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The witness of nonviolence of the church of the Brethren in Nigeria in a
violent world: Towards Ecumenical Collaboration

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**The Witness of Nonviolence of the church of the Brethren in Nigeria in a
violent world:
Towards Ecumenical Collaboration**

By/par

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List of Abbreviations

ABU	Ahmadu Bello University
BSC	Brethren Service Centre
BVS	Brethren Volunteer Service
CAMPI	Christian And Muslim Peace building Initiative
CAN	Christian Association of Nigeria
CBM	Church of the Brethren Mission
CCEPI	Centre for Caring, Empowerment and Peace Initiative
CCN	Christian Council of Nigeria
CEPAC	Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies
CEPAN	Center for Peace Advancement in Nigeria
COCIN	Church of Christ In Nations
CPFN	Christian Pentecostal Fellowship of Nigeria
CPS	Civilian Public Service
CRC	Civil Rights Commission
CSJ	Centre for Social Justice
EYN	Ekklesiyar Yan'uwa a Nigeria
FCT	Federal Capital Territory
FEC	Federal Executive Council
GCCA	Gwoza Christian Community Association
IAP	Islam in Africa Project
IPCR	Institute for Peace and Conflict Resolution
JPIC	Justice Peace and Integrity of Creation
KBC	Kulp Bible College
MCC	Mennonite Central Committee
NAPTIP	National Agency for the Protection of Trafficking in Persons
NIREC	Nigeria Inter Religious Council
NSCIA	Nigeria Supreme Council of Islamic Affairs
OAIC	Organization of African Independent Churches
PROCMURA	Project for Christian Muslim Relations in Africa
SURE-P	Subsidy Re-Investment Programme
TCNN	Theological College of Northern Nigeria
TEE	Theological Education by Extension

TEKAN Tarayyar Ekklesiyoyin Kristi A Nigeria
UCC United Church of Christ
WCC World Council of Churches
WRAPA Women Rights Advocacy Protection Agency

Introduction

One significant question which needs to be answered today is this: Are we to maintain the historic doctrines of the church, or, does God have a new Word for every age which then makes the past Word irrelevant? It is the conviction of the Brethren Revival Fellowship that to study and embrace the historic beliefs and practices of the Brethren is not an outdated exercise, but that such a study contains a major potential for renewal in the church. Our Brethren forefathers had a full understanding of the central doctrines of the Christian faith. They were open to newer understandings of thought and fuller illumination of God's Word, but they were not about to cast aside basic truths. The Brethren searched out the beliefs and practices of the First Century Christians and rediscovered a number of biblical distinctives.¹

The doctrine of non-violence in the Church of the Brethren in Nigeria and all other Historic Peace Churches to which this project attempts to look at was a product of the Brethren forefathers search and rediscovery of this biblical distinctive of non-violence and keeping strict allegiance to this principle.

If there is anything that has plagued the world today is the drumbeat of violence which is either advertently or inadvertently beaten by different faiths on the one hand. On the other hand, these faiths speak against violence in one way or the other. To say we are living in a broken World is not an over-statement. The World created by God that was very good at the beginning of creation (Gen. 1:31), has been turned into a battleground.

The World Council of Churches in 2001 launched for the period of 2001-2011 a "Decade to Overcome Violence, Churches Seeking Reconciliation and Peace," calling on Christians to further wrestle with the dilemma of violence asking the following questions: What does it mean to be the Church in the midst of violence and how can the churches help create the culture of non-violence? The mandate of the decade states, "we are convinced: A clear witness to peace and non-violence grounded in justice is what the world needs today from all churches together...As Christians, we are motivated and encouraged by the gospel message of the peace of Christ and the rich biblical tradition of peace with

¹ Herold S. Martin, *New Testament Beliefs and Practices: A Brethren Understanding*, (Elgin: Brethren Press) 1989: 9.

Justice...We want to engage in constructive efforts to build a culture of peace”² Looking at violence as a destructive culture, the document went on to say, “Decade to Overcome Violence- a call to repent for our own complicity in violence, and explore, from within our faith traditions, ways to overcome the spirit, logic and practice of violence”³ This is indeed a bold step by the World Council of Churches not only trying to overcome violence but calling on churches for self-examination and self-critiquing. This has to be seen against the background that the churches at some times in the past and present, when confronted with violence either support or legitimize it.

In talking about violence, we should note that violence is multi-dimensional and multi-faceted. Gill in looking at the theme of violence and non-violence in the contemporary times and the challenges of violence says, “prior to 1960, however, the moral dilemma of violence was considered almost exclusively in terms of international conflict between sovereign states”⁴ Today violence seems to be everywhere ranging from international conflict between sovereign states, religious conflicts, ethnic conflicts, domestic violence, racism among others, in such a violence torn world churches need to have a clear position of their responsibility.

Since its inception the Church had been faced with questions regarding war and violence and the issue of peace. Churches over the years have taken varied and various positions on this crucial issue. The Historic Peace Churches, to which the Church of the Brethren in Nigeria belongs, have a long standing tradition of pacifism and non-resistance or non-violence, while some churches adhere to the “just war theory,” and yet other churches do not have a clear cut stand.

² *DOV Pamphlet*, Geneva: WCC Publication, 2004:3.

³ (*DOV Pamphlet*, 7).

⁴ David Gill, “Violence and Non-Violence”, *Dictionary of the Ecumenical Movement*, 2nd ed. Geneva: WCC Publications, 2002, 1189-1192:1189.

Abstract

This thesis analyzes the context of non-violence using the Church of the Brethren as background for study. From the research it is discovered that the Church of the Brethren both in Nigeria and United States have experienced violence in one way or the other because of their beliefs. The Church adheres to non-violence or non-resistance referred to as pacifism as her pillar of belief. Most members of the Church of the Brethren in Nigeria were influenced by the teachings of the early missionaries with regard to pacifism. The research also discovered that to imbibe pacifism certain theories have to be studied as used by proponents of pacifism. The models used by Fernando, Childress, Hauerwas and Yoder in the area of non-violence or pacifism are adopted. Yoder's methodology is centered on Christological pacifism: he dwells on the dynamics of non-violence and principled Christian pacifism. Christians are called to a community of non-violence in a world of war thereby creating the division between Church and world. Therefore, Christian non-violence is not a strategy to end war, though of course it certainly wants to make war less likely. Rather Christians are called to non-violence in a world of war because they can do nothing less as faithful followers of Christ. This theory resonates with the teachings of the Church of the Brethren as the Church tends to take biblical injunctions given by Jesus literally especially on non-violence. The witness of non-violence by individuals as well as religious bodies has attracted global sympathy but also criticisms and sometimes outright condemnations. Another methodology that is relevant is the one used by Childress: that pacifism and just-war share a common starting point. He stresses that the duty not to kill or injure others (nonmaleficence) is a duty within each approach; a moral presumption against the use of force. Childress both highlights the point of contact between pacifism and just-war tenets and reconstructs the essential logic of the *jus ad bellum*. Childress' emphasis on the starting point is consistent with the teaching of Jesus Christ and the Church but the Church does not sanction just war. For the Church, the culture of violence has to be defeated, an ethics and culture of peace and non-violence have to be developed. And for the struggle for peace to be successful; there should be the struggle for justice because peace will be impossible without justice. Fernando Enns's methodology which centers on Messianic ethics is explored and applied.

He emphasizes on following the example of Jesus, living out – as far as possible in an imperfect world – a “messianic ethic”, of which non-violence is the key-element. He adds that, the primary mission and responsibility of the church is to live this new communion within society. The commitment to nonviolence is ultimately grounded in eschatology of trust in the victory over evil of God revealed in Jesus’ life, teachings, death, and resurrection. This methodology is generally adopted by the Historic Peace Churches in which the Church of the Brethren is one.

Motivation

This research is born out of the earnest desire to revisit one of the fundamental doctrines of the Church of the Brethren in Nigeria being one of the Historic Peace Churches. The said doctrine is that of the non-violent witness of the church. Why then this doctrine and not another? This doctrine has to do with one of the most important concerns of all humanity. It has to do with peace as the overriding socio-political issue of our time and more so in Nigeria. Peace is being sought for everyday and everywhere. However, violence seems to be everywhere and has become a daily phenomenon. Due to spontaneous eruptions of violence mostly religious in nature in Nigeria, church denominations are having questions and sometimes confusion as to how to respond to these challenges. The Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) being the largest ecumenical body in West Africa and its leadership had severally released statements, which show openly the confusion and raises questions to the churches. Some denominations in some states when confronted with what seems to be unprovoked and unending violence against the church have even been tempted to revenge or engage in reprisal attacks.

Some of the questions confronting the churches are: it is time to begin to respond to the violence against the church, how is the Church going to do it? Nonviolence is still relevant today based on the teachings of Christ. What is the church to do in applying it so that the adherents will be committed to it? What will be the response of the Church to Jesus' teaching on turning the other cheek? What does it mean to be a church in a violent context?

The questions can easily be extended. They constitute the core thrust of what motivated the researcher to revisit the history and theology of non-violence of the Church of the Brethren in a violent context, and to describe how it is embedded in the religious and socio-political landscape of Nigeria and to evaluate the impact the Church of the Brethren will bring on the future of the religious and socio-political climate in matters of peaceful coexistence.

This academic research is being done objectively and in unapologetic manner. However, the context of research is the Church of the Brethren where the researcher works as a shepherd. The Church is being exposed to, in terms of the violence and the resulting challenges. Between the inception of every scholarly work and its completion, there are countless pitfalls. This research attempts to study one of the most important tenets of the Church of the Brethren and personal experience also counts.

The researcher states a lot of painful experiences of how humans can harm other humans, in other words, how destructive and inhumane people could be. Some of these include the loss of dear members whom are taught on the goodness of God and to uphold the doctrinal teaching of the church on non-violence. The destruction of church buildings, some of which have been built as far back as the 1950s which serve as symbols of what the missionaries were to the Church of the Brethren in Nigeria, are now in ruins (EYN⁵ Church Maiduguri, Shaffa, Shindiffu, Vi, Tiraku, Ngoshe etc) is not only an eye sore but painful and sad. The church the researcher was serving as an overseer has been taking care of 10,376 internally displaced persons who have lost all their savings for life. It is estimated that there are more than 10,000 internally displaced persons in Taraba State, mostly Church of the Brethren in Nigeria members and over 20,000 in neighbouring Cameroon. Some women lost their husbands and all their children. Some children have lost both parents and as orphans without any resources encounter difficulties to pursue their educational career.

A pathetic story that has attracted global attention, sympathy, concern and prayers is the abduction of about 276 Chibok School girls. 219 of these girls are members of Church of the Brethren in Nigeria. The School was built by the Church of the Brethren Mission in 1938 and was rebuilt in 1948. They were abducted in their school hostels on 4 April 2014 by the *Boko Haram*⁶ and are still

⁵ EYN is the abbreviation of the name Ekklesiyar Yan'uwa A Nigeria which is translated in English as the Church of the Brethren in Nigeria. For the purpose of our research, we shall be using the English translation and where necessary use the Hausa. Hausa is one of the three major languages spoken in Nigeria and is the most widely spoken in the northern part of that country.

⁶ Boko Haram is the Hausa word which is translated to mean "western education is forbidden or a taboo" this name is used to refer to the Nigerian terrorist group who have the name as they address

in captivity. Public schools in Borno State have been closed for nearly a year and children could not go to school only for few parents who could afford to send their wards outside the State. The displaced persons are living in their nation but away from their ancestral homes and living only on charity. This certainly cannot leave a researcher without impact. These painful experiences have informed the researcher's sensitivity as to the manner in which some of the questions with regards to violence and how to overcome it are addressed.

The fact that this research has been conducted as a non-residential programme allowed the researcher to remain located in the context of research. However, the research at a certain time was away from the violence centre as he was in Geneva. The distance enabled the researcher to reflect more critically the life and witness of the church with regard to non-violence

Scope and Limitation of Study

The researcher will start by looking at violence from a contextual perspective then look at the Historic Peace Churches and the belief in non-violence. Then a detailed study of some selected biblical texts supporting this belief in the life of these Churches will be carried out.

A critical survey of the "Just War Theory," "Just Armed Struggle," "Pacifism," and "Conscientious Objection" will be offered. Emphasis will be on the Church of the Brethren in Nigeria and her witness of non-violence in a violence- torn Nigeria. A brief history of Nigeria and of the Church of the Brethren in Nigeria will be given. Emphasis will be laid on Nigeria as a nation bedeviled by different kinds of conflicts and violence.

This analysis will constitute the basis for suggestions towards an ethics of culture of non-violence. Areas of ecumenical collaboration between different confessional traditions and people of other faiths will be discussed. Areas to be discussed in the field of ecumenical collaboration and inter-religious dialogue will include among others, a re-orientation towards nonviolence and an ethics and culture of non-violence as a means of overcoming violence.

Research Methodology

The theme of this research merits a multifaceted approach, as the topic lays at the intersection between ethics and systematic theology. It attempts to offer both a perspective on the development of a distinct ecclesial self-understanding and its applicability in the concrete situation of Northern Nigeria. In other words, an interdisciplinary approach is adopted and this is necessitated by the nature of the problem to be studied and the variety of existing perspectives from which it has usually been studied.

The researcher uses methodologies practiced in the area of pacifism, nonviolence, nonresistance and just war. The scholars explored and adopted for this methodology are: John Howard Yoder, James Childress, Stanley Hauerwas and Fernando Enns. The area of emphasis of each scholar's methodology is presented thus; Yoder's methodology is centered on Christological pacifism: he dwells on the dynamics of nonviolence and principled Christian pacifism. Christians are called to a community of nonviolence in a world of war thereby creating the division between Church and world. Therefore, Christian nonviolence is not a strategy to end war, though of course it certainly wants to make war less likely. Rather Christians are called to nonviolence in a world of war because they can do nothing less as faithful followers of Christ. Another methodology that is relevant is the one used by Childress: that pacifism and just-war share a common starting point. He stresses that the duty not to kill or injure others (nonmaleficence) is a duty within each approach; a moral presumption against the use of force. Childress both highlights the point of contact between pacifism and just-war tenets and reconstructs the essential logic of the *jus ad bellum*. Fernando Enns's methodology which centres on Messianic ethic is explored and applied. He emphasizes on following the example of Jesus, living out – as far as possible in an imperfect world – a "messianic ethic", of which nonviolence is the key-element. He adds that, the primary mission and responsibility of the church is to live this new communion within society. The commitment to nonviolence is ultimately grounded in eschatology of trust in the victory over evil of God revealed in Jesus' life, teachings, death, and resurrection.

Key Definitions

The definition of conflict given by Tink could be relevant for overall discussion. In his words, "conflict is the state of dispute, disagreement, or open clash between opposing groups or individuals, ideas or interests. It may suggest antagonism or opposition even to the point of hostility and violence. War itself is often referred to as 'armed conflict.'"⁷ This is broad a definition as conflict though having the potential of turning violent it does not necessarily suggest violence when it is managed. Violence is more of a result of unmanaged conflict or poorly handled conflict. This is why we speak of conflict management, conflict resolution or conflict transformation. M. Chave-Jones Stated that conflicts in interpersonal relationship is inevitable and defines conflicts thus, "Conflict exists in group situations and institutions where different factions have differing interests which are in deep opposition to one another. If each party fears that it may lose something that is vital to its cause in the antipathetic struggle, there is probably little room for negotiation or fair bargaining."⁸ This definition shows to us and true to it that conflicts are part and parcel of any group of people, but how the conflict is managed matters most.

The Merriam-Webster Dictionary, an Encyclopaedia Britannica Company defines "riot" in relation to group of people thus, "to behave in a violent and uncontrolled way, to indulge in revelry or wantonness." The full definition goes thus, "profligate behavior, unrestrained revelry, noise, uproar, or disturbance made by revelers, public violence, tumult, or disorder. A violent public disorder; specifically: a tumultuous disturbance of the public peace by three or more persons assembled together and acting with a common intent." From the above definition we could see the word violence and disturbing public peace coming out. However in the Nigerian context sometimes when the media uses the word riot, one could hardly place a finger on the common intent of the rioters.

Massacre is defined by the Merriam-Webster Dictionary to mean, "The act or instance of killing a number of usually helpless or unresisting human beings under circumstances of atrocity or cruelty."

⁷ Fletcher L. Tink, "Conflict" in *Dictionary of Scripture and Ethics*, ed., Joel B. Green, (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic), 2011:163-165:163.

⁸ M. Chave-Jones, "Conflict" in *New Dictionary of Christian Ethics and Pastoral Theology* ed, David J Atkinson and David H Field, (England: InterVarsity Press), 1995:249-250:249.

The BBC English Dictionary defines the above words thus: "riot" this way, "When there is a riot, a crowd of people behave violently in a public Place." Violence means, "Behaviour which is intended to hurt, injure, or kill people." Crisis is thus, "a serious or dangerous situation which could cause great hardship or death... is also a situation where a conflict has become so threatening or dangerous that people are afraid there will be fighting or war." Killings, "when someone or something kills a person, animal or plant, they cause the person, animal or plant to die." Destruction, "to destroy something means to damage it so much that it is completely ruined or ceases to exist," and massacre, "is the killing of many people in a violent or cruel way. "We could see from the above simple and single dictionary definitions, the words are not supposed to be used interchangeably as each of the words has varied meanings as seen above.

CHAPTER ONE

- 1.0 The Church of the Brethren in Nigeria and its witness of non-violence
- 1.1 Church of the Brethren in Nigeria
- 1.2 Nigerian Brethren and Pacifism
- 1.3 Nigerian Brethren and Reconciliation
- 1.4 Nigerian Brethren and Non-violence

1.0 The Church of the Brethren in Nigeria and its witness of non-violence

In this chapter, the Church of the Brethren in Nigeria, its establishment, growth, theological and ecclesiological particularities are explored.

It is important at this point to raise some fundamental questions regarding the Church of the Brethren. Who are the Nigerian Brethren? When did they come into existence? What is their approximate population? In which part of Nigeria are they predominant? And which challenges are they facing? Answering these questions will in no small measure help put the research in proper perspectives.

The Church of the Brethren in Nigeria is generally known in Hausa language, one of the native languages spoken in Nigeria, by the name *Ekklesiyar Yan'uwa A Nigeria* which is translated Church of the Brethren in Nigeria. As much as there had always been an attempt by members of the Brethren Evangelism Support Trust (BEST) and those who share their views to use the English name over and above the Hausa name, the Hausa word '*yan'uwa*' carries more weight and meaning than the English word Brethren. The English word Brethren is more masculine than inclusive, though it may be argued that it implies women are inclusive. However, the Hausa word '*yan'uwa*' besides carrying the meaning of blood relations, it is inclusive in meaning. Against this background, why then the insistence to the desire to abandon the Hausa name and taking the English one which is unarguably limited? The answer has to do with the current spread of the church beyond the Hausa speaking communities. Hausa is predominantly spoken in Northern Nigeria where the Church of the Brethren is located. But the Church has expanded to other parts of Nigeria that do not speak Hausa. For every member to feel accepted as part of the Church it is significant to use English name which is all

encompassing. Worthy of note also is the fact that the Church of the Brethren has spread to other countries in Africa namely Cameroon, Chad Republic, Niger Republic and Togo. However, the *lingua franca* in those countries is French and obviously the problem remains in both English and French.

There are three important points to note on the Hausa name of the Church, *Ekklesiyar Yan'uwuwa A Nigeria*. First as we said, the Hausa translation of the name "Church of the Brethren in Nigeria" is more inclusive than English. It should be noted that inclusiveness is not a feature as such of ecumenism, rather is the result of a theological analysis which reposes on the biblical message of the createdness of humankind (men and women) in the image and likeness of God.

Furthermore, even outside the church, there is now the urge to be more inclusive as there were many professions hitherto that seem to be an exclusive possession of a particular gender. In African politics for instance, many people hold fast to the opinion that it constitutes a domain which belongs to men folks alone. To further stress the above point that even outside the Church there is now the clamour towards inclusivity. The third importance of the Hausa name is that it is a sign of inculturation making the Church of the Brethren in Nigeria a bridge to the Hausa speaking people in Nigeria. The Hausa speaking people in Nigeria being the largest peoples group in the northern part of Nigeria and have a very few number of Christians; do require a church denomination having a name in their mother tongue which makes them feel at home. The Hausa name also facilitates the appropriation of the core values of the Church of the Brethren which is inclusive community. This also resonates with the Gospel message. To prove this point, some of the Hausa people who converted to Christianity and worship at *Ekklesiyar Yan'uwuwa A Nigeria* feel as part of the family.

1.1 Church of the Brethren in Nigeria

Who are the Nigeria Brethren? The word "Brethren"⁹ in the NT was used to designate all believers in Jesus Christ and over the time in the course of the history of Christianity.

⁹ In John 20:17, Jesus Himself said to Mary Magdalene to go to 'my brethren,' and in verse 18 we see Mary went to the 'Disciples.' A similar view is seen in Matthew 28:10 & 16 where Jesus used the word

The Church of the Brethren in Nigeria was founded by the missionaries of the Church of the Brethren, USA, in March 1923. The Church started as a Church for the rural and neglected *Bura*¹⁰ people of the Western Borno Empire. The researcher gives a general overview of the church's history, its growth, socio-ethnic composition and contextual uniqueness.

These questions will give clarity about the Church of the Brethren in Nigeria: What is its distinctiveness? Was it at any time confronted with violence? If yes how has it responded? The Church of the Brethren in Nigeria is a mission branch of the Church of the Brethren in the United States of America. It is interesting to note that Church of the Brethren in Nigeria was first called *Lardin Gabas*. Faw, as Morse comments "To be quite literal, the words *Lardin Gabas* are the Hausa words for eastern district, and they refer specifically to the Eastern District Church of Christ in the Sudan, one of the churches associated with the Fellowship of Churches of Christ in the Sudan."¹¹ Worthy of mention is the fact that one cannot locate *Lardin Gabas* on any Nigerian map, but it refers to the Church of the Brethren in Nigeria and covers parts of the three provinces of Nigeria's Northeastern States.

At that early stage when the Church of the Brethren in Nigeria was known as *Lardin Gabas*, it was also called Church of the Brethren Mission (CBM). Over times, the acronym CBM was used to mean Chibok, Bura Marghi in a derogatory manner. Those were three tribes within which the Church of the Brethren missionaries had first contacts. However, many members of the church had felt either left out or sidelined by such acronym. Church of the Brethren in Nigeria is made of many ethnic nationalities and using such description has lots of negative implications.

The researcher discusses the Church of the Brethren in the United States and their response to the Gospel needs of the sisters and brothers in Nigeria. Hackman offers the following overview, "In the early 1900's, news reached the churches in America that

brethren for the disciples. Jesus had earlier on addressed his followers that, 'you are all brothers' Matthew 23:1-8. In Acts 1:15-26 we had Peter speaking before 120 brethren, and in I Corinthians 15:6 Jesus appeared to 500 brethren at one time.

¹⁰ Bura is a language and also refers to the people who speak the language. Bura is one of the over 250 ethnic groups in Nigeria. Other documents could write it Babur Bura or Pabur (Pabir) Bura or Pabur (Pabir) Thlali. However, Babur or Pabir are people who have different dialect and are more of the ruling class than the Bura.

¹¹ Chalmer E. Faw and Kenneth I Morse, "Introduction" in *Lardin Gabas: A Land, A People, A Church*, (Elgin Ill.: The Brethren Press), 1973:5.

many places in Africa did not yet hear about the Gospel. In southern Nigeria the evangelization was successfully started in the 1800s. However, very little was done in northern Nigeria. Therefore, there was no Gospel and no churches in northern Nigeria. Christians in America thought about this information and asked themselves whether it was God's will to go and bring the Gospel to northern Nigeria."¹²

It was in response to that need, that in October 1922 Mr. Harold Stover Kulp and his friend Albert Helser were sent by the Church of the Brethren in the United States on trial mission in western Borno among the *Bura* people. Gwama describes,

EYN or the Church of the Brethren in Nigeria has about 160,000 members, organized in 44 District Church Councils, 402 Local congregations, and over 1000 Local Church branches...Part of what is now the EYN was founded by other mission bodies. Ashland Brethren came to Mbororo-Michika area in the early 1950s and later joined with the Church of the Brethren (COB) in Nigeria. Basel Mission started work in Gavva-Ngoshe area in 1959 by sending Rev. Werner Schoni from Switzerland. They joined COB in 1964.¹³

The above estimated number of members by Gwama was reported in 2001. The current estimated membership of the Church of the Brethren in Nigeria stands at over 1,500,000 communicant members with roughly over 4.5 million non-communicant members, children and those who come to worship. It is important to mention that in the Church of the Brethren, children and those that are not baptized are not regarded as communicant members. However, they attain in many local congregations more than twice the number of communicant members in most local congregations. The Church of the Brethren in Nigeria is mainly located in the northern part of Nigeria and is organized into 52 District Church Councils, (467) local congregations and about 1700 local church branches and mission fields.

The Church has a total of 714 ordained pastors with about 1700 lay leaders. The Mission body has been working in West Africa especially in Ghana and Cameroon. Faw remarks on the Basel mission work in the sub-region:

¹² Galen R Hackman, *Introduction to Brethren History*, (Mubi: TEE College) 1992:98.

¹³ Filibus Gwama, in *Seeking Peace in Africa Stories from African Peacemakers*, (Telford, PA: Cascadia Publishing House), 2007, 54-60:54.

Their work in Gavva, in the borderlands of Northern Cameroon and Nigeria, was begun in 1959 as an extension of the work in Southern Cameroons. Then when this area became part of Nigeria by plebiscite, the Mission looked for some Nigerian church with which to affiliate. They eventually chose Lardin Gabas, though there was a geographical gap of some forty-five miles between their nearest respective outposts and another mission territory was interposed.¹⁴

The other mission territory interposed between the nearest respective outposts of the Lardin Gabas and Basel Mission¹⁵ was the one in which the Church of Christ in Nigeria (COCIN), now Church of Christ in Nations, came into existence

We will now briefly embark on discussing the Brethren family tree, with the objective to offer an overview on the broad taxonomy, after which we will discuss the beliefs and practices. The Church of the Brethren USA, the founding father or mother of the Church of the Brethren in Nigeria, has its origins in Schwarzenau, Germany, when in 1708 eight persons received believer's baptism by triune immersion at Eder River. Alexander Mark soon became the leader. Church History reveals to us that at that time in the life of the Church, adult baptism was prohibited and could attract persecution. This was against the background that all Christians must have been baptized as infants hence the name 'Anabaptists' have given to churches, which decided to introduce adult baptism, meaning "baptized again." There had been several debates in Switzerland among the early reformers, particularly Zwingli and the Pietists, on several dogmatic issues, among which was infant baptism. When the founders of the Church of the Brethren decided to continue with the practice of adult baptism, in accordance with the position they deemed supported by the Scriptures, they did that in full awareness of possible consecutive persecution. Due to the persecution by other fellow Christians they migrated to America in search of religious freedom and settled in Pennsylvania. Right from the outset the church laid a strong emphasis on peace and non-violence, based on a literal biblical interpretation and in following the Pietistic tradition. This emphasis had led to the labeling of the church as one of the Historic Peace Churches

¹⁴ Chalmer E. Faw, "The Emergent Church," in *Lardin Gabas: A Land, A People, A Church*, (Elgin Ill.: The Brethren Press), 1973:93.

¹⁵ Basel Mission was and still is an ecumenical venture of Lutheran and Reformed Churches and missionary agencies (bodies). We could obviously notice from this that the churches founded by Mission 21 did not have the Brethren heritage nor do they have the same doctrine as the Church of the Brethren. This means for these two distinct bodies to be one district, one body, one denomination, they entered into agreement with some give and take.

However, the church suffered a great division, which is one of the darkest moments in the history and life of the church. The division came as a result of "controversy over change and acculturation led to the division that produced the Old German Baptist Brethren (1881), several related Old Order Fellowships (1913, 1921, 1939), the Brethren Church (1883), and the Dunkard Brethren (1926)"¹⁶ The Church of the Brethren is the largest of all. We also distinguish the Fellowship of Grace Brethren Churches, which broke away from the Brethren Church in 1939, as well as other smaller Brethren Fellowships. In the South Eastern part of Nigeria, we have the Church of the Brethren, which has no affiliation with the *Ekklesiyar Yanúwa A Nigeria*.

Some of the prominent tenets of the Church of the Brethren are: Adult (believers) baptism by triune immersion, the historic Brethren Love Feast (with feet washing, fellowship meal, and bread and cup), rejection of war through teaching of peace and pacifism, conscientious objection and non-violence. Brethren also emphasize carrying the cross, non-conformity, simple life, holy kiss, wearing of special garb, Christian speech without oath taking, priesthood of all believers and they are non creedal. These heritages undoubtedly helped the Church of the Brethren missionaries in their missionary endeavours. This was obvious in the way the missionaries related with their host communities, their humility demonstrated in learning the Bura, Marghi, Chibok and Higgi languages, their house to house evangelism, their health care to mention some few.

The Church of the Brethren emphasizes adult (believers) baptism. At the beginning, the church opposed infant baptism which was the practice of most churches. At that time, the Churches that performed infant baptism were the majority. In Nigeria, since among the Christian population, Roman Catholic still has more members followed by the reformed. Infant baptism is still practiced in most churches than adult baptism. But the Church of the Brethren was influenced by the Anabaptist and pietist tradition, so does not practice infant baptism. According to the church's baptismal teaching, a person has to reach the age of knowing, not only good and evil, but to be mature enough to understand, believe and accept the Gospel teaching before he or she is

¹⁶ Mildred Etter Heckert, "Church of the Brethren," *Brethren Encyclopedia*, (Philadelphia, PA, and Oak Brook, IL: The Brethren Encyclopedia, 1983), 298-305:298.

baptized. Hence at the beginning of the church in 1708 and the years that followed, all members were re-baptized since most if not all of them were baptized as infants in their churches before deciding to join the new movement. It was later that Church of the Brethren engaged in theological debate that led to acceptance of members without rebaptizing them. The church believed in one baptism and one Spirit as taught by the Scriptures.

Baptism by trine immersion has been one of the causes of division amongst the early brethren. Trine immersion adopted by the Church of the Brethren is the one that a person is immersed thrice under the water each at the mention of the name of the triune God (God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit). Some of the other branches of the Brethren that broke away had the mention of the triune God but immersing the person once under the water. The Church of the Brethren rejected baptism by sprinkling saying that the Greek word *baptizo* (baptism) literally means 'to immerse' or 'dip'. Because of this literal understanding and mode of baptism, the Church of the Brethren was persecuted by the Lutheran and Reformed churches.

When one is baptized, he or she is allowed to partake in three things: feet washing, fellowship meal and communion of cup and bread. The Historic Brethren Love Feast is the observance of Feet washing where each baptized member washes the feet of another member as Jesus did during the Last Supper (John 13). The feet washing mode adopted by the Church of the Brethren in Nigeria is the one called single feet washing where each baptized member washes the feet of another. The double feet washing is the mode where one baptized member washes the feet of all. The Church of the Brethren tries to apply in a literal manner the teachings of Jesus Christ in their lives and practice. The church puts emphasis on the New Testament teachings as it believes that "No Creed but the New Testament." This does not mean that the church is not using the Old Testament. The emphasis on the New Testament by the Church of the Brethren has an impact on its ecclesial self-understanding. This is evident on the emphasis put on the ritual of feet-washing.

The feet-washing is followed by eating the fellowship meal where all brothers and sisters eat together. This too was taken after the example Jesus laid down to his Disciples in John 13. Each baptized member comes with her or his meal from the

house and is eaten by all. After the fellowship meal the Holy Communion is celebrated where Brethren partake of the bread and the cup. The Brethren neither believe in transubstantiation nor in contra-substantiation. They believe the bread and cup are but symbols of the body and blood of Jesus Christ. Brethren are not comfortable with the word Sacrament when they refer to the Holy Communion; they prefer to call it ordinance. By ordinance the Brethren mean, "a) any practice commanded in the New Testament, b) which uses an outward sign to symbolize an important spiritual principle, and c) is to be practiced by all Christians."¹⁷

The Brethren believe and teach that all war is evil, and are against war even as last option. The Brethren are pacifists and emphasize peace. At the beginning of the church many were conscientious objectors, who refused to participate in war even as non-combatants. The Brethren teach non-conformity deriving it from the words of St Paul, "*Do not be conformed to this world but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that you may prove what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect*" (Romans 12:2). They also emphasize simple life, which can for instance be seen in their dress code. By simple life they mean, a Christian is expected to dress moderately and not too gorgeous. They reject oath taking, this is also from the words of Jesus which says,

Again you have heard that it was said to the men of old, 'You shall not swear falsely, but shall perform to the Lord what you have sworn.' But I say to you, Do not swear at all, either by heaven, for it is the throne of God, or by earth, for it is his footstool, or by Jerusalem...Let what you say be simply 'Yes' or 'No'; anything more than this comes from evil. (Matthew 5:33-37).

Strongly rooted in this biblical tradition and strictly following this as a rule Brethren will only answer a question by simply 'yes' or 'no' even at the law courts.

The Brethren frequently state: "No Creed but the New Testament" making them non-creedal. Although this phrase has been misunderstood by many Christians from different confessional backgrounds to seeing the Brethren as those who rejected the Old Testament and do not accept the statements of the creeds. This is not so, they accept the statements of the creeds but refuse to adopt any one creed as the law for their Church. Hackman says, "When the Brethren say 'No Creed but the New

¹⁷ Hackman, *Brethren Beliefs and Practices*, p. 45.

Testament' they are not rejecting the Old Testament, but recognizing that the New Testament is God's covenant with the Christians and is more important for establishing Christian beliefs and practices."¹⁸ The Church of the Brethren emphasizes the whole of the New Testament saying, adopting the Creed is limiting what we as followers of Christ are expected to practice. This position has lots of consequences on the way Brethren seek to live out their faith. Such consequences could be noticed in the way their Church Buildings are, which they call Meeting House as the Church is the individual believer himself/herself. There are no candles, the use of holy water is not seen, the Pulpit is higher and the Holy Communion table does not take the centre stage. The emphasis on the Priesthood of all believers is another consequence resulting into preaching done by both the laity and the clergy.

Before discussing the uniqueness and distinctive of the Church of the Brethren in Nigeria, let us first study the history of the Church of the Brethren in Nigeria. Unlike other parts of Africa, and Nigeria in particular, where at times the colonial masters supported and assisted the missionaries in spreading Christianity or the Gospel, while at other times they supported and assisted Islam. In the case of the Church of the Brethren missionaries, their coming to Biu was opposed both by the colonial masters as well as by the native chief.

The situation faced by the Church of the Brethren Missionaries of opposition from both the colonial masters in Biu and the native chief affected them. The early missionaries and native church leaders were Durnbaugh, Ronk, Faw, Hackman, Bugu, Gwama, Musa among others. These missionaries and native leaders of Church of the Brethren were great historians of the Church. Hackman wrote two important books; one on the History of the Church of the Brethren and the other, Beliefs and Practices of the Church of the Brethren. Hackman says about the opposition experienced by the early missionaries.

From the time Helsler and Kulp first arrived in Biu, two people opposed their coming. One of them was the Emir of Biu, who was a Muslim. He did not like missionaries arrive in Biu. The other man was a British District Officer. He was on the side of the Emir because he thought the coming of the missionaries will cause

¹⁸ Ibid. p 17.

*problems for the Muslims. This would be against the British policy of 'Indirect Rule' in Nigeria*¹⁹

Stover Kulp one of the two pioneering Church of the Brethren missionaries to arrive Nigeria who also became the leader wrote this in his diary,

*It happened that the Resident, although an able administrator, belonged to the group who opposed missions on the grounds of policy. That is, he favoured all people coming under the Moslem Emir and felt that the coming of Christian missions was not at that time a desirable step in the development of the country. He took the objection of the local chief at Biu as a sufficient reason for advising against our application's being granted. We had, however, the written statement of the Governor that it was not the government policy to prohibit missions even though the paramount chief was a Moslem if the mass of the people was still pagan.*²⁰

Through the Indirect Rule, the British imposed Muslims as rulers over non-Muslims. This was against the background that, Borno was the first area to accept Islamic religion in Nigeria. Historically Borno Empire accepted Islam since the 11th century and has been regarded as an Islamic Empire but that was majorly the northern part as the southern parts were predominantly traditional religious worshippers with the exception of the Biu Empire which has embraced Islam. Bugu says,

*Before the coming of the British, the Borno Empire had existed for many years as the main power in the area. Through Jihad, the Islamic holy war, they had expanded Islam to a radius of more than a hundred miles. Those who rejected Islam but wanted to remain on their lands were enslaved by the Moslems. Those who objected to being slaves to the Moslems fled into the mountains and remained there until the coming of the British government, which imposed conditions that forced the Moslems to maintain peace and order.*²¹

It is equally a historical fact that the British officers in Borno and the Muslim leaders deliberately created tensions among the non-Muslim tribes whom they considered to be difficult to rule and control with the sole aim of "divide and rule". Gwama has analyzed the historical situation as he says, "They (British and Muslim leaders) would create problems

¹⁹ Hackmann, *Introduction to Brethren History*, p. 147.

²⁰ Mary Ann Moyer Kulp, *No Longer Strangers: A Biography of H. Stover Kulp*, (Elgin ILL.: The Brethren Press), 1968:70.

²¹ Patrick K. Bugu, "Reconciliation or Pacifism?" *Seeking Cultures of Peace*, (Pennsylvania: Cascadia Publishing House), 124-131:127.

between these tribes, which often would push them into war with one another, until both tribes became weak. Then the Muslims with their British allies would intervene and take control of both tribes. This was the situation in which the first Church of the Brethren missionaries found themselves."²²

Before the arrival of the British, rivalries and constant hostilities among the people have existed. Sawa says,

Before the coming of the British, however, native authorities were not able to prevent or stop local hostilities and inter-tribal skirmishes which persisted as a constant threat to many human lives. Village communities lived in constant fears of impending invasions by rival groups. The kingdom of Bornu to the north of the Lardin Gabas area had been a constant menace through the centuries, and in the late eighteen hundreds the Fulani from Adama infiltrated from the south. Such a state of insecurity, plus minor harassments even where no invasion was threatened, caused a basic unrest and slowed down the rate of economic development over the whole area.²³

It took the missionaries great patience, persistence, and the intervention of the Lagos Commissioner to be allowed to start work in Garkida, not Biu. Garkida was known as a place for venomous snakes, scorpions and other dangerous animals. The word *Garkida* was initially two words in Bura, *Gar* and *Kidda* literally meaning mountain of bamboo, a village forty miles about sixty-four kilometers southeast of Biu, on the east bank of Hawul River.

The missionaries held their first worship service at *Garkida* under a Tamarind tree on 17th March 1923. This date was held by the missionaries as the founding date of the Church of the Brethren in Nigeria and is now celebrated as the Founder's Day. Although that date was regarded as the Founders' Day, there were no converts at that time. The service was attended by Kulp and Helser with their local collaborators a Muslim called Shehu and John who attended a Mission School at Zaria, who was interested in Christianity, but was not a convert, and Garba who was a Christian convert though not through the activities of the Church of the Brethren missionaries. On the 21st of January 1923 being Sunday, while still

²² Gwama, Op. Cit., 55.

²³ Bitrus P Sawa, "Agents of Change" *Lardin Gabas: A Land, A People, A Church*, (Elgin Ill.: The Brethren Press), 1973:76.

in Jos on their way to their mission station, the missionaries along with their collaborators had worship service where they read the second chapter of the Gospel of Luke. However, that day was not regarded as the Founders' Day because they have not yet reached their destination, hence the consideration of 17th March 1923 as the Founders' Day.

However, soon after that success, the continuation of the missionary work was jeopardized. Ronk records this, "Before 1923 was over, the missionaries received an order from the Lt. Governor advising them that they would not be permitted to stay in *Garkida*. No reason was given, but the District Officer of Biu Division requested that the Native Authority collect 150 native carriers to transport all mission belongings to Bauchi."²⁴ In 1924 the missionaries had to overcome another obstacle, when the colonial government changed the border between Adamawa and Borno and *Garkida* was no longer among the *Bura* people. This led them move to the *Marghi* people in *Dille* and later moved to Lassa after staying for one year at *Dille* due to water scarcity.

The missionaries started their work by learning the language, culture and religion of the Bura people. A year after they arrived in Nigeria, on 9th December 1923, Kulp preached his first sermon in Bura. Their work involved four major areas: The first was preaching the Gospel and the Christian life and in building worship places to preach and teach Sunday school classes. The second area was teaching, reading and writing in the missionary schools. Where ever they built a worship place they also built a school. The third area was healing. They treated the sick by giving them medicine and building small hospitals where those who were seriously sick were admitted. The leprosarium was the biggest hospital built by the missionaries and still serves Nigerian people. Today, however, the leprosarium is more a research hospital. The fourth is agriculture where the people were taught improved ways of farming. This is the holistic Gospel, where the whole person with his/her spiritual as well as physical needs is addressed. It is not incorrect to say that the diaconal commitment of the missionaries reposes on a specific understanding and interpretation of the Gospel. The words of Jesus in Matthew 25:35-36 is taken seriously by the Church of the Brethren where Jesus will be asking those on the right hand side of God of how they took care of his basic needs while here on earth. The Epistle of James 2:15-17 has great impact on the lives of the missionaries. Kulp was trekking to rural areas for

²⁴ Albert T. Ronk, *History of Brethren Missionary Movements*, (Ohio: Brethren Publishing Company, 1971), 108.

extended visits of people. Hackman offers a vivid description of the activities of Kulp when he states,

During the day he taught classes for children in reading and writing. After the classes, Mr. Kulp gave advice and medicine to the people who are sick. Those with serious health problems were sent to the small hospital in Garkida. Every afternoon Mr. Kulp taught the people stories from the Bible. He showed them the love of God. He explained to them how Jesus came into this world to bring salvation for the whole creation. In Mr. Kulp's visit to villages you can see all three areas of the mission work.²⁵

Kulp and Helser faced numerous challenges as the pioneer missionaries. One of the challenges was putting the Bura language into a written form which hitherto did not exist, except the brief Bura grammar compiled by the government clerk. Stover described their early efforts this way,

The first task is to master the language....The second is to decide how the writing is to be done. What shall the alphabet be? A very simple rule has been followed in the past by those at work on African languages. The rule is this: Give the vowels the Italian pronunciation and the consonants their English values ... but it is too simple. There are many consonant sounds that have no English equivalents and there are many vowels that lie between the Italian values. We have to invent certain combinations which are approximately representations of the sounds or we may arbitrarily decide that one of our superfluous English consonants shall represent a certain sound. At the best because our system is so simple certain words differing slightly in sounds are written the same way, although they may have a world of difference in meaning. For instance, in Bura there are two both spelled kila. If the i has a certain value the word means to grow. Give the i another slightly different value and it means dog. So a missionary wishing to complement a mother on the growth of her fine baby might quite unwittingly say something that sounds to the mother like calling her child a dog).²⁶

The Bura word 'kila' does have a third meaning when the letter i between k and l is given a different value it can mean boundary. Another word with difference in meaning depending on the value given to certain letter is 'sili' could mean 'foot' give the 'i' another value and it means 'shame.' There are indeed several words in Bura that have such

²⁵ Hackman, op. cit., 150.

²⁶ Kulp, *No Longer Strangers*, p. 89.

differing meaning and it was difficult for the missionaries to reduce the language into writing.

The Bible School started by the missionaries had and still has agriculture as a main course of study. Some decades ago, when evangelists and pastors graduate, they were given ploughs and cows which they were expected to pay back after some years and the monies revolve. That gesture was not limited to the Bible School graduates, but extended to members of the Local Churches, who have been identified to be doing well in farming and are people of integrity. However, lack of faithfulness by some of the evangelists and members alike led to the suspension of that practice. The original idea was that the evangelists and members would not have to depend on anybody for survival, but also to teach their communities on how they could best improve their food supply and guarantee food security. This was also as a result of the emphasis on the New Testament by the Brethren which looked at the life of St Paul as a tentmaker who does not depend on people for his needs as a missionary (Acts 18:1-5).

