

HISTORIC CHRISTIANITY AND THE CHALLENGES OF PSEUDO-CHRISTIAN ORGANISATIONS AND CULTS

MOSES ADETUNMBI, Ph.D. (Ife), J.P.

Department Of Religious Studies, Ajayi Crowther University, Oyo,

E-mail: mosesadetunmbi@gmail.com; ma.adetunmbi@acu.edu.ng

Tel. Nos. +234 803 4717 327; +234 805 8270 394

Abstracts

Christianity is the belief in Christ and not a religion because religion is taken as a way of approach to God. Christ is not a way of approach to God because He has said “I am the Way, the Truth and the Life; no one comes to the Father but by Me”. If that is so, which I believe is, and then Christianity is a faith, a way of life, not like religions of the world that are institutions of men. Talking about historic Christianity, the beginning of the letter of John is very relevant. Some facts stand out which are proofs of the historicity of Jesus the Christ and the fact that He was not a figment of human imagination. From the Gospel according to St. Luke there were reports from the disciples of Jesus and eye-witnesses - some were written while others were oral. The paper traced the root of Christianity and its rise to the challenges posed to it by Pseudo-Christian Organizations and Cults using historical method to drive home its point.

Keywords; God, Christianity, Religion, Father and Gospel

Introduction

The Church did not take any escapist steps and were not even afraid of controversies. There were intrigues and prosecutions and yet Christianity had stood the test of time. In discussing historic Christianity, it is right for us to think about the most basic beliefs of Christians about God, man and the universe or, better still, to discuss the person of Christ who is the centre of Christian belief, and was both God and man.

The story of Christianity started with Jesus of history, who lived between 4B.C and AD29, who was arrested, tried as a heretic according to the Jewish law and executed as a criminal according to the Romans law. This same Jesus did not write books when he was physically on earth preaching and healing. But immediately after him his disciples were ‘inspired’ to make statements about him and books were written on the life and teachings of their master. A lot of questions were raised about him: what type of man was he? Was he crucified as a criminal or why did he die? While his disciples claimed that the Jewish scriptures had predicted about him, people had to ask which scriptures? What did he claim himself to be? Can we be sure of the records we have about him, especially as they were not written until many years after him? Was he God the father? Can we think of salvation through him? How far does this claim of this man/God affect our relationship or approach to God?

Peter’s sermon on the day of Pentecost was a good illustration of the teaching of the disciples. They taught that life and death of Jesus had been predicted in the Jewish scriptures and even the crucifixion was pre-arranged [Acts 2:22 LB] by God himself. He was the true scion of David as predicted by the prophets, but he was a son of greater than the great David. He remarked that the people were living witnesses of the life of this man Jesus who lived among them to fulfil God’s purpose for the salvation of mankind.

Practices and culture or the mode of worship of a particular church may be different from the others but the basic Christian belief will be clear. The basic belief of the Christian church started from the scriptural statements claimed by the disciples of Jesus e.g. Jesus is Lord. In the Jewish belief, this is blasphemy and the Jews quarrelled a lot with him on this ‘equality with God’. The first Christians were Jews and had the belief in the oneness of God as contained in the Shema [Deut.6:4-6] and their claim that Jesus was both Lord and Christos was to the Jewish unbelievers blasphemy. This led to the prosecution of the early Christians and the doctrine was gradually taking shape. Christians were not only persecuted, they were also betrayed.

Christianity down the Memory Lane

Early Christians made the following declarations at their baptism:

Do you believe in the Father and the Lord God of the universe?

Do you believe in Jesus Christ our saviour, who was crucified under Pontius Pilate?

