

The Significance of the Gospel of Christ to the Inhabitants of Ejisu in the Ashanti Region of Ghana

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ABSTRACT

The study adopted explanatory research design, qualitative approach, cross-sectional research strategy, sampling design were churches and their members, sample size was 600 samples, population of the study were nine churches, sources of data collection were primary and secondary sources, method of collecting data were investigation into existing knowledge and development of questionnaire, method of data analysis were analyzed through individual views. The problem statement was "The significance of the gospel of Christ to the inhabitants of Ejisu in Ashanti Region of Ghana". Through the data collected from the field, the objectives of the study were achieved. Concerning the literature review the study examined into what other authors had written with respect to the subject under study. The background of the study was brief introduction to the gospel of Jesus Christ. The study found out if evangelists and pastors preached salvation message, what people say about evangelists, could preaching be a profession to cater for a family, people's interest in salvation message and significance of salvation message. The study generalized that the gospel of Christ was important to the inhabitants of Ejisu in Ashanti Region of Ghana. The study recommended that pastors and evangelists should concentrate on preaching and teaching sound gospel of Christ. Evangelists must have professional work which would help them to cater for their families.

KEY WORDS: Significance, Gospel, Inhabitants, Origin, Message, Jesus Christ, Preach, Reject, Early church

BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Introduction

The gospel of Jesus Christ is divine plan design to save man from the bondage of sin so that human race can receive salvation in Christ and to enjoy cordial relationship with God. It is known as gospel in the sense that the atonement of Christ defines the plan of redemption. Due to this, God sent His Son, Jesus Christ into the world to reveal to us how to live peaceful life and to obtain everlasting life after death. The grace and mercy of Jesus Christ enable us to live sinless life and enjoy peace of mind. Because of Christ, we deserve to live with God after death. The gospel is one but the writers of the gospel are four authors namely, Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. The gospel is the good news about

Jesus Christ and comprises of birth, life, death, resurrection and ascension of Lord Jesus Christ. The term "gospel" implies "good news". The gospel is the good news about Jesus' coming to offer forgiveness of sins to those who will believe in Him (Colossians 1:14; Romans 10:9). The sins of our first parents has put human race under God's condemnation (Romans 5:12). The gospel is the theological concept in many religions. According to historical Roman Imperial Cult and modern non evangelical Christianity the gospel is the message concerning Jesus who brought peace to mankind. The word "gospel" denotes a type of sacrifice to thank the gods for receiving good news declared by Ancient Greek Religion. The religious concept was adopted during Greece's Classical era. The Roman Writers used the term

"gospel" getting to the end of the 1st century, BCE. Later it was adopted by Christians. The gospel is the main message of Christianity and is the doctrines of Jesus Christ. The gospel's books are positioned at the beginning of the New Testament and constitutes about half of the text.

ORIGIN OF THE GOSPEL

The "gospel" comes from the Anglo Saxon term known as "godspell" meaning "good story". The gospel is derived from Latin called "evangelium" and Greek "euangelion" implies "good news" or "good telling". From the Late 18th century the first three books of the gospel have been call "synoptic gospels".

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

To find out f pastors and evangelists preach salvation message

To find out what people say about evangelists

To find out wether preaching preaching is a profession that can cater for a family

To find out if people are interested in the gospel message

To find out the importance of Preaching salvation message

THE CENTRAL MESSAGE OF JESUS CHRIST

The main message of Jesus Christ is the kingdom of God. The term "gospel" is commonly found in the entire gospel books. He told the Jews to turn away from evil deeds and accept the gospel. He informed them the time had come to pass and the kingdom of God was near (Mark 1:14-15). He told Nicodemus that no one could see the kingdom of God unless the fellow was born again (John 3:3-7). He decided that His kingdom was not worldly kingdom. He emphasized His main message on the sermon on the Mountain and told His disciples to concentrate on the kingdom of God and it's righteousness (Matthew 6:33). The kingdom of

God was the main message of the gospel. His message was the coming of the kingdom of God on earth. According to the Scripture the gospel defines a message and that is the kingdom of God (Matthew 9:35; Luke 4:42). Jesus Christ stated it clearly that He came into the world to preach about the kingdom of God. The message of the kingdom of God was Christ's life. During His earthly ministry, all that He did pointed people to the kingdom of God. Because of this, He sum-up His message as the gospel of the kingdom of God. The kingdom of God implies two things, one is instant and the other are referring to future events link with the coming of Christ. Some aspect are concerning God's promises that have fulfilled. Others have not come to pass. The kingdom of God is a place where the will of God is fulfilled. Jesus helps us to know that the kingdom of God is within us if God's will rules our lives.

