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THE AHMADIYYA MOVEMENT: ITS  
CHALLENGES TO NIGERIAN CHRISTIANITY

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## ABSTRACT

This thesis titled "The Ahmadiyya Movement: Its Challenges to Nigerian Christianity" was carried out with the view to investigate and give some vital information that can be of help to persons or groups of persons who might want to know something about Ahmadiyya Movement. Secondly, it is intended to educate Christians that the title "Messiah" must not be taken for granted to mean Christ.. To point out that there is an Islamic sect called Ahmadiyya that has come to pose challenges to Nigerian Christianity. It is also to point out that the founder of Ahmadiyya, Ghulam Ahmad, was erroneously believed by the Ahmadis to be the promised Messiah of the Christians. And to demonstrate clearly that the idea of sectarianism, as the Muslims have always believed is not limited to Christianity alone.

The result of the study reveals that the founder of the movement has presented himself as "the promised Messiah." He claims to have met physically with Jesus Christ, and that Christ has authorized him to bear the title 'Messiah.' He believes and teaches that Jesus has told him that He would not come back. He believes that although he did not come as an incarnation of Christ, he has come in the power of Christ. He believes and teaches that Jesus was crucified on the cross but He did not die on the cross. He argues that Christ was unconscious, fainted, but definitely did not die on the cross. He claims that Christ's disciples took Him down from the cross, took care of Him and made sure that He regained His consciousness. He

migrated to an Indian town called Kashmir. Ghulam Ahmad teaches that Kashmir was the place where the lost sheep of Israel were. That was why Jesus chose to go there to find the lost sheep and restore them. He argues that Jesus got married, raised children, males and females before he eventually died there at the age of one hundred and twenty. Ahmadiyya believes strongly in the concept of continued prophethood; and disagrees with the idea that Prophet Muhammad was the seal of the prophets, which made the orthodox Muslims believe that there cannot be another prophet after Muhammad. The Ahmadis use the Bible only to suit their purpose. They believe that whoever does not belong to Ahmadiyya is an infidel. Ghulam Ahmad died in May 1908 but was succeeded by Nuruddin who led the group until his death in 1914, when the sect was broken into two.

In the light of the foregoing therefore, the researcher recommends:

- (1) That the title "Messiah" when used in the context of the New Testament is limited to Christ alone. Christians must be aware that the Ahmadis use this term falsely.
- (2) Although Christians must strive to evangelize, they must not compromise their faith.
- (3) Christians must not be deceived to believe that they are worshipping the same God in different ways.

## **Conclusion**

The conclusion drawn in this work is that the Ahmadiyya movement is an Islamic group that has presented itself as all in all in religion. It is an Islamic sect whose adherents do not have any special way of appearing to the public in terms of dressing or in any other way of living.

The Ahmadiyya movement is an Islamic group who makes use of the Bible in an extensive way though with wrong intention on most occasions. It is necessary here, to note that except a Christian be vast in his understanding of the Holy Scriptures, an encounter with this particular Islamic sect may result in a serious setback, or a total backsliding.

The sect looks friendly to people, not only in its community, but even outside of its community. As a result of its friendliness, it can easily be accessible and it too can gain access to anywhere it wishes to. With that piece of information, the writer presents his suggestions, which can be of help to as many as would have anything to do with the Ahmadiyya movement either now, or in the future. The suggestions are as offered below:

## **Suggestions for Further Studies**

The following suggestions as offered are considered necessary for proper guidance of the prospective workers among the Ahmadiyya movement. The suggestions are not necessarily intended for the purpose of research and studies alone. They are helpful to serve as a bunch of guide for

whoever wishes to evangelize among this group of Muslims. This is not impossible, because God can do it. In the light of the foregoing, therefore, the following suggestions become very important.