Do you believe in the Holy Spirit, who spoke by the prophets? [From Justin Martyr d.165AD]

These statements gradually developed into creeds which we now use. The first [now called the Apostles creed] was compiled first but gradually developed and took the present shape in c A.D.600 but the second shows the response of the church to the challenges on its beliefs – either from external or internal forces. Aims, an Egyptian presbyter, taught that Jesus was not the eternal son of God but just a heavenly being created by God before creating the universe. He claimed that difference in names of identification implied a difference of being. The three persons of the Godhead could not be the same if one was distinguished from the other. Accepting the Father as God, the Son and the Holy Spirit must be creatures. A Council of the Christian Church met in Nicaea in 325 AD and the present creed known as the Nicene Creed was a summary of the conclusion of the church at this council. It made a clear declaration that Jesus is both man and God – fully human and fully divine. The council or Constantinople [381] continued the debate.

The church was spreading all over the world and leaders were appointed for different centres. These leaders were known as overseers [episkopoi or Bishops] who would in turn appoint and ordain local leaders called Elders or Presbuteroi. As the church grew, five of these Bishops were appointed ‘‘Fathers’’ [known as Patriarchs in Greek]. These were the Bishops of Alexandria, Carthage, Constantinople, Rome and [later] Jerusalem. Later the Bishop of Rome became too powerful in the west and dominated the church because he was in the see of the seat of the political government headed by the Emperor. However, Martin Luther, a professor of Theology and a priest rose against the Bishop of Rome by writing his 95 theses nailing same on the door of St. Peter Basilica in Rome. The church had been corrupt and this spear-headed the Great Reformation which later led to the birth of different denominations as we have today.

The Bible is regarded by the church as unique – though written with human hands, but it is the inspired word of God. It is written by ordinary men but it is God-breathed [2Tim.3-16]. God was working in a special way of these men at a particular time the church regarded as ‘‘period of prophetic inspiration’’ [see 2Pet.1:20-21].

When the world council of churches [WCC] was inaugurated in 1948, the declaration was based on a ‘‘A fellowship of churches which accept the Lord Jesus Christ as God and saviour.’’ Later in 1961 the declaration was expanded further

To confess the Lord Jesus Christ as God and saviour according to the scriptures and therefore seek to fulfil together their common calling to the glory of the one God, Father, son and Holy spirit.

These basic beliefs are often challenged so much that many movements do teach today that it is senseless believing that a human being could be divine. A man like Rudolf Bultmann taught that most claims of the NT about Jesus were mythical e.g. phrases like ‘‘becoming man’’ ‘‘sending his son’’ ‘‘raised from the dead’’ ‘‘at the father’s right hand’’ should not be taken literally. They are pre-scientific statements; you need to de-mythologize the NT. ‘‘Bultmann and his followers wanted to set Christ free from the strange world of first-century Palestine, and to let the gospel be heard by modern men and women in their own language and forms of thought. ‘‘people have always pleaded for a distinction between Jesus of history and Christ of faith; thinking that the story of Jesus in the NT had been so beclouded with faith and doctrine that it is difficult to know anything about the historical Jesus. So many facts in the NT are exaggerated to bring out distinctions. We are however warned not to create the Jesus of our own image e.g. Christ is now being; paraded as ‘‘the political Christ’’ thereby popularising him as a liberator, forerunner of freedom-fighters and champion of the oppressed. These re-emphases are really challenging the church. However, the historical Jesus’ teaching will outlive whatever innovations we make of him.

Pseudo-Christian organization and cults: The prefix pseudo – is a transliteration of the Greek word pseudes which means false, spurious, or deceptively resembling and more seriously, fraudulent. That means these organization are so close to Christianity that could easily be deceived that they are just another way [or even the only way] of understanding Christianity. On occasions, many of them fraudulently deceive to be

able to lure people away into their fold. A lot of beliefs are being paraded in Nigeria today and Christians need to be warned of their dangers, so that they will not fall prey to them. Many ministries are springing up everyday in the garb of the Bible study groups and these gradually develop into churches. They claim that God had spoken to them to start the ministry and later a church. Since God is not God of confusion, he could not have encouraged these. It is true that at a time when the church was almost dead at different times of the history of Christianity, the Lord brought revival through some personalities – Martin Luther, John Wesley, Moses Orimolade Tumolase, Joseph Ayo Babalola etc. there is always counterfeit form of God's creation that is made by Satan. The church is founded by Christ but Satan has always been planting his own counterfeit.

