

**THE HISTORY OF CHRISTIANITY IN OKUNLAND (KOGI STATE)
WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO THE BAPTIST MISSION.**

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CONCLUSION EVALUATION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 CONCLUSION: The focus of this study is to trace how Christianity got to Okunland the people and the missions that first brought Christianity to the area. The thesis also focus on the spread of the Baptist Church within the area. Many important things were revealed during the course of the study the prominent ones can be summarized as follows:

Christianity was first introduced to Okunland in the year 1900. This was made possible through the ministry of Rev. J.O Olorunyomi A. Baptist and native of Aiyegunle- Gbede in Ijumu Local Government area.

The first Christian denomination to come to Okunland in Chronological order are

- (a) Baptist 1900
- (b) Anglican 1903
- (c) Roman Catholic 1906
- (d) SIM, ECWA 1908

And for each of the denominations except SIM/ECWA. The Gospel was introduce first by an indigene of Okunland.

The first Baptist church in Northern Nigeria is first Baptist church Aiyegunle Gbede. This is followed by First Baptist Church Aiyetoor – Gbede.

Both of which were established through the effort of Rev. Olorunyomi in 1900¹.

The first indigenous Northerner (that is indigenes of the 18 Northern states) to be Baptist are the Okun people.

Rev. J.O Olorunyomi who was ordained at first Baptist Church Ijaiye on July 11 1920 was probably the first Northerner to be ordained as a Baptist Minister.

Some of the early Baptist Churches in Okunland (Mopa, Isanlu, Panyan etc) developed and thrived as a result of polygamy crisis in S.I.M/ECWA Churches in the area.

The establishment of Baptist Primary Schools in Okunland initially faced strong opposition from the white S.I.M missionaries.

The establishment of Kogi Baptist Conference has led to the growth (in terms of number of Churches and financial contribution to the conference cooperative funds) of the churches within the conference area:

5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation based on the conclusion and Evaluation above my recommendations are as follows.

1. Most of the records in this thesis were obtained under very difficult conditions. This is because the Churches do not keep a record of their History. Most of the people interviewed are very old. When they die a lot of history will be lost forever. The Convention should recommend to each church to have a "Church History Committee". The committee will keep a record of the history of their church which they will keep on updating from time to time. Each church should also have a vertical file at the Nigerian Baptist Theological Seminary Ogbomoso or any of the convention Seminary, College of Theology, Bible School and Pastors' School where the records will be kept.

2. From the study of how Christianity got to Okunland it is clear that it was indigenes of the area that evangelized their people. They also did the work very well. Based on this success I will recommend that: the home missionary should be ministers from the area where the home mission field is established. This could be extended also to the foreign mission fields. If this is done several factors which could hinder evangelism such as cultural and language will be removed.

3. The growth rate of Kogi Baptist Conference is very low. In order to enhance higher growth rate I therefore give the following recommendations.

i The conference Secretary should become full time. This will enable him to have enough time to go round the conference area better, to encourage the churches to improve on their stewardship.

ii The conference should also have a full time field worker, who will be committed to mobilizing the people at the grassroots. He should also encourage the people to plant new churches.

4. To motivate the people to give more financially for the work of the conference. Seminars on giving should be encouraged in each church and also on Association basis.

5. To encourage educated young men from the conference area to answer pastoral call and go for training. The Conference should have a

deliberate policy of sponsoring or giving scholarship to indigenes of the area in Baptist Seminaries or Bible College, etc.

6. The evangelism tactics of Rev. J.O Olorunyomi (i.e starting an Adult literacy class and start to teach the scripture later and finally turn the class into a church) should be encouraged especially in the villages where there is mass illiteracy.