



**NATIONAL OPEN UNIVERSITY OF NIGERIA**

**SCHOOL OF ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES**

**COURSE CODE: CTH 441**

**COURSE TITLE: WEST AFRICAN CHURCH HISTORY**

**COURSE  
GUIDE**

**CTH441  
WEST AFRICAN CHURCH HISTORY**

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## **INTRODUCTION**

West African Church History (CTH 441) is a 2-credit course available to 400 level students of the Christian Theology programme.

Module 1 examines the planting of Christianity in Nigeria, especially the coming of missionaries to Nigeria in the early period. Module 2 examines the Independent movements in Nigeria, the impact of Christianity in Nigeria and problems and prospects of Christianity in Nigeria. Module 3 examines the planting of Christianity in other West African countries.

The course consists of 16 study units. The Course Guide introduces you to what the course is all about.

## **WHAT YOU WILL LEARN IN THIS COURSE**

The study of West African Church History will enable you to have insight to the planting of Christianity in most West African countries, namely Nigeria, Republic of Benin, Gambia, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Ghana and Liberia.

Finally, you will learn about the difficulties faced by the earlier missionaries in West African countries that this course seeks to cover.

## **COURSE AIMS**

The aims of this course are to present an overview of the:

- i. coming of Portuguese missionaries in Nigeria
- ii. establishment of independent churches in Nigeria
- iii. impact of Christianity in Nigeria

## **COURSE OBJECTIVES**

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- state how Christianity was established in Nigeria
- describe the roles of missionaries in the planting of Christianity in West African countries
- identify the role played by indigenes in the spread of Christianity in West African countries
- list the difficulties faced by the earlier missionaries in West Africa.

## COURSE REQUIREMENTS

To complete this course, you are required to read the study units, and reference books that will help you achieve the objectives.

Each unit contains Self-Assessment Exercise and Tutor-Marked Assignments (TMAs) for assessment purpose. The course should take you a total of about 16 weeks to complete. Listed below are the major components of the course.

## COURSE MATERIALS

- Course Guide
- Study Unit
- Reference Books
- Assignment File

## STUDY UNITS

There are 16 study units in this course. Each unit should take you about two hours to work through. The units are divided into three modules. The first two modules contain five units each while the last module has six units.

### Module 1 Christianity in Nigeria

- Unit 1 Portuguese and Catholic Missions in Nigeria
- Unit 2 The Catholic
- Unit 3 The Methodists
- Unit 4 The Spread of Christianity in the Eastern Parts of Nigeria by the Holy Ghost Fathers in the Nineteenth Century
- Unit 5 The Activities of Christians in Egba Land

### Module 2 Independent Movements

- Unit 1 Christ Apostolic Church of Nigeria
- Unit 2 Cherubim and Seraphim Church, Nigeria
- Unit 3 Celestial Church of Christ, Nigeria
- Unit 4 The Impact of Christianity in Nigeria
- Unit 5 Problems and Prospects of Christianity in Nigeria

### **Module 3 Planting of Christianity in other West Africa Countries**

Unit 1	The Planting of Christianity in Republic of Benin, Gambia, Burkina Faso and Cape Verde
Unit 2	Christianity in Ghana
Unit 3	The Establishment of African Methodist Episcopal Church in Ghana
Unit 4	The Planting of Christianity in Liberia
Unit 5	The Planting of Christian Mission in Sierra Leone
Unit 6	The Difficulties Faced by The Earlier Missionaries in West Africa

Each unit includes a table of contents, introduction, specific objectives, reference books and summaries of key issues and ideas. At interval, in each unit, you will be provided with a number of self-assessment exercise. These are to help you test yourself on the materials you covered. The value of this is to help you assess your progress and to reinforce your understanding of the material. At least, one tutor-marked assignment will be provided at the end of each unit.

The exercises and the tutor-marked assignments will help you achieve the stated learning objectives of the units and of the entire course.

### **TEXTBOOKS AND REFERENCES**

- Ade-Ajayi, J.F. (1964). *Christian Missions in Nigeria 1841-1891. The Making of a New Elite*. Longmans Group Ltd.
- Ayandele, E.A. (1966). *The Missionary Impact on Modern Nigeria 1842-1914*. London: Longmans Group Ltd.
- Babalola, E.O. (1976). *Christianity in West Africa*. Ibadan: Scholar Publications International (Nig) Ltd.
- Baete, C. G. (ed). (1968). *Christianity in Tropical Africa*. London: Oxford University Press.
- Crampton, E.P. (1976). *Christianity in Northern Nigeria*, (Second Edition). Zaria: Gaskiya Corporation.
- Crowther, S.A. & Taylor, J.C. (1859). *The Gospel on the Banks of the Niger 1857 – 1859*. London: Sedey Service.
- Kalu, O.U. (1980). *The History of Christianity in West Africa, Essays Lectures*. London: Longman.

- Geoffrey, P. (1969). *Africa's Three Religions*. London: Sheldon Press Ltd.
- Oshitelu, G.A. (2002). *Expansion of Christianity in West Africa*. Abeokuta: Visual Resources Publishers.
- Elwood D. (1992). *History of the Episcopal Church in Liberia 1821 to 1980*. Metuchen, NJ: Scare Crow Press.
- James, L. S. & Wetermenn, D. (1992). *Liberia –Old and New. A Study of its Social and Economic Background with Possibilities of Development*. London: James Clarke and Company Ltd.
- Jane, J. M. (1968). *'The Dual Legacy; Government Authority and Mission Influence Among the Glebo of Eastern Liberia'*, Published ph.D Dissertation, Boston University.
- Jeremy, I. L. (2005). *The Evolution of Deadly Conflict in Liberia, from 'Paternalism' to State Collapse*. Durham, North Carolina: Carolina Academic Press.
- Holt, D. A. (1997). *'Change Strategies Initiated by the Protestant Episcopal Church in Liberia from 1836 to 1950 and their Different Effects'*. Michigan, UMI Dissertation Services.
- Paul, G. (1993). *Christianity and Politics in Doe's Liberia*, Cambridge University Press.
- Tom, W. S. (1980). *Behold the Promised Land. A History of Afro-African settler Society in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century Liberia*. Baltimore, London: The John Hopkins University Press.

## **ASSIGNMENT FILE**

All the details of the assignments you must submit to your tutor for marking will be found in this file. You must get a passing grade in this course. In the assignment file itself and in the section on assessment within this Course Guide, additional information will be found. There are 40 assignments in this course.

## **ASSESSMENT**

There are two aspects of the assessment of the course. First, are the Tutor-Marked Assignments (TMAs); second, there is a written



examination. In tackling the assignments, you are expected to apply information and knowledge acquired during this course.

The assignments must be submitted to your tutor for formal assessment in accordance with the deadlines stated in the Assignment file. The work you submit to your tutor for assessment will be 30% of your total course mark.

At the end of the course, you will need to sit for a two-hour final examination. This will also account for 70% of your total course mark.

### **TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENTS (TMAS)**

You will be given four TMAs. You need to submit all the assignments. The best three will be counted. The total marks for the best assignments will be 30% of your total course mark. Assignment questions for the units in this course are contained in the assignment file. Make sure you read and study all units before attempting the assignments. However, you are advised to use other references to broaden your view point and provide a deeper understanding of the subject.

When you have completed each assignment, send it with TMA form to your tutor. Make sure that each assignment reaches your tutor on or before the deadline given in the assignment file. If, however, you cannot complete your work on time, contact your tutor before the assignment is done to discuss the possibility of extension.

### **FINAL EXAMINATION AND GRADING**

The final examination of CTH 441 will be of two hours duration and have a value of 70% of the total course grade. The examination will consist of questions which reflect the type of self-assessment exercises and TMAs you have come across. All areas of the course will be assessed.

You are advised to revise the entire course materials after studying the last unit before you sit for the examination.

## COURSE MARKING SCHEME

This table shows how the actual course marking is broken down.

<b>Assignment</b>	<b>Marks</b>
Assignment 1-4	Four assignments, 20 Marks each = 30% of the overall course grade
Final Examination	70% of overall course grade
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>

## COURSE OVERVIEW

This table brings together the units, the number of weeks. You should ensure to complete them, and the assignment that follows them.

Units	Title of work	Duration/Weeks	Assignment
Course Guide			
<b>Module 1 Christianity in Nigeria</b>			
1	Portuguese and Catholic Missions in Nigeria	1	1
2	The Catholic	1	2
3	The Methodists	1	3
4	The Spread of Christianity in the Eastern Parts of Nigeria by the Holy Ghost Fathers in the Nineteenth Century	1	4
5	The Activities of Christians in Egba Land	1	5
<b>Module 2 Independent Movements</b>			
1	Christ Apostolic Church of Nigeria	1	6
2	Cherubim and Seraphim Church, Nigeria	1	7
3	Celestial Church of Christ, Nigeria	1	8
4	The Impact of Christianity in Nigeria	1	9
5	Problems and Prospects of Christianity in Nigeria	1	10
<b>Module 3 Planting of Christianity in other West Africa Countries</b>			
1	The Planting of Christianity in Benin, Gambia, Burkina Faso and Cape Verde	1	11
2	Christianity in Ghana	1	12
3	The Establishment of African Methodist Episcopal Church in Ghana	1	13
4	The Planting of Christianity in Liberia	1	14
5	The Planting of Christian Mission in Sierra Leone	1	15
6	The Difficulties Faced by The Earlier Missionaries in West Africa	1	16

## HOW TO GET THE MOST FROM THIS COURSE

The following is a practical strategy for working through the course. If you run into any trouble, telephone your tutor. Remember that your tutor's job is to help you. When you need assistance, do not hesitate to call and ask your tutor to provide it.

1. Read this Course Guide thoroughly, it is your first assignment.
2. Organise a study schedule. Design a 'Course Overview' to guide you through the course. Note the time you are expected to spend on each unit and how the assignments relate to the units. Important information, e.g. details of your tutorials, and the date of the first day of the Semester are available from the study centre. You need to gather all the information into one place, such as your diary or a wall calendar. Whatever method you choose to use, you should decide on and write in your own dates and schedule of work for each unit.
3. Once you have created your own study schedule, do everything to stay faithful to it. The major reason that students fail is that they get behind with their course work. If you get into difficulties with your schedule, please, let your tutor know before it is too late for help.
4. Turn to unit 1, and read the introduction and the objectives for the unit.
5. Assemble the study materials. You will need your text books and the unit you are studying at any point in time.
6. Work through the unit. As you work through the unit, you will know what sources to consult for further information.
7. Keep in touch with your study centre. Up-to-date course information will be continuously available there.
8. Well, before the relevant due dates (about four weeks before the dates), keep in mind that you will learn a lot by doing the assignment carefully. They have been designed to help you meet the objectives of the course and, therefore, will help you pass the examination. Submit all assignments not later than the due date.

9. Review the objectives for each study unit to confirm that you have achieved them. If you feel unsure about any of the objectives, review the study materials or consult your tutor.
10. When you are confident that you have achieved a unit's objectives, you can start on the next unit. Proceed unit by unit through the course and try to pace your study so that you keep yourself on schedule.
11. When you have submitted an assignment to your tutor for marking, do not wait for its return before starting on the next unit. Keep to your schedule. When the Assignment is returned, pay particular attention to your tutor's comments, both on the tutor-marked assignment form and also the written comments on the ordinary assignments.
12. After completing the last unit, review the course and prepare yourself for the final examination. Check that you have achieved the unit objectives (listed at the beginning of each unit) and the course objectives (listed in the Course Guide).

## **FACILITATORS/TUTORS AND TUTORIALS**

The dates, times and locations of these tutorials will be made available to you, together with the name, telephone number and address of your tutor. Each assignment will be marked by your tutor. Pay close attention to the comments your tutor might make on your assignments as these will help you. Make sure that assignments reach him on or before the deadline. Your tutorials are important; therefore, try not to skip any. It is an opportunity to meet your tutor and fellow students. It is also an opportunity to get the help of your tutor and discuss any difficulties encountered on your reading.

## **SUMMARY**

CTH441, West African Church History informs you of how Christianity was planted in some selected countries, namely Nigeria, Ghana, Gambia, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Liberia and Sierra-Leone.

Also, it informs you about difficulties faced by the earlier missionaries in West Africa.

After studying the course, you should be able to:

1. describe the aim of the Portuguese for coming to West African Countries.
2. enumerate all the denominations that planted Christianity in West African countries.
3. state the roles played by missionaries in the establishment of Christianity in West African countries.

You need to get the best knowledge out of this course.

**MAIN  
COURSE**

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## **MODULE 1 CHRISTIANITY IN NIGERIA**

- Unit 1 Portuguese and Catholic Missions in Nigeria
- Unit 2 The Catholic
- Unit 3 The Methodists
- Unit 4 The Spread of Christianity in the Eastern Parts of Nigeria by the Holy Ghost Fathers in the Nineteenth Century
- Unit 5 The Activities of Christians in Egba Land.

### **UNIT 1 THE PORTUGUESE AND CATHOLIC MISSIONS IN NIGERIA**

#### **CONTENTS**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 Portuguese and Catholic Missions in Nigeria
  - 3.2 The Contribution of the British Parliament to the Abolition of Slave Trade in Nigeria
  - 3.3 The Arrival of Freed Slaves of West Africa to Freetown Around 18th Century
  - 3.4 Freed Slaves from Sierra-Leone
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

#### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

The first unit will introduce you to the Portuguese voyages of the 15th Century that brought Christianity to Nigeria.

However, the planting of Christianity in Nigeria was soon terminated because of their involvement in slave trade.

Many Nigerians were sold to them and were taken as slaves into exile, such as America. For this reason, Nigerians were not converted to Christianity by the Portuguese. Christianity could not penetrate into Nigeria through the Portuguese slave-traders and the religion soon fizzled out of Nigeria. This unit will also introduce you to the coming of the Roman Catholic Church into Nigeria, but, the Denomination too soon was short lived in Nigeria in the early 18th century. However, in this unit, you will also learn how the Yoruba wars of the early 19th



century paved way for the sale of many men to various places in the world. But the sale of these slaves became blessings in disguise to Nigerians after their freedom.

Many of these people, who were sold into slavery by Nigerians got converted into Christianity at their new world in which they found themselves.

In 1841, the British government embarked on campaign for the abolition of slavery in Africa; many slaves were set free.

The freed slaves settled at Freetown and Sierra-Leone. The freed slaves had accepted Christianity as their main religion instead of the African Traditional Religion into which they were born. These freed slaves were also said to have engaged in legitimate trade. The freed slaves introduced Christianity to their relatives in Nigeria. They also invited missionaries to Nigeria to continue planting the Christian religion which they had introduced in their various towns and villages in Nigeria. In other words, this unit discusses the planting of Christianity in Nigeria through trade and the freed Nigerian slaves. Therefore, the specific objectives and outline below are what you should expect to learn from this unit.

## **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

At the end of this unit, you should be able to;

- explain the period which Christianity took root in Nigeria.
- analyse the roles of the freed slaves in the planting of Christianity in Nigeria
- state the roles of the early missionaries in Nigeria
- describe the problems and prospects of Christianity in Nigeria.

## **3.0 MAIN CONTENT**

### **3.1 The Portuguese and Catholic Missions in Nigeria**

About 15th century A.D, Henry the Navigator of Portugal, desired to sail further in the Atlantic Ocean. He loved buying the gold of West Africa. Henry wanted to get the West African gold directly, without going to the Muslim Kingdoms in North Africa and Arabia in the Middle East (Ade-Ajayi, 1977). Henry sent out his ships accompanied by some Roman Catholic Missionaries to Nigeria.

They visited Benin and Warri. Around the riverine areas in Nigeria, slave trade was the business of the day. Most of the kings the missionaries preached to were interested more in the Portuguese guns than were in Christianity. For this reason, the planting of Christianity by the Roman Catholic missionaries in Nigeria failed in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries A.D.

### **3.2 The Contribution of the British Parliament to the Abolition of Slave Trade in Nigeria**

Andeyatso Addo et al, (1985), in their work entitled *The Church Missionary Society and the Anglican Church*, state that the Crown passed the bill of the abolition of slave trade into law in 1807. The Crown Government therefore assigned some British naval officers to patrol the sea and arrest whoever they found involved in carrying slaves on boats from Africa to their own countries.

The British navy would capture boats that were used by the Portuguese carrying slaves, and would send them to Freetown slave court for trial.

At Freetown, the slaves who were in the captured boats were set free and the captured boats were seized and sold by the British Armed Forces to the rich freed slaves. The arrival of freed slaves into Sierra-Leone in 1841, made Christians in the Great Britain to change the policies of the government. As a result, many Britons saw the evils of slavery and took steps to stop it. William Wilberforce encouraged the British government to make slave trade illegal and to send British armed ships on the oceans.

### **3.3 The Arrival of Freed Slaves of West African Ancestry to Freetown Around 18<sup>th</sup> Century**

At the close of the 18th century, freed slaves of West African ancestry began to arrive and settle in Freetown. Reverend Mulvilles, an Anglican priest came to Sierra-Leone to serve as Chaplain to the European traders. He preached the gospel to the freed slaves and cared for them at Freetown.

He later returned to Britain and he became one of the Chief advisers of the Church.

### 3.4 The Arrival of Freed Slaves in Nigeria

Some of the freed slaves in Sierra-Leone were engaged in trading. They travelled from Sierra-Leone to Lagos via Badagry. The Yoruba freed slaves were organised.

#### Henry Townsend and Freeman Arrived Badagry

Freeman arrived in Badagry on September 24, 1842. Between 1893 and 1842, about 500 freed-slaves in Sierra-Leone had returned to Badagry and other parts of Yoruba land. The immigrants at Badagry sent urgent messages and earnest entreaties to the missionaries in Sierra –Leone to send Christian teachers. The response to this appeal was the birth of missionary activity in Yoruba land. Freeman was sent to Badagry by the Methodist Church.

Freeman arrived in Badagry on September 24, 1842.

He was the first Methodist missionary to arrive at Badagry, Nigeria in 1842. He was accompanied by William Graft and his wife. They were permitted to establish a mission station there. They built a house and chapel at Badagry on 24 December, 1842. Reverends Henry Townsend and Wilhelm arrived in Badagry and worshipped with Reverend Birch Freeman who was an adherent of Methodist faith.

However by the period these missionaries got to Badagry, they met the traditional rulers divided into factions. In Badagry, one of the factions favoured the advent of missionaries, whose presence, it was hoped, would confer definite political and military advantages on their patrons. In Badagry, there arose pro-missionary and anti- missionary factions. Wawu, chief of English town in Badagry professed hatred for the slave-trade, love for legitimate trade and the warmest of friendliness towards the British. He welcomed the missionaries and English traders in order to use them to claim a first- class status.

On 29 December 1842, Townsend left Badagry for Egba land. He was received by Oba Sodeke of Abeokuta. All commercial activities were suspended to welcome the Missionaries to Egba land since they requested for them to plant Christianity in the land. The Missionaries established Mission Station in Abeokuta on 27 July, 1846. Abeokuta was made the Headquarters of the other Mission Stations for Yoruba land. In 1847, the Church Missionary Society planted their Missions in the following towns: Ake-Owu, Ikija-Itoku, and Igbein. The missionaries established Sunday school and primary schools for both the old and young people in Egba land. The people of Egba raised no

objection to their children being initiated into the white man's mystery of reading and writing. They saw the advantages of imitating his technological superiority in house- building and cotton-ginning.

The free slave Christians engaged in buying captured boats condemned by Freetown slave courts. One of the boats bought by them was named Wilberforce. Some of the freed slaves settled at Abeokuta, the capital of Ogun State, Nigeria. Many of them were educated by the Church Missionary Society. Their association with the British government helped them to purchase fire arms.

Abeokuta served as a home place for those freed slaves that settled there. While in Abeokuta, they practiced their Christian faith. They also preached the religion to others who were not Christians. However, in Egba land, missionary propaganda from its beginning was bound up with political considerations. The political situation was such that the time first missionaries arrived in the land, the traditional rulers in Egba were divided into factions. But, one faction favoured the advent of missionaries, whose presence, it was hoped, would confer definite political and military advantages on their leaders. At Abeokuta, there arose pro-missionary and anti-missionary factions. For several years, the position of the Egba had been insecure. Often they encountered with their neighbours. Driven southwards from their once flourishing towns, over 100 townships had settled in Abeokuta about 1830 under the leadership of Sodeke. The military state of Ibadan on the north-east and the relatively tranquil Ijebu state on the south-east, which had contributed to their misfortunes, were still hostile neighbours. The west lay the powerful military kingdom of Dahomey, under Gezo, dedicated to their destruction. Although the Owiwi war of about 1833, in which they defeated the Ijebu and Ibadan, transformed them from the defensive to the offensive in their relations with their neighbours, yet early looked forward to an external agency to ensure their continued existence and sustain their solidarity. It was therefore natural that the political usefulness of the white man was uppermost in Sodeke's mind when in December 1842 he received Thomas Birch Freeman, the Wesleyan missionary who went to Abeokuta on a missionary visit. Sodeke invited him to settle in the town and bring other missionaries and traders with him. A month later Henry Townsend, the Church Missionary Society missionary of Egba fame, was also received with the idea that he would stay, but he soon left. However, the Saros in Abeokuta succeeded in putting across to the British government their pressing needs early in 1844. Sodeke asked for military help against Ado with which war had broken out since 1841, petitioned for missionaries and traders and described himself and his people as crusaders against the slave trade in Yoruba land. In response to the pressure of these liberated Africans,

missionaries followed them to Abeokuta. (E.A. Ayandele, 1966 pp.6-8). There, they exercised political influence in Egbaland. For instance, Henry Townsend had settled in Abeokuta since 1846. It was said that he was a member of Ogboni, a Yoruba fraternity and ‘senate’ of Egba. He became secretary to the Alake of Egba land in 1850. In this capacity he exercised a great deal of influence on the Alake and was the sole director of the Anglo-Egba policy from Egba side. Townsend turned the Egba government into a theocracy that united all Egba land. The Egba people raised no objection to their children being initiated into the white man’s education. The Egba people saw the advantages of imitating Townsend’s technological superiority in house-building and cotton-ginning.

### **SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

Account for the roles played by Townsend in Egbaland.

## **4.0 CONCLUSION**

In this unit, you have learnt the followings:

The Portuguese voyages of 15<sup>th</sup> Century introduced Christianity in West Africa. However, their roles in planting Christianity soon faded away because they combined buying slaves with the spread of Christianity. In 1841 the British government enacted law on Abolition of slave-trade in West Africa. Reverend Mulvilles served as a Priest in Serra-Loene. He cared for the settlers in the town. Sodeke invited missionaries to Abeokuta. Henry Townsend became the Secretary to Alake of Egba in 1850. He supported Egba people and waged war against their enemies. Townsend enlightened the Egba people educationally and morally.

## **5.0 SUMMARY**

The Portuguese voyages introduced Christianity in West Africa.

In 1841, the British government promulgated law against slave-trade in West Africa.

Sodeke invited missionaries to Abeokuta in order for them to help him wage war against their enemies.

Reverend Townsend joined Ogboni fraternity in Abeokuta.

He became the Secretary to Alake of Egbaland in 1850.

Townsend supported Egba people, waged war against their enemies.

He enlightened the Egba people educational and morally.

## **6.0 TUTOR- MARKED ASSIGNMENT**

The coming of missionaries to Egbaland was a blessing to Egba people. Discuss.

## **7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING**

Ade-Ajayi J.F. (1977). *Christian Missions in Nigeria 1841 – 1891: The Making of a New Elite*. Lagos: Longmans Groups Ltd.

Andeyatso Addo et.al (1985). *The Church Missionary Society and the Anglican Church History of Nigeria*. Ibadan: Nigeria Educational Research Council, Heinemann Ltd.

Ayandele E.A. (1966). *The Missionary Impact on Modern Nigeria 1842 -1914: A Political and social Analysis*. London: Longmans Group Ltd.

Kalu, O.U. (1980). *The History of Christianity in West Africa: Essay Lectures*. London and New York: Longmans Group Ltd.

Taiwo, C.O. (1980). *The Nigerian Education System; past, present and Future*. Lagos: Thomas Nelson Nig. Ltd.

## **UNIT 2 THE CATHOLIC MISSIONS**

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- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 The Formation of the Society of the African Mission (S.M.A)
  - 3.2 The Spread of the Roman Catholic Faith to Lokoja, Onitsha and Asaba
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

In the first unit, you read about the Portuguese traders who came to Nigeria to trade as well as to spread Christianity which however was short lived due to their involvement in slave / trade. In this unit, you will study about the formation of the Society of the African Mission by the Catholic missionaries in order to plant Christianity in West Africa, especially, Nigeria.

### **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- identify the contribution of the Catholic Mission to the growth of the Christian church in Nigeria
- state how many mission stations were opened by Catholic priests in Nigeria in the early period of Christianity.

### **3.0 MAIN CONTENT**

#### **3.1 The Formation of the Society of the African Mission (S.M.A)**

##### **Spreading of the Roman Catholic Faith**

The formation of the Society of the African Mission for the spreading of the Roman Catholic faith helped in the planting of Christianity in Nigeria. The Society attempted to plant Christianity in Sierra-Leone

around 1860, but it failed. However, it moved from Sierra-Leone to Dahomey to plant the Roman Catholic faith.

The planting of the Roman Catholic faith at Dahomey, now the Republic of Benin, began with Father Borghero who was assisted by two other missionaries. In 1860, the Italian Roman Catholic Father, Borghero who was stationed at Whydah in Dahomey paid a visit to Abeokuta and Lagos. In 1862, he re-visited Lagos. However, on reaching Lagos, he met some of Nigerians Catholic freed slaves from Brazil who had settled there. In addition to this, Father Borghero was also surprised at meeting some Brazilians who had baptized in the Roman Catholic Church, but, were living in Lagos.

Father Borghero was encouraged when he saw some of his natives and Nigerians who were adherents of the Roman Catholic faith in Lagos. He established a mission station at Lagos. But, it had no permanent Priest. He made Lagos one of the out-stations of Ouidah in Dahomey. By 1862, Father Borghero sent a Catechist named Padre Antonio who was a freed slave from Sao Tome Island to the Lagos Mission.

While Catechist Padre was stationed in Lagos, he taught Nigerians and other nationals who lived in Lagos the Roman Catholic faith. He baptised children, prayed with the dying and buried the dead. In 1868, Father Pierre Bouche was sent to Lagos by the Catholic Mission to resume duty as the residential Priest in Nigeria. The Roman Catholic Mission built a Chapel in Lagos in 1869 for the adherents of the Catholic faith. The Church also established a primary school in Lagos the same year. From Lagos, the Roman Catholic faith spread across Nigeria. The faith spread to Onitsha through another Father named Lutz who worked around Onitsha town. This marked the growth and expansion of the Roman Catholic faith towards the Niger Delta area. The Catholic adherents further sent Fathers Chausés and Holley from Onitsha, towards Ilorin, and Ondo.

In 1885, the Catholic Mission sent two Irish priests who were members of the Society of the African Mission to Lagos. They were Fathers Healey who stationed at Abeokuta and Connaughton who was made the Lagos schools Manager in Nigeria. In 1886, Father Chausés opened a Mission station at Oyo. In 1891, he was consecrated Bishop of Nigeria.

He died around 1894. Father Chausés was succeeded by Bishop Paul Pellet who opened a Mission Station at Ibadan in 1895. Around this period, Father John M. Coquard established the Sacred Heart Hospital at Ibadan.



### **3.2 The Spread of the Roman Catholic Faith to Lokoja, Onitsha and Asaba**

In 1884, the Roman Catholic Mission opened a mission station at Lokoja in Kogi State, Nigeria. Three Fathers were sent by the Catholic Mission to Lokoja to continue spreading the Catholic faith in the area.

However, one of the fathers died at Lokoja in 1885. Father Andrew Dorman was sent to replace the deceased Father. After some years, the Roman Catholic Mission Headquarters was moved from Lokoja to Asaba by Father Carlo Zappa who was placed to head the Lokoja Mission area. Father, Bishop Shanahan built a mission house at Onitsha. He spread the Catholic faith to Oghuli, where he built a primary school, conducted baptismal classes and learnt Ibo language. This made many Igbo people to be converted into the Catholic faith. Bishop Shanahan founded the congregation of the Sisters of Our Lady of the Holy Rosary in Ireland in 1920. The sisters were trained to offer service to the Catholic Missions of the Holy Ghost Fathers in the Eastern part of Nigeria.

In addition to these, Father Shanahan also converted many other Nigerians into the Catholic faith in Igbo land. By 1924, the Catholic Church in Nigeria was staffed by natives of Igbo who were priests. In 1933, Father Shanahan consecrated the new Cathedral that was built by the church in Nigeria.

#### **SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

Assess the roles of the Society of the African Mission in Nigeria.

### **4.0 CONCLUSION**

The formation of the African Mission for the spread of the Catholic faith helped in the expansion of the faith in Nigeria. The Roman Catholic Mission began in Lagos around 1860 with Father Borghero. The Church spread from Lagos to Onitsha, Ilorin, Ondo, Oyo, Lokoja, Oghuli and other parts of Igbo land in Nigeria. The mission had established Schools in all its mission stations in the country where children were educated and converted into the Catholic faith.

### **5.0 SUMMARY**

Father Borghero and the freed slaves of Nigerians championed the planting of Catholic faith in Nigeria. Bishop Shanahan founded the Roman Catholic Mission station at Onitsha in 1886. He evangelised

Oghuli. He built a mission house and School there. Many Nigerians received Bible instructions in the Bible classes at the various Catholic Mission stations in Nigeria. In addition, many Nigerians benefited from the Catholic Mission through the receiving of western education from them. The Catholic mission spread from Lagos to other parts of Nigeria.

## **6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT**

Examine the roles of the Nigerian freed slaves in the planting of Roman Catholic Faith in Nigeria.

## **7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING**

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## UNIT 3 THE METHODISTS

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### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

So far, we have been able to trace the period of the coming of the missionaries who first planted Christianity in Yoruba land. The roles of the freed Nigerian slaves in the planting of Christianity in Nigeria were also noted in the previous studies.

