

BECOMING A RELEVANT TWENTY FIRST CENTURY PASTOR

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Abstract

Dawn into this 21st century, many things got changed especially with the massive technological and scientific innovations. This has caused many people to lose their jobs to scientific innovation and pastors inclusive. This paper attempts a critical exposition of some issues affecting pastoral vocation in the twenty first century. This is because in a religious dominated setting especially in a Christian dominated society, the work and personality of a pastor as a leader largely determines the height the society or organization can attain. It examines the extent to which the 21st century technological and scientific evolved age is affecting the general work and personality of a pastor. The study argues that a pastor needs more than the itemized triune module so as to maximize his/her pastoral activities thereby making lasting impacts in the long. The paper therefore recommends among others, the need for pastors to urgently reflect on the factors that can make him/her relevant in this 21st century and beyond.

Key words: Becoming; Relevant; Twenty First Century; Pastor

Introduction

In an era full of many unpredicted scientific and socio-economic issues, the position and work of a pastor seem challenging to many pastors. Apart from the foregoing, the society and humanity in general are evolving and the pastor needs to do same. Understandably, the scientific innovations and technological developments have influenced virtually every walk of human life. There is a rapid mechanization and digitalization in all fields of human life and the pastoral vocation is not immune to these advancements. In Germany and other advanced countries today, many worshippers are today being led by robots, in other climes, TV, Face-book and YouTube are almost serving as alternative to churching. The lack of understanding and appreciation of this reality has made some pastors not to be achieving the desired and required positive results. Somehow, many people do erroneously assume that the relevance of a today's pastor is assessed by the number of cars, houses, nature of titles, positions, attires, oratorical prowess, number phones, gadgets and other shouting social brands he/she commands. In as much there may be nothing entirely evil about attaining and owning all these but the sources and longevity of these acquisitions should be consciously considered. Regrettably, in a bid to look or sound relevant in the modern-day

pastoral work, many pastors have adopted some questionable interpretations of the gospel aimed at nothing other than exploiting the unsuspecting worshippers and casting fears in the minds of people. There are others who have joined various secret and devilish cults just to acquire wealth, power and influence. Stories abound of how many supposedly pastors who are into frauds, defilements, gay and other unthinkable practices with the aim of being heard or recognized. However, an average pastor still occupies a crucial position in the society. This study x-rays the features of the twenty first century, the life, challenges and ministry of a pastor at this time and analyze some of the factors that will help him/her fulfill his/her ministry. It is believed that the fulfillment of ministry will enable him/her remain very relevant, impactful and becomes a point of reckon both now and after.

Understanding Some Terms

Pastor

A pastor is a term very notable in the Christian parlance which means a person who leads and cares for other members in the household of God. Taylor (1989) affirms that the common English word, “pastor” is derived from the Latin and it is simply the semantic equivalent of the biblical word for shepherd (p.19).

In the context of this work, becoming a relevant pastor in this twenty first century implies working assiduously, dutifully and carefully to make lasting impacts as a person called and use by God.

Theory of Relevance

Wilson (2019) avers that the foundation for relevance theory was laid by cognitive scientists, Dan Sperber and Deirdre Wilson in their work, “Relevance: Communication and Cognition” in 1986. However, some others have expanded and deepened discussions on the theory in numerous books and articles. Relevance theory summarily means a cognitive approach to pragmatisms which starts from these two broadly Grecian assumptions i.e. that much of human communication both verbal and non-verbal involves the overt expression and inferential recognition of intentions and in inferring these intentions, the addressee presumes that the communicator’s behavior will meet certain standards. This theory is chosen because it treats the borderline between semantics and pragmatics. A pastor is not only relevant by words or church ordination but also by character, works and impacts.

The Place of a Pastor in the Society

Regardless of some reported flops of some pastors in the society, they still occupy a crucial place in any society. Apart from being the spiritual leaders of men, they are endowed with ideas that help in developing the society and potentials of men. They are regarded as the moral compass of a society and that could account for why their mistakes usually make

negative headlines. They are believed to know and possess the knowledge of handling everything. For example, when some members fell sick instead of consulting medical personnel first, they rush to their pastors first. A pastor can serve as an arbitrator even when he/she is not trained as one. There are many land cases, family disputes, court cases, community cases and other legal tussles that many pastors have successfully handled. Even when he/she is not a business mogul, some members consciously ask of their counsel and opinion on either starting or changing a particular business. A pastor can generally be characterized as a care giver, always available and comfort provider. Understanding the place and role of a pastor in the society will spur a pastor to seek personal development so as to be relevant anywhere.

