

AN EXAMINATION OF THE CHALLENGES OF ISLAM TO
CHRISTIANITY IN OGBOMOSO, OYO STATE

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ABSTRACT

This study is titled, An Examination of the challenges of Islam to Christianity in Ogbomoso, Oyo State. It was aimed at taking a close look at the challenges posed by Islam against Christianity in Ogbomoso land. The study was carried out in Ogbomoso. People who responded to questions put forward to them through the questionnaire and interviews were randomly picked in the town. These people were students, school leavers, graduates, workers, farmers etc. The questionnaires and interviews were utilized to gather useful information on the topic of study.

The study revealed that Islam is striving hard to measure up with Christianity in the land of Ogbomoso. These being that the Muslims are fast modifying their way of worship as they now, like Christians, observe vigils, weekly activities etc. They are intensifying efforts to retain their members who are believed to be straying away into other religions like Christianity. Also, the study clearly proves that the Christians are thriving despite all odds against the Faith. They are multiplying in number and their impact and influence can still be effectively felt in the town of Ogbomoso.

More so, this study reveals that Christians and Muslims in Ogbomoso are co-existing peacefully. They see their family ties, culture and unity more important than their religious affiliations, and as such, they are not willing to evade the existing peace through any means.

The study recommends that due to the constant religious crisis experienced in some parts of Nigeria, which of course is between Christian and Muslims, further research should be made in the area of Muslim- Christian relations, as this will help curb the incessant violence which emanate from religion. It further recommends that other parts of Nigeria, especially the North, learn lessons from Ogbomoso people about living in harmony despite religious differences. The study also recommends that

Christians in Ogbomoso stand up to their responsibility of evangelizing the land for Christ. They should take note of the fact that their presence in the land should influence people of other religions to come to know Christ.

5.2 Conclusion

Islam is striving hard to catch up with Christianity. This striving is the bone of contention and the reason to do an examination as Muslims have come all – out to make

their religion more relevant than it used to be. They have taken time to look into the practice of Christianity and borrowed so much into their way of worship. It is surprising to know that Muslims now organize night vigils, fasting etc. These were never emphasized in Muslim way of life.

No matter what effort is put by Muslims to beef up their ways of worship and practices, and what so ever effort is put to pursue Christianity as a threat, the Christian faith is thriving much more than the Islamic faith. The rate at which Muslims are leaving the mosques for the church is quite alarming. Every effort to stop this proves abortive.

This study concludes on the fact that there is a peaceful relationship between Muslims and Christians in the town of Ogbomoso. This can be clearly seen in the way adherents of both religions have been able to co- exist all these years. They are able to come together to carry out functions which are beneficial to the town without any religious prejudice. As a community, Ogbomoso people have been able to co-operate together to achieve social, economic, political and even religious purposes. This is due to the fact that they see the interest of the town, the families, and the culture far above any forms of religious affiliations, unlike it is in most parts of Northern Nigeria.

5.3 Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made. First, due to the incessant religious crisis being experienced in the country which is usually between Islam and Christianity, the researcher recommends that further research be made on the area of Muslim – Christian relations in Nigeria. This of course would go a long way in cubing the crisis.

Secondly, the researcher further recommends that other parts of Nigeria; especially the North would learn lessons from Ogbomoso people about living in harmony with people of other religions. Ogbomoso is a multi- religious town such that it has principal religions which includes Islamic, Christian and the African traditional Religions, yet there has never been a known clash among these religions in recent times.

Thirdly, the researcher would again recommend that Christians in Ogbomoso should sit up and focus on living the Christian life more effectively. They should ensure that they remain the light in the town by which Muslims and traditional religious adherents would see clearly God's purpose and will for themselves.

Lastly, the researcher recommends that Ogbomoso Christians should put more effort in personal, street and even group evangelism. They should not be content in seeing their relations and neighbors continue in Islam and traditional religious practices.