In this unit, you will learn about the Methodist Mission's quest for the planting of Christianity in Badagry.

### 2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- identify the roles of the Methodist Mission in Nigeria
- discuss the methods used by the Methodist Missionaries to spread their faith in Nigeria
- list the mission stations that were opened by the Methodist Mission in Nigeria.

### **3.0 MAIN CONTENT**

#### **3.1 The Arrival of the Methodist Missionaries in Nigeria around 1840**

The Yoruba settlers in Freetown and Sierra - Leone had appealed to the Queen of England to permit them established a Colony in Badagry. They also demanded that soldiers, traders and missionaries be sent to them at Badagry to help them wage war against slavery, especially the Ado people, and to preach the Gospel of Christ. In 1841, these people wrote letters to missionaries who were stationed in Sierra-Leone to come and preach the gospel of Christ in Badagry. When their letters were read to the Christians in Sierra - Leone, some people liked the idea and appealed to missionaries to assist the Christians in Badagry. On 24 September, 1842, the Reverend Thomas Birch Freeman and William de Graft arrived at Badagry. Reverend Freeman preached the gospel to the people who lived in Badagry. He made many converts in the town. The Clergy built a mission house at Badagry. He organised prayer-meetings for the Christians. Freeman paid a visit to Abeokuta to open a mission station in Egbaland. When he got to Abeokuta, he met Henry Townsend an Anglican Catechist and two Egba freed slaves from Sierra-Leone spreading the gospel there. When he had returned to Badagry, he left for his home country. Freeman left De Graft behind at Badagry to care for the adherents of the Methodist faith both in Badagry and Abeokuta. However, he used to pay visits to De Graft once in a while. The Methodist mission later transferred De Graft and posted Samuel Annear to replace him at Badagry. The mission station at Abeokuta was shut down due to the Dahomey wars.

However, when the war ended, a teacher was sent there to re-open the Mission Station at Abeokuta. The Methodist outreaches spread from Badagry to Lagos. In addition, the above name used to spread Christianity in the Yoruba land, mention could be made of the freed slaves who went from Sierra-Leone to settle at Abeokuta after gaining their freedom from the Dahomean armies.

In 1846, the Methodist and Anglican Missions were established in Lagos and Abeokuta. Besides, as soon as the Lagos slave market was shut down, the Methodist and Anglican Missionaries entered there and they established Mission Stations and Schools in both towns. African ministers were stationed in the two towns to spread Christianity (Geoffrey Parrinder, 1969). In the Schools that were established by the Missionaries in Lagos and Abeokuta towns, instructions were largely oral since books were scarce. Prayers and Biblical texts were learnt through oral recitation.

Christianity could not penetrate into the Northern parts of Nigeria in the early period, because the then Governor-General of Nigeria, Sir Lord Luggard ruled that Christianity could only be allowed to enter the Hausa land through the agreement of the ruling Chiefs who were the Custodians of Islamic religion.

### **3.2 The Baptist Mission**

In 1850, the American Baptist Missionary, Thomas J. Bowen arrived Badagry. He established a mission station there. He built a mission station at Ijaye. In the same year, he moved to Abeokuta. There he met the Wesleyan and the Church Missionary Society missionaries. While Bowen was at the town, he studied Yoruba language in order to be able to communicate with the people without any interpreter. He later wrote Yoruba grammar and dictionary for the use of Yoruba people. Bowen proceeded from Abeokuta to Ibadan and Ogbomosho where he established Baptist Mission Stations in 1854.

At Ogbomosho, converts saw themselves as superior people over the traditionalists. For this reason, the traditionalists developed hatred for Christians in the town. Besides, they abandoned tradition of burying the dead in their family compounds. This act compounded their problems in the town. Christians then started burying their dead in the bush. This is because Christians considered burying the dead in the house was unhygienic.

On the other hand, traditionalists viewed burying the dead in the bush as separation from their ancestors. In traditional beliefs, the moment a person is dead, he has become an ancestor, to be revered and remembered. The traditionalists hated the Christians the more for not allowing the buried Christians to join their ancestors. The traditionalists also kicked against the idea of the Christians burying the dead in the bush for only criminals were buried in the bush at Ogbomosho. In 1879, according to Ayandele, all christians were expelled from Ogbomosho (Ayandele, 1979 p.14).

Bowen built a mission station at Ijaye. In 1854, Harden also established a mission station in Lagos. From Lagos, the Baptist Mission also spread to Oyo, Shaki, Igboho, all in Oyo State, and Ilorin, in Kwara State, Nigeria. (E.O. Babalola , 1979.p.14) The spread of the Baptist Mission to the Northern parts of Nigeria was done by some Nigerians who were working in the northern Nigeria. The Government posted them to the place after the Second World War. The Yoruba government workers in the North were located mostly in Jos.

There, they worshipped as adherents of the Baptist faith. However, in 1912, the Nigerian Baptist Convention was officially established. It is now completely self-governing, self-propagating, and self supporting. In 1920, a minister of the faith paid a visit to them. There he officially established a mission station for the Baptist adherents. While he was returning from Jos, he stopped at Kaduna and established a mission station for the Yorubas who lived in the town. He baptized eighteen people in River Kaduna. In 1913, Mr. M A. Adeniran established the first Baptist Mission Station in Zaria. According to Crampton, the Nigerian Baptist Convention posted Reverend J.A. Adejumbi to Kaduna as its first Pastor to oversee the rest Mission Stations of the Baptist faith in the Northern Nigeria in 1925. Furthermore, when the American and some of the Nigerian Missionaries worked together in Northern parts of the country, they established a Secondary School at Jos; a Teacher Training College in Minna and a Seminary School in Kaduna. The Nigerian Baptist Convention operates nine theological training centers for pastors, the largest being the Nigerian Baptist Theological Seminary in Ogbomosho. The Nigerian Baptist Convention also operates several hospitals and medical institutions across the country. The Baptist Hospital in Ogbomosho remains one of the leading hospitals in Nigeria. Besides, it is used as a University teaching hospital by the Ladoke Akintola University jointly owned by Oyo and Osun states. In 1969, a separate Conference for Ilorin and Kabba faithful was established and it was named Kwara Baptist Conference. The Church has planted about 100 Mission Stations in the Area. Besides, a group of Longuda who broke away from the Lutheran faith has joined the Baptist faith in Northern Nigeria. In 1972, Etubi who was a missionary in the Qua Ibo Church at Idah broke away and he joined the Baptist. In 1974, a second Baptist church was established at Idah which was named Emmanuel Baptist Church, Idah. The Baptist Mission has the Northern Conference Convention, which has its headquarters at Beulah. It comprises Adamawa and Saradauna Provinces. The Mission Stations are located in the following towns, Zaria, Kano, Katsina and Sokoto. The Nigerian Baptist Convention has founded and operated several primary Schools and Secondary Schools across the nation. The Mission has established a University at Iwo in 2002. It is named Bowen University in honour of Reverend Thomas Jefferson Bowen, the first American Baptist Missionary from the Southern Baptist Convention. The named institutions above are established to convert pupils, Secondary school students and the post secondary school students into the Baptist faith in Nigeria to date.

### 3.3 The Planting of Christianity in Ondo Area

In 1853, David Hinderer introduced Christianity in Ibadan. In 1856, Christianity was established in Ilesha. In 1859, Christianity was planted in Ile-Ife. In 1875, David Hinderer introduced Christianity in Ode, Ondo. In 1877, Charles Philips was posted to take over from Hinderer. This was during the period that Oba Ajimekun the then Osemawe of Ondo land and some of his Chiefs embraced Christianity.

In 1876, the first worship Centre was built for Christians to worship. In 1877, Philips demanded for another land to build a bigger place of worship in the town because the population of Christians increased daily. The land that was given to the Christians to build a Church was the land of the evil spirits. It was a place where people who died unpleasant death were buried. The evil forest was allocated to Christians in order to discourage them from serving Jesus Christ. The adherents of the traditional religion hoped that Christians would be afflicted with incurable diseases. However, the Church accepted the land and their spiritual leader in person of Philips prayed over the land for God's protection. On the land, there was an Iroko tree that the Ondo people believed that evil spirits inhabited. The adherents of Christianity prayed on the site for seven days and the tree that was believed to be the abode of witches fell down. The Christians cleared the tree away from the site and they built a Church on the land. There, they worshipped the Living God.

It was reported that Philips cared for the people spiritually and materially. The Christians built Schools and Colleges in Ondo area. Many people were trained in those institutions that were established by Christians in the town. The first Primary School was built in Ondo in 1890 by the Missionaries. The pupils were taught Christian education.

The old pupils of the School could be found in all parts of Nigeria occupying important political, social, economic and administrative positions. They are also in law, politics, medicine, theology, technology and education all over the country. The Christians in Ondo area made use of the converts to spread the Good News to others in Nigeria. In 1879, Ondo town was affected by small- pox. The mortality rate was high, and it was reported that about ten people died daily in the town. The traditional Chiefs gave a heifer to Sango priest to offer as sacrifice of propitiation. However, Philips and Christians in the town were able to inform the people that the disease came because of their disobedience to the commandments of God. The Living God used it to punish them for their evil acts to fellow human beings in the town. However, the Lord God demanded from them repentance from their wicked deeds. It was

noticed that none of the Christians was reported dead, except two people who were affected and later received healing as the Church prayed for them and they repented from their sins. The Church prayed for the forgiveness of sins of the entire people of Ondo town, and God heard their prayers and the disease vanished from Ondo town. This made many people to join the Church.

Another important thing that Christianity brought to Ondo town was the introduction of corrugated iron sheets for roofing houses instead of leaves that had been previously in use. Many people in Ondo town roofed their houses with iron sheets. The Christians also made the people to stop the act of burying living slaves with their masters when they die. The Christians also introduced the planting of economic trees, such as cocoa and breadfruit to farmers in Ondo area in 1890. Reverend Charles Philips distributed the seeds of the trees to Ondo farmers to plant in their various farms which later brought to them economic reward.

Reverend Charles Philips succeeded against the power of darkness and illiteracy in Ondo area. He died in 1906. It is a testimony to his efforts that the spread of Christianity continued in Ondo area after his death.

### **3.4 The Planting of Christianity in Ibadan**

Reverend David Hinderer introduced Christianity in Ibadan around 1854. He was a German Missionary of the Church Missionary Society.

It was Reverend Henry Townsend who was then at Abeokuta who paid a visit to the town during the reign of Baale Ope Agbe and requested a mission station for the area. Townsend returned to Abeokuta and requested for more missionaries from his mission. In 1852, Hinderer established a mission station at Ibadan. Many Evangelists were also posted to him and he sent them to open mission stations in various towns, such as, Iwo, Ilesha, Modakeke, Ile- Ife and Oshogbo to mention just a few places. In April 1896, the Church Missionary Society established a training institute in Oyo. There, they trained professional teachers, but the students in the school looked to the priesthood as their mentor. The college in question is now crowned as Ajayi Crowther University, Oyo. In 1900, the Mission established an institute in Oshogbo to train vernacular evangelists for the spread of the gospel in Yoruba land. On the other hand, the Baptists likewise built the Baptist College and Bowen University at Iwo. In 1901, the Wesleyans established Wesley College at Ibadan.



### **3.5 The Introduction of Christianity in Ikare-Akoko Area**

The introduction of Christianity in Ikare-Akoko area took place in various routes. In 1870, one Michael Badoro at Okela Quarters in Ikare, returned from slavery and preached the gospel to his people.

Christianity was also introduced in the area through Lokoja in Kogi State, Nigeria in 1883. The Anglican priest named J.J. Williams who was the vicar of the Holy Trinity Church, Lokoja, spread the gospel to the area in 1883. At the same period, many non-native traders, rubber tappers, saw millers, produce buyers, and Christian sojourners who were soldiers in Ikare area also spread Christianity in Akoko area. Mention could be made of David Oluguna and Peter Arowolo, natives of Ilesha who were traders. In 1910, Reverend H.F. Gani, the superintendent of Owo, Ogori, and Akoko churches visited the Ikare church. He influenced the Anglican Church authorities in Lagos Diocese to merge the Akoko churches to Yoruba mission. In 1915, Mr Aiyebusi became the church administrator in Ikare mission stations. He imposed church wedding on christians. Adherents, who could not comply with Aiyebusi on the marriage order, left the Anglican Church. They established African church in Ikare. Despite the breakaway of some members, Saint Stephen's church Ikare began to exercise the leadership role among Ikare churches from 1915 to 1920. On 29 September 1920, Mr. Lackland Augustus Lennon, a Jamaican was posted to Saint Stephen's church Ikare, as an administrator. In 1922, he was ordained Priest at Owo and returned to Ikare mission area. In 1924, the Bishop of Lagos Diocese, Melville Jones authorised Lennon to extend the spread of Christianity to Kabba, Ebira and Akoko-Edo areas. Lennon established schools in those areas to convert children.

In 1922, Lennon established post office at Ikare. By the middle of 1940s, the Ministry of Communications, Nigeria, took over the post office.

In 1923, Lennon built a magnificent office and he allocated a room to his wife, Mrs. M. Lennon to serve as dispensary to Ikare people. Many non- Christians who benefited from the clinic became Christians.

In 1922-1925, Lennon, Chief Ajaguna and Momoh gave able leadership to the people of Ikare to construct Ikare-Owo road.

In 1943, Lennon was appointed a parliament member to represent the Western-Region in the house of parliament in Lagos. His cordial relationship with Christians and other faith members in Akoko area, earned him popularity among them. Lennon used the opportunity that

was offered him in the House of Parliament to appeal for essential amenities for the people of Ikare. However, the government could not meet his demands due to the Second World War that had just ended for it had affected the economy and the finance of Nigeria. Based on this, Reverend Lennon advised that the Ikare people levied every taxable male some amounts along with their yearly poll tax. He made it clear to the people of Ikare that if they could produce the materials and used direct labour methods for the pipe borne water and the light projects, the government would render the technological assistance for the Ikare community. The people yielded to the advice of Lennon. Between 1943 and early 1950 pipe borne water and electricity were provided in Ikare area. Many non-Christians who witnessed the events became Christians. Lennon advised Christians to participate in Nigerian politics in order for them to bring light into the country.

In January 1921, Reverend Lennon established a primary school at Ikare. He christened it Saint Stephen's School, Ikare-Akoko. On 23rd September, 1935, Lennon established Jubilee Central School to train Pupil-teachers, clerks, church workers and would-be students for Saint Andrew's Teachers College, Oyo, Oyo State, [now Bishop Ajayi Crowther University, Oyo, Nigeria]. Lennon left Nigeria on 7 July 1951 (Jamaica (Akeredolu, 1986).

### **3.6 The Problems Encountered by Christians in Spreading**

#### **Christianity in Yoruba Land**

This course material seeks to discuss the contact of Christianity with Islam in Yoruba land. It has been discovered by Scholars that Islamic religion predated Christianity in Nigeria. Islam had been planted and nurtured in the land before the introduction of Christianity. Besides, Islamic propagators in Nigeria were Africans who were accustomed to the harsh climatic conditions and diseases of the land. These Islamic scholars continued spreading Islam faith in the land.

They also established Quranic schools where children were taught Arabic as the official language in spreading Islamic religion in Yoruba land. For this reason, the Muslim community had grown both in size and stature ever before the coming of Christianity into Yoruba land.

The contact of Christianity and Islam created many problems for Christianity at the initial stage of expansion in the land. Among these problems in the wheel was bad climate. The climate served as a great barrier against the efforts of foreign missionaries who came to plant

Christianity in Yoruba land. This is because they were not used to the tropical climate of the land.

For instance, some missionaries died of heat -stroke caused by the heat of the sun. Malaria was another disease militating against the progress of Christianity in Yoruba land. It could be recalled that right from 1841, which was the period of the Niger expedition, malaria was a very significant barrier to the spread of Christianity in Nigeria. About one hundred and thirty-six out of one hundred and forty-five Europeans who took part in the expedition died of malaria and they were buried at Lokoja in Kogi State. Their graves remain in Lokoja town till date. For the reasons mentioned above, the spread of Christianity in Lokoja area stopped for some time. But, for Muslims, their religion continued to spread in the land for their propagators were Africans who had all natural endowment in terms of energy and natural adaptability to the situation in the tropic. Islam came to Yoruba land by land. The early propagators did not face the sea problems encountered by the propagators of Christianity since most of its propagators came from the hinterland. The Christian missionaries were also faced with the problem of language, a problem which created a favorable avenue for Islam to spread since Islam was propagated by Yoruba –speaking people.

Consequently, Islam had an edge over Christianity. In this situation, the Christians in Yoruba land were not happy at the rapid expansion of Islam in the land. As a result, some measures were adopted either to limit the rate of the spread of Islam in the area or to help in their own way of spreading Christianity in the same manner as Islam. To achieve this goal, the following efforts were made by the Christians. Native Clergies learnt Arabic language which they used in spreading the gospel in the Muslim populated areas.

Schools were built to educate Yoruba children in order to attract their parents to become Christians. However, the strategies such as discussion on Christian faith, preaching, baptism and training the native Clergy in Arabic language adopted by the Christian missionaries to counter the rapid growth of Islam in Yoruba land had little or no effect. But they were most successful through the use of education and health-care delivery strategies. All these, we shall discuss in other units of this course. But an example is mentioned below.

In 1922, Lack land Augustus Lennon used the above-mentioned methods to spread Christianity in Ikare-Ikare Akoko area of Ondo State.

In schools and hospitals, the Christian missions had all the resources within their control to serve as magnet to attract adherents of other

religions in Yoruba land to the Christian faith. Moreover, in some areas, this method did not work. This is because the adherents of Islam had also introduced Quranic schools that served as alternative to the type of Christian- sponsored schools to train their children.

From the whole episode, it seems that right from the beginning of the contact of Islam with Christianity in the Yoruba land, the two religions have been witnessing a kind of revivalism with a view to winning souls from one to the other faith. On the other hand, both religions have several things in common including the belief in one creator who had sent many prophets, the only Son of God Jesus Christ the Messiah of mankind. Muslims hold Muhammad as the Prophet to mankind. They both claim Abraham as their ancestor and both teach morals and peace.

However, Christianity teaches Trinity to their adherents, which Islam did not accept. This makes Islam and Christianity to become rivals in the Yoruba land.

### **3.7 Steps Taken by Missionaries to Minimise their Problems in the Yoruba Land**

During the period that arrangements were being made for Niger Expedition and a mission was projected for the model farm at Lokoja, the mother church of Anglican in London, assigned duties to Reverends J.F. Schon and Samuel Ajayi Crowther to train interpreters and themselves to learn the languages of the people of Nigeria that could help them communicate with Nigerians.

Schon choose Hausa and Igbo languages. While Samuel Ajayi Crowther studied Yoruba language, other missionaries in Yoruba land studied Yoruba language for the same purpose. In 1852, Samuel Ajayi Crowther published an enlarged edition of Yoruba Grammar and Vocabulary as well as translations of four books of the New Testament.

Professor Carl Lepsius guided the Church Missionary Society linguistic studies in Hausa, Kanuri, Ibo and Ijaw. While Bowen, a Baptist missionary also learnt Yoruba language and drew the attention of the missionaries to the poetic excellence of the invocative prayers of traditional Yoruba worship, especially those of Ifa for use in Christian worship by Christians in the Yoruba land. His works were published in volumes of the Smithsonian contributions to knowledge in New York. Crowther and Thomas King translated the Bible and the Prayer book into Yoruba language for the Yoruba Christians. In 1854, another expedition was sent up the River Niger by the Crown Colony. The British Government and Macgregor Laird organised the expedition. The

aim of the trip was to introduce legitimate trade and plant Christianity in the Niger-Benue area. According to Crampton, many of the explorers were Africans. The white men were very few at this period, this was due to the death of many of them during the first expedition that took place in 1841. The few white men that accompanied the black men to the upper Niger-Benue came with quinine, which they used to cure malaria whenever they were attacked. Bishop Ajayi Crowther left the Yoruba mission and joined the expedition. At the period in question, everybody that made the journey returned alive for there was no report of death among the explorers. In 1857, the Crown Colony, the church missionary and some traders made another journey to the area in question. While they got to Idah in Kogi State, the Attah of Igala land did not grant them permission to establish a mission station there. However, he sent some of his servants to accompany them to the confluence area. He told them to sell the war sport to the explorers so that they could settle there and help him wage war against the Nupe warriors who used to wage war against the people of Igala. The Attah of Igala land named Ocheji, sold the land to them for 700,000 cowries or goods worth of the amount. On the land, were the following buildings; Gbobe Chapel, Schools, a College and The Holy Trinity Cathedral Church, Lokoja, which are always headed by Lokoja indigenes in fulfilment of the prophecy of Lieutenant Glover in 1862.

He wrote a private letter to the Authority of the Church Missionary Society in England that the Confluence area which was bought would be the area where future great Bishops that would be produced. He wrote 'this Lairdstown will be the ground of a future great bishopric.' Today there are many sons of Lokoja area that are Bishops, mention could be made of Ferron, Bako, Akanyan, and Igbunu to mention just a few of them. No any priest outside the area was made a bishop except the retired Bishop Haruna who was trained by Lennon, a missionary at Ikare- Akoko in Ikare, who was consecrated the Bishop of the Kwara Anglican Diocese, Offa, but later, the headquarters of the Diocese was moved to Ilorin. However, if the policy that was laid down by Glover is amended in the Lokoja Diocese, then other priests that are not an indigene of Lokoja area may be considered by the Anglican Communion in Nigeria to be consecrated bishop. If not, the Lokoja indigenes will continue to be bishop in the area.

### **3.8 Other People that Helped in the Spread of the Gospel in Yoruba Land**

The Creoles, that is, the freed slaves that were Nigerians, especially, the Yorubas contributed immensely to the planting of Christianity in Yoruba land. Another group that helped in the planting of Christianity in

Yoruba land were noble persons; that is, men of local prominence who on their own initiative invited and patronised missionaries; among such people were Sodeke of Egba land and the Chief of Badagry. The lay converts, especially traders who acted as a group used their social powers to aid the establishment of missions in Yoruba land. Catechists, Evangelists, church elders and school teachers were also used to plant Christianity in Yoruba land.

In addition, congregations which pioneered expansion of Christianity to other parts of Yoruba land and paid for the upkeep of ministers also helped in the planting of Christianity in Yoruba land through financial aids.

Mention could be made of All Saints Anglican Church, Yaba that paid for the upkeep of ministers. Furthermore, local communities built and maintained Church, and school infrastructures for the spread of the Gospel in Yoruba land. Another set of people that helped in the planting of Christianity in Yoruba land were the Charismatic, or prophet figures who quickened the planting of the religion in their brief careers in the land.

### **SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

The freed slaves of Yoruba land started the planting of Christianity in Badagry. Discuss.

## **4.0 CONCLUSION**

This unit has identified some of the problems that were encountered by Christians in the planting of Christianity in Yoruba land. Among these problems were the harsh climatic conditions and diseases of the land. The missionaries also faced the problem of language which they could use to preach the Gospel to the people of Yoruba land.

They also encountered opposition from adherents of other religions in their quest to get converts. In this unit, you also learnt about some steps that were taken to minimise some problems that were encountered by the missionaries in Yoruba land.

## **5.0 SUMMARY**

Having gone through this unit, you would have understood the following points:

- The Methodist Mission got to the Yoruba land around 1840.

- The Yoruba freed slave settlers appealed to the Queen of England to establish a Colony in Badagry. They also demanded for missionaries be sent to them at Badagry to continue the spread of Christianity in Yoruba land.
- The freed slaves in Sierra-Leone joined the settlers at Badagry and appealed for more missionaries for Badagry land. Reverends Thomas Birch Freeman and William de Graft responded to the requests of the settlers of Badagry and arrived in town on 24 September, 1842 to plant Christianity there.
- Schools and hospitals were used as means to convert people into Christianity in the Yoruba land.
- The Missionaries had problems of language, diseases and oppositions from other religion in the land.
- The Missionaries learnt some Nigerian languages and they made use of them to write the Bible for Nigerians to use.

## **6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT**

1. Enumerate the problems that the early Missionaries faced in the planting of Christianity in Yoruba land.
2. Assess the spread of Christianity in Yoruba land between 1840 and 1842.
3. Explain some of the steps taken by the Missionaries to minimise their problems in the Yoruba land during the early periods of the gospel in the area.

## **7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING**

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## **UNIT 4 THE SPREAD OF CHRISTIANITY IN THE EASTERN PARTS OF NIGERIA BY THE HOLY GHOST FATHERS IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY**

### **CONTENTS**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objective
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 The Purchasing of Slaves and Their Converting into Christianity by the Holy Ghost Fathers
  - 3.2 The Spread of Roman Catholic Mission at Nkissi
  - 3.3 The Evil practices of the Onitsha Indigenes in the Early Periods
  - 3.4 The Practice of Christianity in Aguleri Village
  - 3.5 The Problems of Christian Village Evangelism in Onitsha Area
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

In this unit, you will be introduced to the spread of Christianity in the Eastern parts of Nigeria by the Holy Ghost Fathers in the last quarter of the Nineteenth Century. The Holy Ghost Fathers focused their attention on village evangelism in the Eastern parts of the Country.

### **2.0 OBJECTIVE**

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- explain the method used by the Holy Ghost Fathers to spread Christianity in various villages in Eastern parts of Nigeria. enumerate their achievements in the areas.



### 3.0 MAIN CONTENT

#### 3.1 The Purchasing of Slaves and Their Conversion into Christians by the Holy Ghost Fathers

The method of evangelisation that was embarked upon by the Holy Ghost Roman Catholic Missionary Society in Africa was the buying of slaves whom they settled in villages and converted into Christianity around nineteenth century. This method was used to gather the scattered slaves who were displaced by the French and the European slave traders. The Europeans assembled the African freed slaves and gave them liberty in their various settlements.

However, they used the slaves cheaply in the labour market. The missionaries also used the slaves cheaply to get themselves established in Africa. Around 1877, the Holy Ghost Fathers started buying African slaves at Bagamoyo. They used the opportunity to evangelise the African slaves whose souls were neglected in evangelism work. In 1892, the Superior of the Holy Ghost Fathers wrote from Paris to the Cardinal Prefect of the College of Propaganda in Rome to inform him of how they bought children, trained them, converted them into Christianity and settled them in Christian villages. He wrote:

...in all our missions our Fathers bring up young children, both boys and girls, at great expense and a good number of these, especially of the girls, are children bought out of slavery. We have to look after them for several years until we can establish them and make Christian house-holds and then Christian villages. (Kalu,O.U.1980).

In 1896, 880 children were bought in the slave markets in Congo and 830 at Oubangui between 1894 and 1899 respectively by the Holy Ghost Fathers. In March 31st, 1897, Father Hacquard, a missionary in Timbuktu reported to the General Assembly of the Anti-Slavery Society in Paris that they had adopted slaves whom they settled in Christian villages. By this method, the inhabitants of the Christian villages were converted into Christianity by the Holy Ghost Fathers. However, the Holy Ghost Fathers had the problem of financing in the Christian village evangelism method. But on 5th May, 1888, a partial solution was reached through the letter which Pope Leo Xiii wrote to the Anti-Slavery Society in Paris to establish and finance thirty Christian villages for evangelism among Africans who settled in the French territories. The Archbishop of Algiers Cardinal Lavigevie, pleaded for the abolition of slavery in Brazil. He made a request for abolition of internal slavery in Africa. The Cardinal put forward the following plans to other Bishops

to stop the internal slavery in Africa. Armed monks should be formed to fight the Negroes in order to end up the trafficking in slaves in Africa by using force of arms. The Pope suggested to the Missionaries to buy the African slaves and settle them in a place called 'Christian village'. The suggestion of the Pope was taken by the Missionaries in Nigeria. In the Eastern part of the country, the Holy Ghost Fathers bought Nigerian slaves and settled them into Christian villages. In order to aid the Missionaries in the Eastern part of Nigeria to evangelise the people, the Pope introduced collection of money on 6th January annually in every Catholic church for the Holy Ghost fathers for planting of Christianity in Nigeria. About fifty people were sent to evangelise the area. Among these people were twenty freed slaves in the mission work. In 1890, about fifty-five slaves were bought and in 1891, the missionaries bought about seventeen slaves. The slaves that were bought settled in Christian villages. In 1906, the Holy Ghost Fathers had established three Christian villages in the Niger Delta area of Nigeria. Agouleri mission stations had Saint Joseph as its headquarters for evangelism in the area.

The mission also had about 500 Christians who were in charge of the spread of the gospel at Onitsha Wharf. Around 1902, The Vatican suggested that all catholic churches should contribute money for the spread of the gospel in Nigeria. All catholic churches throughout the world contributed money for the work of evangelism in Africa, especially, Nigeria. The French Anti—Slavery Society accepted the suggestion of the Vatican and promised to make funds available to the Missionaries in Africa, especially those who were in the Eastern part of Nigeria. 50,000 Francs was sent to the Missionaries in the Eastern parts of Nigeria for the evangelism work by the named organisation. However, in 1911, in Eastern Nigeria, the Superior of the Roman Catholic Mission, Shanahan, had a dispute with the Cardinal of the propaganda colleagues in Rome over the misused of the money donated by the organisation for the purpose of evangelism in the area. This was because he was accused of embezzling the money that was meant for evangelism in the Eastern parts of Nigeria by the Church.

### **3.2 The Spread of Roman Catholic Mission at Nkissi**

In September 1885, four French Missionaries were sent to open a Mission station in the Eastern part of Nigeria. They opened a mission station at Nkissi near Onitsha Wharf which was opposite the bank of River Niger, near the slave market in the area. In 1886, Samuel Ajayi Crowther who was an Anglican priest donated a piece of land to the Roman Catholic Mission to establish a Mission station at the Niger Delta Pastorate area. The area which Ajayi Crowther gave to the Holy Ghost Fathers to plant Christianity was formally used for buying slaves

in the Eastern part of Nigeria. At Onitsha Wharf, a slave was bought for 90 Francs on 12th June 1886. Furthermore, on 6 August 1886, a three-year old boy was sold for 12 sacks of salt. In 1891, the missionaries bought seventeen slaves. The slaves were established in christian villages. In 1906, the Holy Ghost Fathers had established three christian villages in the Niger Delta area of Nigeria. Aguleri Mission Station had Saint Joseph as its headquarters for evangelism in the area. The Mission also had five hundred christians who were in charge of the spread of the gospel at Onitsha wharf in Nigeria around 1902.