The Church and Ministry of a Pastor in the Twenty-First Century

Biblically, pastors especially the New Testament were given explicit instructions as regards to their duties. They were charged to shepherd the church of God which Jesus Christ purchased with His own blood (Acts 20:28). When Jesus Christ ascended to Heaven, He sent the Holy Spirit to empower and endue men with gifts so that they can direct His church (John 16:5-11). He however entrusted the leadership of His church to men that are gifted by the Holy Spirit to equip the flock to do the work of the ministry (Eph. 4:11-12). The responsibility of a pastor is among other things, (to) provide oversight for the flock, be an example to the flock and lead according to the will of God. Expectedly, the pastors of God's flock are accountable to the Chief Shepherd, Jesus Christ (I Peter 5:1-4).

In this jet age and the twenty-first century world, the terminology of a shepherd and shepherding seems likely strange or derogatory to many people. Waller (1991) maintains that the people in bible times fully understood the role of a pastor as a shepherd. This is because the family often depended upon sheep for survival. A large part of their diet was milk and cheese and occasionally they ate the meat. Both their clothing and tents were made of wools and skins. Also, their social position often depended upon the well-being of the flock similar to the way people depend on their jobs, businesses, cars and houses today. This imagery was very familiar in the context of biblical times but today, there is largely a modern disconnect from an agrarian society. As a result, many have moved away from shepherding terminology and have proposed other principles that may be unbiblical in promoting the pastor as the chief executive officer of a corporation (pp.9-10).

Similarly, with the concepts of assessments, returns, accounting, remittances, etc depending on the terminology adopted by a particular congregation, there is a consensus among senior pastors that they should be maintained as the managers of their religious company instead of being pastors. These terms, assessments, returns, accounting, remittances, etc. are systems introduced in various churches where the local or junior pastors are obligated to

raise monies and send them upward to the senior pastors and authorities or the owner or founder of the church as the case may be. To these “senior pastors”, the relevance of a junior or local pastor in the ministry today, is dependent upon his/her ability to raise enough money for the ecclesiastical maintenances. It is becoming difficult for a pastor who does not view ministry from a crude business perspective to survive and arguably, the business model seems to have taken preeminence over the biblical model. Moreover, with the discovery and massive appreciation of YouTube, Face-book, artificial intelligence (robots) especially where live services are held online and AI pastors ministering in many congregations, the challenges have been compounded for a pastor in the 21st century.

Therefore, the ministry of the twenty-first century pastor is multi-faceted and Taylor (1989) concurs that the concept of success must be expanded to cover the whole gamut of the modern pastor’s functions because a pastor is not only a preacher and a teacher, a liturgist but also a legal head of a corporation. He/she is a planner, promoter, organizer, manager, advertiser, delegator, supervisor and diplomat. Success in the pastoral ministry requires some degree of skill in every function. Thus, a twenty first century church and ministry is characterized by unhealthy competition for attention, use of sophisticated theology and technology, rapacious quests for fame, power, position, prophesy, miracles, unfettered freedom, questionable rationalization and other worldly entanglements to mention but a few. The church seems to be a gathering of people whose dressings, eating and dancing patterns are close to the world models. It is turning into a venture driven by crude business models, corruption, impunity, gang-ups, schism, envy, dirty politics and ethnic and other bigotries. The survival of a pastor in this century is very difficult and very many pastors have started joining those they had condemned before. Any pastor who will be relevant in this time is the one who is willing to provide superior alternatives to all these vices and these models are crucial for the provision of the superior alternatives:

The Models for a Pastor to Be Relevant in the 21st Century

Godly Character

Many figures throughout history have either written or spoken at length about the importance of having an upright character especially for those who serve in any type of leadership capacity. A simple Google search on the character and leadership of a pastor can prop up numerous books, speeches and quotes on the subject. Obviously, a person’s character is who he/she really is. One’s character is that person’s real personality and existence in the sense that he/she cannot separate what he/she do from who he/she is. Character is that particular combination of qualities in a person that makes him/her different from others. It is a feature used to separate distinguishable things into categories. The biblical standards for a pastor’s character are outlined in 1Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9.

