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APOSTLE PAUL'S MISSION WORK:

A MODEL FOR CHURCH WORKERS

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ABSTRACT

This work examines the topic "Apostle Paul's Mission Work: A Model for Church Workers." The work is divided into five major divisions. First part is the introductory aspect where the motivation for the study as well as the objectives of the study are mentioned. Explanation of key terms in the study are also highlighted succinctly. The second aspect deals with the life background of Apostle Paul, the subject of the study, Paul's family background, training, conversion to Christian faith and call to Christian mission.

The third aspect deals with the theology of Paul as it concerns his view of God, the Cross of Christ, the Church of God and prayer. It also discusses Paul's church planting techniques, his preaching and method of overseeing churches that he planted. The fourth division of the work discusses Paul's leadership traits. It also discusses his training methodology, his way of appointing workers and working with others. Above all, the division examines Paul's methods of handling issues that affect leadership such as discipline, trials and criticisms. Lastly, Paul's weaknesses are discussed.

The fifth division which is the last is the conclusion to the study. In it, an appraisal of the whole work is done and recommendations made on doing God's work.

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CONCLUSION

A. Appraisal

The adherent of the Christian faith can hardly overestimate the importance of Apostle Paul to Christian mission. Paul's legacy highlighted in this study, and other studies carried out on him, is worthy of note, acceptance, and practice.

From this study on Paul the apostle, it is evident that a sense of divine call from God in Christ Jesus is a necessity for mission involvement in the body of Christ. Involvement in mission work without a sense and certainty of divine call from God will not yield the desired fruitful result. And it may not be sustained for long because the propelling force that sustains active involvement in mission work is the assurance of divine call from God.

Apostle Paul's divine call from God sustained him in his mission work and also helped him to be successful in his mission endeavour. The Lord of Harvest who extended a call to Paul to join Him in His mission endeavour, supported and backed Paul throughout his ministry life.

Another important factor in the mission of Apostle Paul is the training he had before the commencement of his mission work. This study has shown that there is no substitute for appropriate and adequate training for success in mission work.

The training Paul had through his parents, Gamaliel a teacher and scholar, and the apostles prior to the commencement of the mission work he

was commissioned helped him to be successful and also to do more work than his other contemporaries and senior apostles that were not as trained and learned as he was.

Another important factor in the mission of Apostle Paul was his identification of his specific assignment within the mission of God in Christ Jesus. Early in his mission work he identified himself as a worker sent to the Gentiles with the aim of bringing them to faith in Christ Jesus through the church. Paul all through his mission work era stuck to his specific assignment from God and he excelled and did much for the Lord Almighty. The study shows that Paul did not try to meddle into other people's assignments, rather he concentrated on his own assignment and for that he was justified and esteemed high. A clear identification of one's specific assignment in the body of Christ is a necessity for success in mission work.

Another factor in the mission of Apostle Paul was his disposition, attitude and relational ability with people. Paul related with everyone on equal basis. He did not give place to discrimination on the basis of tribe, sex, age and status. He related with people as valuable creatures of God. He shared love, sympathy, and kindness to all that came his way. Through that he gained access to many hearts and won several to the Lord. Through this study it is evident that love, acceptance and kindness are necessary for successful mission work.

Another significant factor in Apostle Paul's mission work is his method of church planting. He engaged in church planting activity in areas in which Christian faith had not been previously established. Paul expended energy

and zeal to this task. In addition, he had the consciousness of knowing that he was a servant and messenger of Christ Jesus. This consciousness made him to be humble and gentle with others. Modern day church workers need to cultivate the servant spirit of Paul which he also cultivated from Jesus.

Another significant factor in the mission of Apostle Paul is the consistency of Paul in patterning his life in line with his messages. In a nutshell, Paul Lived the messages he preached. There was no gap between the apostle's lifestyle and the message he preached that resulted in church planting and conversion of souls for Christ Jesus.

Another important factor in Apostle Paul's missionary work is his willingness to submit to the leading of the Holy Spirit. Paul will not do any work without receiving the direction and guidance of God in Christ Jesus through the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit was at work in Paul's life most of the time in his mission endeavour as enabler, counselor, energizer and leader. Unlike many workers of the church today that depend on self and human intellect, Paul depended on the Holy Spirit of God for ministerial success and as far as I know, he never regretted it.

Another significant factor in Paul's mission work was his practice of involving others in his mission work. Paul worked with others at different levels of his mission work. Likewise, he worked through others to achieve his mission endeavour.

In addition, Paul exhibited exemplary leadership traits and also held to correct biblical theology that enabled him to achieve the purpose of his commission by God. Holding to correct biblical theology and exhibiting

appropriate leadership traits are necessary ingredients for effective and fruitful mission work.

Above all, Paul's criteria of choosing his co-workers and his method of training his workers are commendable because they enhanced his mission success. Today Paul is a role model and an exemplary church worker and missionary worthy of note and study.

B. Recommendations

The desire and expectation of many churches today is for workers that need not be ashamed but who rightly divide the word of truth. For this desire of the church to continue to be met and realized, churches need to cultivate the attitude of Apostle Paul to work. The virtues of Apostle Paul to mission work need to be inculcated and taught to present day church workers, if the mission of the church as mandated by God in Christ Jesus is to be realized. The following recommendations demonstrated and effectively made use of by Apostle Paul in his mission work are necessary for modern day church workers so that the kingdom of this world will become the kingdom of God in Christ Jesus. Churches must see to the implementation of the recommendations. The recommendations include:

- (a) Personal encounter with the Lord of harvest is a must for present day church workers for effective performance. Experiential knowledge of God in Christ Jesus is necessary for anyone who may desire to work for the Lord. Without this personal encounter with God through Christ a worker will become a misfit in the vineyard of God.

