

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF EVANGELISM STRATEGIES IN CHURCHES OF
OGBOMOSO ZION BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

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ABSTRACT

There have been cases of local churches that engage in evangelism using carnal means in order to attract crowds to themselves. In an attempt to draw crowds, they do things that are unbiblical and even unethical. We conduct good and excellent events, but fail in sharing the gospel and leading people to Christ. We waste God's resources in various dimensions. In fact, we waste the church's time, and our time by not preparing very well, thereby making our mission unbiblical and non-evangelistic because; though the programmes are enjoyable, charismatic, expensive, and tasking, yet non-productive. The church has fallen for the devil's lie that evangelism does not work. We live as though the gospel is powerless and act as if the gospel is in some type of code, in struggles trying to discover a new approach or grasp which evangelism strategy works best, the world is going to hell on jet fuel. Therefore, there is urgent need for us to give a deep and careful thought to our ways of evangelizing the world because the time is short and the harvest is white (John4:55) and there has been murder charge upon us for the lost who we should reach (Ezekiel3:18-19). It is these conditions of the local churches and lot more that triggered this writer into this research. Because of the nature of this study: The Effectiveness of Evangelism Strategies in Churches of Ogbomoso Zion Baptist Association, the discrepancy evaluation research method is used in order to ensure empirical accuracy in the study. The research design employed was sample and sampling technique and the research instrument used was self-design questionnaires. It is established from this findings that, the effectiveness of evangelism strategies being used in Churches of Ogbomoso Zion Baptist Association is very weak: the strategies used are not enough, and are not frequently and effectively used. Therefore, it is recommended for both the church pastors, evangelism ministers, evangelism team members, and the church members of the association to work together to improve upon the evangelism strategies they are using already, and try to employ some other contemporary and relevant strategies which can be of help in evangelizing our community in this 21st century.

5.2 CONCLUSION

From the discussion, and analysis of the findings so far on the topic: the effectiveness of evangelism strategies in Baptist Local Churches of Ogbomosho Zion Baptist Association, one can conclude here that the effectiveness of evangelism strategies used in Baptist Local Churches of Ogbomosho Zion Baptist Association is very weak. The reasons are that their annual conversion rate is very low and the large percentage of the converts are nominal Christians (church goers) who are also Yoruba language speaking people. This probably is as a result of poor follow – up or discipleship efforts or strategies and ineffectiveness in the formation, training and

retention of the members of their evangelism teams. It could also be as a result of insufficient evangelism strategies employed by the Baptist local churches of the association: those ones being used are not well or effectively used, while many others which are contemporary, relevant, productive and biblical are left unemployed.

5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

5.3.1 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CHURCH PASTORS

Church pastors of the association are charged to be evangelism-minded because they are in the better position to lead the churches to evangelize than anyone else. If other church' works will take much of their time from leading their churches, they are advised to call a trained evangelism minister or pastor to do the work. They (The church pastors) will just endeavour to fully support them and empower them. They are also advised to mobilize every member of their church to take part in evangelism, either by going, giving or groaning. None of the church members should be idle in evangelism work. They are to ensure overseeing and periodic evaluation of the evangelism effort of their church in the light of biblical bases of evangelism, taking cognizance of the contemporary trend of their community (Post Modernism), in order to make the gospel relevant to their audience.

This involves proper contextualization of the gospel in terms of language, culture, religious beliefs of their various audience or communities. If there is no evangelism ministers in a church, the church Pastors must give careful attention to the formation, training, and retention of their evangelism team members.

They should also review and improve upon their follow – up strategies, especially in terms of formal and life practical discipleship for their converts.

5.3.2 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR EVANGELISM MINISTERS/PASTORS/COORDINATORS

Evangelism ministers of a church are advised to develop a goal statement for their mission and evangelism in the light of the church mission statement (if there is) and according to the biblical standard of evangelism. He or she must set priority right by firstly recruiting, training, empowering, and maintaining a very strong evangelism force. Because the effectiveness of the evangelism effort is largely determined by the spiritual technical strength of the team involved, it is also advisable for the evangelism ministers of the local churches in the association to improve upon the evangelism strategies being used. There are several contemporary and relevant evangelism strategies which can be of help in evangelizing our community in this 21st century. They include Evangelism strategies like operation Andrew Evangelism, saturation evangelism, campus – wide evangelism, the mission output evangelism e.t.c. The choice of their evangelism strategies should depend largely upon the leading of the Holy Spirit and the nature of their audience or community they want to evangelize. The ministers are also advised to collaborate with their church pastors to design productive follow – up strategies for their new converts. They are also reminded that, their evangelism effort should not be limited to their immediate geographical location or four corners of their church. We are mandated to bring the gospel to all people of the nations of the world irrespective of their culture, background, language and social status.

5.3.3 RECOMMENDATION FOR EVANGELISM TEAM MEMBERS

It is recommended for evangelism team members to be obedient always to the leadership of the Holy Spirit and cooperate with their team leaders. They are advised

to be more committed to any training measure, organized by their team leaders and to any periodic retreat and to all of their evangelism responsibilities or mandate.

5.3.4 RECOMMENDATION FOR FURTHER RESEARCHERS

This study, the effectiveness of evangelism strategies in Baptist Local Churches of Ogbomosho Zion Baptist Association, faced a lot of difficulties which serve as limitation to the study. The future researchers are therefore advised to limit the scope of their study (If it is similar or relevant to this subject matter), to a local church instead of study an association as a whole. This will enhance objectivity, specificity and accuracy of their findings.

AN APPRAISAL OF BAPTIST COOPERATIVE PROGRAMME IN
EVANGEL ASSOCIATION OF THE LAGOS EAST BAPTIST CONFERENCE

An Essay Submitted to the Faculty of Theological Studies
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