The Essence of a Godly Character to a Pastor

Godly character is so important to a pastor that it is recognized it as one of the principal requirements or essential prerequisites for all meaningful relationships for any pastor. Godly character builds and enforces the trust needed for a lasting success. It is not out of place to be knowledgeable, anointed, gifted and eloquently attractive with many ministerial contacts as a pastor but when character is flawed, all these will amount to nothing in the long run. Character speaks louder than voices. Most times some pastors struggle to impress their bosses and members by appearing to be who they are not and that is why when some pastors get promoted, they become something else. Godly character builds courage and confidence: A godly character helps a pastor to be clearer and more confident in his/her choices. Godly character builds and commands trusts and motivates the people as most people would be reluctant in following someone with a life filled with dubious moral or ethical questions.

However, as long as human beings remain with flesh and blood, nobody should absolutely boast of firmer character because it cannot boast of permanence. People can change their minds and behavior any time, make mistakes and there appears to be a general incongruity in some societies between what people value and what others allow. The media is often awash with sordid stories about the ignoble actions of some pastors who are supposed to be society's supposed role models. Therefore, to maintain a godly character, a pastor should be renewed in the spirit and mind, put on a new man that is created in righteousness and true holiness of God (Ephesians 4:22-24). The character that represents Jesus Christ as contained in Galatians 5:22 and 23 should be earnestly pursued.

Meanwhile, a pastor's character can be tested by adversity and prosperity. Geniuses are admired, wealthy ones are envied, people in power are feared but only people with character are trusted. Without character one cannot be trusted and if one cannot be trusted, the person cannot truly do pastoral ministry. The relevance of a pastor hinges on the degree trust he/she carries. God honors steady character and faithfulness more than He does with spectacular gifting and abilities. Olford (1985) believes that God is far more concerned with who we are than what we do. If who we are does not satisfy His holy demands, then what we do is virtually worthless (p.32). The focus should not be so much on methodology and capacities in ministry but much more on character that is in tune with the Word of God. Where a good character is absent, good methodology will not last. Pastors are to lead by character primarily and not by programs because tremendous character deficits can lead to distrust toward pastors and by extension to the churches where they serve.

Functional Education

The term education is a very broad concept but it primarily consists of efforts aimed at making human being understand him/her-self and their world. The concept of education is etymologically derived from the Latin word, 'Educare' which means 'to lead out', 'to draw out', nourish, develop and 'to bring forth'. Education starts from birth until death. It can be described as the process by which an individual is enabled to function according to the expectations of the society as well as according to his capabilities. It can be formal, semi-formal and non-formal. The non-formal form of education is the type indirectly imparted on a person by the culture, parents and other members of the society. The semi-formal type is the one that has the elements of both formal and non-formal form of education. The formal system is the structured, patterned, organized and rigid form of education that is carried out at specific environment hence the school. Education can be described as the efforts among human beings often aimed at self-improvement that will secure happiness at the physical, mental and spiritual levels of human existence. In the widest sense, it is a constant interaction between an individual and the environment.

From the creation, God gave human beings dignity and duty. Endowed with purpose as image bearers, mankind was tasked with manifesting the wisdom and character of God in His world as vice regents. Hence in some degree, bearing God's image and cultivating the world hinges on education as we can see in Genesis 1 and 2. To be a learner is to express our humanity. To seek knowledge, insight, and wisdom and pursue growth is part of what it means to be agents for God's creation. Any day a pastor starts thinking and behaving as if he/she has learnt it all, then he/she is falling and failing.

The Benefits of Functional Education to a Pastor

A pastor's job is never easy and can hardly be complete. There is always more to do and a functional education is an integral part of human society. Knowledge arguably is the third eye of man. Functional education is like a light. Locke (1969) as cited in Willinsky (2018) argues that while plants are developed by cultivation, men are developed by education. Education is oxygen of human's life. Functional education improves a pastor's knowledge, skills and develops the personality and attitude. Education helps a pastor to develop economically, socially, intellectually and even spiritually. Apostle Paul admonishes a young Pastor in his days, "study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" (2Timothy 2:15). It is a powerful tool of gaining knowledge and improving communication and managerial skills for day-to-day tasks especially in this IT and digitally driven and communication age where communication is vital and the heartbeat of pastoral work. It is greatest weapon a pastor possesses no matter the size of the church.

