

## **The History and Operations of Livingspring Chapel International, Ibadan, Oyo State, Nigeria**

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*ABSTRACT—The paper examined the history and operations of the Livingspring Chapel International Church based in Ibadan, Oyo State, Nigeria. The Church was founded by Pastor Femi Immanuel. The operations of the church are patterned towards the Pentecostal Movement. The paper considered the immense contributions of the church to Christendom in Nigeria. It also considered some of the challenges faced by the church. The paper employed historical and sociological research design. It is recommended that an understanding of the mode of operations of the church would give a clearer view of the Pentecostal paradigm. This marks the wild contemporary move of Pentecostalism in Nigeria.*

*Keywords: Chapel, Ibadan, Livingsprings, Operations, Oyo State*

### **I. Introduction**

On This paper focuses on the brief history of the Llivingspring Chapel International Church located at Ibadan, the state capital of Oyo state in the western part of Nigeria. The paper also explores the mode of operation of the church. The church was founded by pastor Femi Emmanuel and jointly pastored by his spouse Modupe Femi Emmanuel and other pastors.

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This article tries to examine the immense contributions of the church in the body of our Lord Jesus Christ and also the economical advancement it has brought to the city of Ibadan, especially where the church is situated. The prospects and the expected area of improvement in the mode of operations of the church are examined as well.

## **II. History of the Church**

The establishment of the Livingspring Chapel International Church was a reality of the vision given to the man of God, Pastor Femi Emmanuel. The church came into being from the vision conceived by the founder. According to Ayowale one of the senior pastors of the church, the initial vision of the founder was to have what was known then as “Word preachers Ministry”. This was purely for soul winning only. This simply means that the original intention of the ministry was just to catch fish for the Lord and populate the Kingdom of God and not to start a church.

This was traced back to the Great Commission of the Gospel according to St. Matthew 28:19 that says, ...“Go Ye ... and make the disciples of all nations.” This notion corroborates the original intention of the founder of the Methodist Church, John Wesley whose vision was just to preach to the people and get them saved for the Kingdom of God. No wonder in his journal he said that the world was his parish. This could be said to be the principle of what is called Methodism throughout the world today. It was credited to Wesley that he was an itinerant minister who used to go from one place to another.

Likewise, Livingsprings Chapel International Church started with evangelism. This has been termed to be the heartbeat of God. This was done aggressively at the early stage of the church without the premonition of establishing a conventional church. Crusades, revivals and thorough teaching of the Bible were the mode of evangelism at the beginning of the church. This aggressiveness in soul winning quickly yielded appreciable and noticeable fruits by bringing souls to the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ by way of conversion.

However, it came to a point that the arm of this ministry as it was called at the beginning realized that the souls won could not be sustained and retained except they had a regular source of spiritual food. This became a major concern to the ministry. Because the ministry didn’t want to lose the harvest of the product of Revivals, Crusades and the biblical

teachings to the foxes again, they started thinking of having a platform that would retain the souls won for regular nourishment.

This could be likened to the story of the Mountain of Fire and Miracles Centres where it was said that the church was an offshoot of what was originally known as a prayer group where people would quickly get a solution to their problems before it was finally turned into a fully fledged church with many parishes both at home and abroad today.

The name of the Livingsprings Chapel International was founded on Isaiah 41:17-18: “The poor and needy search for water, but there is none; their tongues are parched with thirst. But I, the Lord, will answer them; I, the God of Israel, will not forsake them; I will make rivers flow on barren heights and springs within the valleys. I will turn the desert into pools of water, and parched grounds into springs.” Also it was based on Psalm 107:35: “He turned the desert into pools of water and the parched ground into flowing springs.”

The name of the church was carved out of the two above quotations. The burden and the concern to sustain those that were won for Christ necessitated and justified the reason why the Church was founded. This has been the story of many known Pentecostal Churches today where the original intention of the founders would mostly be for either bible study, outreach, fellowship, or prayer groups and before the group became a church.