These pseudo-Christian organizations and cults could be illustrated by the following, especially looking at their practices:

- 1]. The Mormons
- 2]. The Jehovah's witnesses
- 3]. The celestial church
- 4]. Christian Science
- 5]. Sea of faith

The Mormons: members of this group know themselves as the church of Jesus Christ of latter day saints. The organization was founded by Joseph Smith in the state of Utah in USA in 1830. He taught that the true word of God is hidden in a hill in America [he later claimed he had found them]. taught baptism for the dead and the eternal sealing of marriages. He is described to have been "A man with apparent occult or psychic powers, he told fortunes and spent a good deal of the time searching for buried treasures and lost objects, using the divining rod and so called "peep stones". [see every wind of doctrine P.107]. Smith taught that it was revealed to him that he should found "the true church"

The Mormons teach:

- i] They believe in many gods. God the father has a body of flesh and bones. He was a man before – he was really Adam who was later exalted as the God the father. Adam took Eve one of his wives into the Garden of Eden and became God the father. As all the gods were formerly men, so all Mormons will become gods and the union of these with their wives will become celestial children.
- ii] They believe that man had existed as a spirit [of these celestial children] before coming to this world. The union of man and woman produced body in which the spirit will inhabit to become a human being.
- iii] The founder of the organization had many wives and his successor Brigham Young had twenty-five and they taught that a woman will not be saved unless she was married. They even taught that Jesus was a polygamist – Mary and Martha her sister and Mary Magdalene were three of his wives.
- iv] They deny the virgin birth of Jesus but the Adam-god was responsible for his birth.
- v] They taught that man must be saved by the works and grace had to couple with "obedience to the laws and ordinances of the gospel".
- vi] The book of Mormon has equal inspiration as the Bible.

Jehovah's witnesses: This group was founded in 1874 by Charles Taze Russel. He was pictured as a Christian but of strange nature. He lived a sexually loose life and was divorced by his wife. He fraudulently sold "miracle-wheat" at high price, whereas it was ordinary grain. He placed his book studies in scriptures as more important than the Bible. But he was a powerful speaker. He taught that Jesus was a created being, though higher than all other creatures. He was actually identified with Archangel Michael before his incarnation. They condemn other Christians and believe only Jehovah's witnesses will constitute the 144,000 that will go to heaven and God will renew the earth for the others [possibly only the Jehovah's witnesses] to dwell at the last day. They continue to fix the date of the coming of the Lord.

Christian Science: This group was originally called Church of Christ, Scientist and it is not yet common in Nigeria though they have their reading rooms on some towns in Nigeria. They claim to have answer to the problems of pain and diseases. The founder, Mary Baker Eddy, was described as delicate and subject to hysterical fits. She was married three times – the first husband died while she divorced the second and third also died. She was sick and she learnt to be healed without medicine through what she called

‘‘science of the mind’’. She taught that disease is caused by the mind alone. She was taken as ‘‘God-sent’’ and her followers flocked her public appearances to touch the hem of her garment to be healed. She later became mentally imbalanced and contradicted her teaching by taking medicine. She died of pneumonia.

Celestial Church: This group was founded by pastor SBJ Oshoffa who claimed to have received his revelation in Cotonou in Benin Republic. He was a launderer and went to the bush one day to get log and he got lost. As he was wandering in the bush for days without food, he saw a snake standing upright and this snake gave him a message to found a church. He also saw an animal that cried into his ears ‘‘Luli, Luli’’ and gave him the mandate to found a church. The snake, unfortunately, was the symbol of the destroyer of man and if God were going to send a message to any of his children he would not use this means. The celestial church, like the Rosicrucians treat their adherents to development. The more they develop intellectually, the more powerful spiritually and the more difficult for them to leave establishment. The climax of their development is to make the candidate drink their ‘‘green water’’ which is a point of no return. They claim to offer children to barren women but, unfortunately, if she makes mistake of leaving their church, she will lose the child. The founder had many wives and believed that Paul’s injunction that a church leader should be married to only one wife was the Jewish culture and would not apply to an African church leader.

