

Tribute: Chief Theophilus Akinyele

“And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them”. Rev. 14:13.

I give glory to the Almighty God who gave a man like Chief Theophilus Akinyele to us in the Anglican Church and most especially to the Cathedral of St. Peter, Aremo Ibadan. Personalities, such as Chief T. A. Akinyele are very rare; a man of high intelligence, visionary, articulate, good planner and a lover of God who in his time used all his talents for the progress of God’s work and the development of our Cathedral. Chief T. A. Akinyele during his time had a profound penchant for the development of rural churches. His belief was that we should all be our brother’s keeper. His claim was that the proceeds from the villages were used to develop the Urban Churches, which are now buoyant; therefore, the urban churches have the responsibility to give back to the village churches, which are now financially weak. He did not do this merely by words of the mouth but as well in deed. His village church at Ajia is one of the village churches that is self sustaining. This was due to his profound contributions to the Church and as well as his encouraging words which challenged other descendants to follow suit.

Chief T. A. Akinyele was a man of peace; he held no grudges against anyone but peaceably lived with all. With the few years in which he attended the Standing Committee as Bishop’s nominee, he hardly engaged in unnecessary arguments. He would speak his mind and less bothered if his opinion was accepted or not. He was unlike those who would want their opinions to be taken at all cost.

Chief T. A. Akinyele was a promoter, and supporter of good works. Whenever the Cathedral is engaging in any project, he would give his donation and pray for the success of such projects. He never rejected invitations to donate; rather, he always honoured them and donated handsomely. He was not only supporting the Cathedral as a body but as well its members. It was when he died that litany of testimonies of lives he touched positively came to the open. One of such was from an Evangelist who informed me that Baba paid for his training as an Evangelist and also financed their mission work for several years. This shows that Baba was a man with passion for mission and evangelism.

Chief T. A. Akinyele lived and died in the Lord. Today he is resting from his labours, his works follow him and the testimonies of his good work will live with us for long. May his soul continue to be in the perpetual light of God.