

APPROVAL SHEET

THE ROLE OF DELIVERANCE MINISTRY FOR EFFECTIVE CHURCH
GROWTH IN DALE MOORE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION OF RIVERS BAPTIST
CONFERENCE OF THE NIGERIAN BAPTIST CONVENTION

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ABSTRACT

The two versions of the Great commission of Jesus to His disciples in Matthew 28: 18 – 20; Mark 16:15 – 18 form the basis of this thesis. Both versions opened with the charge to do and proclaim the Gospel to unbelievers. Matthew's special emphasis was that the disciples should educate the new converts doctrinally and nurture them for their spiritual edification. This implies the coming together of all the saints to form a church. It implies church planting. Mark's special addition was an unveiling of a comprehensive list of spiritual gifts which mark out believers from unbelievers. Among these was the gift of deliverance: *"And these signs shall follow them that believe; in my name shall they cast out devils..."* (Mark 16:17).

Both internal evidence from the scripture and external evidences from literature review in addition to churches have shown the value of this gift for accelerating the rate of the numerical growth of churches. Deliverance ministry in its broad sense covers all non pagan modes of deliverance such as deliverance through counseling, herbal medication, scientific medication and through prayer of faith to God in Jesus name. However, the last named is the focus of this essay, and for expediency, it is sometimes referred to as absolute Divine deliverance.

Finally, in Luke 10:20, Jesus cautioned the seventy disciples on evangelistic outreach not to rejoice because the demons obeyed them but to rejoice because their names were written in heaven. For effective ministry of soul winning and church planting with healthy numerical church growth in view, both the command and caution are necessary and inseparable. The command is to cast out demons, and the caution is to regard not healing but salvation as the optimum purpose of evangelism. This is the focus of this essay.

There was therefore a significant relationship between deliverance ministry and effective church growth in Dale-Moore Baptist Association of Rivers Baptist conference.

6.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of this work, the following recommendations are made:

- (i) Pastors should admit the fact that effective church growth is not only determined by church's numerical strength, but majorly on members relationship with the Lord Jesus and their commitment to kingdom work,
- (ii) Deliverance service or activities should be held in churches at least on quarterly basis,
- (iii) Pastors should not trade their calling and ministry for worldly things, hence facing the challenges of church growth at all cost.
- (iv) Pastors should embark on power-packed teaching, training and preaching against all appearances of evil.
- (v) Pastors should as a matter of necessity and urgency make Ephesians 6:10-18 their watch word and live it.
- (vi) Pastors should come to the understanding of the fact that "Deliverance makes church members a better Christian; it gives them a closer walk with the Lord. People do not get all their demons overnight, and they cannot get rid of them overnight, hence need to be persistent with Jesus.

Finally, Jesus says in Mark 16:17 that "Those that believe shall cast out demons." We have no power on our own, the power of his (Jesus) miracle is in using his name, but remember, you can't use his name if you are not perfectly related to him.