Sea of Faith: Not much is known of this organization because we don’t have literature about them. However, it is known that the nucleus of the foundation of the movement were some clerics of the Church of England. Some of their teachings are:

i] Religion is a human creation

ii] You do not need to believe in God to be a Christian

iii] Christian prayer is not about talking to an invisible supernatural being.

With this little, we are convinced this is another pseudo-Christian organization and could only be possible within the Church of England for its permissiveness, autonomy of each Diocese and ‘‘Loose-end’’ in their teaching.

Yoga: This is included in our treat because many people are enticed by what looks like ordinary game, but it is actually a cult. Yoga is a sort of meditation through physical exercises. It has been defined as a system or physical exercises and mental discipline which is a vital part of Hindu religious philosophy aimed at the union of the human soul with the universal soul.[Every wind of doctrine P.257]

This Yoga is being taught by Hindu adherents under the guise of sports or exercises and many people are becoming more interested. The teachers are Hindu ‘‘missionaries’’ and Christians have found that the teaching are a ‘‘gateway into the occult’’, The teachings look attractive on the surface but they lure one away from God into occultism and by the time you discover, you have become a pantheist and an unbeliever – Yoga teaches that all people are one, that all are one with God, and that all religions are true. On this, Dr. Freeman warns:

Multitudes of people, Christian and non-Christian alike, find themselves suffering physical ,mental ,psychic and spiritual oppression, few realizing that it is because they have allowed themselves to become ensnared in the diabolical web of occultism, which is under influence and control of the power of darkness. [Every wind of doctrine P159.]

Failures of the Church and Challenges Posed By the Pseudo-Christian Organizations and Cults:

The Christian church may be confused as in the days of Arianism. The church leaders were convinced that Arius was wrong but had no word to counter his teachings. Thank God for Athanasius, a deacon who was chaplain to his Bishop who provided the solution. Athanasius demonstrated, as a theologian, that the hope of our salvation depends on Christ’s being true God as well as true man. We put our faith in Christ for our salvation because he was God himself coming to take our flesh – God incarnate – ‘‘who became man for us and for our salvation.’’ Therefore, when they say ‘‘No’’ to a heresy, they need counter solution to the problem. The church believes in ‘‘unity in diversity’’. There must be unity in doctrinal issues and principles of the church to be able to speak with one voice. When even a denomination is a divergent, there is bound to be confusion and external challenges will be great.

The church may be allowed to adapt to the good part of the culture of the people in practice, though maintaining Christian doctrine and discipline. This can best be illustrated in terms of worship. Many people are enticed into occultic Christian churches” because of mode of worship. The Anglican Church in Nigeria should work faster on this.

G. Verwer compares the Christian as a Christian with his life outside at work or socially and see that he maintain two worlds. He explains the confusion of Christians in their applying their belief to their secular life:

We keep these two worlds strictly apart, and though we may vaguely feel that something is wrong, we don't suspect we are suffering a major disorder—a sort of spiritual schizophrenia. In church, and occasionally among Christian friends, we talk about dedication, commitment, surrender, revival, a life on fire for God, and other expressions of loyalty and love for God, but the words and their corresponding deeds get little exposure outside church walls.[Hunger for Reality P10]

To strengthen this further, he quotes another, Dr. Tozer: Evangelization as we know it today ... does produce some real Christians ... but the spiritual climate into which many modern Christians are born does not make for vigorous spiritual growth. Indeed, the whole evangelical world is to a large extent unfavourable to healthy Christianity. And I am not thinking of modernization either. I mean I rather the Bible-believing crowd that bears the name orthodoxy. We are making resemblance to that of the New Testament. The average so-called Bible Christians in our times is but a wretched parody of true sainthood, yet we put millions of dollars behind movements to perpetuate this degenerate form of religion, and attack the man who dares challenge the wisdom of it... [Hunger for Reality P.11]

The application of our evangelicalism, orthodoxy and Bible-based Christianity is therefore challenged by the following ways:

A) Many members of the different denominations owe allegiance to their churches and not to Christ e.g. the Roman Catholic. Unfortunately, many Anglicans do not even owe allegiance to their churches, neither are they to Christ. We have divisions daily, instead of unity. The question then follows, are we in this wise better than members of these cults?