### **3.3 The Evil Practices of the Onitsha Indigenes in the Early Periods**

The Onitsha wharf Missionaries witnessed the practices of human sacrifice and slavery at Onitsha. It was reported that slaves departed Nupe kingdom for Onitsha. And the Asaba people bought them. For instance, two slaves were sacrificed during the enthronement of Obi. Moreover, Obi titleholders were very many at Asaba. Each titleholder used to sacrifice slaves for their enthronement or burial. Besides, the Asaba people used to buy slaves from Nupe traders at Onitsha. The tasks for the missionaries at Onitsha and Asaba areas were to stamp out these evil practices among the indigene of the named towns. For these reasons, the missionaries started to purchase some of the slaves that were bought by the Obis in area. In 1887, the slaves that were bought by the Holy Ghost Fathers or Missionaries were used as labourers to build a hospital at Onitsha wharf for treating the sick among the slaves that settled in the area. However, they were accused of using the slaves for labour but the Missionaries claimed that slaves were used to build the hospital for charitable purpose.

### **3.4 The Practice of Christianity in Aguleri Village**

In 1891, the Onitsha missionaries converted a Chief named Igigo Aguleri. At the village, the Holy Ghost Fathers celebrated Mass each morning at 4.45 am followed by communal prayer and meditation of the Christians whom they bought and settled there. After the morning Mass, the Christian ex-slaves were engaged in work on the coffee plantation that was owned by the missionaries. In addition, during afternoon every day, the Christian ex-slaves learnt catechism in the church. The Christian ex-slaves used every evening to work around the mission buildings. In 1891, about seventy Ossamori who were adherents of the Anglican faith joined the Roman Catholic Church. In 1893, the Missionaries established a primary school at Onitsha wharf about five hundred people were admitted into the school to receive Western education. This served as the beginning of the Roman Catholic

education in the Eastern part of Nigeria. Some of the ex – slaves, who were trained in the school were engaged as teachers, interpreters and clerks in government service.

### **3.5 The Problem of Christian Village Evangelism in Onitsha Area**

The Royal Niger Company was the lord of the Niger Delta area in the early 1890s. For these reasons, the company controlled all activities in the area. For example, the company imposed payment of 25 percent tax on all goods for the Missionaries that were sailed by the sea to Onitsha area. In addition to this, they were also taxed the sum of three pounds for the transportation of a ton of goods brought through the sea to Onitsha. Besides, whatever goods the Catholic missionaries paid for at the Royal Niger Company, would be delayed before delivery. The imposition of taxation on the goods of Catholic mission by the Royal Niger Company led the Holy Ghost Society authorities into debt. In Nigeria, from 1885 to 1890 the Royal Niger Company saw the French Holy Ghost Society as French aides and abettors of French interests on the Nigeria soil. For example, Gold accused the Superior of the Holy Ghost Mission of engaging in slavery and had him prosecuted and fined.

He also claimed that the mission site that was given to them by Ajayi Crowther to establish a mission station belonged to the Royal Niger Company. And that the Royal Niger Company was owned by the British Government. Therefore, the landed properties which were occupied by the French Holy Ghost Fathers belonged to the British government. So, their occupation of mission stations in Onitsha and Asaba was illegal. Marshall therefore, replaced the French Missionaries with the English Missionaries in the Niger area. He summoned Cardinal Ledochowzki, Prefect of the Congregation of Propaganda in Rome, and Cardinal Vaughan to remove the French Holy Ghost fathers from the Niger Delta areas in Nigeria. Furthermore, Marshall also wrote to the Superior General of the Catholic society in Paris, Father Emonet, that there was rivalry between the French and the English missionaries in the land. Therefore, he would like the French missionaries to leave the area for the English missionaries, since they belonged to the British government that owned the disputed land .This also made the new Cardinal get involved in the disputed land by looking for a West African Bishopric to which a British – born person could be appointed.

All these problems with the Royal Niger Company, over taxation, the buying of slaves and the French presence in the Eastern part of Nigeria made the operation of the Christian village expensive and unprofitable in Nigeria. In addition to this, it was felt by the missionaries that it was

better for Africans to evangelise themselves rather than using White Missionaries. This view compounded the problems of Catholic Mission in Nigeria in the early 1895 to 1890s. The attitude of the Holy Ghost Fathers showed their bias towards the Africans that they had little or no faith in the Africans evangelised in Nigeria. For they focused on the Christian village evangelisation methods in the eastern part of Nigeria that was led by the white men only. The Holy Ghost Fathers also introduced other methods of evangelism in Nigeria. For instance, Lejeune, Superior of Onitsha Wharf mission from 1900 to 1905 demanded for funds from the Cardinal Golti, Prefect of propaganda of Christianity in Rome, to tackle the problem of slavery in Nigeria. As a result of this, the missionaries converted sixty-five people in Agouleri in Nigeria. In 1901, Golti sent Lejeune 20,000 Lira to be used for the conversion of African slaves to Christianity. Despite these methods that were used by the missionaries to fight slavery in Africa, it was not totally eradicated. For this reason, Lejeune embarked on a research for an alternative method of evangelisation which would be more effective in the spread of the Gospel in the Eastern Nigeria. The method was the introduction of Christianity to the Chiefs and Leaders of the Agouleri village. Through this, many people were converted to Christianity in the area.

#### **4.0 CONCLUSION**

It is expected that from the study of this unit, you should have learnt the following points:

The purchasing of slaves and their conversion to Christianity by the Missionaries. The spread of Roman Catholic Mission in the East of the Rivers Niger and Benue in Nigeria. The evil practice of the Onitsha indigenes in the early periods of Christianity.

#### **5.0 SUMMARY**

Having gone through this unit, you would have understood the following points:

- The Missionaries embarked on the buying of slaves in Onitsha area, settled them in villages and converted them into Christianity.
- The Pope introduced collection of money in the Catholic Church to aid the Missionaries in the spreading of the Gospel in the Onitsha area.

- The Royal Niger Company was the lord of the Niger Delta area in early 1890s. Goldie accused the leader of the Missionaries of engaging in slavery, had him prosecuted and fined.
- Lejeune replaced Goldie in 1901 in Niger area. He searched for an alternative method of evangelising the people of Niger Delta area.

## **6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT**

Discuss the following:

- i. Goldie
- ii. Marshall
- iii. Obi title holders at Asaba land in 1885.

## **7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING**

Kalu, O. U. (1980). *The History of Christianity in West Africa Essay Lectures*. London: Longmans Groups Ltd.

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## **UNIT 5 THE ACTIVITIES OF CHRISTIANS IN EGBA LAND**

### **CONTENTS**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 Henry Townsend and Wilhelm arrived Badagry
  - 3.2 Townsend Appointed the Secretary of Egba United Government
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

In the last unit, you have learnt about the Portuguese voyages of the fifteenth Century that brought Christianity to Nigeria. Also, you have learnt about the involvement of the Portuguese Christians in slave-trade business. Their involvement in the illegal trade resulted to the short live of Christianity in Nigeria for a period. You have learnt that the campaign against slavery by the British government led to the eradication of slave- trade in Nigeria in 1841. This led to the return of many Nigerian free slaves to their homes and introduced Christianity to their people.

This unit will enlighten you on the planting of Christianity in Egba land in Nigeria.

### **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- discuss how Christianity was planted in Egba land
- identify the problems that confront the spread of Christianity in Egba land.

### **3.0 MAIN CONTENT**

#### **3.1 Henry Townsend and Wilhem Arrived Badagry Freeman arrived Badagry on September 24, 1842**

Between 1893 and 1842, about 500 freed-slaves in Sierra-Leone had returned to Badagry and other parts of Yoruba land. The immigrants at Badagry sent urgent messages and earnest entreaties to the missionaries in Sierra –Leone to send Christian teachers. The response to this appeal was the birth of missionary activity in Yoruba land. Freeman was sent to Badagry by the Methodist Church.

Freeman arrived Badagry on September 24, 1842.

Freeman was the first Methodist missionary to arrive at Badagry, Nigeria on 1842. He was accompanied by William de Graft and his wife. They were permitted to establish a mission there. They built a house and chapel at Babagry. William deGraft was put in charge. However by the period when these missionaries got to Badagry, they met the traditional rulers divided into factions. In Badagry, one of the factions favoured the advent of missionaries, whose presence, it was hoped, would confer definite political and military advantages on their patrons. In Badagry, there arose pro-missionary and anti- missionary factions. Wawu, chief of English town in Badagry professed hatred for the slave-trade, love for legitimate trade and the warmest of friendliness towards the British. He welcomed the missionaries and English traders in order to use them to claim a first- class status. But, the Egba remained until 1891 slave-holders, slave-dealers and slave- hunters. Human sacrifice was performed publicly in Abeokuta as late as 1887.

On 24 December, 1842, Reverends Henry Townsend and Wilhelm arrived at Badagry and worshipped with Reverend Birch Freeman who was an adherent of Methodist faith. On 29 December, 1842, Townsend left Badagry for Egba land. He was received by Oba Sodeke of Abeokuta. All commercial activities were suspended to welcome the Missionaries to Egba land since they requested for them to plant Christianity in the land. The Missionaries established mission station in Abeokuta on 27 July, 1846. Abeokuta was made the Headquarters of the other Mission Stations for Yoruba land. In 1847, the Church Missionary Society planted their missions in the following towns: Ake, Owu, Ikija, Itoku, and Igbein. The Missionaries established Sunday school and primary schools for both the old and young people in Egba land. The people of Egba raised no objection to their children being initiated into the white man's mystery of reading and writing. They saw the advantages of imitating his technological superiority in house- building



and cotton-ginning. On the other hand 'Christian' social laws must give way to indigenous customs and institutions that really mattered such as polygamy, burial rites, slavery and ogboni (E.A. Ayandele 1966 p.12). The postponed conflict in the political ideals of the missionaries and the leaders of Egba land began to occur at the outbreak of the Ijaye war. In February 1860 the perennial Dahomian menace led to the usual appeal by the Egba for British military aid through the missionaries. The government responded and sent ammunition and volunteers to Egba land. However, the British government sent warning to Dahomey that an attack on the Egba people would be regarded as declaration of war on British people. As a result of the warning the Dahomey people received from the Britian, they had to stop their plan of attempt to wage war on the Egba people. Townsend advised the Consul who sent a deputation to instruct the Egba people on what the Bristish Government did to the people on the grounds that an opportunity had arrived for the recovery of their father land. Townsend also supported the Egba people and declared war. He said Ibadan was already too strong and used it to perpetuate war and kidnapping. The Egba people refused to allow the Consul's deputation proceed to Ibadan and Ijaye.

The people of Egba demanded from the British to destroy Whydah, Dahomey's chief port, stop importation of ammunition to Ibadan through the Ijebu territory and send military officers to defend Abeokuta and the Egba people waging war against all their enemies namely, Dahomey, Ibadan and Ijebu. Egba Christians became the most vocal group who advocated war against the Ibadan. The Egba waged war against Ibadan. (E.A. Ayandele 1966 p. 13).

The wives of the Missionaries cared for the women of Egba land. In Egbaland, the Missionaries were also involved in the economic, commercial, social and political life of the people as stated by Oshitelu. They encouraged the people to trade by using Ogun River as waterway for trading. They bought and sold farm product such as palm oil and cotton.

In 1862, the Missionaries built Ake Orphanage in Abeokuta to take care of orphans in the land. The Mission also established a News paper called Iwe Irohin in Yoruba language. It was used as a medium of information for the people in Egba land in 1859.

### **3.2 Reverend Johnson Samuel Appointed the Secretary of the Egba United Government**

In 1902, Reverend Johnson Samuel was appointed the secretary of the Egba United Government. He was also known as Adegboyega Edun.

C.B. Moor was also appointed the treasurer of the Society. The highest judicial authority in Egba land was no longer held by the Ogbonis but by a Christian named J. Martin while Reverend D.O. Williams became the 'Prime Minister' of the Alake around 1898 and 1911. In 1900, the Alake of Egba land named Gbadebo attended Church service at the opening of the Townsend Wood Memorial Church. Since then he attended services regularly. He became a devoted Christian and abandoned the traditional customs of the land. For instance he allowed his face to be seen by his chiefs. Furthermore, he prayed to God whenever drought or illness befell his domain. Oba Gbadebo no longer consulted diviners for solution to the problems of Egba land but went to Saint Peter's Church to pray to the living God to solve such problems. He also had a Chaplain for the king's palace in Abeokuta town. Oba Gbadebo paid a visit to the king of England in 1904. King Edward vii gave him a Bible as a special gift.

### **SELF -ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

State the roles of the Alake of Egba land in the spread of the Gospel in his land.

## **4.0 CONCLUSION**

You have read in this unit that the Egba people sent for Missionaries to plant Christianity in their area. They accepted Christianity and it brought to them social, spiritual, educational and economic gains which further spread to the other areas of Yoruba land. Christianity paved way for Oba Gbadebo to pay visit to England. The happiness and gains which other Yoruba people saw among Christians in Egba land made them open their gates to the Missionaries. The Christians who were traders also spread their faith to some parts of Northern Nigeria.

## **5.0 SUMMARY**

In this unit, you have learnt the following:

The Abeokuta people welcomed the Missionaries to their land and allowed them to plant Christianity.

Many Mission Stations were opened by the Missionaries in Egba land.

The Missionaries established a vernacular newspaper called "Iwe Iroyin".

## **6.0 TUTOR- MARKED ASSIGNMENT**

1. Discuss the roles of Alake of Egba land in the spread of Christianity in Egba land.
2. State the benefits of Christianity to the people of Egba.

## **7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING**

Ayandele, E.A. (1966). *The Missionary Impact on Modern Nigeria 1842-191: A Political and Social Analysis*, London: Longman.

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## **MODULE 2 INDEPENDENT MOVEMENTS**

- Unit 1 Christ Apostolic Church of Nigeria
- Unit 2 Cherubim and Seraphim Church, Nigeria
- Unit 3 Celestial Church of Christ, Nigeria
- Unit 4 The Impact of Christianity in Nigeria
- Unit 5 Problems and Prospects of Christianity in Nigeria

### **UNIT 1 THE CHRIST APOSTOLIC CHURCH OF NIGERIA**

#### **CONTENTS**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 Birth and Early Life of Apostle Joseph Ayo Babalola
  - 3.2 The Call of Ayo Joseph Babalola
  - 3.3 His Meeting with Faith Tabernacle at Ilofa
  - 3.4 The First National Meeting of the Faith Tabernacle at Ilesa, Osun, State
  - 3.5 The Great Revival held at Oke-Oye
  - 3.6 The Persecution of Joseph Babalola in 1931-32
  - 3.7 Apostle Babalola handed over the Church to Prophet S.O. Akande at Ede and passed away on Saturday 25th July, 1959
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

#### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

In this unit, you will learn about the call of Apostle Joseph Babalola who was the first indigenous Church founder in Nigeria. Besides, you will also learn about how he has healed several people in Nigeria.

Furthermore, you will also read about how Babalola was used by God to perform miracles that brought joy to many people in Nigeria. Apart from that, you will learn about how he invited many foreigners to spread the Gospel in Nigeria which caused him to lose some of his members to their Church when they fell apart over doctrinal differences. You will learn how he was persecuted by the then Government and his own

people at Odo-Owa in Kwara State, Nigeria, his marital life as an ideal Christian family and his preaching.

## **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- describe the call of Apostle Joseph Babalola
- describe his meeting with Faith Tabernacle members at Ilofa
- identify the contributions of Babalola to the planting of Christianity in Nigeria
- discuss his persecution over the spread of the Gospel in Nigeria.

## **3.0 MAIN CONTENT**

### **3.1 The Birth and Early Life of Joseph Ayo Babalola**

Joseph Ayo Babalola was born at Odo-Owa in Kwara State, Nigeria, on the 25th of April, 1904. His father was Pa David Lawani Rotimi, while his mother was Martha Talabi Rotimi. Both of them were of the Anglican church of Nigeria. Pa Rotimi was one of the early strong members of the Anglican faith in the then Lagos Diocese of Nigeria.

Joseph Babalola started primary school at Ifo and later transferred to Oshogbo in Osun State, Nigeria. There he read standard four, but could not proceed further. As a result, Babalola took an appointment with the Public Works Department, Lokoja, in Kogi State, Nigeria. He was employed as a tractor driver. One day, he was called by a mysterious voice to take up preaching as a vocation, as he was driving a roller on the road of Akure-Ilesha in 1928. He thereafter heeded the call and resigned his appointment. Babalola later married Mrs Dorcas [nee Adetoun] a native of Ilesa in Osun State, Nigeria in 1935.

### **3.2 The Call of Joseph Ayo Babalola**

On October, 9th 1928, Babalola heard a voice calling him from heaven to leave his job. He asked others who were near him if they heard the voice that spoke to him. But they said to him that they heard no voice.

The next day, he went to the Akure-Ilesa road to continue his work. At 12 noon, Babalola heard the mysterious voice the second time repeating the same words that were spoken to him the previous day. So, he came down from the roller and told one of his assistants to take over the driving of the roller from him. As the man started the roller, it cut fire.

As a result of the burning of the roller, Babalola resigned his appointment with the Ministry of works, Lokoja. While he returned from Lokoja, to Ipetu-Ijesa, the same voice spoke to him to fast for six days and also pray 120 times and he obeyed. In his room, he saw a very bright light, and a voice accompanied the light saying to him that the Lord Jesus would like to send him with important message to various towns. The voice further said to him that if he did not obey his words, he would die. For obeying the voice, he would not die. He decided to heed the voice. Babalola further had revelation from heaven. He began his ministry by paying visits to many towns and villages in the Yoruba areas preaching the Good News. As he preached the Gospel, he also healed many people that were ill. He went about ringing a hand bell to call the attention of people to his messages of salvation. As Babalola went to Odo-Owa to preach the Gospel, he was rejected by his people. He pronounced epidemics on the people that disobeyed the Word of God which he preached to them. Many people at his home town were afflicted by small pox. However, those who heard the Word of God and obeyed it were healed by him. The people of the town decided to kill him for they could no longer tolerate his words. A man volunteered himself to kill Babalola in the elders meeting that was held to find solution to the problem of his preaching which they claimed was against them and their way of life. The second day, as he was going out to proclaim the Good News, he saw a snake about to strike him on the road. However, God sent an Angel that stood between Babalola and the snake, and the heavenly Being used a sword in his hand to kill the snake.

Also, according to Idowu,(2007), some evil spirits that were shouting behind Babalola while he was preaching along the road, also disappeared as he kept ringing the bell and pronouncing the Word of God to warn his people to repent of their evil deeds in the land.

### **3.3 His Meeting with the Faith Tabernacle at Ilofa**

At Ilofa in Oke-Ero Local Government, of Kwara State, there was an Anglican church which had a society named the Faith Tabernacle. The band was headed by Daniel Ajibola in 1918. The Society engaged in all season prayer meetings. He used the opportunity to involve the members of his Society to participate in many evangelistic programmes of the Church. The Society became attractive to many members of the church in Nigeria. More members of the Anglican faith joined the society. Mentioned could be made of Mr. J.B. Sadare and Miss Sophia Odunlami. The Faith Tabernacle Society became popular among the Anglicans in Nigeria. For instance, it has been mentioned that the following Anglican members also joined the society: Messrs I.B. Akinyele, Odubanjo and Babatope. The Faith Tabernacle Society spread

to the following towns through the Anglican Church Lagos, Ibadan, Ijebu-Ode, Ilesa and Zaria.

However, as more people joined the society in Nigeria, it became affiliated to the American Faith Tabernacle that has its headquarters in Philadelphia, USA. The members of the society who lived in Lagos invited Joseph Babalola to come and preach to the people of Lagos. Joseph Babalola was hosted at the town hall at Ebute-Elefun to preach the Good News to the people who had gathered themselves there to hear him. According to Idowu, Babalola used six hours to address the audience about his calling, he then preached the Good News to them. Many people, who were ill, were brought to him for healing and were healed. Many people also got converted. According to historical accounts, Babalola said that the Holy Spirit, told him to join the society and he did. Babalola joined the society and he was baptized into the faith before he continued in his missionary journey in Nigeria. Members of the Faith Tabernacle chose Mr. J. A. Medaiyese who probably hailed from Kabba area to accompany him in his missionary journey to Odo-Owa. Babalola did not limit himself to his home town, as he also spread the Gospel to Ibadan. Many people went to hear him there and were saved. Many ill people were also healed by him at the various crusade grounds at Ibadan.

### **3.4 The First National Meeting of the Faith Tabernacle at Ilesa, Osun State**

A meeting was held at Ilesa on July 9th and 10th, 1930 by the Faith Tabernacle Society in Nigeria. The main reason for holding the meeting was to settle the doctrinal differences among members of the society. Some members held that polygamists should not be admitted into the church. While another group among them accepted the view that they should be accepted into the church, but they should be denied baptism. Yet some other group also argued that polygamists may be given the chance to attend church services, but they must be excluded from participating in the Holy Communion. Another issue that also needed to be settled was the case of the use of drugs to heal the sick. While some believed that only the name of the Lord Jesus Christ should be used to heal the sick, some others believed that both methods should be used. Among those groups who wanted the two methods to be combined for healing was Joseph Babalola who was stationed in Ilesa at this time. Besides, members of the society also planned to introduce Babalola to others as the leader of their Society. Members of the Society assembled at Oke-Oye Street in Ilesa town for the meeting on the above mentioned date. Before the deliberation on the above issues, Babalola preached to the assembled members. After his preaching, he stepped aside with Mr. Medaiyese in one of the rooms that was attached in the church building.

Delegates of the various churches deliberated and finally arrived at the conclusion that a Christian husband should marry one wife. Likewise, a Christian woman should marry to one man. While the delegates were deliberating on the issue of divine healing, there was an incident that disrupted their discussion. It was the death of a child that was brought from the farm by its parents for burial. As Babalola heard the cry of the community over the dead child, he was moved with pity then he had compassion on the child and the parents. He prayed on the dead child and the child was brought back to live. This became the first miracle which all the delegates from various towns and villages that attended the conference witnessed. The raising of the dead child convinced everybody that Jesus Christ is the Lord over sickness and the dead. Everybody who saw the child brought back to live believed in the Lord Jesus Christ as the only Saviour and Messiah. Many people who witnessed the miracle became convinced that Babalola was a prophet anointed by God. As a result, many repented of their sins and became converted.

Babalola stayed in the town spreading the Good News for many days. Many people visited him and he prayed for them. Some people brought water to him to pray on it for their use. According to the late Chief Ezekiel Komolafe who also witnessed the great crusade that took place at Ilesa, there was a prominent king from Akoko land who was warned not to drink the water which Babalola prayed on, but the king insisted and drank the blessed water. Immediately, he fell down and blood began to rush out of his mouth and he died. Reverend Lennon, an Anglican priest at Ikare Mission Station, who went to Ilesa to hear Babalola preach, used his car to carry the deceased king to his town for burial.

Also, a woman from Ogori named Mrs. Rebecca Jemitola, who was childless for many years, went to the crusade and Babalola blessed the water for her to drink. She drank the water and she conceived and gave birth to a son named Samuel Jemitola. The son later became a doctor.

The crusade of Babalola spurred the growth of the church in the Yoruba land. It also became the first time for Christians to gather in one place to witness the preaching and performing of at the same time. Not long after, the Faith Tabernacle Society got transformed into Christ Apostolic church of Nigeria.

Babalola later moved from Ilesa to Efon-Alaaye where he later settled at his missionary home in the Yoruba land. From there, he proceeded to the following towns for evangelism: Offa, Aramoko, Ijero, Ikole and Iddo. Many sons and daughters of these towns are now Ministers of the Gospel in Nigeria and overseas.



### **3.5 The Persecution of Apostle Joseph Babalola in 1928-32**

Babalola was persecuted by his own people at Odo-Owa, his home town. The people hated him for his preaching in which he warned them to turn away from their evil acts, and if they were adamant, they would perish. He was beaten up by some people who felt that his words were against the culture and values of their society, for his preaching did not exempt the elders of the town. His parents and sisters were also persecuted because of him. As many of his people did not listen to the good news preached by him, there was a revelation which was shown to him by God concerning the wrought of God on those who were opposing the Gospel. An epidemic of small pox broke out in Odo-Owa.

This caused many people to die in the town. For this reason, he was hated the more. Therefore, some people planned to kill him. While they were busy planning to kill him, he was fasting. A man volunteered at the meeting that was held in the palace of their king to eliminate him. Apostle Babalola kept on preaching the Gospel in the town, ringing the hand bell to call the attention of the people to the Gospel. According to Idowu, Babalola was confronted on the road by evil spirits but they could not harm him. In addition to this, a strange snake also appeared to him on the road, but an angel of Lord appeared and killed the snake. Likewise, the evil spirits also appeared to stop him from continue his preaching. At Offa, Babalola's crusade drew many crowds and this angered the muslim community as they could no longer bear this. Consequently, they called their king to send away Babalola from the town. Not long, he was sent away from the town.

In 1932, Babalola was imprisoned in Benin City. This was because he identified two women who attended his crusade at Otuo as witches. The people of the town reported him to the Oba of Benin. The chiefs in the town felt bad over the matter. The Court sent officials with warrants to Ilorin that was the headquarters of his home town to effect his arrest through the Government. So he was arrested and brought to Benin City, where he was sentenced to six months imprisonment.

### **3.6 The Hand Over of the Church by Babalola to Prophet Akande at Ede**

Babalola attended the Sunday service in the morning of 26th July, 1959 at Ede. After the service, he called on Mr. Odusona to take up the expenses of a young man whose wedding he had promised to sponsor, for the man had no helper. He also had a dialogue with Mr. S.O. Akande who was instructed to take care of the church. According to Idowu, apart from the discussions which Babalola had with the two men mentioned above, a strange event also marked his departure from the earth. The

Holy Spirit was said to have filled the room where he bid them goodbye. After these events, Babalola passed away peacefully.

### **SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

Account for the persecution of Babalola by his own people and government.

## **4.0 CONCLUSION**

From this unit, you have read how God called Apostle Joseph Ayo Babalola to be His servant. You also learnt how he was persecuted by his people, and also the authorities. The crusades of Babalola also brought salvation and healing to many people who had accepted the Gospel. You have also learnt that many people who did not accept the Gospel at Odo-Owa perished with the epidemic that took place there including the evil king who drank the water and died. Also, you learnt how a childless woman who had faith in the Good News preached by Babalola gave birth to a son who later became a doctor.

Finally, you studied how the Faith Tabernacle Society transformed into Christ Apostolic church and how the church was handed over to Prophet S.O. Akande before the Apostle of God, Joseph Ayo Babalola departed this world.

## **5.0 SUMMARY**

- Babalola was called by God when he was working with the Public Works Department in Lokoja, in Kogi State, Nigeria in the year 1928 along Akure-Ilesa road.
- He was used by God to spread the Gospel in Nigeria.
- God also used him to bless many people in the country.
- He was imprisoned at Benin- City, Nigeria.

## **6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT**

1. Discuss the call of Joseph Ayo Babalola.
2. Asses the roles of Babalola in the planting of Christianity in Nigeria.
3. How was Christ Apostolic Church, Nigeria founded?

## **7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING**

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Dr, Samuel Jemitola, aged 60 years, Private Interview at Ogori on 7/10/2002.

## **UNIT 2 THE PLANTING OF CHRISTIANITY IN NIGERIA BY THE CHERUBIM AND SERAPHIM MOVEMENT**

### **CONTENTS**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 The Birth and Childhood of Moses Orimolade
  - 3.2 The Beginning of Orimolade's Ministry
  - 3.3 The Missionary Journeys of Orimolade
  - 3.4 The Spread of the Movement in the Western Nigeria
  - 3.5 The Spread of the Movement in the Northern Nigeria.
  - 3.6 The Persecution of the Movement by the Colonial Government
  - 3.7 The Successor of Orimolade
  - 3.8 The Death of Orimolade
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

In the first unit, you learnt about the Faith Tabernacle, a Society in the Anglican Church, which later metamorphosed into Christ Apostolic Church. You were told that it was God who called Babalola out of secular work to come and serve Him in the spread of the gospel in Nigeria. You were also taught how he was persecuted by the enemies of the gospel in Nigeria and how he handed over the Society that had now metamorphosed into a Church, to another servant of God.

In other words, God does not use lazy people to carry out His purpose, but hard working people like Babalola to carry out His plan on earth.

Babalola's case assured others that it was not only the white missionaries that can proclaim the Good News to people, but that God uses whosoever responds to His call. In this unit, you will learn how God used Moses Orimolade to spread Christianity in both Western and Northern parts of Nigeria. You will also learn about his persecution too.

## 2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- narrate the call of Moses Orimolade
- identify the contributions of Orimolade to the growth of Christianity in Nigeria
- enumerate the missionary journeys made by Orimolade
- discuss the persecution of Orimolade.

## 3.0 MAIN CONTENT

### 3.1 The Birth and Childhood of Moses Orimolade

Moses Orimolade Okejebu Tounlase was a son to Pa Tounlase who hailed from the royal family in Ikare in the present Ondo State, Nigeria. He was born in 1879.

