

THE NIGERIAN BAPTIST THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

THE IMPACTS OF PENTECOSTALISM ON SOME BAPTIST
CHURCHES IN SAKI BAPTIST ASSOCIATION.

A THESIS SUBMITTED TO
THE FACULTY OF THEOLOGICAL STUDIES IN CANDIDACY
FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF DIVINITY
DEPARTMENT OF THEOLOGY

BY

SUNDAY OYEBAMIJI PETER OLANIREGUN

OGBOMOSO, NIGERIA

JUNE, 2004

**J.C. POOL LIBRARY
BAPTIST SEMINARY
OGBOMOSO NIGERIA**

ABSTRACT

Although the emergence of Christianity in Saki through the labours of foreign missionaries was largely successful; its growth was later truncated as those who embraced it were driven back to African Traditional Religion (ATR) to solve their existential problems. Obviously, it appeared that they were deficient both in faith and knowledge of Christianity to meet these challenges of life. At this stage, Pentecostalism arrived in Saki.

Pentecostalism is one of the means at God's disposal to get His people to return to the biblical standard of New Testament Christian life and witness. This movement is not to be explained away in our generation. There is need to return to the Bible. Whichever way God chooses to bring revival, it should be welcomed heartily.

As we see the movement gaining ground in Saki Baptist Association churches, the impacts are seen through interview with some personalities both in Baptist churches and Pentecostal churches. This is to know how Pentecostalism has affected the Baptist churches in Saki Baptist Association. It was found that members of the Baptist churches are well disposed and have largely been affected by such Pentecostal practices like vigil, lively praise sessions, manifestation of spiritual gifts, spontaneous prayers, deliverance and healing services as well as tongue-speaking. The exception is the Baptist leadership, which is still conservative towards the movement. There is therefore a need to resolve to be open to the Pentecostal movement, which God is using for the perfection of the church in this age.

This essay has revealed that swimming against the Pentecostal current has been futile. There should be unity in pursuing the very heart of God for our generation. Consequently, we must see fresh move of the Holy Spirit as a blessing to our generation and one that is worthy of acceptance.

**J.C. POOL LIBRARY
BAPTIST SEMINARY
OGBOMOSO NIGERIA**

B. RECOMMENDATIONS

Beside the suggestions made by the respondents to the questionnaire as listed in chapter four, the following recommendations need to be considered and adopted by the Nigerian Baptist Convention:

1. The Nigerian Baptists should see Pentecostalism as a God-initiated, God-promoted and God-approved movement. It should not be seen as an heretical or unbiblical movement.
2. The Nigerian Baptist Convention (NBC) needs to educate its membership on the essential features of Baptist faith and practices. The NBC and her membership should be ready to accommodate new and novel practices, which do not contradict God's word.
3. Baptist leaders and members who are already favourably disposed to Pentecostalism should know that change is gradual and that people are slow to accept change. Before introducing Pentecostally-oriented changes, the sensitization and enlightenment of the congregation is highly necessary.

4. The NBC should be open to Pentecostal experience in humility of heart.
5. The role of the Pastor is to educate, guide and gradually lead the people to study and understand the experience of Pentecostalism.

D. CONCLUSION

Pentecostalism has its root in the scripture and the body of Christ needs to accept this new phenomenon. The experience of Acts 2 was a wonderful experience. To desire to experience this phenomenon is not acting contrary to the scripture. The power for victorious Christian living lies in experiencing something of what the one

hundred and twenty disciples experienced in the day of Pentecost. The transformation experience is better experienced than imagined.

It must therefore be stated that the NBC will do better in her ministry if Pentecostalism is that accepted as a true and biblical movement. One thing that must be critically ascertained however, is that scriptural belief or practice is to be so accepted and practiced.

Surely one of the determinants of the future of NBC lies in whether Pentecostalism is accepted or not, because in the experience lies the power to succeed in NBC's various Christian ministries. The movement should therefore not be rejected in spite of some observed excesses. The Holy Bible, which provides the ultimate standard for Christian beliefs and practices, must be the sole yardstick for informed judgments on Pentecostal beliefs and practices; not church traditions and undue doctrines. This is the position, which the universal church of Christ must hold onto as it seeks to align itself with "what the spirit is saying to the churches" (Rev. 2:7) through the agency of Pentecostalism.