Today, many scholars, writers, theologians and historians consult the works of Apostle Paul and other biblical leaders with some revered theologians such as Thomas Aquinas, Jerome, Bishop Augustine and Rev John Wesley who at different times defended Christianity with their unparalleled intellects. Recall that Edgson (2017) said that the Aquinas Five Designs theory has one of them maintaining that the world and everything in it serve as proofs of God's existence. This logical and reasonable stand made the Donatis, Plegian and Manichians helpless in their rapacious attacks against the Gospel. Some scholars like Wallace (2018) have done critical studies on the New Testament and thus suggest that the narratives of St Mark sound as the most authentic eye witness account about Jesus Christ. Many argued that it is an eye witness account of a man who had followed Jesus Christ more closely than others. They are of the view that the account of Mark was a personal secretary to Apostle Peter but because Peter was not educated to defend his writing after narrating his accounts to his well-educated traveling secretary, John Mark who simply put down his name as the writer. All other Gospel writers depended on this account to write yet the name of Peter, the historian and narrator went missing. Furthermore, many people would have not have been pastors today without their intellectual prowess. Functional form or type of education is deliberately attached to the nature of education under discourse. This is because of the unfettered clamor and quest for the acquisition of certificates that majority of the people cannot defend has ridiculed the concept of functional education in Nigeria. Certificates are good, four wall nature of education is needful but the most efficient and productive one is the critical, research, scientific, analytical and rational driven type of education. They are keys to unlocking personal development and empowerments. Regardless of the tabula-rasa argument, the truth is that there is an innate thinking that is naturally endowed to man and it takes the functionality of education to be sharpened and be efficiently put into rightful use.

The Holy Spirit

Expounding on Mark 3:13-19, Luke 6:12-16, 10:1-16, Acts 2, Anderson (1968) affirms that Jesus Christ called the twelve disciples and sent them into ministry and from there on, there exists a continuous flow of events in several stages. As the twelve disciples were called and commissioned by Jesus Christ, the seventy were sent out to proclaim the kingdom and when Jesus earthly ministry of Jesus Christ ended, the church gathered to celebrate the resurrected Lord, to secure continuity between Jesus ministry and the apostolic ministry and to receive the gifts of the Spirit (pp.55-57). Howard and Wiersbe (1973) insist that the work of the ministry is too demanding and difficult for a man to enter without a sense of divine calling for nothing less than a definite call from God could ever give a man success in the ministry (p.9). This definite call is the one of the ministries of the Holy Spirit.

Holy Spirit as the third person in the Trinity directs, assigns and equips the works of a pastor (Isaiah 60:1, Ephesians 4:11-12, Acts 2:2-4b). He plays an essential role in taking the raw materials of gospel potentials and turning them into the fruitful gospel impacts. For example, Peter was so devastated by the events leading to the death of Jesus Christ that he had to cut off the ear of one of the girls nearby yet later denied Him. Even after Jesus Christ' resurrection, Peter needed His special attention and encouragement to lead His flock (John 21). But being filled with the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost, the same fearful Peter preached a single sermon and over three thousand souls turned to Jesus Christ in faith (Acts 2:41). The presence of the Holy Spirit leads to confidence and courage even in the face of adversity, opposition, mockery and disgust. The presence of the Holy Spirit leads to fruitful ministry.

It is possible to be skilled in ministry yet bear little or no fruit. A pastor can have knowledge and adopted the best practices and even sincere desire but still act in human strength. Of course, that solitary effort leads to nothing remarkable. Branches that are separate from the vine never produce grapes. With Holy Spirit, preaching is not merely speaking, entertainment, *oratorical* and enticing words of man's wisdom but it consisted in demonstration of God's power (1 Cor. 2:4-5). Holy Spirit helps a pastor make impacts that can remain indelible in the hearts of men even in his/her absence. Revd John Wesley preached against gambling, alcohol and prostitution in a street of London and over a hundred years after his death, the Food of Champions (2017) confirms that a noble man came into that village looking for alcoholic beverages and finding none, he then asked a man why he could not find alcohol and the man replied: "master, a century ago someone by the name John Wesley passed through this village and since then all alcohol shops shut down because no one would buy"

Character and education cannot be measured with the power of the Holy Spirit and 1 Corinthians 8:1 warns that "Knowledge puffeth up." Taken that knowledge and wisdom are important but caution must be exercised to avoid leading to unbelief and temptation of no longer depending on God for wisdom and direction.