However, before he was born, the mother suffered a prolonged labour to the extent that a native doctor was consulted by his parents on what they should do that would make his birth easy. They were told by the Ifa Oracle that their would be child would be a great man. They instructed that the mother put on the chieftaincy beads of the family on her neck, and the baby would come out easily. This was done and Orimolade was born, he stood up and began to walk. This made the midwife to force him to sit down twice. However, Orimolade stood up the third time and he began to walk. At that moment, the midwife left him and sent for his father to come and see his miracle child. When his father saw him, he ran into his room and brought out some objects and made incantation to invoke powerful spirits to come to his aid since he was a medicine man in the town. He tied some objects on the legs of the baby in order to stop him from walking. The onlookers viewed the actions of Tounlase as trying to disturb the child. However, some neighbours went to remove all objects which his father tied on him. The child was then left undisturbed again by the parents. Many people within and outside the town who heard about this event began to pay visits to Ikare to see the miracle child. The king, named Ajiboye also paid a visit to the child greeted him in the traditional way of the Ikare people. For this strange behaviour of the baby, the King marveled and went back to his palace.

Among the people who visited the boy were old women who paid him obeisance. In addition to this, some of them used the opportunity to make requests, such as fruitfulness of the womb for the barren women in the town, prosperity, peace and good harvests, while some brought him gifts. However, as these events were taking place in the presence of both parents, the father was mystified. He became embarrassed by the

constant visit of the people to see the child. At a point, he wanted to leave the town but he was dissuaded from leaving. People begged him to bear with the baby and stay in the town. He took their advice and stayed.

On the eighth day of the baby, his parents named him Orimolade, Tounlase Okejebu. When the father could no longer bear with the strange things that kept on happening through Orimolade, he summoned his family for a meeting to take his last decision concerning the child.

The family agreed with him to allow the mother to take the child to her own parent's house and take care of him there. At the age of eight, Orimolade went into Saint Stephen's Anglican Church, Ikare, in the night. Inside the church there was a heavenly light shining within the church and Heavenly invisible beings singing melodious songs. The Pastor of the church who lived in the vicarage heard the song, woke up and walked towards the church. He saw that the door of the church was shut opened. The pastor took courage and entered the church, there he saw the lame Orimolade sitting in one corner in the church. The Vicar asked him who he was and the voices that were singing in the church. Orimolade answered him that 'they' were the ones. The Vicar further asked where the other voices were and Orimolade replied, "Here we are." According to Olu Famodimu, while both were still dialoguing the voices started singing the same song thus:

On the Mount above Jordan  
I am called, I am called  
By my favourites that had gone, that had gone  
I like to enter eternity with them  
Where there will be no more parting forever.  
Come home, Come to the home of Love  
The book of Jesus said to me  
That Angels carried me  
Home I'll rejoice  
Jesus carries me home.  
After the above song was over, the Vicar,  
having recognised the boy as the son of  
Tounlase, decided to let things be.

### **3.2 The Beginning of Orimolade's Ministry**

In order for you to understand this unit, we intend to explain what probably made Orimolade lame in his boyhood. It is assumed that the charm used by his father to force him sit down when the midwife invited him to come and see the boy standing up on the very day that he was born caused this. The Vicar said that he was surprised to see Orimolade who was lame inside the church alone without seeing anyone with him,

and added to this was the mystery of unseen voices singing with him inside the church. Concerning the time when he started his ministry, we were not informed by scholars. However, we were told that Orimolade began his ministry at his home town Ikare /Akoko in the present Ondo State. One-day, people just saw Orimolade walking on the street singing. Christians in the town were pleased when they saw him and they rejoiced with him for this miracle. Orimolade began to preach the Gospel to people who came out to see him as he walked on the street in the town. He also prayed for those who were ill.

Immediately he prayed for them, they received their healing. Many people who were healed began to spread the activities of Orimolade outside Ikare town.

Orimolade enjoined his hearers to confess their sins and turned away from them.

He taught about the existence of heaven and hell. He taught them that the righteous people would go to heaven after death, while the wicked people would go to hell. Those who believed were loosed from bondages. In addition, women who were barren gave birth to children as a result of his prayers. He converted many people including his mother Abigail, one of his sisters Mary, and two of his brothers, namely, Peter and Samuel (Famodimu 1990). Many people from other towns and villages visited Orimolade to listen to his preachings.

Besides, many people also confessed Jesus Christ as their Lord and Saviour. The population of Christians increased within and outside Ikare town. However, as the Christians were glad with the activities of Orimolade, the unrepented herbalists were sad and they began to persecute him. Orimolade also encouraged Christians to shun the worship of the ancestors in Ikare town. Male Christians who wanted to get married to females who were unbelievers were told by the parents of these women to forget the idea, unless they renounce the new religion. The preaching of Orimolade encouraged many Christians to buy the Holy Bible, for they wanted to be reading the Word of God for spiritual growth. The lessons learnt from the Bible helped them to grow spiritually. The adherents of the traditional religion appealed to Orimolade to stop converting people into Christianity for it affected their livelihood. This is because people stopped consulting them over their problems after giving their lives to God. Orimolade was warned to stop converting people into Christianity or risk his life and the lives of his followers. He informed the Christians about this but encouraged them not to fear the traditionalists and that the Lord Jesus Christ would glorify Himself. The traditionalists tried to carry out their evil plan against the christians while Orimolade was preaching at Okorun Street

Ikare-Akoko. They went to confront the Christians at the preaching ground. The traditional priests used charms and cutlasses to harass the Christians. But Orimolade called upon the Lord Jesus Christ to fight for them. He then stretched his staff towards the evil people and they began to fight themselves, while the Christians stood watching as they fought themselves. Many of them were wounded with their weapons and charms which they were supposed to use on the Christians. Some of them however, having seen the power of God as superior to their gods, joined the church. The remaining traditionalists went to tell the king of Ikare that Christians were killing people in the town. The king sent for police men to arrest them. They were arrested and they were taken to Kabba prison in Kogi State. But Orimolade was excluded. However, as he got to know about the incident, he left Ikare for Kabba town. When he got there, Orimolade began to spread the Good News at Kabba town.

Orimolade also told the people to release the Ikare Christians who were locked up in their prison. However, as the district officer learnt about what Orimolade preached, he ordered the release of Christians that were brought from Ikare. After letting out the Christians, the officer told them to go to their home town. All the released prisoners went to their various homes unhurt. On the arrival of detained Christians in the town people rejoiced and they continued in their journey of faith.

### **3.4 The Spread of the Movement in the Western Nigeria**

Orimolade began his missionary journey in the year 1916. He left Ikare for Irun Akoko in 1916. In the town, he was confronted by witches, wizards and traditional worshippers. He was confronted because the Word of God was against their practices. In his preaching, he appealed to whoever belonged to such societies to repent, forsake them and accept Jesus Christ as their saviour. Orimolade was also said to have destroyed one of the temples of the traditional worshippers in the town, after which he left the place for Ogbagi. There, he preached the Good News to the people of the town. Many people who listened to his preaching accepted Jesus Christ as their saviour. Orimolade further spread the gospel to Akungba, Oka, Ikiran, Merri, Ifon, and Owo. He moved from these towns to Benin-City in the present Edo State, Nigeria. He observed that some of the traditional worshippers used human beings for sacrifices to their gods. Orimolade preached the Good News to them and many of them repented and joined the church. He moved from there to Isekiri kingdom to preach. Orimolade left Isekiri land to Lokoja, in Kogi State, Nigeria. He spread the Gospel from there to Idah. At both towns, he preached the Gospel, and performed many miracles that people saw and they joined the church. Orimolade moved from Lokoja to Onitsha to plant a Mission Station. He left the place for Sapele in Delta State to spread the Good News. He further left Sapele for the following towns:



Ogori, Akunnu, Ikaramu, Daja, Iga, Uromi, Igasi Omuo, Kabba and Ogidi where he planted mission stations. Orimolade was the only missionary who voluntarily spread the gospel to Ogori land without being invited by the indigenes as they did for the Church Missionary Society. Although they were invited to teach them how to read and write and not for the purpose of planting the gospel nor to aid them fight their enemies as other Yoruba people, such as the Badagry and the Egba people did.

### **3.5 The Spread of the Movement in Northern Nigeria and Lagos**

Orimolade spread the Good News to the following towns: Bida, Zaria, Kano, Ilorin, and Offa. Orimolade left the Northern parts of the country back to the Western parts of Nigeria to plant his Mission Stations:

Ikirun, Osogbo, Ede, Ogbomoso, Ibadan, Abeokuta and Lagos. The movement was established in Kaduna by Mrs. Adebisi in 1927. In Lagos, Orimolade met a young girl called Abiodun Akinsowon. Abiodun joined Orimolade in the spreading of the Gospel when she was seventeen and a half years. In 1925, she went into a trance from 18th to 25th June Orimolade adopted her as his own daughter. While she was with Orimolade, she contributed to the spread of the Gospel. Many Mission Stations were opened by both of them. Orimolade later stayed put in Lagos Mission Station, while commissioned Abiodun to continue spreading the faith to other towns and villages. In Lagos, Orimolade preached the Gospel and performed many miracles. Many converts spread the Good News to their own people in various towns and villages. Orimolade further commissioned other members in Lagos, made the sign of the cross on their palms and sent them out to spread the Good News, to set the oppressed free from the devil and afflictions and to heal the sick. He warned them not to shake hands with people as they carried out their missions. Many people they touched were healed of diseases. In Lagos, Orimolade healed Albert Ishola Cole of poison.

Accounting to Famodimu (1990), Orimolade made a sign of the cross on the man's chest three times and he vomited out an object in form of red parrot feather. Immediately, Ishola became whole. It was also said that Orimolade raised Matthew 'Eku Ojo' from the dead. The news of the two events spread in Lagos and people joined Orimolade's Mission in large numbers. Orimolade then named the Movement as the 'Seraphim' on the 9th September, 1925. On the 26th March, 1926, he added the name 'Cherubim'. Since then, the Movement became known as Cherubim and Seraphim. In addition, the Movement was later transformed into a church with many branches all over the country.

### 3.6 The Persecution of the Movement

In 1925, the Cherubim and Seraphim adherents were persecuted by other missions in Nigeria. In Lagos, Archdeacon Ogunbiyi of the Breadfruit Anglican church, kicked against the angels' names that the movement gave to their mission. In addition to this, he was also against people calling Orimolade the name 'Alufaa' meaning, 'Reverend' since he was not ordained by any mission. Also a newspaper, Nigeria pioneer wrote critical articles against the practices of the Movement in July, 1927.

Furthermore, some people also accused the adherents of preaching against the use of traditional drugs. The preaching of the Movement against traditional gods, customs, witches, herbalists and wizards made members of such societies hate the adherents. Besides the above mentioned reasons, people persecuted members of the mission because of one of their songs which went thus:

“Sword of the Lord, sword of Holy Michael would destroyed the wicked people of the land unless they repent and accept the Good News they brought to them; Egungun worshipers were labouring in vain”.

Holy Michael would destroy them.

The adherents of the Church Missionary Society [Anglican] and the traditional worshippers wrote a letter to the Governor at Lokoja to help them stop Seraphim and Cherubim Faith in Nigeria. The Governor ordered Orimolade to stop spreading his faith in Nigeria. However, Orimolade quoted the Word of God in his letter to the Governors thus:

“If this counsel is of men, it will come to nothing, but, if it is of God, ye cannot overthrow it [Acts5, vs. 38-39]

However, the governor ordered all district officers to stop the spread of the mission in their areas. For example, on the 22nd June, 1931, the district officer at Ogbomoso sent away one of the prophets named Adeyemi from Ogbomoso town. In Oyo town, Mr. Ross sent messages to all the Districts Officers under him to send away all evangelists of the Movement in Oyo Kingdom. Other methods that were used to curtail the spread of the mission in the country were the use of Kings, Chiefs and the Nobles to stop giving them land to establish mission stations. However, it was reported that the King of England during this period was ill and he sent to the Governor in Nigeria to look for people to pray for his recovery. The governor in turn sent to all district officers in

Nigeria to look for people to pray for the recovery of the king. The Governor finally sent to Prophet Orimolade to pray for the King of England to recover. Prophet Orimolade prayed for the recovery of the King. The Governor sent message to the king that he had been prayed for by the prophet in question in the country at a particular hour of a certain day. The King discovered that it was the very period that he was prayed for by Orimolade who was in Nigeria that he recovered from his illness in England. He sent 400 pounds sterling to Moses Orimolade in Nigeria as token of his appreciation for his effective prayer that he believed had healed him from a far distance. For this reason, the Movement was freed from the persecution of the government. As a result of this the Movement became free to establish mission stations in every state in Nigeria. Since then, the Movement has built many schools, colleges and a university named 'Cherubim and Seraphim University of Nigeria, Omu-Aran, Kwara State, Nigeria.' The Institution is located at Omu-Aran town.

### **3.7 The Successor of Orimolade**

Famodimu (1990) stated that Orimolade called some elders of the Movement to advise him on whom to take the leadership after him. He was advised by the elders to take elder Onanuga. Orimolade then put on him one of his white prayer gowns, blessed him, anointed him and handed the mission over to him. On the 18th October, 1933, the unseen guests of Orimolade who visited him when he was young inside Saint Stephen's Anglican Church, Ikare, Akoko, came to him and they sang songs of victory. Prophets Agbebi and Peter who were with him heard the songs but they could not see the singers. Famodimu further said that it was at about 3.am on the day in question that Moses Orimolade joined other faithfuls in the kingdom of God.

### **SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

Discuss the name 'Cherubim and Seraphim'.

### **4.0 CONCLUSION**

The Cherubim and Seraphim church began as a Movement with Orimolade, a native of Ikare, in the present Ondo State. He was persecuted by Government agents and other people who were opposed to his Movement. He prayed for the King of England and God answered his prayer for the King recovered from his illness. Orimolade planted his mission in the Western, Eastern, Southern and Northern parts of Nigeria. He healed many people, raised the dead and performed many miracles. Orimolade appointed many evangelists and commissioned them to spread the Good News in Nigeria. He handed over the mission to

Onanuga to lead the adherents of the faith. The voices that were heard by the Vicar of the Anglican Church, in the Ikare Mission Station before his call by God, also sang again on the last day of his life. Indeed his was a fulfilled life.

## 5.0 SUMMARY

You should have noted in the course of this study the following points as major roles played by the Cherubim and Seraphim Movement in Nigeria. These are:

- a. the Movement was an indigenous one.
- b. Moses Orimolade began its spread in Nigeria.
- c. the Movement was persecuted by the Government of the land, traditional adherents, chiefs, and other Missions in Nigeria.
- d. the Orimolade Mission was the only one that volunteered to spread the Good News to Ogori land without the people inviting him to do so unlike the Anglican Mission that were invited by them to the town.
- e. the Mission also used Abiodun to spread its faith to Nigerians.
- f. the Mission had appointed Evangelists to spread its faith in Nigeria.
- g. the Movement has spread to the Northern Nigeria, such as Kaduna, Kano, Bida and Zaria, Hausa and Fulani speaking areas which Lord Lugard prohibited the planting of Christianity without taken permission from the Emirs before preaching the Good News.

As for the mission in question, it was not said by anybody in Nigeria that they took permission from any of the Emirs before planting their faith in the area.

## 6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1. Discuss the call of Moses Orimolade.
2. The adoption of Abiodun as Orimolade's daughter was a blessing or a curse, Discuss.
3. State the factors that led to the rapid spread of the Movement in Nigeria.

## 7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

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## **UNIT 3 CELESTIAL CHURCH OF CHRIST**

### **CONTENTS**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 The Birth of Samuel Bilewu Oshoffa
  - 3.2 The Birth of Celestial Church of Christ
  - 3.3 The Growth of Celestial Church of Christ
  - 3.4 The Doctrines of the Mission and the Death of the Founder
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

This unit will introduce you to the founder of the Celestial Church of Christ. It will also enlighten you about how the name of the church came about. Moreover, you will also learn about how Mr. Alexander Yanga fell into trance and pastor treated him. You will also learn about the adherents relations with other religious bodies in Nigeria. Furthermore, this unit will shed light on how the Mission hopes to recovers the lost spiritual treasure. In this unit, you will also learn about the Mission's doctrines. The Mission also pays homage to the previous Indigenes church founders in Nigeria.

You will also learn about the work of Oshoffa on earth and his death in the year 1985.

### **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- narrate the story of Oshoffa
- discuss the teachings of the Mission
- describe the trance of Yanga.

### **3.0 MAIN CONTENT**

#### **3.1 The Birth of Samuel Bilewu Oshoffa**

Samuel Bilewu Joseph Oshoffa was born in 1909 in Porto Novo, Republic of Benin. His mother hailed from Imeko in Abeokuta, Ogun

State, Nigeria. His father Mr. Ojo had many children. All the male children except Bilewu died. His father Ojo Oshoffa hailed from Abeokuta in Ogun State, Nigeria. He was an adherent of Methodist faith. Bilewu was given to the Methodist Reverend to take care of him by his father in the early age. It has been said that Bilewu refused to mould blocks for the college building which he attended. For that reason, he was sent back to his father. His father immediately made him learn carpentry and also to work with him until 5th June, 1939. After the death of his father, he specialised on trading in ebony planks. While, he was in the forest to purchase planks for sale, he would also pray and read his Bible. Bilewu got married to Alake Iyabo of Imeko, Egbado, in Abeokuta, Nigeria.

### **3.2 The Birth of Celestial Church of Christ**

On the 23rd of May 1947, Bilewu went into the forest to pray in Porto Novo. It was at the period that the eclipse of the sun took place. While he was praying, he heard a 'voice' saying; 'LULI' meaning; 'The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ'. . According to Okunola, Bilewu saw the following objects as he opened his eyes after prayer.

1. A white monkey that had two teeth with winged hands. Its feet looked like that of the bat.
2. A stationary bird that was behaving like a peacock. It had various colours.
3. A short snake about one foot long and it stood coiled and its mouth was puffed like a cobra.

In the presence of the above named creatures, Bilewu felt awed and his body had goose pimples.

The interpretations of the visions which he saw are explained thus:

The monkey meant the tricks or pranks which human beings play in the universe to achieve their selfish goals or desires. Bilewu was then warned not to allow himself to be tricked by human beings, for tricks lead to the downfall of people. While the bird which he saw behaving like a peacock indicated the pride which does cause the downfall of many people. Bilewu was told not to imitate the people who are proud for pride leads to the downfall of such people.

The short snake signified deceit and mistake of the past in the Garden of Eden. Bilewu was warned to learn from the lesson of the story of Eden. He should probably avoid these things which God had shown to him. The inability of the snake to hurt him indicated that he was anointed to

deal with all evil deeds in the universe. It also fulfilled the Scriptures that say:

*“And these signs will follow those who believe;  
In my name they will cast out demons; they will  
speak with new  
Tongues (Mark 16:17).*

*They will take up serpents; and if they drink  
anything deadly; it  
will by no means hurt them; they will lay hands  
on the sick, and  
they will recover” (Mark 16: 18) .*

All the incidents that took place in the bush with Bilewu marked the beginning of the Celestial Church of Christ.

### **3.3 The Growth of the Celestial Church**

On the 29th September, 1947, Bilewu was in his house praying when the angel of the Lord appeared to him in a strong ray of light and he was told that he had been chosen to carry out a spiritual message to the whole world. The angel further told him that many people die without salvation. This is because people do look for salvation from Satan when they face problems in life. Besides, they also fail to listen to the word of God that is being preached to them by anointed men of God. He was told that his calling would be backed by miracles. Bilewu began his mission by preaching and healing the sick that came to hear the word of God. He also healed those that were brought by their relatives to him.

As these continued, Mr. Alexander Yanga was taken to Bilewu for spiritual healing. There, Mr. Yanga fell into trance for seven days. As he was in the trance, Yanga named the Mission of Bilewu, thus; ‘Eglise Du Christianisme Celeste’ which means’ Celestial Church of Christ’. Bilewu continued the spread of the Gospel to various places such as Agange, Kudiho, and Porto-Novu. The dead were raised to life and people were healed. Bilewu also loved music. He played the following musical instruments: Piano, Guitar, Trumpet and Violin. These activities drew many people to hear him as he preached the Gospel. Bilewu used the following languages to preach the Good News to his hearers: French, Egun and Yoruba. He sometimes used English language to preach, but he often used interpreters to interpret his messages to English speaking people. Bilewu spread his gospel to Abeokuta, Ketu, Lagos, Odogbolu, Ibadan and other parts of Nigeria



### **3.4 The Doctrines of the Mission and the Death of the Founder**

The Celestial Church believes that all people who have faith in the Lord God worship the same Almighty who created human beings and the universe. For this reason, the mission is out to seek salvation for all worshippers of God in the world. Believers should see themselves as brothers and sisters who serve God under the same umbrella. The adherents regard everybody that worships God as one body in the Lord God Almighty. Therefore, they see no reason for people to engage in religious quarrel. The mission of the church is to shed more light on the ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ on earth. The mission is also out to search for the lost souls and lead them back to Jesus Christ. The mission also considers the period which Jesus Christ spent on earth to set people free from bondages to have been very short. Therefore, the Mission has been commissioned by God to continue the spread of the Gospel and set people free from their bondages. The mission is also out to continue the work of salvation which the disciples were unable to complete while they were on earth. The church regards the following prophets as the forerunners of Oshoffa: Orimolade, Babalola and Oshitelu. The mission teaches Christians to love their neighbours who are not Christians, especially, Muslims. Christians and Muslims should be encouraged to live together as brothers and sisters who serve the same God. Also, white and black races should see themselves as Creatures of God. They must not discriminate against themselves. The mission believes that their achievements are part and parcel of Christ's achievements in the universe. The mission pays homage to those who have preached the gospel and departed the world to paradise. The church teaches that man's kingdom of heaven begins as soon as he or she dies. It also teaches that there should be no religious condemnation or discrimination of any kind. Furthermore, it teaches that it is only God that knows who and who will be saved. The Movement condemns pride. It also teaches people to respect constituted authority and also our parents. Oshoffa died in 1985.

#### **SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

The slavery of Ojo in the Republic of Benin was a blessing to the Christendom. Discuss.

## 4.0 CONCLUSION

Oshoffa was born in the Republic of Benin. He was an adherent of the Methodist faith. His father called Ojo hailed from Abeokuta in Ogun State, Nigeria. Bilewu was the only son of his father. Ojo made a covenant with God that if He gave him a male child, he would be made to serve him. For this reason, when Bilewu was born, Ojo gave Bilewu to a Methodist priest to take care of him. The Pastor put Bilewu in a school, but Bilewu disobeyed the school authority when all the pupils were ordered to mould blocks. He refused to comply. For this reason, he was sent out of the school. Bilewu was then forced by his father to learn carpentry skill. He was very good in the work. While at work, he was always praying and reading his Bible. Bilewu got married to Alake Iyabo of Imeko in Abeokuta, Ogun State, Nigeria. History has it that the grandfather of Bilewu was taken as a slave from Abeokuta to the Republic of Benin. But when he got there, he fell sick. As a result of his sickness, his master who bought him could not resell him to any other slave buyers. So, he retained him. There, he gave birth to Oshoffa who in turn gave birth to Bilewu the founder of the Celestial faith in the Republic of Benin and Nigeria. The teachings of the church emphasise the unity of all believers irrespective of denominational differences. also unconditional love among the people of the world.

## 5.0 SUMMARY

In this unit, you have learnt the following points:

- The planting of the Celestial Church of Christ in Nigeria and the Republic of Benin.
- Bilewu whose grandfather was sold into slavery at the then Dahomey was the Founder of the Celestial faith worldwide.
- The adherents spread of the Good news to all parts of Nigeria.
- Many people were healed of various diseases by Bilewu
- Members of the Celestial faithful helped themselves spiritually and financially.
- Members of the church are told to love one another and other people irrespective of their religious inclination.

## 6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1. Narrate the call of Bilewu.
2. Do all believers worship the same God?

## **7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING**

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## **UNIT 4 THE IMPACTS OF CHRISTIANITY IN NIGERIA**

### **CONTENTS**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 The Improvement of Trade in Nigeria
  - 3.2 Building of Schools and Manpower by Missionaries
  - 3.3 The Provision of Postal Services by Missions
  - 3.4 Road Network Constructions by the Missionaries in Ikare-Akoko Area
  - 3.5 How Christianity Promotes Love among Nigerians
  - 3.6 Spectacular Missionary Outreaches by Indigenous Churches
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

In this unit, you will gain insight into how Christian missions in Nigeria contributed to the spiritual, economic and physical growth of Nigerians. You will also learn how Christianity set many Nigerians free from various bondages in the country. For examples; it was Christianity that eradicated slavery in Nigeria. It also set many people freed from satanic bondages such as illnesses, oppression and hatred. You will also learn how to behave in a godly manner, how Christianity improved trade in Nigeria, how christian missions encouraged many Nigerians to be educated and gained employment in various fields of endeavour and how local people contributed to the spread of the Gospel in Nigeria.

### **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- state the impact of Christianity in Nigeria
- identify the effects of education among christians in the country
- state the positive contributions of christians to the development of Nigeria.

### **3.0 MAIN CONTENT**

#### **3.1 The Improvement of Trade in Nigeria**

Before the introduction of Christianity in Nigeria, many towns and villages had no motorable roads. This is because they feared their enemies using such roads to get to them and carry them into slavery. For instance, it was an enemy that captured Ojo the grandfather of Bilewu and sold him to a slave trader at the Republic of Benin. There, he stayed and gave birth to Bilewu the founder of the Celestial Movement in Nigeria and in the Republic of Benin. At that period, the Egbas feared to open good roads to link other parts of Nigeria. But when they wanted the white men to aid them fight their enemies, they invited missionaries into their land. It was the presence of the missionaries and white soldiers that encouraged the Abeokuta people to open motorable road to link Lagos and Ijebu land. The linkage of the road with Ijebu land encouraged legitimate trade among them and other parts of Nigeria.

In 1921, Arch deacon Lennon encouraged Ikare people to open the road that linked Ikare-Akoko with other towns such as Owo, Ado- Ekiti, Kabba, Okene and Lokoja.

The opening of the mentioned roads encouraged legitimate trade in the above named towns. The opening of Ikare road that link Owo encouraged many people in Ikare town to join the faith of Christianity.

#### **3.2 Building of Schools and Man power by Missionaries**

In 1841, Thomas Fowell Buxton persuaded Lord Melbourne's government in Britain to send an expedition to the Niger to make treaties with the Chiefs in order to abolish slave trade. It was made also to open the way for improved trading and advancement in educational, scientific, technological and ultimately religious conditions of Nigerians. In 1841, specialists in various fields including a chaplain and two Anglican church missionaries were sent to the River Niger area. The missionaries were to report on the possibilities of missionary work in the area. During the expedition, treaties were signed with the Obi of Aboh named Ossai and the Attah of Igala named Ocheje. They acquired land at Lokoja in which a model farm, school and a mission Station were established. In 1885, Ajayi Crowther built a church made of mud and burnt bricks at Lokoja, he named it The Holy Trinity Church. In 1867, Ajayi established The Holy Trinity Primary School at Lokoja. There, many Nigerians were trained and they were employed by the then British government and the missionaries.

In 1911, the Anglican Mission established Saint Peter's Primary School, Ogori. There, many people were later trained and were employed by the missionaries and government. In 1921, Lennon established a primary school in Ikare-Akoko to train many people who were employed by government and missionaries in Nigeria. Various missionaries have also established schools, colleges, and universities in Nigeria to train skilled workers.

### **3.3 The Provisions of Postal Services by Church Missions**

Before 1920, paper communications were in the form of notes that were brought by those who work in Lokoja to people in their towns and villages in some parts of the Western Nigeria. Likewise in Lagos, Abeokuta, Ijebu and Onisha areas, letters were brought by workers to people by hands. In 1922, Lennon was assigned by the Ministry of Communications to assist in delivering letters in some parts of the Western Nigeria. He built and constructed wooden boxes where letters were posted and were to be delivered to those whom he had assigned such duty. However, around 1940s, the Ministry of Communications, Nigeria, took over the post office that was built by the Anglican Mission in Ikare which served many towns and villages in Nigeria.

### **3.4 Road Network Construction by the Missionaries in Ikare-Akoko Area**

Lennon, a missionary in Ikare area introduced motorable roads in the area around 1922-1925. He was supported by Oba Momoh who gave able leadership to the people of Ikare area to construct Ikare-Owo road. This enabled the traders in the area to engage in productive trade that promoted economy of the people. In Akoko-Kukuruku area, the church established a market in Ososo in order for church women in the area to engage in profitable trade that would improve their standard of living and empower them to contribute to the evangelisation of the area.

Missionaries in various parts of Nigeria did encourage the inhabitants of their mission stations to construct good roads to link other towns and villages. Such roads encouraged many Nigerians to be engaged in various profitable trades in Nigeria.

### **3.5 How Christianity Promotes Love among Nigerians**

The church leaders in Nigeria teach their followers to love themselves and their fellow human beings. They are also taught to aid those who are in need in the society and to get involved in the political life of their nation. Their participation in politics would probably bring peace and harmony to the country. The persecutions of Christians in the country strengthen them rather than the opposite. Christians in Nigeria regard themselves as brothers and sisters in Jesus Christ. They are also taught to love others irrespective of their religious inclinations. Most importantly, they are enjoined to demonstrate love in their actions to all people whether the people deserve it or not. That is the hallmark of Christianity as taught by Jesus Christ.

### **3.6 Spectacular Missionary Outreaches**

Aladura churches such as the Cherubim and Seraphim Movement and the Christ Apostolic Church that are parts of the indigenous missions have spread from the Southern parts of Nigeria towards Ilorin and to other Northern parts of Nigeria. They have continued to attract the interests of many Nigerians, more than the established Churches in the area. The activities of the Cherubim and Seraphim Movement have continued to pose a great challenge to Islam than Orthodox Churches because monogamy is less emphasised by the movement. For example in 1930, the Cherubim and Seraphim Movement extended her Evangelism to the Ebira area, many of the Ebiras that heard the Good News accepted Jesus Christ as their personal Saviour. Also, many Muslims and traditional worshippers became members of the Movement. In order for the Movement to continue winning more souls for Jesus Christ, it established two secondary schools: Cherubim and Seraphim College, at Ilorin and Laruba both in Kwara State, Nigeria. In 2005, the Movement established the Cherubim and Seraphim University in Omu-Aran, Kwara State. The Movement also embarks on annual Crusades in many towns that are located in Muslim dominated areas in Northern Nigeria.