So Livingspring Chapel came out of that burden of refreshing souls from the spring of life, Jesus Christ. There was a combination of what the ministry of Jesus was and the burden to reach out to the dying world. This passion became the pursuit of the church since its beginning up to the present time.

However, the most noticeable point here is that it was the pressing deed of how to sustain and retain the winning of souls that were regarded as the fruits of the labour from the evangelistic activities of the word preachers ministry that there arose the need for the establishment of the church. This need and other factors in order to meet the demand of the influx of its membership has reshaped virtually every aspect of the church up until the level it is today.

The church was officially inaugurated on Saturday, 18th December, 1993 with a handful of people, and began in the parliament building, Government Secretariat, Ibadan, Oyo state. The above quoted date could be regarded as the exact date the church was given birth to.

However, we must not forget that there had been accumulated activities in the form of fellowship, crusades, revivals and Bible study which had attracted a sizeable number of people in their quest to know

more about the Lord. This quest implies that it is almost impossible to know the precise date the Livingspring International Church started. Consequently, the church could be seen as the fruition of an invisible seed already planted in the mind of the founder, Pastor Femi Emmanuel.

The church took off with two major programmes (Sunday Service and Tuesday Bible Study). These two services were held to because of the restriction imposed in the usage of the venue, which was Government House. For instance, Tuesday Bible Study would always come up in the evening after the official closing hours of the Government workers.

While Sunday was also used for service because of its peculiarity in terms of poor commercial transportation at the weekends in this part of the world. The church used the place for the first three years with an appreciable number of adherents in their hundreds to know more and hear from the fountain that supplied the living water.

However, as the church began to grow, and entered its third year, the military came and ended civil rule on June 22, 1993. The church was petitioned by the then Military Administrator of Oyo state as to why the Government office was converted into a religious house. This could be regarded as the first impediment to the growth of the church, if not for the dedication and the persistence of the founder. Instead of seeing it as a blow, it was considered to be a blessing in disguise, because the said allegations led to the exit of the church from the venue.

Meanwhile, the understanding of the founder of what the church was all about gave him the courage and determination that it would be possible to relocate the church building without necessarily affecting the adherents. After all, the church has always been defined as *ekklesia*, meaning the assembly of God's people, especially being redeemed on the inside. Therefore, wherever the location of the church building is taken does not in any way affect the growth and expansion of the church. This is so because people that are longing to be fed with the word of God are scattered around.

Eventually, the church was relocated to Sango. This movement witnessed tremendous supernatural explosions that brought a multitude to the church considering the peculiar nature of Sango in Ibadan. It is highly populated because of its commercial activities. It is not out of place if one attributes the rapid growth of this church to this movement and the geographical location of where it was moved to.

It accommodates both the elite and uneducated people such as market men and women. Unlike the former venue, which people considered to be more or less a government reserved area for mostly educated people. And since the church was for both the educated and uneducated, the

choice of Sango, the heart of the major market in the city of Ibadan, was considered to be more appropriate.

Nevertheless, what led the founder to settle for Sango could not be ascertained as at the time of putting this piece of work together apart from the fact that the military government evicted them from the state parliamentary house. The writer assumed that several alternative locations would have been open to the founder before he finally chose Sango as the next location of the church. According to the national Director of the church the person of Pastor (Dr.) Olufemi Ayowale, the Sango property was originally owned by the Agbaje family and the church used to pay about 4 million naira per annum as rent.

The Sango location used to be a slum where all sorts of immoral activities took place before it was acquired by the church. Also, Pastor Ayowale gave a hint that the major reason why the church left the government house was as a result of a letter sent to Pastor Femi Emmanuel from some Muslim fanatics which accused him of attempting to turn Oyo state into a Christian religious state. Therefore, the church had no option but to quickly move to Sango.