The missionaries did a contextual mission work. The way they lived their faith illustrated to the people what Christianity is about. The words of one of the earliest converts by name Mr. Risku attests to the above fact when he was interviewed as to his memory of his contact with the missionaries. He said, "But mine was different. I was a Moslem. I knew Islamic teaching of God and could read the Koran in Arabic. Most important for me, they practiced what they told us. They did not abuse us, or chase women and children away. They loved us all and accepted us. That's what convinced me."²⁷ Their hospitality to the sick and those in rural areas showed their caring nature. They succeeded in reconciling most of the warring tribes, this showed their peace making and reconciliation witness. Prior to the coming of the missionaries, there were generally skirmishes and rivalries amongst the tribes as stated earlier. The Baburs (also spelled Paburs, or Pabirs) and the Buras for example have had an unhealthy relationship before the advent of the missionaries. The Baburs (Paburs or Pabirs) were the ruling class and had always loaded it over the Buras. Those among the Buras who struggled for their liberation suffered greatly in the hands of the Baburs (Paburs, Pabirs). Some were killed or made slaves for their inability and in some cases outright refusals to pay tax to the emirate council. In village

²⁷ Faw, *Lardin Gabas*, p. 123.

squares, beautiful Bura girls have to be hindered by parents or relations from attending gatherings or else they would end up being forced to marry the emir or any Babur (Pabur, Pabir) man. Even among the Buras themselves, relationships between clans sometimes can be full of suspicion and hatred. When one man from a certain clan snatches a married woman belonging to a man from another clan, enmity is created which revenge is to be carried out by the cheated clan when peace and reconciliation is not properly done. The revenge is usually by shooting the offender with an arrow though an arrow without poison so that he may not die but suffer. When the emir calls on a village, the Buras in that village would be forced to bring the needed chickens and provide the meals the emir and his entourage was to eat and a family would be mandated to take care of the emir's horses. This is just but one historical narrative of how the relationships among two out of the many ethnic groups to which the early Brethren missionaries worked and brought peace and reconciliation. From this historical perspectives of the missionary period we could see the witness of peace and reconciliation was formative for the EYN witness of peace and reconciliation. It is stated here that during the missionary era, there was no discussion on human rights as the modern mind would like to see. This is one of the Brethren heritages and Gwama relates to that in the following,

They demonstrated practically what it meant to be a Christian to such an extent that even those who once hated them, like the Emir of Biu, later regretted their hatred and eventually pressed to have the Brethren Schools built at Waka, not far from his house. Some Muslims even sent their children to learn from the missionaries. What was even more amazing was the recognition of the Kulp Bible School by the Emir of Yola. For many years and to this day, the Lamido of Adamawa has a high respect for the Church of the Brethren in Nigeria. During the time of the early missionaries, the Emir came to Kulp Bible School to inspect the farms and to visit the missionaries. The Emir trusted the missionaries completely.²⁸

As a result of this recognition, trust and societal integration of the missionaries by the emir, he made a powerful statement during the dedication of Kulp Bible School (KBS) now Kulp Bible College (KBC). Kulp Bible School as it was then called was an Institution that the Church named after H. Stover Kulp as a mark of honour and remembrance for his immense contribution to the growth of EYN and by extension the contribution he made

²⁸ Gwama, Op. Cit., 57.

towards the education and wellbeing of the people of Nigeria. Part of the Lamido of Adamawa's speech goes thus,

Today people have gathered for the purpose of opening a school which surpasses any in value because it is unique in that its purpose is to serve the Lord. This school has also been named after a well known person of the Church of the Brethren Mission. Dr. Kulp... has done more than anyone else for the education and health services for the people of Adamawa. For this reason I hope that this school will be long-lived among schools as has the famous Dr. Kulp lived long among the people here.²⁹

What is the uniqueness and particularity of Nigerian Brethren? Are the Nigerian Brethren a replica of the Church of the Brethren in the United States? The researcher presents and analyzes points of convergence and divergence between the Nigerian Church of the Brethren and the mother Church of the Brethren in the United States.

As to convergences, the Nigerian Brethren observe the historic (traditional) Love Feast with feet-washing, fellowship meal, and bread and cup. The Nigerian Brethren also practice adult or believers baptism by triune immersion. The Nigerian Brethren as their founding fathers emphasize simple life, tolerance for others, brotherly love and practical Christian living.

Although the Church of the Brethren is part of the Anabaptist tradition, the founding fathers and mothers were all re-baptized as infants. The Nigerian Brethren like Church of the Brethren in the USA did not insist on re-baptizing those who were baptized as infants from other churches when they decided to join the Brethren. Three things interplay in this, first is the challenge of ecumenism leading to the slight theological change in the interpretation of baptism in Christ once for all. Among the Conservative Brethren however, they could still demand and insist on re-baptism of those baptized as infants. Second, the Church of the Brethren in Nigeria takes the issue of the unity of the body of Christ so seriously and not de-emphasizing the differences while emphasizing the areas of agreement with other denominations and ecclesial bodies. And thirdly, the doctrinal debates are not as it used to be. Since the introduction of Pentecostalism in the religious

²⁹ Kulp, *No Longer Strangers*, p. 165.

arena had shifted lots of attention to the gifts of the Holy Spirit with emphasis on miracles and the prosperity gospel and not much emphasis is put on the baptism debate.

This research also analyzed the Nigerian Brethren uniqueness and particularities. Lots of Nigerian Brethren theologians and some missionaries as Bugu, Gwama, Mambula, Faw, contend that the Brethren missionaries did not teach their Nigerian converts some salient components pertaining to the heritage of the Church of the Brethren. The Brethren in Nigeria, in their mind, were not taught the heritage of peace and pacifism, neither were they taught non-violent resistance, conscientious objection, and wearing of special garb. In fact, even at the present moment, peace theology is not part of any curriculum of the seven EYN Bible College and Schools with the exception of KBC where peace theology was introduced lately. The reasons for adopting such position is discussed and analyzed by asking the following questions; Are the Nigerian Brethren pacifists or not? Do they practice conscientious objection or not? What then is their understanding of peace? How then can they be a peace church without being pacifists? Can it be verified that the missionaries refused to teach fundamental beliefs and practices, and if so what are the underlying reasons?

The observation that Brethren missionaries did not teach Nigerian Brethren on peace and pacifism impinge directly upon our theme, and therefore attempt to proffer solutions to the questions raised in a systematic way. Failure to exhaustively address such questions will eventually negate this research.

The missionaries were ardent believers in all the heritages of the Church of the Brethren, Kulp and many of the missionaries were at one time conscientious objectors and therefore pacifists. Kulp offers this biographical statement on Stover:

In college during the First World War, Stover was differed from military service because of his registration as a minister. He had taken a position of Conscientious Objector, reflecting the historic tradition of the Church of the Brethren. Although not able to bear arms, he felt a very deep concern for the portion of mankind which was suffering as a result of the conflict and he directed his energy toward its relief. He was a member of the group who proposed that their class forego publishing a class annual in 1918, the sum saved was sent for war relief projects. And he was one of the two

students who went without class ring so that the money they would have cost could be given to relief or to missions.³⁰

It is evident that Stover being one of the two pioneer missionaries emphasized the Brethren heritage. As to why they did not teach those tenets to the Nigerian Brethren, Faw says,

These Brethren missionaries were representatives of the Church of the Brethren in America, but they were not leaders of the church. They were members of the church who willingly gave up everything to share their lives with an unknown, distant, colored race. In terms of traditional Brethren doctrines and practices, the majority of them knew enough to share with others equal to or below their rank but not enough to really represent the denomination, they were 'middle Brethren'³¹

However, whatever were the criteria Faw used to label the missionaries as "middle Brethren" and that their knowledge cannot represent the denomination, this view can be disputed, as Stover had served as a teacher and a pastor in the Church of the Brethren in the United States before becoming a missionary to Nigeria. He was a pastor at New Enterprise, PA from 1918 to 1919 and Philadelphia from 1919 to 1922, from where he left to come to Nigeria as a missionary. Helser was known to be a dedicated churchman and also had a PhD degree. So if others might have been considered as 'middle brethren', at least for Kulp and Helser, the pioneer missionaries, they cannot be regarded as such. What Faw meant by "middle Brethren" is even problematic, as such a term is a non-brethren perception on the emphasis brethren place on the priesthood of all believers and the simple life. Does he take "middle-Brethren" in terms of church hierarchy? One will ask, where then is the position of the Congregational nature of the Brethren? Or did he see it in terms of commitment to the Brethren beliefs and practices? However, it remains true that some of the missionaries were conscientious objectors. Durnbaugh comments the following on the missionaries' educational background:

Kulp, H(arold) Stover (1894-1964), Church of the Brethren Missionary in Nigeria. Born in Chester county, Pennsylvania, Kulp graduated from the Chester state Normal School, Juniata College

³⁰ Kulp, *No Longer Strangers*, p. 30.

³¹ Chalmer E. Faw, "Profile of Brethren Mission: An Evaluation of Fifty Years in Nigeria," *Brethren Life and Thought*, Vol. 19 No. 2 (Spring, 1974), 85-96:88.

(honorary D.D., 1948), and the University of Pennsylvania (M. A., 1920); he also studied at the Kennedy School of Missions, Hartford Seminary, Connecticut (1930-1931). After spending his early years as a teacher and pastor, he and Albert D. Helser were sent by the Church of the Brethren in 1922 to initiate a missionary work in the Northeastern state of Nigeria, locating in Garkida.³²

This refutes Faw's position, as a pastor cannot be a "middle Brethren" either in hierarchical perspective or in terms of commitment or knowledge of Brethren's teachings, and therefore is in every regard a better representative of the church. Does it mean rejection of the priesthood of all believers as taught by the church and now introducing hierarchy? In other words, does this primus inter pares understanding not collide with the idea of priesthood of all believers? Not at all, it does not collide what it means is that a pastor is in every regard a better representative of the church based on his/her theological knowledge and the knowledge of the history of the church. By priesthood of all believers the church believes that all believers are vessels unto honour and are usable by God and all have various spiritual gifts for the growth and edification of the church. It also means that every believer can receive inspiration from the Holy Spirit to interpret Scriptures to God's people.

Why did the missionaries not teach peace and pacifism if they did not? Since Kulp and Helser were not "middle brethren" if we are to borrow such a phrase, for they knew all the tenets, they were conscientious objectors and are capable to represent the church? Did they just want to make followers of Jesus Christ, and not Brethren, as Bugu claims? Bugu says, "The missionaries, it seems, did not intend to make Brethren of the Africans. Their main concern was to make them followers of Christ, not Brethren. Thus, they focused their attention more on what the Bible says in the African context rather than on what the denominational beliefs and practices demand."³³ But this is unlikely because if that was their intention, they would have come with a different name entirely and some of the tenets taught might not have been taught in the first place.

Both Bugu and Gwama in struggling with why the Brethren missionaries have not taught the other tenets say, "The truth is that missionary churches are shaped by the situation in

³² Donald F. Durnbaugh, "Kulp, H(arold) Stover (1894-1964)," *In Biographical Dictionary of Christian Missions*, 1998:378.

³³ Bugu, Op. Cit., 128.

which the missionaries found themselves contextually, not by what the mother denomination believed."³⁴ This point also does not justify why the missionaries did not teach some of the tenets, specifically pacifism and peace. Both Gwama and Bugu mentioned that the situation the missionaries found themselves was difficult, the continuous tension between the ethnic groups, in which the missionaries had to always broker peace and seek for reconciliation among the people. The researcher opines that the situation might have been a good ground for them to teach those tenets.

Mambula is also of the view that the missionaries did not teach pacifism to the Nigerian Brethren, when he mentions, "When I interviewed some retired Church of the Brethren missionaries to ask them as to why the Brethren did not teach about pacifism to the church they founded in Nigeria, a few reasons were explained to me as follows:

- *The Reformation and the 1st World War just ended, and so there was no need to talk about war or pacifism anymore.*
- *When the Missionaries arrived, they found on ground a relatively peaceful co-existence among the natives and various tribes. Since there was no war, no conflicts, it did not come as a surprise, and so did not become an issue. It was not preached about since peacemaking was already imbedded in the gospel message of the Risen Christ taught by the missionaries.*
- *From 1924, the missionaries started by building confidence in the natives by teaching them about better ways of agriculture, medical treatment, and education which they thought were the most needed initially-not to exploit but to help.*
- *Emphasis on religion and evangelism began far into the 1920's and so pacifism was a weak point at that time. Even in the USA, pacifism was not taught dogmatically. The Brethren taught what they believed, but were also given freedom to make their choice on the issue. Some of the missionaries pointed out, however, that even though they did not teach pacifism per se, they did teach about the Brethren commitment to obey Christ- certain teachings, especially on loving our neighbors as ourselves and the importance of peaceful co-existence with nonbelievers, which can provide evangelistic opportunities to witness to others about our faith in Christ.³⁵*

From the above quotation, there are contradictory answers to the question of lack of teaching on pacifism by the missionaries. The second and the fourth respondents said

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Prof Musa Mambula, *Are There Limits to Pacifism? The Nigerian Dilemma*, p. 105-106.

peacemaking was already imbedded in the gospel message of the Risen Christ taught by the missionaries and that even though they did not teach pacifism per se, they did teach about Brethren commitment to obey Christ-certain teachings, especially on loving our neighbours as ourselves and the importance of peaceful co-existence with nonbelievers.

Although many of the Nigerian Brethren abhor war as evil, and many will not like to carry arms, some do not practice conscientious objection as there are Brethren found in the Nigerian Army and some in para-military organizations. Some of the Brethren who joined the military and such organizations did that during the missionaries' era. But worthy of note is that some if not all who went into the military service (army) during the missionary era faced considerable resistance from the missionaries. Some parents literally had to finish mourning (funeral service) of their children who were still alive as they are already dead for having joined the army. It is a fact that even those who took up jobs with the government did not receive the blessings of the missionaries. Politics was regarded as a dirty game and a Christian is not supposed to play it. Mambula and Gwama add that, "Politics has been one area where the indigenous church got little or no mission encouragement. Politics was looked at suspiciously as dirty, worldly and corrupt. At Nigerian Independence in 1960 there was no representative from the Church of the Brethren representing the traditional EYN areas."³⁶ These points to us that the missionaries, if not directly, indirectly through their actions have not left out any dimension of the Brethren heritage. For a practice to become a guiding principle, it requires teaching, and teaching can either be formal or informal for teaching involves understanding and consciousness. Pacifism shows that the missionaries were able to influence the Nigerian Brethren through practical lives, in other words through the informal teaching.

There were some remarkable influences upon the Nigerian Brethren by the missionaries and how the Nigerian Brethren were able to influence other churches they are in fellowship with under the umbrella body of TEKAN during the Nigerian Civil War. To appreciate the roles played by EYN and the other churches, issue of Nigerian Civil War is analyzed. The Nigerian Civil War took place between 6th July, 1967 and ended

³⁶ Jabani P Mambula and Filibus Gwama, "EYN Under Indigenous Leaders," *The Progressive History of the Ekklesiyar Yanuwa A Nigeria (Church of the Brethren In Nigeria)*, (Jos: Midland Press), 1988:92.

15th January 1970. The war is also called Biafran War where the Igbos under the commandship of Odumegwu Ojukwu attempted to secede from a united Nigeria and proclaimed a Republic of Biafra. The war was mainly as a result of economic, ethnic, cultural and religious tensions between the Igbos in the southeastern Nigeria and the Hausas in the northern part of Nigeria. It was estimated that over a million Nigerians died. The war is regarded as Igbo war and made the Igbos in the northern part of Nigeria to be persecuted, hunted and killed. The Church in the north was then at a cross-road as either to support the north or to save lives of the Igbos. Mambula gave us a good description of the roles played by EYN and other churches exemplifying their peace heritage this way,

EYN with the TEKAN member churches played very significant roles during the Civil War:

1. *Some Igbos were hid in TCNN ceilings and on the mountain on which the present two gigantic water tanks currently stand.*
2. *Some TCNN students abandoned the comfort of their hostels to join the Red Cross Society to take relief materials to the victims of the civil war.*
3. *TEKAN, which includes EYN, made several calls to the Federal Government of Nigeria to stop the war.*
4. *Food items, clothing, and money were gathered from among members of TEKAN to help war victims in the Eastern Region.*³⁷

Are the Nigerian Brethren pacifists? The answer to this question is not straight forward. Bugu answered this question in stating that they are not. But an in-depth analysis of the life of the Nigerian Brethren will show that many of them are pacifists. How did this come to be? What are the factors that contributed to this? Why did some become pacifists and others not? In answering the questions, the Hausa adage comes to play, "*tafiya da ma daukin kanwa shi ke kawo farin kai*" literally translated, "walking together with someone who carries potash will end up having white hair." The Scriptures say, "Bad company corrupts good morals" (1 Corinthians 15:33). Looking at the title of the Book written by Prof Musa Mambula, "*Are there Limits to Pacifism? The Nigerian Dilemma*", suggests that many of the Nigerian Brethren are pacifists only that with unending violence; are there limits? Some Nigerian Brethren became pacifists by

³⁷ Musa, *Are There Limits to Pacifism*, p. 117.

association; this is true due to the fact that the missionaries through their practical lives did teach in an informal way the Brethren peace heritage. Through the emphasis on peace in their preaching had influenced in no small measure some Nigerian Brethren towards being pacifists. Topics and passages of preaching that suffixed at that time and present are "Blessed are the Peacemakers," "Turning the other Cheek when smitten on the other," etc. The resistance to getting enrolled into the Nigerian army by the missionaries of young Nigerian Brethren was another factor that had contributed in making some to be pacifists. As to factors that might have contributed in making others not pacifists may be due to uncritical acceptance of jobs without recourse to the resistance experienced. The second reason is due to the freedom and freewill. Even among the Church of the Brethren members in the United States, not all of them are pacifists, as such one will not expect hundred percent adherence in Nigeria.

One fact remains obvious, that the Brethren missionaries might not have taught pacifism as in the sending church's understanding, but that they had taught all the tenets except wearing of special garb and holy kiss which is a contextualization of the handshake. As to the wearing of special garb, it was not so much in practice even among the Church of the Brethren but among the Dunkard and Old Order German Baptist Brethren. It was the Church of the Brethren Missionaries and not the Dunkard or the Old Order German Baptist Brethren that came to Nigeria.

There are some major shifts and changes in the life of the Church of the Brethren in the United States in the 19th and 20th centuries, failure of which, will lead us to look at the missionaries who came to Nigeria as either not true Brethren or as those who did not teach the tenets and are therefore to be held responsible for not making all Nigerian Brethren to be pacifists. Unlike the Old German Baptist Brethren who are the most conservative of all the Brethren family who kept to the traditional heritage of the Brethren resisting change and acculturation, most of the other Brethren families have changed significantly. The Old Order German Baptist Brethren in their Annual Conference of 1946 expressed their peace stance clearly, that non participation of war of all forms is a fundamental principle and one of the conditions upon which applicants

were received for baptism, as such any member who enters the armed forces has broken his or her baptismal vow and cannot be recognized as a member.

The Dunkard Brethren also maintained their peace stance condemning participation in armed forces and any uniform, or work having military features, and most Dunkard Brethren hold to this position to date. For the Fellowship of Grace Brethren Churches, only a small minority of the membership hold to the peace position. As for the Brethren Church, in their 1917 Annual Conference resolution, they expressed deep gratitude for recognition given to religions who are opposed to bearing arms in warfare. In 1941 conference, they clearly stressed, "We affirm the historic stand of the Brethren Church as being opposed to carnal warfare...we recommend that Brethren young men called...avail themselves of the opportunities offered them by our US Government to choose non-combatant or civilian service."³⁸

For the Church of the Brethren, the peace stance has continued to be the official position of the church, strongly stated in Annual Conference decisions. In 1918 the following statement was issued, "We believe that war or any participation in war is wrong and incompatible with the spirit, example, and teaching of Jesus Christ."³⁹ In 1934 they still emphasized the peace stance by saying, "It is our conviction as humble followers of Christ, that all war is sin. We cannot therefore encourage, engage in, or willingly profit from armed conflict at home or abroad. We cannot, in the event of war, accept military service or support the military machine in any capacity."⁴⁰ Worthy of note is also the following observation, "A substantial majority of Church of the Brethren denominational leaders and pastors accept (or do not reject) the peace position. Yet the wars and acculturation that came in the 20th century brought sharp decline in the peace stand among the general membership."⁴¹

A survey was provided in 1945 by Merlin C Shull and it revealed that, "Less than ten percent of Church of the Brethren men, in response to the alternative in World War II, had entered Civilian Public Service; slightly more than that had been non combatant in

³⁸ Dale H. Aukermen, "Peace," *Brethren Encyclopedia*, 997-1001:1000.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 1000.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*,

⁴¹ *Ibid.*,

the armed forces; and more than eighty percent had gone into the armed forces as combatants."⁴²

All these facts indicate that, although the peace stance of the church remains a fundamental principle, there has been a shift in the understanding of pacifism. This is indeed an important finding which has to be stressed and unfolded. What is the exact shift in their understanding regarding pacifism? In the minds of more than eighty percent of the Brethren who had gone into armed forces as combatants, when critically assessed and evaluated, their shift could be that not all war is evil. Some of them no doubt had shifted into accepting the theology of self-defense. Still others had started assuming pacifism is practical idealism and is never a solution to the problem of human violence and fellow humans. What the Church of the Brethren did to keep to its peace witness is getting involved into services and relief efforts. The Church over the years in collaboration with other historic peace churches has been making efforts at renewing the church's peace stance through attempts to influence governments to adopt policies against militarism and work for peace and justice. This is evident in the first ever conference of the Historic Peace Churches of Africa held in August 2004 in Kenya with the theme "Making Peace Theology relevant to the challenges of conflict in Africa." That was a part of the Bienenberg Conference Series and the World Council of Churches Decade to Overcome Violence. These people are called, "*Watu Wa Amani*" which is translated People of Peace. The church has been making denominational statements on peace and peace related issues as seen in Annual Conference reports.

This brings the issue of absence of Peace theology in the taught programmes of the Nigerian Brethren Bible College and schools, and Bugu and Gwama's argument that this might be due to the failure of the missionaries to teach pacifism and peace. This position is refuted historically, the oldest EYN Bible College was established in 1960, forty two years after the Church of the Brethren in Nigeria was founded. The history of peace studies or theology in the Church of the Brethren in the United States shows that, it was until 1948 at Manchester College under the leadership of Gladdys E. Muir that the first College or University Programme in Peace Studies began. It was preceded by peace seminars in 1947. This is in a whopping period of 240 years before peace

⁴² Ibid.,

studies was introduced in the Church's College. Does this mean the Church of the Brethren ceased to be a peace church, and that the Church no longer believes in pacifism? The absence of taught courses on peace theology at the churches' seminaries does not indicate that the church would not be a peace church.

The view that the missionaries did not teach all the heritage of the mother church to the Nigerian Brethren more especially in relation to peace is inaccurate. Gwama and Bugu among others maintain that the missionaries emphasized practical Christian life where they taught practical Christianity through living out the faith. Due to their commitment to peacemaking and reconciliation witness, they not only brokered peace amongst the warring ethnic groups, but even those who showed fierce opposition to them, like the Emir of Biu, later regretted their action and invited them again. This heritage was undoubtedly transmitted to the Nigerian Brethren to the extent that even those who accused the missionaries of neglecting some of the heritage agreed that the Church of the Brethren in Nigeria is regarded by other churches in Nigeria and even Muslims as a peace church. Where did the Church of the Brethren in Nigeria get its peace stance if not from the mother church and surely this occurred not just by affiliation.

Faw remarks in this context the following:

From the beginning on to the present, the mission and the church to which it gave birth, have reflected the basic strengths and weaknesses of the Church of the Brethren through the years, as it found itself in interaction with the local Nigerians and their culture. Some of the basic tenets of the faith came through in strong accent: the emphasis on the well-rounded life of the believer; the translation of Christian doctrine into Christian character and conduct; the daily work of devotion to God and love of fellowmen; and faith based on the scriptures, especially the New Testament, and demonstrated in home and community. Both baptism by trine immersion and the threefold love feast and communion service have been practiced from the beginning. The rural emphasis of the Brethren was matched by the rural character of Nigeria in which they worked, and the mission's fourfold ministry in church, school, health, and farm stamped its character on the emerging church. Other emphasis of the Brethren, such as a strong peace position

*and nonconformist witness to state and society, while not absent, did not come through quite so early.*⁴³

It is seen that most of the tenets of the Brethren were transplanted to the Nigerian Brethren though not done at the same time, some got in right at the beginning of the missionary works while some came at a later period.

Mambula, when considering the Church of the Brethren in Nigeria and her understanding of peace, says, "The EYN as a Church believes that Christ has been the Prince of Peace and that he is our peace *eirene* or shalom. Christ has emphasized peace in all his teachings and has lived it out; he was non-violent and non-retaliatory even at the expense of his own life. It was the peace that led him to the Cross. He called on the disciples to be at Peace (Mark 9:50)."⁴⁴

It is true that some Nigerian Brethren joined the armed forces, but this was not peculiar to Nigerian Brethren, the same is valid for the Church of the Brethren in the USA where this trend can be found, and this was not based on the approval and support of the missionaries. Indeed the missionaries had such a profound Brethren self-understanding that their emphasis on simple life led them to discourage Brethren from looking for money to become rich as it will be *'easier for a camel to pass through an eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God (Matt.19:24).'* They discouraged their converts from joining politics stating that politics is a 'dirty game'. Members who became engaged in politics were considered to have deviated or not to be spiritual enough. Most of the teachers trained at the Waka Teachers' College had the aim of serving as teachers in the mission Schools, as such those who left the service of the church and went to the public service were not applauded. A considerable amount of sermons dealt with peace related texts of the biblical narrative, like turning the other cheek when stroke on the other, were emphasized (Matt.5:39).

Thus, the Church of the Brethren in Nigeria is a peace church through practical peace witness and reconciliation much more than theoretical or formal education in pacifism. The influence of the founding fathers on the Nigerian Brethren can be observed also in

⁴³ Faw, *Lardin Gabas*, p 90.

⁴⁴ Mambula, p. 170.

the way the church has responded and still responds to violent situations. Mambula in looking at the way the Church of the Brethren in Nigeria handled the Nigerian Civil War, says, "Although the Brethren did not expose the EYN members to the Brethren peace stance, the influence of their teachings about loving your neighbors as yourself and their practical ways of bringing peace in Christian homes when things soured, affected and influenced EYN on how they handled the Nigerian Civil War along with the TEKAN member churches."⁴⁵ TEKAN is Tarrayar Ekkliṣiyoyin Kristi A Nigeria (The Fellowship of Churches of Christ in Nigeria) an ecumenical body made up of fifteen member churches with two associates. The Church of the Brethren was among the founding fathers of TEKAN which is the Proprietor of the Theological College of Northern Nigeria (TCNN).⁴⁶ In summary EYN, which is considered among the TEKAN member churches as a pacifist or peace church, has influenced the member churches in their response to the Nigerian Civil War.

The EYN has recurrently been confronted by violence. Factually, the Church of the Brethren in Nigeria being the church that is predominantly in the north-east of Nigeria is a church that has several times been confronted by violence. In the year 2000 when Nigeria was only a year from returning to democratic government, violence erupted in Kaduna and several states in the North where many people were killed and property worth billions of Naira were destroyed. Rev. Iyasko Taru a Nigerian Brethren pastor in Kaduna was massacred for his refusal to denounce Christ as requested by Muslim fundamentalists. Matthew A. Gali states in this respect:

Churches in Kano, the EYN in particular, have endured a series of attacks from 1990 up to May 2004, when many church members were killed, maimed, and subjected to all sorts of barbaric acts at the hands of Muslim fundamentalists. However, the EYN church members were guided by Romans 12:17-21: 'Do not repay any one evil for evil, but take thought for what is noble in the sight of all.' We were not shaken despite the fact that in 1991 our church was burned to ashes. In 1992 the church was burned again and bulldozed by the Kano State government through its agent called Kasseppa. In 1995 the church was burned once more by Muslim fanatics. In 2001, during the American invasion of Afghanistan in search of Osama Ben Laden, our church yet again was burned

⁴⁵ Mambula, p. 116.

⁴⁶ This is the general meaning of TEKAN and my personal definition as I had been a lecturer at the Theological College of Northern Nigeria (TCNN) between 1998 and 2000.

down. Six people were killed on the church premises and thirty-one members lost their properties.⁴⁷

In 2006 in Maiduguri, the Borno State capital, six Church of the Brethren worship places were destroyed, three were burnt down completely including the parsonage while the other three suffered various degrees of damage. Between the years 2009 to 2014; the Church of the Brethren in Nigeria has lost 8,038 members to the Boko Haram menace, a total of 1,674 Local Churches and worship centers have been destroyed and lost thousand of naira worth of properties. In all these just mentioning some few examples, the peace nature of the Brethren was demonstrated.

How can the uniqueness of the Nigerian Brethren in contrast to the mother church be described? There are few indications: Recitation of the creed in worship. This is so unique to the Church of the Brethren in Nigeria where the Apostles' Creed is being recited in almost all congregations. Some of the Nigerian Brethren have come to accept the Creed as part of the church's beliefs and practices. The circumstances leading to the acceptance and recitation of the Creed in Nigerian Brethren churches has never been investigated but is not unconnected to being part of the fellowship in TEKAN. Many Nigerian Brethren grew up now to recite the Apostle's Creed and it will be difficult to now abandon it on grounds that Church of the Brethren is non-creedal.

The second difference between the Church of the Brethren in the US and the Church of the Brethren in Nigeria is in rejection of divorce and remarriage under whatever circumstance so long as the other partner is alive. The Church of the Brethren in Nigeria does not accept divorce and re-marriage as does the mother church. The case of David Whitten⁴⁸ a Church of the Brethren in USA missionary to Nigeria clearly proves this. David Whitten was divorced by his wife in a Court in the United States while he was serving as a missionary in Nigeria. In 2007, he approached the Church of the Brethren in Nigeria with his desire to re-marry. The National Executive Committee of the Church asked the Church of the Brethren in the United States to withdraw David Whitten as his action was regarded as unacceptable. Is the Church of the Brethren in

⁴⁷ Matthew Abdullahi Gali, Op. Cit., 94.

⁴⁸ Minutes of National Executive Committee Meeting held on Wednesday 12- Friday 14 December 2007 at EYN Headquarters Kwarhi. P.12.

Nigeria being more New Testament and laying more emphasis on the literal interpretation of the Scriptures than the Church of the Brethren in the United States?

The church polity is another area of the Nigerian Brethren Uniqueness. The Church of the Brethren in Nigeria unlike the mother church has a sitting President who has executive powers despite the fact that the church is congregational in nature. The President is elected by the Annual General Conference popularly called the *Majalisa* and serves for an initial period of four years at first instance and can be re-elected for a second term. The President serves as the Chairman of the Annual General Conference (Majalisa), as the Chairman of the National Executive Committee (NEC), as the Chairman of the Ministers' Advisory Council, as the Chairman of the Ministers' Council, Chairman of the Transfer Committee, and Chairman of the Standing Committee among other functions. While the Church of the Brethren in the US has a Moderator who serves for a period of one year after which another person is elected. The Moderator moderates the Annual Conference of the Church while the General Secretary is the administrator. In the Church of the Brethren in Nigeria, the President is deputized by the Vice President.

Another aspect is ordination of women. Unlike the Church of the Brethren in the United States where women are ordained into the ministry, Nigerian Brethren are yet to start ordination of women despite the number of women theologians who are currently holding key positions in the Church. Some of them are Principals of EYN Bible Schools, Director of Education and Principal of EYN Gunnar Theological Education by Extension (TEE) College. What are the underlying reasons which hindered the church from ordaining women? In the records of the Church's Ministers' Council resolution, the church had several years past in principle accepted to ordain women. However, as at that time it was argued and true to it that there were no women theologians and the resolution states that until such a time when the church has women that are qualified. In the Ministers' Council Annual Conference of February 2010 when the matter was brought up for implementation, it was surprisingly resisted. It reached a point when it was put to vote and those against outnumbered those for. Reason given by those against is the issue of culture. In most of the cultures among some of the tribes in the north-east of Nigeria, there were no women priests, as such some pastors have their

cultural background taking a lead and arguing that the Gospel message will be resisted by Muslims and African Traditional Religious Worshippers if women are ordained and are to perform some of the ordinances of the Church among which are Baptism, Holy Communion etc. This is a big challenge to the Priesthood of all Believers position of the church. After all, women do lead and preach in most Nigerian Brethren churches.

Another area of divergence between the Nigerian Brethren and the United States Brethren is in the teaching of peace theology. However, there is a change now as in 2011, the Course on Peace and Pacifism was introduced in Kulp Bible College which is the Prime Theological Institute of EYN leaving out the remaining six Bible Schools without peace studies. However, regarding this latter aspect, it has to be emphasized that despite the lack of formal teaching, peace and pacifism is an important feature of the practical theology of the Church of the Brethren in Nigeria. It is especially against this background that the researcher explores the contribution of the church in the subsequent section.

1.2 Nigerian Brethren and Pacifism

What is the understanding of the Church of the Brethren in Nigeria as to the Brethren heritage of pacifism? The questions to explore are: Do Nigerian Brethren join the armed forces? Are there some Brethren who through pacifism reached a point of being conscientious objectors? If yes, are they able to impress on the government of Nigeria to consider conscientious objectors?

There are many people including Christians who perceive the notion of pacifism as a blind way of rejecting war and violence and worst of all a pacifist as an irrational person or a religious zealot. Some do look at pacifism and pacifists as being associated with pessimism. Because Pacifism and Pessimism are alike. Some hardly distinguish between the two, or end up looking at pacifism through the lens of pessimism. Cadoux comments this in the following way:

Pacifists have been accused of cowardice, sentimentality, indifference to righteousness, heresy of a Marcionite, Manichaeism, or Pelagian type, literalism, legalism, evasion, intellectual confusion and inconsistency: They have insultingly been dubbed 'pseudo-Quakers': jokes have been made about their pugnacity as sadly out

*of keeping with their peace-principles: their zeal for peace has been censured as a claim that none but they were zealous for it.*⁴⁹

Are these criticisms appropriate? What then is pacifism? Secular definition of the term may be helpful at this stage. The BBC English Dictionary defines 'Pacifism' to mean, "The belief that war and violence are always wrong."⁵⁰ This secular definition does not portray the pacifist as being irrational or cowardice, but a person who sees war and violence as always, not sometimes but always wrong. Yoder defines pacifism as a "view which accepts no war as morally permissible."⁵¹ Going by Yoder's definition and if we accept it, then many people would be pacifists as even Niebuhr who was one of the most profound critic of pacifism could not disagree. Niebuhr says,

*It is a terrible thing to take human life. The conflict between man and man nation and nation is tragic. If they are men who declare that, no matter what consequences, they can not bring themselves to participate in this slaughter, the church ought to be able to say to the general community: We quite understand the scruple and we respect it. It proceeds from the conviction that the true end of man is brotherhood, and that love is the law of life.*⁵²

Wicker gives a comprehensive definition of the term pacifism this way, "Pacifism is the refusal for conscientious reasons to fight in wars or submit to military discipline. Historically speaking pacifism has been predominantly a Christian phenomenon, although today there are many pacifists groups based on other religions (Budhism, for instance) or on none. Pacifism is closely linked to, but distinct from, the practice of non-violent action, such as that by Ghandhi or Martin Luther King."⁵³ Robbins gave us a definition of the term with some important historical facts; she says pacifism, "Is the opposition to war and violence. The word pacifism was coined by the French Peace Campaigner Emile Arnaud (1864-1921) and adopted by other peace activists at the tenth Universal Peace Congress in Glasgow in 1901."⁵⁴

⁴⁹ Cecil John Cadoux, *Christian Pacifism Re-examined*, (Oxford: Basil Blackwell), 1940:5-6.

⁵⁰ John Sinclair, Editor in Chief, "Pacifism" *BBC English Dictionary*, (BBC English and HarperCollins Publishers Ltd), 1992.

⁵¹ John Howard Yoder, *When War is Unjust: Being Honest in Just-War Thinking*, 2nd ed., (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books), 1996:1.

⁵² Reinhold Niebuhr, *Christianity and Power Politics*, New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1952.

⁵³ Brian Wicker, "Pacifism" *The Oxford Companion to Christian Thought*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press), 2000:508-509:509.

⁵⁴ Keith Robbins, *The Abolition of War: The Peace Movement in Britain, 1914-1919*, (Wales: University of Wales Press), 1976:11

Looking at the above definitions, what then is the position of EYN on Pacifism? In answer to this question, an examination of Church of the Brethren in Nigeria theologians as to what they say is cardinal. Mambula holds to the view that the Church of the Brethren in Nigeria is a pacifist church, which epitomizes the finding of his book entitled, "Are There Limits to Pacifism? The Nigerian Dilemma." This book was written under the premise that the Church is a pacifist church, but the question he wrestled with is whether there are limits to pacifism due to seemingly unending, unprovoked persecution, arsons, killings, massacres, destructions perpetrated against Christians and their properties in Nigeria by Muslim Fundamentalists and extremists over the years. He gives expression to his conviction that the church is a pacifist church, and underlines:

In the face of increasing Islamic militancy that has claimed many lives of Christians, and resulted in the destruction of their homes and properties in Nigeria, even the EYN leadership and rank and file are beginning to ask this question. The pacifist stance of the church, per se, is not in question, but Christian communities on the 'front line' are looking for practical answers in terms of what can be considered legitimate self-defense and, for that, they may need to rely on the armed forces or the police of the state.⁵⁵

It is interesting to note that many Brethren in Nigeria joined the armed forces. Some interestingly joined the armed forces during the Missionary era as stated above. As mentioned earlier and severally too, such who joined the military were not applauded by the missionaries. Many of the parents of those who were conscripted into the military more especially during the World War II have been advised against allowing their children going into armed forces. This is not just for any reason but due to the belief in peace and pacifism. One striking revelation is that many Church of the Brethren members who joined the armed forces today have lots of difficulties when it comes to matter of taking human life. The life story of Corporal David Ciwar who was a Church of the Brethren in Nigeria member but serving with the Nigerian Army stands as typical example. Ciwar was sent to Jos the Plateau State Capital in 2010 along with his other colleagues on a peace mission when religious crisis broke out under the Special Task Force to restore peace. Some youths who were reacting to the arson and killings were marching into the town. A colleague of Ciwar told Ciwar that they should

⁵⁵ Musa A Mambula, *Are There Limits to Pacifism? The Nigerian Dilemma*, (Kaduna: Prudent Universal Press), 2009:163.

fire rifles at the youths and Ciwar objected by telling his colleague, 'we are sent to restore peace and not to kill.' He went over to the youths and was pleading with them to withdraw from the streets. But Ciwar was shot dead by that same colleague under the pretense of 'accidental discharge.' This action generated further reaction and this was a testimony of another colleague of Ciwar at Ciwar's funeral service. Ciwar objected to firing the youths due to his belief in peace and pacifism. The above action further reveals to us that belief in peace and pacifism is much more than just adhering to a concept, it is indeed incarnating a life-style that depends on another model, i.e. a way of costly discipleship in Christ. In the Church of the Brethren, there are lots of emphasis on 'Counting the Cost' or 'the Cost of Discipleship. There are practical and tangible life style being demonstrated and displayed by many members of the Church of the Brethren in Nigeria serving as combatants with the Nigeria Armed Forces that show that peace and pacifism is deep rooted in them.

The story of Malam Risku and how he stopped war between people as far back as 1946 was a cherished life story even among the missionaries and among many Church of the Brethren members. Hackman reports,

One day in 1946, Malam Risku, Mr. Kulp and other missionaries trekked to the surroundings of Gwoza. They rested near a well. While there they discovered that the Fulani people of the area were preparing for war. The missionaries did not know what they should do. However, Malam Risku had an idea... M. Risku took one of his shoes and held it over his head. He went to the Fulani's place and talked with them. The people recognized the sign of the shoe over his head, and they agreed to listen to what Malam Risku had to say. Then Malam Risku explained to them that he is a messenger of the King of Peace. He offered to help them talk about their differences. The people agreed and the war did not take place... He brought peace between the people there. He showed them that God wants peace and the well-being of his people.⁵⁶

This is strong evidence to the fact that peacemaking is part and parcel of the Nigerian Brethren self-understanding and the impact of dialogue. Fulani people were not Christians and they were not planning for war against Christians. The peacemaking effort of Malam Risku was not informed by selfishness, in other words not because the war was planned against people of his faith. The war was not planned against his tribal or clan but against fellow human beings. The pacifist nature of the brethren that

⁵⁶ Hackman, *Introduction to Brethren History*, p. 105.

all wars are wrong is exhibited. The question is how did Malam Risku know what to do? The biography of Malam Risku reveals that he had served as a shepherd boy among the Fulani people and knows their customs that when one has his/her shoe over his/her head is a sign of peace and not war. Though this still involves risk and giving of self for the sake of those whom he did not know. But Risku took the risk, in other words, he counted the cost and through that broker peace through dialogue.

1.3 Nigerian Brethren and Reconciliation

This section analyzes the Church of the Brethren in Nigeria and the Nigerian Brethren understanding of reconciliation and how they witness reconciliation in a violence torn Nigeria. It is in reconciliation that the Church of the Brethren in Nigeria has made a land mark achievement. There had been constant rivalries, skirmishes and hostilities among the various ethnic communities in the areas of the Church of the Brethren Mission to which the missionaries and now Church of the Brethren in Nigeria have brought reconciliation. This was achieved as a result of the emphasis laid by the missionaries on the gospel of Jesus Christ which is centered on God's love for humanity.

The Ministry of Reconciliation to which St Paul charged the Corinthian, Ephesian and Colossian Church has been emphasized by the Church of the Brethren in Nigeria. Paul in 2 Corinthians 5:16-21 says,

From now on, therefore, we regard no one from a human point of view; even though we once regarded Christ from a human point of view, we regard him thus no longer. Therefore, if any one is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has passed away, behold the new has come. All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation; that is, God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation. So we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us. We beseech you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

Because, through Christ sinners have been reconciled to God, have been given the ministry of reconciliation. Just as sinners are reconciled to God, the Sinful world shall

be reconciled through Christ to God. Paul goes on to tell the Church at Ephesus in Ephesians 2:11-22;

Therefore remember that at one time you Gentiles In the flesh, called the uncircumcision by what is called the circumcision, which is made in the flesh by hands—remember that you are at that time separated from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenant of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near in the blood of Christ. For he is our peace, who has made us both one, and has broken down the dividing wall of hostility, by abolishing in his flesh the law of commandments and ordinances, that he might create in himself one new man in place of the two, so making peace, and might reconcile us both to God in one body through the cross, thereby bringing the hostility to an end. And he came and preached peace to you who were far off and peace to those who were near; for through him we both have access in one Spirit to the Father. So then you are no longer strangers and sojourners, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone, in whom the whole structure is joined together and grows into a holy temple in the Lord; in whom you also are built into it for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit.

It is interesting to note that this passage was the portion of Scriptures read by Kulp and Helser when they held the first worship service in 1923 under the Tamarind Tree at Garkida and since then, this passage is seen in most church documents as the motto of the Church. Paul again speaks to the Church at Colosse through his epistle in Col 1:15-23

He is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of all creation; for in him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or authorities—all things were created through him and for him. He is before all things, and in him all things hold together. He is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning, the first-born from the dead, that in everything he might be pre-eminent. For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross. And you, who once were estranged and hostile in mind, doing evil deeds, he has now reconciled in his body of flesh by his death, in order to present you holy and blameless and reproachable before him, provided that you continue in the faith, stable and steadfast, not shifting from the hope of the Gospel

which you heard, which has been preached to every creature under heaven, and which I, Paul, became a minister.

This is reminiscent of the missionary history, where the practical demonstration of this reconciliation among families can be observed. Prior to the arrival of the missionaries, polygamy was the standard family system and women were treated largely with disrespect. However, the missionaries came and introduced monogamy where respect for women and children was greatly encouraged. This has continued in the life of the church to the present. When there was crisis in homes, the church had played major role of restoring peace and bringing about reconciliation.

To further show that the Church of the Brethren in Nigeria learnt from the mother Church of the Brethren in the USA and strongly maintains the ministry of reconciliation, Bugu comments, "The Church of the Brethren in Nigeria is well known for this one thing, the concern for peace through reconciliation. The Church has helped in reconciling sister churches with the TEKAN (Nigerian Council of Churches) fellowship and between churches and the government. It has confronted the government many times around issues relating to peace and justice"⁵⁷

The story of Malam Risku has further demonstrated clearly how the Church of the Brethren in Nigeria has taken seriously the Ministry of Reconciliation. This could be seen today in rural areas where Church of the Brethren pastors and evangelists are reconcilers of families and peoples in their communities. There are several stories where some of the pastors and evangelists have reconciled Muslim families and when they have further misunderstandings, they approach pastors, missionaries, evangelists and some respected Christians for reconciliation and solutions to some life threatening challenges.