B) Control of the Holy Spirit is de-emphasised in many of these churches, especially in the manifestation of the Holy Spirit. Many of our people are enticed to run after these cults. We accept that the Holy Spirit speaks to us , but we think it must be in the quiet of our hearts and not open manifestations,

C) We have not been studying the Bible enough. Thank God for the reawakening going on in Dioceses now. However, there are still a lot of uneducated literate people in the church. They rationalise the Bible as if it is an academic novel. Many of them lose touch with the historicity and God-breathed word of God and its infallibility. The Anglican has a good doctrine which has to be revisited. [See article XX].

D) Many of us are not totally committed, whereas when any of the cults “catch” them, they devote all their lives to them. Many people have a lot which they hold back from God- of their money, time etc. Out of this they bring a spark and a call it “widow’s mite”.

E) The Jehovah’s witnesses challenge the church on missionary zeal. But the church has not been missionary enough. The injunction is “Go” but we are disobedient to this. The Jehovah’s witnesses go all the way discipling but the best some of us do is to go on procession of witnessing or best to hold crusades. A lot will not come to our crusade. Many of us have been pastoring for over 20 years without winning a soul.

F) Where there are strives and divisions, the Spirit of God will move away from them [cp.1cor 1:12-13]. The love of Christ [agape] is absent from the church. We accuse cult member of having selfish love [i.e. for only their member] but many Christian don’t even love the brethren but only self especially our Anglican members in government have forgotten that that was why God brought them to the government “for a time like this”. The Jehovah’s witnesses admit God is love and they preach against violence and wars and military services. [Cp. the crusades; Mat.26:52]

G) Healing ministry of the church is not encouraged enough to be able to counter all the beliefs of the Christian Science, we must do something about the healing ministry. The good news is relevant only when it meets the needs of the people [see Luke 4:18ff cp. Isa 61:1 ff.]

H) The Jehovah’s witnesses are also in the forefront of suffering for their faith. How many of us are ready to suffer for their faith?

I] We need to encourage shared ministry. Every church member should be an evangelist, a visitor to those in need. The pastor will coordinate and do the difficult part. Cp. Exod. 18

Therefore, in conclusion, the ministers of the gospel have to look at Nigeria and the church in times like this, look at their stand and belief. They need to examine their ministry and correct lapses. The church itself needs to stand and define its theology. The Anglican Church especially like that of Roman Catholic to coordinate its theology and the central person of the status of the Pope, who is their archbishop of Canterbury, makes doctrinal pronouncements.

CHRISTIANITY AS IT AFFECTS COMMERCE AND CULTURE

There were two phases of introduction of Christianity into the geographical area now known as Nigeria. These were the fifteenth and nineteenth centuries, although the former is always overlooked or neglected. Even though we have much to criticize in some of the motives of the early missionaries in this country, we have to thank God for them for the spirit of sacrifice and obedience to the great commission to “Go”. However, we may not be surprised to note that the two phases of the advent of Christianity can be said to have commercial root.

Priests were noted to have followed Portuguese traders to West Africa as early as the 15th century and so had missionary outposts at Mina (in the present Ghana), Benin and Warri (in the present Nigeria). But the outposts did not last in the face of persecution from the African rulers who strongly promoted their traditional religion. Coupled with this were the diseases in the land that drove the people away, but the presence of these missionaries left an indelible mark – in the dressing of the Oba of Benin till this day. So, the 19th century introduction of Christianity (or re-introduction) was not a new thing but it was a Begin Again.

