

**CHRISTIAN APOLOGETICS: AN APPROACH TO  
REACHING AFRICAN TRADITIONAL RELIGION  
ADHERENTS IN NIGERA.**

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**BY  
AMUSAN, JOEL OYEWOLA**

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## ABSTRACT

Nigeria is the largest country in Africa. It has a highly varied topography. The coast lines of Nigeria are bordered on the West by Atlantic Ocean, on the North by Mediteranean Sea, on the East by Suez, and to the South are lagoons. Nigeria is peopled with a wide variety of human kind, social-cultural, religious and historical heritage.

Most of the 36 states display conspicuously, evidence of the impact of industrialization, urbanization and modernization. Many of the world Religions dominate and cults <sup>to</sup> have adherents in Nigeria, but three religions dominate – namely African Traditional Religion, Christianity, and Islam, with each of these making its historic appearance in Nigeria in that order. African Traditional Religion is the indigeneous religion.

So, this thesis seeks merely to make a contribution to the apologist tasks of effective interpretation, and presentation of biblical Christianity to the modern adherents of African Traditional Religion. It deals with the relationship of Christians and Christian missionaries to modern adherents of African Traditional Religion.

More importantly, this abstract is to indicate the standing-point and argument of this effort by setting it within the wider context of present day thought upon the problem of “Christian Apologetics: An Approach to Reaching African Traditional Religionists in Nigeria”.

In the succeeding chapters we shall be dealing not with the philosophy of Religion but with the “Christian Apologetics: An approach to Reaching African Traditional Religionists in Nigeria”.

We shall be compelled to consider the relationship between Christian apologetics and African Traditional Religion. This task has rarely been attempt<sup>ed</sup> by students of

Christian apologetics and African Traditional since the adoption of the modern theological method in the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

There are general reasons why the study of Christian apologetics has been neglected in 20<sup>th</sup> century; it may be because their own attention is absorbed in their own special research, not seriously interested in the methodology and educational method of their discipline in relation to Christian apologetics.

The students of Christian apologetics and African Traditional Religion are however, compelled to raise the question and implication of the validity of apologetics knowledge. The Christian apologist must critically examine the human mind and its workings with a view to establishing not only the possibility but even the necessity of African Traditional Religion. And it is here averred:

So long as theologies continue to make little effort to understand the nature of their own theological method or to convince other people of its validity; so long as they are content to leave unanswered, the fundamental questions which the modern mind asks concerning the nature of the apologetics truth and African Traditional Religion, they will be unable to make effective contact with the mind of a generation which has come to believe that the only kind of knowledge which can properly be given that little is scientific knowledge.<sup>1</sup>

Furthermore, this researcher is motivated about what his forefathers have in mind when they talked about religions adherents and whether the type of adherents they talked about has to do with this present world alone? Or about the world to come? The researcher is motivated again, about the unclear goal of his forefathers adherents of African Traditional Religion, whether they are looking for salvation, liberation, or deliverance solely from evils around them or freedom from the consequences of sins and sins against Olodumare (God) which they have committed. Not that alone.

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<sup>1</sup> Richardson, A. Christian Apologetics. (London: SCM Press, 1970). P. iv.

The researcher understands that other religions in the world for instance, zoroastrianism, Taoism, Buddhism talk about adherents. Therefore he would emphasize reaching African Traditional Religion adherents through Christian apologetics methodology. And with a strong belief that these African Tradition Religion Adherents are brought to Christianity which is widely believed to be the Way to come to Jesus Christ which every human being needs in his or her life as personal Saviour (Jn. 3:16) “For God so loved the world he gave his only son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal Life.” (RSV).