However, as God would have it, there was an explosion at Sango. Many more programmes were added to the previous activities of the church, such as prayer mountain which came up every Monday morning between 6am and 7am, and Taku-ti-Jesu which literally means “hold on to Jesus”. This became possible because the church was no longer restricted. So moving to Sango was more of a blessing to the church than the inconvenience the said relocation brought to the logistics encountered in the process of moving.

All these added spiritual activities of the church really opened the ministry to both the educated and un-educated. For instance, Taku-ti-Jesu was always in Yoruba Language. This gave an opportunity to the market men and women of the location and neighbouring communities to express their concerns to God in their native language. This was unlike the former place which was to an extent restricted to a particular set of the people.

The explosion at Sango resulted in the opening of many branches of the church at home and abroad. Without necessarily mentioning all the parishes in Nigeria, the church has the following as her regional headquarters nationwide: Northern Region Headquarters at Abuja, Southern Region Headquarters at Uyo, Western Region Headquarters at Abeokuta and Eastern Region Headquarters at Port-harcourt. All these regions are pastored with some assemblies under each region. Each

assembly is pastored by what is known as an assembly pastor who reports to regional pastor.

Pastor Olufemi Ayowale who joined the church shortly after its inception has held many positions in the church and now is the National Director of the church. He told the researcher that another explosion experienced at the Sango location necessitated the move to Dominion City without the necessity of closing the Sango church. The landed property at Dominion City is about 41 acres of land, bought from the Aduloju Farm. It was a parcel of land owned by the above-mentioned family.

It is note worthy that it took the church only nine months from the foundation to the roofing level to build Dominion City Cathedral with a capacity of about 10,000. There were some court litigations from different quarters at the initial stage of acquiring the land. However, all these have been settled at the time of writing this report, except a portion of land that is yet to be decided.

Dominion City was formally dedicated on Dec. 1st, 2013 at the 20 year anniversary of the ministry. It is regarded as Covenant home of Livingspringers and National Headquarters of the ministry while Lagos assembly is considered to be its international headquarters. However, in terms of administrative reportage the latter reports to the former.

### **III. Outline of the Church**

#### **A. Vision of the Church**

The vision of the church reads “we have a mandate to lift up men and women from their low estates, to the top where God wants them to be”. The scriptural foundations of the vision statement were taken from Job 22:29, and Deut. 33:27. This corroborates the reason why Dominion Cathedral is tagged to be a lifting house. It also conforms with the annual world lifting conference of all Livingspringers. It usually comes up at every last weekend of November.

#### **B. The Mission Statement**

To reach out to the unsaved. Through strategic and aggressive evangelism, the church seeks to spread the good news as contained in John 3:16 and as commanded in Matthew 28:13 in order to bring in lost souls.

According to the National Director, the mission statement is carried out through in depth teaching, training and re-training of those that have been saved to enable them to discover, develop and deploy their God given potential. This means that in Livingspring Chapel, every saved soul is a worker in the house of God. Everybody must be a worker. This system helps the church to bring more souls to the house of God, since evangelism is a game of numbers and it is also beneficial to an individual in the realization and usage of their natural endowments.

### **C. Identity/Core Value of the Church**

- 1. Brotherly love**
- 2. Distinction**
- 3. Qualitative and Creative Approach to things**
- 4. Emblems and Signs. Ps 74:9**
- 5. The Prophetic Aura**
- 6. The Evangelistic Zeal**
- 7. Place of Insights (Progressive Revelation)**
- 8. Motivational Messages. We are inspired people with impartational auras**
- 9. Drive for Result**
- 10. Supernatural Lifestyle**
- 11. Pride for our Tribe**

### **D. Insights, Revelation Keys, and Impartation Insights of the Church**

Covenant insights and revelation keys are God's truths revealed to the church, and particularly the Livingspring Chapel, for the release of blessings and breakthrough for mankind. Every door has a key and until the appropriate key is applied, a door remains shut. This teaching is to expose us to diverse keys and truths that God has provided for our lifting as a church and the commission.