Abolition of slavery and slave trade was a contributing factor to these new beginning and along with these were missionary societies being founded in Britain. In 1807, slavery and slave trade were abolished with the Abolition act. A leading figure was William Wilberforce and there was the move by Fowell Buxton who took over from Wilberforce that the abolition could be followed by “The Bible and the Plough” move. This was the belief that agriculture could raise the standard of the people from whom the bad trade was being taken in 1840. The society for the extinction of the slave trade and the civilisation of Africa was formed with Prince Albert as president.

As early as 1804, Freetown had been the centre of missionary work in West Africa but in 1841, three ships were sent by the British government on the Niger mission to help the new society. The ships were Albert, Sudan and Wilberforce. Two representatives were sent by the CMS to accompany these ships from Freetown. They were Rev. R.F Schon and Mr Ajayi Crowther, a catechist. The expedition was taken as a failure but expedition led to the call to evangelise Africa by the Africans and there were cries from the freed slaves to the missionary societies to urge them to send missionaries. Consequently, Samuel Ajayi Crowther was ordained in 1842. Following calls from freed slaves, the Methodists sent Thomas Birch Freeman in 1842 who started the missionary work in Badagry. They arrived on September 24, 1842. On December 17, 1842 the CMS party arrived in Badagry. They were Rev. Henry Townsend and Andrew Wilhelm and on Christmas day they worshipped together in the Wesleyan church in Badagry with Freeman who had just arrived from Abeokuta. The Baptists felt challenged and sent Rev. Thomas Bowen who arrived old Ijaye in 1852 and Ogbomoso in 1855.

Meanwhile, the Church of Scotland had sent Rev. Hope Masterton Waddell to Africa and they arrived Calabar on April 10, 1846 accompanied by a British couple, 400 Negroes and a man of mixed blood. Hope Waddell contended with a lot of problems in Calabar and these inclined – “the brutal massacres which customarily attended the death of a Chief, the Ekpo society exercising dominion through fear, the widespread use of the poison ordeal, the oppression of women (Nigeria under the cross. Pp. 33). The impact the missionaries had on King Eyo of Creek town was very tremendous. He was never baptised but was regular at worships. “When his and stores were demolished by fire, there was no poison ordeal; the king said ‘the Lord gave and the Lord has taken away’. When he died, by his strict instructions, there was no massacre” pp. 33.

Before we continue with this, it is good for us to look into what we mean by the word culture. Prof. Bolaji Idowu, among others, had looked into different ways by which the word is being misused and came out with the following statements that culture is:

A people's or a nation's total way of life [what someone has described as 'ways and wisdom'] which shows itself by various means in actions and expressions. Culture is therefore primarily metaphysical or spiritual- because it is closely inherent with being- the corporate being or corporate personality of a people, thus making for a bona fide distinctiveness and peculiarity. Because it is grounded in the being of the corporate personality, it becomes the source from which emanate the issues as well as the distinctive complexion of identity. The implication here is that basically, culture implies a state of stability of the inner being in order to find expression in essential ethos. [Orita Ix/2 December 1975 p.78]

In other words, what Bolaji Idowu is saying is that culture is the totality of man. So when we discuss the culture of the Nigerians as affected by the missionary work in the country, we might be expected to write books upon books and succeed in writing on only a small proportion of the peoples. In Nigeria, you will note, we have nothing less than 250 languages and this means culture. Bolaji Idowu writes further that: vitally connected to a people's soul as it refers to culture and its ordering is the people's language. To him;

Language reckons as a vital factor in the maintenance, sustenance, and moulding of a people's culture. A people without a bona fide language, a people who is no longer proud of its own language, a people in the process of losing its language, a people without a language which is stable and expressive of its essential being is a people in danger of cultural chaos, or death. [Orita Ix/2 p.79]

Bolaji Idowu talks about cultural contact, i.e. the contact between an indigenous culture and a foreign or an alien culture. This may be as a result of colonization or a migration. By this, culture ceases to remain the same. The more dynamic culture eliminates the other or at least helps to remould. But then, we have the African indigenous churches coming to renew some of the culture that we have lost to the foreign influence.