Could the above understanding of reconciliation be as a result of what Schreiter noted to be a new paradigm for mission? In his writing, "Reconciliation and Healing as a Paradigm for Mission," Schreiter points out some number of shifts which necessitated the consideration of reconciliation and healing as a paradigm for mission. He states that the shifts began in the last part of the 20th century and continued to the 21st century. He categorizes the shifts into five starting with the end of Communism, the

⁵⁷ Bugu, p. 130.

changes that have taken place in the social order which was as a result of the growing awareness of past social justice. The next shift was the effects of economic globalization which enriched some people from both the developed and developing countries but also increased the overall disparity between the rich and the poor. The spread of HIV/AIDS from segments of wealthy society of the west to wider spread devastation of societies in Africa and Asia was another shift. The fifth shift is the impending ecological crisis all over the world where human beings are not living at peace with and in a constructive relationship with the physical environment ending in threatening the future of humanity on the planet.

Schreiter was of the opinion that the above shifts make the need for reconciliation and healing as a new paradigm for mission imperative. He goes on to discuss vertical and horizontal dimensions to reconciliation this way, "Much of the previous theological literature on reconciliation has been addressed to what might be called the "vertical" reconciliation between God and sinful humanity. This is certainly a prominent Pauline theme in the New Testament, especially in the letter to Romans. The more "horizontal" dimension of reconciliation, viz., between human beings as individuals and societies, and between humans and the earth, has not received as much attention in theological reflection until quite recently. It has been the urgent need to rebuild ravaged societies and human relationship, to heal memories of horror and degradation, that has prompted a newer approach"⁵⁸

Schreiter goes further to give five basic points as characteristics to the horizontal approach to reconciliation. First is that reconciliation according to him is God's work and we as humans just cooperate in God's work. The second is that God himself begins the process by healing the victim. This however, is not in any way exonerating the wrongdoer. The third is that the reconciliation makes of both victim and wrongdoer a new creation (2 Cor. 5:17). The fourth is that the pattern of healing and redemption from suffering is patterned on the passion, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. But all the above is incomplete until when God has reconciled the whole universe to himself in Christ (Eph. 1:10).

⁵⁸ Robert Schreiter, *Reconciliation and Healing as a Paradigm for Mission*, (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books), 2005:79.

What then is Schreiter's understanding of reconciliation? The answer to this shows that that was the way the Church of the Brethren in Nigeria understood it. He says, "Reconciliation in terms of healings of individuals might be described as God's restoring of the humanity of the victim, a humanity that has been wrested away by oppression, poverty, disease and wrongdoing. Social reconciliation is to be understood as the reconstruction in justice of a broken society, so that the wrongdoing of the past cannot happen again, and that this renewed society might look toward the fulfillment to be found in the reign of God."⁵⁹

As to healing in relation to mission paradigm Schreiter defines it thus, "Healing is a concept paralleled to that of reconciliation, and incorporates many of the same distinctive features. A central concept in reconciliation has been termed the 'healing of memories' for both individual and social reconciliation. The healing of memories recognizes first of all the importance of memories in forming both individual and collective identity. How we think of ourselves, both as individuals and as groups, has to do with accumulated memories we have of past actions and relationships."⁶⁰

To sum up his argument that reconciliation and healing is to be accepted as a paradigm for mission, he continues, "From a Christian and theological perspective, reconciliation and healing constitute a paradigm of mission. That is to say, they can order our theological thinking, our missionary endeavors, and our preparation of missionaries in the present time. Like other missiological paradigms, they do not constitute a complete break from the immediate past. Rather, they recognize a reordering of priorities and action in light of changed circumstances."⁶¹

The Church of the Brethren in Nigeria leaders are making headway in this due to the emphasis being laid on justice and love of your neighbour as taught by our Lord Jesus Christ. The peaceful co-existence hitherto enjoyed between Christians and Muslims in most communities where the Church of the Brethren is predominant was as a result of major contribution to peace and reconciliation by the Church of the Brethren members. To buttress this point, Rev Dr Samuel D. Dali of Church of the Brethren in Nigeria in his teaching at the Church of the Brethren Jos District Annual Conference of 2011 on

⁵⁹ Ibid, p. 80.

⁶⁰ Schreiter, p. 80-81.

⁶¹ Ibid., p 82.

the topic, 'Brethren Life and Teaching' says, "With the number of Church of the Brethren members killed in the north-east of Nigeria, their properties destroyed and the number of churches burnt, but no Church of the Brethren member reacted violently, it means the Brethren heritage of peace and reconciliation are rooted deep in the Church."⁶²

In the areas where the Church of the Brethren in Nigeria is predominant, that is the north-east of Nigeria; it is not uncommon to see in the extended families a Muslim, Christian and sometimes an African Traditional worshipper. This could be noticed also among the Yorubas in the South-west as well as some other tribes in Nigeria. In such situation, one can observe how the Christian always maintains a middle position in order to bring reconciliation. There are lots of practical testimonies of many Brethren who did reconcile many including family members having different religious beliefs.

There are other practical ways through which Brethren demonstrate their reconciliation ministry. It is not unusual to see a Christian naming his child after a Muslim friend, Muslim brother or a Muslim sister, although hardly does one see Muslims naming their children after a Christian friend, brother or sister. What is the significance of this in relation to the ministry of reconciliation? When one names his/her child after someone, one is automatically bridging the gap against crisis. The child that is named after someone is considered as belonging to that person and the person whom the child is named after can only wish the child well and support the child in every area of human endeavor, this we could say is building bridges. The significance of naming a child after somebody also shows that the person whom a child bears his or her name is respected, valued and accepted by the parents of that child. This is similar to alliances which were sometimes sealed with intermarriages even in Biblical narratives.

During Muslim festivities and even mourning periods, one can observe how Church of the Brethren members massively attending the celebrations and the ceremonies, sharing the grief and joys with their Muslim friends and family. This action is standing for reconciliation as we have noted in Schreiter's words the horizontal dimension of reconciliation. This action has always helped in keeping the church reconciled to peoples of other faiths in the society.

⁶² Rev Dr Samuel D Dali, "Brethren Life and Teaching," Being a Paper Presented at the EYN Church of the Brethren in Nigeria Jos District Annual General Synod, April 2011.

1.4 Church of the Brethren in Nigeria and its witness of Nonviolence

This section looks closely at the Church of the Brethren in Nigeria's understanding of non-violence. Has the Church of the Brethren in Nigeria understood the teaching of non-violence differently from the Church of the Brethren in the USA? If yes, attempt to find out how this affected the Nigerian Brethren participation in peace making and peace building as a peace church. What is the seed sown in Nigeria by the mother Church of the Brethren in the United States? What are the conflicting areas in which the attitude of the Church of the Brethren in Nigeria becomes relevant?

The Church of the Brethren in Nigeria is a peace church through practical Christian life, Nonviolence is consistent with the teaching of Christ which emphasizes love as the law of life and is still very relevant in every context. Nonviolence does not mean withdrawal or being passive but denouncing all forms of violence be it war, structural violence, social violence, gender violence, hate speeches etc in a nonviolent way.

(1) The researcher presents an example of how the Church of the Brethren in Nigeria has demonstrated its witness of nonviolence over the years using Borno State. If it was not because of the nonviolent nature of the Church of the Brethren, there should have been a religious crisis between Christians and Muslims since. There was a time in the history of Borno State where more than eighty percent of principals of post primary schools were Christians and Church of the Brethren members. What led to that privileged position was because of the schools opened by the Church of the Brethren Missions which gave opportunity for children to attend and be educated. It is plain that Muslims were not discriminated against in the Mission Schools. It is on record that Christian teachers as there were no Muslim teachers during the missionary era in the mission schools would take the Muslim students to mosque on Fridays and wait for them to perform their juma'at prayers so too they could do to Christian students on Sundays to churches. It was also on record that during the seventies and eighties, the larger percent of the work force in Borno and Adamawa (Gongola) States civil service were Christians and most of them Church of the Brethren members. They were able to live at peace with their host communities and brought growth and development through justice and equity. During that period, it was quite common to hear even small

children of Muslims especially the Kanuris calling a Christian *Kirdi* (infidel), but the Church of the Brethren members have never reacted violently. It is a fact that there had been persecution through policies against Christians in Borno State for many years. The persecution through policy came to manifestation when those admitted into schools by those principals and subsequently employed upon graduation sometimes with less qualification by those working in the Civil Service, were soon made superiors of those that employed them because they are Muslims. Christians are denied land for building Churches whereas Mosques are built on streets. The last Certificate of Occupancy granted to a Church in Maiduguri the Borno State capital was as far back in 1980.

Christian instruction was denied by the government to Christian pupils in government public schools. Borno State government uses the State funds to build Mosques in Tertiary Institutions and Housing Estates while denying building of churches. In the State Estates built by tax payers money and Christians are part, the estates built between 1999 to 2013, there is the 202, 303, 555 and 777 housing estates there are mosques and Islamiya Schools built by the government and no church nor provision for building of same. Admissions into tertiary institutions are based on religious affiliation, courses like medicine, engineering and law are denied to Christian applicants. Summary of persecution against the Church in the Northern Part of Nigeria as presented by the CAN National Secretary Engr. S L Salihu in his address to church pastors, leaders and elders in Maiduguri on the 18 March 2006 exactly one month after the religious crisis as a result of Danish Cartoon of prophet Muhammed that resulted in killing of 50 Christians and the burning of 56 church buildings and looting and burning of Christian business places. He mentions four points, but only one is cited,

The issue or issues before us are issues that have caused us some trauma and some elements of confusion. We as Nigerian Christians have taken so much for granted. We love our Muslim colleagues and others who profess no Religion. We usually obey governments and are usually hard working to support and uphold all good endeavors. Our religion teaches us hard work, love for all. We are called to shed abroad the LOVE of Christ to all. It is when a command from our God to love our enemies and those who despitefully use us. All these we have done in Nigeria and will continue to do. What we have failed to understand is the HATRED of our Muslim brothers for us for we have strived to love them

*under all circumstances. We are baffled that at the slightest or no provocation at all we become the immediate targets, killings, arson, looting etc.*⁶³

However, due to the peace teaching of the Church, there has been no time that Church of the Brethren members contemplated taking the laws into their hands or went out for vengeance. These are some factual violent situation perpetrated against the Church of the Brethren in Nigeria and indeed the Christian community in the northern part of Nigeria. In the words of the General Secretary of the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) we have this:

- i) When a page of the Koran is found on the street ... we are attacked.
- ii) When there is a beauty contest which we have not organized ... we are attacked- Kaduna and Maiduguri.
- iii) When a girl refuses to be disciplined in a class ... we are attacked.
- iv) When there is an eclipse ... something in the sky ... we are attacked.
- v) When somebody sells pig meat somewhere ... we are attacked.
- vi) When a mosque is sited near an existing church ... we are attacked, Kano, Ibadan, Maiduguri.
- vii) When there is community argument on where to site a market ... we are attacked.
- viii) And of course quite recently a Danish cartoon that has not even been seen in Nigeria ... Hell was let loose on us Christians in Borno, Bauchi, Kontogora, and of course with a reprisal at Onitsha.⁶⁴

The Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) is the largest ecumenical body in Nigeria to which Church of the Brethren in Nigeria is a member. Often, in Borno and Adamawa States, Church of the Brethren ministers had held the leadership position of the State Chapters of CAN. They have while in such leadership position used their nonviolence teaching to guide them in their leadership. In all of the above marginalization, discrimination, and persecution the Church of the Brethren in Nigeria being the predominant church in the north east of Nigeria and always the worst hit in all these killings and destructions, the Church of the Brethren never for once, retaliated nor contemplated violence.

⁶³ Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) Borno State, *Christianity in Crisis: Lesson From Borno State 18 Feb. 2006*: vi.

⁶⁴ *Ibid*, p. vii.

(2) The Church of the Brethren in Nigeria through her witness of non-violence has always been calling on the governments of these States and Nigeria at large to ensure justice and fairness to all. Justice in employment, admission into schools, recruitments and in all aspects of human endeavours needs to be given to all regardless of ones religious inclination but on merit. The Church had always advocated total adherence to the Nigerian Constitution that states that there should be freedom of worship and that no State shall adopt any religion as a State religion. The Church has been addressing the issue of corruption that has bedeviled Nigeria as a nation as well as the issue of poverty and education. In a paper the researcher presented at the Meeting of the Church of the Brethren and the Mennonites Central Committee in Nigeria on the 15th February 2012, he addressed the issue of addressing Nigerian State as a "Secular State." He explained that for the Muslims, when you address Nigeria as a 'secular state' it means you are making him none religious. The researcher suggested that when addressing Nigeria it is less offensive to the Muslims to say Nigeria is a 'Multi' or 'Plura' Religious society. This is due to the fact that when a Nigerian Muslim hears the phrase 'Secular' he/she thinks, Nigeria is seen as a country of non-religious people. The most popular statement among Nigerians especially the media is that Nigeria is the most religious nation in the world. Though in the course of this research it is evident that not all what is carried in the media are correct or accurate especially in developing countries where investigative journalism is not popular. The criteria of measuring the degree and or depth of the religiosity of a country is not put in place, however, the words of Paul at Athens when he addressed the Areopagus could be helpful here (Acts 17:22-23). However, as to whether the religiosity of the Nigerian people has some practical impact on their daily lives is questionable looking at the rate of corruption and other social vices. When you come to Nigeria on Fridays and Sundays, you would see outwardly that Nigeria is religious as the streets would be deserted with worshippers filling worship places. In this context, living a Christ like life in such a violent situation as demonstrated by the Church of the Brethren members in Nigeria has been helpful. As sad as there have been many EYN churches burnt and destroyed by the Muslim fundamentalists and extremists in Nigeria, there are some heart touching comments by the perpetrators of violence revealing the nonviolent nature of the Church. In July 2014, there was an attack by the extremists in Shaffa a town in the southern Borno State and one of the mission stations found by the

missionaries but has grown to a big settlement. It was overheard that the insurgent were saying, we have been with you in your worship for two weeks, and we have seen and heard you do not abuse and insult people, so we will not kill you. They left without burning the church building down and harmed no one with the exception of some new comers to the town to which they said they went looking after. For the Church of the Brethren, life is sacred and precious and should not be killed. The Church shared the pains of the relations of those that were killed, but one could from this testimony see the nonviolent witness of the Church of the Brethren in Nigeria in practice.

(3) The Church of the Brethren severally had called on Governments at all levels to sanction preachers of every religion who are inciting people towards violence. The researcher when he was serving as the Chairperson of the State Chapter of the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) 2007-2008 had made this call severally.

It is worthy of note that in Nigeria, there is no regulatory body when it comes to preachers and preaching. It is not uncommon to see preachers of both the Christian and Islamic faiths preaching in commercial buses and saying all manners of things. Motor parks and markets are some public places where one could see and hear different preachers with their stands and supporters disseminating information to the general public some literally inciting people to violence.

The Church of the Brethren in Nigeria has demonstrated her nonviolent approach to issues of peaceful co-existence by never violently confronting violent preachers. In Nigeria as one goes to markets or motor parks in most cities in the northern part of the country, many of the Islamic preachers could make a caricature of the person of Jesus Christ and the church, but the church of the Brethren members have never reacted violently. What the Church does is to seek intervention through the Christian Association of Nigeria, and sometimes through the traditional leaders who are mostly Muslims.

(4) Another practical demonstration of the Church of the Brethren nonviolent witness was the physical support given to Muslims in rebuilding their mosque by Church of the Brethren members, a mosque that was destroyed by Christians during one of the

religious clash between Christians and Muslims. This is indeed witness of nonviolence. As a result of the demonstration of that share of love, some of the Muslims got converted to Christianity, but sadly enough, they were killed by fellow Muslims. Mambula confirmed the authenticity of this story by saying, "After younger Christians repaid with anger by destroying three mosques, the larger church asked for volunteers to restore the Muslim mosques of their enemies. In the restoration a few Muslims were so moved by this love that they became Christians. It was sad that the fundamentalist Muslims, who had more recently come to Nigeria, killed the Muslims who had belittled their faith."⁶⁵

It is worthy of note that in the Nigerian context, most often than not, when a Christian got converted to Islam, such a one would not be persecuted. He/she would still be in his/her parents' house if not yet married. If married, his wife and children would not be taken away from him if they are not converted with him. If it is the woman that got converted to Islam, the husband and children would not eject her out of her house. The Church of the Brethren has always emphasized 1 Corinthians 7 passage, where St Paul in responding to the Corinthians' question on marriage charged the believing partner never to get divorced to the unbelieving partner. On the contrary, the Church of the Brethren had witnessed threats and sometimes outright attack not only the person who got converted to the Christian faith from Islam but the faith communities. Most times, the convert had to be taken away from his community in order to save his/her life.

(5) The story of the Church of the Brethren Local Church Branch (LCB) at Awang in Plateau State which demonstrated their witness of nonviolence by refusing to support either group in an ethno-religious crisis that took place in the year 2010 is a story which gives further evidence to the issue under discussion. Awang is a small village with a Local Branch of Church of the Brethren. Crisis erupted between Hausa/Fulani Muslims and Christian natives. The Hausa/Fulani Muslims came over to them and requested their support to which they refused, they were threatened that if they did not join them and they win the war, they will be destroyed. The natives who are Christians also came over to them seeking their support to resist the attackers to

⁶⁵ Musa, p. xii.

which the Church of the Brethren in Awang also objected by saying, we should learn to solve our differences through dialogue without resorting to violence. Unfortunately, the crisis did take place. The surrounding communities were all destroyed, many people were killed, the only village that survived was Awang which when one approaches the area looks like an Island. It was that village that served as a refugee camp for the surviving people of the area. After the crisis, they to this day were neither attacked by the Hausa/Fulanis nor by the natives. Any reference about them, one will hear such heart warming statement that Awang is a village of peace.

(6) A Muslim lady, Hajiya by name "Hajiya could also mean a Muslim lady who had undertaken the pilgrimage to the Holy land (Mecca). Pilgrimage of course is one of the five pillars of Islam."⁶⁶ Hajiya was spared by the members of the Church of the Brethren in Nigeria, Local Church Council Jos in the Plateau State capital. Hajiya was in the Church's Guest Inn when one of the violence erupted in January 2010. For fear of being killed by the church members, when night was approaching and it was getting dark she went to the fence and was climbing to jump over to escape for her dear life. She was told to calm down that nobody is going to harm her. She was informed that the Church of the Brethren is a peace church and can not kill a human being; she was assured over and over again of her security and safety. There was a twenty-four hour curfew imposed on the city, members in the church fed her for a week before normalcy returned and she left unhurt. This is witness of nonviolence of the Church of the Brethren in a violent world. To this day, Hajiya has made the EYN Guest Inn her second home whensoever she is in Jos. One will see that even during crisis time, she will come into the EYN Guest House with no fear of harassment or molestation. Jesus said when your enemy is hungry feed him, when thirsty give him water to drink. The church has demonstrated that through her nonviolence witness.

(7) Another practical way through which the Church of the Brethren witness of nonviolence is being demonstrated is through participation in peacemaking and peace building processes. EYN has Peace Programme through which Christians and Muslims for Peace Building Initiatives (CAMPI) bringing ten Muslims and ten Christians together in dialogue was put in place. This is EYN inter-faith programme and the

⁶⁶ My personal explanation.

Church's contribution towards ensuring peaceful co-existence and fostering religious harmony in a non-violent way. When you watch and listen to the group together discussing the need for peace, you will surely be touched and have a different view of both the Christian faith and Islam. Unfortunately, the programme has always been sponsored by EYN alone since inception and no Muslim financial or logistic contribution. The group CAMPI at one of its meetings, after brainstorming and assessment of barriers to peaceful coexistence between Christians and Muslims in Mubi area, developed a Mubi based Inter-faith Peace Initiative Club as a forum for an interfaith Dialogue. Since then, CAMPI has been organizing conflict resolution training workshops for dialogue and conflict management. The strategy has been to strengthen and promote peace within religious institutions such as Mosques and Churches. They have been purposefully reaching secondary schools where Christians and Muslim students live together and study together with great ambition for the future.

CAMPI believes that the new initiative of forming a peace building club, targeting secondary school students will help create social integration between Christians and Muslims as they grow as future leaders with good and positive view of each other. The Peace Club is intended to help the students to grow together with respect for each other, develop a sense of belonging and share common value. This will also help them develop a spirit of openness and respect for each other's faith.

Some of the activities of the Peace Club include staging dramas on interfaith matters, singing and dancing together, organizing peace carnival, football matches, environmental sanitation and tree planting together. CAMPI also organizes inter-school peace debate and competition to promote peace and interfaith interaction. Most of the topics of the debate are focused on common problems affecting communities such as poverty as one of the causes of conflict. CAMPI is working on organizing a fashion parade peace summit to promote a code of dressing and socio-cultural and religious cohesion among the students.

One issue that is coming out so prominently here is that just as was the approach of the Church of the Brethren in the US and other Historic Peace Churches where the

strategy for peace and nonviolence is threefold: First is actions before war or violence, two actions during war or violence that is attending to the needs of victims of war and violence and the third is actions after war. The actions after war have to do among others but not limited to trauma healing, trust and confidence building, and reconciliation. CAMPI⁶⁷ has been seriously working before violence breaks out, this has been helpful.

EYN has been partnering with Centre for Peace Advancement in Nigeria (CEPAN) a Non Governmental Organisation pursuing peace. These efforts have been yielding some measures of result but not substantial yet. However, for these efforts be sustained and more needs to be done.

(8) The Church of the Brethren in Nigeria has always responded by enabling the victims of violence to survive the situation and the effects if they just only lost properties. This EYN has always demonstrated, even with the post presidential election violence in 2011 where Churches were the target and Christians were killed, raped and tortured, the Church had to resettle the members and showed them God's compassion. The Church had spoken out against the violence and called on the Federal, States and Local Governments to ensure justice and peace granted to all and perpetrators be brought to book and punished for their crime against humanity.

(9) The Church of the Brethren in Nigeria has been speaking as God's advocate being the voice of the victims and the oppressed. The world through the Church of the Brethren has been hearing the stories of these people. This has been helping in healing of memories. The recent action of the Church as an advocate was when the Church of the Brethren in Nigeria, the Local Church Council Utako District Abuja, invited the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria and told him about the peace stance of the Church, and also told him of the number of victims and the atrocities committed against the Church and called on him to do all he can through dialogue in a nonviolent way to bring an end to the acts of killings in the nation.

⁶⁷ Christian and Muslims for Peace Building Initiatives (CAMPI) EYN Peace Programme RC 643. ND. Pp.1-5.

EYN in partnership with the Church of the Brethren USA have had workshops on trauma healing organized for church leaders and not limited to EYN. These were done in order to help the victims of violence be healed and to encourage them to stand up and never to contemplate violence as an option. As a Church being God's advocate to the victims of violence, there had been deliberate efforts of raising supports and relief materials to victims of violence. There are instances where houses destroyed have been rebuilt and foodstuff supplied to the victims.

EYN through her relief committee (disaster management team) been taking care of displaced people by providing relief materials, drugs etc.

Through her Women Ministry, the Church of the Brethren in Nigeria had severally organized trauma healing workshops for children and was stepped down in lots of local congregations. This ministry takes care of widows and vulnerable children.

(10) EYN is fully partnering with TEKAN (the Fellowship of Churches of Christ in Nigeria) Peace Programme to further ensure there is peace among different ethno-religious people of Nigeria. TEKAN Peace Desk with its headquarters in Jos the Plateau State Capital, a State that has suffered too many violence has been doing a wonderful job towards restoring peace in a nonviolent way. The Church of the Brethren in Nigeria is a major stakeholder in TEKAN and using nonviolent means to address the lingering insecurity in the nation.

(11) The Church of the Brethren in Nigeria has been emphasizing how to break the circle of violence by not only refusing taking revenge but much more through grassroots revival of the African Community spirit. What the pastors and leaders have been emphasizing is that when a Muslim neighbour rejoices, Christian neighbours to rejoice with him/her so too when in times of sorrow. That was the way Africa used to be, the current trend of Christians inhabiting a certain part of the town while Muslims occupy a certain part is unhealthy as far as Church of the Brethren is concerned. This is further hatching mistrust and suspicion.

When one visits cities and towns like Kano the Kano State Capital, Kaduna the Kaduna State Capital and Jos the Plateau State Capital, one discovers that the Muslims are now occupying specific areas and streets while the Christians inhabiting other areas. The Church of the Brethren in Nigeria felt that grassroot African Community Spirit will be a solution and help in restoring trust and confidence in a nonviolent manner.

(12) The Bura Women Development Association which first started as a Church of the Brethren Bura Women Association has taken up a multi-religious dimension and working towards peaceful co-existence in a nonviolent way. This group of women has been advocates of peace and nonviolence. They have called on the Nigerian government to ensure justice, equity and fair play to all. They have been visiting victims of violence and giving them succor. They have not only been concerned with violence between communities and peoples but also areas of gender violence are taken seriously by them.

(13) The Women Fellowship of the Church of the Brethren in Nigeria has been one of the active church groups in the church. Besides the numerous activities by this group, they have been very active in nonviolent actions. They had programme of taking care of widows and orphans more especially those that are victims of violence.

(14) The Gwoza Christian Community Association (GCCA) which is made up of predominantly Church of the Brethren in Nigeria members have been a nonviolent association serving as a voice to the voiceless. This association inspired by nonviolent witness of the church has been taking care of victims of violence more especially girls who were victims of rape.

There are several women associations and groups like this born out of the Church of the Brethren in Nigeria which are not directly under the church but have been influenced by the nonviolent witness of the church. Some among such groups are the Kamwe Christian Women Association, Glavda Christian Women Association to mention but few.

From the above discussion, one sees that the Church of the Brethren witness of nonviolence is truly in practice. The researcher is convinced that it has contributed in no small measure in breaking the circle of violence in that specific conflict ridden context. As to the position of the nonviolent nature of the Church of the Brethren in Nigeria, several comments have been uttered by Muslims and those who are African Traditional worshippers to testify that this Church, and by 'this church' they mean *Ekklesiyar Yanuwa A Nigeria* , is a Church of peace. When the researcher had an opportunity and visited Garin Tabki in Niger Republic in January 23rd, 2013 where EYN has a mission station though there was no single Christian there with the exception of the missionary and his family, the traditional ruler of the village said, "This Church is a Church of peace."⁶⁸

Having seen how the nonviolent peace witness of the Church of the Brethren in Nigeria is lived out and its impact, then the second chapter where we shall be discussing the nonviolent ecclesial self-understanding of the Historic Peace Churches.

⁶⁸ Personal interview with Mai Martaba Alhaji Mahmud the traditional ruler of Garin Tabki in Niger Republic, 23rd January 2013.

CHAPTER TWO

2.0 The Nonviolent Ecclesial Self-understanding of the Historic Peace Churches

2.1 The Mennonites

2.1.1 Swiss Brethren

2.1.2 The Obbenites

2.1.3 Menno Simons and the name Mennonites

2.1.4 Conversion Experience

2.1.5 The Society of Friends Quakers

2.1.6 The Church of the Brethren

2.1.7 Some Beliefs and Practices of Historic Peace Churches

2.1.8 Significance of Nonviolence in the Historic Peace Churches

CHAPTER TWO

2.0 The Nonviolent Ecclesial Self-understanding of the Historic Peace Churches

Historic Peace Churches is a term widely used for the three church groups (Denominations), which have for centuries held the position that the New Testament forbids Christian participation in war and violence. The three are; the Mennonites, the Society of Friends (Quakers) and the Church of the Brethren. These groups advocate for pacifism believing that Jesus advocated nonviolence. Though, this teaching of nonviolence and pacifism is not restricted to the Historic Peace Churches, they have prominently promoted it and made it part of their ecclesiological identity. These church traditions have an extended history which can be traced to the Anabaptist movement of the sixteenth century in Europe. Enns has an interesting point when he says,

Central to the Anabaptist vision of the Church was becoming a people of peace. Thus nonviolence became one of the regulative principles for their ecclesiology, based on the cross, where God had shown that his nonviolence to creation rejected the use of violence even when God's own self was threatened on the cross. Jesus suffered death to reveal the hopelessness of the way of

*violence and to prove the truth that love and nonviolence will overcome all evil, even death, in the end.*⁶⁹

There are three critical issues from the above quotation which need elaboration. First is the mention of the Anabaptist. The Historic Peace Churches are descendents of Anabaptist. The second point is that non-violence is one of the regulative principles of the Historic Peace Churches ecclesiology and three, non-violence is believed by the Historic Peace Churches that it would overcome all evil even death. Miller and Barbara in the same line of thought have this to say,

*During the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries in European Christianity several ecclesial communities emerged that regard pacifism or nonresistance as the defining mark of the true church. Their pacifism is closely linked with their understanding of church-state relationship, which is in turn rooted in their scriptural hermeneutics. Seeking a return to the life and virtue of the primitive church, the evangelical radicals looked to the New Testament to guide their faith and practice.*⁷⁰

It is seen that Miller and Barbara are using the word Pacifism and nonresistance interchangeably. The Historic Peace Churches are seeking to return to the life and virtue of the primitive church. This is important for the Historic Peace Churches. Lienemann in his description of the Historic Peace Churches has this to say,

*Under the rubric of 'Historic Peace Churches' we understand those churches or congregations within Protestantism, which at the time of their origins were sidelined and persecuted by the politically influenced society in which they lived, and which somewhat later from their side took a more or less clear stand for the separation of church and state, and whose members until today understand non-resistance and nonviolence as important characteristics of Christian discipleship and therefore, as a rule, reject military service.*⁷¹

⁶⁹ Fernando Enns, *Seeking Peace in Africa: Stories from African Peacemakers*, (Telford, PA: Cascadia Publishing House), 2007. 61-63:61-62.

⁷⁰ Donald F. Durnbaugh and Charles W. Brockwell, in *The Church's Peace Witness*, ed. Marlin E. Miller and Barbara Nelson Gingerich, (Grand Rapids: W. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company) 1994,182-195:182.

⁷¹ Wolfgang Lienemann, "Frieden, Bensheimer Hefte," vol.92 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2000), 123-124 quoted by Fernando Enns, in his *The Peace Church and the Ecumenical Community: Ecclesiology and the Ethics of Nonviolence*, (Ontario: Pandora Press), 2007:74.

From Lienemann's description at the beginning the emphasis on the separation of the Church and State, the persecution suffered by these group of believers and the position they held on nonresistance and nonviolence. Enns' defines the Historic Peace Churches (HPCs) this way,

It is a church strongly marked by an "anti-clerical (non-liturgical, non-creedal, non-hierarchical, non-sacramental) stamp. It is a free (voluntary) church and a congregationally structured denomination holding firmly to a Christologically-based rejection of violence as the central ethical requirement of comminatio. It follows that the HPCs are designated confessionally as Protestant free churches that name nonviolence as a characteristic of their ecclesial identity. They are "historic" in that they have not arisen as a new movement of our day but have roots in a tradition reaching back into church history, one that places them in a direct line originating with the Jesus' and the early Christian requirement of nonviolence- in contrast to liberal concept of pacifism.⁷²

Enns's definition is about the most comprehensive description of the Historic Peace Churches. When was the concept of the Historic Peace Churches documented? The concept of the HPCs is documented in the literature after 1935. At a conference in Kansas, representatives of the Mennonites, the Church of the Brethren and the Quakers (Society of Friends) came together for the first time. Their purpose was to formulate "Principles of Christian Peace and Patriotism." The concept of the "Historic Peace Church" also signified a distancing from a concept of pacifism bearing strong connections to liberal theology.

The representative peace churches at the Kansas event identified with each other on the basis of three common characteristics: (1) "Each has been visibly active world-wide in relief work among victims of war and other kinds of service, and in fostering international communication"; (2) "each has assumed or affirmed the supranational quality of Christian fellowship"; (3) "Each has taught the historic view that the Christian is called not to participate in war, even when required to do so by government."⁷³

The above church families are called Historic Peace Churches because they have accepted the interpretation of the cross of Jesus Christ as their heritage. The Historic Peace Churches are Church families that took seriously Gospel's teaching of loving

⁷² Fernando Enns, *The Peace Church and the Ecumenical Community: Ecclesiology and the Ethics of Nonviolence*, (Ontario: Pandora Press), 2007:84.

⁷³ Ibid. p 76.

neighbour and enemy, turning the other cheek when stroke on the other, not only to go one mile but the second mile, not only to be against violence but to seek healing and reconciliation whenever relationship is broken or violated. They seek only nonviolence means in conflict resolutions and are teaching that all war is sin. They are generally believed to be pacifists and some amongst them are conscientious objectors. They clearly distance themselves from churches who hold to the just war theory, teaching that there are some wars that are morally right.

2.1 The Mennonites

Mennonites is one of the Historic Peace Churches starting from its formation. This is so because the Mennonites are the first to come into existence. The Mennonites are closest descendants of Anabaptist who espoused nonviolence. The beginning of the Mennonites movement can be traced back to Switzerland in 1525, where Konrad Grebel and others who were followers of Zwingli began to practice believers' baptism. Smith who was one of the greatest historians of the Mennonites, of course a Mennonite himself has this to say in his work, "The Anabaptists with whom we are here concerned had their beginning as a separate religious body in Zurich, Switzerland as a radical wing of Zwinglianism in the beginning of that movement. In the early period of his reforming career, Zwingli seemed much more inclined than in his later years to radical changes from the old order."⁷⁴ A closer study of the life of Zwingli reveals that Zwingli was more interested in Bible Studies and looked to the Bible for solutions to the problems of his day. Smith went further to tell us more about the life of Zwingli this way when he talked about Zwingli as the Chief Preacher of Zurich. He says, "Soon after his installation as the chief Preacher of Zurich in 1518, he preached against tithes, and spoke highly of Church fasts; soon, too, he opposed Swiss Military Service in the armies of the Pope, though not on scriptural, but rather on social and economic grounds."⁷⁵ Many Church historians who have written on Zwingli's reformation hold on to the view that as many as were the reformers who were satisfied with Zwingli's reformation, others were not. Smith holds to the above view also and he has this to say, "But liberal as he was, he did not succeed in satisfying all his co-reformers. There were some to whom the cause of reform was not moving

⁷⁴ C Henry Smith, *The Mennonites Story*, (Newton, Kansas: Mennonite Publication Office), 1972:2.

⁷⁵ Ibid.,

swiftly enough. These were the first to find fault with the Mass, the Observance of Saints Days, the use of pictures and images in worship, and other Orthodox Catholic Religious practices.”⁷⁶

Worthy of mention is the year 1522 where Wilhelm Reublin was made a pastor at Wytikon a village in Switzerland. Reublin soon rejected the use of Relics; he described relics as nothing but dead people’s bones. He went further to take a wife being the first clergy to do that as prior to that, the clergy practice celibacy. The contribution of Hetzer, Hubmaier and Stumpf as summarized by Smith is worth stating here. In his words,

*At the same time, Ludwig Hetzer, by birth a South German, and by training a learned Habraist, greatly stirred up the populace with a tract against images and pictures as used in worship. Up in Waldshut, just across the border, Balthasar Hubmaier, a famous theologian and former University rector, was beginning to deny the validity of infant baptism. Simon Stumpf, pastor at Hongg, a village just at the outskirts of Zurich, was preaching against tithe and rents.*⁷⁷

There were some fundamental questions to which Wenger in his work *Glimpses of Mennonite History and Doctrine* raised and provided answers. Was there need for Mennonite Church? Why did the Mennonite founding fathers not remain in the Roman Catholic Church? Why were they not satisfied with the other Protestant Churches of continental Europe- the Lutheran and the Reformed? In providing answers to the above questions systematically, he has this to say, “Why then did the Sixteenth-Century founders of the Mennonite Church withdraw from the Roman Catholic Church? The answer is that they were determined by God’s grace to get back to the Bible, back to the faith of the apostles of Christ, back to the faith of the Church of the New Testament.”⁷⁸ The above statement or answer justifying the founding fathers’ reason for starting the Mennonite Church could as well be the reason given by founding fathers of many churches and of course their followers as to why they founded such churches. Wenger in trying to buttress his point went on to list thirteen key issues (Salvation by Grace and not mere partaking of Sacraments, Priesthood of all believers,

⁷⁶ Ibid.,

⁷⁷ Smith, p. 3.

⁷⁸ John Christian Wenger, *Glimpses of Mennonite History and Doctrine*, (Scottsdale, Pennsylvania: Herald Press), 1949:4.

Justification by faith alone, the Christian life is a life of obedience to Christ and his words, the Church is the fellowship of Saints, that God alone should be worshipped and not Mary and Joseph, that baptism is a symbol and not a supernatural instrument of Grace, that the bread of the Holy Communion is a symbol and does not change to real body of Christ, the cup is to be for all believers not as practiced by the Roman Catholics prior to the reformation where the laity do not partake of the cup, that also the New Testament did not enforce celibacy on priests as the Roman Catholic teaches, the Bible is believed to teach on Hell and Heaven but the Roman Catholics add purgatory. Mennonites refused all military service while the Roman Catholics employed it and lastly, sola-scriptura while the Roman Catholics have tradition and the Bible). The Council of Trent (1545-1563) reaffirmed the Roman Catholic position. Wenger went on to correct what he termed as wrong or false theories on Anabaptism.

He stated that many older historians believed there was a connection between the radical Zwickau prophets of Saxony, Germany led by Nicholas Storch in the early 1520s, and the Swiss Anabaptists. He said that such a connection has no supporting evidence and Storch up to his death in 1525 never had believers' baptism. Wenger went further to dispel another wrong notion on Anabaptists, in his words,

Another ill-founded notion, which goes ultimately to Heinrich Bullinger, 1504-78, Zwingli's successor in Zurich, is that radical Thomas Munzer of Saxony, another Zwickau "prophet," had established contact with the Swiss Brethren. It is true that Conrad Grebel wrote a lengthy letter to Munzer but the letter never reached its goal, and Munzer, who was captured and executed, 1525, probably never heard of Grebel. Munzer's program of violence was entirely unacceptable to the nonresistant Swiss Brethren. Grebel wrote to Munzer as follows, '[Christians] use neither the worldly sword nor engage in war, since among them taking human life has ceased entirely...' Swiss Anabaptism had no connections with Munzer's peasant revolt of 1524-25.⁷⁹

Wenger among others rejected the views held by Karl Kautsky, 1854-1938 and that of H. Richard Niebuhr that Anabaptism was a social-economic movement. He stated on the contrary that the founders of Swiss Anabaptism preached not social revolt, but repentance, faith and holiness.

⁷⁹ Wenger, *Glimpses of Mennonite History and Doctrine*, p 7.

There was another theory held by people like Albrecht Ritschl, 1822-99 that the Anabaptists have Monastic Origin. This theory however cannot be sustained from the available evidences. The Mennonites teach the order of Apostolic Succession since some amongst the founding fathers were members of the Roman Catholic with some priests. Some people like Ludwig Keller 1849-1915 claimed that there was a connection between the Swiss Anabaptists with the Waldenses. However, historically, the Waldenses disappeared hundred years before the actual founding of Swiss Brethren. Some still like Rufus M. Jones interpreted Anabaptism in terms of Mysticism. This theory too is unfounded as Anabaptists were not mystics but Biblical literalists. Wenger in his discussion on the founder of Anabaptism says,

The founder of Anabaptism was a young patrician and scholar named Conrad Grebel. His parents were Jacob and Dorothea Fries Grebel. The Grebel family had originally settled in Zurich in 1386 and was always prominent in the affairs of the city. Jacob was one of the most outstanding of the Grebels, being a wealthy iron merchant and leading citizen. He was elected to the Zurich Council in 1494, and was made Magistrate or ruler (Vogt) of the township of Grueningen, just east of the city, in 1499. Conrad was born in the city of Zurich in 1498.⁸⁰

Conrad attended many schools and met different renowned scholars. It was believed that he was very intelligent but his moral life was at its lowest ebb. He had his life full of health challenges and married while back in Switzerland after being at Vienna and Paris. Grebel died in 1526. As to whether the Grebels family are found in Mennonites Church today or not, Wenger has this to say,

On December 5, 1527 his widow (Grebel's), Barbara, married a man named Jacob Zieglar, undoubtedly a member of the Reformed Church, for Barbara did not stand by her first husband during his trying months as a leader of the Swiss Brethren. Relatives of the Reformed faith reared Theophilus and Joshua (Grebel's Barbara's Children). Therefore, none of the descendants of the founder of Anabaptism are found in the Mennonite Church today.⁸¹

The Swiss Brethren Movement cannot best be understood without understanding the Lutheran Reformation as well as the Zwinglian Reform Movements as stated earlier. It

⁸⁰ Ibid. p. 9.

⁸¹ Ibid. p. 11.

is an undisputed fact that the founder of the Sixteenth Century Reformation was the German theologian named Martin Luther (1483-1546). Luther was a Catholic Monk who entered the Monastery sometimes in 1505. Martin Luther was said to have been so conscious of his sin and had struggled for a long time trying to achieve peace with God. In vain however Luther fasted; prayed and did all kinds of good works but could not achieve peace with God. In his theological studies, he obtained his Doctor of Theology in 1512. Luther in his spiritual struggles discovered the doctrine of Justification by Faith which changed his entire life. On October 31, 1517, some legends have it that Luther tacked his ninety-five theses on the door of the Church at Wittenberg. In 1520, Luther went further to publish three reform booklets. On June 15 that same year, the Pope issued a formal threat of excommunication. Luther it was said burned the Papal decree and the Pope also ordered for the burning of Luther's books.

In 1521, Luther was summoned to the diet (Parliament) which was convened in the German city of Worms. At that Parliament, the Catholic Church demanded of Luther to recant to which he refused. Upon Luther's return, for the safety of his life, his friends kidnapped him and kept him in a Castle in Wartburg where he spent eleven months. While there, he translated the New Testament into German. In 1522, it was believed he undid some of the things and returned to the Monastery. He soon abandoned ascetic life and took a wife.

It was generally believed and accepted among associates of Luther and historians that Luther was a powerful leader. In the words of Wenger, "Luther was a great man, a powerful leader, a talented personality. He was a reformer, theologian, preacher, writer, poet, and musician. He wrote hymns as widely and different as the militant song, 'A Mighty Fortress is our God,' and the tender Christmas hymn, 'Away in a Manger.' His family life was a model for Christian joy and piety."⁸² A lot indeed have been said and written on Luther's reformation to which we shall not be able to look at. However, there is an African adage that '*nobody is all wise and nobody can do all things*,' this is true with Luther. Wenger saying what most historians of the other Churches after Luther and Zwingli thus, "Martin Luther did a great work in

⁸² Wenger, p. 14.

inaugurating the Reformation, but he did not go all the way in simple obedience to the New Testament, rather he retained a State Church, Infant Baptism, an elaborate ritual in worship, an ineffective emphasis on holiness of life. He did not believe in religious toleration, freedom of conscience, biblical non-resistance, or separation of Church and State."⁸³ It was obvious that the influence of Martin Luther's reform went far within Germany and beyond. The Catholic of German speaking Switzerland was also influenced by the reform literature of Luther.

The unarguably most influential priest in the Swiss reform was a leader in Zurich by name Huldrych (Ulrich) Zwingli, 1484-1531. Wenger made an interesting comparison between Luther and Zwingli and says thus, "Temperamentally Zwingli and Luther were quite different. Luther was impulsive, a man of powerful passions. Ultimately he had an overwhelming sense of the love of and grace of God. Zwingli was, by nature, cool and practical, with no profound sense of sin. Yet he, too, was an earnest reformer."⁸⁴ Zwingli preached against the Catholic superstitious practice of pilgrimage to the Shrine of the black image of the Virgin Mary at Einsiedeln. In 1518, Zwingli opposed a seller of indulgences who arrived Switzerland. Zwingli himself could not admit the influence of Luther on him because when monks accused him of being Luther's follower he denied, though it was obvious that Luther's influence on him was great since he defended Luther's writings. The epidemics of plague that broke out in Switzerland in 1519 where Zwingli got ill led him to surrender to God thereby resulting into his deeper Christian experience. "By 1520, he was preaching against tithes, fasting, monasticism, the intercession of deceased saints, and belief in purgatory."⁸⁵

Zwingli held three disputations on Catholicism, the first one was in January 29, 1523, at which there was Catholic representatives. The second was in October 26-28, 1523 where there were no representatives of traditional Catholicism and the last one was on January 20, 1524 where action was taken. The Zwinglian Reformation spread to other cities and Cantons of Switzerland and South Germany. The chief centers were Basle, Berne, Schaffhausen, St Gall, and the Alsatian Strasburg. "Zwingli went far beyond Luther in his reformation. Luther rejected only those doctrines and practices which

⁸³ Ibid. p 15.