#### **1. Mystery food- Communion Table**

Mk.14:22-24. Symbolic eating of the flesh and drinking of the blood of Jesus is an ordinance that was commanded by the Lord Jesus in remembrance of Him. The communion table is served weekly and often.

#### **2. Anointing Oil**

Mk. 6:13, James 5:1-24, Isa. 10:27, Ps. 92:10. Oil in the Scriptures is symbolic of the Holy Spirit and God's unction in the lives of his people.

The anointing oil was used in the process of healing and ministration by the early apostles. It is a powerful medium of transferring God's power and authority. The anointing oil should be used as occasion demands and as led by the Spirit. The olive oil is symbolic and representative. Our faith should be in God and not the substance.

### **3. Prayer Mountain Insights**

Obadiah 17. The prayer mountain is a specific and very important meeting of the Living Spring Commission. It is a very unique prayer meeting programme that is ordained of God for the liberation of mankind from all oppressions of the enemy. It is an interdenominational programme for all members of the body of Christ.

Insights Practiced Include :

- a. Prophesying on Material Things : Phil.2:9-11, Ezek.37:1-7. This is a powerful insight and secret that God has used to bless his people tremendously. It is a process whereby we are commanded to speak to similar non living objects such as cars, passports, documents etc.
- b. Impartation Release : II Kings 13:21, Num 27:18-21, Deut. 34:9. Impartation release is essentially through hand-laying, prophetic releases and the touch of the Holy Spirit. It is a process of transference of virtue or unction by God through His servants.
- c. Bonfire : Matt. 7:19, Acts 19:19. This is also an insight where whatever we do not desire in our lives or of our loved ones are symbolically burnt off.
- d. Do it Yourself Prayers : Matt. 7:7-8. Prayers and praying is a personal responsibility. Do it yourself prayers are opportunities for members to pray to God for their personal challenges or needs.
- e. Shiloh Encounter : I Sam. 1:10-12. This insight is based on the scriptural encounter of people like Hannah with God. It is a time of making vows and pledges in anticipation of God's mercy and magnanimity in our affairs.

### **4. Impartation Insights**

This is another powerful key God had given us in this commission producing profound testimonies in our generation. They are practiced in meetings where we look into the Bible to see what worked for Jesus Christ and the patriarchs, applying the same with Holy Ghost inspiration to deliver undeniable proofs in our time. These meetings are solution meetings and some of the impartational insights include;

- a. Impartation for Business and Career



- b. Impartation for Help and Assistance
- c. Impartation for family
- d. Impartation for Divine connection
- e. Impartation for Global Dimension
- f. Special Impartation for Firstborns and Sons
- g. Money impartation
- h. Impartation for Open Doors
- i. Impartation for Good News from far and near
- j. Mantle Impartation
- k. Divine visitation for waiting people
- l. Impartation for New things

### **E. The belief of the Church in Relation to the Leadership Change and Commitment to the Commission**

Change is good and godly; we should be excited about it and also long for it. God personally transferred the apostles from Jerusalem to various locations and the kingdom of God benefited (Acts 1:8). The promise of the Holy Spirit is not for conservativeness but for evangelism around the entire world. Our Lord Jesus Christ demonstrated it from His Holy Ghost baptism (Matt. 3:15-17).

He was always departing to the other side. In a dynamic system like ours, change is inevitable. Every leader in our church organization system undergoes change; from the National officers, to Resident pastors, to Church Council Members, to Heads of Departments, Assistant Heads of Department, Unit Leaders, Group Leaders, House Fellowship Leaders and Inaugurated Committees of the Church. They are changed every 2 years or less depending on the church's periodic needs.

