

**THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH AS THE
MANIFESTATION OF THE POWER OF GOD**

NBTS
S4151.6

M. Div

**A THESIS PRESENTED TO THE FACULTY OF THE
NIGERIAN BAPTIST THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY,
OGBOMOSO, OYO STATE, NIGERIA**

**IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE
AWARD OF THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OF DIVINITY (THEOLOGY)**

BY

SULE, OLUWATOYIN MOKOLADE ALABA

JUNE, 2002

05 — 1193

ABSTRACT

This work essentially has to do with the Christian Church as a creation of God mandated to operate in this world of sin and contradictions in the power, authority and the righteousness of God. The Church as a project is close to the heart of God, because it has cost Him so much to found and establish. She is very fundamental and cardinal to the eschatological plans and programme of the Almighty, for the Church has been mandated to play a vital role of an agency, and a responsible representative and ambassador communicating God's salvific plans in Christ to all mankind. She is an agency imparted with power, and authority, and share in the divine nature of the most High. She is to showcase god's power and wisdom to the world of principalities and powers thereby proclaiming the supremacy and pre-eminence of God in all things.

Therefore, what God has done in the Church by Christ and by His Spirit must of necessity manifest the power and ingenuity of God.

Chapter one introduces the subject and highlight the background of the study and the relevance of this discourse to the life of the Church. It also defines the scope and the delimitation.

Chapter two is dedicated to literature review, exploring scholarly and contemporary thoughts on the Church and power of God. It discusses various perspectives of power and the power of God as invested and manifested in the Church by God.

Chapter three is the Biblical foundation. It seeks to establish biblical base for the Church, exploring both the Old and the New Testaments to arrive at a clearer understanding of the Church phenomenon especially as it relates to the power of God and its manifestation.

Chapter Four has to do with the way and manner in which the power of God is revealed in the Church. It discusses the power resources available to

the Church of God in which the Church should operate in order to reveal an authentic power of God to the world. It also establishes Biblical bases for them.

Chapter Five is Summary, conclusion and recommendations. It gives an overview, and succinctly discusses the reality of Church's situation and God's expectation and the need to continue to function as God's agent and representative in this world of "powers". It discusses various solution options, strategies and recommendations.

CONCLUSION

The Church should therefore resolve to work assiduously and operate in a godly sense, doggedly and faithfully utilising all the power resources and being found subject and totally obedient to Christ will be able to bring about attendant effect upon the people and especially upon her members,

transforming their lives and commanding their loyalty thereby glorifying God. This is the Church that can convert the world, making them disciples, engendering and creating brotherhood and fellowships while maintaining peace and harmony in the contemporary world of ours. Then the principalities and powers and all other powers of evil shall be put to shame, and Church will emerge and be seen as a manifestation of the power of God.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In the world we live today, satanic influences are all over. They manifest in technical, economical, political and social spheres of life and this impact upon our understanding of truth. They readily bastardise our values, attitudes and behaviour. According to James F. Cobble, the powers rule and reign, not men and women, and no one escapes their influence in the world¹. This influence is to be overcome by the power of God working in the church. He says further that the Christian community is to expose the powers by living a life of obedience to the Spirit of God, and this in effect manifest love, peace, and joy to the world.²

There is, by God's grace, a prophetic office and tradition in the church as there always has been and there are at large among the churches some prophets today³. Meaning that the church should speak out prophetically through the ecclesiastical authority in defence and sustenance of the rule and reign of God's in our world today. The church should both pray and work. Pray that God intervene in the affairs of men, work by making prophetic utterances or projecting Godly views to the world. The church should not be conformed to the world and its patterns. Conformity with the world is enmity with God.

¹ James F. Cobble, JR., The Church And The Powers, (Massachusetts : Peabody, Hendrickson Publishers, 1988) p.38

² James F. Cobble, JR., The Church And The Powers, (Massachusetts : Peabody, Hendrickson Publishers, 1988) p.38

³ William Kilbourn, The Restless Church, (New York : Lippincott, 1966) p.14

The Church must make a firm resolve to be rid of all shams and make believe and to face entirely the truth, however unpalatable. In this way, the Church can hope to become an effective force in the world today. Let us, therefore, on the threshold of our present task attempt to see without illusion the position of the church in the present life of the world¹. There is a prevailing insensibility and insensitivity to spiritual issues, to holy living, to righteousness, to upholding the truth, and this had caused the message of the church to fall on deaf ears. Many will want miracles and short cuts rather than making a commitment to pursue holiness and righteous living etc. It is in the power of God to enable the church now and in the coming days to utter a word which will not be without effect on the life and conduct of Christians and believer at large².

The Church should allow love to be the ruling power. In our generation his glorious presence will be made manifest according to the power and love that the church allows to work in her life and members. The glory that was in Christ from all eternity is made manifest in the church and in the world as the love that unite Christ to God comes to unite Christians to God and to one another (John 17)³

The church must not forget that she need urgently an authentication of the message which will arrest the attention of the world. As a result, she must pray for revival, presentation of the full gospel and plead with God to visit her and give her power⁴ knowing-fully well that there is the presence of the supernatural life in the church⁵. The task of the church is to carry forward

¹ W.A. Visser 'T. Hooft & J.H. Oldham, The Church and Its Functions In Society, (Great Britain : George Allen &Unwin, 1938) p.108

² W.A. Visser 'T. Hooft & J.H. Oldham, The Church and Its Functions In Society, (Great Britain : George Allen &Unwin, 1938) p.112

³ Dale Moody, Christ And The Church, (Michigan : Grand Rapids, Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1963) p.84

⁴ D.M. Lloyd-Jones, Darkness And Light, (Edinburgh : The Banner Of The Truth Trust, 1982) p.327

⁵ W.A. Visser 'T. Hooft & J.H. Oldham, The Church and Its Functions In Society, (Great Britain : George Allen &Unwin, 1938) p.26

