

Comparative Study of Pauline Church Growth Strategies, including the contribution of the
Book of Acts, With CAPRO Strategies in Nigeria

Leo, Bawa

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ABSTRACT

This thesis is a comparative study of Pauline church growth strategies and Calvary Ministries (CAPRO) strategies in Nigeria. The growth of the church has become a critical area of biblical and missiological studies. This debate revolves around the balance between quality and quantity in the discourse of church growth. Closely related to this is the portrayal of Paul as a missionary who planted and grew churches seemingly without any planned or strategy. This research contributes to this ongoing debate by critically comparing CAPRO strategies in Nigeria and Pauline church growth strategies. It is the aim of this comparison to test the organization's assumption that their strategies are based on the Apostle Paul's pattern in the NT. Having critically examined CAPRO and Paul's church growth context, the study identified and grouped significant phenomena and patterns in their church growth endeavours as common categories and strategies for comparison. The categories identified from CAPRO and Paul include contextual realities, church planting, ethnicity, discipleship, and partnership. These strategic categories are compared, and form the chapter structure of this thesis. This research employs a qualitative research method and a socio-historical approach to critically examine CAPRO and Paul respectively. The study argues that Paul had well-thought-through strategies for the evangelization of the Gentiles and growth of the churches he planted. Although CAPRO and Paul depended on the Holy Spirit, they also took into consideration the following strategic approaches: church-planting, disciple-making, ethnicity, and partnership; to build qualitative and quantitative churches. Having compared CAPRO and Paul this thesis concludes in Chapter Seven that CAPRO's church growth strategies are in many ways analogous to, but asymmetrically dissimilar from, Pauline church growth strategies. Therefore, cautionary recommendations are made for all church growth advocates and Pauline enthusiasts.