#### **SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

Discuss the impacts of Christianity in Nigeria.

### **4.0 CONCLUSION**

In this unit, you have studied the contributions of Christians to the economy of Nigeria.

You have learnt how Christianity encourages love and unity among Nigerians irrespective of their religious persuasions. Furthermore, you have learnt that it was Christianity that brought western education to Nigeria. Through Christianity, many Nigerians in various fields, such as Clergy, teaching and trading to mention a few, have improved their lives greatly.

## 5.0 SUMMARY

You have learnt the following in this unit:

- The Christians built schools and colleges in Nigeria where many people were trained.
- After their training, they gained employment in various fields of human endeavour. You have also learnt that the planting of Christianity in Nigeria by both the missionaries and the indigenes brought progress to Nigerians all over the country. Through western education brought by Christianity, ignorance, fear, poverty and the like have been banished forever in the lives of many Nigerians.

## 6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1. Discuss the roles of Lennon in the development of Nigeria.
2. State some benefits that Nigerians have derived from the planting of Christianity in Nigeria.

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## **UNIT 5 PROBLEMS AND PROSPECTS OF CHRISTIANITY IN NIGERIA**

### **CONTENTS**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 Christianity and some Traditional Rulers in Yorubaland.
  - 3.2 The persecutions of Christians by the Rulers
  - 3.3 The Ogboni Society and the Spread of Christianity
  - 3.4 The Problems of Personnel and Schism in Churches
  - 3.5 The Attitudes of People to Islam were Against the Planting of Christianity in the Northern Nigeria
  - 3.6 Prospects of Christianity in Nigeria
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

By now, you should have learnt how Christianity began in Nigeria as you have read in the previous units of this course. It is hoped that you have also understood how Christianity started and how its adherents were persecuted by the government, Chiefs and traditionalists. You have read from the previous units the benefits derived by Nigerians by the coming of the Missionaries into Nigeria. It is believed that you have learnt how the indigenous Christians also contributed to the planting of Christianity in Nigeria in studying this course. However, in this unit, you will learn about some problems and prospects of Christianity in Nigeria.

### **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- state and discuss some of the problems the early missionaries had to contend with in the cause of their missionary expeditions
- explain prospects of Christianity in Nigeria.

### **3.0 MAIN CONTENT**

#### **3.1 Christianity and Some Traditional Rulers in Yoruba Land**

The planting of Christianity in Yoruba land had problems at the initial stage of its introduction to the people. For, it has been stated that the coming of the missionaries to Yoruba land was accompanied with the political situation of the area. For instance, when the missionaries arrived Badagry and its environs, some traditional rulers agreed that they should be allowed to stay in their land to establish mission stations while others kicked against them settling in their territory on the ground that they were the representatives of the British Colony that was out to seize other people's land by force, and that they used to wage war against those who refused their authority. Some chiefs in the Yoruba kingdom were strongly against the planting of Christianity, which they called the White man's religion. This was the reason why the Ijebu people refused to grant permission to the missionaries to enter their land around 1888.

Furthermore, some of the Yorubas who enjoyed slave trade in their land also kicked against the coming of the missionaries whom they learnt preached against such trade. They see their coming as an end to slave trade.

The anti- Christian movement was led by Akitoye, the King of Lagos land around 1845. On the other hand, king Sodeke of Egba land welcomed the missionaries to his Kingdom. He received Thomas Birch Freeman, a Wesleyan missionary to settle in his land. Freeman established mission stations in Egba land. He was told by the king to invite other missionaries and legitimate traders to Egba land.

#### **3.2 The Ogboni Society and the Planting of Christianity in Yoruba and Ibibio Lands**

According to Ayandele, the Ogboni Society was the school of oratory and jurisprudence in the Yoruba land in the olden days. He further claimed that among the Egba and the Ijebu people, Ogboni was the court house that tried criminal cases and any one that was found guilty was sentence to death by the body in the Yoruba land. Moreover, the Ogboni body served as checks and balances on the power of the Yoruba kings. In the Ibibio land, the Ibibio women formed the secret society to check indiscipline among women of their land. Offenders were punished. For instance, any woman that was caught stealing would be punished by them. But, when Christianity was introduced among the Yoruba and Ibibio lands, it preached against the acts of the society. For this reason,

the Ogbonis were strongly against the planting of Christianity in their lands. The spread of Christianity in the above named places suffered a setback, hence a few people accepted the religion in such areas.

### **3.3 The Problems of Workers and Schism in the Churches**

In 1905, the Emirs of Kontagora and Katsina sent message to the Church Missionary Society to come to their areas and establish mission stations to spread the gospel to their subjects, but the Mission turned their requests down because it lacked workers. Besides, it was reported that Lugard also sent to the same Mission to send Evangelists to Kano and establish mission station in the town but they could not respond to the call because of lack of workers. Besides, the Mission also lacked capital to recruit more evangelists for the spread of the Gospel to all parts of Nigeria. Apart from the above problems that confronted the spread of the Gospel in Nigeria, the restriction of Samuel Ajayi Crowther's activities to the Southern parts of Nigeria by the Church Mission Society in Nigeria, also contributed to the setback for the spread of the Gospel to other parts of Nigeria. According to Babalola, a leadership issue was a major cause of schisms among Christians in Nigeria. This is because African churches had quarrels with some doctrines and practices of Christianity in Nigeria.

They claimed that European leaders in the established Missions monopolised leadership positions among themselves. They did not place Africans in the Church leadership positions, but, they do place them in subordinate positions to the Europeans. Besides, polygamy was another problem that faced established churches in Nigeria. Mission kicked against polygamy in Nigeria. Many Africans who cherished their culture and tradition left the orthodox churches for indigenous ones. Mention could be made of the Cherubim and Seraphim Movement where many lovers of polygamy came to join. This is because the Movement accommodates some of the African traditions which the established churches kicked against. In the Anglican Church, many adherents who opposed infant baptism were expelled from the Church. Those who were sent away from the church joined the Christ Apostolic Church or the Celestial Church.

### **3.4 The Attitudes of People to Islam in the Northern Nigeria**

It has been noticed that Islam was more acceptable than Christianity in the North. This is because the religion accommodated the marriage style of the Northern people. But Christianity did not. For this reason, the Northerners were against Christianity. Apart from the above mentioned fact, it has being said that the Europeans that brought Christianity to Nigeria were reported to be drinking and importing gin that could cause

intoxication for people that drank it. The religion of Islam opposed the drinking of alcohol which the Christian Missionaries traded in and also imported to some parts of Nigeria. That if they were allowed to gain access to the Hausa-Fulani areas, they would compromise their people. For this reason, the Northerners were against the establishment of Christianity in the North.

### **3.7 Prospects of Christianity in Nigeria**

With the spread of Christianity in Nigeria, it is hoped that activities of witches and wizards will be minimised if not totally eradicated since many of them have confessed and repented of their evil deeds as members of the named societies as they accepted Jesus Christ as their Saviour. The Aladura Churches, the Christ Apostolic Church and the Cherubim and Seraphim Movement that accepted some of the traditions of Nigerians would in future gain more ground in Nigeria than the established churches that reject such practices.

Now that the restriction of the planting of Christianity in the Northern parts of Nigeria has been minimised, many indigenes of the area are now engaged in the planting of Christianity in various parts of Northern Nigeria; it is hoped that many people in the North will accept Christianity.

As many people have now accepted Christianity in Nigeria, it is hoped that they will continue to live godly lives and have peaceful homes. At a lower level, If Christian couples continue to live godly lives, more people will be drawn into the kingdom of God. It is our hope that the establishment of christian institutions will also draw more people into God's kingdom.

The characters of many Christians in Nigeria could also influence many none members to become Christians in Nigeria at all times. For example, in Ikare-Akoko, Ondo State, Christians do exercise love among themselves with all sincerity. They demonstrate this in some practical ways. The Anglican members called themselves 'Arakunrin' that is 'Brothers' and 'Arabirin' that is, Sisters, as a sign of oneness in Christ and fidelity. They visit one another regularly.

Those who are well to-do should continue to help the needy. Furthermore, it has been observed that the character of Lennon who was a Priest in St. Stephen's church, Ikare, in Ondo State, between 1920 and 1946, did encourage many people in Yoruba and Ebara lands. It has been said of him that he loved both Christians and muslims in Akoko-Kabba district area where he ministered as a priest. The Retired Bishop Haruna who was once an adherent of Islamic religion told us that Lennon

sponsored some muslims children including one of his late sister and a brother of his who built St. John Anglican Church, Obangede in Okehi Local Government Area in Kogi State. He later returned to the religion of Islam for his life was threatened by some members of his family that were muslims. The pupils in question attended the Jubilee Central School, Ikare between 1934 and 1942.

The training of Bishop Haruna by Lennon encouraged many muslims in Nigeria to convert to Christianity. Likewise, Bishop Haruna has also established a Nursery- Primary School at Okene town in order to use it as a means whereby muslim children areas could be attracted to accept the religion of Christianity. It is assumed that in the future, when those Pupils who are being trained in the various established institution by the adherents of Christianity grow up, some of them would later accept Christianity and their generations would continue to be Christians.

The training of the indigenous people in various Theological Colleges in Nigeria by various denominations for the spread of their faith would increase the numbers of evangelists and this would further encourage the spread of Christianity. For this reason, it is assumed that in the future, Christianity would gain upper hand over all other religions in Nigeria.

Many people in the country would accept Christianity as the method of evangelism and training of church workers continue to be improved upon. It is assumed that those who continue to receive theological training in Nigeria will continue to spread the Good News.

Another hope for the continuity of the growth of Christianity in Nigeria in the future is that many people who used to go to the witch doctors and priestess for help find solutions to their problems through Christians faith, and have abandoned those doctors. Such people now go to consult some evangelists to help them solve the various problems that they are facing.

Another factor that would probably contribute to the spread of Christianity in Nigeria is the avenue that various Missions give to their adherents to tell others what Christ did for them in their lives. There, some of them do tell how God does help them overcome their problems in life. Besides, the printing of such testimonies and its distribution to various people in Nigeria could also serve as means for the continued growth of Christianity. The use of mass media such as television and radio in preaching the gospel in Nigeria would probably help to spread the Good News.

House to house evangelism that embarked on by Christians in Nigeria is another means of promoting the spread of the gospel. The visitation to

prisons by some evangelists, teaching of religion studies, especially, Christian studies in primary, secondary and tertiary institutions in Nigeria is assumed would aid the continuity of the spread of the gospel in Nigeria.

Apart from this means, the outreach programmes to places such as the orphanage homes by various denominations in Nigeria are deemed to promote the spread of Christianity in Nigeria now and in the future.

The distribution of Christian tracts and literatures to people in the country by various missions, would aid the continuity of the spread of the gospel in Nigeria.

The formation of various Christian organisations such as ‘The full Gospel Business Men Fellowship International, The Young Women Christian Association, The Young Men Christian Fellowship International Association, The Christian Council of Nigeria, Pentecostal Fellowship of Nigeria, The Boys Brigade Companies, The Girls Brigade, The Bible Society of Nigeria, The Gideon Society of Nigeria, The Christian Association of Nigeria and The Scripture Union of Nigeria, among others, are means for the continuous means for the spread of the Gospel.

Finally, the freedom of worship and association that are included in Article 39 of the Constitution of Nigeria of 1999, would encourage the continuity on planting of Christianity in all parts of Nigeria.

The continuity of Church ceremonies such as burial and wedding in Nigeria by Couples would encourage the spread of the Gospel in Nigeria now and in the future.

The provisions of Counseling units by Missions in the country which people who have problems run to as means of solving their problems by Christian counselors would also encourage the continuity of the spread of the gospel in Nigeria.

### **SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

Discuss the possibilities of the continuity of Christianity in Nigeria.

## **4.0 CONCLUSION**

The planting of Christianity in Nigeria as you have learnt in this unit, faced many challenges. Despite the problems, the Church in Nigeria has achieved many good things for Nigerians economically, socially,

educationally and health wise. Furthermore, it has opened the eyes of many people in Nigeria to engage in evangelism as their means of livelihood. For example, some people who are founders of the indigenous churches have no other means to survive but through the evangelistic mission. Besides, the planting of Christianity in Nigeria has opened the eyes of some people to political posts in the country hence they had taken after some missionaries, such as Philips and Lennon who once engaged in the politics of Nigeria and brought economic and social amenities to the people of Yoruba, namely, the Ondo and the Ikare inhabitants in Nigeria.

The engagement of some Nigerians in the evangelical works in the country would probably encourage the continuity of the planting of Christianity in Nigeria.

## **5.0 SUMMARY**

You have learnt in this unit that Christians in the country have liberated many people from various problems like: sicknesses, confrontation of evil spirits, wizards, witches, slavery and illiteracy. They have won many souls for Jesus Christ in Nigeria. The planting of Christianity in Nigeria has brought civilisation to Nigerians. The formation of some Christian Associations in the country would probably enhance the continuity of the spread of the Gospel in Nigeria. Furthermore, the use of the mass media for the spread of the Good News in Nigeria would encourage the continuity of the Good News in the country. In addition to the above mentioned points, the method of allowing people to give testimonies in crusades, and other Christian services that take place in every denomination in Nigeria would probably encourage the continuity of the spread of the Gospel in Nigeria. The availability of the Holy Bible in the country is an opportunity for everybody who wants to purchase the Good News which would probably contribute to the continuity of Christianity in Nigeria in the future. The calling of many Nigerians by God to spread the Good News to people would probably aid the continuity of the Gospel in Nigeria now and in the future. Teaching of the gospel in schools, colleges and tertiary institutions in Nigeria would definitely aid the spread of the Good News in Nigeria. The freedom of worship in Nigeria is probably hoped to encourage the continuity of Christianity in Nigeria in the future.

## **6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT**

1. State the bodies that encourage the spread of the Gospel in Nigeria.
2. Explain the roles of Missionary Educational policies in Nigeria.
3. Discuss the role of media in the spread of the Gospel in Nigeria.

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### **MODULE 3 PLANTING OF CHRISTIANITY IN OTHER WEST AFRICAN COUNTRIES**

- Unit 1 The Planting of Christianity in Benin, Gambia, Burkina Faso and Cape Verde
- Unit 2 Christianity in Ghana
- Unit 3 The Establishment of African Methodist Episcopal Church in Ghana
- Unit 4 The Planting of Christianity in Liberia
- Unit 5 The Planting of Christian Mission in Sierra Leone
- Unit 6 The Difficulties Faced by the Early Missionaries in West Africa

#### **UNIT 1 THE PLANTING OF CHRISTIANITY IN BENIN, GAMBIA, BURKINA FASO AND CAPE VERDE**

##### **CONTENTS**

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- 2.0 Objectives
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    - 3.1.1 Planting of Catholic Mission in Benin
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- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

This unit focuses on the planting of Christianity in Benin, Gambia, Burkina Faso, and Cape Verde respectively. Not much work has been written on the planting of Christianity in the above named countries by church historians in West Africa. The writer could only search for the history of Christianity in these countries through the internet explorer. Besides, the author has no opportunity to visit the above named countries to collect data on the planting of Christianity in such countries unlike the opportunity he had to visit mission stations in Nigeria which gave him upper hand to gather data for the establishment of Christianity in Nigeria. However, in the future those countries will be visited to collect data from primary sources for improvement on this work on its revised edition.

The planting of Christianity in Benin, Gambia, Burkina Faso and Cape Verde may be traced back to missionaries who came from Portugal, Nigeria and French countries.

The Catholic Church was established in Benin in 1830 while the Methodist Church was established in Benin in 1843. Christianity was planted in Gambia in 1456 by the Roman Catholic priests while members of the Assembly of God churches planted Christianity in Burkina Faso in 1958. The Portuguese missionaries established Christianity in Cape Verde around 15<sup>th</sup> century.

## **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- mention when Christianity was established in Benin, Gambia, Burkina Faso and Cape Verde
- discuss the achievement of Catholic church in Benin
- discuss how Deeper Life Bible Church got to Cape Verde.

### **3.0 MAIN CONTENT**

#### **3.1 The Planting of Christianity in Benin, Gambia, Burkina Faso and Cape Verde**

##### **3.1.1 The Planting of Catholic Mission in Benin**

The Catholic Church established the first mission station in Benin in Quidah in 1680. First, Portuguese priests and then French clergy worked with indigenes or natives of Benin. Around 1830, there were about 2,000 Catholic adherents in the Southern coastal region of Benin. The Catholic Church focused her attention on the planting of mission stations in urban areas. In 1860, the African Missions of Lyons began to plant mission stations in the interior of Benin. The church grew and a seminary was established to train priests in 1913. In 1960, the first African Archbishop began to spread Christianity in various places within Benin.

##### **3.1.1.1 The Establishment of Methodist Mission in Benin**

Methodist missionaries began the first protestant church in 1843 a town named Aborney. They planted mission stations among the Fon and the Gun people while Assembly of God started mission stations in Somba and Pilapila areas in the same period. Evangelical Church of West Africa (ECWA) planted mission stations in central Benin.

In 1947, the heavenly church was established by the indigenes. They planted several mission stations in the area.

In the 1990s several people in Benin joined the Pentecostal church as a result of the constant revival services held throughout the country.

##### **3.1.2 The Planting of Christianity in Gambia**

Christianity began in Gambia with Portuguese sailors in 1456 when they sailed upriver and arrived on James Island. In 19<sup>th</sup> century, Christianity got a boost when freed slaves who were converts of the religion settled in Gambia. In 1849, a Catholic mission station was established in Bathurst on Saint Mary's Island. In 1905, an Irish father named Giovanni John Meehan arrived on the scene. In 1931, he created the Vicariate Apostolic of Senegambia. He separated it from Dakar.

In 1950, the Catholic population increased to over 3,000 adherents. In 1951, the Vicariate was elevated to the prefecture Apostolic of Bathurst in Gambia and in 1957 to the Diocese of Bathurst.

However, the arrival of the new evangelical movements from other West Africa countries have spurred some people with vigorous gospel speeches, local assistance, aid and have planted many mission stations and continue to get some willing converts.

The arrival of the new evangelical movements to Gambia paved way for re-enforcing Christian faith, supporting charity work in the country, establishment of schools and giving skills assistance to help youth schemes.

Christians in Gambia work actively with Muslim communities on various projects. They accept Muslim pupils into their mission schools, namely, Saint Augustine's High School. In the country, Gambian Christian council is composed of many religions and denominations who discuss matters of common interest. There are over 120,000 Christian adherents of various denominations, namely, Methodists, Anglicans, Jehovah's witnesses, Baptists, Seventh-Day Adventists and others.

### **3.1.2.1 The Establishment of Methodist Church in Gambia**

The Methodist church was established in Gambia in 1821. John Baker and John Morgan were the first missionaries to establish mission stations in Gambia. Among the mission stations established by them are Tendaba in Banjul, Macoumba in 1935 Jallow St. They also planted Christianity in Serrekunda, Bakau, Georgetown and Kombo areas. The Methodist church established Bathurst's High school for boys in Banjul. Christians in Gambia constitute approximately 8 percent (136,400) of the country's population (1,705,000 – 2009 estimation) in 1963, Christians formed. The Gambia Christian council as an ecumenical association of Roman Catholic, Anglican and Methodist churches.

### **3.1.3 The Planting of Christianity in Burkina Faso**

The planting of Christianity in Burkina Faso obtained independence from France in 1960.

Apostolic church of Burkina Faso started in 1958 as a group. They were members of the Assembly of God churches in Ouagadougou. However, in 1971, they broke away from the Assembly of God and formed Apostolic Church, Burkina Faso. The world council of churches granted

them autonomous in 1995 and the church planted 80 mission stations in the country. The church had 14,120 adherents. The adherents were 9,000. In 2000, the church established more new mission stations that consist of 8000 adherents.

### ***Church of God of Prophecy***

Church of God of prophecy began in 1987 in Burkina Faso. In 1995 the church had five mission stations that comprised 333 adherents.

### ***New Apostolic Church***

New Apostolic church was planted in Burkina Faso in 1970. In 1995, the church planted 200 mission stations in the country. The numbers of adherents were 18,886. In 2000, the church established 38 mission stations in the country. They comprised 11,500 adherents.

### ***Assembly of God Churches***

The Assembly of God came to Burkina Faso in 1919. In 1995, there were 1,686 mission stations. Adherents were 500,907. In 2000, the Assembly of God planted 2100 mission stations. The mission stations had 400,000 adherents.

### ***Association des Eglises Ev de pentecote (Pentecostal)***

The Association des Eglises Ev de pentecote was established in Burkina Faso in the year 1945. In 1995, the church established 86 mission stations in the country. The numbers of adherents were 6,700. Sixty-four percent adherents left the NOUNA faith to join the church. Also, eleven percent adherents left the sissalsa faith to join the faith while seven percent adherents were from the Birifon ethnic group Association de la convention Baptist.

Association de la convention Baptist was planted in Burkina Faso in 1965. In 1995, there were 88 mission stations in the country. Its adherents were 11,800. Later the numbers of the mission stations increased to 123 with the population of adherents numbered 7435.

### ***Eglise chretienne Evangelique***

Eglise Chretienne Evangelique was planted in Burkina Faso in the year 1923. In 1995, the church had 499 mission stations. There were 47,900 adherents of the faith.

### ***Isolated Radio Believers***

The adherents of isolated Radio Believers only have access to a church service through radio broadcasts either because of the remoteness of the area in which they live or due to societal pressures. There are over 8,000 adherents who listen to God's word this way.

#### ***The Christian and Missionary Alliance Church***

The Christian and Missionary Alliance Church had established 328 mission stations. The church had 17000 adherents.

#### ***Mennonite Church in Burkina Faso***

Mennonite Church in Burkina Faso was established in the year 1978. The leaders came from Zurich, Switzerland to establish mission station in Burkina Faso. They had 4 mission stations in Burkina Faso in 1975. Adherents of the faith were 250.

#### ***Protestant Evangelical Church***

Protestant Evangelical church was established in Burkina Faso in 1931. In 1995, the church had established 38 mission stations in Burkina Faso. The adherents of the faith were 3,800

#### ***Reformed Evangelical Church***

Reformed Evangelical Church Faith was planted in Burkina Faso in 1980. The founders were from France. In 1995, the church had established 20 mission stations in Burkina Faso. There were 2,000 adherents of the faith.

#### ***Seven Day Adventist in Burkina Faso***

Seven Day Adventist was planted in Burkina Faso in 1971. In 1995, there was only a mission station in the country.

The faith had 181 adherents. However, in 2000 the faith had 4 mission stations. The numbers of the adherents were 1000.

### **3.1.4 The Planting of Christianity in Cape Verde**

The uninhabited Islands were discovered and colonised by the Portuguese in the 15<sup>th</sup> century. Cape Verde became a trading centre for the African slaves and later an important coaling supply islands.

Christianity was established in Cape Verde in 1989. It was planted by missionaries from Brazil. The church had 5 mission stations in the Islands. There were 243 adherents of the faith. However, in the Cape Verde, they had 398 affiliated missions.

### ***Seventh Day Adventist***

Seventh Day Adventist was planted in Cape Verde in 1935 by mission stations with 5,712 adherents. In Cape Verde, they also had 10,000 affiliates. In 1981, the seven Day Advent organised a conference for her members. However, in 2005, the Church was re-organised. The Seven Day Adventist was placed under the Sahel Union Mission.

#### **3.1.4.1 The Planting of Deeper Life Bible Church in Cape Verde**

Members of Deeper Life Bible Church, Nigeria planted the Deeper Life Bible Church in Cape Verde in 1988. They established 2 mission stations that comprise 58 adherents of the faith. In Cape Verde, there were additional 63 affiliates of churches.

#### **3.1.4.2 The Establishment of Manna Church of Christ in Cape Verde**

Manna Church of Christ began as neo-Pentecostal Church in Lisbon in 1984. Manna Church of Christ was planted in Cape Verde in 1989 by the Manna missionaries from Portugal. It has one mission station in 1995 with 18 adherents. However, in Cape Verde there were other 52 affiliated churches apart from the Manna Church of Christ.

#### **3.1.4.3 The Planting of Church of the Nazarene in Cape Verde**

In 1903, the church of the Nazarene was established in Cape Verde. The church had 26 mission stations with 3,780 adherents. Also, there were 10,743 affiliated other faith adherents in the country.

#### **3.1.4.4 The Planting of God is Love Church in Cape Verde**

God is love church was established in Cape Verde in 1990. In 2001, the church had 16 mission stations with 2,500 adherents. In Cape Verde, there were 4,000 affiliates.

### **3.1.4.5 The Planting of Baptist Mission Association in Cape Verde**

The Baptist Mission Association was planted in Cape Verde by the BMAA missionaries in the United States in 1956. It has planted one mission station with 130 adherents of the faith.

### **3.1.4.6 The Planting of Universal Church of the Kingdom of God in Cape Verde**

Universal church of the kingdom of God began in Brazil in 1977. The church was founded on Pentecostal principles or doctrines. Missionaries of the universal church of the kingdom of God in Brazil established 13 mission stations in Cape Verde. It has 1,000 adherents in the country.

## **4.0 CONCLUSION**

Probably, the unique role of scholars who placed the information of how Christianity was established in Benin, Gambia, Burkina Faso and Cape Verde should be commended. The planting of Christianity in Benin was the Catholic mission before other missionaries followed suit. African missions of Lyons planted Christianity and established seminary to train priests in Benin.

Methodist missionaries planted Christianity in Benin around 1843. The Portuguese sailors established Christianity in Benin in 1456. In 1931 Father Giovanni John Meehan planted Christianity in Gambia.

In 1958, The Apostolic church of Burkina Faso was planted by members of Assembly of God. In Burkina Faso an isolated Radio Believers was established. Members could only listen to radio broadcasts to hear the word of God.

Deeper Life Bible Church was established in Cape Verde by Nigerians.

## **5.0 SUMMARY**

The following are the major points you have learnt in this unit.

- Christianity was planted in Benin by the Portuguese sailors
- Christianity was planted in Burkina Faso by French Missionaries
- Christianity was introduced to Gambia by the French missionaries



- Deeper Life Bible church was introduced in Cape Verde by Nigerian missionaries.

## **6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT**

1. State how Christianity was established in the following countries. Benin, Burkina Faso, Gambia and Cape Verde.
2. Explain the genesis of Apostolic Church of Burkina Faso.

## **7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING**

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## **UNIT 2 CHRISTIANITY IN GHANA**

### **CONTENTS**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 The Presence of Christianity in Ghana
  - 3.2 Many Denominations are Planted in Ghana
  - 3.3 The Establishment of Christian Council in Ghana
  - 3.4 Christian History in Ghana
  - 3.5 The Establishment of Roman Catholic Mission in Ghana
  - 3.6 Establishment of Indigenous Churches in Ghana
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

This unit will introduce you to the presence of Christian missionaries in Ghana. You will also learn the methods used by the missionaries to spread the Christian faith in the country.

### **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- discuss the roles of each denominations in the planting of Christianity in Ghana
- state when the Christian Council began in Ghana.

### **3.0 MAIN CONTENT**

#### **3.1 The Presence of Christianity in Ghana**

The presence of Christian missionaries on the coast of Ghana is dated to the arrival of the Portuguese in the fifteenth century. Basel/Presbyterian and Wesleyan/Methodist missionaries laid the foundation for the Christian church in Ghana. They converted people in the coastal area. These missionaries established schools in which educated Africans were trained. Although, churches continue to influence the development of education in the country, church schools have been opened to all since the state assumed financial responsibility for formal instruction under the Education Act of 1960.

### **3.2 Many Denominations are Planted in Ghana**

Various Christian denominations are well represented in Ghana. The Volta Region has a high concentration of Evangelical Presbyterians. Many Akwapim are Presbyterians and the Methodist denomination is strongly represented among the Fante. The Roman Catholic Church is fairly well represented in central region and Ashanti region. Although no official figures existed to reflect regional distribution of the various denominations, it is generally agreed that the southern part of the nation is more of Christianity, while the north is more Islamic.

### **3.3 The Establishment of Christian Council in Ghana**

The unifying organisation of Christians in the country is the Ghana Christian Council, founded in 1929. Representing the Methodist, Anglican, Mennonite, Presbyterian, Evangelical Presbyterian, African Methodist Episcopal Zionist, Christian Methodist, Evangelical Lutheran, F'Eden, Baptist churches, and the Society of Friends. The council serves as the link between the World Council of Churches and other ecumenical bodies. The National Catholic Secretariat, established in 1960 also coordinated the different in-country dioceses. These Christian organisations, concerned primarily with the spiritual affairs of their congregations, have occasionally acted in circumstances described by the government as political. Such was the case in 1991 when both the Conference of Catholic Bishops and the Ghana Christian Council called on the military government of the Provisional National Defence Council (PNDC) to return the country to constitutional rule. The Roman Catholic newspaper, *The Standard*, was often critical of government policies.

### **3.4 Christian History in Ghana**

The first Christian missionaries arrived in Ghana about 1828. They were representatives of the Swiss Basel Mission. Later, Moravian missionaries joined the efforts in 1848. A Methodist missionary arrived in 1835. The Methodists emphasised autonomy among the churches and helped to form bands of African leaders. Missionaries who were working with the Bremen Mission in Togoland among the Ewe also helped to establish the Evangelical Presbyterian Church. Later, after World War I, they had to leave because of political reasons and the church begins its self-governance. The Basel Mission left during World War I because of political pressures and the missions connected to that ministry had to learn to function independently. Many of the missionaries founded medical clinics or schools. The mission schools helped to educate young people and caused them to advance economically. Today, the Methodists, Presbyterians, Seventh-Day

Adventists, and Evangelical Presbyterian churches are all strong influences. Many churches have also split from the mainline denominations to form their own brand of Christianity. While some have maintained authentic Christian theology, others have mixed traditional religious ideology and become synchronise. In the 1970s and 1980s many Pentecostal missionaries arrived and charismatic churches became exceedingly popular. Christian music and drama have influenced culture positively.

