

**THE ROLE OF THE CHURCH IN  
SUICIDE PREVENTION**

**AN ESSAY**

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## ABSTRACT

This section is a brief summary of this research. The intention of the researcher is lucid: Suicide is real and it can be prevented. The church has a vital role to play in curbing suicide in our society.

Chapter one is the introduction. The paper defines suicide as “the intentional extirpation or annihilation of self for any cause that results in death”. Chapter two presents the social causes of suicide. It then examines the cultural view and the biblical view of suicide from African perspective. Chapter three is the case study on suicide. It then examines the cultural view and the biblical view of suicide from African perspective. Chapter three is the case study on suicide- attempt person that was prevented from committing the act. The church can play a vital role in suicide prevention. The result of the interview conducted by this researcher confirms that suicide is real and the church has a greater role to play in preventing suicide. Chapter four enumerates the roles that the church can actively play in preventing suicide. The pastor is to take the leadership role. Chapter five presents the conclusion and recommendations.

## A. CONCLUSION

This study shows vividly that suicide cases are real. All those that are interviewed by this researcher said that suicide is real.<sup>1</sup> (See appendix I). The report from Nigerian Tribune by Johnson Fagbamila is a clear indication that suicide is real. (See also appendix II) There it was reported that a woman named Omotunde Goye “committed suicide by jumping off the window of the top floor a four – storey building to end the controversy over her unwanted pregnant.”<sup>2</sup> Suicide is a nuisance and social menace that is claiming lives of people. This paper has defined suicide as intentional killing of oneself.

Some factors are responsible for suicide which includes family problems, unemployment, depression, despondency, pain, distress, agony, shame, sin, guilt, failure, alcoholism, drug addicts, mental illness, demonic attack and a host of others as mentioned in the previous chapters.

This paper consented that the Bible was not judgmental because it neither condemned nor condoned suicide. It is clear that suicide must be condemned in the interpretation of the Bible. Suicide is a sin of murder and it is morally unacceptable. African cultures also condemn suicide.

The researcher has used a case study to show that suicide is socially unacceptable and morally wrong. Suicide must therefore be prevented.

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<sup>1</sup>Johnson Fagbamila, “Woman Jumps To Death In Lagos” Nigerian Tribune 29 November 2002, P.3.

<sup>2</sup>Fagbamila, “Woman Jumps To Death In Lagos” P.3

This work has enumerated the roles of the church in suicide prevention. The pastor has a key role to play in curbing suicide. The researcher suggested that conducive atmosphere and a good rapport must be set with the suicidal person. Concern and interest must be established. He also suggested that the society must be educated on suicide. If all the stated roles of the church and pastor are strictly followed, there will be a huge success in the record of suicide prevention. However there should not be self-judgment or guilt if a suicide ends up in a successful completion.

## **B. RECOMMENDATIONS**

This researcher hereby recommends strongly that there should be more research especially in the area of suicide. In fact, there is a need for practical and active research. This will help to have a good and active record of suicide. Accurate record of suicide will stimulate more helpers to prevent suicide. More researchers will enhance the church to be more effective in her total ministry concerning suicide. This may include: The ministry of the church in suicidal behavior; the ministry of the church to the despondent and the ministry of the church to the family of the suicide victims.

The teachers of theological institutions should teach suicide so as to grow professionally. They should design courses on suicide.

There is a need to promote writing of articles in a Christian magazine on the subject of suicide. This will help people on how to relate with a suicidal – person. People will know what to do when they meet anyone with suicide thought. Fear will be removed from people. Also people will know how to

prevent suicide. Through writing they are going to be knowledgeable about suicide and how to relate with suicide survivors.

Good books should be read on related subject matter of suicide. This is because some authors may condone suicide. Information's can be got from national newspaper so as to wage war against suicide. Suicide is not socially acceptable. Government should be encouraged to organize suicide prevention center in strategic places in Nigeria. This is because many people are depressed in our society and they found it difficult to get help that can heal them. People with suicidal thoughts can be encouraged to seek help in such a suicide prevention center.

There is a need for evaluation of our ministry as Christians concerning suicide. It will show our strengths and weaknesses for which to be watchful. Insights and skills are also going to be developed through evaluation.

There is a need to encourage the use of the media through people can be educated about their roles in suicide – prevention. Churches should take note of the vital role they can play concerning suicide – prevention.