⁸⁴ Ibid. p 16.

⁸⁵ Wenger, p 16.

conflicted with the Bible, while Zwingli aimed to discard every teaching and ceremony which lacked Biblical support."⁸⁶Zwingli was killed in the battle of Cappel on October 11, 1531 and his body burnt.

2.1.1 Swiss Brethren

The next group of people which the history of the Mennonite Church will be incomplete without is the Swiss Brethren. Who is the founder of the Swiss Brethren? What were the uniqueness of the Swiss Brethren? In an attempt to answer the above questions, This research analyzed the life of Conrad Grebel the man who was believed by most Church Historians to be the founder of the Swiss Brethren. Wenger goes further to state that, "Conrad Grebel was won for the evangelical cause by Ulrich Zwingli. During the year 1522 Grebel made the change, and a thorough conversion it was. It was undoubtedly the preaching of Zwingli which led to Grebel's conversion. Grebel himself stated that he got 'on this way' through Zwingli. No account of Grebel's conversion has been preserved however."⁸⁷ It was obvious that Grebel was a loyal follower of Zwingli. However, as time went by, Grebel and some of his colleagues started getting uncomfortable with the slow pace of Zwingli. We get this description that,

During the year 1523 a tinge of disappointment began to colour the attitude of Grebel and his colleagues towards Zwingli. During that summer Simon Stumpf, Priest in Hoengg, near Zurich, went to Zwingli and laid before him a plan for a new Christian Church. He was followed by Grebel. Both men felt that Zwingli was going too slowly and too mildly in his reformation. Greater earnestness was required, they thought, than Zwingli was manifesting. They longed to see Zwingli lead out in setting up a Church of converted believers, abolishing the State church system, and disentangling the disposition of Church questions from any connection with the civil authorities.⁸⁸

It was evident that Zwingli was not willing to follow their plan. The duo expressed their strong rejection of the continued observance of the Roman Catholic Mass. It was in October 28, 1523 during the second disputation, Zwingli and Grebel came to an open break as Grebel raised several points to which Zwingli was not willing to shift grounds.

⁸⁶ Ibid. p 17.

⁸⁷ Ibid., p. 18.

⁸⁸ Wenger, p. 19.

The issues raised by Stumpf and Grebel were: The Lord's Supper, mixing of wine with water, and the priests inserting water into the mouth of the communicant. Since Zwingli could not accept to change, Grebel thus declared, "The one thing necessary before all else is the abolition of the mass. Much has been said about the mass but none of the priests is willing to forsake this great abomination."⁸⁹ Zwingli in response said that the matter has to be taken to the Council to decide on the matter. When Zwingli said that, Simon Stumpf responded by saying that, 'Master Ulrich, you have not the right to leave the decision of this question to the Council, the matter is already decided; the Spirit of God [through the Scriptures] decides it.' Stumpf went on to quit saying mass in Hoengg. On November 3rd that same year (1523), he was ordered out of town by the Council, and on November 20th he was exiled from the Conton of Zurich.

William Reublin was one of the early priests who taught the principles of believers' baptism. He preached against various Roman Catholic traditions. It was said that, "In a religious procession of June 13, 1522, instead of bearing some 'holy' relics, Reublin carried an open Bible, saying, 'This is the true Sacred thing; the other is only dead men's bones.'⁹⁰ He was banished at Basle and he left for Zurich where he was appointed priest at Wytikon. Reublin became the first Swiss priest to get married in August 1523. Reublin advocated the position earlier held by Zwingli of allowing infants grow up first before baptism. In August 11, 1524, Reublin was arrested and spent sometimes in prison.

There were also records of letters Grebel wrote to Thomas Munzer and Luther to which he got no reply. Some debates were held between Zwingli and the Brethren. The Brethren representatives were Grebel, Reublin and Felix Manz. However, The Council went on to pass a mandate that all have to baptize infants. The Brethren then went and inaugurated Believers' Baptism.

2.1.2 The Obbenites

Another group on the Mennonites analysis is the Obbenites. This was the group that came up and took their name from Obbe Philips and his brother Dick. These two were

⁸⁹ Ibid., p 20.

⁹⁰ Ibid., p 21.

baptized by the apostles of the Melchiorites to which Obbe considered them false prophets. The Melchiorites brethren told them that Christians will not be persecuted anymore and that bloodshed has come to an end, that they had powers of miracles just as the apostles. They were baptized and were entrusted with the ministry. Soon after that soul lifting teaching, persecution started and the apostles of no more persecutions were themselves executed. The Philips brothers suffered great persecution and after but just two years of inaugurating their evangelical programme, Menno Simons, a converted priest joined their group. Menno was baptized by Obbe Philips. Soon, after that, a group of Obbenites made Menno to take up the ministry. Menno has this to say,

Thus my reader, behold, I was not called to serve among the followers of Munster nor of any other seditious sect (as it is falsely reported concerning me), but I have been called, unworthy, to this office by a people who were ready to receive Christ and His word, led a penitent life in the fear of God, serve their neighbors in love, bore the Cross, sought the welfare and salvation of all men, love righteousness and truth, and abhorred wickedness and unrighteousness, which shows pointedly that they were not such perverted persons as they are slanderously reported to have been.⁹¹

There had been lots of argument as to the connection between the Swiss Brethren which was founded by Conrad Grebel in 1525 and the Obbenites founded by Obbe Philips in 1534 with some historians believing they were connected while historians like Wenger believe the contrary. In the words of Wenger we have this,

So far as we know, Obbe at that time had never heard of the Brethren in Switzerland. Nor was the rise of Obbenites in any way associated with the older Waldenses; there is no evidence that there had ever been Waldenses in the Netherlands at any time. The doctrine of the Obbenites and that of the Swiss brethren were quite similar simply because both groups made a serious effort to reject tradition and to make the Scripture the sole norm of faith and practice.⁹²

With the above available evidences, we could agree with Wenger that there was no connection between the Swiss Brethren and the Obbenites.

⁹¹ Wenger, p. 74.

⁹² Wenger, p. 75.

2.1.3 Menno Simons and the name Mennonites

The name Mennonites was taken after Menno Simons (1496-1561) the influential leader and reformer from Netherlands. Menno Simons was born in 1496 at Witmarsum in Friesland. He received training for the Catholic Priesthood in the Franciscan Monastery at Bolsward, near his hometown. Although he never read the Bible, his training was in reading and writing Latin and in the studies of the Church fathers.

Menno was consecrated priest in 1524 and served for about seven years in the Pinjum Parish. He was after then transferred to his hometown Witmarsum and served there for five years. Of course one will guess already as a Catholic Priest what Menno's work as a priest consists of, celebrating the mass, offering prayers for both the living and the dead, infant baptism and hearing confessions of sins among others.

2.1.4 Conversion Experience

This is the way Mennonite historians record the conversion experience of Menno Simons the founder of the Mennonite Church. In the words of Wenger he says, "One day in 1525, during the first year of his priesthood, while he was celebrating the mass, a doubt crept into his mind as to whether the bread and the wine actually became divine. This doubt of the truth of transubstantiation was to lead to Menno's first soul-struggle."⁹³ Menno at first thought that thinking was from the devil to distract and tried to discard such thought. But the seed of struggle was already sown; he went on to study the word of God on that matter. It was obvious that Martin Luther through his works had great influence on Menno Simons, "For Luther (through his writings) taught Menno one great truth. A violation of human commands cannot lead to eternal death. And yet Menno did not become a Lutheran; he developed his doctrine of the Lord's Supper. But it was Martin Luther who convinced Menno that the ultimate authority in all matters of faith was the word of God and nothing else."⁹⁴

Though Menno was convinced of such a truth and took such a position as far back as 1528, from available records, he continued as a Catholic celebrating the mass and doing all as a Catholic priest. Then came a second incidence which further helped in raising more questions in the life of Menno. That incidence was the execution of the

⁹³ Glimpses p.75.

⁹⁴ Ibid. p. 76.

Dutch man by name Sicke Freeks. Freeks was baptized as an adult through believers' baptism in 1530 but was executed for his faith at Leeudverden on March 20, 1531. Menno asked the question, is the Catholic Church also unbiblical as to baptism? Menno quickly consulted the works of leading reformers and he got these,

Luther said that infants baptism was justifiable because babies have 'hidden faith,' just as a believing adult is also a Christian even while he is asleep. Martin Butzer said that infant baptism was a pledge that the parents will give the child a godly training. Henry Bullinger, Zwingli's successor in Zurich, said as the Old Testament covenant (circumcision) was performed on infants, so also the New Testament sign of the covenant (baptism) shall be performed on infants.⁹⁵

Although these arguments seem logical, convincing and reasonable, Menno was not so much interested in logic as in the word of God. He then went on to search through the pages of the New Testament in his quest to get proof texts to infant baptism; however, he could not see anything on infant baptism. With all these questions, confusion and disillusionment, Menno continued as a Catholic priest baptizing infants and saying the mass. In the midst of all these however, he was promoted to become a head-pastor at his hometown. We could see a person who could be judged to be living a double standard life, believing one thing and doing the other.

Menno's struggle continued until between the years of 1534-35 when the fanatical Munsterites came to Holland with their abominable views that brought about radical change in his life. Menno rose up challenging the Munsterites, but in so doing, he was defending Catholicism. Wenger summarized Menno's conversion experience this way,

About April 1535 Menno surrendered to God, crying for pardon and peace. What a decision that was for the Obbenites and for the future Mennonite Church! Strangely enough Menno apparently remained in the Catholic Church for yet another nine months, preaching evangelical doctrine from a Catholic pulpit. But this could not go on indefinitely, and in January 1536 Menno renounced the Catholic Church and thus took the step which he had known for a long time was God's will for him.⁹⁶

⁹⁵ Wenger, p. 76.

⁹⁶ Wenger, Glimpses, p. 77.

Menno Simons after that was given leadership by the Obbenites and was soon ordained an elder (bishop) by Obbe Philips probably in 1537. Soon after Menno got married to Gertrude but had to suffer lots of oppositions. Menno took up the proclamation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ so passionately winning souls and strengthening believers.

Migration due primarily to persecution and mission spread the movement. Mennonites are non-creedal but have written many confessions. "Three main distinguishing features need to be mentioned: The church as a community of believers; the church lives under the authority of the word of God and; both social and personal ethics in the life of discipleship is part of the gospel."⁹⁷

2.2 The Society of Friends (Quakers)

The name Quakers at first was a nickname given to them by outsiders due to the trembling of the friends at their meetings, but now Friends use the name as self-designation.

*They were originally called 'Children of the Light', 'Friends in the Truth', 'Friends of the Truth', or 'Friends'. The present official title, 'Religious Society of Friends', came into general use in the 19th century. This was a movement that developed around the teachings and preaching of George Fox (1624-1691) in England. Fox taught that the ordained ministry and consecrated buildings were irrelevant. Friends were persecuted in England due to their resistance to civil laws of religion. Worthy of mention is that social action is a characteristic of the Friends. Friends have worked consistently towards the elimination of war and its root causes in militarism, injustice and economic imperialism.*⁹⁸

The life of George Fox was quiet interesting so too the beginning of Quakerism. Having been born to upright and honest Christian parents, he grew up to know pureness and righteousness. In the biography of George Fox quoted by Hubbard about George's early life, he has this to say,

When I came to eleven years of age, I knew pureness and righteousness; for while I was a child I was taught how to walk to

⁹⁷ Larry Miler, "Mennonites," *Dictionary of the Ecumenical Movement*, 2nd ed. (Geneva: WCC Publications), 2002, 752-753.

⁹⁸ F.L. Cross and E.A. Livingstone ed. "Friends, Society of," *The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church* (New York: Oxford University Press), 1997, 642-643.

be kept pure. The Lord taught me to be faithful in all things, and to act faithfully two ways, viz. inwardly to God and outwardly to men, and to keep to 'yea' and 'nay' in all things. For the Lord showed me that though the people of the world have mouths full of deceit and changeable words, yet I was to keep to 'yea' and 'nay' in all things; and that my words should be few and savoury, seasoned with grace; and that I might not eat and drink to make myself wanton but for health, using the creatures in their service, as servants in their places, to the glory of him that has created them; they being in their covenant, and being brought up into the covenant, as sanctified by the word which was in the beginning, by which all things are upheld; wherein is unity with the creation.⁹⁹

George Fox travelled a lot seeking comfort from priests due to temptations and despair to which he got no solution. Some amongst those he consulted were Richard Abel of Mancetter in Warswickshire, Dr Cradock of Coventry and John Machin of Atherstone but all were unable to teach George Fox's condition. It was as Hubbard puts it,

About this time Fox began to have 'openings', as he called them, intuitive perception of the truth. The first such perception does not seem very fundamental today even though it was against the background of his time. He was convinced that 'being bred at Oxford or Cambridge did not qualify or fit a man to be a minister of Christ'. By this he meant not so much a criticism of the Universities but a criticism of the concept of priesthood as something to be acquired by worldly activity, by book learning and residence, and also an implied rejection of the special position of the clergy... Instead, regardless of his learning, a man was fit to be minister of Christ if he served Christ and followed his teaching.¹⁰⁰

In 1647, Fox had a deeper revelation though not final; it had a lasting impression on him and the society, a revelation where he experimentally knew that no one can stop God when he decides to do something. However, Fox was a complex figure, Hubbard said, "Fox was no simple soul and his very complexity led to his having periods of uncertainty and depression which rendered him inactive from time to time throughout his life. Nor was he man made perfect; he had certain stiff pride, almost amounting to self-satisfaction at times, particularly when he considered the Lord had dealt justly with those who opposed him."¹⁰¹ Of course with such experiences of Fox, his 1647 vision though unique was not final. He continued to have such 'openings' of varying

⁹⁹ Geoffrey Hubbard, *Quaker by Convincement*, (England: Penguin Books), 1974, 17.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 19.

¹⁰¹ Hubbard, p. 20.

degrees. One interesting thing with Quakerism and its founding father is the Fox's journal that has details of his life and his experiences in the ministry (it was indeed an autobiography dictated in later life). Let us get the first hand description of the deeper revelation of Fox of 1647 and see the uniqueness of Quakerism.

Now after I had received that opening from the Lord that to be bred at Oxford or Cambridge was not sufficient to fit a man to be a Minister of Christ, I regarded the priests less, and looked more after the dissenting people. And among them I saw there was some tenderness, and many of them came afterwards to be convinced, for they had some openings. But as I had forsaken all the priests, so I left the separate preachers also, and those called the most experienced people; for I saw there was none among them all that could speak to my condition. And when all my hopes in them and in all mere were gone, so that I had nothing outwardly to help me, nor could tell what to do, then, oh then, I heard a voice which said, 'There is one, even Christ Jesus, that can speak to thy condition', and when I heard it my heart did leap for joy. Then the Lord did let me see why there was none upon the earth that could speak to my condition, namely, that I might give him all the glory: for all are concluded under sin and shut up in unbelief as I had been, that Jesus Christ might have the pre-eminence, who enlightens and gives grace, and faith, and power. Thus when God doth work who shall let [i.e. prevent] it? And this I knew experimentally.¹⁰²

Soon Fox was the leader of the organized Society and thereby became the dominant figure. From the above we could see the place of 'opening' or 'inner light' as is called by the Friends as the beginning of the Society of Friends. The emphasis on the 'inner light' clearly demonstrates their uniqueness with the firm belief on the working of God without hindrance at the time he wills. How then does the Society of Friends worship? Hubbard goes on to discuss Fox's teachings and the mode of worship of the Friends thus;

The interpretation that Fox put upon the Christian teaching brought him into fellowship with many who felt that here was the truth they had been seeking. From some of these groups, who had practiced silent worship, Fox and the Children of Light, or Friends in Truth, as they called themselves, took their Meeting for Worship; sitting in silence, waiting upon God, until some member of the Meeting felt the compelling promptings of the spirit to spoken ministry... though there be not a word spoken, yet is the true spiritual worship performed. The worship was so intense, the spiritual exercise so

¹⁰² George Fox, Journal, 1952, p. 7.

profound, that some shook and quivered under stress and earned for the Children of Light or Friends in Truth the nickname of 'Quakers'. The nickname has stuck.¹⁰³

Their worship is unique indeed, as gathering in silence when the Lord has not prompted any one to speak is still considered spiritual worship has been performed. Are the Friends offering something new? Hubbard says,

It is important to remember that Quakerism was not in fact offering anything completely original. The essential insight was not new, and while the combination of beliefs and practices was novel, the elements were all to be found in earlier groups, particularly in the Anabaptists, the particular Baptists and the Familists, the sect founded by Henry Nicholas in 1530 in Holland, whose writings were in Fox's library at his death.¹⁰⁴

Henry Nicholas had earlier on expressed the concept of inner light as well as the use of silence in worship and the rejection of war and oaths. He did indeed lay emphasis on the use of plain speech. The Anabaptists rejected oath taking and war. Some of the distinguishing characteristics of the Friends are; "Refusal to swear oaths; or to take off the hat or to use the second person plural as a sign of deference became the distinguishing sign of a Quaker and a frequent excuse for persecution. And the early years of Quakerism were indeed years of persecution."¹⁰⁵ However, despite the persecution suffered by the early Quakers, due to their vigorous missionary activities involving lots of travelling, Quakerism spread with many getting convinced and joining.

Worthy of note, George Fox and the earlier followers suffered lots of imprisonment. From Hubbard we get the historical narration of the spread of the Friends,

Throughout the following years, the movement grew in the northern countries, though not without opposition, sometimes from mob violence, and sometimes from the magistracy, frightened at this disturbing manifestation and often urged by the priests to convict for blasphemy. And blasphemy was easily found in Friends' attempt to put-into the language of orthodox seventeenth-century religion the concept of the indwelling presence of God. Fox asked by the magistrates of Carlisle if he was the son of God, replied

¹⁰³ Hubbard, p. 22.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid. p. 22-23.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid. p. 24.

'Yes', and replied 'Yes' also to the question whether he had seen God's face.¹⁰⁶

The reasons for the persecution were as a result of their teachings but also some of the above claims did open doors for persecution. That was further complicated by the misunderstanding from their early contemporaries that Quakerism was not true Christians to which they spent much time trying to convince them that they were primitive Christianity revived.

2.3 The Church of the Brethren

The Church of the Brethren originated in Schwarzenau, Germany in 1708 when a small group of believers committed themselves to put into practice the teachings of the New Testament. The Church of the Brethren is one of the Historic Peace Churches along with the Quakers and Mennonites, which begun in opposition to the rigid state churches in Europe and claiming Anabaptism and Pietism as its theological roots. Alexander Mack was the one generally regarded as the man responsible for starting the Church of the Brethren. Within 25 years of the beginning of the Brethren movement, most of the early Brethren had migrated to colonial Pennsylvania for greater religious freedom. In fact the Brethren at the beginning were persecuted by fellow Christians and that is the reason for their migration to Pennsylvania.

However, in writing the early history of the Church of the Brethren, one is confronted with lack of proper record keeping. This was due to two major reasons as far as the movement that later on took the name Church of the Brethren is concerned. The first reason is this that they believed that record keeping tended towards vanity, and the second reason is this that it tended towards self serving and that was unacceptable to the Brethren. To buttress this point, the name of the person who baptized Alexander Mack who was regarded as the founder of the Brethren movement was hidden and not disclosed to any to avoid the self serving nature of record keeping. From inception of the Brethren movement to about 78 years of their existence, the Brethren refused to keep statistics of membership until in 1770. We get the first accurate record of membership and number of congregations in 1882. Durnbaugh says,

¹⁰⁶ Ibid. p. 28.

Unlike the Quakers, the Brethren did not develop a tradition of writing dairies and travel accounts, which reveal so much about the inner life of that important movement. Although remarkably active in publication of devotional material for a people of their limited educational background, the Brethren typically issued their hymnals and books or poetry without attribution of poet or composer. So far was this penchant for humility carried that early Brethren would allow only initials to be placed on their gravestones made from common fieldstones.¹⁰⁷

The Brethren teaching on simple life being lived out in such a manner that the identity of song composer would not be disclosed is presented. As one continues to study the early history of the Brethren movement, he/she is also confronted with the problem of nomenclature. At first the movement did not take a name and outsiders called them by variety of terms. Durnbaugh being a Professor of Church History and a lecturer at the Bethany Theological Seminary and indeed an authority in the history of Church of the Brethren has this to say,

Members were content to call themselves 'brethren,' much like the unrelated nineteenth-century group known as the Plymouth Brethren or Darbyites. In Europe the Brethren (as we shall refer to them) were designated New Baptists (Neue Taufer) or Schwarzenau Baptists to distinguish them from the Mennonites (Alte Taufer) with which they had so much in common. The use of the name Brethren has been confusing, for many other denominations have appropriated this biblical term. Though the Brethren have had contacts with the Moravian Brethren, the Brethren in Christ (River Brethren), and the United Brethren, they should not be identified with any of them. They are all distinct entities.¹⁰⁸

When was the name taken on by the early Brethren one may ask? It took the Brethren over a hundred years of existence before they adopted a name. The name Fraternity of German Baptist was the name taken up officially by the Brethren in 1836. However, their name soon changed to German Baptist Brethren in 1871. These names had caused the Brethren to be related to Baptist movement.

¹⁰⁷ Donald F. Durnbaugh, ed. *Church of the Brethren Past and Present*, (Elgin, Illinois: The Brethren Press) 1971:9.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, p.9.

There is logic here, for the most striking of the Brethren practices was the baptism of adult believers by immersion (although this was by threefold, forward motion, not a single, backward motion as practiced by the Baptists). This form of baptism gave rise to the most common nickname for the Brethren-Dunkers (derived from the German tunken-to immerse). The nickname is often corrupted to Dunkards, and it is by this that Brethren are still known in parts of the United States. Since 1908 the official title has been the Church of the Brethren.¹⁰⁹

This shows a whooping period of over two hundred years of existence before the Brethren took up the name to which is maintained to this day.

It is quite interesting to note that Pietism as a reform movement within German Protestantism has been recorded in the annals of Church history with their leaders, so too the Radical Pieties which was a movement at the same time as the Brethren. But the history of the Brethren was nowhere found to have been captured. Durnbaugh says,

Emerging from Radical Pietism at the very same time, but of quite a different temper, was Brethren movement. Although numerically larger than the inspired, the Brethren passed virtually without notice by the scholarly world. Scattered condemnations in symbolic protocols, some documents in administrative archives, a few critical comments in the writings of the Radical Pietists- these are about all the research has discovered to date. Yet, unlike the Amana movement which is something of a religious fossil the Brethren are currently an active, if small, Free Church with worldwide commitment and contact.¹¹⁰

As to why the Brethren were unnoticed in Europe, there were about three factors given by Brethren historians. First is the fact that the Brethren were regarded as the 'Quiet Ones in the Land' – (*Die stillen im lande*). The second factor was the early migration of the Brethren to America. It was noted that within twenty-five years of the start of the Brethren in Europe, they all migrated to America in search of religious freedom. The third factor in the words of Durnbaugh,

As the Brethren formed themselves into a brotherhood or Gemeinde, they discarded many of the ideas and positions of the

¹⁰⁹ Durnbaugh, p. 10.

¹¹⁰ Ibid., p. 10.

Radical Pietists. These included Bohemism, Communitarianism, celibacy, refusal to work, antisacramentalism, and vocal criticism of authority. The best way to understand the early Brethren is to see them as a Radical Pietist group which appropriated an Anabaptist view of the Church. They stressed a gathered church of believers, the discipline of church members, a nonresistant approach to the State, and a theology of obedience. To be sure, they retained some characteristics of their Pietists background, but they were almost indistinguishable by the outsider from the Mennonites. These descendents of the sixteenth-century Anabaptists had won for themselves a tenuous tolerance in the palatinate as sturdy farmers and in other areas of Germany as skilled craftsmen.¹¹¹

As to the situation in Europe before these religious movements, before the Reformation, both from the political and religious life, there were lots of turmoil. In the discussion on the Mennonite Church, it was already elaborated on the reformation of Luther and Zwingli. Hackman says,

The years before the Church of the Brethren began were very hard times. Germany was very weak. Germany did not have a central government, but many kings ruled over small areas of land. There was very little agreement in government. The rights of the people were often ignored. There was much fighting among these kings. All the fighting kept the country from developing.... Also, the kings charged the people large taxes on items brought into Germany from other countries. The rich people who owned land made their servants work long hours. The servants had little time to work for themselves. Sometimes the kings would sell the men to other nations to be soldiers in the army. Some families moved away because of the killing by invading armies and the selling of them. The population of Germany fell very low.¹¹²

It was obvious that at that time in Germany, the standard of education among the people was very low which in turn resulted into much diseases leading to many deaths. The cost of education was very high and only the rich could afford it. In such kind of a system, it is common to see the rulers being comfortable keeping the people at that level thinking that the more the common people are educated and have improved living condition, the more they would rebel, the less educated and poor they are, the more obedient they remain. That was the same situation with the kings in Germany then. Research has revealed that more worrisome is the fact that many

¹¹¹ Ibid., p. 11.

¹¹² Galen R. Hackman, *Introduction to Brethren History*, (Nigeria: TEE College of EYN), 1992:9.

Church pastors are preaching only to win the support of the kings thereby diluting the truth of the word of God. That no doubt resulted into low moral standard by the Church as some of the pastors are involved in the bad ways of living. It is known that when the common as they are fondly called are subjected to such hardship, they will begin to be tired and would start hoping for changes. That was the same thing that happened at Germany even in the religious circle. Bittinger says,

The appearance of the Brethren in Schwarzenau, Germany, in 1708 is not isolated from other historical events of the times. In fact, the decision of Alexander Mack and seven others to break with the existing Churches can be understood best as part of the general religious and moral unrest which had long existed in Western Europe. Anyone attempting to comprehend the reasons why the baptism in the Eder River took place will need to wrestle with the larger questions pertaining to the events leading up to those years.¹¹³

Prior to the reformation of Luther in the sixteenth century, the Roman Catholic Church was the only Church recognized in Europe. The concept of the two kingdoms, kingdom of God and the kingdom of the world came to play. The Church grew in influence and the Papacy at sometimes regarded as ascendant over the kings while at other times the kings do unite against the Pope. Between the years 1198-1216, the power of the Roman Catholic Church reached its height. During that period, Kings and emperors did obeisance to the Pope whereby all men acknowledged him as their superior and as the earthly representative of God. It was during the Papacy of Innocent III where in the description of that period as given by Bittinger thus,

During the period in which the Church enjoyed the peak of both secular and religious favor she conducted successful wars against opposing groups, sought to suppress heresy by torture and death, and received vast sums of money from all her subjects in Europe. Many degrading and unchristian social, political, and religious practices, most of them regarded as normal at the time, came into the life of the Church.¹¹⁴

¹¹³ Emmert F. Bittinger, *Heritage and Promise: Perspectives on the Church of the Brethren*, (Elgin, Illinois: Church of the Brethren General Board), 1970:9.

¹¹⁴ Bittinger, p. 11.

Due to the aforementioned, the Church went into various abuses and the Papacy experienced decline. The papacy also suffered military defeat from France. Between the twelfth and fourteenth centuries, there was rise of some reform movements. Worthy of mention were the Albigenses and the Waldenses. Such movements were teaching that the Pope was not infallible and that the Bible is the only and final authority in matters of faith and conduct. Christian scholars among them John Wycliffe, John Hus and Michalangelo were burnt on the stake by the church for the translation work, for denouncing the excesses of the Church and for opposing the authority of the Papacy respectively. After that scientific intervention was introduced into the scene which further made things differently. The scientific intervention resulted into industrial growth and the increase of population and of trade. There was also the growth of education beyond the confines of the monasteries and the clergy. The invention of the Printing Press enabled many people to have access to devotional materials. Bittinger goes further to say,

In short, between the twelfth and fifteenth centuries, the life and culture of Europe were undergoing great transition. As a result of these changes, those forces seeking to reform the Church were strengthened. The political, intellectual, and spiritual monopoly of the Church was weakened. Protest against the Church was becoming more intense and vocal. Lacking the ability to predict the future, no man can possibly have foreseen the startling events which soon were to transform the Church and the religious scene in Europe in the sixteenth century. Neither could any man have succeeded in preventing those changes.¹¹⁵

This was then followed by Martin Luther's reformation and then that of Zwingli. Worthy of mention however, is the Roman Catholic Reformation which is called by the Protestants as the Counter-Reformation to which Bittinger says,

As a consequence of the Counter-Reformation, the Catholic Church gained in three areas: (1) Organizing of efforts to combat and negate Protestant doctrines. (2) Bringing about some needed reforms in the life of the Church (there have been no corrupt popes since the Counter-Reformation). (3) Alignment of political and religious personnel to fight against Protestant gains. It is worth noting that during this period a small but influential minority of Catholic leaders were stressing (as were the Protestant critics) the

¹¹⁵ Ibid, p. 13.

*need for elevating the authority of Holy Scriptures. For a return to the religious teachings of the early Church fathers, and for genuine Church reforms. ... At any rate, the Counter-Reformation had the effect of slowing down the rapid gains of Protestantism as a mass movement.*¹¹⁶

One of the saddest moments in Church history was the period between 1618 and 1648. It was the period Europe was thrown into the bloodiest intra-religious war between the Roman Catholics and the Protestants. It was until the Treaty of Westphalia (1648) that brought the open war to an end thereby providing equal rights to the Catholics, the Lutherans and the Reformed in Germany and Switzerland. Bittinger describes the kind of equal rights this way,

*However, each state or province in Germany was to be totally Lutheran, Reformed or Catholic according to the decree of the land of each state. The people were forced to accept an officially proclaimed religion under threat of persecution or to migrate to another province. A new foundation was laid for continued religious intolerance under the protective wings of local governments. ... Religious intolerance and rejection of new insights were common place. Maintenance of the status-quo and enforcement of religious and doctrinal conformity became important values.*¹¹⁷

The words of J. N. Morris is relevant when he says,

*The division of Europe into competing versions of Christianity was a much more dangerous matter than we might think today. In our world, in America and Europe, on the whole our societies have become accustomed to living with religious difference. We call this religious pluralism. We might have very serious disagreements over particular things, but mostly we are prepared to recognize that people with very different religious opinions from us are entitled to some freedom to express their views, and to some protection under the law (as long as they obey the law). This was not the case at all in the sixteenth century. Even after the main events of the Reformation in Europe, on the whole Christians continued to assume that there could be only one acceptable form of religious expression.*¹¹⁸

¹¹⁶ Ibid, p. 16-17.

¹¹⁷ Ibid, p. 17.

¹¹⁸ J.N. Morris, *Renewed by the Word: The Bible and Christian Revival Since the Reformation*, (Massachusetts: Hendrickson Publishers), 2005:25.

Because of lack of tolerance and religious freedom as most of the developed world have it today, there arose the religious wars to which Morris made reference to. In his words,

In southern Europe, in Spain and Italy, Protestant minorities were never very significant, and it was relatively easy for catholic rulers to suppress or contain them. In France, a sizeable Protestant community came into being in the course of the sixteenth century, and it took France a hundred years to manage the ensuing social and religious divisions, through civil war, attempted toleration, massacre (for example, the infamous St Bartholomew's day massacre of thousands of Huguenots, French Protestants, in Paris and other French cities in 1572), and finally suppression, with exile, of the Protestants... In northern Europe, in Scandinavia and the Baltic states, and the contrary consolidated Lutheran national churches were formed, and Catholic communities were dispersed, persecuted, or disappeared altogether.¹¹⁹

That was the scenario leading to the thirty years of wars as mentioned above. The above position is held by Pearse when he wrote on the thirty years war has this and right is he that, "A 'cold war' had been building in the Holy Roman Empire for several decades before 1618. The protagonists were two mutually antagonistic and suspicious confessional camps that, in 1608 and 1609 respectively formalized alliances as the Protestant Union and the Catholic League."¹²⁰ That kind of situation was not limited to Europe as England had nine years of religious war. Morris says this on the England wars, "In the middle of the seventeenth century, in the reign of James's unfortunate son, Charles I, religious rivalry burst into civil war. For nine years, the kingdoms were torn by war."¹²¹ It was within this period that Anabaptism and the Pietist movements arose.

Alexander Mack. Mack was born in 1679 in Schriesheim, Germany to John Philip Mack a prominent miller, local businessman and elder of the Reformed Church. Alexander Mack had an infant baptism on 27 July, 1679. He got married to Anna Margaret Kling, daughter of a respected townsman and counselor. They had five children, three sons and two daughters (John Valentine, John, Alexander, Christina, and Anna Maria). The

¹¹⁹ Ibid. p. 25-26.

¹²⁰ Meic Pearse, *The Age of Reason: From the Wars of Religion to the French Revolution, 1570-1789, The Monarch History of the Church, Vol. 5* (Oxford: Monarch Books), 2006:152.

¹²¹ Morris, p. 28.

founders of the Church of the Brethren were influenced by the Anabaptist and Pietist. This position was accepted by all Brethren historians. Bittinger collaborates this by saying,

In 1706, Mack invited the famous leader Ernest Christopher Hochmann von Hochenau to come to Schriesheim. A meeting (or series of meetings) to which various citizens of Schriesheim were attracted was held in the Mack mill. Other meetings were held in homes and in the streets. As a result of this disturbing activity, and because of their success in attracting wide interest, the authorities decided to derive the Pietist out. Mack and his wife and children escaped to Schwarzenau but eventually Hochmann was arrested with nine others and sentenced to hard public labor. The Klings were excommunicated from the Reformed Church. Hochmann and two others who were not Palatine subjects were released after few weeks.¹²²

Soon after that Mack sold his vineyards and other property and used the proceeds in settling fines of those arrested and also in supporting those refugees fleeing to Schwarzenau. There were historical evidences of Mack accompanying Hochmann on missionary journeys to Germany spreading Pietism. However, Mack being a family man was uncomfortable with lots of travelling and prefers settling with his family. More so, Mack and Hochmann could not completely agree with each other on doctrinal issues. In the words of Bittinger we get this,

Hochmann was one of the more extreme German Separatists. He did not accept the necessity for religious organizations, clergy, sacraments, and any thing else that reminded him of the outward expression of Churchness. He was interested only in a spiritual Church having no ritual, sacraments, or buildings. Mack never fully shared these views. It is possible that in the two years between his leaving Schriesheim and the baptism at the Eder he gave serious consideration to the extreme separatist position. But he decided forthrightly against it. More urgently than Hochmann, Mack felt he needed to be obedient to all biblical commands.¹²³

In their in-depth study of the New Testament, the Macks saw what seems to be a church in the first century Christianity where there were baptism, anointing and the Lord's Supper. No wonder, Bittinger says,

¹²² Bittinger, p. 30.

¹²³ Ibid, p. 31.

Consequently, Mack, his wife, and six others, in the year 1708 entered into intensive and prolonged prayer and study to determine what was involved in full obedience to Christ and New Testament ... Durnbaugh estimates from a study of the sequence of events as they are recorded in the archives in Germany that the baptism took place between early August and late September. Five men and three women participated in the historic occasion (Alexander Mack of Schriesheim, George Grebe and Luke Vetter from Hesse, Andrew Boni from Basel, John Kipping from Bareit, Joanna Nothiger (or Boni), Anna Mack, and Joanna Kipping). A person chosen by lot first baptized Alexander Mack, who in turn baptized the rest.¹²⁴

After the baptism, due to persecution and in search for religious freedom, the Brethren migrated to America and settled at Pennsylvania. The migration was in three batches, in 1719 led by Peter Becker with twenty families (settled in Germantown), the second was in 1729 led by Alexander Mack both to Pennsylvania and the third was in 1733 led by John Naas to Philadelphia. Upon arrival, Mack was made an elder and died in 1735. Since the first migration until 1770, the Brethren had been worshipping at homes and they had not built any worship place. The Brethren soon organized 18 new local churches. Due to numerical growth and the weather in Pennsylvania, the rooms in their homes started becoming inadequate. In providing solution to the above challenges the local church in Germantown was the first to build a worship place in 1770 which still stands to this day. It is worth noting that when the Brethren started building worship places, they never call it churches as according to their understanding of the New Testament, the church refers to the people who were Christians and not to a building. The worship places were called 'Meetinghouse'. In other words, meetinghouse is a building where the church meets for worship.

The first 'Annual Meeting' also called 'Annual Conference' was held in May, 1742 under the leadership of Martin Umer. At that time, agenda was called 'queries' and every member had a voting right. After the arrival of the first batch of the migrants, it took them sometimes before they started to assemble as Brethren. Soon after they started worship, they were joined by one Conrad Beissel who was baptized at the Conestoga congregation. Beissel had spiritual gifts and that soon made him the leader of the Conestoga Congregation. However, the Church was thrown into division due to the

¹²⁴ Ibid, p. 32-33.

teachings of Beissel who left with many Brethren and took up an ascetic life establishing a monastery. Durnbaugh describes the situation that led to that schism this way, "Unfortunately for the Brethren, Beissel was determined to go his own way. He immediately introduced such emphases as direct revelation (superior to the Scriptures), the necessity of celibacy, and certain Jewish practices, including the observance of Saturday as the day of worship. These innovations quickly caused friction with the Germantown Brethren, and led to a final split in 1728."¹²⁵

After getting out of that shock and disappointment, the Brethren grew rapidly, but soon another hurdle was before them, the America's war of independence. America in the 1770s started to get angry with Great Britain and they started to form militia groups in her colonies. Most of the Brethren are in Pennsylvania colonies. Hackman says, "The Pennsylvania government declared that every strong man must join the militia and fight the British. If a man feels fighting is against his beliefs, he must then pay a fine. Also, the government passed a law requiring all people to take an oath of loyalty to the new government. This oath included renouncing the British rule."¹²⁶

The Brethren teach nonviolence, and nonviolence means that it is wrong to use violence to solve a problem. They also emphasized the teaching of Jesus that letting your 'yes be yes and no be no' as such they refused oath taking. These did cause the Brethren much distress and they had to be paying fines. Another law was passed by the government allowing the authorities to put those who refuse into prison and their properties sold and the money taken by the government. In other words, the Brethren were committed to nonresistance, and could not in good conscience bear arms or swear an oath of allegiance. Brethren suffered greatly during that persecution and some lost completely what they had worked for all their years. Soon after the war, the church grew rapidly.

Studying the history of the Brethren, one would not help but accept the title of the Church History Book by David Hinson, "Set Back and Recovery". Soon after the Church recovered from that persecution and spread, there was another set back, indeed what is considered by Brethren as the saddest moment in the life of the Church. The

¹²⁵ Durnbaugh, *Church of the Brethren Past and Present*, p. 15.

¹²⁶ Hackman, *Introduction to Brethren History*, p. 42.

Church suffered division in the 1880s resulting in the formation of 'Old German Baptist Brethren' which was the first to break away. They are the Conservatives who do not accept changes, about five thousand of them left. The second group is the 'Brethren Church', this was the Progressives, those who want changes faster; they left with about four thousand members. The Church of the Brethren takes the middle way, they will accept changes but slowly, they were the largest with over fifty thousand then. The changes the Brethren struggled with that resulted into the divisions mentioned earlier are: The changes in the Americas way of life from agrarian to industrial and the Brethren young people were being educated. The issue of Revival Meetings introduced by Henry Kurtz was another major challenge. Accepting children Sunday school was another issue. Hackman says,

Sunday school was another new idea to the Brethren. The idea of Sunday school for training young people in the Christian faith began in England in 1780. However, it was not until 1823 that the first Sunday school was started involving Brethren...In 1838, Annual Conference advised Brethren not to participate in Sunday schools...They favored, of course training their children and teaching them in the Bible. However, the Brethren feared that Sunday schools would take away from the parents' responsibility to teach and train their children. Sunday schools received approval from Annual Conference in 1857.¹²⁷

Even the issue of home mission and foreign mission constituted a big problem for the Brethren at that time. The issue of salaried ministers, in others words, paying ministers salaries was a problem to the Brethren as some were thinking that it will make the ministers under the control of the members and they will only dance to the tune of those paying them, this reminds us of the adage, 'he whose bread you eat his song you sing.' Another issue that brought about that great division was how to begin theological training for ministers. The earlier held belief was that it is the Holy Spirit that teaches one what to preach and not a human being using human wisdom and knowledge.

In 1851, D W Kurtz began printing a magazine called the Gospel Visitor. Soon Kurtz and other Brethren who were printing magazines combined and formed the magazine today called the Messenger. In the 1900s, there were the two World Wars. Despite the

¹²⁷ Hackman, p. 55.

fact that the Church of the Brethren right at its beginning was and still is a peace church that abhorred war, the Brethren were unprepared for the First World War. That lack of preparation resulted into some young people joining the non-combatant service while others who refused to join were put into prison; others however, joined the military and carried guns to battle. Hackman says,

Many Brethren leaders did not feel it was right for a Christian to serve in the military in any way. However, other Brethren leaders felt that noncombatant duty was alright. Ideas about how to respond to the war varied ... In 1918, the Church of the Brethren met in a special conference in the city of Goshen. Here they passed a statement declaring that war is wrong. The statement said that any service in the military is wrong. The statement also gave advice to young men who faced the draft.¹²⁸

These wars had an impact on the Brethren leading them to be alert at the suffering of other people in other countries. In 1917 the first organized effort by the Brethren to relieve the suffering of people started in Armenia. The Brethren continued with relief work by sending workers and Heifers (young cows called Heifer Project) to needy families in other countries i.e. Spain. The Brethren experience of World War I made them to plan ahead. The Church of the Brethren in America met with other churches that are opposed to war and discussed how Conscientious Objectors will serve their nation other than in the military. When the Second World War broke out, the United States government approved the plan and the government and the churches developed the Civilian Public Service (CPS). Hackman in his discussion on the Second World War goes further and says,

In 1941, America officially entered the war. The CPS camps offered Brethren young men the chance to serve their country without carrying a gun. However, the evil practices of Adolf Hitler, the German dictator, also led many Brethren young men to join the military and fight in the war. The war ended in 1945 and the draft in 1947. By then, 1,386 Brethren chose the CPS camps. However, more than 21,000 Brethren went into full combatant service. Another 1,484 Brethren men went into noncombatant.¹²⁹

In public debate, there needs to be strong ecclesial stances or else people would take and accept the position of the state or nation as normative. Despite the recognition by

¹²⁸ Ibid, p. 78

¹²⁹ Hackman, p. 79.

the American government of the right of conscientious objectors, the above statement shows that such a vast number of Brethren went into full combatant service under the guise of the evil practice of a dictator. This was a serious challenge to the Brethren pacifist stance that all war is evil even as a last option. One would be quick to ask, if there was no constitutional provision by government of exempting conscientious objectors, does it mean all Brethren would have entered into full combatant service? Does it then mean the Brethren pacifism is selective pacifism? Where did the Brethren during the Second World War keep their peace heritage? In answering the above questions, the ecclesial stance did indeed help during that public debate which still reminded the church of her peace position or else the story might have been different. The constitutional provision indeed helped without which many more would have kept aside their pacifist position. This then further challenged the Brethren to be more proactive toward their peace heritage.

When the World War II began, the Brethren started the Brethren Service Committee (BSC). This was the Committee that handled the Civilian Public Service (CPS). In 1948, the BSC began the Brethren Volunteer Service (BVS) programme. Hackman says, "BVS is a programme for young people to give one or two years to work in a service project. The BVS person is given a place to live and basic needs of living, but no salary. The BVS programme continued even after the service work in Europe ended. By 1980, nearly 4,000 people had served in BVS in 23 different countries and 25 states of the United States."¹³⁰ In some countries, the BSC had undertaken works of rebuilding bombed cities, some engaged in agricultural works while others went into medical works. The Heifer Project of the BSC grew very fast and some Churches among which were the Baptists, Reformed, The Methodists, Mennonites and Catholics used to send cattle to Europe. In 1953, the Heifer Project was reorganized and made a separate programme from the Church of the Brethren with the name Heifer Project International.

¹³⁰ Ibid, p. 81.

2.4 Some Beliefs and Practices of the Historic Peace Churches

This part is devoted towards studying some of the Beliefs and Practices of the Historic Peace Churches turning away briefly from pacifism and nonviolence.