THESIS STATEMENT: The problem statement of the study was "The significance of the gospel of Christ to the inhabitants of Ejisu in Ashanti Region of Ghana". The study found out if pastors and evangelists preached the gospel, what people say about evangelists, preaching is a profession that can cater for a family, people's interest in the salvation message and importance of salvation message.

THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD

- The kingdom of God is full of love, justice, peace and joy.
- It is a place where everyone is equally respected
- It does not entertain hatred.
- Decisions are taken based on love.
- God is King
- The kingdom of God does not follow the standards of the world.

- The people who inherit the kingdom of God should bear it's fruit.
- The kingdom of God is compassion, understanding and forgiveness.
- The kingdom of God builds relationship depending on trust and respect.
- The kingdom of God is experience base on the state of the mind.
- The kingdom of God is happiness and self contents.
- The kingdom of God is kindness, generosity, mercy, patience, humility and faithfulness.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Many authors have published countless articles about the gospel of Christ. These articles have educated the general public concerning the need to hear His gospel. Notwithstanding the views of the authors, the study investigated into "The significance of the gospel of Christ to the inhabitants of Ejisu in Ashanti Region of Ghana" Because of this, the study examined what other writers had written on the subject under study. In reference to (gotquestions, 2022, January 4) an article written entitled "What is the gospel of Jesus Christ?" gives detail account of the gospel. The term "gospel" implies "good news" and the gospel is Jesus' coming to offer forgiveness to those who will believe Him (Colossians 1:14; Romans 1:19. The fall of Adam and Eve has placed human race under divine condemnation. We have gone beyond the perfect law of God and found guilty (Romans 3:23). The penalty of committing sin caused physical death and everlasting death (Romans 6:23; Revelation 20:15; Matthew 25:46). The everlasting separation from God is known as second death (Revelation 20:14-15). The human race is guilty of sin and condemned by God are included in the gospel of Christ. Due to Agape love, God sent His Son, Jesus Christ to make way for man in order to escape eternal punishment (John 3:16). Jesus Christ delivered

us from the custody of Satan through His sacrificial death (1Peter 2:24). This makes Him the savior of the world and anyone who follows Him would receive forgiveness of sin (Acts 10:43). His resurrection justifies those who will place their confidence in Him (Romans 4:25). The gospel comprises of two historical facts namely Christ's death and His resurrection. The evidence of His death is His burial and His resurrection is eyewitnesses. The gospel is the good news that God has paved way for humanity to receive eternal salvation. In reference to (cru, n.d) an article written Chelsea Kight entitled "What is the gospel?" Confirms that apostle Paul wrote a lot of the New Testament Bible and talked about the gospel of God. That is His Son, Jesus Christ (Romans 1:1-3). There are two important truth concerning the gospel. They are: **1.** The gospel is the message proceeded directly from God to mankind. The gospel is not derived from man or the church but it is the gospel of God. **2.** The gospel is the message about Jesus Christ, the only begotten of God. This makes the gospel vital and life-changing. The gospel is the message God has given to humanity so that we can fellowship with Christ as our savior and Lord. The gospel must reveal who Christ is, what He has done, why He did that and results of His work. With respect to the views of the above mentioned authors, the study investigated into if pastors and evangelists preached salvation message, what people said about evangelists, people's interest in the salvation message and importance of salvation message.

THE MESSAGE OF THE EARLY CHURCH

The early church preached about resurrection of Jesus Christ (Acts 2:24). The early apostles regarded the power of His resurrection and the Jews understand the relevance of His resurrection. The early preachers of the gospel focus on preaching the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Apostle Paul said that he desired to know Him and the power of His resurrection

(Philippines 3:10). The resurrection proved that Jesus Christ was the Son of living God. Without His resurrection, forgiveness of sin is impossible. The resurrection of Jesus Christ makes it clear that there is future resurrection. If Jesus did not raise from the dead, then there would be no redemption from the custody of Satan. Jesus is false Messiah and His disciples are false witnesses. Jesus Christ died so that He would conquer the last enemy, death. The early church preached concerning the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. They instructed people to turn away from sin, live holy and gave testimony about their lives to one another. This was done not only on worship days but everyday.