#### **1. Benefits of Change/ Transfer**

- a. Indicator of growth and mature ministry
- b. Promotes stability and unity of the church
- c. Multiplies ministries effectiveness
- d. Elimination of boredom, stagnation and rusty head tendency
- e. Impartation of fresh aura and anointing on the entire church

#### **2. Current Attitude Change/ Transfer**

- a. Expect it always and at any time.
- b. Celebrate it when it comes; do not fight it.

- c. Let your heart commitment be to God and his church, not sentimentally to individuals.
- d. Team up with change to grow up when changes occur in the church.
- e. Never antagonize the church's decisions on change: it is rebellion.

### **3. Commitment to the commission(1 Cor. 15: 58, Eccl. 9:10)**

What is commitment? It is an attitude of heart not just an act; it is being sold out to your task or assignment. It is putting in your all at all costs. Seeing a need and making a qualitative decision to be part of meeting it. To pledge, promise or bind yourself to a certain course of action. A qualitative and consistent walk in the direction of a chosen or given assignment.

The summation of the above is that one's commitment must be total and only unto God. However, this can only be manifested through the church's leadership system. Members must never antagonize or negotiate the church's decision in respect of transfer, postings and whatever changes in the administrative structure of the church whenever the need arises. This is rebellion which attracts God's judgement.

#### **a. Administration**

On the administration of the church, it is stratified. At the apex of the administration is the founder, senior pastor Femi Emmanuel with the cooperation and assistance of his wife pastor, Mrs. Emmanuel, and other cadres in the arrangement of the position in the leadership of the church.

Meanwhile, most workers in the church are full members of the body and thereby create room for easy and unhindered flow of the life and movement of God. All the same, many of these workers entered as volunteers at the point of entry as workers in the church. However, their performance and yearning for professionalism necessitated their placement in the administrative structure and work force of the church.

#### **b. Finances**

When the researcher asked the National Director about how the church is generating her income he simply remarked by saying, "the major source of income of the church is God," while members are considered to be the investment of the church.

Other sources of church income include the following: tithe, offerings, individual donations and support either from corporations and Government, especially those that are moved with what God is doing in their lives and society through the platform of the ministry.

### **c. The payment of salary**

It is considered to be a no go area or that no one is officially permitted to disclose the mode of operation in the payment of salaries. However, with the persuasive word of the researcher, it was scarcely and slightly revealed that each assembly is allowed to pay her pastor, who retains twenty percent for their salary, while the remaining income is sent to the national headquarters. This is strictly monitored and adhered to and it has resulted in the suspension of some pastors that failed to implement this faithfully. However the actual salary of either the founder or any other church workers was not revealed to the researcher.

## **F. The Church Structure and Leadership**

### **1. The Board of Trustees (B.O.T)**

Consists of the Presiding Pastor as Chairman, the Wife of the Presiding Pastor, the Senior Pastors, and 4 other nominated members.

### **2. National Executive Council (N.E.C)**

Is made up of the Presiding Pastor as Chairman, Wife of the Presiding Pastor, Vice Chairman Council of Pastors, Secretary of N.E.C., all the Senior Pastors, all heads and acting heads of divisions, II State/Acting States Pastors, Director of Finance (National), the legal Adviser and a few nominated members.

## **G. Fundamental Beliefs of the Church**

The following are the fundamental beliefs of the church among others:

1. Understanding that the church of Jesus Christ is one. Matt. 16:18
2. Believe in the revelation of the Word and the demonstration of the power of God
3. Holiness and purity of life
4. Believe that a child of God must be earthly relevant, well equipped mentally and career wise to impart nationally and globally
5. The church also believes in adult baptism through immersion.

## **H. The Church Structure and Leadership**

The organization of the church is listed from the apex of the ladder to the lowest.

### **1. The Board of Trust (B.O.T)**

The board of Trust comprises of the following: The presiding pastor as Chairman, the wife of the presiding pastor, all the senior pastors, and four (4) other nominated members of the assembly.