It is not out of place to state here that neither the Mennonites, nor the Quakers, nor the Brethren which started came with totally new set of beliefs which are new and unique only to them. They were all influenced by the Anabaptists and the Pietists. For the Brethren, Bittinger has this interesting point when he discusses the Brethren heritage,

Doctrinally as well as in other ways, these first Brethren were the recipients of a rich cultural heritage going back many hundred of years. An attempt to write about these religious principles which were accepted by the Brethren must therefore include a discussion of the major groups and their belief systems with which Mack and his associates were in close contact. This contact may have been direct and personal with the leaders of movements. Other values may simply have been passed down in the religious culture from previous generations. Some aspects such as patterning or emphasis are new and distinctive and arise out of the unique situation to which the Brethren responded.¹³¹

This is true of the Mennonites and the Quakers. This further shows us that there are uniqueness and distinctiveness but there are commonalities as well. Probably the commonalities may be more than the distinctive but always emphasize the uniqueness and de-emphasize the commonalities. The belief in God, the Holy Spirit, humanity, the Bible, the Church, sin, salvation are beliefs common to all Christians and are shared by all. Yes, there can be slight differences in the degree of emphasis on one aspect or the other. For sure, there are uniqueness to Catholics, Orthodox and Protestants; also there are commonalities as well as uniqueness to and between Anabaptist, Pietist and the Brethren.

Church of the Brethren historians had not undertaken any in-depth studies of the Protestant character of the Brethren Beliefs. However, taking a closer look reveals that the Brethren had lots of commonalities with the Protestants. In the words of Bittinger,

¹³¹ Bittinger, *Church of the Brethren Past and Present*, p. 74.

*That the Brethren still perceived themselves two hundred years later to be content in their doctrine with Protestant Christianity in general is well illustrated in a statement made by H C Early, a much-beloved and highly respected minister of the Church. Elder Early delivered an address before the Annual Conference in 1908 on the subject of the doctrines of the Brethren. Before discoursing upon the distinctive beliefs of the Church, he stated, 'first, let it be understood that the Protestant Church for the most part, agree on the large and fundamental doctrines of the New Testament: He then set forth fifteen or eighteen doctrines upon which the Brethren are united with other Protestants.'*¹³²

The Brethren and Mack in particular were so much influenced by the Anabaptists. Mack had severally visited in the Congregation of the Anabaptists. No wonder, there are many overlaps between the Mennonites and Brethren. The Anabaptists and Mennonites are used interchangeably here from the work of Bittinger, where the terms are used differently. From Bittinger's work there is a summary of 14 Anabaptist beliefs to which Mack and the early Brethren agreed to all, these are:

1. *Adult Baptism and the invalidity of infant baptism.*
2. *Individual responsibility to God, freewill (free choice) on man's part.*
3. *The true Church as being the elect or the regenerate.*
4. *Imitation of Primitive Christianity; the apostolic Church.*
5. *Acceptance of the Scriptures, especially the New Testament, as the final authority in religious matters; the right of individual interpretation of the Scriptures under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.*
6. *Acceptance of the God-given authority of the government in civic matters; denial of the right of the secular government to intrude in spiritual matters. No force in religion. A Christian not permitted to hold civil office for fear of compromising his behaviour, especially in being connected with capital punishment and warfare.*
7. *Affirmation rather than an oath.*
8. *Refusal to bear arms or to do military service.*
9. *Salvation and an inner spiritual experience of God on the part of the sincere believer.*
10. *Baptism not a sacrament, but a rite accepted in faith and making entrance into the Church.*
11. *The Lord's Supper not a sacrament but a commemorative rite to be participated in by the elect only.*
12. *Washing of the feet of the saints as a mark of obedience and humility.*
13. *Consistency between faith and works rather than justification by faith alone.*

¹³² Bittinger, p. 77.

14. *The necessity of the ban or excommunication for unfaithfulness together with avoidance of all social contacts (shunning) of members placed under ban.*¹³³

The difference however between the baptism mode, in other words, how baptism is to be administered. The Brethren agreed to trine immersion in a forward manner while Mennonites permit pouring. At the other level, Mack will not be comfortable that Mennonites are regenerate.

It has been noted that most Brethren Church historians among them Donald Miller, John L. Gillin and M.G. Durnbaugh testified to the great influence Pietism had over early Brethren. Mack indeed had read the works of Pietist like Felbinger, Gottfried, Arnold and Hochmann. Hochmann had earlier on written the Confession of Faith which was used by the early Brethren. Of a fact, Hochmann was seen by the early Brethren as their spiritual guide. Here is the summary of the Confession of faith of Hochmann;

- i. He (Christian) accepts and is in accord with the major doctrines of Orthodox Christianity.*
- ii. He accepts only adult baptism.*
- iii. He holds that the Lord's Supper is to be celebrated only by the elect who have renounced the sinful life.*
- iv. He accepts Christian perfection but claims not to have achieved it.*
- v. He believes that Christ alone is the head of the Church, though ministers may be qualified for office by the Holy Spirit*
- vi. He holds that government is by divine right in civil matters but its power does not extend to spiritual matters.*
- vii. He states his belief in the final restoration of the damned men.*¹³⁴

Hochmann regarded organized Churches as Babylon. This was their point of departure with Mack. He also regarded celibacy as holier than the married life. Gottfried Arnold added in his writings the necessity for repentance and absolute obedience to Christ, continued search for enlightenment, pious behaviour and presentation of sincere godly life. Elaborate, expensive and prideful Churches are wrong. He condemned the

¹³³ All these from Bittinger, *Church of the Brethren Past and Present*, p.78-79.

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 81-82.

distinction between the clergy and laity. He further states that true Church consists of the regenerate and he has distrust for Creeds.

While there is little in the above Pietists beliefs to which the Brethren could not agree ... discussing the 'Genius of the Brethren' reminds us that several aspects of radical Pietism were discarded by the Brethren founders. These rejected ideas are: the concept of a purely spiritual Church having no organization or outward forms, extreme individualism in interpreting the Scriptures; strong emphasis upon celibacy and devaluation of marriage, extreme mysticism; and community of goods.¹³⁵

What are the distinctive and uniqueness of the Brethren? The two works of Mack while he was still at Germany, 'Basic Questions' written in 1713 and 'Rights and Ordinances' written in 1713 are helpful. These works set forth the beliefs of the early Brethren. Bittinger while describing Mack's two works says, "Undoubtedly, the most outstanding theme of Mack's writings is his stress on obedience to the Scriptural commandments and his desire to conform to the order of the New Testament Church. It is this same conviction which did not permit him either to align himself with the Mennonites or to remain with Hochmann and the Pietists."¹³⁶ Mack rejected the Mennonites because he considered them degenerate because they are not fully obedient to the Scriptural commands as he accepted and understood them, neither did he remain Pietist as he rejected their infant baptism. Bittinger further says,

Some of the Pietists had resolved this problem by staying in the state churches where they could act as a leaven and continue to regard their baptism as valid. The radical and separatistic Pietists resolved the issue by denying the need for membership in an organized church and by claiming the validity of a baptism by the Holy Spirit. They believed that God accepted a spiritual renewal and an inward conformity and that an outward conformity through water baptism is not to be made a necessary requirement for salvation.¹³⁷

Mack had at sometimes in November 2, 1708 written to Hochmann on baptism and in the reply, Hochmann stated that whether to be baptized or not to must be left free. In a summary, one would say, the Brethren believe in 'Simple Life' called by Brethren

¹³⁵ Ibid, p. 83.

¹³⁶ Ibid, p. 85.

¹³⁷ Ibid.

'Non-conformity' to the ways of the World or may be called 'Conformity' to the gospel that is manifested in dress and titles.

2.5 Place of Nonviolence in the Historic Peace Churches

What is the centrality of nonviolence among these church families? Nonviolence is one of the central teachings of the Historic Peace Churches and has prominence in their lives.

The Quakers are generally regarded as pacifists with many of them conscientious objectors. They have what is called Friends Ambulance Unit that attends to victims of war and they engage in lots of social activities. Some Friends are absolute pacifists while others are not but all Friends are concerned with reducing strife and conflict. Some Friends do completely reject the use of armed forces while others do not. "Fox himself refused a captaincy in the Civil War 'I told [the Commonwealth Commissioners] I lived in virtue of that life and power that took away the occasion of all wars and I knew from whence all wars did rise, from the lust, according to James' doctrine... I told them I was come into the covenant of peace which was before wars and strifes were."¹³⁸

Even with this strong stance of Fox, there were some Friends who fought or were civil magistrates. But the trend was towards not bearing arms and refusing to fight under any circumstances. "There are of course precepts enough in the New Testament to have guided early Friends in this direction, and these were reinforced by the emphasis on 'that of god in every one'. Indeed, the theology is easy; there is no difficulty about enunciating a doctrine that eschews violence, recognizing other lives as of at least as much importance as one's own, although there may be great difficulty and suffering in following such doctrine."¹³⁹

In 1661, the Quakers defined their stand point in terms of war and taking of arms leading them to have the 'Declaration from the harmless and innocent people of God called Quakers. It runs thus:

¹³⁸ Geoffrey Hubbard, *Quaker by Convincement*, p. 127.

¹³⁹ *Ibid.* p. 127.

All bloody Principles and Practices we (as to our own particular) do utterly deny, with all outward wars and strife and fighting with outward Weapons, for any end, or under any pretext whatsoever. And this is our Testimony to the whole world ... that Spirit of Christ, by which we are guided, is not changeable, so as once to command us from a thing as evil and again to move unto it: And again we do certainly know, and so testify to the world, that the Spirit of Christ which leads us into all Truth, will never move us to fight and war against any man with outward Weapons, neither for the Kingdom of Christ, nor for the Kingdoms of this World.¹⁴⁰

From practical and experiential knowledge, most new organizations get better structured and organized with time. In other words, organizations and institutions get more defined and better organized than when it first came to existence, the church is not an exception. This is so too with the Friends,

As time went on, this rejection of violence became a 'testimony', that is to say it became a required Quaker attitude, and as the Society became more rigid the testimony became more of an absolute requirement. Yet even so, it had been carried through in the difficult conditions of the time of persecution, demonstrating that it was a remarkably strong weapon against bullying civic authorities. This of course is really irrelevant; non-violence is not proposed as a more effective weapon against your enemies, more powerful than gunpowder and less likely to get damp; the argument for non-violence is that it is right, and that one should do that which is right and take the consequences.¹⁴¹

Nonviolence is held so tight by the friends not because it works but because it is right. How then one may ask have Friends taken their stand in later wars? From their actions and in actions if any, can the nonviolent stance be maintained in warring times? Are there other actions that were taken by them to ensure that their nonviolent stance is put to action? What consequences do Friends have to bear for keeping to their nonviolence stance during war times? To these questions, Hubbard had a paragraph on the Friends position which seems to answer most of the above questions, he states thus:

In later wars, Friends took their stand against the emotional current of patriotism and nationalism, and did something of great value in

¹⁴⁰ George Fox, Journal, ed. J.L. Nickalls, C.U.P., 1952:399-400.

¹⁴¹ Hubbard, p. 128-129.

showing, in different times and places, that the non-violent attitude could be maintained. In so doing, such people as William Rotch of Nantucket, who threw a consignment of bayonets into the sea so that they should not be used in the American War of Independence, or John Bright, who resigned from the Cabinet rather than be a member of a Government which resorted to armed force, have created a pantheon of heroes who make it difficult for Quakers to look in a detached fashion at their peace testimony, for to modify it might imply that their attitudes, and hence their actions, were insecurely founded. Moreover there are with us still many Friends who have suffered for their beliefs in wars of our own time; are we to tell them they were misguided?¹⁴²

There are from research a discovery that some Friends today are saying the peace testimony of the Church can not go unquestioned, that we cannot say categorically 'we do not believe the use of force can ever be justified in any circumstances'. Such Friends are of the opinion that Friends do not generally oppose the use of limited force by the Police. They hold to the view that when criminals are trying to operate private armies, they should be opposed. Such Friends also support international peacekeeping forces; this they believe is a measure more realistic than the absolute position. To the view of such Friends Hubbard responded this way to stress the position of the Church,

I suspect that the difference of view is less significant than appears. For one thing, we Quakers do not rule countries, or command votes in the United Nations. We can only express our convictions in relatively limited ways, and when it comes to what we can do and say, the absolute question is of very little importance. The common ground, on the other hand, is wide; particularly in interpreting the peace testimony in the positive rather than the negative sense; in stressing not that we will not use force but that we will strive for peace, to remove the occasions of war; the political divisions, the misunderstandings, the unfair distribution of wealth, from which wars spring.¹⁴³

The above stance of the Friends has been problematic to many Christians from different confessional backgrounds that hold to other theories such as Just War theory. Such people argue that this conviction only applies to the Friends, does God have different standards for the world and then for the Church? What happens if the Friends grow in number and could control votes, will this stance still remain or will it change?

¹⁴² Ibid. p. 129.

¹⁴³ Ibid. p. 129-130

Are the Friends not enjoying the fruit so to speak of the war (like the war of independence of the United States)? These are indeed reasonable questions to which the Friends do have answer. However, we are not concerned about that here. In this section, the centrality of nonviolence in each of the three Historic Peace Churches has succeeded with that of the Quakers.

What then are Friends involved in? Hubbard summarizes:

In this sense the Quakers have worked over the years. Obviously when war does break out our actions must be to alleviate suffering, and hence the Friends Ambulance Units founded by Philip Noel Baker at the out break of the First World War. But though this is the activity the world at large associates with Quakers in wartime, we would prefer that people should take a little more note of what we do between wars. Philip Noel Baker went on to work with Robert Cecil and Fridjof Nansen in the formative years of the League of Nations; Pierre Ceresole, a Swiss Quaker, ran a work camp for French and German young people at Verdun in 1920, and out of this grew the Service Civil International, with its British element, International Voluntary Service (originally 'for peace'); the Family Service Units were originally started by Friends in the Second World War as an alternative form of service for conscientious objector.¹⁴⁴

As part of Quaker service, there are a number of Quaker organizations and institutions which are fairly directly aimed at increasing international understanding in order to reduce strife.

As to the doctrine of nonresistance of the Mennonites, they develop it from their unique understanding of a number of New Testament verses. Among the passages are: Matthew. 5:38-48; Luke. 6:27-36; John. 18:36; Romans 12:17-21, 1 Thessalonians 5:15, 11 Timothy 2:24, Hebrews 12:14, 1 Peter 2:20-23; 3:8; 9; 13; 17. Wenger has this to say,

In a simple acceptance of this as the Christian ethic Mennonites oppose the use of force in private life and also reject military service in every form. They hold this position humbly, aware of the fact that there are many believers who cannot understand them. They based their ethic of non-resistance on both the letter and

¹⁴⁴ Ibid.

spirit of the New Testament, believing that the Christian's calling is to 'make disciples of all nations' (Matt. 28:19).¹⁴⁵

Due to the Mennonites understanding of the above passages, they refuse police service or to be magistrate. Right at inception of the Mennonites, they took a strong stand on nonresistance. However, after the Napoleonic period Dutch Mennonites took a progressively weaker stand on nonresistance. In the United States and Germany, during World War I, Mennonites voluntarily accepted combatant service. Today interestingly, there is great awakening of the historic nonresistant doctrine of the Mennonites by the Mennonites. Wenger again says,

During the American Civil War, 1861-65, Mennonites secured military exemption by the payment of fee of \$300, or by hiring substitute. Farm furloughs and release for relief work was provided for Mennonites, Friends and Brethren during the First World War, 1814-18. The matter was handled quite admirably during the second World War, 1939-45, by creating Civilian Public Service camps and units ... The cost of the CPS program to the Mennonite Central Committee for the fiscal year ending November 30, 1945, was about \$825,000.¹⁴⁶

On the part of the Brethren, they came to the commitment to peace in several ways. Brethren believe that the Bible calls all Christians to life of nonviolence. Of course the same Scriptural passages used by the Mennonites are those used by the Brethren. They believe that the Bible teaches that love is the supreme command, that Jesus commanded us to pursue peace and also that Christians are to avoid retaliation and that the Church should live by a higher standard than the world. For the Brethren, all war they say is sin. Brethren are generally regarded as Pacifists as said earlier and have practically demonstrated that even in the United States war against Iraq. The Brethren went out in protest refusing to support America in going to that war. The Brethren have about six weapons of nonviolence. First is witnessing the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the world. This is due to Brethren understanding that violence exists because the hearts of men and women are affected by sin which only the Gospel can change. Second weapon is Prayer; the prayer of the saints avails much. The third is doing good deeds, the fourth is suffering love, allow yourself to suffer even if it is unjustly, the fifth is dialogue and the sixth is forgiveness. Without dialogue there

¹⁴⁵ Wenger, p. 34.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid, p. 37.

would be no understanding and without forgiveness the circle of violence will not be broken.

From the foregoing, for the Historic Peace Churches, nonviolence is central to their ecclesial self-understanding. Their conviction on nonviolence is not necessarily that it works but is the right thing to do. These church families are aware they would not be understood by others but are so determined not to give up on their peace position. We have identified their nonviolent peace witness before, during and after war. One thing we need to stress is the emphasis on war and violence not only between states but also between individuals is considered wrong and sinful.

CHAPTER THREE

3.0 An Overview on the Interdisciplinary Research on Violence

3.1 Concept of Nonviolence and Overcoming Violence

3.2 The Term and Origin of Nonviolence

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3.8.1 The Term and Origin of the Concept of Just Peace

3.8.2 Just Peace Practices

3.9 Conclusion

3.0 An Overview on the Interdisciplinary Research on Violence

This chapter gives an overview of the state of the international and interdisciplinary research on violence. This will indeed be of tremendous help as the researcher theoretically and empirically looks at the concepts of nonviolence and overcoming violence.

But some questions would be asked, why give an overview on the interdisciplinary research on violence since the major concern is with nonviolence? What tremendous help would it give? For the first question, giving an overview on the interdisciplinary research on violence, it is critical and of course needed because without violence

which is self evident, a daily phenomenon and threaten the existence of the world, there may be no need talking and exploring the relevance of nonviolence. In other words, failure to know what violence is and how it is interpreted, discussion on the importance of nonviolence would be wrongly placed. As such, it is very much in place to first start with the negative and coming to the positive. The help this approach would render is; it would help to better appreciate the subject under discussion.

The research is done in three layers. First from the definitive point of view and from the interdisciplinary perspectives what violence is. The second layer is to present various approaches in the research on violence and then thirdly state the interconnectivity between violence and religion. This third point is very relevant having direct impact on this research.

In the interdisciplinary research on violence, it has been noted that violence is the most enigmatic and most serious social phenomenon leading to different academic disciplines to have different explanations of violence. The research on violence has to be so nuanced as the phenomenon of violence is ambiguous which is further compounded by the way and manner people interpret it. This could be evidenced by the so many theories and concepts developed by people across the divides from all works of life and from different religious, confessional background, and ethnic to overcoming violence.

Violence is indeed a complex subject which makes dealing with it complex as well. The violence phenomenon is multifaceted thereby rendering violence to be ambiguous. Heitmeyer and Hagan have this point,

Almost all relatively detailed studies make it clear that violence takes extremely varied forms and may possess many different qualities; not only is there a very substantial range of (current) definitions, but there are so many disagreements about the authority of what violence is, or is to be. Consequently, theories of violence not only vary in their validity and significance but also address different subjects and involve controversial assessments of the efficacy of possible struggles for addressing the problem. Moreover, what seems the clear condemnation of violence is significantly challenged in many social and political situations, so

*that it is highly advisable to approach violence, and its different areas and contexts, on a basis of clear distinctions.*¹⁴⁷

In dealing with violence, there is the interplay of many factors starting from what exactly should be classified or defined as violence due majorly to overstepping of boundaries as well as to the logic governing the outbreak of violence. No one knows when violence will break out and the victims of violence are random. This is further complicated by the fact that violence involves quite different types of victim. The diversity of social situations and political conflicts that are classified as violence make the description of the variations of violence an impossible and herculean task.

Then comes another challenge in the words of Girard, Heitmeyer and Hagan the problem of ambivalent consequences in relation to violence. The modern age is an age of ambivalence which is also reflected in the ambivalence of violence. Granted that the prevalent opinion among many people is that violence is always destructive based on devaluation of life and the exaltation of power. Yet, violence is an ambivalent phenomenon because the same acts can have different consequences in different social contexts and political systems. "Violence is negative when it involves the destruction of human beings and humanity; it may be positive where the focus is on the preservation or restoration of humanity. Both the destruction of order and the creation of order can involve violence."¹⁴⁸ The question then is how to distinguish between legitimate and illegitimate, lawful and unlawful violence. An example of the ambivalence of violence is when violence is used by a dictator would be negative, but when violence is used by the oppressed, marginalized and the disadvantaged as a means to destroy the power of the dictator can be positive. However, even at this, scholars like Heitmeyer and Hagan are of the view that demand is to be made on integrity and freedom from harm and safeguarding the right to human integrity.

The ambivalence of violence has a great consequence on the Historic Peace Churches and especially the Church of the Brethren understanding of violence and the concept and ethics of nonviolence. For the Historic Peace Churches as discussed

¹⁴⁷ Wilhelm Heitmeyer and John Hagan, "Violence: The Difficulties of a Systematic International Review" in *International Handbook of Violence Research*, (Netherlands: Kluwer Academic Publishers), 2003:3-11:3-4.

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p.6.

in the previous chapter, there is nothing good in violence for even the oppressed are not to use violence but only nonviolence in overcoming violence. The notion that violence defeats violence and the end justify the means is unacceptable to the Historic Peace Churches and specifically the Church of the Brethren.

What then is violence? There are no unanimous agreement as to the definition of violence and what is to be regarded as violence due to the ambiguity as well as the content of violence. However, a research of this nature must have a definition no matter how limited it may be. This would have an impact on the overall discussion because one's understanding of violence affects his or her approach to the subject. Imbusch having the same mind as the above statement did an extensive work on the 'etymology and delineation: the origins and the concept of violence and changes in its meaning.' He kick started his critical analysis from the root words of the Germanic and Roman legal systems where he saw that power and violence were at first restricted concrete terms for the authorities whose legitimacy were unquestioned. But from the twentieth century the concept got broadened and the meaning of the term exhibiting so varied components. Pahl's definition seems to me comprehensive enough and relevant for our studies. He gave what he calls two approaches scholars generally distinguish in defining what violence is. The two approaches are what he referred to as the 'Minimalists' and the 'Maximalists.' In his words,

Minimalists choose to limit the term 'violence' to organized aggression or physical force, as in war, riots, or crime. Some minimalists further prefer to limit the term to illegitimate, or criminal, physical aggression. Maximalists, by contrast, prefer to extend the term 'violence' to include overt or covert forms of cultural coercion, including both physical and symbolic action. Some maximalists describe particular language patterns (for instance hate speech) as violent, even though no overt physical aggression may accompany any given speech (or writing) act.¹⁴⁹

The approach in this research work is from the maximalists point of view putting Imbusch's macroviolence and microviolence concepts together as this is the understanding of the Church of the Brethren. The maximalists approach to the

¹⁴⁹ Jon Pahl, "Violence from Religious Groups" in *International Handbook of Violence Research*, (Netherlands: Kluwer Academic Publishers), 2003:323-338:324.

definition of violence is shared by McAfee in which he defines violence as “any violation of personhood with or without physical force.”¹⁵⁰

It is clear due to the foregoing, there is every need in dealing with the phenomenon of violence to go with the suggestion of Heitmeyer and Hagan among others that, to approach violence research, it has to be approached from both psychological and sociostructural approaches. However, they warned against what they call thematization traps because violence emotionalizes, it creates fear and can be politically exploited. “Risky approaches to violence become apparent when the attitude adopted to one’s own or others’ points of view and spoken or unspoken assumptions is not sufficiently self-reflexive. There is the danger of falling into the ‘thematization traps’ of the violence discussion, to six which particular attention must be drawn.”¹⁵¹ There is the re-interpretation trap when violence is personalized, pathologized and biologized, then the scandalization trap using vocabulary dominated by social media, the inflation trap making it look as violence is everywhere, the moralization trap having good and bad, normality trap attaching violence to particular group of persons and then reduction trap where no consideration is given to the complexity of the phenomenon of violence and to attribute violence to the personal characteristics of individuals. As such, the theoretical approach to violence research is to be multidimensional.

Another approach worthy of mention here is the “Evolutionary and Social Biological Approaches” proposed by Martin Daly and Margo Wilson. This approach has to do with the quest to understand and predict who is likely to use violence against whom, and under what circumstances.

“Such an approach requires a dispassionate perspective in the sense that we cannot prejudge the violence in which we are interested as pathology. It may often be so, in which case an appropriate remedial response might be therapeutic, but violence may often be understood as the adaptive output of a healthy psyche functioning normally,

¹⁵⁰ Robert McAfee Brown, *Religion and Violence: A Primer for White Americans*, (Philadelphia: Fortress Press), 1987:29.

¹⁵¹ Heitmeyer and Hagan, p. 8

in which case an appropriate remedial response must address the social and material circumstances conducive to the violence."¹⁵²

There had been a time in world history when readiness to resort to violence has regularly been interpreted as primitive or immature. Yes, there was a time indeed with civilization, some scholars were predicting a non-violent world. More especially by the collapse of the communist socialist regime, the hope was kindled that with such human advancement in technology bringing about globalization, the world would be violent free. However some theoreticians hold to the position that violence is inevitable. Heitmeyer and Hagan both said is nonsensical conjectures that violence is inevitable in the biological sense but addressed the expectation of a nonviolent society as utopian. This was against the earlier held positions and predictions by many theoreticians of culture and civilization that since the human race is involved in permanent civilizing process, it will culminate into a nonviolent modern age. The believe that human race is getting better and better and in turn making the world better and better, the end result would be a violent free society. This from empirical evidences has proven to be just but an illusion. There are on the other hand those who see the civilizing modern age as barbaric which is a one sided view. Attempt has however been made by authors who adopt a more anthropological line of argument by saying there is no relationship between modern civilization and violence.

Another approach in the international and interdisciplinary research on violence has to do with the relationship between violence and religions. Prior to the religious revivals witnessed in this century, there were even the widely held assumptions among historians and other scholars that religion will loose its grip on people and may have no impact in the political and social life of the modern globalized people. However, that was proven to be false as the current activities of religious and cultural resurgence in modern times are so evident. Juergensmeyer, Heitmeyer and Hagan, Girard, McTernan, Fernando, and Haar to mention some few all agreed to having a religious approach. Rene Girard who had meticulously proposed the "mimetic desires" accepted the reality of violence in human beings and looked at the

¹⁵² Martin Daly and Margo Wilson, "Evolutionary Psychology of Lethal Interpersonal Violence," in *International Handbook of Violence Research*, (Netherlands: Kluwer Academic Publishers), 2003:569-588:569.

roles of sacrifice in societies and religions and came up with redirecting violence into another channel. This could be done through the scapegoat sacrifice.

Juergensmeyer proposes "religious nationalism" which sometimes become violent because it rejects secular ideas but not necessarily secular politics. Juergensmeyer though appreciative of Girard's thesis of "mimetic desires" when he gave social and psychological reasons for the virtual universality of violence in religion, however, most real acts of religious violence do not easily fit the Girardian scheme. "The reason, is that most acts of religious violence are less like sacrifice than they are like war. One can think of religious warfare as a blend of sacrifice and martyrdom: sacrificing members of the enemy's side and offering up martyrs on one's own. But behind the gruesome litany is an idea that encompasses both sacrifice and martyrdom and much more: the dichotomy between the sacred and profane. This great encounter between cosmic forces- an ultimate good and evil, a divine truth and falsehood-is a war that worldly struggles mimic."¹⁵³

Having given an overview on the interdisciplinary research on violence and the various approaches, the concept of nonviolence and overcoming violence is discussed.

3.1 Concepts of Nonviolence and Overcoming Violence

In the second chapter, the researcher analyzed the non violent ecclesial self-understanding of the Historic Peace Churches. In doing that, it is evident to this church group, nonviolence became one of the regulative principles for their ecclesiology. Having done that, this third chapter looks at a critical analysis of concepts of nonviolence and overcoming violence. However, before considering the concepts of nonviolence, there is the need to discuss violence, its causes and types of violence hence a general overview on the interdisciplinary research on violence is presented in the introduction.

¹⁵³ Mark Juergensmeyer, *The New Cold War? Religious Nationalism Confronts the Secular State*, (Berkeley: University of California Press), 1993:155.

Nonviolence is generally held to be a philosophy and strategy for social change that rejects the use of physical violence. As such, nonviolence is an alternative to passive acceptance of oppression and armed struggle against it. Practitioners of nonviolence may use diverse methods in their campaigns for social change, including critical forms of education and persuasion, civil disobedience and nonviolent direct action, and targeted communication via mass media. Practitioners of nonviolence have been criticized of cowardice. Even if such criticisms would be justified, it will not necessarily mean to abandon such a conviction. This chapter looks critically at nonviolence starting from its origin to its practice. Here different theories with their respective implications are discussed. The chapter goes on to discuss Conscientious Objection, Pacifism, Just War Theory, Just Armed Struggle, and Just Peace. The historical origins of these theories are discussed; their problems and critiques will be looked at not leaving out their merits and demerits.

It is important to state at this point that Christian Nonviolence is the area of our concern. This is against the background that there are other types of nonviolence. Also worthy of note is the term Christian nonresistance. The term Christian nonresistance and Christian nonviolence is usually used interchangeably by Christian theologians and scholars among them Brian Wicker as could be seen in his article on Pacifism. Wicker says, "John Robinson has shown how Paul developed this theology of Jesus' own non-violence... What they cannot understand, and are literally disarmed by, is absolute non-resistance to the point of death."¹⁵⁴ Of course it is not out of place to use the terms interchangeably, but there might be slight differences between the two terms. The term nonviolence though conveying the same notion, it is not a word derived directly from the Scriptures as the term nonresistance. And two, the proponents of the doctrine of Christian nonresistance sometimes claim that it is different from nonviolence among such scholars is Herman A. Hoyt who says, "I have come to the conclusion that the Bible teaches nonresistance on the part of Christians. It is unfortunate that the term nonresistance has been given to this doctrine."¹⁵⁵ This is however, not to say that the concept of nonviolence is not rooted

¹⁵⁴ Brian Wicker, "Pacifism" in *The Oxford Companion to Christian Thought*, ed., Hastings, Mason and Poyer, (New York: Oxford University Press), 508-509:508.

¹⁵⁵ Herman A. Hoyt, "Nonresistance" in *War:4 Christian Views*, Robert G. Clouse, ed. (Downers Grove, Ill. : InterVarsity Press), 27-57:31.

in the Scripture, they of course claim the same Scriptural proof texts which we shall look at later.

From the Historic Peace Churches point of view, they too use the terms nonresistance and nonviolence interchangeably. Another striking point is that, some theologians and scholars among them Myron S. Augsburger use the terms, nonresistance, nonviolence and Pacifism as meaning the same thing. Augsburger in his response to the write-up by Hoyt on "Christian Nonresistance" says, "Dr Hoyt has presented a practical biblical basis for the doctrine of non-resistance in war. Since this position is basically held by the Church of the Brethren in Nigeria, the Mennonite Church, the response is quite positive. Although the researcher has written a chapter in a volume entitled, "Christian Pacifism," researcher's position is better expressed by the term non-resistance."¹⁵⁶ The questions to be asked then are: are these three terms synonymous? What are the nuances to be noted, if any?

Just as there are other types of nonviolence so too there are other types of nonresistance. There is what Ballou calls the philosophical nonresistance or nonviolence. This is a nonresistance that comes from the light of nature or to put it better from general revelation. In the words of Ballou, "Philosophical non-resistance of various hue, 'which sets at naught divine revelation, disregards the authority of Jesus Christ as divine teacher, excludes all strictly religious considerations, and deduce its conclusions from the light of nature, the supposed fitness of things and the expediency of consequences.'"¹⁵⁷

There is also sentimental nonresistance or nonviolence in the words of Ballou. Although this is slightly a derogatory term which the people holding and believing accept nonresistance but are classified by Ballou to belong to such category may not be comfortable. But it looks more descriptive and can still stand. Sentimental nonresistance is regarded, "to be spontaneous dictate of man's higher sentiments in the advanced stages of his development, transcending all special divine revelations, positive instructions, ratiocination and considerations of expediency."¹⁵⁸ The third

¹⁵⁶ Myron S. Augsburger, "A Christian Pacifist Response" in *War: 4 Christian Views*, ed. Robert G. Clouse, (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press), 58-63:58.

¹⁵⁷ Adin Ballou, *Christian Non-Resistance in all its Important Bearings*, (New York: Da Capo Press), 1970:1.

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid.* p.2.

type of nonresistance is the one described by Ballou as, "Necessitous non-resistance, commonly expressed in the phrase, 'passive obedience and non-resistance,' imperiously preached by despots to their subjects, as their indispensable duty and highest virtue; also recommended by worldly prudence to the victims of oppression when unable to offer successful resistance to their injuries."¹⁵⁹

Making this distinction between Christian nonviolence or nonresistance and the others is crucial as it will help us to know how to solve some of the questions posed to the advocates of nonviolence by its critiques.

There have been lots of criticisms leveled against nonviolence mentioned at this point of discussion. Reinhold Niebuhr among others accuses pacifists and proponents of nonviolence as passivity and cowardice. Not only that, they further say, nonviolence is but irresponsible and inconsiderate not having and feeling the touch to reality. Nonviolence they again say is not concerned about social life, nor concerned about what happens to the other but simply about their self holiness. They further argue that nonviolence is but impractical idealism and that the foundational basis of nonviolence is faulty. Are these accusations true? Is there no power in weakness? Is brevity only in violence? The list of the questions can easily be extended.

3.2 The Term and Origin of Nonviolence

The terms nonviolence or nonresistance seem to be negative thereby giving negative impression attracting lots of criticisms as previously mentioned. There seems to be no better alternative to these terms. Christian nonresistance according to Ballou, "Is that original, peculiar kind of non-resistance, which was enjoined and exemplified by Jesus Christ according to the Scriptures of the New Testament."¹⁶⁰ He goes on to distinguish between Christian nonresistance with philosophical and sentimental non-resistance thus,

1 Philosophical non-resistance of various hue, which sets at naught divine revelation, disregards the authority of Jesus Christ as a divine teacher, excludes all strictly religious considerations, and deduces its

¹⁵⁹ Ballou, p. 2.

¹⁶⁰ Ibid. p. 1.

conclusions from the light of nature, the supposed fitness of things and the expediency of consequences. 2. Sentimental non-resistance, also of various hue, which is held to be the spontaneous dictate of man's higher sentiments in the advanced stages of his development, transcending all special divine revelations, positive instructions, ratiocination and considerations of expediency. 3. Necessitous non-resistance, commonly expressed in the phrase, 'passive obedience and non-resistance, 'imperiously preached by depots to their subjects, as their indispensable duty and highest virtue; also recommended by worldly prudence to the victims of oppression when unable to offer successful resistance to their injurers.¹⁶¹

It is important to state that the Church of the Brethren as well as Ballou uses the term nonresistance only to the conduct of human beings vis-à-vis human beings. This is of course one of the limitations of the term nonresistance of which opponents assume that it refers to being passive to all assailing beings and things. In refuting such an understanding, Ballou states the position of the Church of the Brethren and of many advocates of nonresistance thus,

But I go further, and disclaim using the term to express absolute passivity, even towards human beings. I claim the right to offer the utter most moral resistance, not sinful, of which God has made me capable, to every manifestation of evil among mankind. Nay, I hold it my duty to offer such moral resistance. In this my very non-resistance becomes the highest kind of resistance to evil ... Thus another most important qualification is given to the term non-resistance. It is not non-resistance to animals and inanimate things, nor to Satan, but only to human beings. Nor is it moral non-resistance to human beings, but chiefly physical. Nor is it physical non-resistance to all human beings, under all circumstances, but only so far as to abstain totally from the infliction of personal injury, as a means of resistance. It is simply non-resistance of injury with injury-evil with evil.¹⁶²

It is however so obvious that human beings most often than not are on the side of resistance of injury with injury. Three empirical evidences are cited by the researcher to buttress above claim. In most of the tribes in the northeastern part of Nigeria, when a child is bullied or beaten by his age mate outside and he came home crying, either the parents or any elderly person he found would force him to go and fight back in order to prove his strength. The second evidence is this popular adage among most of the tribes in the northeastern Nigeria but presented in Bura language, "pazhikur adi ana nzi bibal wa tar ma gir ku mpa kadaku" which can

¹⁶¹ Ballou, p.2.

¹⁶² Ibid., p.2-3.

literally be translated, "For one to be best of friends with someone you both have to first fight." The third evidence is the popular saying among some quotas that, 'when you want peace, prepare for war.' As to whether the above statements can be justified or not, more analysis will be carried out.

There are some tangible examples all over the world where most times individuals and nations were justified by inflicting any amount of injury in resisting a supposed greater injury. The consequences of such have been growth in universal suspicion among individuals and nations, thereby giving birth to defiance, armament, violence, torture and bloodshed.

Non-resistance explodes this horrible delusion; announces the impossibility of overcoming evil with evil; and making its appeal directly to all the injured of the human race, enjoins them, in the name of God, never more to resist injury with injury; assuring them that by adhering to the law of love under all provocations, and scrupulously suffering wrong rather than inflicting it, they shall gloriously 'overcome evil with good' and exterminate all their enemies by turning them into faithful friends.¹⁶³

The origin of Christian nonviolence is rooted in the Scriptures. As stated above, nonviolence and nonresistance are used synonymously. The term nonresistance came from the words of Jesus in Matthew 5:39 "Resist not evil." Reading through the Scriptures more especially the New Testament provides the origins of the Christian doctrine of nonviolence. Many theologians and Church historians among whom are Bainton, Augsburg, and Boar accept this fact that nonviolence or nonresistance was the practice of the early Church up until the mid of the third century from when the position started to change. It was until the time of Emperor Constantine that the position of the Church officially changed from nonviolence to that of participation in military or war. From the end of the New Testament to about A.D. 170-180 there was no evidence whatsoever of Christians participation in the military. Bainton also shared the above view when he said,

Broadly speaking, three attitudes to war and peace were to appear in the Christian ethic: pacifism, the just war, and the crusade. Chronologically they emerged in just this order. The early Church was pacifist to the time of Constantine. Then partly as a result of the close association of the Church and the state under this

¹⁶³ Ballou, p.5.

*emperor and partly by reason of the threat of barbarian inversion, Christians in the fourth and fifth centuries took over from Classical world the doctrine of the just war, whose object should be to vindicate justice and restore peace ... The crusade arose in the high Middle Ages, a holy war fought under the auspices of the Church or of some inspired religious leader, not on behalf of justice conceived in terms of life and property, but on behalf of an ideal, the Christian faith.*¹⁶⁴

From the above, although Bainton uses the term pacifism, some advocates of Christian nonresistance as stated earlier use the term interchangeably with Pacifism. As such since the early church was pacifist, it was also nonresistant. Ballou agrees to the above when he asked and answered the question,

*When originated the term Christian non-resistance? Non-resistance comes from the injunction, 'Resist not evil,' Matt. 5:39. The words 'resist not,' being changed from the form of a verb to that of a substantive, give us non-resistance. This term is considered more strikingly significant than any other of the principle involved, and the duty enjoined in our Saviour's precept ... It is denominated Christian non-resistance to distinguish it, as the genuine primitive doctrine, from more philosophical, sentimental and necessitous non-resistance.*¹⁶⁵

Bainton further elaborates on the early Christians and their participation in war or military service this way, "The age of persecution down to the time of Constantine was the age of pacifism to the degree that during this period no Christian author to our knowledge approved of Christian participation in battle."¹⁶⁶ Here we can see that Bainton and Ballou are using nonresistance and pacifism interchangeably.

E. Stanley Jones further compliments this point by saying that himself and like minded search in vain during the early years of Church history to find Christian people engage in warfare but found out that Christians did not become soldiers. If they were in the army when converted, they resigned. The early Christian will say, "We will match our power to suffer against your ability to inflict suffering, we will wear you down by our spirit, by soul force against physical force, by going the second mile, by turning the other cheek."¹⁶⁷ This position is also maintained by

¹⁶⁴ Roland H. Bainton, *Christian Attitudes Toward war and Peace: A Historical Survey and Critical Re-evaluation*, (London: Hodder and Stoughton), 1960:14.

¹⁶⁵ Ballou, p. 12-13.

¹⁶⁶ Bainton, p. 66.

¹⁶⁷ E. Stanley Jones, *Mastery*, (Nashville: Abingdon), 1955:309.

critical scholars like Ramsey in his work, "Speak up for Just War or Pacifism: A Critique of the United Methodist Bishops' Pastoral Letter 'In Defense of Creation.'" Gregg holding to the same view above writes,

The surprising conduct of the non-violent resister presents suddenly to the violent assailant the new ideas that dispute can be settled calmly and amicably, that calm conduct is more dignified, more decent, more efficient, more worthy of respect than violence; that there are some values and imponderable forces in the world perhaps even more powerful and desirable than physical force; that the position of the attacker is much less favourable than he at first thought; that perhaps the two parties are not enemies after all.¹⁶⁸

The researcher looks at the works of some of the early Church Fathers to buttress the scholars' above mentioned point discussed. Justin Martyr (100-165) in his Apology when he was defending the Christians against the misrepresentation Demons were doing to the Christian Doctrine writes,

We who formerly delighted in fornication but now embrace chastity alone; we who formerly used magical arts, dedicate ourselves to the good and begotten God; we who valued above all things the acquisition of wealth and possessions, now bring what we have into a common stock, and communicate to everyone in need; we who hated and destroyed one another, and on account of their different manners will not live with men of different tribe, now, since the coming of Christ, live familiarly with them, and pray for our enemies, and endeavour to persuade those who hate us unjustly to live comfortably to the good precepts of Christ.¹⁶⁹

This then proves that the early Christians were people who had stopped hating and destroying one another. Justin Martyr is here explaining that before they became Christian, the way of violence was the normal way of life so to speak, but having become Christian, they have taken on new way of life and that is the way of nonresistance to violence.

Another Church father to make reference to his work is Ireneaus (130-201) who wrote giving a proof against the Marcionites that the prophets referred to in Isaiah and Micah when explaining their vision of ploughshares and pruning-hooks is Christ. He says thus,

¹⁶⁸ Richard B. Gregg, *The Power of Non-Violence*, (London: George Routledge and Sons), 38.

¹⁶⁹ Justin Martyr (100-165) *1 Apology*, Dialogue with Trypho, xiv, 3.

But if the law of liberty, that is, the word of God, preached by the apostles (who went forth from Jerusalem) throughout all the earth, caused such a change in the state of things, that these [nations] did form the swords and war-lances into ploughshares, and changed them into pruning-hooks for reaping the corn, [that is], into instruments used for peaceful purpose, and that they are now accustomed to fighting, but when smitten, offer also the other cheek, then the prophets have not spoken these things of any other person, but of him who effected them. This person is our Lord, and in Him is that declaration borne out, since it is He Himself who has made the plough, and introduced the pruning-hooks.¹⁷⁰

From this, it is obvious that the early Church was nonviolent in all aspect of life. The weapons used for war is changed to weapons for peace and that was what the early Church was known for.

Worthy of mention is Athenagoras (177) who wrote a plea for the Christians. Athenagoras was an Athenian Philosopher and a Christian who wrote the plea to Emperors Marcus Aurelius and Lucius Commodus. The plea contains vital information which buttresses the point that the early Church was nonviolent or nonresistant while some could use the word pacifist. The plea was against the injustice shown towards Christians of his time. In his words,

But for us who are called Christians you have not in like manner cared; but although we commit no wrong-nay, as appear in the sequel of this discourse, are of all men most piously and righteously disposed towards the Deity and towards your government- you allow us to be harassed, plundered, and persecuted, the multitude making war upon us for our name alone. We venture, therefore, to lay a statement of our case before you- and you will team from this discourse that we suffer unjustly, and contrary to all law and reason- and we beseech you to bestow some consideration upon us also, that we may cease at length to be slaughtered at the instigation of false accusers. For the fine imposed by our persecutors does not aim merely at our property, nor their insult at our reputation, nor the damage they do us at any other of our greatest interests. These we hold in contempt, though to the generality they appear matters of great importance; for we have learned, not only not to return blow for blow, nor to go to law with those who plunder and rob us, but to those who smite us on one side of the face to offer the other side also, and to those who take away our coat to give likewise our cloak. But, when we have surrendered our property, they plot against our very bodies and souls, pouring upon us wholesale charges of crimes of which we are

¹⁷⁰ Irenaeus, (130-202) Against Heresies, iv, 34.4.