WHAT THE GOSPEL IS NOT

The gospel is not praying, obedience to God, paying tithes, faith in God, forgiving one another, going to church, living at peace with others, ten commandments, fellowship, doing miracles, inviting people to church, for sinners only, preaching at villages, a set of regulations, step to follow to draw God's attention, advice, therapeutic psychological message to solve emotional problem and solution to for woes in life.

HOW TO PREACH THE GOSPEL

Believers in Christ must know that we cannot impart what we don't possess. Before we preach, we should know the message to preach to the world and understand the meaning of the gospel. If we study the scripture, we will know the message God wants us to preach. We should pray that He will bring workers into His ministry (Matthew 9:38) and pray that He makes good preachers of the gospel. We must depend on the grace and power of the Holy Spirit as the source of our strength. Preaching of the gospel is not a message about ourselves. The gospel is the will and purpose of God for mankind. Apart from praying for ourselves, we should pray for other ministers of God. We ought to pray that He opens more changes to advance the gospel.

Our lives must reflect what we preach. It is meaningless if we refuse to practice what we preach. Our lives ought to be the gospel of Christ to the world and make the world to admire to be sons and daughters of God (Matthew 5:14,16). Because of hardship, sometimes we forget ourselves that He has called us to preach the gospel. We should determine and make it our purpose to preach the truth. Jesus Christ determined to do the will of His Father and to complete His work. Preaching the gospel must be part of our lives and falls under our aims in life. From 2017 the users of Facebook monthly is more than 2 billion. This does not consist of Google plus, Twitter, LinkedIn, Pinterest, Instagram and other social networking sites. The internet has created chances to proclaim the gospel to the world. Using social media is one best and fastest means to reach the gospel to the entire universe.

THE REASONS WHY PEOPLE REJECT THE GOSPEL OF CHRIST

Plausibility structure: These are accepted beliefs, conviction and understanding that are convinced as the truth.

Common ground: The apostles of Christ searched for common ground and proclaimed the gospel that enables them and their readers to admit it as the true introduction to sharing of the gospel.

Sin and guilt: Preaching of the gospel goes with rebuke of sin but our culture lacks the model to describe sin.

Questions: A lot of preachers are not able to answer questions of their audience.

Ethics: Non Christians fail to think about good news, salvation, forgiveness, restoration, justice, mercy or love but rather Christians think about hate, power and violence.

The gospel: The lives of the most of the preachers do not reflect the image of Christ.

Self complacent: Many people are satisfied with their standard of living and lack nothing in life. Morally some are good because they received good training at home. Because of this, they don't see need to cry unto Jesus Christ to save them.

Need: The natural man may realize that Christ can help him in many ways but personally he does not sense the need to accept Him as His savior. He does not value that he is condemned before God if he does not welcome Christ into his life.

IMPORTANCE OF THE GOSPEL

Faith: We receive faith in Christ through listening to the word of God. The gospel is the ministry of the Holy Spirit. Out of the preaching of the gospel, the Holy Spirit works to produce salvation.

Knowledge and understanding: The books of the gospel enable us to know the mind, will and purpose of Christ for humanity.

Power: The gospel is power of God unto salvation. Believers in Christ receive the Spirit through faith in Christ (Galatians 3:14,3:2; Romans 1:15-17, 10:17; 2Corinthians 3:8).

The strengthen faith: The gospel strengthens Christians in times of persecution so it is not only sinners who need the gospel.

Salvation: The gospel helps the world to acquire about salvation in Christ. Through this, many sinners become sons of God. This enables us to receive other blessings in the Lord. Through receiving the gospel, we become justified and sanctified.

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This chapter covers research design, approach, strategy, population of the study, sampling design, sample size, source of data collection, method of data collection and method of data analysis. The research design used was

explanatory because it was the best method for explaining the data collected from the field. The research approach adopted was qualitative in the sense that the study was interested in the importance of the gospel of Christ. The research strategy used was cross-sectional survey where a group of churches were chosen as a case study. The sampling design, population of the study, sample size, source of data collection, method of data collection and method of data analysis were thoroughly examined.

SAMPLING DESIGN: The individual members of the congregation were considered but the churches were nine in number.

POPULATION OF THE STUDY: The target population of the study consist of religious denominations namely, Orthodox and Pentecostal. The names of the churches were Presbyterian Church of Ghana, Percious Believers Revival Center, Hand of God Ministry, Jehovah Witness, The church of Pentecost, God's love Ministry, Jesus Miracle Ministry, Salvation Army and Methodist Church of Ghana.

