

NIGERIAN BAPTIST THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

NBTS
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MISSIONARY AS AN AGENT OF DELIVERANCE

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ABSTRACT

The misconception about deliverance is that it is different from salvation in the Lord Jesus Christ and that it is just exorcizing demons or evil spirits. This research work has established the fact that the vehicle for deliverance is the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ preached in the power of the Holy Spirit. Deliverance is all encompassing - It is steering or taking one away from dangers of all kinds and taking one to safety physically and spiritually. Deliverance goes beyond earthly things but heavenly joy as well.

Deliverance is the prerogative of God Almighty and we are just instruments in His hands to will and to make good His purpose among men, while we do not undermine the fact that we need to submit to Him as agents of deliverance in bringing glory to Him through our involvement in mission activities. While it was established that the training of our missionaries as it were is effective and adequate, several suggestions were made as a way of improvement. These include: sourcing lecturers that can teach specialized courses like demonology, spiritual warfare and so on, in the Missions and Evangelism Department of the Nigerian Baptist Theological seminary, Ogbomoso; making Mission students' practical experience longer and associating students with ministers on the field.

RECOMMENDATIONS

To a great extent, this study has achieved its purpose. It has no doubt provided useful insight as regards Nigerian Baptist Convention ministers' practice of deliverance.

It can be established that the training of our missionaries in the Nigerian Baptist Theological Seminary, Ogbomoso is adequate and effective. However, there is need for improvement in many areas of the ministry. The following recommendations are made both to the practicing ministers (either on the mission fields or in the churches) and our seminaries generally and The Baptist Theological Seminary, Ogbomoso in particular, in the area of training of our missionaries

1. The Nigerian Baptist Theological Seminary, Ogbomoso (NBTS) faculty must be staffed adequately with qualified lecturers to handle specialized courses like demonology, spiritual warfare, deliverance, and so on.
2. Field experience for mission students in particular should at least be extended to cover a semester or a whole session, in which practical mission activities shall be the focus.
3. Supervised Ministry program as being practiced now should be revised in a way that all student pastors will be mentored by experienced minister either directly or indirectly.
4. Partnering with missions agencies like Calvary Productions (CAPRO), Christian Missions Frontier (CMF), Nigerian Evangelical Mission Agency (NEMA) and others should be encouraged. Exchange of staff and students is in the right direction. African Prayer house is another organization that can immensely benefit our students, if we can partner with her.
5. Every trained missionary must know that he has been equipped and commissioned to engage Satan and his cohorts in spiritual battle. The issue is authority in the Lord Jesus Christ. God is the Deliverer, we are just instruments in His hands. We must not be afraid or shy away from this responsibility.

6. Missionary must be aware that there are prices to be paid for engaging in deliverance, which include holy life, prayer and fasting without ceasing, time in the word, and so on, should be the life pattern of anyone in the Deliverance ministry.
7. Deliverance ministers should bear it in mind that the gospel is the bedrock of deliverance. It is equally the aim and objective which deliverance is driven at. Without the word of God there is no deliverance. Many of the time, salvation comes before deliverance and where it is other way round, salvation should be the ultimate aim of any deliverance. Ensure that your client is saved by accepting Jesus Christ as the Lord and Saviour through genuine repentance.
8. Every minister must know that deliverance as is in the mind of God is more than exorcism. It is the deliverance of total man (soul, spirit and body) from every form of demonic oppression.
9. Discipleship training is necessary for every converted and/or delivered individual to maintain his deliverance from demons.
10. Every deliverance minister should pray for spiritual gifts such as spirit of discernment, miracle, faith, healing and so on, which will make the ministry prosper in His hands.
11. Deliverance ministers should know that there is no "the" pattern/way for deliverance, one just need to depend totally on the Holy Spirit leading in each case.

CONCLUSION

The research work is a worthwhile one, in which it was made clear that human beings are agents of deliverance, God is the ultimate Deliverer. It is of interest to note that every born again person; a child of God is a potential deliverance minister once he is interested and ready to cooperate with God.

There is a revelation through the work that deliverance as is in the mind of God goes beyond exorcising spirits. Deliverance is totality of man (spirit, soul and body) becoming what God want it to be – free from every form of demonic oppression and fulfilling God's purpose for life; now and then.

Theological issues was identified, in which attempt was made to differentiate between deliverance and preaching of the gospel. The gospel is the bedrock of deliverance. There is no way we can view deliverance outside the gospel. Attempt to do otherwise would result in the experience of the sons of Sceva to whom "the spirit answered and said 'Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are you'" (Acts 19:15). They were overpowered, beaten and humiliated by the evil spirit.

AREAS FOR FURTHER STUDIES

1. Christian cannot be demon possessed.
2. Evaluation of Deliverance ministry vis-à-vis the preaching of the Gospel.