*guiltless even in thought, but which belong to these idle prates themselves, and to the whole tribe of those who are like them.*¹⁷¹

The above quotation shows the teaching of Jesus on turning the other cheek in practice in the early Church. One may argue that this was written in defense of the Christians and not a practical testimony of the Church. Although above argument may sound strong, from the historical point of view. However, such writing may as well be taken to serve as a practical testimony of the early Christians' faithfulness, who will rather suffer or even die than to speak falsehood to the whole world in writing such as this and to people of higher authority and more so by calling on those in authority to investigate.

Another Early Church Father is Tertullian (150-230). He says,

*In the last section, decision may seem to have been given likewise concerning military service, which is between dignity and power. But now inquiry is made about this point, whether a believer may turn himself unto military service, and whether the military may be admitted unto the faith, even the rank and file, or each inferior grade, to whom there is no necessity for taking part in sacrifice or capital punishment. There is no agreement between the Devine and human sacrament, the standard of Christ and the standard of the devil, the camp of light and the camp of darkness. One soul cannot be due to two masters- God and Caesar. And yet Moses carried a rod, and Aaron wore buckle, and John (Baptist) is girt with leather and Joshua the son of Nun leads a line of march; and the people warred: If it pleases you to sport with the subject. But how will a Christian man war, nay, how will he serve even in peace, without a sword, which the Lord has taken away? For albeit soldiers had come to John, and have received the formula of their rule; albeit, likewise, a Centurion had believed; still the Lord afterward, in disarming Peter, un-belt every soldier. No dress is lawful among us, if assigned to any unlawful action.*¹⁷²

From the writing of Tertullian and the other Early Church Fathers quoted above and other early Church Fathers that are not discussed. The Early Church was nonviolent or nonresistant, or in the words of other historians and scholars, pacifists.

Since the early Christians were nonresistant, they used the New Testament passages to draw their strength. There are four New Testament passages; that adherents of

¹⁷¹ *Ante-Nicene Fathers 1*, Athenagoras, A Plea For Christians (trans; B.P. Pratten).

¹⁷² Tertullian, *Apologetics Concerning Military Service*, XIX (trans. S. Thelwall).

the nonresistant position claim as their foundation. The first is Matthew 5:38-48 with strong emphasis on verse 39 where Jesus said "resist no evil." This verb 'resist not' was transformed into a substantive and that is where the term nonresistance is derived. The advocates of nonresistance or nonviolence interpret this passage to mean that Jesus gave these words to his followers to limit the extent of retaliation in the exercise of justice. In the ways of the Old Testament, Moses gave the law which states, "If any harm follows, then you shall give life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, burn for burn, wound for wound, stripe for stripe" (Exod. 21:22-23). It is not in doubt that the offender at the end suffers much more than the offended. Many African traditional contexts operate on a similar law and principles of retaliation. However, if the 'eye for an eye' law is to be followed in the world today, would not the world turn out to be full of blind people? The answer would not be in the affirmative as during the Old Testament era, the Jews did not turn all blind as a result of enforcing the law. Above all, the motive of the 'eye for eye' in the Hebrew Scriptures is not meant to make the world blind but to doing right to those injured and deterring others from doing wrong. Advocates of nonresistance say, Jesus had said that some of the laws were given to the Israelites due to hardness of their hearts and that he came to fulfill the Laws. St. Paul further stresses Jesus' point in this passage by saying vengeance is the Lord's and therefore believers should owe no one anything serve to love one another (Rom. 12:19-21; 13:8). Proponents of nonviolence take this Pauline passage seriously as systematic argumentative support for their daily lives. The third passage is the parallel to the Matthean passage found in Luke 6:27-36. The fourth text is the one found in 1 Peter 2:18-24:

Slaves, submit yourselves to your masters with all respect, not only to those who are good and considerate, but also to those who are harsh. For it is commendable if a man bears up under the pain of unjust suffering because he is conscious of God. But how is it to your credit if you receive a beating for doing wrong and endure it? But if you suffer for doing good and you endure it, this is commendable before God. To this you were called, because Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in his steps. 'He committed no sin, and no deceit was found in his mouth.' When they hurled their insults at him, he did not retaliate; when he suffered, he made no threats. Instead, he entrusted himself to him who judges justly. He himself bore our sins in his

body on the tree, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed.

This is a very powerful passage used by the advocates of nonresistance, they could argue using this passage to challenge believers to bear pains as Jesus did and they will get God's approval. No wonder, one will come across so many writings by the members of the Historic Peace Churches on "Following in Jesus' Steps" and books bearing such related titles.

The above passages gave the early Christians ground for taking the position of nonviolence. This is as a result of giving a literal interpretation of the Scriptures. The contemporary Christian advocates of nonresistance or nonviolence still hold to these biblical verses as their source of authority on this concept. Granted that literal interpretation of the Scriptures plays a prominent role in the early Church as well as among the Historic Peace Churches, the literal method of Bible Interpretation has lots of limitations. Such limitations could be noticed when similar passages of the Scriptures can not be taken literally, for example, when Jesus asked his disciples to sell their cloak or garment and buy sword in the Gospel according to St Luke 22:36. The same is valid for the passage where Jesus said he has 'not come to bring peace but war' as recorded in Matthew 10:34-39. Pacifists and advocates of nonresistance have tried to solve the problem by arguing that in case of the sword where even the disciples presented two swords and Jesus said it is enough, they do argue that Jesus did not mean that he is to be taken literally. If Jesus was referring to physical swords, why will he say two is enough? What is two swords to thirteen people? To prove that Jesus was not intending his words to be taken literally, at his arrest, the Scriptures recorded that Simon Peter used the sword and cut off one of the ears of Malchus one of the servants who went to arrest him (John 18:10), Jesus would not have resisted. So convincing this could sound, but it still left the problem unsolved. The words of Jesus that he did not come to bring peace but war, further makes the whole discussion complex.

Bainton however says, the early Church did not take that position simply because of the biblical roots but, because at that time, no converts to Christianity were in the army and believers were in the minority and their non participation in military service does not amount to anything significant. "From the end of the New Testament period

to the decade A.D. 170-80 there is no evidence whatever of Christians in the army ... The expansion of Christianity had taken place chiefly among civilians in the urban centers. Few as yet were converted while in the army. Converts not already in the ranks had many reasons against volunteering, and they were not subject to conscription."¹⁷³ This is indeed a strong point and historical too. However, the early church took the Scripture literally and tried applying it in their daily lives. Such a position of literal interpretation and application of the Scriptures is the approach of churches that today emphasize nonviolence. Though they are in the minority and may not be in the army, the words of Tertullian as quoted above that when Jesus disarmed Peter against using the sword he Jesus un-belt every soldier was the understanding of the early Church and the early believers in obedience to the words of Jesus did not join the army. There are testimonies and stories of early Christian martyrs who refused one or two things the state commanded which they believed was against their spiritual convictions. One early Christian martyr worthy of mention was Polycarp of Smyrna with his popular statement "for 86 years I have served him and he has done me no wrong. How can I blaspheme my King and my Savior." This was a statement he made when the proconsul advised and threatened him to denounce Christ and be freed.

3.2.1 Principles of Nonviolence

This section discusses the principles of nonviolence (nonresistance). Christian nonviolence (nonresistance) is a biblical teaching. However, what stands out so obvious is the principle of the separation between Church and State. The saved from the teaching of the Scriptures is commanded to separate her/ himself from the practices of this world, this is so much emphasized using Romans 12:2. They stress this position by Jesus' words in John 17:16, "*They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.*" The words of Jesus also in John 15:19 says, "*If you were of the world, the world would love its own; but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you.*" Hoyt, Augsburg and Ballou among other proponents of Christian nonviolence (nonresistance) hold strongly that the Church and the State are but separate by divine injunction. The

¹⁷³ Roland H. Bainton, *Christian Attitudes Toward War and Peace: A Historical Survey and Critical Re-evaluation*, (Nashville: Abingdon Press), 1960:67-68.

argument is that since the Church and the State are separate, their mode of operation and defence are different.

To further strengthen this position, the statement of Jesus in John 18:36 is highly treasured, "Jesus answered, 'My kingdom is not from this world, if my kingdom were from this world, my followers would be fighting to keep me from being handed over to the Jews; but as it is, my kingdom is not from here'" (NRSV). This verse clearly shows us that Jesus is a King, but he Jesus gives the difference between his kingdom and the kingdom of this world. From the context, this was Jesus' defence before Pilate. Hence, the church does speak of Jesus as the King of kings and Lord of lords. His kingdom is heavenly; it never changes nor passes away. Jesus' kingdom is not a threat to worlds' kingdoms as is being misunderstood. Jesus went further to explain that because his kingdom is not of this world, his servants are not to use worldly arms to advance and protect his kingdom. Matthew Henry in his popular Matthew Henry's Commentary critically and exegetically studied this verse and summarized Jesus' intention in five lessons sharing the same opinion thus,

Christ is a King, and has a kingdom, but not of this world. First its rise is not from this world... His kingdom is not by succession, election, or conquest, but by the immediate and special designation of the divine will and counsel. Secondly, its nature is not worldly; it is a kingdom within men (Luke 16:21), set up in their hearts and consciences (Rom 14:17), its riches spiritual, its power spiritual, and all its glory within. The ministers of state in Christ's kingdom have not the spirit of the world, 1 Cor. 2:12. Thirdly, its guards and support are not worldly; its weapons are spiritual. It neither needed nor used secular force to maintain and advance it, nor was it carried on in a way hurtful to kings or provinces; it did not in the least interfere with the prerogatives of princes nor the property of their subjects; it tended not to alter any national establishment in secular things, nor opposed any kingdom but that of sin and Satan. Fourthly, Its tendency and design are not worldly. Christ neither aimed nor would allow his disciples to aim at the pomp and power of the great men on earth. Fifthly, Its subjects, though they are in the world, yet are not of the world. They are called and chosen out of the world, are born from, and bound for, another world; they are neither the world's pupils nor its darlings, neither governed by its wisdom nor enriched with its wealth.¹⁷⁴

¹⁷⁴ The Gospel of John, *Mathew Henry's Commentary* (New York: Herpers and Brothers), 1950.

The researcher does not corroborate some of Matthew Henry's points more especially the ethical implication of Jesus' teaching in the lives of the believers would sometimes turn out to oppose secular establishment. However, he has made so important points on the Kingdom of Christ. Henry's third critical point directly finds additional strength from Pauline Epistle to the Church at Corinth. St Paul says, *"For though we live in the world we are not carrying on a worldly war, for the weapons of our warfare are not worldly but have divine power to destroy strongholds"* (11 Cor. 10:3-4).

Looking critically at the passages and texts from the New Testament, advocates of nonviolence (nonresistance) among whom are Orr believe that Christians are forbidden from using violence for whatever reason. Physical violence is not Christian they will say. Christians they say have been called upon to follow the footsteps of Jesus. 1 John 2:6 says, *"The one who says I abide in him ought to walk in the same way in which he walked."* Jesus chose the way of nonviolence and love of enemy. Advocates of nonviolence (nonresistance) have understood this way as one to which Christians are invited. They believe that following Jesus means choosing nonviolence, even in times of war or conflict, and lifting its possibilities before neighbors and nation. Declaring that "all war is sin," they recognize that armed conflict never reflect God's will for humanity.

Peter's statement in 1 Peter 2:21-24 is very relevant to the position of nonviolence (nonresistance) where he says this challenging words,

For this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example; that you should follow in his steps. He committed no sin; no guile was found on his lips, when he was reviled, he did not revile in return; when he suffered, he did not threaten; but he trusted to him who judges justly. He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed.

Conscious of the above principle of the separation between Church and State, the doctrine of Christian nonviolence (nonresistance) is a spiritual principle for individual believers under any form of government. Jesus said, *"Render to Caesar that which belongs to Caesar and to God that which belongs to God"* (Matt. 22:21b). Paul states also in Romans 13:1-7 about being submissive to governing authorities as discussed

above. Peter also called believers to be subjects to and to honour the kings (1 Peter 2:3-14, 17).

Looking critically at the aforementioned passages, they are directed more to individuals and individual's conduct. Advocates of nonresistance among them Hoyt, Ballou always say, these passages are directed to individual behaviours and not to nations. In the words of Hoyt,

Any careful examination of the language makes this a necessary conclusion. The 'whosoever' and 'if any man' individualizes the command. Even if these expressions did not appear, and a whole Congregation were being addressed, the only way for this exhortation to be carried out would be by personal effort of individual believers. The individualizing principle of these Scripture makes application to governments and nations wholly illogical. Never is the passage of the New Testament directed to unregenerate worldly governments.¹⁷⁵

This portion of Scriptures and the way the interpretation is given by advocates of nonresistance as quoted above attracts lots of criticisms and objections from just war theorists among them Holmes. The likes of Holmes criticized that if these passages are directed only to individuals, then the church may be failing in its responsibilities of social actions and caring for the life of the other as they wanted to protect him or her by not killing. In response to the above critique, Augsburgers among others could say that although it is true that due to the separation between Church and State and also that the doctrine of nonresistance (nonviolence) is not primarily social, but yet, it is intended to be felt in the social realm. Hoyt in his description of Christian nonresistance (nonviolence) says, "A spiritual principle to be exercised by the people of God in the midst of this wicked world. Whenever an entire nation reaches the point that all within its boundaries are Christians and are practicing the principle of non-resistance (non-violence), it may be fairly concluded that the kingdom of God has been established on earth."¹⁷⁶The accusation by advocates of other theories more especially just war theory is this that adherents of nonresistance are proposing two ethics differently, one for individual believers and one for the non-believer. This is a strong point to which proponents of nonresistance have no satisfactory answer as far as just war theorists are concerned.

¹⁷⁵ Hoyt, p. 36.

¹⁷⁶ Ibid p. 39.

The life and ministry of Jesus was the model for the doctrine of Christian nonviolence (nonresistance) which is one of the things Christ asked the believer to obey. The command by Jesus to his followers to love their enemies is a well-grounded principle of nonviolence (nonresistance). Advocates of Christian nonviolence (nonresistance) say, Christ kingdom is not of this world, his spirit is neither of this world, nor his purpose, method, evaluations and even his protections are not of this world. As such, practicing nonviolence (nonresistance) shows that one is at the center of God's perfect will. Evil can be overcome only by good, truth is superior to error, right superior to wrong and love over hatred. Ballou says in his discussion on Christian nonresistance (nonviolence) that the doctrine "Proceeds from the inner most bosom of God. It proceeds from ALL PERFECT LOVE that absolute, independent, unerringly wise, holy love, which distinguishes the Divine from all inferior natures, and which, transfused into the natural sentiment of human benevolence, super induces the highest order of goodness."¹⁷⁷

Ballou is of the view that Christian nonresistance (nonviolence) rejects the participation of a believer in government, while Hoyt is of the view that a believer who believes in nonresistance (nonviolence) can participate not only in government, but is free to join the military but as a non-combatant. This position has been a source of controversy among advocates of Christian nonresistance (nonviolence) due to the fact that participation in military as non-combatants ends the doctrine to mean, I will not take life, but you are free to take life and I support you. So this then if accepted shows that the criticisms leveled against the doctrine of nonviolence (nonresistance) as being cowardice could be substantiated. However, those who, like Hoyt, hold to the view that one is free to join the military as a non-combatant will say, I am not supporting the killing of people, but protecting lives of the victims and leading them to Christ.

3.2.2 Nonviolence Practices

Is nonviolence or nonresistance applicable in real life? In other words, with all the misconceptions, misunderstanding and the supposed weaknesses of the term

¹⁷⁷ Ballou, p. 21.

nonviolence or nonresistance by its critics, are there records of successes recorded by nonviolence in overcoming violence?

Before answering, some scholars like Niebuhr have said that what Mohandas Gandhi did in India and Martin Luther King Jr. did in North America would not work under a brutal government like the Soviet sponsored government. In the words of Niebuhr, "If we believe that if Britain had only been fortunate enough to have produced 30 per cent instead of 2 percent of conscientious objectors to military service, Hitler's heart would have been softened and he would not have attacked Poland, we hold a faith which no historic reality justifies."¹⁷⁸ The researcher is arguing with those holding to such position as different contexts require different approaches. Yet nonviolence works and would always carry the day in overcoming violence or in restoration of just peace. The words of Wink elaborates on this when he says,

*Non-violent general strikes have overthrown at least seven Latin American dictators: Carlos Ibanez del Campo of Chile (1931), Gerardo Machado y Morales of Cuba (1933), Jorge Ubico of Guatemala (1944), Elie Lescot of Haiti (1946), Arnulfo Arias of Panama (1951), Paul Magliore of Haiti (1956), and Gustavo Rojas Pinilla of Colombia (1957). In 1989-90 alone, fourteen nations underwent nonviolent revolutions, all of them successful except China, and all of them nonviolent except Romania. These revolutions involved 1.7 billion people. If we total all the nonviolent movement of the twentieth century, the figure comes to 3.4 billion people, and again, most were successful.*¹⁷⁹

As beautiful as the above picture looks, one cannot deny the fact that there were times nonviolence could not work, but because is the right way to go, it shouldn't be abandoned.

3.2.3 Criticisms against Nonresistance Literal Bible Interpretation

What are the problems of literal Bible interpretation? Has literal interpretation created some difficulties to advocates of nonviolence? The researcher discussed this aspect from the perspective of the present thesis' subject in order to avoid any digression.

¹⁷⁸ Reinhold Niebuhr, *Christianity and Power Politics*, (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons), 1952:6.

¹⁷⁹ Walter Wink, *Jesus and Nonviolence: A Third Way*, (Minneapolis: Fortress Press), 2003:2.

The first criticism against the interpretation of the Scripture in favour of nonviolence is their over emphasis on the New Testament over the Old Testament. Was the Old Testament not inspired as well? Was not both the Old and New Testaments a unit? What is there to say to some of the wars commanded by God and some are even declared holy wars? If the people of Israel in the Old Testament did what was right by engaging in wars and battles, is it not also proper for Christians to do same?

In responding to some of these questions, the Historic Peace Churches and those who hold to the nonviolence teaching say, we do not neglect nor abandon the Old Testament. They argue that there are some Old Testament passages that give support to their position. It has to be stated though that they hold the position as many Christians believe to be right that it is in the New Testament, in Jesus Christ that God's final, special revelation was made. In the Old Testament, God was continuously revealing himself to his people. He sometimes has to allow war so that the people of other nations could know that he is all powerful. Besides this, there have been some texts in the Old Testament that Hoyt, Augsburg among others believe that such passages are against war and supporting nonviolence. Such passages for instance, are part one of the Ten Commandment where God said, "*Thou shall not kill*" (Ex. 20:13). They culminate by throwing a challenge to their accusers that, what has Jesus said as to one of the purposes of his coming? He came to fulfill the laws, in other words, to make perfect those laws that were not perfect. *You have heard it was said an eye for an eye, but I say to you...* (Matt. 5:39). In Matthew 19:8, "*He said to them, 'for your hardness of heart Moses allowed you to divorce you wives, but from the beginning it was not so.'*"

They argue that Israel was a nation of this world, God indeed chose them, but wanted through them (Israel) to make himself known to the whole world. Now the Church is the New Israel, so there is no longer any need for the Church to be involved in violence or violent activities. Israel they say had a language and a land, the Church has heaven as its final destination. Israel existed during the dispensation of the law while the Church now exists during the dispensation of Grace. Holmes among those holding to the just war theory have criticized Hoyt, Augsburg among others that even during the Old Testament, God was still the God of Grace and to this point, Hoyt and Augsburg will not argue. Holmes says, "Hoyt is a

dispensationalist, as he makes clear repeatedly in his essay. He believes that the two Testaments present different moral standards for different dispensations. Thus the law is 'superseded' by grace- while the lex telionis with its 'eye for an eye' (which he interprets as providing for retaliation) prevailed under the law, now it is replaced by loving nonresistance. Justice is therefore superseded by love."¹⁸⁰

Indeed proponents of the Just war theory and other theories that seem to justify different types/forms of war always use the Old Testament strongly to justify their position, but,

*A high-school student read an article written by a Christian who used Old Testament passages to justify holy war. When he was invited to criticize the material, he wrote in the margin. 'Isn't it possible that justification for the holy war was changed when Jesus changed 'an eye for an eye' to 'turn the other cheek?' Christ fulfilled Old Testament law and prophecy. In so doing, he sometimes revealed new truth. Sometimes he focused attention on the basic principle involved in existing revelation. Sometimes he demanded a return to the concept revealed before man's fall into sin.'*¹⁸¹

Still in line with the biblical origins of Christian nonresistance (Christian nonviolence) comes the Scriptural difficulties of some of Jesus' pronouncements. For example, in Matthew 10:34 Jesus says, "Do not think I have come to bring peace on earth; I have not come to bring peace, but a sword." This verse has always been quoted to throw out the claim of the biblical root of nonresistance. Is this not Jesus' statement they ask? How do you interpret this with your literal interpretation? Can you apply the same principle to this passage as you did to the others?

In reacting to the above criticism, proponents of the doctrine of Christian nonresistance have this to say. First they could look at the principle of biblical interpretation which says never quote a Scriptural portion out of its own context. This principle emphasizes the importance of the context of any discourse. Looking critically at the context of the above passage, paying special attention to the preceding verses as well as the verses which follow, one sees that Jesus was not talking of physical but spiritual issues; hence the passage cannot be interpreted literally as the other passages. What then is the criterion in changing hermeneutics

¹⁸⁰ Arthur F. Holmes, "A Just War Response," *War: 4 Christian Views*, ed Robert G. Clouse, (Downers Grove Ill: InterVarsity Press),1981: 64-72:65.

¹⁸¹ Chester Russell, *Was Jesus a Pacifist?* (Nashville: Broadman Press) 1971:71.

between literal and non-literal biblical interpretation? The answer to this comes in line with that of Hoyt and many advocates of nonresistance, "the immediate and larger context of the passage has to be taken into consideration." This applies also to the literal interpretations of biblical passages. Talking about the peace that will cease amongst family members, father against son, and mother against daughter, can this be taken literally? The nonresistant could respond that what Jesus means is that even in a single family; some members will accept him while other members will reject him.¹⁸² So lack of peace in this context does not necessarily mean violence but agreeing and following different faiths in a single family can be seen as lack of peace. But the answer according to proponents of nonviolence and that of biblical scholars still remains that not all passages of the Scriptures can be interpreted literally.

Another biblical passage challenging the claim that Christian nonresistance has its origins in the Bible is Luke's Gospel 22:35-38 which says, *"And he (Jesus) said to them, 'When I sent you out with no purse or bag or sandals did you lack anything?' They said, 'Nothing,' He said to them, 'But now let him who has no sword sell his mantle and buy one. For I tell you that this Scripture must be fulfilled in me, 'And he was reckoned with transgressors.' For what is written about me has its fulfillment' And they said, 'Look Lord, here are two swords.' And he said to them, 'It is enough.'"*

Advocates of Just War and other theories supporting various forms of war, hold on to this passage as they argue against proponents of nonresistance. It is true that as one reads this passage at a glance, it seems to constitute a serious problem. This leads us to ask the question, if there is a contradiction in the Scripture? If the answer to this question is yes, then we consider this passage to be in contradiction to the other passages. But if the answer to the above question is no then there is need to attempt giving an interpretation.

The revealed God and the witness of this revealed God in the biblical narrative as in the Gospels can pose some challenges to modern minds which will seem to portray some seeming contradictions. However, the view held by many Christians and Biblical

¹⁸² In the Nigerian context, more especially in the northern part of the country, this verse does not require a serious interpretation, as it is very possible to see in a single family, some members to be Christians, others Muslims and still others belonging to the African Traditional Religions.

scholars among them Christopher J.H. Wright in his work, *Knowing Jesus through the Old Testament*, (Downers Grove: IVP, 1992) that God does not contradict Himself and therefore there is no contradiction in the Bible. If in an area where there seems to be a contradiction, either our knowledge is limited or our language is deficient or inadequate.

Now back to Luke 22:35-38 as quoted above many Christians reading this passage sometimes end by interpreting what Jesus meant this way. That when I sent you out first without asking you to carry along with you purse or bag or sandals and you lacked nothing, it was because I was here on earth, but now that am leaving you, listen to these words. Of course Jesus had said it somewhere that "in a little while, you will see me no more, and a little while you will see me" (John 16:16). With all these, the interpretation from many believers is that since a little while you may see me no more, you my followers have to prepare for battle and therefore purchase swords. If above interpretation is accepted as correct, does it mean if Jesus is living here on earth in this generation and since sword is now no longer powerful weapon of war as it used to be, will Jesus tell us to buy guns or weapons of mass destruction? No Christian even among the Just war theorists could accept this.

However, as said earlier, let the Scripture be taken in its own context, and let Scripture interprets Scripture. Although that is more of a protestant position as the Roman Catholics do hold to the authority of Scripture and tradition and thus may not be comfortable with this. However, from the Historic Peace Churches point of view, let the Scripture interpret Scripture is our working principle in Biblical interpretation.

Yet, there are some indications that even the disciples might have taken Jesus literally and that was the reason for presenting him with two physical, carnal swords and Jesus said that was enough. Jesus did not tell them to have some swords, so presenting two swords to Jesus was out of place. Does it mean the disciples did not understand Jesus or what went wrong? How can just two swords for 12 of them be enough? He said let each who has no sword sell his mantle and buy. Looking at the context, two facts will tell us the contrary. First, reading through the verses that follow reveal this, Jesus was still speaking and there the crowd who came to arrest him arrived. The disciples then said, 'Lord shall we strike with the sword' (Luke.

22:49b). Probably the same two swords they presented to Jesus to which Jesus said it is enough. Jesus' response was quite revealing, if he had meant literally, his answer should have been yes, go ahead. The second point is the action displayed by Jesus, the Scripture continued by saying, "And one of them struck the slave of the high priest and cut off his right ear. But Jesus said, 'No more of this!' And he touched his ear and healed him." (Luke. 22:50-51) These two facts then tell us to look for another interpretation as to what Jesus meant is not referring to physical carnal swords neither its usage.

This possibly shows that Jesus did not expect the disciples and his followers to take him literally. He might have probably meant that since his hour has almost come and he will soon leave the disciples, they need to get ready for the spiritual battle and to learn to cater for both their physical as well as the spiritual needs. Hoyt sums up the views of nonresistance on this passage accurately when he says, "Whatever our Lord meant by his statement about buying a sword, it certainly cannot be construed to mean he is sanctioning war in a sense. If he meant self-defense in some limited sense, then it is to be explained in the light of other Scriptures instructing Christians on the use of physical force."¹⁸³

Another point of challenge to the nonresistant use of the Scripture as their base is how can they reconcile their position of the separation between Church and state in the light of Romans 13:1-7? Niebuhr, Holmes among other critics to the nonresistance position have always said that being submissive to civil government could warrant being obedient even in military service. What are the advocates of nonresistance saying to this? Mark Manos in his *The Mystery of Romans: The Jewish Context of Paul's Letters*, (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1996), was of the opinion that Paul is writing to Gentile believers in Rome to obey, not Roman secular/pagan authority, but to obey the God-ordained authority of the Synagogue rulers in Rome and payment of taxes referred by the Apostle is talking about temple taxes.

It is not in doubt that a wide range of interpretations have been given on this passage. The researcher looks at the different interpretations generally, but we shall look at the interpretation offered by advocates of nonresistance among them Hoyt.

¹⁸³ Herman A. Hoyt, "Biblical Nonresistance" in *WAR: Four Christian Views*, ed. Robert G. Clouse (Illinois: InterVarsity Press), 1981, 27-57:55.

The key verse is believed to be verse 3a which says "For Rulers are not a terror to good conduct, but to bad." This verse for proponents of nonviolence is critical to the understanding of the whole passage. Hoyt, Augsburg, Ballou and Orr among other advocates of nonresistance interpret it to mean governments are to promote good and not evil. However, just as Apostle Peter and the other Apostles said to the rulers in Acts 3:29, "We must obey God rather than man." They went on to say that governments are to be obeyed, but when the government demanded of a citizen to do what conflicts with what God says in His revealed word, God being the Higher power has to be respected and the government disobeyed.

Some scholars among them F D Maurice in his *Christmas Day and Other Sermons* (New York: Macmillan and Co. 1892) are of the view that Paul wrote this letter when the emperor at that time was not a persecuting emperor, that interval of promise before the outburst of Nero although the tune of the letter may not have changed they argue. This argument is worth discussing. This epistle was believed to have been written during the early years of the beginning of the reign of Emperor Nero, history has it that Nero started his emperorship well. However, Paul in line with the teaching of Jesus, bearing in mind also what he said towards the end of chapter 12 of this epistle that believers are to pay no one evil for evil because vengeance is the Lord's. He was calling on believers to be submissive to civil authority regardless of the particular ruler's wickedness. This statement was calling on Christians who were in the minority then not to rebel against constituted authority even if they are evil, nor to call on curses on evil rulers. But, when a demand comes which is sinful like taking up of arms, emperor worship and the likes, Christians are not to obey.

3.3 Conscientious Objection

Conscientious Objection is the teaching and belief on moral or religious grounds where one refuses to bear arms in a military conflict or to serve in the armed forces. The one who refuses to participate in war or support combatants is called conscientious objector. As one option, conscientious objectors may be willing to accept non-combatant roles during conscription or military service. As a second option, the conscientious objector may object to any role within armed forces which results in complete rejection of conscription or military service. In some countries,

assignment to an alternatively civilian service as a substitute for conscription or Military service is given to the conscientious objector. Some conscientious objectors may consider themselves either pacifists, nonresistant, or anti-militarists. The issue of conscientious objection is applicable in countries where military service is obligatory for every citizen and not optional or during war where countries could engage in conscription. In Nigeria and many other countries, military or para-military service is not by conscription but voluntary and at the will of the individual.

Case gives a broader definition of conscientious objector. In her words, "A conscientious objector is one who passively resists the effort of some social group, usually the state, to compel him to do something against which he holds conscientious scruples. The behavior of the conscientious objector is purely defensive and non-aggressive and is often, although not necessarily, as a result of pacifists views."¹⁸⁴

The above quotation is broad in the sense that it did not refer only to war or joining the armed forces but of doing something against which the conscientious objector holds conscientious scruples. Case goes further to distinguish three types of conscientious objectors. First she called the religious objectors who belong to mostly the nonviolence churches. The second type is the ones she addressed as socialists objectors and by that she means those who opposed especially the two World Wars on international and humanitarian grounds. The third is the individualist objectors often called 'absolutists.' According to her, the absolutist objectors are those that, "Their objection was directed at conscription in and of itself, regardless of the righteousness of the particular war or of war in general."¹⁸⁵

It is interesting to note that Conscientious Objectors is not only limited to the Historic Peace Churches, of a fact there are many who object to participation in war and military service who are not members of the Historic Peace Churches. Drescher concurs, "Christ's teaching on non-resistance to evil (on a physical level) are clear and unequivocal. They are so clear that such men as Tolstoy and Gandhi, who were not prepared to accept the total gospel, found their basis for pacifism in Christ's

¹⁸⁴ Clarence Marsh Case, "Conscientious Objectors" in *Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences*, ed Edwin R A Seligman vol. III (New York: Macmillan Company), 1930:210-212:210.

¹⁸⁵ *Ibid.* 211.

teaching. D.L. Moody says, 'There has never been a time in my life when I felt that I could take a gun and shoot down a fellow being. In this respect I am a Quaker.'¹⁸⁶ Most Christians who rejected Christian participation in war taking up a pacifist stance have the New Testament as their basis. However, if there is one subject that has divided the church of God is the Christians' rejection of participation in war or military service. Drescher goes on to say, "In sharing my personal convictions as a conscientious objector to participation in war, I recognize that the subject is one which has divided sincere Christians since the fourth century. Prior to that time there was almost unanimous agreement that Christians cannot engage in warfare."¹⁸⁷

3.3.1 Motivation for Conscientious Objectors

What are the motivating factors to conscientious objectors? The answer to this is not far fetched for the religious objectors. The New Testament they will say. Their Christology which is deeply rooted in the New Testament motivated conscientious objectors to adopt their position. Interesting enough is the insight given by Yoder¹⁸⁸ who stated that right in the Old Testament and specifically Exodus 20:5-8 there was a provision for exempting some group of people from war.

It is worthy of note that conscientious objectors are pacifists and when one is discussing conscientious objection one will be addressing the two. He/she will be dealing with pacifism and how some pacifists are living out their pacifism. Although not all pacifists could be conscientious objectors but all conscientious objectors are pacifists. It does not mean that all conscientious objectors are members of Historic Peace Churches because being a member of the Historic Peace Churches and a pacifist are two different things. Lamar Gible in his paper entitled "The World Council of Churches and the question of Conscientious Objection" presented at the International Conference of European Churches and Conscientious Objection to Military Service a Contribution to the conciliar process for Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation held at Loccum in 1988, states,

¹⁸⁶ John Drescher, *Why I am a Conscientious Objector: A Christian Peace Shelf Selection*, (Ontario: Herald Press), 1982:29.

¹⁸⁷ Drescher, p.18.

¹⁸⁸ John H. Yoder, "Conscientious Objection," in *Dictionary of the Ecumenical Movement* ed. Nicholas Lossky and others, (Geneva: WCC Publications), 2002:245-246.

While rejection of war appears in the experience and writings of the ancient Hebrews, Chinese, Indians, and Native Americans, the unconditional rejection of war seems to have arisen first from the teachings of Jesus and was deeply ingrained in the beliefs and practices of the Christians of the first three centuries AD. This response of the early Christians and the pacifist stance of Jesus is, however, not without debate. There were times when our Lord spoke and acted aggressively and a few biblical passages, if taken quite literally, which puzzlingly seem to approve of self defense (like the passage of the two swords). But the cumulative message of Jesus is overwhelmingly that he does not sanction violence against persons or the taking of human life and continuously witness to love and forgiveness in human relationships. The nonviolent character of Jesus' life, teachings, and ministry are overwhelming.¹⁸⁹

This quotation stresses the position of the Historic Peace Churches on conscientious objection. When assessed critically the statement of Gibble on his interpretation of the words of Jesus Christ to his disciples on the two swords that Jesus seems to approve of self defense, the Historic Peace Churches have a different interpretation as discussed above. To give further strength to the position of the historic peace churches on that portion of Scripture, the context needs to be taken into account. However, looking at Churches that hold on to pacifism, such churches are on the minority. Although pacifists are found within and without churches that hold to pacifism, but pacifists are few and Conscientious Objectors are a very little segment of human society as such, Conscientious Objectors had suffered persecutions and more hardship than any other group of people in times of war. The words of Cadoux is relevant here when he discusses on conscientious objectors, he says,

Pacifism has been an unpopular minority position in every war making society. Even in the two relatively democratic nations, England and the United States, pacifists had a very difficult time during World War 1. Those who were of draft age, in England and America, were treated with great severity. In Britain out of 16,100 known conscientious objectors, at least 5,793 were court-martialed. Thirty-four men were sent to the frontlines in France, virtually a sentence of death; others were paraded through the streets, where they were hissed, jeered, stoned, and injured by hostile crowds. There was also harsh treatment for objectors within the United States, unless they were members of well-organized peace

¹⁸⁹ Lamar Gibble, "The World Council of Churches and the Question of Conscientious Objection" Paper Presented at the International Conference of the European Churches and Conscientious Objection to Military Service, Contribution to the Conciliar Process for Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation Held at Loccum, 1989:11-27:12.

*Churches such as the Society of Friends, Mennonites and the Church of the Brethren. The non-historic-peace-Church objectors were forced into the army, sent to military prisons, and brutally treated.*¹⁹⁰

The quotation clearly confirms the previously presented positions on pacifism, pacifist and conscientious objectors. First, conscientious objectors just as are pacifists were and still are in a minority position. Secondly, many of conscientious objectors are not members of Historic Peace Churches, and thirdly, they suffered harsh treatment. However, just as pacifists could not easily let go of their pacifist stance so too conscientious objectors could hardly renounce their conviction. This is seen from the description of the achievement so to speak of the conscientious objectors during the First World War by Cadoux when he says, "The revulsion against war during the post-war period, plus the suffering of conscientious objectors during the war, helped to remove the popular stigma from the word 'pacifism.' Pacifists gained a measure of respectability during the period between World Wars, and prior to World War II they had become an important force in both British and American Churches."¹⁹¹

The researcher presents the position of the Church of the Brethren in America on Conscientious Objection since this is the Church that gave birth to the Church of the Brethren in Nigeria. Most Church of the Brethren historians hold to the position that though the Church is a Peace Church, however, the Church was unprepared for the World War I. World War I was fought from 1914-1918, while the Second World War was fought between 1939-1945. Another fact is that both World Wars were started in Europe but America joined due to her alliance and friendship with Great Britain and France. The proof that the Brethren were not prepared for the First World War was as a result of the fact that when America entered the War in 1917, it soon began the draft. Although it granted those of draft age from the Peace Churches to perform non-combatant service, historical records show that the ideas of Brethren leaders varied with some feeling that it is not right for a Christian to serve in the military in any way, even as a non-combatant, while some of the leaders saw nothing wrong with non-combatant duties. This ended up misleading the young men of draft age resulting in some of them joining the non-combatant service, while others refused to join the military and ended up in prison. However, others joined the

¹⁹⁰ Cecil John Cadoux, *Christian Pacifism Re-examined*, (New York: Garland Publishing, Inc.), 1972:5.

¹⁹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 6.

military and carried guns. When the Brethren leaders took note of this confusion, they decided and acted. The Church of the Brethren called a special Conference in the city of Goshen where they passed a statement maintaining their peace heritage declaring that all war is wrong. Durnbaugh gave the outcome of the Conference and the reaction of the American government thus:

In the meantime, a special Conference was called in Goshen, Indiana, in January 1918. The purpose was to reach consensus on the Brethren attitude to the world conflict and the military demands. Those attending drew up a comprehensive statement, which consisted of resolutions to be sent to the heads of the government, a strong theological justification for the refusal to bear arms, and a procedure for organization to represent the church in these matters. The Goshen statement was printed and distributed to the Churches. It soon found its way to the offices of the War Department in Washington as draftees produced it to answer the question why they would not fight.¹⁹²

That historic special Conference attracted a threatened attack and prosecution by the American government of the Conference leaders who were lucky as the war soon ended in 1919. However, the threat worked as the statement was withdrawn which averted the leaders possible trial and imprisonment but with the expensive price of what seems to be a rejection of the official peace position of the church.

The experience of the war did have some impact on the Brethren in the United States and they started sending relief materials to people in other countries. From that relief work came the Heifer Programme The Brethren leaders after World War I started looking ahead to avoid being cut unprepared in an event of another war. This led them into meetings with leaders of other churches who are also opposed to war and trying to work out alternative plan for conscientious objectors instead of serving in the military. This preparation helped the Church as their stance during the Second World War was more defined.

In 1940, America having joined the war began the draft for young men within the draft age. The peace church who had their plans already presented their plans to the American government requesting the government to allow conscientious objectors to serve their country under civilian direction and not in the military a plan which the

¹⁹² Donald F. Durnbaugh, "Recent History" in *The Church of the Brethren Past and Present*, ed. Donald F. Durnbaugh, (Elgin. Ill. : The Brethren Press), 1971:31.

American government graciously approved. The government and the church worked together and came up with the Civilian Public Service.

However, with all the Brethren preparation for the Second World War, non-pacifists or those not belonging to the Historic Peace Churches will be shocked to discover that many of the brethren still went into full combatant service. The startling revelation by Brethren historians as summarized by Hackman though Hackman considers it as strength but not a strength as such attest to my position above, he says,

In 1941, America officially entered the War. The CPS camps offered Brethren young men the chance to serve their country without carrying a gun. However, the evil practices of Adolf Hitler, the German dictator, also led many Brethren young men to join the military and fight in the war. The War ended in 1945 and the draft in 1947. By then, 1,386 Brethren chose the CPS camps. However, more than 21,000 Brethren went into full combatant service. Another 1,484 Brethren men went into noncombatant service.¹⁹³

From the above discussion, the dilemma that war could throw the Church in, even the peace churches is evident. Despite the preparation, plan and the position of the government of the United States, when the number of young Brethren who chose the CPS and those who went into noncombatant is put, they are 2,870 young men as against 21,000 who joined the military as combatants. This is a minority of the minority voice, one could imagine if the Brethren had not prepared before the Second World War, the number would have been inconsequential. This further shows that even the Historic Peace Churches could be in a dilemma when it comes to war times. In what does the dilemma consists? The dilemma is in the fact that with a long history of peace as a major heritage of the church, when come face to face with the reality of war, not many could be Conscientious Objectors. Would this position then be considered irrelevant? The researcher opines that it is not irrelevant and still very much needed, there are instances that success is not recorded only when there is numbers but even with few.

¹⁹³ Galen R. Hackman, *Introduction to Brethren History*, (Mubi: TEE College), 1992:79.

3.3.2 Criticisms against Conscientious Objection

Are there criticisms against Conscientious Objection? If there are, what are the criticisms leveled against Conscientious Objection? What are the challenges faced by Conscientious Objectors? Yes, there are several criticisms against Conscientious Objection some among which include:

(i) Conscientious Objection is faced with the criticism that this teaching or belief has reduced the Gospel of Jesus Christ into one thing and that is Love.

(ii) The second criticism is this that, there is over emphasis on the New Testament over the Old Testament.

(iii) That the teaching cannot be for the whole people everywhere but only for the followers of Christ Jesus.

There is no doubt that Conscientious Objectors face several challenges:

(a) The failure of several governments of nations to grant the right to Conscientious Objection is a major challenge. The struggle for the United States government to accept and grant rights to Conscientious Objectors was not an easy one. Some who were of draft age were severely punished while some drafted against their will. There are to date many states which do not have provision for Conscientious Objectors in the Constitution of their states.

(b) Conscientious Objectors are accused of cowardice and seen as people who like to enjoy the peace of a nation which violence might bring.

3.4 Term and Origin of Pacifism

What is Christian Pacifism? Working definition is given. Cahill is of the view that

Pacifism is more difficult to define in relation to ethics, in that it does not begin so much as an ethical reply to the violence question (as it is often interpreted to do, especially by just war theorists) but as a practical embodiment of religious conversion experience – as a way of life rather than a theory. Christian pacifism is essentially a commitment to embody communally and historically the kingdom of God so fully that mercy, forgiveness, and compassion preclude the very contemplation of causing physical harm to another person.

This is an important quotation which bears much and would be further interpreted.

Most of the time nonviolence or nonresistance and pacifism have been used synonymous to each other. This section looks at the interchangeability or otherwise of the usage of these two terms. To state it right from the outset, it is not appropriate to treat them as synonyms for they are similar but not synonymous. Pacifism denotes the rejection of the use of violence as a personal decision on moral or spiritual grounds, but does not inherently imply any inclination towards change on a socio-political level. Nonviolence presupposes the intent to (but does not limit it to) social or political changes as ethical underpinnings for the rejection of violence.

It is relevant that the words of Jesus as many pacifists will prefer to start their work this way. It is done this way not to please the pacifists nor any other group, but because it is relevant to ground the argument in the Gospel. In Matthew 26:52 we get these words of Jesus, "Put your sword back in its place...for all who draw the sword will die by the sword." And again he said, "But I say unto you, that you resist not evil; but whosoever shall smite thee on the right cheek, turn to him the other also (Matt. 5:39 KJV). The Old Testament passage has the words from prophet Micah, "They will beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks." (Mic. 4:3b, NIV) Christian pacifism advocates that when people take the way of Christ and his spirit seriously, the above prophecy could be fulfilled. Where do we find the way of Christ we may ask? Is the way of Christ self explanatory? Are there areas in the way of Christ that needed interpretation?

Christian pacifists believe that the way of Christ is best found in his own words and his own words are best found in the Scriptures. The Lukan Gospel has this verse of importance to all Christians but it has special place to pacifism,

But I tell you who hear me: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you. If someone strikes you on one cheek, turn to him the other also. If someone takes your cloak, do not stop him from taking your tunic. Give to everyone who asks you, and if anyone takes what belongs to you, do not demand it back. Do to others as you will have them do to you. If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? Even 'sinners' love those who love them. And

if you do good to those who are good to you, what credit is that to you? Even sinners do that...But love your enemies, and do good to them, and lend to them without expecting anything back. Then your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High, because he is kind to the ungrateful and wicked. Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful (Luke. 6:27-36).