SOURCE OF DATA COLLECTION::The sources of collecting data to write this paper were primary and secondary sources.

SAMPLE SIZE: The sample size for the study was 600 samples.

METHOD OF DATA COLLECTION: The method used to collect data for the study were investigation into existing research and development of questionire. Questionnaire were used as data collection instrument and questionire were shared to church leaders. The church leaders read them to the congregation and answers were provided.

METHOD OF DATA ANALYSIS: The views of the individual members of congregation were thoroughly examined.

DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSIONS OF FINDINGS

This chapter deals with data analysis and discussions of findings. Qualitative analysis technique were used to analyze the data collected from the field and the results were as follows:

RESPONSE FROM THE CONGREGATION

Name of denomination: Orthodox

Views on preaching salvation message by evangelists

"Yes": He accepted that evangelists salvation message.

"No, evangelists don't preach salvation message": He believed evangelists had stopped Preaching salvation message.

"Yes but no always": He admitted that evangelists preached salvation message but not often.

"Yes they do preach salvation message": He had witnessed that evangelists preached salvation message.

Pastors' views on Preaching salvation message

"Absolutely": He agreed pastors salvation message in their various churches.

"Yes": He accepted that pastors preached salvation message in their churches.

"No pastors don't preach salvation message": He believed pastors had stopped preaching salvation message.

"Yes they do preach salvation message": He had witnessed that pastors preached salvation message.

Criticism about evangelists

"Money conscious and good at collecting money": He admitted evangelists thought about their wefare at the expense of the salvation of mankind.

"They preach the word of God": He accepted evangelists were doing what God expected them to do.

"Waste of time": He agreed that evangelists' work was not important.

"Nothing but is good to preach salvation to know the kingdom of God": He had not heard any bad report about pastors.

Congregation's view on Preaching as a profession

"No": He did not accept preaching as a work that could cater a family.

"No it is impossible": He agreed that preaching could not be a profession that could cater a family.

"No but some people has taking it as business": He regarded preaching as sacrificial work and it should not be classified as a profession.

"May be yes because preaching salvation in your family will help family member to know the kingdom of God": He partially admitted preaching as a professional work.

Public acceptance of salvation message

"Not always they sometimes preach on how to rub people to cheat on them": He had discovered that people were not interested in salvation message.

"No they don't like salvation message": He had seen that people liked prosperity message.

"No": He had noticed that people salvation message as a thing of the past.

"Yes they do appreciate salvation message and it help them alot": He had recognized that people were interested in salvation message.

Significance of salvation message

"It brings us closer to God and helps us repent from our bad deeds": He accepted that salvation message established man's relationship with God.

"Change of life from evil deeds": He believed salvation message made man to be morally good.

"Salvation leads to everlasting life": He admitted salvation message would help enjoy everlasting relationship with God in the world to come.

"To make you know the kingdom of God": He accepted preaching salvation message helped to acquire knowledge about kingdom of God.

RESPONSE FROM THE CONGREGATION

Name of denomination: Pentecostal

Congregation's views on salvation message

"No as compared to the early disciples": She regarded today's evangelists as playing with the evangelism ministry.

"Yes": She accepted evangelists preached salvation message.

"Some of them preach salvation and others don't they to make money instead of salvation": He had seen that some evangelists were conscious of the lost souls and others thought of their personal interest.

"Yes they do": He accepted evangelists preached salvation message.

"Some but not all evangelists": She had discovered that some preached salvation message but not every evangelists.

"Yes": She admitted that evangelists preached salvation message.

"Yes": She believed evangelists preached salvation message.

"Yes as it is written the work that I do ye shall do and d greater works if you believe in me, today evangelist do preach salvation message": He had discovered evangelists search for the lost souls.

Views on pastors preaching salvation message

"Yes": She had accepted pastors preached salvation message in their various churches.

"Yes": He had admitted that pastors preached salvation message.

"Yes they do": She had witnessed that pastors salvation message.

"Yes they do": She had agreed that pastors preached salvation message.

"Pastors today preaching prosperity instead of salvation: He had admitted preached for their own gain.

"Yes": She believed that pastors preached salvation message.

"Yes they do": He had discovered that pastors preached salvation message.

"Pastors as shepherd of the Lord flock are still preaching salvation to the flocks of Christ so that they can obtain eternal life": She had agreed pastors preached salvation message

Criticism about evangelists

"Good": She witnessed that evangelists were doing good work.

