

THE NIGERIAN BAPTIST THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

232.963
On 9-t
NBTS
M.Th.

A THEOLOGY OF SACRIFICE FROM AN IGALA
CHRISTIAN PERSPECTIVE

BY

ONUICHE, JOSEPH

OGBOMOSO, OYO STATE

JUNE 2005

J.C. POOL LIBRARY
BAPTIST SEMINARY
OGBOMOSO NIGERIA

06-0509

ABSTRACT

This Thesis is a contribution to contextual Theology. It is an investigation into the need for a relevant Theology of the sacrificial death of Christ and how it has become efficacious in dealing with sin, evil, and other associated tyrants in the Igala worldview.

The contention of this thesis shall be that since the Supreme and Ultimate sacrifice has been offered, any other sacrifice, whether to God, spirits or ancestors, is therefore, unnecessary. Consequently, the practice of sacrifice by some Igala Christian today can be explained by the simple reason that they have neither understood nor appropriated into their lives what Christ has done on their behalf through His sacrificial death.

The essay started with introducing the study in chapter one. The Biblical perspectives on sacrifice were presented in chapter two. Much attention is given to the New Testament meaning of sacrifice, the necessity of Christ's sacrifice and the role of the death of Christ as the scriptural evidence shows.

In chapter three, Sacrifice in Igala traditional religion was considered. The chapter provided the identification of Igala people, their concept of sacrifice and a redemptive story of Inikpi who is believed to be a sacrificial victim.

In Chapter Four, an Igala Christian Theology of sacrifice was formulated the supremacy, ultimacy, adequacy and finality of the sacrifice which Jesus Christ has offered was affirmed. This chapter

builds on the understanding of the Igala people on sacrifice in relation to God, sin, propitiation, substitution, reconciliation and salvation to formulate a theology of sacrifice that is biblically balanced and contextually relevant.

Chapter five provides the concluding remark and recommendation.

believers.

A. CONCLUSIONS

The following are the major conclusions drawn from the research.

The practice of sacrifice by some Igala people today can be explained by the simple reason that they have neither understood nor appropriated into their lives what Christ has done on their behalf through His sacrificial death. The Igala people should not place their faith in their traditional sacrificial practices because the final and ultimate sacrifice has been offered in and through Jesus Christ.

The sacrifice of Jesus Christ is efficacious and powerful over every evil spirit or forces. God has through the cross of Christ disclosed His love, overcame sin, the devil and his agents for the entire human race including the Igala people. Whatever need that may necessitate the offering of any other form of sacrifice anywhere, anytime, has been fully met by and through the sacrificial death of

Jesus Christ. What an Igala person needs to do now is to appropriate into their lives by faith what Christ has done on their behalf.

B. RECOMMENDATIONS

Sacrifice is an essential element of the Igala religious system. It is the only legitimate way spiritual problems are solved. It is complex and yet so common and frequents a ritual among the Igala people. Once prescribed by the diviner, no matter what it takes, it must be fulfilled. The Church should endeavour to use the books of Exodus, Leviticus, Deuteronomy and Hebrews to teach the significance of sacrifice in the Old Testament and its goal. The climax or apex of the system as evidenced in the book of Hebrews should be emphasized.

Practitioners believe the efficacy of the sacrificial system although it is difficult to prove to non-practitioners. The fact that people still practice it and that civilization has not stopped its practice shows how much faith people still have in sacrifice. The church should teach about the power of faith in the eternal sacrifice of Christ and its efficacious power to forgive, deliver, sanctify, redeem, save, justify, purify and reconcile those that put their faith in God. There is no dirt that the blood of Jesus Christ cannot clean.

The various types of sacrifice, the different types of animals required and the fact that special people are designated to offer certain sacrifices show its complexity and organized system. The church should emphasize the once-for-all sacrifice of Jesus Christ.

Christianity is not a complex religion, neither is the Christian concept of sacrifice a complex concept, Jesus is both the sacrificial lamb and the priest. In this once sacrifice, he sacrificed for the whole world Igala inclusive.

The Igala concept of salvation and redemption is more or less in the present. This concept can be seen in the implication of the various sacrifices and rituals in which salvation is sought in the face of existential problems. The church in Igala land needs to study the whole realm of life in Igala concept so that the Bible could be used to answer the questions Igala people are asking.

The church should teach on the achievements and blessings ascribed to mankind by the power of the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ, such as:

1. By the power of the blood, peace is made between man and God. Colossians 1:20.
2. By its power there is forgiveness of sins and eternal life for all who put their faith in the Lord Jesus. Colossians 1:14; John 6:54.
3. By the power of His blood Satan is overcome. Revelations 12:11.
4. By the power of His blood we are set free from the tyranny of an evil conscience to serve the Living God. Hebrews 9:14.
5. By its power there is continual cleansing from all sin for us. 1 John 1:7.

**S. L. POOL LIBRARY
BAPTIST SEMINARY
OGBOMOSO NIGERIA**

6. By its infinite power with God the most unworthy have liberty to enter the Holy of Holies of God's presence and live there all the day. Hebrews. 10:19.

The church must teach and explain the power of the blood of Jesus and its workings. His power breaks through all the resistance of sin, the flesh, Satan and the world. If an Igala man or any man at all anywhere on earth want to become clean from all sin, the blood of Jesus is the only remedy that can help.