Know When to Pause and Rest

Then, because so many people were coming and going that they did not even have a chance to eat, he said to them, "Come with me by yourselves to a quiet place and get some rest" (Mark 6:31). Balancing personal life and ministerial responsibilities can be a significant challenge for pastors. The demands of pastoral ministry usually extend beyond traditional working hours and pastors find themselves constantly on call, tending to the congregation's needs. This sometimes led to personal sacrifices, strained relationships at home and burnout. To maintain a healthy balance work-life, finding healthy boundaries, practicing self-care and prioritizing well-being become essential for pastors.

Managing Past Experiences

Everybody right from childhood has some unique past experiences which might be pleasurable or un-pleasurable. There are chances that if a person does not experience crises in the family such as the loss of beloved ones, failures, frustrations, serious illness, divorce by parents among others, he/she will grow up to be happy and this will enhance a wealthy personality development and by extension functionality of the Pastor. But for others who are less fortunate, their personality development will likely be on the negative side and it will have serious consequences on the functionality of their vocations including pastors. Some pastors have become judgmental, reserved, and angry and reached hasty conclusions on some places and people simply because of how members and their senior colleagues treated them in the past. They have used the same measures to relate with virtually everybody. This is Joseph's idea about past experiences, "you intended to harm me, but God intended it for good to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives" (Genesis 50:20). A pastor who truly desires to make a genuine difference must learn to positively manage his/her life's experiences.

Temptation from the Promotion of Questionable colleagues

It seems that most churches and ministries today hardly reward pastors with godly character, sound education and Holy Spirit. They seem favorably disposed toward those that bring more money into their personal coffers, whip ethnic and other primordial sentiments regardless of the process. In this type of situation, many pastors are becoming reluctant to going for things that can make them truly relevant rather they will adopt the game of what can be called "spiritual and religious banditry". From the accounts of Anine, (2024), it is understood that these desperate pastors see no evil in serving as mercenaries to defraud the church most times in connivance with some of their rapacious bosses. Some are not ashamed of becoming touting agents in selecting choice sexual instruments for their masters just to get promoted or given juicy posting.

There are some pastors who have used their youthful ages to serve and generated unquantifiable resources for the church only to be treated like "logs of wood" when they seem to be getting old. There are those the church celebrated because of their youthful productivity but got abandoned when they are in slow gear. The ministry of a pastor in this age is almost becoming like the A malekite warlord in 1Samuel 30 who abandoned an Egyptian slave because he was ill. But David and his men found him and fed him and became the catalyst to David's recoveries and victories. It takes greater grace for a pastor in this kind of environment to go for values. Unarguably, it is just few of the promotions in the church today that can boast of taking place without some underhand deals. With this hindsight, some pastors are losing relevance. Any pastor who wants to be very relevant in this 21st century should be focused on building strong and emulative character.

Unplanned Lifestyle and Indiscipline

Nothing pulls a pastor down like unplanned life and indiscipline. For example, a young pastor who makes baby every year should know that by the time he/she turns ten years into his/her marriage he/she must have made at least ten children. At the same time, if he/she wants to drive the latest jeep, phones and clothing and looking at the reality of our world today, the pastor will find it difficult to cope with large family, cars and fashion demands. All these pursuits will put the pastor under intense pressure and it will tempt him/her to maneuver the system so as to make ends meet thereby making it difficult to be devoted and seek the direction of the Holy Spirit in the ministry. In this type of scenario, it is very difficult to make relevance as a pastor.

Lack of Funds and Punitive Transfers

Rainer (2005) argues that the tenure of the pastor is very important for the middle-sized church to be stable and healthy and to have the opportunity to grow to be a large church (P.56). The fund of an average pastor is meager and unfortunately some churches and ministries have no room for a pastor's personal development and aspirations probably they are afraid that a well-developed pastor can no longer be easily enslaved. Those who struggle out of personal sacrifices to go for further personal developments are either victimized through punitive postings or other unfavorable systemic measures. There are a good number of pastors who have abandoned their further personal development like higher education because of punitive transfers. It was not easy for those before and it is not going to be now. The key is "be ready"

Responsible and Fruitful Association

The type of association a pastor keeps is very important because friends and associates have two missions in life. They either work to advance a person's pace, desire and vision for success or they mar it. A Chinese proverb said that if you want to be great, just climb on the shoulders of those who are already great. Many people have thought they could change bad and visionless company only to realize to the contrary. Look at what the Bible says: He that walketh with wise men shall be wise but a companion of fools shall be destroyed (Proverbs 13:20 KJV). To be relevant as a pastor in this 21st century, learn to relate with the right associations.

