

THE NIGERIAN BAPTIST THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY,

PASTORAL CHALLENGES OF MEETING YOUTH
COUNSELING NEEDS IN OGBOMOSO BAPTIST
CONFERENCE

NBTS
M.Div.
Abi 58-P

A THESIS PRESENTED TO
THE FACULTY IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENTS FOR MASTER OF DIVINITY

DEPARTMENT OF THEOLOGY

OGBOMOSO, OYO STATE

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JUNE, 2004

07 — 0092

ABSTRACT

Counseling the Youths is a vital role Pastors need to embark upon in our churches. It is another means of evangelizing the Youths for Christ. Though they are rebellious in attitude and hard to deal with, still with the use of counseling, they can be reached and ministered to. Some of the areas our youths needs counseling are educational, marital, emotional etc. Pastoral challenges of meeting Youth Counseling needs in Ogbomoso Baptist Conference are attempts to explore the meaning and the use of pastoral counseling on Youth and its effects.

Chapter one of this thesis deals with the introductory matters, which includes the statement of the problem, purpose of the research, scope of the research methodology and definition of terms. Chapter two treats the understanding of pastoral counseling and its effects on youths from other writers' point of view, while chapter three introduces the tools that are used in carrying out the research. However, chapter four is the presentation and analysis of data gathered through questionnaires and interviews conducted. Chapter five of the study then gives the conclusion summary and Recommendations.

5.2. CONCLUSION

The word pastoral counseling is a word that is all encompassing in nature or usage. It could mean pastoral care which is the total work of a pastor to his parishioners. Understanding and initiating with the youth are great assets for pastors. It is often said that the future of any nation depends on her youth. Likewise, the future of any church, depends on the spiritual nuance of her youth¹.

In the churches today, adults see youths as impatient, cantankerous and insolent, while youths see adults as intolerant old guard². But, pastor-youth relationship needs to go beyond this. These youths need counseling. They need pastoral encouragements to excel in their studies, to choose right partners, to aspire to greater heights, to have job satisfaction, and to imbibe the morals of our Lord Jesus Christ in themselves. In essence, it is obvious that youths are troubled everywhere, and they need help to resolve their problems. Strictly speaking, today, "youths in problems are seeking for help from pastors more than ever before"³. This is why Frank Victor says, "Pastoral role is

a unique function – to be in a position of spiritual growth enablers is to help crises stricken youth discover the ultimate meaningfulness of life lived in relationship with

¹ Adeyanju, A. and Mronfoye, S. Meeting the needs of Youth. *"The Nigerian Baptist"* 78, No 8, August 2000, 10.

² Adeyanju,

³ Oseni, MN. O. "The role of Pastors As a crises Manager" (M. Div. Thesis, Ogbomosho: The Nigerian Baptist Theological Seminary, 2001), 45.

God whose steadfast love is always available even in the midst of storm and terrible tragedies⁴.

The questionnaires administered and the interviews conducted among some pastors and some selected youths reveal that youths in our churches are aware of the importance of pastors in time of need. From observation, these youths are having good relationship with their pastors; hence they prefer to reveal their problems to these pastors rather than a professional counselor. Therefore, our pastors need to brace up to meet up with this Herculean task.

However, all the pastors interviewed have undergone one or two courses in the seminary about pastoral care and counseling, but they all agreed to the fact that counseling programs in the Seminary is inadequate. They all believed that Seminary curriculum about care and counseling need to be re-designed and reviewed. In their submission, they all agreed that for a pastor to succeed in the ministry, he needs to improve himself in counseling the youths. That is, he needs to look forward in helping the youths in their predicaments.

One major area of counseling that is suffering set back in our churches today is that of vocational counseling. To this position, a pastor said, "We don't need career counseling in Nigeria, because Nigerians dabble into what seems comes their ways." This view is erroneous because people in this area are going through various personal emotional

⁴ Frankly Victor, Man's Search for Meaning (New York Pocket Books Inc., 1963), 206.

distress which must be healed. But, from critical analysis of some people, our nation (in particular our churches) have failed in taking cognizance of youth unemployment: Thus we are breeding less privileged generations who live without future, and later turn to night marauders". We should not forget that, they will also affect us in the ministry, if we fail to reach them now.

5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

Youth pains and discomforts are many. Unemployment, marital struggles, distress, admission barrier among other things are the problems youths are facing today. The researcher humbly submit the following recommendations based on findings from interviews and questionnaires administered.

(1) The Seminary needs to review her curriculum to meet modern requirement for pastor training. Relevant courses like psychology, philosophy, interpersonal relationship, vocational guidance, ministerial ethics and some other counseling courses need to be improved in our pastoral training. McCutcheon said, "As to professional training,

A pastor should have taken three or four seminary level courses in pastoral care and a short term internship, under professional supervision, in a medical or psychiatric facility⁵.

(2). Pastor's must work hard to acquire more knowledge by reading wide to improve their skills in counseling. Since Seminary training is an introduction to what pastors will meet on the field, pastors must endeavour to improve themselves. This world is a dynamic world. Things change day and night, pastors also should study hard, read more to meet the world challenges. It must be realized that youth easily obtain information about things going around, pastors likewise should study hard to obtain more information on counseling. Technology has improved. One can easily obtain information through internet. "Pastors should have access to information through browsing to improve themselves"⁶.

(3) Multi-staff ministry needs to be accepted by pastors and churches. The work of pastors in the church is enormous, and would need assistance of a trained minister who can work effectively with them. This minister can be employed to be in charge of youths in the church. Such pastor must be one who has the love of youths in mind, and creative in nature. Such pastor can easily detect youth problems and help the senior pastor in solving such problems in the church.

⁶ Interview with Pastor Samson Agboifo, Ogbomoso: Glory Baptist Church, 18th October, 2003.

