

NBTS
M. Div
Ag - 264

CHALLENGES OF CHAPLAINCY OF A BAPTIST PASTOR IN
ITESIWAJU LOCAL GOVERNMENT, OTU

A THESIS SUBMITTED TO:

THE FACULTY OF THEOLOGICAL STUDIES
THE NIGERIAN BAPTIST THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY,
OGBOMOSO, NIGERIA.

IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENT FOR THE
DEGREE OF MASTER OF DIVINITY

2013 — 0621

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(07/0010)

JUNE, 2012

ABSTRACT

The study examines the challenges of chaplaincy of a Baptist pastor in Itesiwaju Local Government. This research is a descriptive and statistical study using simple survey design. The Christians in the Local Government were selected as sample for this study with the use of simple random sampling technique; structured questionnaire was designed as instruments for the study. After administering the questionnaire, the data collected were analyzed and interpreted through the use of frequency distribution tables and simple percentage method of data analysis. The result of the study shows that Baptist Chaplain has a lot of challenges such as doctrinal differences of the members, the influence of the Local Government authority in affair of the chapel, inadequate finance, leadership tussle and training. However, it is hereby recommended that Chaplain should not be rigid; he should run away from tribal links, sectionalism and syncretism. He should be visionary. He should encourage people to give adequately. And, he should be vast in the biblical knowledge.

5.2 CONCLUSION

It is glaring that the Chaplains have vital roles to play in our society if indeed they will have a lasting and fulfilled ministry. The life of Christ portrays his message and ministers of today should not be exempted so that their message will have a great impart. The success of a Chaplain is determined by the degree of which he lives by the words he preaches, Jesus called us “the light of the world and the salt of the earth” (Matt. 5:13-14) and we must struggle by his grace to be where he placed us.

The ministry of the Chaplain is not limited to the Chapel alone but to the society at large. The destiny of the society is also tied to the man of God who must not be handled with levity. Ministers are the conscience of the society and we must challenge unrighteousness, frank at lawlessness, bribery, corruption and all forms of iniquities in our community.

Moreover, the impact of the Chaplain must be felt positively in their community by contributing immensely to the social, education, economic and political system. These determine largely the proportion at which life will be favourable for the people and it must be considered. The Chaplain must be ready to encourage and persuade his congregation to fully support the government in ensuring peaceful atmosphere in the community.

Finally, Chaplains are to embark on the programmes that would be inspired by the Holy Spirit, this will be of great benefit to the people. A programme that is not relevant to the society is a mere wasting of time and energy. A contextualized gospel has a great

impart in meeting the needs of the people. The Chaplain and the society cannot be separated because the society determines the existence of the Chaplain.

5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

From the observation of the challenges of chaplaincy of a Baptist Pastor in Itesiwaju Local Government, causes and effect, I have these recommendations to proffer.

1. On the part of the leaders themselves, they must not be rigid; they should run away from tribal links, sectionalism and syncretism. As spiritual leader, they must be ready at all time to embrace sound biblical teachings, and hold prayer in high esteem, by the help of the ministry of the Holy Spirit. Chaplains are also encouraged to desist strictly from those attitudes that negate the scriptures, and the tenets of their calling e.g. bribery, adultery, lying and other little or subtle vices.
2. Chaplains are as well encouraged to have a written and concise vision and to be ready at all cost to pursue the same (see to its implementation). Chaplain cannot be focused without having goals and objectives that are borne out of a clear vision. Chaplains must also be ready to teach the followers/members the tenets or believes and polity of the Bible. Also, Chaplain must be ready to train others in diverse ways, so as to make room for delegation or responsibilities to others, hence development of individual potentials.
3. Chaplain should at all times align life and biblical knowledge to the practice of the ministry. They (Chaplains) should see their ministry as a calling not job. They should not be power drunk; they should subject themselves to open scrutiny, and not to abrogate

power to themselves unnecessarily. They must not neglect their family in any of their tasks or activities. They must choose other leaders, who will work with them, by their gifts/talents and not just by selection. Qualified people are expected to be put in places of responsibility, irrespective of how closely related they are to the Chaplain.

4. Finally, Chaplain must continue to encourage members to continue to give adequately and appropriately to the work of the lord. This can be achieved as a result of continuous biblical teaching and courses on the same subject. The Chaplain must be faithful in this areas (giving) because if the leaders doesn't give or pay his tithe, he/she should not expect anybody to pay his/ her tithes

Men are constantly searching for leaders with distinct virtues, men and women that will rise above human standard, who will lead with charisma to fulfill goals and accomplish visions but critical study of the scripture shows that the searching is not limited to human race. However, God is often seen as looking for a man with special ability to fulfill his plan on earth (Ezek. 22: 30, 1 Sam. 13:14, Jer. 4: 25; 5:21). While God is looking for a man who is not worthy by human standard but who will allow God to change his worthiness with his unworthiness, men are constantly searching for perfect man and woman in chaplaincy position. The contemporary complain both in the religious and secular world is that "the country and the whole world lacks leadership" and one is forced to ask "where are the great reformers, orators and pioneers of a hundred years ago" but it becomes difficult to blame Christian leaders for leadership pitfalls and crises that characterized the ministry and spare followers who keep challenging authority like the day of Moses, "who appointed you leader over us" knowing fully that uneasy lies the head of that wears crown.

The position of chaplaincy is not a problem free but as the destiny of a country is tied to her leaders, the destiny of the children of God is tied to the Christian leaders. Every minister of God must hear and heed to the ancient question asked of Queen Esther “who knows but whether you have not come to the kingdom for such a time like this (Esther 4:4). The message we are commissioned to preach does not change although culture, taste and time change but we must not surrender the call to fear, failure, criticism, poverty and all sort of distraction. God will appreciate our labour of love and sacrifice. He that calls us is faithful and he will see us through.