### **2. The National Executive Council (N.E.C)**

This has the presiding pastor as chairman, wife of the presiding pastor, vice-chairman council of pastors, all heads and acting heads of divisions, all state/acting state pastors, director of finance (National), Legal adviser and a few nominated members.

### **3. Church Divisions**

The divisions of the church are as follows:

- a. The pastorate division
- b. The mission division
- c. Directorate of training and manpower development division.
- d. The directorate of administration division
- e. The finance sub-directorate division

### **4. Council of Pastors**

This comprises all ordained pastors of the church

## **I. Other Programmes of the Church**

Pastor (Dr.) Olufemi Ayowale, the man in charge of Training and empowerment of the church who granted an interview with the researcher highlighted the following programmes which are the platform upon which the church retains and grooms her membership for the onward expansions of Christ's Kingdom.

### **1. New Convert Training(NCT)**

This usually takes about eight (8) weeks for every new convert of the church, irrespective of whether such a convert had been a Christian from one denomination or from no Christian background at all. This leads such to baptism with an issuance of baptismal certificate. As stated earlier, the church only believes in the adult immersion form of baptism. Issuing of the certificate makes such a new member with a sense of belonging and it furthers the commitment of such a new member.

## **2. Membership Training Programmes(MTP)**

This is another form of training exclusively given for those that have agreed to retain their membership in the church. This teaches about what the members of the church are likely to benefit for being a member of the church. It takes care of every category of the church.

## **3. Fundamental Certificate Course(FCC)**

This is mainly for those that intend to go into the ministry of the church. The basic things about the ministry are taught at this level before the advancement.

## **4. House Fellowship System(HFS)**

As the name indicates, this is a system whereby each assembly is divided into various groups based on proxy and geographical locations to one another. This is mainly for proper Bible study and welfare of each member of the group. This makes every member a worker. It also makes it mandatory for every member to belong to an arm. There are three (3) major arms of the church. They are: Men's fellowship, Women's fellowship and Youth fellowship. This grouping also facilitates the coming together of the members to celebrate their festivities or any other celebration. And if there is any major issue affecting any member, such is reported to the assembly pastor. The house fellowship meeting usually comes up on every Saturday evening.

## **IV. Brief history of Pastor Femi Emmanuel**

The precise date of his birth could not be ascertained as at the writing of this report. However, from all indications it appears that Pastor Femi Emmanuel is in his sixties. He was from a humble beginning, his father and mother coming from Edo state. His father had many children to the extent that Pastor Femi Emmanuel could not really say the number and his position among his siblings. This is due to the lack of proper documentation of the births records in the past. Both parents were Christians which gave room to Femi Emmanuel to grow in an atmosphere of Christian religious influence and activities.

According to Falaye "A Christian home is a good ground for introducing the children to the basic tenets of Christianity in practice and faith (Falaye, 2010, p. 146). Thus the parents greatly influenced Femi by introducing and indoctrinating him into the teaching and Christian beliefs

from the cradle. They did all these based on the level of understanding of all that they knew Christianity to be in their own day.

According to the director of training and manpower development of the church, Femi Emmanuel grew up in a village where things were difficult in his early days. His growing up could be likened to that of Jesus Christ who also had a humble beginning. However, with the determination and the sense of purpose why he was sent to the world kept him going. This also justifies the statement that where one is born has nothing to do with what one becomes in life.

The history of most great men and women, either in secular or religious circles, is of that humble beginning. Their doggedness and self-determination most times are the factors that facilitate their excelling in life. The story of Femi Emmanuel is not different from such people.

Consequently, the roles of parents on this must not be overemphasized, especially at the early stage of their wards. To some extent, whether a child was born with or without a silver spoon, it requires the proper training of the parent for such a child to become a great person.