In John 18:36, we get these words from Jesus, "My kingdom is not of this world; if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I may not be delivered to the Jews." Again in Matthew 5:9 Jesus said, "Blessed are the peacemakers; for they shall be called the children of God." (KJV)

All the above passages serve as a frame of reference for the discussion on Christian pacifism. The approach of pacifists to these passages does influence their interpretation as well. This is true not only to pacifists in the sense that pacifists and non-pacifists do always approach these passages from different angles giving room for differing and varied position. Niebuhr's position supports the above statement that, "All forms of religious faith are principles of interpretation which we are to organize our experience. Some religions may be adequate principles of interpretation at certain levels of experience, but they break down at deeper levels. No religious faith can maintain itself in defiance of the experience which it supposedly interprets."¹⁹⁴ To further support the above point that our experiences affect our interpretation, Holmes in his response to the proponents of nonresistance and pacifism says, "Furthermore, Jesus' words about loving ones' enemies (Mt. 5:38-48) do not supersede civil justice. If that were the case, he would have been condemned as anarchist! But he plainly says he came not to destroy the law but to fulfill it. And he drew the law of love directly from the Old Testament (compare Mt. 22:34-40; Deut. 6:1-5; Lev. 19:18, 33-34). Paul, too, tells us that love fulfills the law (Rom. 13:10)."¹⁹⁵ Some non-pacifists accuse the pacifists of proof texts reading and interpretation of Scriptures. However, Jesus did not discuss on everything in the Sermon on the Mount so we do not expect to have direct answers from Jesus on all issues. The consequences then this has on the researcher's analysis of Bible and ethical positions on violence and peace in general is this that where Jesus seems to

¹⁹⁴ Reinhold Niebuhr, *Christianity and Power Politics*, (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons), 1952:6.

¹⁹⁵ Arthur F. Holmes, "A Just War Response," in *War: 4 Christian Views*, ed. Robert G. Clouse, (Downers Gove Ill. : InterVarsity Press), 1961:64-72:66.

have been silent on either violence or peace or both, it gives room for differing positions among Christians. Cadoux has this important point when he says,

There is a sense in which it is true to say that Jesus gave his disciples no explicit teaching on the subject of war. The application of his ethical principles to the concrete affairs of life was not something which could be seen and taught in its entirety from the very first, but was bound to involve a long series of more or less complex problems, and the short lapse and other special conditions of his earthly life rendered it impossible for him to pronounce decisions on more than a very few of these.¹⁹⁶

This is true in the sense the statements of Jesus, even the Sermon on the Mount could not address some of the things modern minds could want addressed. For instance, the modern mind would want to see in the pages of the Bible where Jesus addressed the issue of slavery more especially during the struggle to abolish slave trade. However, there is no where in Jesus' teaching where he forbids slavery and nowhere did he forbid his disciples from being slaves or having slaves. This no wonder made the struggle to abolish slave trade a tough and difficult one with some using the Scriptures to argue for slave trade and others using the same Bible to argue against it. This leads also to the issue of war where Jesus seems to be silent on it. His silence on this has generated lots of representations and misrepresentations. Some have this understanding that since he was silent about war, he should have an open mind about it. The view that Jesus was not silent on the issue of war is very much held by the Historic Peace Churches. Although it is accepted that he has not categorically say that Christians are not to participate in military service or go to war, but looking at his teaching and practical life proves beyond any reasonable doubt that he regarded the acts of war as entirely impermissible to himself and his disciples. Adin Ballou in his work, "Christian Non-Resistance in all its Important Bearings," Herman A. Hoyt in his article on "non-resistance," Myron S. Augsburger in his article on "Christian Pacifism," and Cecil John Cadoux in his work, "The Early Christian Attitude to War: A Contribution to the History of Christian Ethics," to mention some few agree to the above position. In the words of Cadoux, "The Evidence for this last statement is cumulative, and can

¹⁹⁶ Cecil John Cadoux, *The Early Christian Attitude to War: A Contribution to the History Of Christian Ethics*, (London: Headley Bros Publishers), 1919: 19.

adequately be appreciated only by a careful examinations of the sayings in which Jesus utters general principles that seems to have a more or less direct bearing on war and those in which he explicitly alludes to it, and by an earnest endeavour to arrive at the meaning that is latent in them."¹⁹⁷

3.4.1 Theoretical Arguments against Christian Pacifism

Just war theorists and Crusaders said that Jesus was not in any way opposed to war and military service, because during his earthly ministry in so far as he had any relationship with military personnel he never condemn them. A typical example was Jesus' contact with the Centurion who came to Jesus to heal his servant (Matthew 8:5-13). Jesus even commended his faith but never condemned his military profession. This then gave ground for Just War theorists to claim that Jesus is sanctioning war and military participation. The pacifists could respond using three grounds. One, the Centurion was not a disciple for discipleship; in fact he was a gentile so for Jesus to begin to condemn him or give him the principles expected of disciples is uncalled for. Two, it does not mean that whatsoever is disapproved by Jesus, he will always attack it given the slightest opportunity. And three, to turn the Centurion away simply because of his profession neglecting to pay attention to the sick girl will be a violent action against the sick girl and Jesus would do no such thing.

The expulsion of traders from the temple courts by Jesus as recorded in John's Gospel 2:13-16, Jesus created a whip from some cords and drove the traders and money changers away from the temple. Just War Theorists among them Augustine and Calvin say that this laws of nonresistance and gentleness was subject to exceptions under certain circumstances as displayed here by Jesus himself. This is more of situational principle they say and should not be taken to be applied in all and every situation of human endeavor. The Scriptural portion itself has an answer to this from the perspectives of the pacifists. This incidence is recorded in all the four gospels. The Synoptic gospels do not contain the whip from cord only in this fourth gospel. The Greek word used for cast out which implies some violence is "*ekballo*", the same word used to Jesus when he was sent to the wilderness after his baptism

¹⁹⁷ Cadoux, p. 20.

to be tempted by the devil. These two facts prove that Jesus did not in any way use violence. The above point could further be supported by the practical impossibility of a single individual to use physical force using only cord to drive out the whole crowd from the temple. It was believed to be the authority of Jesus through his physical presence commanded the respect.

In the prophecies of the last things as recorded in the Gospels (Matthew 24:3-14, Mark 13:3-13 and Luke 21:17-19), Jesus spoke of wars and rumors of wars would be heard, nation will rise against nation and kingdom against kingdom. These according to just war theorists among them Augustine are clear proofs of Jesus sanctioning war and participation in military service. They buttress their point by some of the parables of Jesus when he talked about a king is said to be killing his disobedient subjects. Of course they say, this gives the state the right to kill and Christian are allowed if asked by the state to kill. Pacifists will respond by saying, parables should be treated as parables looking at their spiritual meaning and not the literal interpretation. While the statement of Jesus on wars and rumors of wars does not mean that he is sanctioning war, but giving warning and calling on his disciples to beware and to stand firm.

Difficulty has sometimes been raised over Jesus' illustrative allusions to war. Cadoux says, "There cannot be any question as to the purely metaphorical character of his picture of the two kings at war with unequal forces- given to enforce the duty of counting in advance the cost of discipleship or of his allusion to violent men snatching the kingdom or forcing their way into it- a demand for eagerness and enterprise in spiritual things."¹⁹⁸ We had struggled with the issue of the emphasis by pacifists on the literal interpretation of the Scriptures where we stated that there are some portions of Scriptures where the Bible can not be taken literally.

Jesus' words as recorded in Matthew 10:34 that he has come not to bring peace but sword has seriously been misunderstood. However, pacifists and some theologians among them Augsburg, Richards, Hoyt and Cadoux to mention but few have argued that there is no difficulty here. In the words of Cadoux, "Jesus is simply saying that, as a result of his coming, fierce antipathies will arise against his

¹⁹⁸ Cadoux, p. 38.

adherents on the part of their fellow-men. The context clearly reveals the meaning; the word 'sword' is used metaphorically for dissension, and a result is announced as if it were a purpose, quite in accordance with the deterministic leanings of the Semitic mind. No sanction for the Christian engaging in war can be extracted from the passage, any more than sanction of thief can be drawn from Jesus' comparison of his coming to that of a thief in the night."¹⁹⁹ Does this mean that for pacifists when it comes to support the idea of nonviolence/pacifism the Bible should be interpreted literally, when it comes to difficult violent related passages the Bible should be interpreted metaphorically? Not so as highlighted above that the criterion for the change in hermeneutics depends on the context and parables be treated as such.

- ❖ The selling of cloak and buying of sword-sword is used metaphorically to represent the steadfast defense of the Gospel under the persecution now approaching. Adolf Von Harnack had an elaborate discussion on this in his *Militia Christi*.
- ❖ The words of Jesus, "Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's and to God the things that are God's" (Matt. 22:21). This passage also has attracted many different interpretations and conflicting ones at sometimes. The real import and implications of this passage seems to have been misunderstood. Just war theorists and some other Christians who advocate sanctioning of some kind of wars by Jesus say that the command to give to Caesar what belong to Caesar may include rendering military service if and when the government demands it. "Important as the words about Caesar doubtless are, they must not be made to bear more than their fair weight of meaning. Caesar, it was well understood, had formally exempted the Jews from service in his legions; and the question was, not whether they should fight in for him, but whether they should bow to his rule and pay his taxes."²⁰⁰
- ❖ There have been lots of criticisms that obedience to the nonresistance teaching of Jesus if taken literally could obviously be inconsistent with the peace and well being of society. As such, Jesus could not have meant his

¹⁹⁹ Ibid., p. 38-39.

²⁰⁰ Ibid., p. 41.

teaching on this to be taken literally. Thus Cadoux quoting Professor Bethune-Baker says, "If the right of using force to maintain order be denied, utter social disorganization must result. Who can imagine that this was the aim of one who ...? It was not Christ's aim; and He never gave any such command."²⁰¹ He went further to quote the works of Schell and Loisy respectively thus, "The self-forgetting altruism, the ideal humanity and charity; says Schell, would, by a literal fulfillment of certain precepts of the Sermon on the Mount, offer welcome encouragement to evil propensities, and by its indulgence would even provoke the bad to riot in undisciplined excess." "A country" says Loisy, "where all the good people conformed to these maxims would, instead of resembling the kingdom of heaven, be the paradise of thieves and criminals"²⁰²

Most if not all the above mentioned assumptions ignore three very crucial facts, which are to be addressed.

These principles were given by Jesus to his disciples and to the Christian community. In other words, it was given to the regenerate, the saved. It was not meant in any way for the unredeemed humanity. The assumption that it was given to the redeemed as well as to the unredeemed is the reason for many of these arguments. We should state also that it was not given to some chosen few, a chosen people, state, and or nation. Jesus gave all these to his small community of believers, a community that continues to grow.

The second assumption is, Jesus and the disciples were assumed to have condoned sin and to have left sin unchecked. This no wonder seems not to have made any impact or have achieved little success. But when one takes a careful study of the life and ministry of Jesus as well as that of his disciples, one sees that Jesus was an efficient reformer per excellence and his early followers treaded the same path and they were successful.

Cadoux has a good point on the third assumption which was ignored resulting into all these misunderstandings of the import and implications of Jesus' words. He says,

²⁰¹ Ibid., p. 42

²⁰² Ibid.,

"The growth of the Christian community is a gradual growth, proceeding by the accession of one life at a time. Two gradual processes have thus to go on *pari passu*, firstly, a gradual diminution in the number of those who use violence to restrain wrong, and secondly, a gradual diminution in the number of those who seem to them to need forcible restraint. The concomitance of these processes obviously means no such 'utter social disorganization' as is often imagined, but a gradual and steady transition to greater social security."²⁰³

The early Christians stayed out of army to avoid idolatry of worshipping Caesar, and not because military service was forbidden some Just War Theorists argued. However, the words of Arthur F. Holmes are relevant here when he says, "The early church faced the problems of war and military service in a pagan world. While courage is commendable, the highest virtue is neither courage nor honor nor even justice, but love; and love demands a compassion for one's enemies of which courage and honor and justice know little. Plato's and Cicero's reservations about excessive violence do not satisfy the demands of Christian love; this becomes evident in patristic writes such as Athenagoras, Tertullian, Lactantius, and Augustine. For some the outcome of such reservations is not just non-violence, but non-resistance to violence as taught by Jesus."²⁰⁴

This brings the argument as to the interchangeability of the words nonviolence and nonresistance.

- Jesus non-pacifists among them Niebuhr and Herrmann could say was undoubtedly a pacifist or a nonviolent person but took that position as an "interim ethic" so that his followers would learn how to act in the kingdom of God which was expected momentarily. It was under this third accusation that vocational pacifism came to bear where an individual refused personal participation in war but acknowledges that states had different obligations. Wilhelm Herrmann of Marburg was the scholar who presented the view of Jesus' "interim ethic." Herrmann says,

²⁰³ Ibid., p. 44.

²⁰⁴ Arthur F. Holmes, *War and Christian Ethics*, (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House), 1975:35.

The Biblical knowledge of the present day teaches us that many duties of social morality, unavoidable by us, were quite unknown to Jesus. Thus to Him it was not yet a problem how far the State can give assistance in economic life. More especially, however, He held a view of the world that left Him concern for the future of human society, for He looked upon this as having in store no future at all, but as being near its end. He saw the beginning of the destruction of the world approaching; He felt the final judgment to be near. This cause Him to overlook many ties whereby we of necessity are bound, and, since He aimed at preparing souls for this approaching glory, He was bound to make of them demands coloured by His expectations.²⁰⁵

Wilhelm's presupposition was that there was a historical discovery that Jesus looked at human society as near its end. This interim ethic is based on a pragmatic motive only and cannot be substantiated. The issue that a historical discovery was made pointing out what was in Jesus mind that the world was near end, there is neither a scientific or historical proof that there was such a thought in Jesus' mind. What Wilhelm has succeeded in doing is liberating humanity from obedience to the teachings of Jesus. Wilhelm earlier on stated in the same paper that,

Many of us devote our life-work to matters in which Jesus not only displayed no interest, but which He could not even know of, since they were not yet in being. Natural Science was still unheard of; hence no glimmering conception of natural law enabled men to see an intelligible order in the realities around them; and systematic investigation had yet extended the dominion of man over nature.²⁰⁶

Niebuhr accuses pacifists of cowardice, impractical idealism, isolationism and self-righteousness. Going through some prominent works of Niebuhr it became very clear the position of his objection to pacifism. Niebuhr talked about the necessity of compromise in social progress; he accused pacifists of 'impossible perfectionism.' In his reaction against religious pacifism which he said is part of general ascetic and symbolic portrayal of love absolutism in a sinful world, he says,

The value of asceticism lies chiefly in its symbolic character. Since the ascetic saint is, economically speaking, a parasite on the sinful

²⁰⁵Wilhelm Herrmann, "The Moral Teachings of Jesus" in *Essays on the Social Gospel The Crown Theological Library Vol. xviii*, A Paper Read By Dr W Herrmann of Marburg at the Evangelical Social Congress held at Darmstadt in 1903; and published separately, and in an enlarged form in (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons), 1904:145-225:176-177.

²⁰⁶ Wilhelm, p. 155.

world, and since disavowal of the natural relationships and responsibilities of ordinary life leads to the destruction of life itself, his devotion to the absolute ideal can be no more than a symbol of the final ideal of love, under the tension of which all men stand. Yet asceticism is the only possible basis for such perfection. As soon as the family is introduced into the calculations, the absolutist is forced either to a perverse disavowal of natural family obligations or to compromise his perfectionism by protecting the interest of his family more than he would protect merely his own interest.²⁰⁷

Niebuhr holds to the view that there are two types of pacifism one which he considers as heretical and the other non heretical. The first non-heretical pacifism is the one which he said was a version of Christian Perfectionism which he describes as follows,

It expresses a genuine impulse in the heart of Christianity, the impulse to take the law of Christ seriously and not to allow the political strategies, which the sinful character of man makes necessary, to become final norm... It is this kind of pacifism which is not a heresy. It is rather a valuable asset for the Christian faith. It is a reminder to the Christian community that the relative norm of social justice, which justify both coercion and resistance to coercion, are not final norms, and that Christians are in constant peril of forgetting their relative and tentative character and of making them too completely normative.²⁰⁸

To this type of pacifism he gave an example of medieval ascetic perfectionism of Menno Simons the founder of the Mennonites. The second type of pacifism is the modern forms of Christian pacifism he considers heretical to which he defines thus,

Presumably inspired by the Christian gospel, they have really absorbed the Renaissance faith in the goodness of man, have rejected the doctrine of original sin as an outmoded bit of pessimism, have reinterpreted the Cross so that it is made to stand for absurd idea that perfect love is guaranteed a simple victory over the world, and have rejected all other profound elements of the Christian gospel as 'Pauline' accretions which must be stripped from the 'simple gospel of Jesus.' This form of pacifism is not only heretical when judged by the standard of the total gospel. It is equally heretical when judged by the facts of human existence.²⁰⁹

²⁰⁷ Reinhold Niebuhr, *An Interpretation of Christian Ethics*, (London: Student Christian Movement Press), 1936:198.

²⁰⁸ Reinhold Niebuhr, *Christianity and Power Politics*, (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons), 1952:4-5.

²⁰⁹ Niebuhr, p.5-6.

Niebuhr goes on discussing the obvious that it is very foolish to deny that the ethic of Jesus is an absolute and uncompromising ethic. It is in the phrase of Ernst Troeltsch, an ethic of love 'love universalism and love perfectionism.' The injunctions 'resist not evil,' 'love your enemies,' 'if ye love them that love you what thanks have you?' 'be not anxious for your life,' and 'be ye therefore perfect as your father in heaven is perfect,' are all of one piece, and they are all uncompromising and absolute.

One striking point from Niebuhr was the position he gave to pacifists despite all the opposition, he says,

It is a terrible thing to take human life. The conflict between man and man and nation and nation is tragic. If there are men who declare that, no matter what the consequences, they cannot bring themselves to participate in this slaughter, the Church ought to be able to say to the general community: We quite understand this scruple and we respect it. It proceeds from the conviction that the true end of man is brotherhood, and that love is the law of life. We who allow ourselves to become engaged in war need this testimony of the absolutist against us, lest we accept the warfare of the world as normative, lest we become callous to the horror of war, and lest we forget the ambiguity of our own actions and motives and the risk we run of achieving no permanent good from this momentary anarchy in which we are involved.²¹⁰

The researcher discusses how the pacifists responded to these theoretical challenges, but first is a definition of pacifism in a very simple and narrow form.

Pacifism is a noun used to refer to opposition to war and military service on religious grounds or personal convictions. Pacifism is a conviction that every dispute can be settled through peaceful means without resorting to violent means. For the simple fact that pacifism and pessimism are related in spelling and similar in pronunciation among people, pacifism is looked at by many people in the glass of pessimism thereby affecting the real meaning. Pacifism is a struggle for peace in a nonviolent manner.

3.4.2 Pacifists Response to the Above Criticisms

The Pacifists hold the view that Christ repudiates war and they go on to list the reasons in support of their position:

²¹⁰ Niebuhr, *Christianity and Power Politics*, pp. 30-31.

- ❖ Loyalty to Christ takes precedence over every other loyalty.
- ❖ The Way of war contradicts the way of Christ.
- ❖ Christ's way of combating evil is God's way.
- ❖ The Gospel of Christ is compromised by Christian approval of war.

Statements of Jesus are inconsistent with the lawfulness of war for Christians, Christian pacifists argue.

1. The first precept of which account has to be taken is Jesus' reiteration of the Mosaic Commandment "Thou shall not murder" (Exodus 20:13). Lots of arguments and counter-arguments have been brought to the fore on this. Some capitalize on the etymological derivative of the word 'murder' to score their point. Just War Theorists argue that the Hebrew word in the Mosaic Commandment refers to murder and not assassination or man slaughter as in war, as such for pacifists to hold on to this is not right. However, looking critically at the Greek word used by Jesus in the New Testament, it has the sense of "murder" as well as "killing" and it was used of slaughter in war both in Classical Greek and the Septuagint. Windass in discussing the early Church's position on bloodshed highlighted what he called the transition between Judaism and Christianity where he gave a reference to the rejection of thirty pieces of silver from the hands of Judas Iscariot by the priests into the treasury of the Temple because as the priests said were price of blood. The Christians he said went on to give such teaching central importance and deeper spiritual significance. In Windass' words,

The earliest Church rules still forbid the receipt of money from magistrates polluted by war, and abstention from blood even of animals remain the general rule; but it became more clear for the Christians than for the Jews that the murder of Abel by Cain was indeed the 'archetypal' crime, the pattern of human strife and bloodshed. The sin of murder was regarded with the utmost horror, and murderers were permanently excluded from the Christian community. An important writer in the time of Emperor Constantine expressed most clearly the spiritual insight behind this revulsion from bloodshed when he wrote, 'man is so sacrosanct a creature that it is always wrong to kill him ... no exception can be made to this commandment of God.'²¹¹

²¹¹ Stanley Windass, *Christianity Versus Violence*, (London: Seed and Ward Ltd), 1964:8-9.

2. The Sermon on the Mount, more especially Matthew 5:38-48, where pacifism has received its strength, is another Jesus' statement we need to take account of. But volumes of controversies have been written by non-pacifists some among them to include Holmes as to the real imports and implications of these critical words. For obvious difficulties in the way of obeying them have led to more than one exegetical attempt to escape from them completely. Cadoux says, "There is, for instance, the familiar plea... that Jesus meant his followers to adopt the spirit of his teaching, without being bound by the letter- a plea which, as has been pointed out by no less an authority than Bishop Gore, commonly results in ignoring both letter and spirit alike."²¹²

Some theologians and scholars end up by saying that these precepts are counsels of perfection which are valid only in a perfect society. In this case, Jesus did not in any way mean that these should be in practice under any existing condition. However, one sees that this argument is illogical due to the fact that in a perfect society there would be no wrongs to submit to and no enemies to love, so this charge is then uncalled for.

Some further went on to argue that Jesus meant this teaching to govern only the personal feelings and acts of his disciples in his or her purely private capacity, and left untouched his duty. As such he is free as a member of society and for the sake of social welfare to participate in the authoritative and official restraint and punishment of wrongdoers. Such arguments are given to the utter seeming difficulties in the way to practice the words of Jesus. However, a careful study of the Mosaic Commandments which were given and intended to be obeyed and practiced, there is no justification for that of Jesus not to be intended to be obeyed and put into practice by his followers. Jesus himself proved that he lives by what he preaches; this was exemplified by his refusal to use practical coercive means to advance his ideals. Some theologians interpret the action of Jesus when he was to be arrested in the garden of Gethsemane, his action is contrary to the modern mind as the disciples were intending to stand in his defense. In contemporary times, lots of emphasis is being laid on "in defense of others," but Jesus clearly forbids the use of the sword in

²¹² Cecil John Cadoux, *Early Christian Attitude to War: A Contribution to the History of Christian Ethics*, (London: Headley Bros Publishers, Inc.), 1919:23-24.

any case including in defense of others. Cadoux neatly sums up his response to such types of argument this way,

Whatever may be thought of the weakness or the strength of the various arguments that have just been adduced, it can hardly be questioned that, in conjunction with one another, they constitute a strong body of evidence for the belief that Jesus both adjured for himself and forbade to his disciples all use of physical violence as a means of checking or deterring wrongdoers, not excluding even that use of violence which is characteristics of the public acts of society at large as distinct from the individual. On this showing, participation in warfare is ruled out as inconsistent with Christian principles of conduct.²¹³

3. The case of the woman caught in adultery is another pointer to the fact that Jesus abhors war and violence as found in John 7:58-8:1-11, with strong emphasis on verse 11 where Jesus said, "neither do I condemn you, go and sin no more." The Scribes and the Pharisees were intending to put Jesus against Moses, but he approached the whole matter differently.

4. "But when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then know that its desolation has come near. Then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains, and let those who are inside the city depart, and let not those who are out in the country enter it; for these are the days of vengeance, to fulfill all that is written" (LK. 21:20-22). This is a challenge even to theologians who hold to the theology of self defense. Jesus here shows that he abhors war and any form of violence.

There are some statements of Jesus considered to be against pacifism by legitimizing warfare for Christians.

The interpretation to Jesus words in Matthew 5:41 which says, "And if any one forces you to go one mile, go with him two miles" according to some non-pacifists goes this way. They argue that the Greek word used refers to government or order from an authority to subjects and not referring to an individual forcing another individual. If this interpretation is accepted as appropriate, then they say, when the government forced an individual to carry arms, the individual has no option than to comply and the guilt is on the government. But pacifists could argue as well that, as at the time

²¹³ Cadoux, *Early Christian Attitude to War*, p. 31.

Jesus said this words, Jews were exempted from Roman Legion as such this argument has no basis. Jesus they say was referring to relationships between individuals.

3.5 The Just War Theory

Just war theory combines both a moral abhorrence towards war with a readiness to accept that war may sometimes be necessary. The researcher made reference to the introduction given by Holmes in his work, "The Just War" where he started by stating the obvious without mincing words that war is evil. He was so emphatic that war cheapens life and produces loss of life and lots of valuables. This no wonder was the position of most just war theorists among them Niebuhr, Bainton, to mention but two, who were sometimes misunderstood to mean they are justifying war and violence. In Holmes' words,

*War is evil. Its causes are evil, whether they be deliberate aggression, unbridled greed, lust for power, fear and distrust, an exaggerated national pride, a perverted sense of honor or some form of social injustice. Its consequences are evil, for it produces ghastly loss of life and limb; it orphans and widows and horribly maims the innocent both physically and emotionally, it cheapens life and morality, it destroys the means people count on to sustain their existence, and it produces economic disaster. Modern weaponry could decimate and even destroy the human race. And wars that are intended to arrest violence and injustice seem only in the long run to breed further injustice and conflict.*²¹⁴

Niebuhr described war as a terrible thing, he says, "It is a terrible thing to take human life. The conflict between man and man and nation and nation is tragic."²¹⁵

In his condemnation of war just as some of his colleagues, Holmes goes further to say,

To call war anything less than evil would be self-deception. The Christian conscience has throughout history recognized the tragic character of war. The issue that tears the Christian conscience is not whether war is good, but whether it is in all cases entirely

²¹⁴ Arthur F Holmes, "The Just War" in *War: 4 Christian Views* ed. Robert G Clouse, (Illinois: InterVarsity Press), 1981:115-150:117.

²¹⁵ Reinhold Niebuhr, *Christianity and Power Politics*, (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons), 1940:31

*avoidable. This is largely a policy question: In the face of such outlandish evil, how should Christian act? Of course they should seek to remedy injustice, to prevent conflict, to avoid bloodshed, to alleviate suffering; but should they under some conditions go so far as to actively support military action and participate in the fighting? Is it ever better to fight than not to fight? Could participation in war perhaps be a lesser evil than allowing aggression and terror to go unchecked and unpunished?*²¹⁶

Holmes gave clarity on four of what he considers as preliminary matters before discussing into details the subject matter of just war. He stated first that not all evil can be avoided due to the fact that evil is a pervasive condition of the fallen human existence. This is talking of the Christian concept of the original sin and the depravity of the human nature and in the words of Niebuhr the tragedy of human history. He went on to say,

*Real life situations are so twisted and perverted that often no altogether good option remains. We are trapped in moral dilemmas whose roots lie in the past as well as the present, such that whatever we do involves us in evil of some sorts ... When faced with a moral dilemma such that any action I take (including the avoidance of action) has evil results, it is not enough to weigh consequences. Right and wrong are not just a matter of the good or evil we produce. They involve act and intent. An act may be right, and be performed with right intent, and still have evil consequences.*²¹⁷

The above opening clearly shows that most of the reactions to advocates of just war theory are due partly to the assumption that they are sanctioning war and violence. The second important issue raised by the above is the fact that unlike pacifism and nonresistance that starts with what Jesus taught, the just war theory starts with questions on what and how to react in a violent situation. These two points will soften the ground for pacifists and just war theorists to listen more to each other and by so doing will understand the dilemmas faced by each and know that the pacifists' position offers a better solution for the problem of violence in the violent torn world. Due to the aforementioned, Holmes goes on to give two examples to consolidate this point. First was the example he gave of punishment done to a convicted criminal in defending the right of the innocent. In such a situation, the punishment may involve

²¹⁶ Holmes, p.117-118.

²¹⁷ Ibid. p. 118.

depriving the criminal of some things he has right to, including life. The second example he gave was on a judge who may have a good intention of sentencing a convicted criminal and the sentence may have a good intention also, but as good as the intention of the judge as well as the sentence, the sentence may have some consequences and most often than note negative on both the prisoner and his/ her family.

He goes on to look at the second preliminary matter where he said that just war theory is an ideal and normative theory for all people. In other words, the just war theory is universally binding on all people regardless of religious, ethnic, tribal, regional etc affiliation. The third preliminary matter he looked at was that the just war theory does not try to justify war as its critics have always wanted to make us believe. He is of the opinion that the chief aim of just war theory is to try to bring war under the control of justice. The just war theory, Holmes believes, when put into practice by all parties will in the long run leads to the elimination of all wars. We shall respond to this as we progress to see as to whether it is practicable or not. Holmes says,

It insists that the only just cause for going to war is defense against aggression. If all parties adhered to this rule, then nobody would ever be an aggressor and no war would ever occur. The basic intention of the just war theory, then, is to condemn war and to prevent it by moral persuasion. But since people will sometimes not be persuaded, it proceeds to limit war - its occasion, its goals, its weaponry and methods-so as to reduce the evils that have not been altogether prevented.²¹⁸

On the fourth matter, Holmes said that just war theory insists that private individuals have no right to use force. That it is only the government, and the government will only do that in order to preserve peace and to maintain just order. And in preserving peace and maintaining just order in an unjust world, there may be times where it will be necessary for the government to apply force. At such a time and situation, if a Christian as a citizen works in the government of that state, he is free to support and participate in such a war.

²¹⁸ Holmes, p. 120.

What is just war theory? Unlike pacifists who hold to the view that evil can never be restrained by violence or by the use of coercive force, just war theory postulate that evil can be restrained by the use of coercive force. Bainton says it well that, "The advocates of the just war theory have taken the position that evil can be restrained by the coercive power of the state. The Church should support the state in this endeavor and individual Christians are citizens should fight under the auspices of the state."²¹⁹This in a nutshell can be seen as a simple definition of what the just war theory is. The just war tradition addresses the morality of the use of force in two parts: when it is right to resort to armed force (the concern of *jus ad bellum*) and what is acceptable in using such force (the concern of *jus in bello*). In more recent times, a third category has been added (*jus post bellum*), which governs the justice of war termination and peace agreement, as well as the prosecution of war criminals. Mention and discussion will be given on the means, objective and proportionality of the use of force.

If it is accepted then that evil can be restrained sometimes by coercive force, are there guiding laws against excesses? If yes, then what are the rules one may ask governing the just war theory? The rules governing just war theory are summarized into seven, Holmes calls it application of justice to war,

1. Just cause. All aggression is condemned; only defensive war is legitimate. This is looking at defensive war as a lesser evil.
2. Just intention. The only legitimate intention is to secure a just peace for all involved. Neither revenge nor conquest nor economic gain nor ideological supremacy are justified.
3. Last resort. War may only be entered upon when all negotiations and compromise have been tried and failed.
4. Formal declaration. Since the use of military force is the prerogative of governments, not of private individuals, a state of war must be officially declared by the highest authority.
5. Limited objectives. If the purpose is peace, then unconditional surrender or destruction of a nation's economic or political institutions is an unwarranted objective.

²¹⁹ Bainton, p. 15.

6. Proportionate means. The weaponry and the force used should be limited to what is needed to repel the aggression and deter future attacks, that is to say to secure a just peace. Total or unlimited war is ruled out.
7. Non-combatant immunity. Since war is an official act of government, only those who are officially agents of government may fight, and individuals not actively contributing to the conflict (including POW's and casualties as well as civilian nonparticipants) should be immune from attack.

Most just war theorists hold to the view that the concept of just war pre-dates Christianity. It went as far back to the Biblical (by biblical we mean the Old Testament) and the Greco-Roman times. Bainton in his discussion on the classical origins of the just war states,

The idea of the just war arose in the context of the ideas of peace already described. The object of such a war was the vindication of justice and the restoration of peace; of necessity, therefore, peace had to be esteemed as an ideal, and recourse to war as a last resort after mediation had failed. The war should be so conducted as not to preclude the restoration of an enduring peace. Hence, the conduct of war would have to be restrained by a code.²²⁰

He goes on to explain that Plato though his rule was supposed to apply to the Hellenes, but he was the one who first gave formulation to the code which came to be called that of the just war.

It is true that unlike the Pacifist views and that of the crusade where they are the minority views, the just war theory seems to be more popular and highly acceptable even beyond the shores of Christianity. The just war theory was asserted as an authoritative Roman Catholic Church teaching, but has been adopted within other confessional traditions. Bainton in his discussion on the three positions on war by the Church, he adds that Lutherans and Anglicans also subscribe to the just war theory. In his words,

These three views had already taken shape before the close of the Middle Ages. Thereafter they were to reappear in various configurations. In the Middle Ages pacifism was represented by the sects. In the Renaissance in Italy the just war theory took on new

²²⁰ Roland H. Bainton, *Christian Attitudes Towards War and Peace*, p. 33.

life among the city-states. At the same time among the humanists there was an extensive propaganda for peace on the basis of a Christian humanistic culture. The Reformation precipitated wars of religion, in which the three historic positions reappeared: the just war among the Lutherans and the Anglicans, the crusade in the Reformed Churches, and pacifism among the Anabaptists and later Quakers. The eighteenth century in theory and in practice resuscitated the humanist peace ideals of the Renaissance. The nineteenth century was an age of comparative peace and great agitation for the elimination of war. The twentieth century has seen two world wars. In this period again, the three historic positions have reoccurred. The Churches in the United States particularly took a crusading attitude towards the First World War; Pacifism was prevalent between the two wars; the mood of the Second World War approximated to that of the just war.²²¹

Many denominations have joined in accepting the just war theory, one wonders as to how many were aware of just war theory than simply accepting to serve as patriotic citizens of their respective nations. One point worth mentioning is that just war theory was developed from the perspective of the ruling class that favoured *de facto* rulers.

As to whether the just war theory has ever been used or if it works, in other words, were there a time in the history of the world where the college of Bishops agreed to a war that it has met the laid down rules? We shall render an answer to this later.

3.5.1 Scriptural basis of just war

Contrary to many critics of just war theory who criticize that just war theory uses the Old Testament over the New Testament, just war theorists use both the Old Testament as well as the New Testaments, probably with even stronger emphasis on the New Testament. Just war theory has two roots, the biblical basis and the natural law.

One of the most important passages that seem to support just war theory is Romans 13:1-7. In this passage, it is unarguable that civil authorities were given the right to use the sword since they have been ordained to restrain and punish evil doers.

²²¹ Ibid., p. 15.

Another passage of importance in support of this theory is 1 Peter 2:13-14 where civil authorities are ordained to punish evil doers and to praise good doers. However, before discussing the interpretation of some of the New Testament passages in support of their theory, the general perception of just war theorists on the Old and New Testaments is analyzed.

Just war theorists hold to the view that the Old Testament records show that military conflict is regarded as a tragic fact of life. God is seen to use the military conflicts in the execution of justice as a result of which he used to strengthen his people during war or with war. There are some references in the Old Testament where Battles fought by God's people were seen as His battles (1 Samuel 17:47). Holmes has this to say,

This biblical picture basically supports the just war theory. But not all Christians will agree with this picture for two reasons. First, because of disagreement over the relationship between Old and New Testaments. Generally, the Christian pacifist appeals to the New which in his view takes us beyond the precept and example of the Old to a law of love. The just war theorist, however, is apt to see the law of love in the Old as well as the New, so that the New fulfills, reinforces and interprets the Old rather than superseding it. The law of love is a reaffirmation of the underlying spirit of the Old Testament Law, at one with the spirit of justice rather than in conflict with it. Love as well as justice requires action to protect the innocent and to repel and deter aggression.²²²

In the New Testament however, the question asked to John the Baptist by the soldiers and the answer given to them without condemning their profession was taken seriously by just war theorists in support of their position. In Luke 3:14, "Likewise the soldiers asked him, saying, 'And what shall we do?' so he said to them, 'Do not intimidate any one or accuse falsely, and be content with your wages'" (NKJV). If military service is rejected, John the Baptist would have told them, but he simply gave them what we may call their rules of engagement. The passage where Jesus seems to have been an aggressor or acted in an aggressive manner by making a whip of cord and chased the money changers in the Temple as recorded in John 2:15ff is taken seriously to mean there are times where the use of physical force

²²² Arthur F. Holmes, *The Just War*, p. 124.

could be permissible. Where Jesus said render unto Caesar that which is Caesar's in Matthew 22:21 is interpreted to mean the civil government are free to use the sword and a Christian citizen is free to carry arms at the order of the state. Reference is made to Luke 22:35-38 where Jesus told his disciples to buy swords, to which they presented to him two. This just war theorists among them Holmes interpret to mean Jesus is sanctioning war.

Having looked at several biblical passages in support and those that constituted difficulties to just war theorists, Holmes had this interesting summary,

*On this basis the biblical picture is as follows: (1) The use of force in resisting and punishing violence is entrusted to governments. (2) Believers in both Old and New Testaments are involved in the governmental uses of force. (3) Such uses of force are to be drastically limited to what is necessary in securing peace and justice. (4) Vengeance is thereby ruled out, along with all aggression; love and mercy must temper justice.*²²³

As to the development of the just war theory, the Graeco-Roman world has the notion that war consciousness does not become limited to the Christian faith. Mention is made of Plato who did urge limits on war more especially among the Greeks. He was of the view that the legitimate purpose of war is the restoration of peace. Cicero was indeed the one who articulated the rules of war similar to the ones stated above as the laws guiding just war but with marked difference with the Christian version. One clearly marked difference is the definition of just cause. According to Cicero, just cause means the defense of honour as well as peace and justice. He was of the view that it is legitimate to avenge dishonour to which Christians rejected.

The second root of just war worthy of mention is the natural law ethics. By natural law is the view that human beings have the capacity to know what is right and to do what they know. Holmes said, "Theorists like Aquinas and Locke held that we can logically deduce an ethic from what we know of the nature of man so as to reach universal agreement about what justice is and what must characterize a just war."²²⁴

²²³ Holmes, pp. 123-124.

²²⁴ Ibid., p. 131.

The natural law ethics has been criticized on the basis that the rationality of human beings had brought many wars in human history than reducing wars.

3.5.2 Arguments against Just War

There is no doubt that the just war theory is a well thought theory and is unlike pacifism and indeed the crusade where they are the minority voice; just war is a majority voice. Are there criteria to prove that just war theory is a majority voice? The answer to this question has to be looked at the ecclesial bodies that hold on to the Just War and the Pacifism positions. Granted that there are some pacifists, who are not Christians, but we are concerned here with Christians and the Historic Peace Churches are not on the majority. However, despite taking the majority position there are some criticisms coming from pacifists as to the practicability and workability of this theory.

Criticisms and counter-criticisms between the pacifists and just war theorists as well as the crusades will continue and hardly will there be a compromise when Scriptures is studied. However, looking at the workability and practicability of each of the theories, there is a likelihood of reaching either a compromise or reaching a level of complimenting one another.

The question to ask just war theorists is, does the theory work? In answering this question, pacifists, advocates of nonresistance and conscientious objectors with Augsburg and Drescher as representatives will say just war theory has never worked. This however, does not rule out some advocates of Just War Theory who may claim it to have ever worked. Drescher summed up the position of pacifists this way,

First the theory has never worked. There is no record that it was ever used. Since its conception in the fourth century it has remained only a theory. Never has a body of bishops or major denominational body officially condemned any war. Second, it assumes that one side will be just and the other unjust. But as we know, both sides claim their cause is just in times of war. Obviously there is much that is unjust on both sides and no nation is an unbiased judge of the moral rightness of its cause. The just war

*theory is the only attempt at a moral justification of war by Christians. If it is rejected, then the Christian is left with the gospel, which reject killing as immoral.*²²⁵

In what it may seem a digression but a relevant point is that in war, truth is said to be the first casualty. As such, advocates of nonresistance will say in a violent situation, it is not uncommon to hear both sides claiming to be having a just cause to go into war and to hear both sides claiming victory until defeated. One could easily notice that many Bishops belonging to each country justifying their individual nations' involvement or justifying with some at the end of the war feeling guilty. Truth being a casualty in that aspect and the case of the Gulf War is a typical example with some supporting the involvement of United States of America getting involved in the war with some few protesting among which were the Historic Peace Churches.

One greatest difficulty confronting the just war theory to which even the proponents admit is the vast destructive power of modern weaponry and the indiscriminate use of such weapons of mass destruction where noncombatants can not be immune to destruction. With this dilemma, even people like Niebuhr and Holmes could not advocate for Just War in this context, will it be right to say they have then adopted what is called 'nuclear pacifists?' Probably they will not accept the term nuclear pacifists but they will say that just war theory in the face of modern weaponry cannot be justified.

Of a fact, just war theorists admit now more than ever before that the theory breaks down completely if it could ever be used in modern warfare where technology has rendered the theory obsolete.

3.6 The Just Armed Struggle

This position was developed by individuals and groups involved in conflicts with sharp political frontlines, in South Africa and many Latin American countries. It is worthy of note that in 1968 the WCC Central Committee created a Programme to Combat Racism. A special fund was provided for as financial grants available to liberation movements engaged in armed struggle against oppressing regimes in

²²⁵ John Drescher, *Why I am a Conscientious Objector*, (Pennsylvania: Herald Press), 1982:22.

South Africa. The struggle against the apartheid regime was not limited to South Africa. Many Counties in Africa (with Nigeria taking the lead) and world over with United States taking the lead brought about the Liberation of Black South Africans. There was within that struggle a development of what is called Black Theology which was similar to Liberation Theology of the Latin Americans.

The struggle against the apartheid was done through protests including in the United States where some Americans were arrested and charged to courts. Nelson Mandela who was one of the most powerful leaders of the struggle was arrested and jailed for over two decades. Arch Bishop Desmond Tutu among others sustained the struggle through preaching and writings. Due to the period of time and the violent crack down on protesters by South African police, the struggle started to witness use of arms against the oppressive regime.

One factor that has brought about debate was the support by the World Council of Churches Central Committee Programme to Combat Racism as stated above where there was financial grant to those engaged in the armed struggle. The Historic Peace Churches were so uncomfortable with supporting violence in all situations in search of peace. This no wonder brought a huge controversy in the ecumenical movement. Why are the Historic Peace Churches not comfortable with the grant? In his remarks to the Bienenberg Consultation, Konrad Raiser writes,

The immediate precursor to this decade was one of the most controversial programs of the WCC. The Programme to Combat Racism included humanitarian support for two liberation movements that were also engaged in armed struggle. The World Council had to respond to the question: How can this be brought in line with a basic Christian commitment to nonviolence? In this conflict, the World Council never crossed the line of justifying violence, and I hope it will never cross that line. It stayed with the statement by the Central Committee in Addis Ababa in 1971 that the WCC does not "pass judgment on those victims of racism who are driven to violence as the only way left to them ... open the way for a new and more just social order." This is different statement from one in which violence as a last resort is justified.²²⁶

²²⁶ Konrad Raiser, "Remarks to the Bienenberg Consultation," in *Seeking Cultures of Peace: A Peace Church Conversation*, (Pennsylvania: Cascadia Publishing House), 2004:19-28:21.

One could notice from this remarks that why the Decade to Combat Racism was controversial has to do with the basic Christian commitment to nonviolence and giving grant to those involved in armed struggle seem to negate that. The Historic Peace Churches who are members of the World Council were not so happy with that because they had the feeling that by so doing the World Council is justifying war as last resort. How to draw the line between what the WCC meant by 'violence as a last resort' and 'victims of violence who are driven to violence as the only way left to them' was problematic and non existent as far as the Historic Peace Churches are concerned. It is a matter of semantics.

3.8 Just Peace

This sub-topic looks at the concept of Just Peace which has grown and drawn lots of attention in the current dispensation especially in the ecumenical movement leading to the declaration of the "Ecumenical Call to Just Peace." Prior to the *Call* however, there was a committee that drafted an Initial Statement towards an Ecumenical Declaration on Just Peace. The statement was circulated widely among member churches and ecumenical partner groups in 2009. The inputs received and theological reflections led to the decision to reduce the declaration into a relatively concise text, a *Call* which was done and the analysis and arguments behind should be developed more fully in a "companion document" which was also done in 2012.

What then is Just Peace and what does this concept seek to address which was neither addressed? If there is anything that the church had unanimously agreed upon is that war is evil and uncompromisingly does not agree with the teaching of Jesus. But what the churches had struggled with little success is agreement on how to respond to war in a war torn world. Advocates of Just War would always hold to their position that in a situation of violence where the use of force as last resort is considered as a lesser evil or the only option, then allowing the use of force could be permissible. While on the other hand the Pacifists and advocates of nonviolence or nonresistance could say, there is still what to do other than the use of force.