### **3.5 The Establishment of Roman Catholic Mission in Ghana**

This denomination began intensive work in Ghana around 1880 although the first Catholics to actually arrive in modern day Ghana were Portuguese traders and sailors around 1471. Although some attempts were made to evangelise, most of them who landed stayed at the settlement around Mina and rarely ventured inland. French missionaries actually started working further inland in the 1880 venture. They were later helped by the White Fathers after 1917.

There are currently four archdioceses in Ghana—Cape Coast, Accra, Kumasi, and Tamale. The diocese of Cape Coast was actually erected in 1879. It was originally called the Prefecture Apostolic of Costa d'Oro or the Gold Coast Diocese. It was elevated to the Vicariate Apostolic of Costa d'Oro in 1901 and to an archdiocese in 1950. Albert Maximilien was appointed as the first ordinary in 1895. The ordinary can be a bishop or vicar who oversees the judicial procedures of the parish. Peter Kodwo Appiah Turkson is the current cardinal and archbishop that oversees the Cape Coast archdiocese. From 1950 when 120,494 people attended mass in this diocese to 2006 when 293,131 people were attending mass, the influence of this archdiocese has grown. There are 99 diocesan priests and ten religious priests. That means that each priest ministers to approximately 2,689 people. There are forty-one parishes within the diocese. The Cape Coast archdiocese covers 3,780 square miles. The two suffragan dioceses are Wiawso and Sekondi-Takoradi. The mailing address of the archdiocese is P.O. Box 112, Cape Coast, Ghana.

The Archdiocese of Tamale was originally constructed in 1926 as the Prefecture Apostolic of Navrongo. In 1934, it became the Vicariate Apostolic of Navrongo. Then, in 1950 it was elevated to the diocese of Tamale. Finally, in 1977, it was made an archdiocese. Oscar Morin, the first ordinary, was appointed in 1926. The current archbishop is Gregory Ebolawola Kpiebaya. The archdiocese actually covers 2,851 square miles. In 2004, there were 16,506 Catholics in the Tamale area. The forty-six priests served approximately 358 congregants each. There were

nine parishes. The suffragan dioceses are Damango, Wa, Yendi, and Navrongo-Bolgatanga. The mailing address for the archdiocese of Tamale is P.O. Box 42, Gumbehini Rd., Tamale, N.R., Ghana.

The Archdiocese of Kumasi was erected in 1932 as the Vicariate Apostolic of Kumasi. It was elevated to a diocese in 1950 and to an archdiocese in 2002. Hubert Joseph Paulissen served as the first ordinary in 1932. He later resigned in 1951. Currently, Peter Kwasi Sarpong is the archbishop who oversees the activities of the archdiocese. He began leading this archdiocese in 1970. The priests in the diocese seek to teach their congregants the following values: love and unity, unity in diversity, justice and peace, compassion, option for the poor, and teamwork. The archdiocese is currently working to support a Christ the Teacher Catholic Training College at Kobreso, a seminary at Paakoso, and a girls hostel near the University of Science and Technology in Oforikrom. One of the theme verses of the archdiocese is from 2 Corinthians when Paul says that “anyone who sows sparingly will reap sparingly and anyone who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully.” Seventy-seven priests currently serve about 350,000 congregants. Thus each priest ministers to about 4,545 people. There are 34 parishes, but the archdiocese also oversees 158 outlying areas. The suffragan dioceses are Goaso, Konongo-Mampong, Obuasi, and Sunyani.

The Accra archdiocese was erected in 1943 as the Prefecture Apostolic of Accra. Later it was elevated to the Vicariate Apostolic of Accra in 1947 and to its diocese status in 1950. In 1992, it officially became an archdiocese. Gabriel Charles Palmer-Buckle is the current archbishop. In 2006, there were 180,432 people attending mass and 116 priests serving in the archdiocese. That means each priest was serving 1,555 people. There are 51 parishes in the archdiocese. It covers 1,257 square miles. The current mailing address is P.O. Box 247, Accra, Ghana. The suffragan dioceses are Ho, Jasikan, Keta-Akatsi, and Koforidua.

### **3.6 Establishment of Indigenous Churches in Ghana**

The establishment of the African Faith Tabernacle

This church started work in 1919. It is linked with the Faith Tabernacle Church of the United States. In 2001, there were 1,100 congregations. There were 128,000 congregants and 160,000 affiliates.

*Apostles Revelation Society* - This movement was started in 1939 by CKN Wovenu, who claimed to be a prophet. In 2001, there were 285 congregations. There were 50,000 members and 110,000 affiliates.

### **The Establishment of Jehovah Witnesses**

Jehovah Witnesses denomination established work in Ghana in 1924. The main church offices are in Accra. In 2001, there were 988 churches and a total of 61,176 congregants. There were 200,000 affiliates.

This group started in 1947. This group relies on the occult. They have a teaching farm, a school, and a carpet production company. In 1995, there were thirty groups. There were 2,000 members and 4,000 affiliates.

### ***Christian Divine Church***

This group left the Methodist church to begin their own denomination in 1960. They believe in the healing of incurables and of mental cases. In 1995, there were one hundred congregations. There were 5,000 members and 7,000 affiliates.

### ***Church of Grace***

The church of Grace was begun by a woman who called herself a healing prophetess. She began her own church in 1949 when the Methodist church of which she had once been a member excommunicated her. She started her own church in 1949. Fifty-seven percent of the church members are from the Ashanti people group. In 1995, there were twenty churches. There were 2,500 members and 4,000 affiliates.

### ***Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter-Day Saints (Mormon)***

This church was started by American missionaries. There is a central temple in Accra. In 1995, there were thirty-nine congregations. There were 5,340 congregants and 15,900 affiliates.

### ***Church of Messiah***

This church was started by a woman who called herself a prophetess and who claimed to perform healings. The woman started her church in 1965. The churches headquarters are in Kumasi. Most of the church members are from the Twi people group. In 1995, there were five congregations. There were 1,000 members and 1,500 affiliates.

### ***Church of the Twelve Apostles and Divine Fellowship***

This church was started in 1914 by John Nackabah, who was a follower of a prophet named Harris. Currently, John Nackabah III leads the denomination. The headquarters of the church is in Kormantse. In 1995, there were 1,150 congregations. There were 8,000 congregants and 12,000 affiliates.

### ***Divine Fellowship***

This church began in 1962. Another name for this church is Twer Nyame Church. It was once a member of the CLA. Members believe in the use of healings, oils, and incense. Ninety-eight percent of the people groups are from the Akan people while two percent are from the Ga people. In 1995, there were fifteen congregations. There were 4,000 members and 7,000 affiliates.

### ***Divine Healer's Church and Eden Revival Church***

The Divine Healing church was established by Brother GA Lawson in 1954. Another name for this church is The Lord is There, Temple. Its headquarters are in Accra. In 1995, there were 170 congregations. There were 120,700 members and 200,000 affiliates.

### ***Divine Healing Church of Christ***

This church was started in 1950 by a woman who called herself a prophetess. The members call themselves indigenous Pentecostals. The church members often engage in midnight times of worship. In 1995, there were twenty congregations. There were 1,000 members and 2,000 affiliates.

## **SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1**

Comment on the establishment of the Roman Catholic Church in Ghana.

## **4.0 CONCLUSION**

In 1471, the Portuguese traders and sailors planted Roman Catholic faith in Ghana. In 1929 the Ghana Christian Council was founded. Members of the Council include the Methodist, Anglican, Mennonite, Presbyterian, Evangelical Presbyterian, African Methodist Episcopal Zionist, Christian Methodist, Evangelical Lutheran, F. Eden, Baptist Churches and the Society of Friends. In 1928 the representatives of the

Swiss Basel Mission arrived in Ghana and planted their faith. The following churches were established in Ghana:

- 1919, the Faith Tabernacle Church of the United States
- 1995, Christian Divine Church.
- 1914, Church of Grace
- 1995, Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter- Day Saints
- 1914, Church of the Twelve Apostles
- 1962, Divine Fellowship.
- 1954, Divine Healer's Church.
- 1950, Divine Healing Church of Christ.

## **SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2**

Discuss the roles of the Pentecostal missions in the spread of Christianity in Ghana.

### **5.0 SUMMARY**

- The Volta Region was a high concentration of Evangelical Presbyterians in Ghana.
- The Unifying organisation of Christians in Ghana is the Ghana Christian Council.
- The first Christian missionaries in Ghana arrived in 1828.
- The African Faith Tabernacle is linked with the Faith Tabernacle Church of the United States.
- The Jehovah Witnesses group relies on the occult. They have the following Social amenities: Farm, School and Carpet Production Company.
- Christian Divine Church members believe in the healing of incurables and of mental cases.
- The Church of the Messiah was established by Prophetess Harris.
- The Lord is There Temple was established by G.A. Lawson.

### **6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT**

1. Discuss the indigenous Pentecostals.
2. Discuss the role of Jehovah Witnesses in the development of Ghana.
3. State the roles of the Portuguese traders and Sailors in Ghana between 1471 and 1917.
4. Account for the first Christian missionaries activities in Ghana.
5. Enumerate all the denominations that comprise Ghana Christian Council.



## **7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING**

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## **UNIT 3 THE ESTABLISHMENT OF AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH IN GHANA**

### **CONTENTS**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 Selected Churches in Ghana
  - 3.2 The Establishment of Church of Pentecost in Ghana
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

In the previous units, you have studied how Christianity was planted by the Portuguese traders and other Missionaries. In this unit, you will study more of other Churches that were established by indigenes of Ghana.

### **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- discuss how each denomination was established in Ghana
- list the names of Church founders in Ghana
- evaluate each church growth in Ghana.

### **3.0 MAIN CONTENT**

#### **3.1 Selected Churches in Ghana**

##### **The Establishment of F Eden Church**

This church was established in 1963. It applied to the WCC in 1971 but was not allowed to join. Currently, the churches' main offices are located in Accra. Another name for this church is F Eden Church. In 1995, there were eighteen churches. There were 27,000 members and 45,000 affiliates. Members usually come from the Akan and Ga people cluster.

### ***Evangelistic Tabernacle of Jesus***

This church was established by Sammy Kweku around 1980. The main offices of the denomination are located in Accra. In 1995, there were thirty congregations. There were 3,000 members and 7,000 affiliates.

### ***First Miracle Healing Church***

This church was established in 1959. They believe in healing by using oil, incense, and handkerchiefs. Eighty percent of the members are from the Ga people group. The membership of the church is currently declining. In 1995, there were ten congregations. There were 2,000 congregants and 3,000 affiliates.

### ***Greek Orthodox P. Alexandria Church in Ghana***

This church is considered under the authority of the church in Alexandria, Egypt. The main church offices are found in Yaounde, Cameroon. In 1995, there were two congregations. There were 1,000 members and 1,500 affiliates.

### ***Holy Trinity Healing Church***

This church started in 1954. The main church offices are located in Kumasi. In 1995, there were fifteen churches. There were 2,000 congregants and 3,000 affiliates. The son of the man who actually started this church later left the church and started his own church which he called the Bethany Church Mission.

### ***Inner Temple of Christ***

This group of churches started in 1964. This group of churches was once part of the Divine Healers Church. The church experienced a forty percent decline after 1966. About fifty percent of the members are from the Ashanti people while thirty percent are from the Ga people. There were 2,000 members and 4,000 affiliates.

### ***International Central Gospel Church***

This church started in 1982 by a man named Mensah Otabil. There are branches today in Nigeria and in the United Kingdom. In 1995, there were 50 churches. There were 14,000 members and 28,000 affiliates.

***Jesus Divine Healing Church***

This church started in 1952. This church believes that epileptics can be healed with the use of the crucifix and holy oils. Members of the church come from the Akan, Ga, and Ewe people groups. It was once a member of the RCC. In 1995, there were ten churches. There were 1,500 members and 2,000 affiliates.

***Liberal Catholic Church in Ghana***

This church was once part of the old Roman Catholic Church. In 1995, there was one congregation. There were 40 members and 90 affiliates

***Nazarene Healing Church***

This church split from the Methodist church in 1935. They believe in the use of healing herbs. Members of this church are from the Akan, Ga, and Ewe people. In 1995, there were ten congregations. There were 8,000 members and 15,000 affiliates.

***New Apostolic Church***

This church was established around 1980. The headquarters for this church are in Zurich, Switzerland. In 2001, there were 1,333 churches and 266,700 members. There were 480,000 affiliates.

***New Covenant Apostolic Church***

This group of churches started around 1980. It is an Apostolic indigenous church. In 1995, there were seventy-four congregations. There were 4,500 members and 9,000 affiliates.

***Sacred Action Church***

This group of churches was started around 1980 by a Catholic and his followers. In 1995, it left the Catholic Church. Church members believe in using exorcisms. In 1995, there were eighty-three congregations. There were 2,700 members and 6,000 affiliates.

***Sacred Cherubim and Seraphim Church of God***

This church was established in 1952. Missionaries from Nigeria started this denomination in Ghana. Church members now come from the Akan, Ewe and Ga people groups. In 1995, there were 169 congregations. There were 4,900 members and 12,300 affiliates.

### ***Sacred Order of the Silent Brotherhood***

This denomination started in 1961. There are three temples. This denomination is associated with the Divine Healing Crusade. In 1995, there were ten congregations. There were 1,200 members and 2,000 affiliates.

### ***Supreme Healing Home***

This group was founded in 1963. They establish places they call healing homes. Accra is a main area where these homes exist. Twenty-three percent of the congregants are from the Akan people while twenty-three percent come from the Guan people. Another twenty-three percent come from the Fante people, and nineteen percent come from the Ga people. Another twelve percent come from the Ewe people. In 1995, there were two congregations. There were 1,600 members and 3,000 affiliates.

### ***True Church of Christ (New Bethlehem)***

This church was established in 1957 by Lucy Kudjo. This church believes in the use of power handkerchiefs and in the use of special healing services for incurable people. Many members of the church come from the Ashanti people group. In 1995, there were forty congregations. There were 7,000 congregants and 9,000 affiliates.

### ***United Christians Church***

This group of churches was founded in 1940 by Salome Mamie Odun, a self-proclaimed prophetess who was evicted from the Presbyterian Church. Many of the members are from the Krobo people group. In 1995, there were ten congregations. There were 500 congregants and 1,500 affiliates.

### ***United Christian Churches Brotherhood***

This church started in 1975. In 1995, there were fifty-two churches. There were 2,120 members and 3,300 affiliates.

### ***Universal Prayer Group***

This church was established in 1932 and has been led by different prophetesses. The church was once associated with the Presbyterian denomination but left it. Church members come from the Akan, Ewe, and Ga people groups. In 1995, there were fifty churches. There were 3,500 members and 9,000 affiliates.

### ***White Cross Society***

This church started in 1941. It is also called Atitso Gaxie Habobo. It is considered to be an EP Healing Group. It was expelled from the EPC. About seventy-six percent of the church members come from the Ewe people group while fifteen percent come from the Kabre people group. There were 20 churches. There were 3,000 members and 5,000 affiliates.

### **African Methodist Episcopal Church**

This church was established as a mission organisation of a U.S. based denomination in 1933. They used to belong to the AMEZC but are no longer affiliated with it. In 1995, there were thirty-nine congregations. There were 1,800 members and a total of 3,000 affiliates. Sixty-five percent of the members come from the Ashanti people group while twenty-five percent come from the Fante people. Another eight percent come from the Akim people.

### ***African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church***

This church began work in 1896. It was started by U.S. missionaries who were affiliated with the AMEZC. In 2001, there were 150 congregations and a total of 27,000 members and 55,000 affiliates. Sixty percent of the members are from the Fante ethnic group. Another twenty-nine percent come from the Ewe people. The AMEZC is responsible for funding and running 118 different educational facilities.

### ***African Orthodox Church***

This church came into existence in 1931. It is considered to be an Anglo-Roman church which was originally associated with Anglican theology but who chose to leave that ideology for a theology that is more similar to Catholicism. The main diocese is located in Accra. It was a mission of an AOC church in the United States. The Akwapim and the Kwahu people are strong members of this church. In 1995, there were ten congregations. There were 1,000 members and 2,000 affiliates.

### ***Anglican Church of Ghana***

This church started in Ghana in 1752. They are members of the CPWA. There are currently eight dioceses in Ghana. These are found in the towns of Accra, Cape Coast, Ho, Koforidua, Kumasi, Sekondi, Sunyani, and Tamale. This church has established the Trinity Theological Seminary in the Accra area and the St. Nicholas Seminary in Cape

Coast. The third seminary is called the Anglican Lay Training Centre in Kumasi. In 2001, there were 490 congregations and a total of 125,000 members and 250,000 affiliates.

### ***Apostolic Church of Ghana***

This church was founded as a mission of the ACMM, a missions group from the UK, but the missionary who founded the church later left the denomination and found the Church of Pentecost in 1953. In 2001, there were 1,800 churches and a total of 260,000 members and 380,000 affiliates.

### ***Apostolic Divine Church of Ghana***

This church started in 1957 and was actually a schism from a Methodist denomination. Today, they are considered to be indigenous Pentecostals. They are called an African Independent Spiritual church. Their headquarters are in Accra. In 1995, there were seventy-three churches. There were 15,000 congregants and 31,400 affiliates.

### ***Apostolic Reformed Church of Ghana***

This denomination began in 1958 as a result of a schism with the Presbyterian Church of Ghana. Today, they are considered to be indigenous Pentecostals. They are called an African Independent Spiritual church. In 1995, there were 37 congregations, 3,160 members and a total of 5,270 affiliates.

### ***Army of the Cross of Christ Church***

This church started in 1922. In 1958, this denomination applied for membership in the World Council of Churches. However, they are not currently listed on the membership roles of the WCC. They are called an African Independent Spiritual church. In 2001, there were 1,022 congregations, a total of 46,000 members and 125,000 affiliates. Many of the congregants are from the Fante people.

### ***Assemblies of God in Ghana***

This denomination began in Ghana in 1916. U.S. missionaries first started work. In 2001, there were 750 congregations, a total of 125,000 members and 200,000 affiliates. Forty-four percent of the congregants are from the Ashanti people group while fifteen percent are from the Kusasi people. Another eight percent are from the Ga people. Eight percent are also from the Dagomba people.

***Assembly Hall Churches***

This church started around 1985. It is listed as a Chinese neocharismatic church. It is called the Little Flock Church. In 1995, there were forty churches. There were 800 members and 2,000 affiliates.

***Baptist International Missions***

The church is a mission of the BIM denomination of the United States. In 1995, there were six congregations. There were 450 members and 1,500 affiliates.

***Baptist Mid-Missions***

This denomination was founded as a mission of the BMM denomination of the U.S. in 1946. The churches are primarily found among the Dagati and Sissala people. Its headquarters are in Tuma. In 1995, there were forty churches. There were 2,000 members and 3,330 affiliates.

***Bethany Church Mission***

This church was founded in 1962 as a split from the Holy Trinity Healing Church. About eighty-five percent of the congregants are women from the Ashanti people group. In 1995, there were twenty congregations. There were 2,000 members and 4,000 affiliates.

***Bethel Church of Christ***

This church began in 1967. It was once a member of the CLA. In 1995, there were ten congregations. There were 1,000 members and a total 2,500 affiliates. Fifty-six percent of the members are from the Akan people group while thirty-three percent are from the Ga people. Another eleven percent of attendees are from the Ewe people.

***Bethesda Church Mission***

This church started in 1965. It is an ex-member of the Divine Healers Church. In 1995, there were sixty-eight churches. There were 30,000 members and a total of 42,900 affiliates. The headquarters are in the Kumasi area. Sixty-six percent of the people are from the Ashanti people, and twenty-seven percent are from the Ga people. Another five percent are from the Fante people, and two percent are from the Ewe people.



### ***Bethlehem Revival Church***

This church was established in 1951 as a split from the Apostolic Church. In 1995, there were ten congregations. There were 4,000 members and 7,000 affiliates. Twenty-seven percent of the members are from the Ga people and twenty-six percent are from the Akan people. Another twenty-one percent are from the Ewe people, and fourteen percent are from the Frafra people. An additional eleven percent are from the Hausa people.

### ***Bible Missionary Church***

This church was founded by BMC missionaries from the U.S. in 1985. In 1995, there were three congregations. There were 150 members and 250 affiliates.

### ***Broadsheet Readers' Clubs***

This group started by readers of the Gospel Broadsheets that were produced by the WEC from the United Kingdom. The WEC started distributing these materials around 1980. In 1995, there were 195 clubs. There were 2,500 members and 6,000 affiliates.

### ***Buem-Krachi Presbyterian Church***

This church started in 1954 as a result of a schism with the EPC when some members had disagreements over the practice of polygamy. In 1964, part of those members who had split choose to return to the EPC. In 1995, there were ten congregations. There were 200 members and 500 affiliates. Members of these churches come from the Buem and Krachi people groups.

### ***Calvary Church of the Coastlands***

This church was established by YWAM missionaries in 1991. Most of the people comes from the Fante people and formerly practiced ethnic religions. In 1995, there were seven churches. There were 300 members and 500 affiliates.

### ***Calvary Pentecostal Church***

This church started in 1983. They are linked with the Church of God Mission. Many of the members come from the Fante people group. In 1995, there were four congregations. There were 700 members and 2,000 affiliates.

***Celestial Church of Christ***

This church started around 1960. It originated in Nigeria. Most of the members are from the Yoruba ethnic group. In 1995, there were sixteen congregations. There were 5,000 members and 10,000 affiliates.

***Christ Apostolic Church***

This church started in 1921. Thirty-two percent of the members are ex-Methodists who left the Methodist as a result of a schism. It is a mission of CAC of Nigeria. There are nine different “apostles” working in Ghana. In 2001, there were 650 congregations. There were 44,200 members and 52,156 affiliates.

***Christ Revival Church***

This church started around 1960. It once was considered to be part of the Apostolic Church, however, it later left the denomination. It applied to join the WCC in 1971. This church believes in healing. Most of the members speak Twi. In 1995, there were ten congregations. There were 900 members and 1,500 affiliates.

***Christian Action Faith Ministries***

This church started in 1978. It once belonged to the Full Gospel Mission group. There are also congregations in the United States, London, Paris, and in Togo. In 1995, there were twenty congregations. There were 15,000 members and 20,000 affiliates.

***Christian Hope Ministry***

This group began as an independent movement in 1984. In 1995, there were twenty congregations. There were 3,000 members and 5,000 affiliates.

***Christian Methodist Episcopal Church***

This church was once a member of the AMEC. It was started in 1950. It is a member of the Ghana-Togoland Conference. In 1995, there were ten congregations. There were 1,540 members and 2,800 affiliates.

### ***Christian Outreach Ministries***

This group started by a Krobo leader in 1989. Most of the churches are around the southern end of Lake Volta in the Krobo area. In 1995, there were four congregations. There were 800 members and 1,500 affiliates.

### ***Church of Christ Spiritual Movement***

This church began as a result of a split off from the Ghana Apostolic Church in 1958. Fifty percent of the members are from the Ashanti people group while thirty percent are from the Ga people group. Another eight percent are from the Fante people while three percent are from the Ewe. In 1995, there were 119 congregations. There were 34,000 members and 42,500 affiliates.

### ***Church of Gethsemane***

This is actually a team of twelve different evangelists who go to different villages preaching. They began work in 1969. Today, there are twenty churches and 2,000 members.

### ***Church of God***

This church is a mission of the CoG of Cleveland. They are Holiness Pentecostals. It started in 1963. In 2001, there were 116 churches and a total of 10,278 members. There were 25,000 affiliates.

### ***Church of God (Anderson)***

This church is Pentecostal. In 2001, there were 43 congregations and a total of 3,000 members. There were 6,600 affiliates.

### ***Church of God of Prophecy***

This church was begun as a mission of the U.S. branch of the church. Work began around 1980. In 1995, there were seven churches. There were 420 members and 700 affiliates. This is a Pentecostal church.

## **3.2 The Establishment of Church of Pentecost in Ghana**

This church started by British missionaries in 1937. In 1953, the church left the Apostolic Church. About sixty percent of the members are from the Akan people group. Another fifteen percent come from the Ewe people, and twelve percent come from the Ga people. In 2001, there were about 4,000 churches and a total of 600,000 members. There were 1,000,000 affiliates.

***Church of the Lord (Aladura)***

This church started in 1953 by Aladura missionaries from Nigeria. This church uses healings, oils, and incense. In 1995, there were 313 churches. There were 56,000 members and 70,000 affiliates.

***Church of the Lord***

This church started after leaving the Aladura denomination. In 1971, ten more churches left the Aladura denomination and joined this new church. Sixty percent of the members come from the Akan people group. In 1995, there were fifty churches. There were 6,000 members and 10,000 affiliates.

***Church of the Messiah***

This church started in 1967. It originated because of a split from the Ransomed Church denomination. Its headquarters are in Accra. Seventy-eight percent of the members are from Ga people while fifteen percent are from the Akan people. Another seven percent are from the Ewe people. In 1995, there were ten congregations. There were 2,000 members and 5,000 affiliates.

***Churches of Christ***

This group of churches was established in 1961 as a mission of the CCCG from the U.S. Ninety percent of the members are from the Ashanti people while ten percent are from the Kwahu people. In 2001, there were 570 churches and a total of 40,000 congregants in all. There are 88,000 affiliates.

***Deeper Life Bible Church***

This church started around 1975 by Nigerian missionaries. Its headquarters are in Lagos. Most of the church members are from the Yoruba people and are actually newcomers to Ghana from Nigeria. Other people groups are also represented, but most are also originally from Nigeria. In 1995, there were 274 congregations. There were 20,800 members and 40,000 affiliates.

***Faith Gospel Ministry***

This church was established around 1980. In 1995, there were 2,000 churches. There were 150,000 members and 300,000 affiliates. These churches like to work with the Organisation of African Instituted

Churches to help with charity work. They are an African independent Pentecostal church.

### ***Emissaries of Divine Light***

This church was begun in 1954. It is associated with the Emissaries Church of the U.S. Members come from the Ashanti, Ga, and Akwapim people groups. The main offices of this church are located in Sekondi. In 1995, there were ten churches. There were 2,000 members and 4,000 affiliates.

### ***Epis Holy Temple and Tabernacle Mission***

This church started in 1920. It was first called the National Church of Christ, but congregants changed to the present name in 1953. Some of the members come from the Ashanti people cluster. In 1995, there were five congregations. There were 1,000 members and 2,000 affiliates.

### ***Evangelical Church of Ghana***

This church was begun in 1940 in northern Ghana by British WEC missionaries. Fifty-six percent of the congregants are from the Konkomba people, and thirty-two percent are from the Birifor people. Another twelve percent are from the Bassari people. In 2001, there were 116 churches and a total of 3,748 congregants. There were 10,481 affiliates.

### ***Evangelical Lutheran Church of Ghana***

This church started around 1950 by LCMS missionaries from the United States. Church members come from the Fante, Ashanti, Kusasi, and Efiks groups. In 2001, there were 350 congregations and a total of 22,000 members. There were 32,000 affiliates.

### ***Evangelical Presbyterian Church***

This church was established in 1847. It was once called the Ewe Presbyterian Church. Fifty-five percent of the members are from the Ewe people group. In 1995, there were 710 churches. There were 102,000 members and 308,000 affiliates.

### ***Evangelical Presbyterian Church of Ghana***

This church began because of a disagreement between EPC churches. The people who established this denomination wanted members to only

come from the Ewe people cluster. This split occurred in 1993. In 2001, there were 748 churches and a total of 41,968 members. There were 143,107 affiliates.

### ***Evangelical Presbyterian Reformed Church***

This church was established in 1964. Currently, the denominations headquarters are found in Accra. The members support a school. Most of the members are from the Akan, Ewe, and Ga people groups. In 1995, there were twenty congregations. There were 2,000 members and 3,500 affiliates.

### ***Free Protestant Episcopal Church***

This church started around 1960. It is a member of the Ecumenical Church Foundation. Currently, the main offices of the church are located in Monrovia, Liberia. In 1995, there were two congregations. There were 150 congregants and 300 affiliates.

### ***Full Gospel Church of Ghana***

This church is sponsored as a mission of a Canadian church. In 1995, there were five congregations. There were 1,500 members and 3,000 affiliates.

### ***Gateway Worship Centers***

This church started after it split from the Full Gospel Church in 1992. Many of the members speak Twi or are from the Ewe people group. In 1995, there were two congregations. There were 1,000 members and 2,000 affiliates.

### ***Ghana Baptist Convention***

This convention started in 1920. Both Southern Baptist missionaries from the United States and missionaries from the Nigerian Baptist Convention have helped this convention. Today, the convention has become highly charismatic in its beliefs. In 2001, there were 942 congregations and a total of 80,000 congregants in all. There 130,000 affiliates.

### ***Ghana Mennonite Church***

This church was begun by a Ghanaian in 1956. It is a mission of the MCNA. Most of the congregations are located in the south with the

denominations main offices being in Accra. About forty-five percent of the church members are from the Ga people group. In 1995, there were seventeen churches. There were 1,200 congregants and 1,800 affiliates.

### ***Good News Churches***

This group of churches started in 1956. Both ECWA and SIM missionaries have helped these churches. In 2001, there were 200 churches and a total of 3,000 congregants in all. There were 9,000 affiliates. Today this is a Pentecostal church.

### ***Harrist Church***

This church started in Ghana around 1940 by Harrists from Cote D Ivoire. The Harrist movement was begun by a Liberian missionary named William Harris during the early part of the twentieth century. His church preached about the importance of a simplistic lifestyle and encouraged adherents to give up theft, idolatry, and adultery. Many of the churches are located near to Kumasi today. In 1995, there were seventy churches. There were 2,000 members and 5,000 affiliates.

### ***International Church of the Foursquare Gospel***

This church was founded in 1965. In 1995, there were three congregations. There were 557 congregants and 1,110 members. It is Pentecostal.

### ***International Pentecostal Holiness Church***

This church was established around 1990. In 1995, there were one hundred congregations. There were 8,000 members and 15,000 affiliates. It is a mission of the IPHC of the United States.

