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**A STUDY OF GBAGYI BELIEF ON LIFE AFTER DEATH: ITS EFFECTS ON
CHRISTIANITY**

**AN ESSAY PRESENTED TO THE FACULTY OF THE NIGERIAN BAPTIST
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ABSTRACT

The Biblical Concept of life after death seems not to be well understood among the Gbagyis. The research is to carry out some findings on the life after death among the Gbagyis in Baptist Victory Association of the Federal Capital Territory. The research will also help Christian Missionaries and preachers to understand the world view of the Gbagyis, their Christian converts and how to minister to them effectively.

In carrying out this research, an historical approach and the Library as be used. Gbagyi elders between age 55-60 years were interviewed to get eye-witness account. All the findings were evaluated in the light of the Bible concept of life after death.

The recommendations are on how to help the Gbagyi Christians to understand the Biblical truth on life after death, how to help their converts not to fall into syncretism, and how to help the Christian Missionary to minister effectively among the Gbagyis or any other tribe that has the same world-view like that of the Gbagyis.

Conclusion

From a systematic study it is observed that people hold on to culture, belief system stronger than a new found faith (Christianity). This is due to continuity in history of their culture. However, without making the mistake of syncretism, the Bible is to be contextualized, having it in mind that Christ makes the difference in any religion or culture. Man has always been seen to be part of a whole throughout this research. Christian Faith should be introduced to Africans with the Spirit of communal life rather than the strategy of individualism. During Christian burial rites, efforts should be strong on the preaching of life after death, Christian hope of resurrection. Opposition and discouragement of communication with the dead should be strongly affirmed as advised by Dauda Shekwolo. Africans believe in prayers we can get the

converts through this A Gbagyi preacher may have a militant approach to prayers and singing while preaching the Bible truth. This may make them embrace his message more. We still have Christians who are not sound in their Christian doctrine. We still have Christians who do not know the difference between the heaven of the Christians and the heaven of the pagans. We still have some with Pagan practices and yet attend churches. All we still need as preachers, educators, and Christian historians is to intensify efforts on teaching the whole counsel of God. We are also to send Christian Missionaries and encourage them to live prayerfully among pagans. With time, the effect of African traditional belief will be very minimal on Christian faith.

Recommendations

The Bible should be translated into Gbagyi dialect using the learned Christian believers they have produced.

Christian hymns should be translated into Gbagyi language for more doctrinal teachings through hymns. Jesus the sacrificial lamb should be impressed in the heart of Christian Converts.

1. Christian Belief, especially on life after death should be well thought and preached by missionaries and preacher among the Gbagyi.
2. There is need to understand the Gbagyi culture in order to preach Christ better.
3. Discipleship among the Gbagyi is very important.
4. Translation of Christian songs to Gbagyi language.

5. Preachers among the Gbagyis must be very honest, if not, they may be easily put off.
6. The preachers among the Gbagyi must always emphasize Christian faith beliefs on life after death at the grave site.
7. Christ should be preached among the Gbagyis as once and for all sacrifice.

Further Study

For further study a researcher may wish to research on the following topics:

- (a) The philosophy of life among the Gbagyis and its effects on Christian faith.
- (b) The gods among the Gbagyis in the light of the very God of the Bible.