"Most people says Now evangelist do not preach about salvation anymore but advancement and money making": He had seen that evangelists were interested in their prosperity.

"Many people say they are not from God others too do believe in them": She had accepted that God had not called them and some were called by God.

"They say some evangelists are fool others too are God fearing": He agreed that some did not think about eternity and others preached the truth.

"Many people say they are not from God others too believe in them": She had recognized a lot

of evangelists were not called by God and some were true sons of God.

"Most people says Now evangelist do not preach about salvation anymore but advancement and money making": He observed that evangelists had stopped Preaching salvation message and focus on money.

"Good": She accepted that evangelists preached sound salvation message.

Preaching as a Profession

"Yes": She accepted preaching professional work which could cater for a family.

"No such as profession cannot cater for a family": She regarded preaching as hand to mouth profession.

"Not at all": He regarded that preaching was not profession that could help to make life.

"Although preaching being blessings to the people but no it is not a profession to cater for a family": She accepted preaching was not classified among professional work.

"Preaching is a calling as God chooses the person hence the preacher have to work": He accepted that preaching was not a profession.

"Yes": She regarded preaching as a profession.

"No we don't preach for money to cater for a family the gospel is not receiving money but salvation but the church has to cater for you preachers": He admitted preaching was not a profession but it was the responsibility of the church to cater for preachers.

"Yes": She accepted preaching as a profession.

Public acceptance of the salvation message

"Yes": She had noticed that people were interested in salvation message.

"It's a folly to these who are lost but to us it's the power of God for saving us, some don't believe, some believe, it's okay": She recognized that the unbelievers regard salvation message useless

and Christians valued salvation message as the power of God.

"Yes": He accepted that people received salvation message.

"Yes they do appreciate but what put them off is the preachers are not being as a role model of Christ":She had seen that people were interested in salvation message but the lifestyle of Christians was a problem to the world.

"Yes they do": He witnessed that people were interested salvation message.

"Yes they do": She accepted that people received salvation message.

"No a lot of people like messages of prosperity": He had noticed that people love worldly possession.

"Yes": She accepted that people received salvation message.

Importance of salvation message

"It make you understand the word of God":She noticed that salvation message enabled us to know the nature of Christ.

"Yes the message of salvation set man free from physical and spiritual problems":She believed salvation message helped us to enjoy peaceful life.

"It brings blessing to people, it lead people to the kingdom of God": He accepted that salvation message brought divine favor upon mankind.

"It bring blessing to people, it bring the heart and mind of members about God": She believed salvation message draw man closer God.

"It help people to repent": He accepted salvation message changed man's life to live godly life.

"Christians believe that salvation message is essential to have a relationship with God while on earth and to have eternal life with God in

heaven after death": She admitted that salvation message brought man closer to God.

"It helps us change from our bad behavior and let us repent": He accepted salvation message builds the life of man to be like Christ.

"It brings peace, love, unity in the life of the believers": She accepted that salvation message helped to enjoy the blessings of God.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The study found out that the gospel was good news about Jesus Christ and comprises of His birth, life, death, resurrection and ascension. The main message of Jesus Christ was the kingdom of God that would appear on earth. The kingdom of God is full peace, love, justice and joy. The early church preached about the resurrection of Jesus Christ. The gospel was not praying and paying tithe. As Christians, before we preached we should know the kind of message to deliver the world. We must understand the meaning of the gospel of Christ. Preaching of the gospel goes with rebuke but our culture lacks the model to describe sin. Through the gospel, the Holy Spirit works to produce salvation. The data collected from the field revealed two religious denominations views about the significance of the gospel of Christ to the inhabitants of Ejisu in the Ashanti Region of Ghana. The names of the religious denominations were Orthodox and Pentecostal. Both of the religious denominations expressed their views on evangelists and pastors preached salvation message, what people say about pastors and evangelists, considered professionalism of preaching, how people were interested in the salvation message and significance of salvation message.

CONCLUSION

The books of the gospel enabled humanity to understand the will, mind and purpose of Jesus

Christ. The data collected from the field indicated that pastors and evangelists preached salvation message but significance of preaching salvation were it helped us to know the kingdom of God, brought us closer to Him and enabled us turn away from sin. From the above mentioned facts preaching salvation message was important to the inhabitants of Ejisu in the Ashanti Region of Ghana.

RECOMMENDATION

Sound doctrines: Pastors and evangelists should focus on preaching and teaching sound doctrines of salvation.

Professional work: Evangelists must have professional work which will help them to cater for their families.

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