### ***Live Ministries Africa***

This church started in 1984. Members of this church come from the Ga, Frafra, Wolof, Nzema, and the Aowin people groups. It is a mission of CAM. In 1995, there were twelve churches. There were 1,692 members and 5,000 affiliates.

### ***Methodist Church of Ghana***

This denomination was established as result of mission work that began in 1835. Forty percent of the church members come from the Akan people while thirty-five percent come from the Ga-Adangbe people.

Another twelve percent come from the Nzima people, and ten percent come from the Ewe people. In 2001, there were 2,600 churches and a total of 238,100 members. There were 450,000 affiliates.

### ***Miracle Life Gospel Centers***

This denomination was begun in Tema in 1987 after splitting from an Assembly of God church. Church services are usually conducted in Twi. In 1995, there were eleven pastors and the denomination was supporting one school. In 1995, there were thirty congregations. There were 2,000 members and 5,000 affiliates.

### ***Nigritian Episcopal Church***

This group of churches started after a split from the Methodist Church in 1907. Forty-six percent of the members are from the Fante people group while twenty-eight percent are from the Ga people. Another twenty-two percent are from the Ashanti people. In 1995, there were sixty churches. There were 4,000 members and 8,000 affiliates.

### ***Open Bible Standard Churches***

This group of churches started around 1970 and is a mission of the OBSC. It is an open Pentecostal body. In 1995, there were twelve churches. There were 887 members and 1,770 affiliates.

### ***Pentecostal Holy Church of Ghana***

This church left the Assembly of God denomination in 1954. It is currently a mission of the CGC. Some of the members are from the Ashanti people. It began losing members after a church split in 1970. In 1995, there were twenty congregations. There were 600 members and 1,500 affiliates.

### ***Presbyterian Church of Ghana***

This church was established in 1818. Forty-eight percent of the members come from the Akyem people while twenty percent come from the Ashanti people. Another seventeen percent come from the Adangbe people. In 2001, there were 1,900 congregations and a total of 180,000 members. There were 520,000 affiliates.



### ***Religious Society of Friends***

This Quaker church was founded in 1927 by someone from Great Britain. There was loss of church members after 1961. In 1995, there was one church. There were 18 members and 36 affiliates.

### ***Salvation Army***

This group of churches was established in 1922. It is Pentecostal in its theology. The Twi name for this church is Nkwagye Don No. Seventy-five percent of the church members are from the Akan people group. In 2001, there were ninety-five congregations and a total of 13,000 members. There were 22,000 members in all.

### ***Savior Church of Ghana***

This church was founded in 1924. Another name for this church is Memeneda Gyidifo. This church was once considered to be Methodist in its theology. Members come from the Akyem/ Twi peoples. In 1995, there were 257 churches. There were 13,100 members and 18,700 affiliates.

### ***Seventh Day Adventist***

This denomination first started in Ghana in 1894. Fifty-three percent of the church members come from the Ashanti people while twenty-three percent come from Akyem people. Another nine percent come from the Dagomba people. In 2001, there were 607 congregations and a total of 208,348 members. There were 400,000 affiliates.

### ***True Faith Church***

This church was founded in 1921. It was created by ex-Methodists who decided to follow Pentecostal doctrine. Today, it is considered to be an indigenous Pentecostal church. Churches are found in six different districts. In 1995, there were 183 churches. There were 22,000 members and 28,600 affiliates.

### ***United Pentecostal Church of Ghana***

This church started in 1968. It is also called the Jesus Only Church. It is a mission of the UPC in the United States. In 1995, there were 144 congregations. There were 13,000 members and 36,100 affiliates.

### ***World-Wide Missions of Ghana***

This group is a mission of the World Wide Missions Group from the United States. It was started in 1961. The church is evangelical. The headquarters of the missions group are based in Pasadena, California. In 1995, there were five hundred congregations. There were 70,000 members and 95,000 affiliates.

### **SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

Discuss the roles of the Pentecostal missions in Ghana.

## **4.0 CONCLUSION**

The F Eden Church began in 1963 in Ghana. Evangelistic Tabernacle of Jesus was founded by Sammy Kweku in 1980 in Ghana. The first miracle healing Church was established in 1959 in Ghana. The Greek Orthodox Alexandria Church was established in Ghana in 1995. The Holy Trinity Healing Church was established in Ghana in 1995.

The Inner Temple of Christ was established in Ghana in 1964. International Central Gospel Church was established by Mensah Otobil in 1982 in Ghana. The Divine healing Church was established in Ghana in 1952. The Liberal Catholic Church broke away from the Old Roman Catholic Church in 1995. Sacred Cherubim and Seraphim Church of God was established by Nigeria Missionaries in 1961 in Ghana. The Supreme Healing Home was established in Ghana in 1963. The True Church of Christ was established by Lucy Kudjo in Ghana in 1957. The New Apostolic Church was established in Ghana in 1980. United Christians Church was established by Salome Mamie Odun in 1940 in Hana. African Methodist Episcopal Church was established in Ghana in 1995. African Orthodox Church was established in Ghana in 1995. Anglican Church of Ghana began in 1752 in Ghana. Apostolic Reformed Church of Ghana was established in 1958. Army of the Cross of Christ Church was established in Ghana in 1922. Bethany Church Mission was established in 1962 in Ghana. Buem-Krachi Presbyterian Church began in Ghana in 1954. Christian Action Faith Ministries began in 1978 in Ghana. Church of Pentecost began in Ghana in 1937. Evangelical Presbyterian Church was established in Ghana in 1993. Methodist Church Ghana was established in 1835 in Ghana. Pentecostal Holy Church of Ghana broke away from the Assembly of God in 1970.

## **5.0 SUMMARY**

- Pentecostal Churches in Ghana broke away from their Mother Churches respectively.
- Anglican Church of Ghana was the first Mission Station established in Ghana in 1752 by Missionaries.
- Methodist Church of Ghana was established in 1835 in Ghana.
- African Orthodox Church was established in Ghana in 1931.

## **6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT**

Discuss the African Orthodox Church in Ghana.

Enumerate indigenous Churches and their founders in Ghana.

State Churches that broke away from their Mother Churches.

## **7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING**

Excerpts from People Groups:

[www.joshuaproject.net](http://www.joshuaproject.net), [www.peoplesgroups.org](http://www.peoplesgroups.org). and [www.ethnologue.com](http://www.ethnologue.com)  
Date: 14-10-2011.

## **UNIT 4 THE PLANTING OF CHRISTIANITY IN LIBERIA**

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  - 3.9 The First Indigenous Bishop in Liberia
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- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
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### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

In this Unit, you will learn about the methods used by the Protestant Episcopal Church in Liberia to establish mission stations. You will also learn about the behaviours of both the white men, settlers and natives that led to the demand of the native Bishop which later was met.

### **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- state the methods used by the Protestant Episcopal Church to plant Christianity in Liberia
- discuss the event that led to the appointment of the first Indigenous Bishop

- enumerate the achievements of Missionaries in Liberia.

### **3.0 MAIN CONTENT**

#### **3.1 The Work of the Protestant Episcopal Church in Liberia**

The work of the Protestant Episcopal Church in Liberia can be dated back to 1822. This date coincides with the arrival and settlement of the first group of freed people of colour (settlers/colonists) from the United States of America, sponsored by the American Colonisation Society (ACS). Jehudi Ashmun, an Episcopal clergyman employed by the American Colonisation Society, was the man who directed the founding of Liberia. Archbishop George D. Browne in his book, "The Episcopal Church of Liberia under indigenous leadership claims, "Christianity in Liberia and the founding of the nation are coeval". Prior to the arrival of the settlers and missionaries, Liberia was known as the Grain Coast and was inhabited by indigenous tribes of the region. The American Colonisation Society (ACS) was a philanthropic organisation founded by white men for the purpose of colonising and assisting the freed people of colour to return to their native Africa. Authorities of the ACS founded and administered the Liberian colony. The Society appointed the Chief Executive or Agent and his Vice-Agent. All other officials were to be elected by the settlers in Liberia. For a protracted period, the leadership of the Liberian colony was placed in the hands of white Agents and black colonists who administer the affairs of the state with the support of foreign assistance from churches, philanthropic organisations and the US government.

##### **3.1.1 Three Groups Influenced the Planting of Christianity in Liberia**

Three groups influenced the growth and development of the Protestant Episcopal Church in Liberia. These groups of people were the foreign missionaries (who were mostly white), the black settlers/colonists (Africans who were repatriated from America) and the natives (indigenous tribal people who inhabited the land prior to the arrival of the settlers and missionaries). Three groups of people and their cultures influenced the planting of Christianity. The people and their culture played a significant role in both the church and state during the years of missionary activities sponsored by the Domestic Foreign Mission Society of the Protestant Episcopal Church USA in Liberia. These three groups of people and cultures constantly interacted to forge ahead with the planting of Christianity and the creation of the Liberian church and state. Racial, cultural, social, political and religious differences existed

among these groups of people and their relationship was characterised by prejudices, falsehood, distorted assumptions, deep-rooted suspicions, misperceptions, constant misunderstandings, conflicts, etc. There was a contradiction between the American ideals of freedom, justice and equality, and the settlers inhumane and unfair treatment meted out against native Liberians.

### 3.2 The Settlers' Behaviour toward the Natives

During the early stage of the Maryland colony, the white Agents were frequently displeased with the settlers' behavior toward the natives.

The authorities believed that the settlers were often to blame for the bad relationship with the natives. For example, in 1841 there was a dispute that involved a colonist that was tried and found guilty of stealing from a native farm. Unable to pay the charges, he was imprisoned. During the early stage of the Maryland colony, the white Agents were frequently displeased with the throwing into jail by the civil authorities. However, his settler colleagues forcibly broke into the prison and freed him during a confrontation. Commenting on the settlers' lawlessness toward natives, Governor Russwurm declared:

*I am sorry to perceive in the colonists generally a strong prejudice and hatred of the natives. If indulged in, the end must inevitably be a war of extermination of one party: this sentiment prevails among the farmer, whose situation is the most exposed. They are the most ignorant and though the majority, can neither read nor write, wish to set themselves up as interpreters of the law. In every conflict with natives, the settlers desire to result to fire arms.*

Upon their arrival in Africa, many of the black colonists made efforts to create a class system in Liberia, in which the natives were treated as second-class citizens and with disrespect. As a result, there were frequent tensions that often resulted into frictions and sometimes led to violent confrontations between the settlers and indigenous Liberians. In 1851 at the time of another incident, Governor McGill wrote to Latrobe, President of the Maryland Colonisation Society:

*"In nearly all of our conflicts, the colonists are more to blame than the natives, rash and inconsiderate one among us are sometimes disposed to trample upon their rights and feelings because they are natives."*

Some of the above tensions and conflicting characteristics of the returnees toward the natives, might have persisted in Liberia; and this might have been some of the root causes of the 1980 military coup d'état, which brought the natives into power. Jeremy Levitt, in his book, *The Evolution of Deadly Conflict in Liberia, From, Paternalism to State Collapse*, describes the cause of the coup: "The coup was the manifestation of 158 years of pent-up settler-native and civil society-government (post-1950s) hostilities, spawned.'

### **3.2.1 The Power of White Men over Blacks**

On the other hand, the white missionaries and agents that immigrated to Liberia exercised authority over the natives and black colonists. Despite the abolition of slavery in America and the colonisation efforts, the concept held during slavery in America that the black race was inferior to the white and that blacks were incapable of governing themselves, continued to persist in the mission field. Both the missionaries and the colonists desired to introduce the Africans to Christianity and civilisation (western culture). They considered the life style of the indigenous people, their religious beliefs-African Traditional Religions and culture, as primitive and barbaric. On the one hand, there was talk of native barbarism, and on the other hand, it was attractive to work with pagans. During his visit to Rabookah, the Rev. Dr. Savage remarked to King Tom, head of the Council of Grebo Confederation, that it was for the natives' own good that the Gospel was brought to Africa. When work among the colonists was disappointing, there was a plan to move away from the costal settlements and work in the interior.

### **3.2.2 Blacks were Brothers**

The black settlers spoke of the natives as brothers, but the cultures of the two groups were vastly different. The Grebo peoples, among whom the work of the Episcopal Church formally began, shared a common social and cultural life style. They were mostly farmers and sea fairers that valued family, clan and village ties. Their traditional and religious beliefs were also similar. The natives were suspicious of the emigrants and believed that they had come to seize their land, enslave them and impose western culture on them. While the civil authorities concentrated on bringing the natives under the jurisdiction of a political structure modeled after the United States, the missionaries sought to establish schools and Christian villages, based on western standards. The missionaries and colonists refused to assimilate into the African society. Against diseases, poverty, and unfamiliar surroundings, the missionaries and settlers worked to transplant their American values and religion

“Christianity” to an African community and peoples they considered degraded and benighted.

In December 1816, prominent white Americans for the purpose of assisting free people of colour to return to Africa met and officially established the American Colonisation Society (ACS) in Washington D.

C. Among the influential founders of the ACS were, Robert Finley (Secretary), Samuel J. Mills, Henry Clay, Francis Scott Key and Judge Bushrod Washington, cousin of former President George Washington. Bushrod Washington, a U. S. Supreme Court Justice, was elected the ACS first president. The ACS became the first organised attempt to operationalise the thinking of men opposed to slavery but equally opposed to assimilation of blacks into the American society and democracy. Colonisation in Africa became a solution to the problem of the freed people of color and influential men, including Thomas Jefferson and Abraham Lincoln, supported this enterprise. The colonisers had considered sending the free people of color to the Northwestern territory or to Louisiana in the south. However, they selected Africa. The logical argument for this choice was that, not only would the black man return to his homeland but he would also serve as the beginning of a missionary crusade to “...civilise and Christianise the millions of Africans yet un-reached.” Once the colonisation scheme was launched, its pioneering white leadership initiated a campaign in the U. S. for missionaries (“they ought, certainly, all be white”) and teachers “in order to strengthen the moral and spiritual life among the colonist.” The ACS eventually sponsored the “planting” of a colony in West Africa, which in 1847 became the independent Republic of Liberia.

### **3.3 ACS Obtained a Piece of Land**

Between 1818 and 1821, the ACS sent out several expedition missions to acquire land on the West Coast of Africa. After several attempts failed to acquire land from the hostile indigenous kings and chiefs. The ACS in 1822 finally succeeded in the negotiation of a land deal. The first settlement was at Cape Mesurado and others soon followed. The Maryland State Colonisation sent free people of colour to the Eastern part of Liberia to live among the Grebo in Southeastern Liberia. Other freed people of color from New York, Pennsylvania and Mississippi found their way to Bassa, Sinoe, and Cape Mount respectively. In 1839, these colonies combined to form the Common Wealth Government of Liberia; and later in 1847, it became the Republic of Liberia. At least, three of the early settlers, the first agent, Rev. Jehudi Ashmun, the Rev. Ephraim Bacon and the Rev. Joseph R. Andrus, were Episcopalian clergy. One could assert that the American Colonisation Society (ACS), the Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society (DFMS) along with other



foreign missions were the founders of the Liberian nation and the Episcopal Church in Liberia.

### **3.4 The Role of Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society in Liberia**

The Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society of the Protestant Episcopal Church USA, the early missionaries, the white agents, and some of the black colonists that immigrated to Liberia, played a leading role in the establishment of the Liberian Church and nation. When the missionaries and settlers arrived in Liberia, they brought with them their American form of Christianity and civilisation (western culture), to be planted into the African soil. However, not much practical effort was applied among the natives to actualise the planting of this western civilisation and Christianity. The settlers, both white and blacks openly rejected and condemned the African religion, culture and life styles. During the early period of their stay in Liberia, the westerners refused to make any adjustments or alteration to their American culture and way of life, to suit that of the natives. The colonists formed settlements and refused to assimilate with the indigenous Liberians. The missionaries built their missions and schools separate from the villages and encouraged native converts to reject their African heritage and adopt western standards. For a very lengthy period, the foreign missionaries and black colonists marginalised the natives and held on to the helm of power both in the Liberian church and state. The white missionaries dealt unevenly with the natives and showed preferential treatment to the settlers. In his address delivered immediately following his consecration on July 11, 1851, in Alexandria, Virginia, Bishop Payne summarised the results of the Mission work in Western Africa from 1836 to 1849. Among many things, Payne noted, "But these natives, with few exceptions can only make assistants." He indicated that the natives would required some superintending agency and recommended that the comparative advance in Christian civilisation attained by the colonists pointed to them as the materials from which to raise this superior superintending agency.

### **3.5 The Use of Schools for Evangelism**

In an effort to evangelise among indigenous Liberians and plant Christianity, the missionaries built schools that educated the children and adults of both the natives and settlers. In his early years in the field, Payne had proposed that the two communities be elevated together. But as the years elapsed, he became very cautious of pushing the two groups into assimilation. The goal of the missionaries to assimilate both the colonists and the natives became difficult and unattainable for several

reasons, including the missionaries and settlers unjust treatment of the natives. The missionaries as well as black colonists that worked for the mission held a false and distorted concept about the natives, that the Grebo and other Africans were vile brutes and degraded savages.<sup>14</sup> And in many instances, the two groups treated the natives as such. Earlier, Payne and other missionaries expressed to the board their view that African and colonists could never assimilate until revolutionary change had been effected through Christian conversion of the Grebo. Based on this view, the churches and schools of Cape Palmas became segregated with the missionaries later building separate churches and schools for colonists and indigenous Liberians in the Cape Palmas area. For example, St. Mark's in Harper was built to accommodate the settlers and westerners, while the St. James Church in Hoffman Station, was built for the natives. The pastor of St. Mark's at the time, Rev. Scott, felt that Grebo influence could have a bad effect upon colonists, especially upon their children unless colonists were firmly grounded in the faith.<sup>15</sup> Payne agreed. The pattern of segregated churches and schools was begun and in time, Liberia would reap the bitter harvest of this pattern. Paul Gifford, in his book *“Christianity and Politics in Doe's Liberia,”* notes “Generally speaking, there was a clear distinction between the mainline churches and the independent. The mainline (often called in Liberia the „civilised) church did cater for the more powerful and affluent.”<sup>16</sup> By 1847, Payne felt that no Grebo scholar was ready to be trained as a teacher at a proposed high school at Mount Vaughan in Cape Palmas. He therefore proposed that the high school be reserved exclusively for the education of colonist young men. <sup>17</sup> In 1848, Payne wrote:

*“ . . . the time has not come, yet, nor will it, for a long time when socially, natives can rank with Colonists. The latter are destined by Providence to be the teachers and governors of the former in this region. Consequently the plan of putting both on the same footing in school was an erroneous one.”*

### **3.6 The Poor Method used for Evangelising the Natives by Missionaries**

The method used to evangelise the indigenous peoples was poor and ineffective. The missionaries believed that the native heathen would be transformed and resurrected from this state if they would accept the word of God. Most of the Protestant Episcopal workers at Cape Palmas were evangelists who believed that the important work of the mission was preaching. However, they believed that if the native was to be converted, a western education was necessary for understanding the

Gospel and a western style of life a necessary compliment “A good Grebo Christian observed Sunday, pulled down Gree-grees, and refused to participate in traditional sacrifices, but a good Grebo Christian also wore western clothes, built western houses, carried a western name and married one wife.”<sup>19</sup> It therefore became difficult for many of the natives to embrace Christianity and the western civilisation that was imported from the United States of America.

A peculiar and conflicting situation that existed during the early period of evangelism among the Grebo peoples was the dilemma faced by those natives that converted to Christianity. After 1850, these Grebo Christians became a dynamic force, although a small one. From the time of their emergence on the scene in the 1840s and 1850s until the early 1900s, these educated Grebo were faced with a continuing problem of how they could best maintain themselves in two communities – the traditional Grebo community and the westernised Americo-Liberian community. During the time of conflict between the natives and the colonists, these converts were caught in the middle and found it difficult to choose between traditional loyalties to old customs and village ties, and new attachments to civilisation and Christianity typified in the Liberian settlements. Yet sometimes they discovered that they were not accepted in either society. Some of them commented, “Hence we are like the bats-we are neither beast nor birds.”<sup>20</sup>

From 1851 to 1871, the Liberian Episcopal Church entered a new era during the Episcopate of the Rt. Rev. John Payne, first Missionary Bishop of Cape Palmas and Parts Adjacent

### **3.7 The Role of the Missionaries in Liberia**

The early missionaries, the white agents, and some of the black colonists that immigrated to Liberia, played a leading role in the establishment of the Liberian Church and nation. When the missionaries and settlers arrived in Liberia, they brought with them their American form of Christianity and civilisation (western culture), to be planted into the African soil. However, not much practical effort was applied among the natives to actualise the planting of this western civilisation and Christianity. The settlers, both white and blacks openly rejected and condemned the African religions, culture and life styles. During the early period of their stay in Liberian, the westerners refused to make any adjustments or alteration to their American culture and way of life, to suit that of the natives. The colonists formed settlements and refused to assimilate with the indigenous Liberians. The missionaries built their missions and schools separate from the villages and encouraged native converts to reject their African heritage and adopt western standards. For

a very lengthy period, the foreign missionaries and black colonists marginalised the natives and held on to the helm of power both in the Liberian church and state. The white missionaries dealt unevenly with the natives and showed preferential treatment to the settlers. In his address delivered immediately following his consecration on July 11, 1851, in Alexandria, Virginia, Bishop Payne summarised the results of the mission work in Western Africa from 1836 to 1849. Among many things, Payne noted, "But these natives, with few exceptions can only make assistants." He indicated that the natives would require some superintending agency and recommended that the comparative advance in Christian civilisation attained by the colonists pointed to them as the materials from which to raise this superintending agency.

### **3.8 The Liberia Episcopal Entered a New Era**

From 1851 to 1871, the Liberian Episcopal Church entered a new era during the Episcopate of the Rt. Rev. John Payne, first Missionary Bishop of Cape Palmas and Parts Adjacent. After 1843, the missionaries under Paynes leadership became unanimous in their support of the settlers. During the 1856-1857 war between the settlers and the Grebo, one of the missionaries declared that the mission policy was to maintain a neutral attitude. Notwithstanding, in practice, through their reporting and actions, they sustained the colonial side. They withheld accusations against Lieutenant Governor Boston Jenkins Drayton, a Baptist minister from South Carolina, who led a coup that turned Governor Prout out of office. The missionaries reported the beginning of the war with caution. Drayton and his supporters secured their takeover in uncontested elections the following June. Drayton believed that God had chosen him to lead a crusade against heathen Africa. On December 12, 1856, he got reports that the Grebo people were preparing to attack the settlers. Whether this was true or whether they anticipated an attack from Drayton is unclear. The Governor initiated a bullying negotiation for peace that deteriorated into war on December 24. The colonists looted and burned the principal Grebo town at Cape Palmas. In the following days, the Grebo raided and destroyed most of the houses in the settlement. The settlers soon ran out of ammunition, and both sides were left destitute and in stalemate. Coincidentally, former governor James Hall had returned to Africa while the war was underway at Cape Palmas. Upon his arrival in Monrovia, he organised and personally financed a force of Liberians to restore peace in the Maryland colony. They were able to accomplish their goal without further bloodshed, taking the Maryland militia out of Drayton's control. Thereupon, the government of Maryland dissolved itself and requested admission into the Republic of Liberia as Maryland County. The Liberian legislature quickly

accepted the appeal and Maryland County settled into a quiet existence, its fortunes now linked to those of the larger country.

During the war, the colonial soldiers were provided with housing at the mission premises at Cavalla. Missionary staff noted the problems that the colonists had faced by such a large heathen population, and declared that the Grebo removal from the Cape should ease the tensions between the colonists and Grebo people. In the missionary writings during the time of the crisis between the Grebo and the settlers in the 1860s, Liberia was described as symbolising Christ while the Grebo represented the devil.<sup>21</sup> The colony was seen as “. . . part of God’s ordained instrumentality for the diffusion of Christian civilisation.

### **3.8.1 The Expansion of Episcopal Mission**

During Paynes leadership, he employed new dynamics in order to resolve the conflicts and challenges he faced as the first bishop of Liberia. It is important to examine how this white American missionary faced the conflicts that were endemic in inserting a Westernised Church in the midst of an indigenous (settler) society in mid 19th century Africa. Payne was constrained to deal with the challenge of working with black American missionary clergy and native Liberian clergy. During Paynes episcopacy, some black clergy, both Americans and locals opposed his leadership style and attempted to seek black leadership for the Liberian church (schism). It was during Paynes administration that the Episcopal mission moved beyond the boundaries of the Maryland colony and expanded into other areas in Bassa, Sinoe and Montserrado counties, including the Liberian Capital City, Monrovia. It can be noted that at the end of Paynes Episcopate in 1871, the Liberian church was far from being Africanised and firmly remained in the hands of foreign missionary Bishops up until 1969. During this period, DFMS consistently adhered to the recommendations made by predominantly white outgoing/retired Bishops and clergy that the Liberian church and people were not qualified nor were they prepared for a native ecclesiastical leadership. Many of them including Bishop Payne advocated for white Bishops and clergy to head the Liberian Mission.

After 170 years of existence, the Episcopal Church in Liberia continues to bear serious marks of an American Episcopal Church. Very minimum enculturation has taken place in the Liberian Church. The early missionary efforts of the Protestant Episcopal Church USA to evangelise and propagate the Gospel in Liberia was faced with series of conflicts, challenges and setbacks. Many of these conflicts and setbacks could be attributed to the false assumptions made by both the white

missionaries and black colonists. The Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society assumed that the institutional model of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the USA could be exported to Africa without alteration or revision. Evangelism was generally unsuccessful due mainly to the highly “sophisticated” Episcopal Churches doctrine, discipline, liturgy and style of worship, in an African cultural heritage. Native Liberians experienced serious difficulties in making the transition from their native culture and indigenous African religious belief to that of the “sophisticated” Christian religion and western culture.

Furthermore, the mission was initiated and pursued without collaboration with Liberians. The DFMS assumed that collaboration with the Africans and colonists regarding the scope, strategies and target population of the mission was unnecessary. <sup>25</sup> Because the planters of the Protestant Episcopal Church were not collaborative, the product has been problematic, expressed as a “dependent” Liberian church, not only of material resources, but also of social, economic, liturgical, polity, etc. White missionaries assumed that black people were ignorant and incapable of handling their own affairs. As a result, the mission never became a viable, independent self-renewing institution. The Protestant Episcopal church in the USA was not able to take a consultative role; it was always forced to take an active participatory role. It is important to note that non-collaboration violates Christian belief that all persons are created equal in the sight of God.

### **3.9 The First Indigenous Bishop in Liberia**

In 1972, Bishop George D. Browne, the first indigenous Bishop of Liberia used a metaphor when he assume the leadership role and launched a program of Rural Evangelism. He compared the Liberian Diocese to a flower plant cutting, presented to the Liberian church in a pot. The Liberian church carefully watered and nourished the plant as prescribed by the donors (Americans). However, it had not occurred to the church to renew the soil, change the size of the pot, or to transplant it in local soil in order to give the proper nourishment and save it from disease, which the African climate may have inflicted on it.<sup>26</sup> Since the early days, the Liberian Church has been preoccupied with maintaining the kind of inherited church structures like the parish system, traditional building, organisations and decision-making process.

An attitude of paternalism, installed in those early years of the missions has retained most of its potency in the Liberian Church and society today. For example, for more than one hundred and seventy years of existence (1836-2007) the Liberian church continued to rely on financial assistances (subsidies) from the American church in order to help pay

salaries of clergy and lay employees, build and repairs schools, churches; and to implement many of its programs and ministries. From 1983 through 2007, the Liberian church received close to \$6.6 million from the Episcopal Church. In recent years, in accordance with the Covenant agreement between the Episcopal Church of Liberia, the American churches contribution to Liberia has decreased. On the local level, many Liberians have not cultivated the act of giving (stewardship) for the support of their local congregations or the diocese. The natives as well as the settlers were not taught sufficiently the obligation of self-support. Bishop George D. Browne notes that as far back as 1862, Bishop Payne reported that he was endeavoring “to teach the natives the obligation of self-support,” but he did not have a plan nor did he make any known efforts.

### **SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

Discuss events that caused crises in Liberia.

## **4.0 CONCLUSION**

The Protestant Episcopal was planted in Liberia in the year 1822. The three groups that influenced the planting and the growth of Christianity in Liberia were the Missionaries, the Black Settlers and the Indigenous tribal people.

A Colonist was jailed by the native Authority for stealing from a native farm. As a result of his imprisonment Colonists acted lawless. They broke in to the prison and released the prisoner. In every conflict with natives, the settlers always result to using fire arms against them. Blacks race Christians were brothers in Liberia.

Between 1818 and 1821, the ACS acquired a piece of land in Cape Mesurado. They established their first mission station on it.

The Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society of the Protestant Episcopal Church USA impacted Western Civilisation on the natives of Liberia. Schools were used to evangelised both adults and children in Liberia. Grebo Christians observed Sunday, built Western houses and married one wife.

## **5.0 SUMMARY**

The Episcopal Church in Liberia faced challenges, conflicts and setbacks in the planting of Christianity in Liberia.

In 1972, Bishop George D. Browne became the first indigenous Bishop in Liberia.

Schools were used to evangelised Liberians.

## 6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1. Were natives really having freedom in Liberia between 1818 and 1821?
2. Account for the setbacks of mission work in Liberia.
3. Discuss one of the methods used to spread Christianity in Liberia.