1. It is important to know that the word 'Messiah' is no longer a title for Christ alone. As a result, care must be taken not to confuse the false messiah with the true Messiah – Jesus Christ.
2. Whenever people are gathered under the claim, our gathering is unto the messiah, Christians should be curious, about such gathering. The gathering may be of the Ahmadiyya movement. Watch out!
3. The fact that the Ahmadiyya recognizes the virgin birth of Jesus Christ through Mary is not enough an evidence to convince a good Christian to submission. The Ahmadis are in the group of the antichrist.
4. They read the Bible though, but they do so with the primary intention to mislead people. They make the Bible to say whatever they want.
5. In order to evangelize among the Ahmadis, Christians should not go to them unprepared. Instead, Christians are advised to take the gospel message to them prayerfully.
6. The Ahmadis, because of their familiarity with the Bible, may choose to be argumentative rather than being attentive to the message of salvation. It is advisable therefore, that whoever goes to evangelize them should avoid being drawn into any form of argument. If the atmosphere is not conducive for the intended evangelism, he may prayerfully consider leaving that scene for another place that is conducive enough for the spread of the

Gospel. However, there must be the plan to go back and evangelize them.

7. The Christians who desire to evangelize among the Ahmadis should always have it in mind that Christ had said it and it must be established that that which was spoken by the Lord may be fulfilled. "Watch out that no one deceives you. For many will come in my name, claiming, 'I am the Christ,' and will deceive many" (Matt. 24:4, 5, NiV).
8. Christ did not say these to terrify His disciples be it then, now, and in the future. Instead, Christ did say it with the view to preparing their minds against the future. Now is the time, Christians should be vigilant.
9. It is also worthy of note, that the Ahmadis value western education so much. As a result, whoever intends to evangelize among them must not be uninformed. Arabic Language and the knowledge of the Qur'an is an added advantage to such Christians.
10. While it is worthwhile to reach the Ahmadis, it is not bad to make friends. It is important that Christian witnesses do not compromise their intention to evangelize the people. This is important, especially as the Ahmadis may tell them as usual that "but we are serving the same God." It may be factual though, that both Christians and Muslims worship the same God, but it is equally good for them to know that the Ahmadis are not worshipping Him in the right way.
11. The Christian witnesses must not go to the Ahmadis with the intention to preach their church (denomination). They are sent to preach Christ alone – the crucified Lord.

For further studies, it is good to read the works of objective authors on Ahmadiyya movement.

As part of the concluding aspect of the thesis, this researcher wishes to observe that the Ahmadis, as well as other Muslims, might prove sometimes to be difficult. But Christians, especially those who wish to evangelize among them, should summon the courage and march on. At some other times, they may prove to be too religious or as having known everything in the Bible. Despite that, Christians should not assume that they do not need the message.

Furthermore, if they tend to be hostile, they are, because of who they are. Until they have developed a new heart towards the Gospel and accept the Gospel as the written Word of God, and until they have accepted Christ as the Revealed Word of God, they may not be anything different. But they may not accept the Gospel as the Revealed Word of God and the Saviour of their souls until Christians can take up the challenge to present the Gospel to them in totality.

Christians are therefore urged, both to preach the Gospel, write and distribute tracts and literature among the Ahmadis and among Muslims. Apart from this, Christians should devise other means of evangelizing among the Ahmadis until they are brought to Christ and until they too can accept and confess that Jesus is Lord. Christians must not give up. They must not compromise their faith. They must trust in the Lord who has commissioned them to go and evangelize in the world. He is sufficient and powerful to grant them success.

Furthermore, one must salute both the courage and the zeal of the Ahmadis both for prayer and propagation of the doctrine of Ahmadiyya. Similarly, Christians should develop the courage and zeal that is even greater than that of the Ahmadis. Realizing that their service unto the Lord is not in vain, they should be more committed, especially to the salvation of the Ahmadis, who claim that they are working for their God, though they are not. They must be made to know and to embrace the Truth. Jesus Christ is the Truth.