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**AN EVALUATION OF THE EFFECTIVENESS  
OF DISCIPLESHIP PROGRAMME ON THE MEMBERS OF  
NIGERIAN BAPTIST CONVENTION**

**AN ESSAY PRESENTED TO  
THE FACULTY OF THEOLOGICAL STUDIES IN PARTIAL  
FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENT FOR THE DECREE  
MASTER OF DIVINITY IN THEOLOGY.**

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## ABSTRACT

The central purpose of the birth, life, death and commission of Jesus Christ is to raise a Holy people for His God and our God. The righteous seed fell to the ground and died so he would not remain alone. He must replicate himself. The instrumental / tool of practical discipleship which he invented, introduced and tested among men and women like-us, was, and is eternal tool of precision to raise men / women in all nation who love God, fear God and please and serve God as a life-style.

Jesus commission to the worldwide discipleship is un-mistaken. He would not take anything for granted when He left and ascended to heaven to sit at the right hand of God, He sent the Holy Spirit from the Father to reinforce His commission, and guarantee the effectiveness of the assigned task.

Jesus was clear about these statements "Go make disciples of all nations"... and "wait in Jerusalem" and "Ye shall receive power when the Holy Spirit is come upon you". These have brought about the main stay of the Christ commission for discipleship. When discipleship process / efforts as most sophisticated machinery of precision in modern times (invented Two thousand and six year ago) to transform men and women for God is powered by the Holy Spirit as the unbeatable invisible driving force (leading force). The products will be the original (Christlike), unadulterated (spotless from sin and self) and without blemish. This is so good, can it be true? Is it possible? Jesus said, "Only believe" "all things are possible unto them that believe". Lord, we

chose to believe that you can do all things, we know you can do the humanly impossible things in your church today.

The focus of this essay is on Evaluation of the Effectiveness of Discipleship Programme on members of Nigerian Baptist Convention. In accomplishing the purpose of this essay, the work has been divided into five chapters. The first chapter gives an introduction of the whole study. It also includes statements of problem, purpose of study, significance of study, research questions, methodology and definition of terms.

Chapter Two of the essay deals with some issues that will assist the understanding of discipleship process as seen in the Bible and church History / Literature available for our use to aid effective training.

The third chapter discusses the present state of Discipleship in the Baptist Churches and problems of Discipleship in Nigeria Baptist Convention: And the fourth chapter deals with Evaluation of the Effectiveness of Discipleship programme in the Nigerian Baptist Convention. Here the case of Ola-Oluwa Baptist Association is used. The responses to the questionnaire sent are analysed and suggestions on how to ensure higher level of effectiveness are made

The fifth chapter, the final chapter seeks to raise the challenges to effective discipleship and recommends a new model for this millennium in the Nigerian Baptist Convention.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that members under training be given incentive by the Church to help them attend the 3-weeks retreat. The members in training should be given time during the College/University holidays (for student) or Annual Leave (for workers) period, and not expected to attend all the meetings of the Church for the retreat period. It is recommended that the trainers and the trainees spend time during the 3 weeks by themselves in order to develop the trainees.

## **A New Model for this Millennium**

The discipler is a wise master builder (1 Corinthians 3:10), the Resources are his building skills, in the use of the Discipleship Training Materials and the Trainees readiness for discipling (Trainees qualification). The analysis of Strength, Weakness, Opportunities and Treats (SWOT) of the discipleship Resources under the Discipleship Programme of the Nigerian Baptist Convention reveals that there is need for a New Model for its Discipleship Programme.

### **Analysis of Strength**

The Discipleship Training Manual rated 59% effective

The Resource Persons Skill rated 62% effective

The Trainers qualification which is rated 83% effective reveals that higher effectiveness of the discipleship programme can be reached by adding:

Developing a training manual for “3-weeks retreat with the master” in which the trainer role-modelling/mentoring is demonstrated and shared with the trainer. This pack will be designed to be a practical apprenticeship manual.

Developing a training manual for 3-weeks “Sent Two-by-Two by the Master” in which two disciples are paired together for field work in assigned villages, preaching station for Evangelism/Soul winning for 2 weeks.

### **Analysis of Weakness**

The Constitutional Recognition of the disciplined member was rated 43%. This reveals a weakness in the discipleship effort. The Church in Conference has to nominate and vote for the various position or the Church in Conference may appoint a nominating Committee which has to suggest nominee to the Church in Conference to be voted for. This if the disciplined candidate want to serve except he is voted for he cannot. But if the criteria for nomination is stipulated in the constitution this will enable nominating Committee to nominate and close from disciplined members of the church. The disciplined members must be encouraged to take Administrative and other Leadership role in the Churches so that the effectiveness of the Discipleship programme can be felt by the Church Ministry and departments. Thus, voting in members that have not be disciplined as Church Voluntary officers or Church Officers or recommending for the Seminary training would be a thing of the past. The position of the church on this issue should be backed-up by the constitution of the Local Church. This also would propel more members of the church to enroll for the discipleship programme and give all their commitment for the training.

### **Analysis of Threat**

The effectiveness of the Discipleship Programme is threatened by the exodus of the under utilized disciplined members who are fast drifting to other denomination or interdenominational Churches and Ministries. The threat can be minimized by their effective use in the church ministries and Constitutional recognition of these disciplined members.

## **CONCLUSION**

*The Nigerian Baptist Convention has come a long way and she has also come-of-age. There is no limit to the corners of the earth that she can reach with the "glorious gospel" of her Lord and Saviour through the instrumentality of her effectively disciplined members as she has been commanded, utilizing the New Millennium Developed Discipleship Programme recommended.*