

**THE PERSECUTION OF THE RADICAL REFORMERS  
AND ITS EFFECTS ON CHURCH GROWTH**

272  
EK82p  
NBTS  
BYH

**AN ESSAY PRESENTED TO THE FACULTY OF THE  
NIGERIAN BAPTIST THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY,  
OGBOMOSO, NIGERIA.**

**IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENT  
FOR THE DEGREE OF BACHELOR OF THEOLOGY**

**BY  
IFEANYICHUKWU BENSON EKHU**

**JUNE, 2002**

03-379

## ABSTRACT

This Research, "The Persecution of the Radical Reformers and Its Effects on Church Growth," is an attempt to find out the significant effects the persecution of the Radical Reformers had on Church Growth. This is with the aim of helping the contemporary Church on how to handle crisis resulting from persecution.

Chapter one is the introductory aspect of the research, which discusses the background to the study, statement of purpose, scope and limitation, research methodology, significance of the research and definition of terms.

Chapter two addresses the factors that led to Radical Reformation, which are Religious, Political, and socio-economic factors.

Chapter Three shed light on the various groups that make up the Radical Reformation. These are the Anabaptists, the Spiritualists, and the Evangelical Rationalists.

Chapter four focuses on the persecution of the Radical Reformers. Hence the writer examines the causes of the persecution, the extent of the persecution, and the Radical Reformers reaction to the persecution.

Chapter five examines the effects the persecution of the Radical Reformers had on Church Growth numerically, spiritually, mission, literature, teaching, leadership and some negative effects.

Chapter six is the conclusion of the Research, which contains suggestions to contemporary Christian and some issues for further studies.

## CONCLUSION

The study has been on the persecution of the Radical Reformers and its Effects on Church Growth. It has considered the factors that led to Radical Reformation. It examined the various groups that make up the Radical Reformation movement. Also, it looked at the causes and the extent of the persecution of the Radical Reformers. Their reactions to the persecutions and the effects on Church Growth were also identified.

In this conclusion, the writer wants to make these suggestions and raise some areas for further studies. The suggestions include:

1. Contemporary Christians should imbibe the spirit of non-violent reaction to persecution. Knowing fully well that the weapons of our warfare are not based on human effort but they are spiritually discern (2 Corinthians 10: 3 – 6). Therefore, our reactions to persecution should be under the leadership of the Holy Spirit.
2. Christians should see persecution as a necessary evil that we will continue to face from time to time as long as we are still in the world. This is because if we must live a godly life in Christ Jesus in this sinful world, Paul says, “we must suffer persecution” (2 Tim. 3: 12).
3. Like the Radical Reformers the Christians of today should maintain their identity and integrity in times of persecution. This will help in the furtherance of the gospel. However, compromise, denial and recounting of one’s faith will continue to hinder the spread of the gospel.
4. For the Church to be able to face the challenges of persecution it must cultivate the spirit of courage, boldness, bravery and fearlessness in pursuing their convictions.
5. Christians should check their actions against other Christians from time to time so that it will not amount to persecution against fellow brethren. We should strive to be our brother’s keepers.
6. The Church should see persecution as an opportunity God is offering them to demonstrate their faith in witnessing for Christ. History has

proved it often and again that many souls have been won or brought into the kingdom of God through the persecution of the Church.

7. Christians should know that not all sufferings are persecution. Thus if any suffers as a result of sin such is not persecution but price for sin. If we must suffer, let it be as a result of our faith in Christ.

Areas for further studies include:

1. A detailed research on the various groups that make up the Radical Reformation Movement – their belief, teachings and practices.
2. Studies on the lives and contributions of some of the key leaders of the Radical Reformation such as Conrad Grebel, Felix Manz, Menno Simons, George Blaurock, Balthasar Hubmaier.