Femi Emmanuel had an encounter with the Lord in 1972 while still a teenager, and he has since been full of fire for God and ministry work. This encounter with the Lord in his teenage years emphasises the earlier statement that he had the influence of his parents that nurtured him in a Christian environment.

According to Falaye, he argued that many factors determine the religious attitude of individuals. A few of them are hereditary, while a larger percentage are environmental (Falaye, 2010, p. 147). Femi Emmanuel is a motivator and conference speaker. His mandate is to preach and teach people the undiluted word of God and the application of the word in order to bring out the best in them. His insightful messages and prophetic declarations make people find fulfilment in life and destiny.

This dynamic man of God was originally trained in Engineering. His passion to see people living the reality of their dreams, coupled with a special call of God upon his life, made him venture into what was initially known as the "Preach the Word Ministry" with its offshoot from the parliament house of the then Oyo State House of Assembly.

He was one of the four pioneer members of the full Gospel Business Men's Fellowship International in 1985 in the Western part of Nigeria. Also, he was a prolific interpreter of Yoruba for great men of God in the 80s.

Femi Emmanuel's working career includes engineering, egg selling, book selling, a one-time deputy speaker of the House of Assembly of Oyo State and a businessman who finally turned preacher. His ministerial

training could be traced back to when he was under the leadership of Pastor Jinadu of New Covenant Church, Ibadan. He was one of the pastors of that ministry for a couple of years.

Consequently, when the vision and aspiration to start his own ministry was discussed with Pastor Jinadu, he was asked to keep praying on the issue. This waiting and praying without a definite answer from his boss, Pastor Jinadu, took him up to two years.

Therefore, having waited for this long without a positive response, this dynamic and vibrant man of God pulled out of New Covenant Church to start his own. Meanwhile, his intention to start Livingspring Chapel International never in any way affected his relationship with his father in the Lord. This was confirmed by the National Director of Training and Development who granted the researcher this interview. This is contrary to what we are seeing in our society today, especially in the body of Christ.

It is a commendation on the part of both Femi and Jinadu who handled the separation amicably without necessarily allowing it to degenerate into unnecessary rivalry. However, the general notion is that there are two kinds of calls. For instance, Ajayi quoted by Falaye explains further that “there is the universal Christian call and there is the specific call to begin a church or ministry in order to meet a spiritual vacuum for the spiritual development of his people” (Falaye, 2014, p. 150).

This and other factors facilitated the pull out from New Covenant Church by Femi Emmanuel to start his own ministry. The pulling out could be seen as a blessing to all parties involved and even beyond. Because if he didn't, we would not have heard of what is known today as Livingspring Chapel International. And the blessing and the impact of the said ministry that have been brought to the people would have been defeated.

Pastor Femi Emmanuel got married to his wife, Modupe about three decades ago. His wife has also been a source of strength in his ministry. This is physically seen in the area of the administrative organization of the church and the ministry to the women of the fold. It also must be observed that since their marriage, no scandal has been associated with their marriage. Their marriage has been blessed with godly sons and daughters.

Femi Emmanuel is one of the most respected and sought after ministers of the Gospel in Nigeria. His popular “Turning Point Programme” is broadcast on various radio stations across the nation. The printed version of it, Turning Point Today (a daily motivational booklet),

comes out on a monthly basis and its demand by young and old is awesome.

## **V. The Noticeable Achievements of the Church**

There is no doubt that Pastor Femi Emmanuel and the church has achieved a lot in the area of Kingdom expansion and in serving humanity.

In the area of bringing fulfilment to the souls that are thirsty for the undiluted word of God, he has been able to be the source of living water to such people consistently over a period of time in the city of Ibadan in Nigeria and beyond. He has taken the preaching of the Gospel to the next level. This is manifested also in the area of introducing a new dimension of Christianity and Churching in Ibadan.

The ministry over the period of her existence has targeted both low and high ranking in society. It is not an over-statement that Livingspring Chapel International under the leadership of Femi Emmanuel has repackaged the mode of worship among Christians.

