

**AN APPRAISAL OF THE IMPACT OF DISCIPLESHIP  
PROGRAMMES ON CHURCH GROWTH  
IN CHOSEN GENERATION  
BAPTIST ASSOCIATION**

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## ABSTRACT

This essay is titled "An Appraisal of the Impact of Discipleship Programmes on Church Growth in the Chosen Generation Baptist Association". The essay among other things, aimed at measuring the level of performance of churches on their discipleship programmes in the Association, and motivating the churches into self assessment towards thirst for growth.

In the review of related literature, considerations were given to the concepts, biblical basis and approaches to discipleship. The concepts, factors and barriers of church growth were also duly considered.

The Descriptive Survey method used for the research, made use of questionnaire as the main instrument for data collection. The target population for the study were the church members in the Chosen Generation Baptist Association of Lagos State Baptist Conference.

Some of the major findings are that: more aged people are involved in discipleship training than young ones; majority of those involved are the ones that can read and write in English Language, and that, very few churches in the associations are seriously involved in discipleship training programme.

Based on the findings of this work, some of the major recommendations made are that: Pastors themselves should be properly disciplined; manuals should be translated into local languages; and that appropriate recognitions be given to churches on good performances in discipleship programmes.

## **Conclusion**

The summary of the major findings on the appraisal of discipleship programmes on church growth in the Chosen Generation Baptist Association of Lagos State Baptist Conference, gave indications that churches are not really making enough use of discipleship programmes to better their growth and that many churches lack the understanding of how to manage their converts.

In the word of Archibald, "Evangelism is not enough, we have become so enamored of numbers that we have lost sight of our responsibility for training the converts whom we have received into our fellowship" [15]. It is the intent of our Lord, Jesus Christ that churches must grow, therefore His followers must example His life, death and gift of caring in discipleship for the growth of the church. For this to happen, recommendations are given based on the findings of this work.

## **Recommendations**

Considering the findings and discussion of this research work as well as the conclusions made above, the following recommendations will pave the way for effective discipleship in churches, and in effect, enhance the growth of individuals and churches at large.

### **Pastors**

Every Pastor should enroll in all the training manuals in discipleship programmes. The pastors that have missed any of the training manuals should take it as a challenge to enroll themselves for the training under their colleagues that have passed through the

training. Pastors should be mindful of the kinds of teachers they recruit for teaching discipleship programmes. Pastors should ensure that training in discipleship programme are sequential. The beginners' manuals such as Enquirers Training Guide; Basic Discipleship Lessons; Welcome to God's Family and Christ Indwelling Your Life, should come before the worker's and stewards' manuals such as Serve the Master; Living the Responsible Life; and Equipping the Saints. This in turn, should be followed by the manuals for development and maturity of disciples which include Master Life; In His Likeness; In God's Presence and Experiencing God. Above all, pastors should attend workshops and seminars on discipleship on regular basis.

### **The Churches**

Where the majority of the members are illiterate, churches should encourage adult literacy classes to increase their literacy level. New converts / comers should not gain full membership of the church until they have been discipled. Churches should always provide conducive space for the purpose of teaching and learning. The manuals for the beginner's group should be provided free of charge by the churches. Other subsequent manuals should be sold by the churches to the disciples at subsidized prices. Churches should also arrange classes for disciples that live far away from the church, in centers nearer to them.

### **The Association**

The discipleship department of the Association should be made to work hand-in-hand with those at the church level to create the awareness in members that discipleship training is meant for all, and

not just a church programme. Discipleship seminars should be conducted on regular basis for the churches in the Association. Also, there should be quarterly evaluation of discipleship on the churches of the Association. Discipleship materials should be readily available in the Association secretariat for purchase by churches. The Association should consider the establishment of preaching stations as a possible assessment of discipleship programme and the growth of church at large. Certificates of recognition should be given by the Association to the churches based on their efforts in discipleship programmes.

### **The Conference**

The Conference should organize regular seminar on discipleship programme for all moderators of the Association. The Conference Secretary should always make follow-up visitations to all Associations during the quarterly meetings. Also, there should be dissemination of new trends in discipleship materials by the Conference especially in the area of translation of materials into local languages.

### **The Convention**

The Convention should endeavour to write discipleship materials in the African context. The discipleship manuals should be translated into the languages spoken by Nigerians. The programmes of the annual Ministers' conference should involve an annual review of discipleship. There should be award and recognitions for churches and Associations that do well in discipleship programme