Therefore, the first noticeable thing affected in our culture by the missionaries was our language. Ajayi was one of the slaves captured and later freed. He was one of the foundation students at Fourah Bay College in Sierra Leone. He was a man of high intellect and as he studied, he tried his hands on his mother tongue. Sooner, he and the white missionaries tried to translate into writing what the Yoruba man spoke as language. Today, we can boast of so many of our Nigerians languages being used in communication, not only verbally but also in writing. History tells us that some of these languages had been orthographed, not on Nigerian soil, but outside in Britain and Sierra Leone. Ajayi Crowther did the translation of the Bible into Yoruba language after his ordination in 1842 in London and after that; he translated the prayer book into Yoruba. Modupe Oduyoye is able to report that the first Anglican service in Yoruba language was actually held in Sierra Leone as led by Rev. Samuel Ajayi Crowther. We have made a lot of improvements [or do we say confusion] on the language since then, but the foundation laid by this our son and white missionaries must be appreciated forever. Dr. Tasiu has noted that some of the earliest missionaries to Nigeria were detrified re-captives who came with the white missionaries to evangelize. That may probably be the reason why he thought that David Pepple was nearly native because though he was born of Ibo parents, he was brought up in the European way and this might affect their way of life in their native land to which they were sent to evangelize. No matter what our impression is about the missionaries, the sayings of J.T.F. Hallgar, the chairman of the Methodist Mission in Yorubaland [1886-1890] quoted by Ayandele. The substitution of a civilized authority for the accursed despotism of Pagan and Mohammedan power is a divine and gracious interposition", is very true here, but when Rev. S.C. Mbang said, 'The older forms were apparently abandoned but certainly not neglected' what does he mean? He answered that people became confused in their culture of mixing their traditional ways of life with the 'pseudo- foreign' ideas as they adopted foreign ways. [See Orita XII/1 June 1978 p42]

Missionaries encouraged interstate antagonism in the land. In 1860, Ijaye war, the missionaries in Ibadan supported the Ibadans while those in Abeokuta sided with the Egbas. But to the surprise of the missionaries, the Egba who had become Christians were more patriotic than Christian. Instead of supporting the missionaries in swing for peace, they supported their people for war against the Ibadan.

Henry Townsend had joined the ruling council of the Egba [the Ogboni] and he became the secretary to the Alake. This gave him a position of influence between the British and the Egba peoples. He was also said to have established himself to use this to unite the Yorubaland under the Egba people to create a ‘‘Christian Egba theocracy’’. Many returning slaves and the saros had come to settle down in Abeokuta to give Townsend this opportunity. The Egba resisted Townsend and the other missionaries on matters that would affect their faith and social institutions like polygamy, burial rites, slavery and Ogboni. They did not object to foreigners in Abeokuta being Christians but they would not forgive any real native becoming Christian. They resisted this strongly. They loved their children learning the Whiteman’s magic of writing and reading, but they would not want them to change faith. This is why many Nigerian historians would want us to believe that the Nigerian chief who invited the missionaries were actually not interested in the white man’s greed but in the social gain and commerce.

References

- Colin Chapman ‘where do we start?’ *The Lion Handbook of Christian Belief*, Lion publishing, Tring 91982] pp 14-22
- David Wright, ‘The Church’s understanding of Christ’ in *The Lion Handbook of Christian Belief*, Lion Publishing, Tring [1982] pp 75-80.
- Gerald Bray ‘the Filioque Clause in History and Theology’’ in *Tyndale Bulletin* 34/1983 pp 91-144
- George Verwer, *Hunger For Reality* STL Books, Bromley 1972/83
- Hobart E Freeman *Every Wind of Doctrine* Reprinted by Faith Builder Publications, Aba 1987
- Idin Ferguson, *Christian Byways* Daystar Press, Ibadan, 1968