A close observation of worship in Livingspring Chapel gives an insight that it is a people-oriented order of worship. It accommodates individuals. It focuses on people. It addresses the feelings of its adherents. Based on this, both the rich and the common people in society find their places under the abode of the Livingspring Chapel International Church.

No wonder that today the congregation comprises of the wealthy, the working class, senior and junior civil servants, successful businessmen and women, professionals of different classes, market men and women, drivers, bus conductors, Okada men and even lecturers and students. It is a place where the youth and those that are endowed with natural gifts are allowed to activate their God-given talent.

This is not really common among the mainline Churches where there are bureaucracies and protocols.

Also, the Church has a welfare package for the members. Everybody is taught what he or she is likely to gain in retaining his or her membership in the church. So it is not about coming to the church only. These days people tend to know what their benefit will be in joining the church before they do. Everybody has a sense of belonging in this ministry.

The Senior Pastor has also been a source of inspiration to a host of listeners both in the Church and on air. In fact, people are always eager to listen to him, especially, on his daily Turning Point in both print and electronic media. His uncommon way of turning virtually everything into



valuable and educative quotations is second to none. His logical way of presentation at the delivery of all his addresses, sermons and messages has helped the church to grow a lot.

The personality of Femi Emmanuel also serves as a means of attraction. Intelligent, cute, soft-spoken as a pastor, industrious, hard-working, always smiling, humble, accomodating, brilliant and a handsome man of God. He is a man one will likely identify with.

In terms of economy, the church has brought food to the table of many people especially in the areas where their churches are located. This is done through their providing employment to those in need of them. Many people are paid workers of the Church whose salaries are paid when due.

This is done with government approval. Many a times some restaurants and small shop owners do make appreciable gains during the major convention of the church. In fact, these sets of people always look forward to these major events of the church. This, in a way, has brought help to many families. Therefore, at Livingspring Chapel International, it is not about praying only, rather it is about work and praying for the sustainability of both body and spirit.

## **VI. Challenges Confronting the Church**

Inasmuch as there is no individual, organisation or church that is perfect, the same must be expected of the Livingspring Chapel International Church. After all, in the midst of the disciples of Jesus there was Judas Iscariot who constituted a threat, so to speak, to the ministry.

First, the Senior Pastor and the Church are sometimes faced with the problem of unfaithfulness in the area of remittance of income from the assembly to the National headquarters. Some assembly pastors are guilty of this and sanctions and total dismissal have been applied on some erring assembly pastors. The national Director and human Development of the Church reports that this is common among the oil rich states such as Port-harcourt and the Niger Delta area. Money has always been the root of all evil in accordance with the Bible.

Another problem of the Church is that of not wanting to be under the leadership of the authority of the set man by some trained pastors of the Church. Lack of patience to learn the rudiments of what the ministry is all about has led some to go and start their own ministry prematurely. In fact, some left without informing the hands that trained them.

The administrative structure of the Church also suggests that the founder is at the apex of the organization, seconded by his wife. He is the

chairman of the Board of Trustees and he is also the chairman of the National Regional Council of Pastors. The power arrogated to him appears to be absolute. This looks so intimidating and threatening that is not likely to give room for accountability, transparency and checks and balances in the area of administration.

## VII. Conclusion

This paper has examined the Livingspring Chapel International Church founded by Pastor Femi Emmanuel with the support of his wife Mrs Modupe Emmanuel in Ibadan. The factors that facilitated the take off of the ministry has been observed. The importance of the ministry in terms of Kingdom extension and in the area of serving humanity have been highlighted.

The areas that demand improvement on the part of the church have also been enumerated. Additionally, the possible solutions to the problems and challenges of the church were not left out.

In summary, the paper has unfolded the intersect between the Mainline Churches and the Pentecostal Ministry with reference to the Livingspring Chapel International Church., Ibadan, Nigeria.

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