

**THE CHURCH REACHING OUT THROUGH ITS SOCIAL MINISTRY:
CHURCHES IN OGBOMOSO NORTHWEST AND OGBOMOSO SOUTHWEST
BAPTIST ASSOCIATIONS**

AS A CASE STUDY

A DEGREE ESSAY PRESENTED TO THE FACULTY

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ABSTRACT

“The church Reaching Out Through Its Social Ministry: Churches in Ogbomoso North-West and Ogbomoso South-West Baptist Associations as A case Study” is an attempt to bring awareness on the need to embark on social ministry by our Local Churches if truly they want to reach out with the Gospel to lost souls both within and outside the Christian fold. The essay seeks to find out what the churches being focussed have on ground as social ministry and see whether or not they are meeting the needs of both members and non-members of their churches and suggest ways by which they can improve on their present level of performances and even explore new areas of social ministry hitherto unknown to them.

Chapter One contains introductory materials like the stating of the motivating factors that prompt the writer to embark upon the writing of the essay, purpose and scope of the essay, definitions of terminologies and the methodology to be employed in carrying out the project.

Chapter Two delves into the Biblical and Sociological Bases for social ministry. For example, God is shown as being the initiator of social ministry considering the way He took good care of the Israelites on their journey from bondage in Egypt to the Promised Land. The interest of Jesus Christ in His followers' involvement in social ministry as seen in the Judgment scene of the Nations in Mathew 25:31-46 is also highlighted. This chapter is concluded by the examination of the social life of the early Christian Communities.

Chapter Three opens with discussion on the various types of Social Ministry which our local churches can embark upon to reach out with the Gospel to the lost souls. About seven different ways are discussed and they include, visitations, prison

ministry, provision of recreational facilities, establishment of Vocational or Educational Centres operation of charity fund to cater for the needy and the utilization of modern communication gadgets like video set, television, film etc in reaching out.

Chapter Four concerns itself with data analysis of the questionnaires administered and the interviews conducted to ascertain the involvements of churches in Ogbomoso North-West and Ogbomoso South-West Baptist Associations in Social Ministry and based on the analysis, recommendations are made on how the churches can improve on what they have on ground and even explore new areas.

The concluding chapter, which is Chapter, Five seeks to highlight the roles expected of pastors and members in our local churches if the social ministry embarked upon by them is to be effective in reaching out with the Gospel to others.

(CONCLUSION)

1. **The Role of the Pastor in His Church's Social Ministry**

There is no doubt that the Pastor of the church is the chief mover of activities in the church as he is guided by the Holy Spirit. Even where the Pastor is not aware that certain things should be done by the church and some of his members are, such things may not be easily carried out if the Pastor is not in support, for example, some pastors have come into conflict with youths in their churches over the use of church van for outreach programmes outside the town because the pastors are not interested in such programmes and they go ahead to approve the van for use by church members who need it for their own social engagements. All these go to show the important position the pastor is holding in the scheme of things. Delos Miles in one of his advice to Christian Social Ministers and Evangelists says:

“Christian Social Ministries can open doors to witnessing opportunities. They establish credibility so essential to effective evangelism. Many years ago, when Dr. Kenneth Chafin was the evangelism leader for Southern Baptists, he said something I hope never to forget. ‘Evangelism moves forward best on the wings of ministry’. If you want your evangelism to fly, couple it with authentic ministries which meets the needs of human beings.”¹

From the foregoing, we can see that the first role of the pastor is to see social ministry as an important aspect of his assignment and attach that importance to it. If he does this,

¹ Delos Miles. 1986 p. 162

he will be in a position to guide the church in ordering a priority list especially when the church has many areas of need competing for its limited resources. The pastor is to make his church realize that the main business entrusted to the church by Jesus Christ is the preaching of the Gospel and if being involved in social ministry will help the church to achieve that goal, then much importance should be attached to the social Ministry of the church. Delos Miles continues:

“It is high time for us evangelists to see that we have to serve the gospel as well as share it verbally. If we can see Christian social ministers as those who help establish credibility for sharing the gospel through serving of it, world evangelization will be blessed by our vision. Tomorrow’s society may be totally secular. Only a ministering church will get through to it.”²

The pastor has to ensure that his church moves with the time. Otherwise he may discover that members will be moving away from it to other churches that take care of their needs in not only spiritual matters but in their welfare in the physical and emotional realms. When this happens among his members, how can he reach out to those who are yet to come to the saving knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ? Delos Miles in another comment observes that when one has seen the love of God acted out, it is easier to believe and that it authenticates the gospel to outsiders, inquirers, and church members as well.³

Another important role which the pastor has to play is that of mobilizing his members to see the need to support the social ministry of the church financially and

² Delos Miles 1986 p. 163

³ Delos Miles 1986 p. 163