Swap Pride with Humility

Pride is all about setting oneself up above every other person in a disrespectful manner. It is the attitude of believing that no other person apart from you is good, worthy or deserves good admiration. Pride is a venal factor against success. It should be scary to reminisce on James chapter 4:6b which states that "God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble". Anyone who got divine opposition cannot be relevant. The Holy writ counsels: A man's Pride will bring him low (Proverbs 29:23 NKJV). When Pride comes then comes

shame (Proverbs 16:18 American KJV) But with the humble is wisdom (Proverbs. 11:2 NKJV). This means that there are people who could have been relevant and impactful today but pride of their talents, spiritual and position has dwarfed their relevance. Pride is a sniper and a moth which kills silently, unnoticed and totally. There has been avowed dissatisfactions with how some churches promote some pastors. Taken that many of them are questionable, no church leaders will promote a stubborn and proud pastor.

Always Aim at the Best

Virtually every activity of man in life is prompted by desire. Becoming relevant as a pastor should not come by accident rather it needs desire, readiness and hard work. In fact, they are sometimes battles far more fierce than any battle fought by Alexander the Great or Napoleon. Learn to work and wait for harvest. No wonder Longfellow remarked: the heights by great men reached and kept were not attained by sudden flight but they while their companions slept, were toiling upward in the night.

De-friend Laziness and Procrastinations

Nothing good comes easily. God honors hard work because there is dignity in labor. The bible says, a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to rest-and poverty will come on you like a thief and scarcity like an armed man (proverbs 24:33-34). It is good to recall that most of the times when people have said “they will, they will” and how many of the “the wills” have been truly willed. Aim at becoming a relevant pastor and you will become one but the best time to start is now!!!

Be Teachable

The bible has this, “where there is no counsel the people fall” (Proverbs 11:14a NKJV). Plans are established by counsel; by wise counsel wage war (Proverbs 20:18 NKJV). A counselor is a person competent in handling problem. However, there are some students today who are wiser than their teachers. This type of mentality and attitude has caused many pastors to lose some opportunities of becoming a relevant pastor. The man even God adjudged to be the wisest man ever to live later visited ants to learn how they behaved. Despite his great wisdom, he allowed the ants to teach him a lesson that is relevant at all times. He admonishes, “Do not be wise in your own eyes” (proverbs 3:7a NKJV). A warning given by an experienced person to someone willing to listen is more valuable than gold rings or jewelry made of the finest gold.

Conclusion

In a rapidly changing and evolving world, the ministry of a pastor remains essential as it offers a beacon of hope, comfort and guidance to the society. As the church continues to adapt to the evolving needs of a society, pastors will continue to play crucial roles in leading

the people toward a deeper understanding of faith, fostering community and demonstrating the love and grace of God. Meanwhile, being aware of the changes and developments arising from the 21st century human existence, a pastor should need much more than preaching, teaching and praying to become very relevant. Noted that education is very useful to a pastor yet education without the Holy Spirit is dangerous and that is why the church is the way it is today. When education is elevated above the Holy Spirit, the pastor becomes a Gospel to and by himself, proclaiming the traditions and philosophies of men. The end result is often that majority of these pastors are caught in the webs of pride so also Holy Spirit without functional education can lead to confusion because it requires knowledge to understand communication. Many pastors have at many times claimed that God spoke to them on some issues only to discover that they did not truly understand who spoke to them. All the men used by God both in the past and present are educated in various degree. Paul admonishes that "in understanding be men" (1Corinth 14:20). There are three major candidates that will always go before the ministry of any pastor and they are character, name and the Holy Spirit. The real relevance of a pastor is not measured only by the number of investments and followers he/she amassed but mostly how his/her godly character has affected and endured in the hearts of the people drawing them constantly closer to God age notwithstanding.

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