

AN EVALUATION OF THE EFFECTIVE USE OF TIME IN
THE NIGERIAN BAPTIST CONVENTION CHURCHES

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ABSTRACT

This essay is titled "An evaluation of the effective use of time in The Nigeria Baptist Convention Churches." Therefore the concern of this study is to research into how The Nigerian Baptist Convention Churches make effective use of time as far as church services and programmes are concerned. It is an attempt to evaluate the pros and cons to effective use of time in Baptist churches. This study finds out why some local Baptist churches are not making effective use of time in their church services and programmes. Some of the factors responsible for this include: lack of priorities and deadlines, attempting too much at once and underestimating the time it takes to do it, insufficient or lack of goals and objectives, indecision, poor communication procrastination, poor planning and scheduling, poor delegation among others.

The pastors and church members within The Nigerian Baptist Convention churches were interviewed through questionnaire in order to find out the areas where the churches have not been making effective use of time and the factors responsible for this. One hundred questionnaires were sent out and turned in accordingly. And through the questionnaire distributed the pastors and church members' highlighted cogent factors that may eventually result into ineffective use of time as follows: indiscipline, long and unfocused prayer in the church, laziness and lack preparation on the part of worship leaders.

The essay has five chapters. Chapter one contains introduction-background to the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, significance of the study, scope of the study and definition of terms. Chapter two deals with literature review. This contains overview of the concept of time and it uses, biblical perspective of the

use of time, causes and effects of ineffective use of time, conducting church worship services and meetings, strategies for effective use of time.

Chapter three focuses on methodology research design, population and sampling. The fourth chapter contains presentation and discussion of findings from questionnaires and interview and summary of findings.

Chapter five contains the summary of the whole work which reveals that effective use of time cannot be compromised or overemphasized in local Baptist churches. The researcher gives recommendation for effective use of time: promptness, delegation of assignments to unit leaders, brevity, avoidance of ostentations and scheduling.

Conclusion

From the discussion made so far, it is important to note that: the church pastors and leaders should always bear in mind the need to maximize the opportunity of being a servant-leader under the one and only Lord and Master and consequently strive to do their best to bring glory to God, their Master as they lead their congregation. Moreover, church pastors and leaders should note that Christians in

general and Baptists in particular are people of “the Book,” they should therefore show this in principle and practice. Our Lord and Master never show off; He is ever prompt, open and humble. He knew the what, where, when, who and how things should be done.

It should be noted that there is the need for church pastors and leaders to disabuse their mind from the polluted phrase “as the spirit leads.” The premise is that the Holy Spirit is a divine person that inspires all the children of God to do according to His divine will and not their wishful will in modesty, humility and openness. Therefore, there is no room for ostentation and extremism if they desire positive reactions from their congregation with reference to church worship services, programmes and meetings.

So, it is the responsibility of the church pastor to consider the effective use of time as a serious matter. However, this cannot be done by the pastor alone and should not be done by the pastor alone. Both the pastor and leaders should be conscious of the preacher’s message: “to everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven,” (Ecc. 3:1).

Recommendation

Having considered the prons and cons of effective time use in our Nigerian Baptist Convention Churches and highlighted some causes and effects of ineffective use of time, the researcher wishes to make the following recommendations:

1. The principle and practice of promptness should be the standing covenant for church worship service, fellowship and meetings.
2. Church pastors should always strategize through planning, delegating and organizing worship activities and meetings.

3. Church pastors should set time limit for each worship activities and meetings. They should be consistent, true to it and never imbibe the philosophy of "African Time."
4. Church pastors should never attempt to compile or bring all outings: thanksgiving, anniversaries and dedication to a single worship hour.
5. Church pastors should minimize or eliminate reading of printed announcements and mails because these are vital time wasters which should be avoided.
6. Church pastors should stop welcoming unannounced programmes by visitors and Christian organizations.
7. Church pastors should delegate assignments to unit leaders and other programme personnel on what to do and how to do it.
8. Unit leaders and teachers should be smart, come prepared and strait to any assignment given.
9. The principle and practice of brevity should ever govern worship services and meetings. Undue repetition and ostentation should be avoided.
10. Church pastors must be pragmatic, honest and transparent. They should purposed in their heart as Daniel (in Daniel 1:8) not to be corrupted or influenced as they attempt to ensure effective use of time.
11. Churches should organize proper Orientation programmes in form of seminars and workshop for Church pastors and leaders on stewardship of time and time management.
12. Possibly, there should be programme moderator for every programme.

Finally, it is recommended that further research should be made in this area of effective use of time in Baptist Churches.