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## **UNIT 5 THE PLANTING OF CHRISTIAN MISSION IN SIERRA LEONE**

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- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 The Attention of Christian Mission in Ghana
  - 3.2 Many Tribes were Diverted to Sierra Leone in 1807
    - 3.2.1 The Planting of the Baptist Faith in Sierra Leone in 1795
    - 3.2.2 The Planting of the Methodist Faith in Sierra Leone in 1795
    - 3.2.3 The London Missionary Society in Sierra Leone
    - 3.2.4 The Visitation of Mrs. Hannah Kilham to Sierra Leone between 1827 and 1830
    - 3.2.5 The First Duty of the Church Missionary in Sierra Leone
    - 3.2.6 The Arrival of the Germany Missionary Society in Sierra Leone
  - 3.3 The Presence of Missionaries in Rio Porgas
  - 3.4 Churches Built in Freetown and New Villages
  - 3.5 Bishop Ajayi Crowther Ordained
  - 3.6 The Work of William Augustine Bernard in Regent Village
  - 3.7 The Planting of the Wesleyan Methodist Faith in Sierra Leone
  - 3.8 Church Personnel
    - 3.8.1 Jacob Elisa John Capitein
    - 3.8.2 Thomas Thompson
    - 3.8.3 Philip Quaque
    - 3.8.4 Peter Claver
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

In the previous units, you have learnt that the Basel Presbyterian Wesleyan Methodist Missionaries planted Christianity.

In Ghana in the fifteenth century, you have also learnt about other mission station in Ghana. In this unit you will learn about the planting of Christianity in Sierra Leone.

## **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- discuss the establishment of Christianity in Sierra Leone
- state the Missionaries that planted Christianity in Sierra Leone
- explain the roles of freed slaves in the spread of Christianity in Sierra Leone.

## **3.0 MAIN CONTENT**

### **3.1 The Attention of Christian Mission in Ghana**

The attention of Christian mission up to 1800 had been concentrated on Ghana but thereafter the emphasis shifted to Sierra Leone. The first step was taken by the Reverend Molville Horne, an Anglican Priest who went to Sierra Leone in 1792, hoping to be chaplain to the European traders, to care for the needs of the Negro immigrants and finally to be a missionary to the local population. Though, he didn't stay long enough (about a year) to achieve these aims, he later became one of the advisers on the foundation of the Church Missionary Society and stressed the necessity for the Missionaries to learn vernacular language of the people they intended to convert. He was of the opinion that his successors would live in villages and become evangelists in the vernacular languages over large areas.

It was in the same 1792 that the ex-slaves of West African ancestry began to arrive in Sierra Leone, they went to the Freetown area then under the control of the Sierra Leone Company.

Some of these Negroes were already converted, belonging to various Christian denominations in the New World. These included the Baptists, Methodists and members of Countess of Huntingdon's Connection. Each of these groups had separate religious leadership which made it impossible to integrate them into a single organisation within the new villages they were to occupy. The relationship between these various groups and the Sierra Leone Company which was expected to look after them was not all that cordial. Under these conditions much success could not have been expected from this small group of Christians of different denominational backgrounds, each

without regard for the wishes of individuals. Besides, the European missionaries were new to West African environment with its characteristics of unfavourable climate to the whites and thus caused ill health and death. More and more of these released slaves of West African ancestry now called “Creoles” were finding their way to Freetown and were given new start of life by being taught to be farmers and skilled traders. They were also given elementary education along with the knowledge of the Christian religion. The children were all taught English and the native languages except Yoruba which eventually disappeared.

### **3.2 Many Tribes were diverted to Sierra Leone in 1807**

After the passing of the slavery Emancipation Act, more slaves of many different tribes and culture of West Africa were diverted back to Freetown which rapidly increased the population of that area. Some were employed as servants in Freetown households; some were enlisted in the British army and others to form villages. By 1807, Sierra Leone had become a British Colony thereby bringing the work of company to an end. The change over from company to colonial rule in 1808 brought about demographic revolution. Ship loads of recaptives were constantly being landed. By 1811, they outnumbered the Nova Scotia and Maroon settlers combined, but the “African Institution” which succeeded the company continued to follow to the letter the policy of its predecessor in caring for the interests of the liberated slaves with the same emphasis on Christian ways of life. This explained why by 1826 the Christian community in the Freetown so encouraged and nurtured had become so large and vocal enough to be demanding their self determination.

#### **3.2.1 The Planting of the Baptist Faith in Sierra Leone in 1795**

The Baptists were among the first newer missionaries to consider work in the Sierra Leone area. In 1795, they sent John Grigg and James Rodway, minister of the Baptist church who carried letters of introduction and recommendation to David George, the leader of the Baptists who came from Nova Scotia. Unfortunately, ill-health prevented Rodway from carrying on his assignment while Gregg became more interested in trade dispute and in staying in Freetown at the expense of the villages which need his attention badly.

#### **3.2.2 The Planting of the Methodist Faith in Sierra Leone in 1795**

Having observed that some Muslims were living along the trade-route from Sierra Leone Coast to Timbuktu and the Niger River, Zachary

Macaulay, the then Governor of Sierra Leone, a pro-Christian decided to send Missionaries and skilled craftsmen to places along the route. The first attempt was by a group of Methodists who were sent out without adequate preparation. It may be recalled that the earlier attempts by the Monrovia mission and the society for the propagation of the gospel had been unsuccessful. The Wesleyan Missionary Society sent out a party of mechanics and preachers in 1795 to Sierra Leone but this attempt failed. The next attempt was made in 1796 by the Glasgow Missionary Society which was predominantly of the Presbyterian tradition. It sent out two Catechists – Duncan Campbell and Robert Henderson. They settled in a place 100 miles up the Sierra Leone River. Henderson had to give up the following year on the ground of ill-health and Campbell had to leave Sierra Leone in 1801 when he was caught involved in the slave trade.

### **3.2.3 The London Missionary Society in Sierra Leone**

The London Missionary Society now joined forces with the Glasgow Missionary and the Edinburgh Missionary Society. Their arrival coincided with the war which broke out in the Fula Kingdom and disrupted the trade route there. Nevertheless, Zachary Macaulay found for them missionary employment in the Freetown area until the Fula road was declared safe while the Edinburgh men were stationed in the Rio Pongas now in Guinea which was a centre of Christian Mission from England.

While half of the party died, others were recalled to England, but the work of Peter Greig who worked among the Susu people, where he learned their language remained indelible till today. Unfortunately, he was killed by Fula traders who wanted to steal his property.

### **3.2.4 The Visitation of Mrs. Hannah Kilham to Sierra Leone between 1827 and 1830**

The countess of Huntingdon's Connection, another English Christian group decided to send one of its ordained men to visit Sierra Leone to see things for himself when they learned that some of its members in Sierra Leone had come from Nova Scotia. For some unavoidable circumstances, this was not done. The name of Hannah Kilham, wife of the Founder of the Methodist New Connection also deserves a mention. She visited Sierra Leone in 1827 and 1830 and succeeded in establishing a School in one village near Freetown. This is not all, wherever she went she learnt the language of the people she visited and it have been claimed that her constructive study of such language is the basis upon which much of the study of African languages have been built. She was

also against the teaching of English to Africans possibly because she was of the opinion that it would spoil the development of their own language.

### **3.2.5 The First Duty of the Church Missionary in Sierra Leone**

The first duty of the Church Missionary Society in Sierra Leone was to cater for the liberated slaves who settled in Freetown and its environs and had displaced the aborigines. But it was among the non-Christians rather than Christians that the first missionaries had stressed their teaching and evangelisation. Later, their work was extended to the ex-slaves. Political support was not lacking. Inspired by the hopes of introducing European civilisation to Africa, Sir Charles McCarthy who governed Sierra-Leone from 1814 – 1824 proposed that government and missions should cooperate to transform the recapatives into a Christian population who as agents of expansion would spread Christianity and European ways throughout West Africa. Recapatives would be settled in villages carefully laid out in English style round parish church, parsonage and school where they would learn and copy from the missionaries a new religion and patterns of new behaviour. He persuaded the government in London to support this scheme.

### **3.2.6 The Arrival of the Germany Missionary Society in Sierra Leone**

The first missionaries of the Church Missionary Society came from Germany as no English Clergymen volunteered for work in Sierra Leone. They studied at the Berlin Missionary Seminary, a Lutheran Institution and first came to London for further studies in English and Susu in preparation for their work in West Africa. Having returned to Germany to be ordained, they arrived in Sierra Leone in 1804. The names of these German Lutheran Ministers included Melchior Kenner, Peter Hartwig, Nylander, Butscher and Prasse. For two reasons, these men did not proceed inland to places of their appointed mission. In the first place, they were being employed in Freetown as Colonial Chaplains at the expense of the villages for which their duties were intended first and foremost. Secondly, after the murder of Peter Greig of the Edinburgh Missionary Society, the authorities felt it was unsafe to allow the Europeans to proceed to the interior.

### **3.3 The Presence of Missionaries in Rio Porgas**

However, in due course, three of the missionaries decided to take the risk and went to the Rio Porgas area which at that time was regarded as part of Sierra Leone. One of the missionaries continued to stay in

Freetown as chaplain while another who could not cope with the risk and difficulty involved gave up the work. This early mission did not make any permanent success except in Rio Porgas where work was mostly carried out in school for children with little public worship and teaching because of disputed among the local chiefs. But the missionaries were not discouraged and more German missionaries were not discouraged and more German missionaries continued to arrive, among them were artisans whose aim was to work with African Institution. It would be recalled that with the end of company administration in 1807, the aspect of that work which was shown in caring for the interest of the liberated slaves was taken over by the "African Institution". By 1814, the directors of this institution and the government realised that there was a great task for them in rehabilitating the 10,000 released slaves in Sierra Leone and with the usual cooperation between the church and State, Colonel Maxwell the Governor, urged the Church Missionary Society to take up the matter.

The Church Missionary Society responded favourably to the call to help the liberated slaves off pure African ancestry or of mixed blood – the Creoles, by teaching the grown-ups, farming and children, general education.

### **3.4 Churches Built in Freetown and New Villages**

In Freetown and the new villages around, churches were built at the expense of the government. These churches were staffed by British missionaries sent out by the Church Missionary Society. This partly explained why Anglicanism subsequently became the predominantly Christian denomination in the villages of Sierra Leone. For instance, between 1804 and 1824 seventy missionaries of African Mission were sent out to Sierra Leone but because of unfavourable African climate, only twenty seven of them survived till the end of the period. Also, during the period, a practice which was to be accepted later as a pattern of Christian administration in West Africa began; one church was built for the Europeans or "official people" and another for the general, local congregation. Apart from racial reason, this practice became necessary in view of the fact that there was difficulty. The church of the "official people" or "the Colonial church" usually had their services in English while services in vernacular. One of the "Colonial churches" in West Africa was St. George's which was opened in Freetown in 1817, while other congregations had to worship in various places until they moved to Holy Trinity Church and Christ Church.

### 3.5 Bishop Ajayi Crowther Ordained

The first African to be ordained into the Anglican Ministry of Sierra Leone was Samuel Ajayi Crowther who received Holy Orders in 1843. A Nigeria of Yoruba ancestry, Crowther was said to have been earlier released from a slave-ship and brought to Sierra Leone. He became the first Bishop of the Niger Diocese and first West African to become an Anglican Church Bishop.

Whereas by 1859, only three Sierra Leone Africans had been ordained into the ministry of the Anglican Church, 1856 alone, eight were ordained. This system of Africanising the Anglican Mission by encouraging local clergy continued so much so that very soon, Africans were manning the parishes themselves. But this organisation lacked Episcopal oversight and as a result, large numbers of converts, who baptised continued to await confirmation while churches and cemeteries were unconsecrated. Finally, suitable candidates for the Ministry had to wait indefinitely for ordination. To solve this problem, a Diocese of Sierra Leone within the church of England was created in 1852, thus becoming the first Anglican Diocese in West Africa.

### 3.6 The Work of William Augustine Bernard in Regent Village

Mention should also be made of a village called Regent in Sierra Leone. In this village, there were about 2,000 liberated slaves of different cultural background in 1817. The Missionary work is associated with a German, William Augustine Bernard, who received Lutheran ordination from his German colleagues in Sierra Leone. He founded a school and, at the same time, acted as Government representative in the village with the primary aim of welding these people into a community. As a government agent, he distributed cloths and food which was provided by the government to these liberated slaves until they were fully rehabilitated and could care for themselves. He approached his work in a spirit of Christian humility and after much perseverance, teaching the people hymns, which appealed to them, he had success beyond expectations. By 1823, out of 1,079 of the 2,000 citizens of Regent who were instructed in the Christian religion, 450 had already become communicants of the church.

Apart from Anglican mission, two other denominations – Roman Catholic and Methodist also made their mark in introducing Christianity to Sierra Leone, but their success was not as high as that of Anglican denomination. On her travels to West Africa, Mother Anne – Marie Javouhey of Roman Catholics found a number of Roman Catholics



among the British soldiers in Freetown and tribal people and reported her findings to church authorities in Europe. For nine months, she worked in Freetown, nursing people suffering from plague. She directed the attention of the Roman Catholic Church to take up more seriously their responsibility in Sierra Leone. Her visit was followed by similar undertakings by women of various Roman Catholic and Anglican religious communities in the future.

### **3.7 The Planting of the Wesleyan Methodist Faith in Sierra Leone**

The Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society refused to be left out in the race for evangelism. In 1811, it sent a group of four to Sierra Leone. The group was made of one minister and three school teachers. Warnee, the minister and one of the teachers died soon after, but the remaining other two teachers carried on their work until they were reinforced in 1815. For health reason, the leader of the group, William Davis had to return to England. Besides, there was no coordination in the work of Methodist church in Sierra Leone as mixed congregation of original, tribal people, or released slaved and of the earlier peoples from Nova Scotia did not agree together to the great task of the church authorities. This disunity between the peoples of Sierra Leone was for a long time a problem to Christian Mission there.

### **3.8 Church Personnel**

#### **3.8.1 Jacob Elisa John Capitein**

He was a slave from the Ivory Coast and was rescued by a rich Dutch trader who took him to Holland in about 1728. There he was educated and later ordained to the ministry of any protestant church. He was located to Elmina which by then had passed into the hands of the Dutch as the chaplain to the Fort. Because of his African background, it was hoped that he would be able to stand the risk of tropical climate and present the Christian gospel to the local Africans which the European chaplains found so difficult to do. He proved up to the task. He was resourceful and one of his immediate acts was the translation of the Apostles Creed into Fanti. This shows that he had probably had association with areas outside his place of origin which is an asset to the missions.

Jacob soon found himself in dilemma. He was not popular with the Dutch because of his colour and the Africans were to have nothing to do with him because of his European wife. As a matter of fact, he had

preference for an African as wife and did everything possible to marry an African girl but he was not allowed by the church authorities in Holland because the girl was not a Christian even though the girl had promised to be converted. The authorities in Holland instead posted an European girl to him to become his wife without seeking his interest or willingness or other wise to marry her. This policy had an important effect in the school which Capitein started at Elmina. The school was predominantly boys with small number of girls. While, some of the boys were converted to Christianity and baptised, none of the girls was. Because of the decision of the church authorities in Holland that Christians must marry Christians, there were no wives for the boys and the whole experiment in education ended in failure. Although, he had been a slave himself, he never said anything essentially anti-Christian about slavery.

His importance lies in the simple fact that after individual West Africans might have been converted by foreigners, there is need for someone, really full of knowledge of the local people and widely accepted by them before great numbers can be brought into the church.

He also laid examples for his successors like Bishop Ajayi Crothwer that translated the Scriptures and the basic Christian formulae into native language that are necessary for effective teaching of the Christian faith.

### **3.8.2 Thomas Thompson**

He was an Englishman of an Anglican Church. He became a missionary of the society for the propagation of the gospel, with special care for the spiritual needs of the Anglicans of British origin living in the colonial area.

In America to where he was sent to work, he came across a number of West African slaves and there and then decided to bring Christian gospel to them at their home in West Africa. His plan was approved by the Society for the propagation of the gospel and in 1751, Thompson began his journey to Cape Coast. At Cape Coast, he preached through an interpreter and because there was no chaplain in Cape Coast castle, he was granted permission to conduct Christian worship there.

Positive achievements of his work include the establishment of a school at the request of African citizens of Cape Coast. His educational efforts were more successful than his evangelistic ones. There are schools in Cape Coast today whose foundation could be traced to Thompson.

In his writing, he suggested that African people would best be evangelised by their own nationals who ought to be able to teach in the vernacular, understand the people's way of thinking and face up to the climate and local diseases better than any European.

He also complained of insufficient number of missionaries and advised that there must be a team of evangelists instead of leaving the work in the hands of only one person. To implement these ideas, he decided to send six suitable African boys to England for education with the hope of sending them back as missionaries, a plan which again received the blessing of the SPG. Unfortunately, Quaake was the only survivor of the team and so, Thompson's vision of training a team of Africans as ordained Priests was not realised for so long and well after his death.

### **3.8.3 Philip Quaake**

Quaake was sent to England in 1754 by Thomas Thompson with others to be educated in London. But Quaake was the sole survivor of the team. After the completion of his education, he was ordained deacon in March 1765 and Priest almost immediately after-wards. Quaake thus became the first non-European to receive ordination in the Church of England. It is significant that it was a citizen of West Africa who was the first outsider to receive ordination into the Christian ministry. Barely three weeks after, he was appointed by the Society for the propagation of the Gospel (SPG) as "Missionary Catechist and School-master to the Negroes on the West Coast of Africa" and Chaplain to the British Forts in the Gold Coast area. After the death of his English wife, he married an African girl and on her death, a second one.

Though, his 50 years work was unsuccessful. Nevertheless, in spite of serious setback including lack of necessary equipment for teaching, there was more success in his educational work than in his evangelistic, for he indirectly carried on in this sphere the foundation which Thomas Thompson had laid and was to be carried on by Thomas Birch Freeman.

He worked hard for over fifty years doing his best to minister to African and European Christians and brought the knowledge of the gospel of Christ to his African brothers and educated such children - African or Mulatto who came to his school. In making these appointments, the authorities in England, because of their ignorance of the conditions in West Africa seem to have believed that an African Priest would fit into the society of his own people easily and have few real difficulties in bringing them into the fold of the Christian church.

### 3.8.4 Peter Claver

He lived from 1580 to 1654 in Central America on the Caribbean Coast; the largest receiving Port for slaves in the world. He was to do all he could for the poor slaves on their arrival with the help of a number of catechists who knew the West African languages. He was said to have instructed, converted and baptized 300,000 West Africans in the forty-seven years before his death. In spite of many odds, many of these converts were steadfast in the faith and after their emancipation, a number of them returned to West Africa as "Brazilians" and had great effect on Christian mission there.

Signor Joseph - arrived in Sierra-Leone about 1714 where he found a Jesuit Mission on Mount Auriol. After a brief prosperous life in America, he lived first in England and then in Portugal, where he was converted to and baptized in the Roman Catholic Church. He soon returned to West Africa to continue his work with the Jesuit Mission in Sierra Leone. There he built a village for his converts. Apart from their spiritual needs, he cared for the material aspects of the people and thus taught them useful trades to make them self-supporting. Unfortunately, the Jesuit order was suppressed before his death and this experience died a natural death.

## 4.0 CONCLUSION

- The Anglican faith was planted in Sierra Leone by Reverend Molville Horne in 1792.
- In 1807 many freed slaves were sent to Sierra Leone to plan Christianity.
- The Baptist planted mission station in Sierra Leone in 1795.
- The Methodist faith was established in Sierra Leone in 1975 by John Grigg.
- The Wesleyan faith was established in Sierra Leone in 1795.
- The London Missionary Society joined other missionaries to spread Christianity in Sierra Leone.
- Churches were built in Sierra Leone by missionaries.
- Liberated West African slaves spread Christianity Sierra Leone.

## 5.0 SUMMARY

The following are the major point you have learnt in this unit:

- Reverend Molville Horne planted the Anglican faith in Sierra Leone.

- Freed slaves contributed to the spread of Christianity.
- Missionaries built schools for the natives.

## **6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT**

Write a comprehensive essay on:

- i. Bishop Ajayi Crowther
- ii. Jacob Elisa John Capitein
- iii. Thomas Thompson
- iv. Philip Quaake
- v. Peter Claver

## **7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING**

Ajayi, J. F. A. (1964). *Christian Missions in Nigeria 1814 – 1891. The Making of a New Elite*. London: Longmans.

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## **UNIT 6 THE DIFFICULTIES FACED BY THE EARLIER MISSIONARIES IN WEST AFRICA**

### **CONTENTS**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 The Missionaries Underestimated their Task
  - 3.2 Missionaries were Confronted with Diseases in West Africa
  - 3.3 The Behaviour of Missionaries
  - 3.4 Financial Difficulties
  - 3.5 Political intriguing of Portuguese
  - 3.6 The Civil War
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  - 3.8 Language Difficulty
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

You have learnt about the planting of Christianity in Sierra Leone in the previous unit.

You have also learnt about the following planters of Christianity in Sierra Leone: Bishop Ajayi Crowther, William Augustine Bernard, Warnee, Jacob Elisa John, Philip Quaque and Peter Claver.

In this unit, you will learn about the challenges that confronted the early missionaries in West Africa in the planting of the religion of Christianity in West Africa.

### **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- discuss the effect of the underestimating of West Africa traditional religion by the missionaries
- state the role of the kings of Portugal and the authorities that led to the failure of mission stations in West Africa

- comment on the behaviour of the missionaries towards the natives.

### **3.0 MAIN CONTENT**

#### **3.1 The Missionaries Underestimated their Task**

Certain factors on the one hand brought limitations to the early missionary success. The missionaries tended to underestimate the magnitude of their task. They failed to take into consideration that the religion they intended to introduce to West Africa was culturally different from that which the established religion has developed. When trade formed the basis of contact between the two cultures, conflict was less frequent than when contact was extended to the sphere of religion which usually resulted in clash of fundamental values.

They launched assaults upon customs and beliefs which they found objectionable and thereby caused conflict and alienated the majority of the people they had come to convert. Attacks on polygamy, human sacrifices, the destruction of images and shrines often preceded conversion instead of following it.

The method of evangelisation was not adopted to the African need and baptism was administered with the same preparation as in Portugal; one would have expected more preparation in a non-Christian environment. This mistake was pointed out by a Portuguese official at Sao Jorge da Mina who wrote to the king of Portugal in 1572 suggesting that European settlers be brought in to live in mixed absorb the culture and skills and religion of the former. It would be recalled that where any success was achieved, it came from application of this suggestion, rather than from the enthusiasm and ability of the clergy.

#### **3.2 Missionaries were Confronted with Diseases in West Africa**

Another factor contributing to the failure of the missionaries was that the kings of Portugal and the authorities in England sent handfuls of men into countries where they quickly succumbed to various diseases. Continuity and stability of personnel, the establishment of a solid institutional and administrative organisation which were pre-requisites for achieving success were unattainable in such circumstances. Bishoprics often remained vacant for years and diocese of cape Verde in particular was left without a bishop for 30 years. New arrivals usually turned to mass baptism and other short-cut methods without adequate

and normal preparation. No wonder, Thomas Thompson in his writing complained that the mission task was not the sort which could be conducted by one person alone suggesting that there must be some attitude of a team work if the mission were to succeed. Quaque too was alone with no professional colleague and his repeated requests for guidance and help from the Society for the propagation of the Gospel in England, seem rarely to have been met.

One solution to the problem of shortage of clergy was to train African converts for the priesthood. The Portuguese crown and authorities in England in collaboration with their ministers, at the Forts recognised the advantages of such a body, drawn from the families of rulers and chiefs, acclimatised and at home with the language and customs of their people. A number of Congolese Youths were accordingly sent to Portugal early in the 16th century to be educated for the priesthood. At the beginning of the 17th century, an Itsekiri prince went to Portugal for ten years to be educated for the same purpose. Thomson planned to send a number of suitable African boys to England for education to qualify them for missionary posts preferably as ordained priests of the Anglican Church. But many of these students fell by the wayside and others who were ordained showed reluctance to return to Africa. Quaque was the only survivor of his own group of six. As if this was not enough, the Bishop of Sao Tome about the same time tried without success to found a seminary at Colimbra for the training of ministers from his diocese. Because of poor results and complaints from interested bodies within Portugal, the education of an African clergy was transferred back to Africa where resources and personnel were wholly inadequate. Religious centres of Education (seminaries) were established in strategic places like Cape Verde, Sao Tome and Angola. Even the Jesuits were able to maintain a "College" in San Salvador from 1625 to 1675. The products of these seminaries were responsible for most of the missionary work outside the areas of Portuguese settlement, especially in parts of West Africa in the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries. But possibly because of the quality of their training and because of their lack of Christian background, the quality was generally poor.

Another serious defect of missionary body in West Africa was that the training of clergy was one sided. No effort was made to train women as ministers. The result was the conspicuous absence of women's religious order which was in part responsible for the failure of Christianity to make an impression on the women of Africa and thus was unable to win that influence over home life and children which was essential to its success.



### **3.3 The Behaviour of Missionaries**

The quality of missionaries sent to Africa left much to be desired and their behaviour had attracted adverse comments. It appeared that the religious authorities tended to retain the services of their able members at home for fear of deaths and at the same time preferred to send to Africa difficult members as missionaries. Many of the other Europeans living in the Forts and in the locality were leading lives so contrary to the Christianity Thompson was attempting to preach. Reports of scandal and corruption abound and quarrelling among the clergy, common in Europe was imported to Africa where it reached endemic proportions. It was impossible for the African to distinguish practising Christians from those indifferent to religion and its injunctions. The level of learning was also low, few important missionary writings were made. Only the Capuchins which is an exception to this general rule, won general African respect.

### **3.4 Financial Difficulties**

Financial difficulties were another problem experienced by the missions. Papal bulls had granted the Portuguese crown control over African missions and rights to finance them. But more often than not the payments usually fell short of what was needed to support the missionary activities and programme.

In 1571, the Bishop of Sao Tome had cause to complain that it would be impossible to perform their functions satisfactorily if the king of Portugal who collected all tithes continued to pay the bishop a stipend which was not enough even for his personal needs. In these circumstances, it was impossible to improve the number and quality of the clergy in the diocese and to well-educated men. The result was missionary involvement in the slave trade, which they entered primarily as a means of financing evangelisation and supporting themselves. What is more, the Portuguese government gave approval to such practice and legalised it by granting slaves or allowing the church to trade in them on its own accounts. The missions Board established in Lisbon in 1693 to check the decay of mass missionary was said to have been financed on the sale of 700 slaves each year. Ships belonging to the Jesuit order were usually loaded with slaves on their way from Angola to Brazil. Thus, the viability of missions depended largely on trade — including slave trade. It provided the missionaries with their means of transport and communication in most of West Africa. Only those places which offered profitable business were frequently called at by the Portuguese ships, and where this was not forthcoming, a port or place once regularly visited might be abandoned for years. When the traders of Sao Tome

lost interest in the Forcados River, the small Christian community there was left to their fate without the services of a priest for about 20 years. The clergy's fellow country-men in Africa and their mulatto descendents were interested only in the trade and had little use for missionaries. Closely associated with this was the Portuguese missionary's association with the slave trade. The first European traders did not think their behaviour unchristian when they took part in the slave trade. Moral indignation against the traffic makes one assume that its corrupting influence was incompatible with the spread of Christianity, though slavery is not condemned in the Holy Bible. Conversion demanded peaceful atmosphere in which churches and schools could be permanently built, in which settled Christian community could accomplish their work without fear and this could not be achieved if slave raiding which usually contributed to the unsettled state of affairs was in operation.

### **3.5 Political Intriguing of Portuguese**

Political intriguing was another factor that tended to discredit the Portuguese and their missions in African eyes. Because of the marriage of convenience between the state and Christianity, the Portuguese felt free to use their control of firearms, to make and unmake rulers with complete disregard for West African tradition, custom and even the ultimate consequences.

### **3.6 The Civil War**

The king of Congo, Affonso I and his successors owed their appointment to Portuguese backing while others like Diogo who were not in the good book of the missionaries and traders on the spot were undermined and relegated to the background. A civil war which broke out over the succession to the throne of the Temme people of Sierra-Leone in 1680 saw the Jesuits supporting the claimant, educated by them against another contestant, and one of their converts who had since relapsed. These wars had nothing to do with Christianity and it reaped no benefit by becoming involved in a struggle for power.

### **3.7 Religious Differences**

Religious differences between the Roman Catholics and Protestant Europeans as well as their national differences also had adverse effect on Christian missions in West Africa.

The Portuguese policy was to exclude other interested powers from her areas of operation. The war of liberation of 1640 which saw Spain and

Papacy in opposition to Portugal, aggravated the latter's suspicion of foreign missionaries with the result that for many years, the Portuguese put obstacles in the way of Spanish and Italian Capuchins destined for Africa. Pombal's quarrel with the Jesuits which resulted in the suppression of that order in 1773 brought to an end their valuable educational work in Angola and the Cape Verde Islands.

### **3.8 Language Difficulty**

Language difficulty also affected the work of the missionaries as it caused difficulty in its presentation by outsiders especially in their attempts to translate the Scriptures into the various vernaculars. Work had to begin and continue completely in the vernacular if the listeners and followers fully comprehend the teachings of the missionaries. The situation has been made worse by the Christian missionaries themselves. This happened when missionaries from two different language-groups entered nearby areas with different dialects of the same language. The result was that dialects began to look like different languages and a situation could be confusing.

#### **SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

Briefly discuss the roles of the Catholics and the Protestant Europeans in failure of evangelisation in West Africa.

### **4.0 CONCLUSION**

The missionaries underrated the West African Traditional Religion in West Africa.

The method of evangelisation was not adopted to the West African need.

The missionaries were confronted with diseases which rendered some of them invalids.

The missionaries lacked enough funds for the evangelisation of West African people.

The behaviour of the missionaries towards the natives discouraged the progress of Christianity in West Africa.

### **5.0 SUMMARY**

- The missionaries underrated their tasks in West Africa.

- Diseases rendered some missionaries invalid in the West Africa land.
- Religious differences between the Roman Catholics and Protestant Europeans had adverse effect on the spread of Christianity in West Africa.

## **6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT**

1. Discuss the main motive of the Portuguese in coming to West Africa.
2. List the challenges that militate against the planting of Christianity in West Africa.

## **7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING**

Ade-Ajayi, J. F. A. (1964). *Christian Missions in Nigeria, 1814 – 1891. The Making of a New Elite*. London: Longmans.

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