The doctrine or theory of Just War which is believed to be intended by the churches to humanize war is seen by even holders of the theory in the face of modern war to

becoming obsolete or invalid a theory. That is the background to which the development of the doctrine of Just Peace came to the fore. The Just Peace Companion gave the vision of Just Peace which encapsulates the definition of Just peace. The vision reads,

The vision for Just Peace receives its inspiration from the biblical tradition. It is a way of rendering in contemporary terms the biblical meaning of shalom, which points to the interdependent relationship between justice and peace. Shalom is usually translated as "completeness, soundness, welfare, peace," but shalom also links peace with all the following concepts: justice (mishpat), rightness (tsedeq) or righteousness (tsedeqah), compassion (hesed) and truthfulness (emet). There is no peace without justice (mishpat), and justice implies fair judgment and rectitude, which requires giving what is right and just to the afflicted, establishing and maintaining right relationships in community. Therefore, Just Peace is the effect of righteousness and the practice of truth and justice.²²⁷

The above definition shows the interconnectedness of Justice and Peace and the impossibility of having one without the other. There used to be a time when religious communities including churches pursue peace at the expense of justice or justice at the expense of peace which is an unbalanced picture of what the Creator expects. There was a time also when emphasis was laid on peace over justice and that had been one of the reasons pacifism and pacifists have been criticized of cowardice and withdrawal from society.

Reference here needs to be made to the United Church of Christ in the USA whom first came up with the term Just Peace. What was their definition? In answering this, the researcher refers to their church documents. "Courage in the struggle for justice and peace is one of the powerful affirmations in the United Church of Christ Statement of Faith. It is central to the identity of our church. It is one of most ardent prayers and richest blessings. To be part of the United Church of Christ is to be part of the struggle for justice and peace."²²⁸ Then comes their understanding of the concept of just Peace, thus "Often, the peace to which most people refer when they

²²⁷ World Council of Churches, "Vision for Just Peace" in *Just Peace Companion*, (Geneva: World Council of Churches Publication), 2012:15-28, 19-20.

²²⁸ Susan Thistlethwaite, ed., *A Just Peace Church: The Peace Theology Development Team*, (New York: United Church Press), 1986:1.

use the word peace is symptomatic of the absence of the real peace, a Just Peace, which Jesus referred to when he approached the great city of Jerusalem. There on the hillside as he looked down on the city, seeing its injustices, the hunger, corruption, violence, and the vying for power, he wept and said: 'If only today you knew the things that make for peace.' Peace is not merely the absence of war but the presence of just social relations."²²⁹

The basic biblical vision is the vision of shalom, which means 'peace.' But shalom means peace in a fuller sense than the English language conveys. Shalom means wholeness, healing, justice, righteousness, equality, unity, freedom, and community. Shalom is a vision of all people whole, well, and one, and of all nature whole, well, and one. (Quote Ezekiel 34:25-29; Isaiah 11:6-8; Luke 4:18-19). The United Church of Christ rejects the notion of the separation of the church and state. The United Church of Christ acknowledges the fact that evil and violence are embedded in human nature and institutions.

3.8.1 Term and Origins of the Concept of Just Peace

When has this concept evolved? Is this a new doctrine or has it been there? Who propounded or formulated this doctrine or concept?

In responding to the above questions first, Just Peace is not a new concept. As a Brethren who emphasizes the Bible as the source of teaching and inspiration, the researcher goes to the Bible to see where peace and justice appear together. It is discovered that the Bible has always had that reading from Psalms 85:10, "*Steadfast love and faithfulness meet; justice and peace shall embrace.*" This could be followed by some important passages in Isaiah 32:17 and James 3:18 which show that justice and peace are inseparable. Secondly, from the history of the ecumenical movement, a closer scrutiny reveals that Justice and Peace have been major ecumenical concerns since the formation of the ecumenical movement. The World Council of Churches from available records had not only spoken out for but has vigorously intervened in the areas of Justice and peace since inception in 1948. In the

²²⁹ Thistlethwhite, p. 9.

Amsterdam Assembly of the WCC that year 1948 under the heading, "*War is contrary to the will of God,*" came out with this affirmation,

*War as a method of settling disputes is incompatible with the teaching and example of our Lord Jesus Christ. The part which war plays in our present international life is a sin against God and a degradation of man. We recognize that the problem of war raises especially acute issues for Christians today. Warfare has greatly changed. War is now total and every man and woman is called for mobilization in war service. Moreover, the immense use of air forces and the discovery of atomic and other new weapons render widespread and indiscriminate destruction inherent in the whole conduct of modern war in a sense never experienced in past conflicts. In these circumstances the tradition of a just war, requiring a just cause and the use of just means, is now challenged.*²³⁰

The assembly acknowledges the need for a law to sanction force but stated that when war breaks out, force can be used at a scale which will end up destroying the law from which it was based. They went on to ask the question, 'Can war now be an act of Justice?' Although the answer to the question was not unanimous, the three views which had always been coming out with each tradition holding its grip. However, the assembly participants' deep sense of perplexity in the face of the conflicting opinions urged Christians continuously to wrestle with the question and pray for God's guidance.

Reading through the documents of the first assembly, the emphasis on interconnectedness and interrelationship between justice and peace stand out so clearly. The assembly denounced all forms of tyranny, economic, political and religious which deny liberty to all people. They took a firm position against any form of suppression, intolerance and persecution. The available document went on to demonstrate their resolve by saying that, "We hold that in international and in national life justice must be upheld."²³¹

²³⁰ *Man's Disorder and God's Design: The Amsterdam Assembly Series Vol 1-4*, Report of Section iv, "War is Contrary to the Will of God," (New York: Herper & Brothers, Publishers), 1949:218.

²³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 219.

Subsequent assemblies of the ecumenical movement had emphasized the call on peace with justice. However, it was at the sixth Assembly of the WCC at Vancouver in 1983 that the most comprehensive statements on Just Peace were issued. The assembly worked extensively with several amendments on the statement on peace and justice looking at the growing threats to justice and peace. Under the topic, "No Peace without Justice," the statements were issued,

The peoples of the world stand in need of peace and justice. Peace is not just the absence of war. Peace can not be built on the foundations of injustice. Peace requires a new international order based on justice for and within all the nations, and respect for the God-given humanity and dignity of every person. Peace is, as the Prophet Isaiah has taught us, the effect of righteousness. The churches today are called to confess anew their faith, and to repent for the times when Christians have remained silent in the face of injustice or threats to peace. The biblical vision of peace with justice for all, of wholeness, of unity for all God's people is not one of several options for the followers of Christ. It is an imperative in our time.²³²

The assembly was resolute that the ecumenical approach to the subject is based on the belief that without justice for all everywhere shall never have peace anywhere. In that same assembly the conciliar process for Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation was initiated. The assembly affirmed the full meaning of God's peace. The 1990 WCC Convocation at Seoul called on the Church to seek possible means of establishing justice and peace and to solve conflicts through active nonviolence. The progression continues until in 1994 when the WCC Central Committee at Johannesburg established the Programme to Overcome Violence with its sole aim of "challenging and transforming the global culture of violence in the direction of a culture of just peace." In 1998 at Harare Assembly of the WCC comes the call for a Decade to Overcome Violence. The climax though came in the Ninth Assembly of the WCC at Porto Alegre 2006 where the Assembly asked the Central Committee to consider a study process engaging all member churches and ecumenical organizations in order to develop an extensive ecumenical declaration on [just] peace, firmly rooted in an articulated theology. This should deal with topics such as just peace, the Responsibility to Protect, the role and the legal status of non-state

²³² David Gill, ed., *Gathered for Life: Official Report VI Assembly World Council of Churches Vancouver, Canada 24 July-10 August 1983*, (Geneva: WCC Publications), 1983:132.

combatants which is to be adopted at the conclusion of the Decade to Overcome Violence.

It may mean that the concept of Just Peace was hatched by the ecumenical movement to which is not so. What the researcher has done is to prove that the ecumenical movement right at inception has had the agenda of peace and justice at the front banner and the emphasis kept growing as the years pass by. However, credit has to be given to the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in the USA which established in 1941 the "Commission on a Just and Durable Peace." In 1985 at the fifteenth General Synod of the United Church of Church that was held at Ames, Iowa, the Synod affirmed the UCC to be a "Just Peace Church." By this the Just Peace Church believes it has moved beyond the historic three peace paradigms of Pacifism, Just War and Crusade. The pronouncement defines Just Peace as the interrelation of friendship, justice, and common security from violence.²³³As noted above, the concept of the doctrine of Just Peace is in the Scriptures but was developed with time through first the insight of the United Church of Christ in the USA.

3.8.2 Just Practices

How is just peace expected to be practiced and lived out? What are the things that needed to be done towards ensuring just peace and by whom? "Just Peace Practices" is taken directly from the Just Peace Companion and answering the above questions, it is pertinent to refer back to the United Church of Christ in the USA which is later named The Just Peace Church from whom we got the term, consult other scholars who have worked on Just peace, look at other available materials that had addressed this subject. Then look at the Just Peace Companion which is a comprehensive work on this concept.

Just peace is expected to be practiced and lived out by all people. All human beings are also expected to do quite a lot of things towards ensuring just peace and we shall soon discuss how all people are expected to get involved. The practice of Just Peace is neither left to the leaders alone nor to the followership alone, neither is it left to the parents alone nor to children alone.

²³³ Just Peace Companion, p. 18.

Although the emphasis is on the Church, however, what needs to be done is not limited to the Church. The reason is simply that it was from the Church that this concept emerged. All religions, faith organizations and even those who do not belong to any faith organizations are expected to key in.

The United Church of Christ calls on her local churches to practice Just Peace in four different ways, first spiritual development which involves prayers for just Peace, studying the scriptures, theological reflections upon the work of the Holy Spirit etc. second Just Peace Education-Just peace be taught through the life of the congregation. Peace Education be integrated into the programmes of the church, such as confirmation classes, Sunday school classes, and membership instructional programmes. "Do not leave Just Peace concerns only to adults, either young children and youth educational programs, both in terms of content and leadership style, are a forum for beginning peace education at an early age."²³⁴ Third through political advocacy,

*We call upon all churches to the outward journey of political witness, enabling all members to join the search for the politics of Just Peace. Just Peace is both a religious concept and a political concept, and participation in the political arena is essential. We call for each church to appoint a contact person for the UCC Peace Advocacy and Hunger/Economic Justice Networks to follow closely those political issues most critical to the development of a Just Peace and to alert members of the local church when it is most appropriate to write or contact their Senators and Representatives.*²³⁵

The fourth is through outward journey of community witness. This could be done much more through the media.

There is also a comprehensive document which is a product of twenty-three scholars, Christian ethicists, biblical and moral theologians, international relations scholars, peace activists, and conflict resolution practitioners from different Church Denominational backgrounds and confessional faith families which is titled, "Just

²³⁴ Thistlethwhite, p. 99.

²³⁵ Ibid., p. 145-6.

Peacemaking: Ten Practices for Abolishing War.” This group of scholars worked together and collaborated for a period of five years since 1992 and came out with the above document. The ten practices are not just wishful list but empirical practices in our times that are spreading peace. Five historical events gave birth to the vision of Just Peacemaking. First is the devastation of war and threat of nuclear weapons after the World War II. What are the things that need to be done to avert another war? Second is the confusion after the Cold War as to what is to be done for peace and peace building and by whom? The third is the growing inadequacy of the theory of Just War and Pacifism. Then the fourth is the violence in the 1980s, Guatemala, Latin America, Rwanda, Liberia, Zaire, Sudan, Burma, Cambodia, Bosnia, Afghanistan, or Iraq propelled most major denominations to issue statements on peace and challenging one another towards developing theology of peace. The fifth historical incident was the contacts and interaction of the worldwide peacemaking movements linking many groups with different emphasis.

The Vision of these scholars is grounded in three theological convictions:

1. *Initiatives: A biblically informed concept of discipleship and peacemaking initiatives grounded in the life, teachings, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ.*
2. *Justice: A church committees to seek the peace of the city where its people dwell (Jer. 29:7); to further God’s reign, not by withdrawal or quietism or by uncritical support of or reliance on the government, but by engaging the issues of peace and justice—especially justice—actively within the brokenness of the world.*
3. *Love and Community: The church community as the eschatological sign of God’s love and reign in the world, embodied in a concrete gathering of persons who seek to discern together what just peacemaking means and to model peace making practices in our corporate and individual lives.²³⁶*

As to who are then to implement the ten practices of just peacemaking, they share the same with those of the ecumenical movement that all and sundry though it requires courage. Schroeder says, “This makes just peacemaking into a task for action—a process in which ordinary citizens individually and in groups work to sustain, criticize, goad, influence, reform, and lead the many kinds of voluntary associations-

²³⁶ Duane K. Friesen, John Langan, S.J. and Glen Stassen, “Introduction: Just Peacemaking as a New Ethic” in *Just Peacemaking: Ten Practices for Abolishing War*, (Cleveland: The Pilgrim Press), 1998:1-27:6.

governmental and private-that can contribute to transcending the contradictions and managing and overcoming the conflicts of an anarchic international society."²³⁷

The ten practices of Just Peacemaking support nonviolence direct action, taking independent initiatives to reduce threats, using cooperative conflict resolution, acknowledging responsibility for conflict and injustice and seeking repentance and forgiveness, advancing democracy, human rights and religious liberty, fostering just and sustainable economic development, working with emerging cooperative forces in the international system, strengthening the United Nations and international efforts for cooperation and human rights, reducing offensive weapons and weapons trade and the tenth practice is encouraging grassroots peacemaking groups and voluntary associations.²³⁸

The first of the ten practices of Just peacemaking which is supporting nonviolence direct action borrowed a leaf from the works of Mahatma Mohandas Gandhi through his *satyagraha* campaign for Indian Independence and that of Martin Luther King Jr during his civil rights movement which he learnt also from Gandhi. Nonviolence direct action is designed to deal and challenge injustice and can transform situations from greater to lesser violence and from greater to lesser injustice. Some among the nonviolent direct actions include among others boycotts, strikes, marches, civil disobedience, public disclosure, accompaniment, safe spaces and interventions and defensive strategies. We may not discuss each of the ten here for space.

The Just Peace Companion gives areas of Just Peace practices. First is the emphasis on Peace Education. The call is that the family, the school and the church to develop the process of peace education though it requires long effort but the result is rewarding. At all levels of the church, peace education be made as part of religious instruction. The first target be children but it is to be extended to include adolescents and adults as well. "The formation to be agents of peace begins by looking to models of those already engaged in peace building. For children, parents must be the first agents of peace they encounter, who serve as signs of peace not only in what they

²³⁷ Paul W. Schroeder, "Work with Emerging Cooperative Forces in the International System" in *Just Peacemaking: Ten Practices for Abolishing War*, (Cleveland: The Pilgrim Press), 1998:133-145:141.

²³⁸ For details see Glen Stassen, ed., *Just Peacemaking: Ten Practices for Abolishing War*, (Cleveland: The Pilgrims Press), 1998:29-188.

say, but in what they do. As children grow and mature into themselves being agents of peace, and churches must provide space, encouragement, and active support in this formation.²³⁹The challenge is for the churches to take up the issue of peace education for children right at an early age. Worship services should educate for peace.

The next practice of Just Peace is through interchurch and interreligious peace works. This aspect of the call is inviting the church to address the issue of unity love and respect amongst churches and to work together towards the establishment of the will of God here on earth for all of creation, this is on the first part. On the second part however, is for world's religions to be a force for peace and not strife and warfare because the great religions of the world carry within them a powerful potential for peace and good will. As much as on the negative part, world religions have played a divisive and destructive roles in the world's order, there is however great hope of tolerance and cooperation for justice and peace emanating over the years. Worthy of mention is the 1970 World Conference of Religions for Peace also known as "Religions for Peace-International" founded at its first assembly in Kyoto.

The third aspect of Just Peace Practice is Gender, Peace and Security, this is against the background that peace needs to be tackled at all levels; home, school, community as well as sociopolitical set-ups. It was discovered that military spending does not only create an economic injustice for women, it supports an 'ethic' of violence against women. The call on churches and by extension all peoples is to reflect on our gender structures, gender mentality and focus on constructive behaviour. The companion calls on churches to address Gender Based Violence and to support women peace programmes and campaigns.

The last aspect but of course not the least is indigenous matters. There are two ways to understanding this section on indigenous matters. First, is for people all over to affirm the significance of indigenous people, their rich cultures, values etc while the second is what concerns the interests of indigenous people. "To travel the way of Just Peace without attending to indigenous matters would be like passing a victim on

²³⁹ *Just Peace Companion*, p. 114.

the side of the road without stopping to give a hand. Who will be the neighbour for that person? Who will be the neighbour for indigenous peoples?"²⁴⁰

In his reflections on the 50th Anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights by the United Nations, C. Dale White writes, "Making A Just Peace: Human Rights and Domination Systems." In that document, he points out areas in the declaration that emphasizes the equality, dignity and rights of all peoples. He looks at the role of the church and theological mandate. He has this to say, "The Church of Jesus Christ, in the power and unity of the Holy Spirit, is called to serve as an alternative community to an alienated and fractured world-a loving and peaceable international company of disciples transcending all governments, races, and ideologies; reaching out to all 'enemies'; and ministering to all the victims of poverty and oppression."²⁴¹

He also paid attention to Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation discussing intensively the Pastoral Letter of the Council of Bishops of the United Methodist Church titled, "In Defense of Creation." He is of the view that Making a Just Peace is the collective responsibility of all people. Christians specially are to be evangelists of God's shalom.

3.9 Conclusion

As this chapter is concluded, the researcher looked at different theories in dealing with or confronting violence. But at first, an overview on the interdisciplinary research on violence is analyzed. This helps to better understand how complex the issue of violence is. The approaches proposed by scholars as to how violence research be carried out is presented. This is done because of the impact it will have on the fourth chapter where some of the proposed approaches are analyzed in depth. The causes of violence in the Nigerian context studied. The various theories for overcoming violence are discussed. There would hardly be any compromise amongst the advocates of the different theories. It was evident that all these theories were not postulated to sanction wars, but to overcome or limit war. Some of the theories have recorded tangible results. Granted that the controversy is more

²⁴⁰ *Just Peace Companion*, p. 138.

²⁴¹ C. Dale White, *Making a Just Peace: Human Rights and Domination Systems*, (Nashville: Abingdon Press), 1998:25.

on who has the appropriate interpretation of Christianity in the field of violence, but an interpretation which falls short of result is but losing touch with reality. Minority voice as is pacifism and conscientious objection; many pacifists and conscientious objectors are committed to breaking the circle of violence through nonviolence. In other words, even though the concept and ethics of nonviolence comes from a minority denomination in Nigeria, it is an impact in maintaining the commitment to the nonviolent teaching of Jesus Christ in the Scriptures. This is because seemingly at the societal level, several people have reached a point of questioning the continuous adherence to this tenet. But for being committed to this teaching of nonviolence without which, the ethos and attitude of the people meeting this situation will call for other reactions.

CHAPTER FOUR

- 4.0 Nigeria and the context of violence
- 4.1 Brief history of Nigeria
- 4.2 Survey of violence and conflicts in Nigeria
- 4.3 Causes of violence in Nigeria
- 4.4 Conclusion

4.0 Nigeria and the Context of violence

This chapter studies the historical background necessary to understand the contemporary causes of violence in this context.

4.1 Brief History of Nigeria

The research topic, "The witness of Non-Violence of the Church of the Brethren in Nigeria in a Violent World: Towards Ecumenical Collaboration" cannot be understood without looking at Nigeria as a nation. It is of great significance to look at history of Nigeria. Various historical and other factors have spurred conflicts between the country's various peoples, especially in post independence Nigeria. Little however is known of the earliest history of Nigeria. This is due to the fact that the literary ability was not developed until sometimes in the eighteenth century starting with the transcription of the Fulani and Hausa languages. M. C. English in giving his historical analysis of the development of written documents in some Nigerian languages states thus,

Hausa was first written in Roman (or English) letters in 1843, and Kanuri in 1853. The first book to be printed in Yoruba was published in 1850; in Ibo in 1860; and in Efik in 1862. No book in Tiv was published until 1918. Thus written material in these languages can provide information on only very recent events. There are, of course, writings about Nigeria in other languages, apart from those of the country. Arab travelers from North Africa visited the lands on the southern side of the Sahara desert, and there are some writings in Arabic describing the countries near Nigeria between the tenth and sixteenth centuries A.D. Unfortunately none of the travelers who wrote about their

*journeys actually came into what is now Nigeria, though they make some references to it.*²⁴²

This means that written history on Nigeria is not ancient and most of the information about the history of Nigeria derives from oral sources as well as archaeological discoveries.

In writing on the history of Nigeria, some historians like Ayandele holds to the view that there were imbalances in many historical writings about Nigeria. Such imbalances had various implications on even the current religious, ethnic, economic and socio-political crisis facing the nation Nigeria. Ayandele discusses five of these imbalances in this way,

*First, there is the tendency of historians to allow relations between the people of the Atlantic Seaboard and the European intruders dominate, if not monopolize, their writings-a tendency which gives the impression that the history of these peoples is made up entirely of such relations. Second, there is the serious error of interpreting the external relations of the Seaboard peoples against the background and interests of the European intruders. Third, there is the over-emphasis on factors making for disunity and the neglect of factors making for unity which characterizes much writing on the pre-colonial period. Fourth, there is the fact that the large ethnic groups receive a great deal of attention from historians whilst smaller groups receive practically none. Fifth, and most important of all, there is the tendency to write the history of the cream of society rather than of the people.*²⁴³

The researcher looks at the implications of how overemphasis on factors making for disunity and the neglect of factors making for unity by historians have on the current situation of modern Nigeria. Most Nigerian historians will not deny the fact that there were skirmishes and sometimes open hostilities or wars during the pre-colonial era between for example Fulani and the Nupe, the Ibani and the Kalabari, the Sura and the Ngas, the Ife and the Ondo, to mention some. However, worthy of note is the existence of inter-state routes that linked the south and the north. Of course, the existence of such routes did play a major role in the economic life of the peoples. One

²⁴² M.C. English, *An Outline of Nigerian History*, (London: Longmans Green and Co Ltd), 1959:6.

²⁴³ E.A. Ayandele, *Nigerian Historical Studies*, (London: Frank Cass and Company Limited) 1979:1-2.

would not doubt also that when there were trans-border trades, there are political, religious and social interactions and influences among the people. To buttress the above point, Ayandele adds,

Few people realized that in the eighteenth century the natron used by the Efik came largely from the Chad basin; that in the same century the Ijebu were the specialist makers of a coarse type of cloth used by slaves and poor people in Northern Nigeria; that up to 1830 the larger part of what is now regularly patronize the market of Kufu, near present-day Kontagora; that for a long time the Edo trafficked with the Nupe and battered their camwood for manufactured articles of northern origin ... that Ijaw men from Nembe were trading directly as far north as the Nupe Kingdom before 1841; that the Yoruba obtained their horses from Tripoli through Kanuri middlemen long before the nineteenth century.²⁴⁴

The above quotation has some implication on the position held and emphasized by people like Richard Akinjide who said that the difference between a southerner and a northerner is much more than that of an English man and an Italian. The Igbos were not exempted either from this interactions nor were they immune to the influences arising from such interactions. It was historically proven that they were some Igbos who went to the north as slaves. In other words, the Igbos too had interactions with people from the north and were also either influenced or had influenced the others in lots of ways. There were evident facts of such influences amongst the Igbos and to this day, there are many Igbos in most cities, towns and villages of the north than any other tribe.

There were of course historical evidences of healthy relationships between large political units and empires, traces could be seen of how they embraced diverse peoples, the Kororofa Empire, the Edo Kingdom, the Old Oyo Empire and the Caliphate did embrace other peoples over a long period of time giving them stability and growth. Ayandele himself refutes the historical imbalance by historians of over emphasis of factors making for disunity rather than factors making for unity and says,

The final point worth considering in any discussion of factors making for unity is the fact of the harmonious relations which existed between rulers on the inter-state level. The commonest way

²⁴⁴ Ibid., p.4.

in which rulers got in touch with each other involved correspondence by symbolic messages. I have come across evidence that in December 1842 messengers of the sultan of Sokoto were with Sodeke in Abeokuta; that the Sultan of Sokoto made some effort to persuade the Yoruba to end their civil war, that Balogun Ogundipe, the uncrowned king of the Egba for nearly a quarter of a century, offered advice to the Etsu of Nupe in 1870.²⁴⁵

Prehistoric Nigeria is the history of the existence of people on the present day Nigeria before the present day Nigeria came into existence. In attempting to do so, the classification as done by classical historians of the Stone Age, the Bronze Age and the Metal (Iron) Age is followed. First the Stone Age which is further divided into Old Stone Age (Early Stone Age generally called Paleolithic) and New Stone Age (otherwise known as Neolithic).

It is worthy of note to state what these periods represent and what it means when such periods are used in the description of some events like certain happenings. When using such "Ages" in historical description, it refers to periods when stone, bronze or iron were the main materials used by humanity for making tools. The Stone Age is by far the longest period in human history. That period extends into thousands of years. That was the period when stone was the most difficult to use and the stone could be used to make some less important tools for human usage. It is interesting to note that, in each of the ages, the material after which the age is named is more difficult to find or to use than the material which the previous age was named after. In other words, during the Stone Age, stone though could be found almost everywhere was more difficult to shape and to make into a tool. When human beings discovered the use of Bronze it shows that humanity has advanced and had discovered what was more advanced than the stone. Though it does not mean that at the discovery of the say Bronze then stone was abandoned, it simply means when one uses the Bronze, he/she was using the more advanced tool to the one or ones obtained during the preceding age.

²⁴⁵ Ayandele, p.5.

Many historians believe that there is a seeming absence of Paleolithic culture in Nigeria though such a position can historically be contested. Meek in comparing West Africa to other parts of Africa says this,

But in West Africa generally there is a remarkable absence of palaeolithic specimens. A few rough flaked types which might be referred to the Early Stone Age have, however, been found in the Northern Provinces. Such a one is the hand-axe, picked up by Captain Best on the surface near Badiko in Bauchi division, and now in the British Museum. It is a core implement of very early type, which would in Europe be referred to the palaeolithic drift period. A number of other stone implements which would in Europe be classified as palaeoliths have been dug up on the tin-mines of the Bauchi-Plateau.²⁴⁶

He goes on to enumerate the implements found on the Naraguta Mine. The above statement no wonder seem to negate the early position held by many historians that there seem to be the absence of Paleolithic culture. Meek adds,

Other seemingly palaeolithic types have no doubt been found, but so little is known of the African Stone Age that it is impossible to assign them to the same periods as would be given to similar types if found in Europe. It would be interesting to have an expert geological opinion on the deposit in which the Naraguta specimens were found. There is, of course, an abundance of polished Celts of the Neolithic Age.²⁴⁷

The Celts were collected at Naraguta by Mr E. A. Langslow-cock, Chief Inspector of mines. English concur to Meek on the discovery of some Stone Age tools but held a different view on the lack of Paleolithic culture as he says,

This stone may have been used (as its name suggests) as an axe-head held in the hand for chopping small pieces of wood or rough joints of meat, but it could also be used as a primitive sort of knife or chisel and as a scraper to remove and clean the skins of animals killed by hunters. The people of the Old Stone Age are wandering hunters and food gatherers, and, to judge by the number of stone hand-axes found, this all-purpose tool seems to have suited their needs very well. You could see from the map on page 18 that palaeolithic hand-axes have been found in Nigeria mainly on the

²⁴⁶ C. K. Meek, *The Northern Tribes of Nigeria 11 Vol, Vol 1*, (London: Frank Cass & Co. Ltd), 1971:50.

²⁴⁷ *Ibid.* p. 51.

*Bauchi plateau, but it is most unlikely that Old Stone Age people lived there and nowhere else in Nigeria.*²⁴⁸

Then came the Neolithic (New Stone Age) which was distinguished from the Paleolithic (Old Stone Age) by the development of agriculture and the taming of animals by human beings leading to the development of some tools which could not be used during the Old Stone Age. Some among the tools were the making of pots from clay, building of mud huts and stone bridges to cross streams. There were discoveries of some remains of such huts and fortified villages on the Bauchi plateau, in the Borno Province, Adamawa, Sokoto, Niger, Zaria and Ilorin Provinces. As to the date of the change from the Old Stone Age to the New Stone Age, there was no agreement among historians as to any fixed date. English among other historians accept the fact that it was in Egypt that the New Stone Age began and they said it started in about 5000 B.C.E. They said that the New Stone Age soon began in Sudan and moved to Kenya in East Africa about 3000 B.C.E. As to when the New Stone Age might have begun in Nigeria, though there are still lots of uncertainties, historians are of the opinion that it might have started between 3000-1500 B.C.E.

The Bronze and Iron Ages were of course the age where Bronze was the most advanced tools used by human beings. To obtain Bronze, this was done by heating called smelting. Bronze and metals are obtained from rocks and sands where they would be separated by heat where the impurities are removed. The degree of heat needed to separate bronze is less than the degree of heat needed to extract metal. It is also harder to beat and melt into a shape of the later than the former. As to when each age starts and the change over, we may leave that for further studies. These two ages, there have been many discoveries of the existence of human beings in present day Nigeria using those tools belonging to these ages. The tin mines on the Jos Plateau and other metal tools and sculptures discovered all over the country attest to this.

By about 2000 B.C.E most of the country which made up today's Nigeria was sparsely inhabited by persons who had a rudimentary knowledge of raising domesticated food plants and of herding animals. From about 800 B.C.E to about A.D. 200 the neolithic Nok culture (named for the town where archaeological findings first were made)

²⁴⁸ English, p. 15.

flourished on the Jos Plateau; (the Nok people made fine terra-cotta sculptures and probably knew how to work tin and iron). The first important centralized state to influence Nigeria was Kanem-Bornu, which probably was founded in the 8th century A.D., to the north of Lake Chad (outside modern Nigeria). In the 11th century, by which time its rulers had been converted to Islam, Kanem-Bornu expanded south of Lake Chad into present-day Nigeria, and in the late 15th century its capital was moved there.

Beginning in the 11th century seven independent Hausa city-states were founded in Northern Nigeria—Biram, Daura, Gobir, Kano, Katsina, Rano, and Zaria. Kano and Katsina competed for the lucrative trans-Saharan trade with Kanem-Bornu, and for a time had to pay tribute to it. In the early 16th century all of Hausa land was briefly held by the Songhai Empire. However, in the late 16th century, Kanem-Bornu replaced Songhai as the leading power in Northern Nigeria, and the Hausa states regained their autonomy. In southwest Nigeria two states—Oyo and Benin—had developed by the 14th century; the rulers of both states traced their origins to Ife, (renowned for its naturalistic terra-cotta and brass sculpture). Benin was the leading state in the 15th century but began to decline in the 17th century, and by the 18th century Oyo controlled Yoruba land and also Dahomey. The Igbo people in the southeast lived in small village communities.

In the late 15th century Portuguese navigators became the first Europeans to arrive Nigeria. They soon began to purchase slaves and agricultural products from coastal middlemen; the slaves had been captured further inland by the middlemen. The Portuguese were followed by British, French, and Dutch traders. Among the Igbo and Ibibio a number of city-states were established by individuals who had become wealthy by engaging in the slave trade; these included Bonny, Owome, and Okrika. Nigeria's over 170 million people belong to more than 250 distinct ethno-linguistic groups, and are evenly split between Muslims and Christians, while there are also significant numbers of people who follow traditional African religions.

The name Nigeria was believed to have been named after the river Niger, the longest river in Nigeria which got its source from the Fouta Djallon Mountains and empties itself in the Atlantic Ocean via the Niger Delta with the river Benue as its main

tributary. However, the etymology of the name Nigeria has been a subject of controversy for quite a long time to this day. In his contribution titled *Nigeria: The Country of the Niger Area*, Ifemesia struggled with the etymology of the name and as a historian he advised that the controversy be left for linguists to solve. Worthy of note though is this that the name Nigeria was not a name the inhabitants gave to themselves it was given to them by foreigners. However, contrary to popularly held view among many historians and writers that it was Miss Flora Shaw (later Lady Lugard) who coined the term in her efforts to find a shorter word for the terms "Royal Niger Company Territories", that the name Nigeria first appeared in *The Times* of London on January 8, 1897; in a letter Shaw writes,

In the first place, as the title "Royal Niger Company' Territories" is not only inconvenient to use but to some extent also misleading, it may, be permissible to coin a shorter title for the operation of pagan and Mahomedan states which have been brought by the exertions of the Royal Niger Company within the confines of a British Protectorates and thus need for, the first time in their history to be described as an entity by some general name.²⁴⁹

There are available evidences of the usage of the words Nigerian and Nigerians before her usage.

This is the background against which the name Nigeria came into use. Shaw argues against using the name 'Central Sudan' as geographers and travelers were fun of using that it could be mistaken to people of the Nile Basin. She goes in her letter to say,

The name Nigeria applying to no other part of Africa may, without offence to any neighbours be accepted as co-extensive with the territories over which the Royal Niger Company has extended British influence, and may serve to differentiate them equally from the colonies of Lagos and the Niger protectorate on the coast and from the French territories of the Upper Niger.²⁵⁰

This shows that at the time she wrote the letter mentioning the name Nigeria, it was exclusive of the western and eastern part of Nigeria.

²⁴⁹ Kalu Ezera, *Constitutional Development in Nigeria*, (New York: Cambridge University Press) 1964:6.

²⁵⁰ *Ibid.* p. 6.

As stated above, there are available evidences that Flora Shaw did not coin the term and that there were some earlier people who had used the term and Shaw might have taken it from them. Worthy of mention is the statement of Dr Martin Leake, Secretary of the Society for Promoting the Discovery of the Interior Parts of Africa (later known as the African Association). He stated that the Greek geographer Ptolemy called the river Nigeir or Nigir there by gradually giving birth to the name Nigeria. C. K. Meek though many years after Ptolemy who was a British anthropologist argued in the same line with Ptolemy in 1925 that the Buduma (Yedina) word for river was Njer or Nijer. All these are clues to the etymology of the name Nigeria. Some have argued that the etymology of the name Nigeria would have been from the Latin adjective Niger translated black. This has been offensive to many Africans and therefore driving it from the river seems more acceptable. M.D.W. Jeffreys a former British administrative officer in Nigeria argued that the root word of Nigeria was from a Semitic root word naghar signifying river. He was of the opinion that even Senegal was of the same root word. All said, Ifemesia has this to say when he refuted the early held position that it was Flora Shaw who coined the term that, "But, as early as 1859-60 a Liverpool trader, William Cole, used the terms 'Nigerian' and 'Nigerians' in reference to things, events, and peoples of the area watered by the Niger. During this period, Cole was operating in a tract of the Niger basin extending from the Ijaw country in the Niger Delta to the Nupe country above the Niger-Benue confluence."²⁵¹ There was every indication that Flora Shaw might have used some other works before coming out vividly with the above statement but she was not in any way the originator of the term. This shows that the expressions Nigerian and Nigerians had been in use some forty years before Lady Lugard introduced the word Nigeria. Ifemesia further says,

*perhaps it is because the Niger is so much the framework on which Nigeria is built that its very existence sometimes appears to be forgotten even by Nigerians themselves. But the Niger is the longest and largest river in West Africa, the third longest river on the African continent. It is one of the eleven longest rivers of the world and one of the seven largest with respect to drainage area and a maximum discharge.*²⁵²

²⁵¹ C.C. Ifemesia, "Nigeria: The Country of the Niger Area," *Studies in Southern Nigerian History*, ed. Boniface I. Obichere, (London: Frank Cass), 1982:23-37:24.

²⁵² Ifemesia, 25.

The modern Nigeria can be traced back to 1914, when the British protectorates of northern and southern Nigeria were amalgamated. Nigeria got her independence in October 1, 1960 and in 1963 adopted a republican constitution, but elected to stay as member of the Commonwealth. The Federal Republic of Nigeria is the largest of the Western African Coastal States. Its population is the largest of any country in Africa and one of the largest in the world. "With an area of 356,669 square miles (923,768 square kilometers), it is the 14th largest state on the continent. It is bordered on the north by Niger, on the east by Chad and Cameroon, on the south by Gulf of Guinea, and on the west by Benin."²⁵³ The present day Nigeria is made up of 36 States and the Federal Capital Territory is located in Abuja (formerly Lagos).

As to settlement patterns, one could notice remarkable differences between the north and the south in physical landscape, climate, and vegetation. There are marked differences as well in the social organization, religion, literacy, and agricultural practices of the people. The statement that the above differences "form the basis of the division of Nigeria into three main regions-the south, or Guinea Coast lands; the Middle belt; and the north, or Nigerian Sudan"²⁵⁴ is not well grounded. The historical fact was that prior to the amalgamation of 1914, all these regions were existing independent of one another, there were separate states.

Before the merger, there were fears amongst the colonial masters as to the workability of the agglomeration, Sir James Robertson in his diary wrote, "How can any feeling of common purpose of nationality be built up between people whose culture, religion and mode of living is completely different?"²⁵⁵ In his comparison of two European countries and Nigerian ethnic nationalities he wrote thus, "There is less difference between an Englishman and Italian, both of whom have a common civilization based on Greek and Roman foundations and on Christianity, than between a Muslim villager in Sokoto, Kano, or Katsina and an Ibo, Ijaw or Kalabari."²⁵⁶ That fear was indeed genuine as that has been part of Nigeria's unending violence and conflicts since independence. No

²⁵³ Reuben Kenrick Udo, "Nigeria" *The New Encyclopaedia Britannica*, vol. 29 (Chicago: Encyclopaedia Britannica), 894-905:895.

²⁵⁴ *Ibid.* p. 894-905:895.

²⁵⁵ James Robertson, *Transition in Africa: From Direct Rule to Independence, a Memoir*, (London: C. Hurst & Company), 223.

²⁵⁶ *Ibid.* p. 223.

wonder, Chief Richard Akinjide wrote, "The so-called Nigeria created in 1914 was a complete fraud. It was not created in the interest of Nigeria or Nigerians but in the interest of the British."²⁵⁷ Many Nigerians see the existence of Nigeria today as a miracle as they had thought that Nigeria might have disintegrated by now given the background of this complex nation-building process.

As to religious composition, there are three major religions in Nigeria, the African Traditional Religion, Islam and Christianity. The North is predominantly Muslim with Christians and African traditional religious worshippers in the minority. The East in majority is dominated by Christianity while the West is divided fifty-fifty between Christianity and Islam with fewer traditional religious worshippers. The 1963 census which has been contested put the population of Muslims to 47% and Christians to 35%. The recent statistic by the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN), states that Muslims are 45% and Christians 45% while 10% are African Traditional Religious Worshippers.

The issue of the population of Christians and Muslims in Nigeria has been a contentious issue. The 2006 Nigerian Census figure released by the National Population Commission of Nigeria gave the total population figure to 140,003, 547 people, with male out-numbering women. During the pre-census struggles, Christian religious leaders insisted religion and ethnicity be included in the questionnaires where as the Muslim religious leaders objected to the inclusion of religion and ethnicity. President Olusegun Obasanjo being a Christian yielded to the pressure from the Muslim clerics and religion and ethnicity were excluded. The Christian clerics were insisting on the inclusion of religion and ethnicity so that the claims of dominance by one religion over the other portrayed to the international community would have been put to rest.

However, since that was not done, any claim of either religion be it Christianity or Islam to claim the majority position can not be authenticated. No wonder, most writers mentioning the population of either Christians or Muslims in Nigeria; will say the two religions are evenly distributed and African Tradition Religious worshippers lamed with

²⁵⁷ Chief Richard Akinjide, "Bad Leadership and the Curse of the Nigerian Nation" *Vanguard Nigeria*, 20 July 2000:1.

Christianity, failure to do this will show that the writer is biased. Paden has this to say as to the population composition of the Nigerian people, "Of its approximately 138 million people about half (69 million) are Muslims and half Christian and traditional religious worshippers. This makes Nigeria tied with Turkey and Iran for having the sixth largest Muslim population in the world, after Indonesia, Pakistan, India, Bangladesh, and Egypt. Yet all its religions rest on a solid foundation of African cultural tradition."²⁵⁸ Boar who had served as a missionary for over thirty years in Nigeria and author of several books on Christian-Muslim relations has this to say, "Nigeria is now marked by a pluralistic situation that no longer allows the domination of one religion over all the people. Conversion from both traditional religions and Islam to Christianity have produced a Christian community that is at least numerically equal to that of Islam and may have surpassed it."²⁵⁹ Worthy of note is what Boar highlighted that he and his wife arrived in Nigeria in 1966 to meet a Christian community that was small and can hardly resist any push either by the government or Islam. When it comes to issues of Christian-Muslim relations in Nigeria, Boar is an authority whose writings can hardly be contested, not even by fanatical Muslims. Boar is of the opinion that Christians in Nigeria were gradually getting larger and this might have been one of the reasons adding to the unending religious crisis in Nigeria.

The current population of Nigeria stands at 170,123,740 by the CIA World Factbook a figure which is corroborated by the 2014 World Population Review that gave the figure of 173,611,131 while the Answers Africa in their World Gazetteer Projection 177,096,000. This area needs thorough research so that the demography of Nigeria be known.

There is a popular saying amongst Nigerians and the mass media that Nigeria would be the most religious nation world over. This was as a result of a survey carried out in January 2004 by the BBC amongst ten countries and ten thousand people were interviewed in a programme "*What The World Thinks of God.*" The countries polled were the US, the UK, Israel, India, South Korea, Indonesia, Nigeria, Russia, Mexico and Lebanon. Over 90% of Nigerians said they believed in God, prayed regularly and would

²⁵⁸ John N. Paden, *Muslim Civic Cultures and Conflict Resolution: The Challenges of Democratic Federalism in Nigeria*, Washington, D.C.: Brooking Institution Press, 2005:2.

²⁵⁹ Jan H. Boar, *Nigeria's Decades of Blood, Studies in Christian-Muslim Relations*, Vol 1, (Belleville, Ontario, Canada: Essence Publishing), 2003:15.

die for their belief.²⁶⁰ For Nigeria and many other countries among which are Sudan, Tunisia, Egypt, Indonesia, Saudi-Arabia, Pakistan, Turkey, to mention some few by way of example, religion and politics are intertwined, every adventure of life and all instruments of governance and survival are clothed in religious ritual, language and symbols. Some among these countries like Indonesia and Nigeria have within their constitutions provision for religious tolerance, the case of Nigeria is adherence to the constitution and the constitution debate has been unending. Many modern Nigerian historians among them Ilesanmi, Boer, Akinrinade, Ojo and Falola hold to this position. In the words of Ilesanmi,

*It is common knowledge that Nigeria's political and religious scene reflects an untidy reality, a reality that advisedly warns us against the tendency to force the country's situation into 'a preformulated paradigmatic framework.' An important point to demonstrate, therefore, is that religion has been central to how the Nigerian people understand themselves. This task is particularly important, given the standard argument that 'until independence in 1960, religion was not a significant factor in national politics,' rather, 'ethnic rivalry, regionalism and competition for resources...dominated the direction of political activities.'*²⁶¹

There are estimated to be more than 250 ethnic groups in Nigeria with each group occupying a territory it considers its own by right of first occupancy and inheritance. It is true what Robertson said that "Non members of a given group who have lived and worked for several decades in the territory of another group are still considered to be aliens. In most rural areas, such aliens may not acquire outright title to land; yet there has been considerable migration of people from one ethnic territory to another in search of farmland."²⁶² Nomadic cattle breeders could also be seen migrating from one area to the other in search of grazing land. However, despite the fact that the cattle rearers could settle in a place for some times and annually settle at a particular location, they are not given indigene-ship titles but rather addressed as settlers. This applies also to other tribes settling among communities other than theirs by right of inheritance. This lack of recognition and societal integration do breed suspicion and violence.

²⁶⁰ BBC Programme, "What the World thinks of God," January 2004, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/programmes/wtwtgod/default.stm> (access 20.09.2014).

²⁶¹ Simeon O. Ilesanmi, *Religious Pluralism and the Nigerian State*, (Athens: Ohio University Press), 1997:114-115.

²⁶² Robertson, *Transition in Africa*, p. 223.

4.2 A Survey of Violence and conflicts in Nigeria

It is not a hidden fact that Nigeria has been a country that has been rocked by violence and conflicts. It started with the post independence conflict in the 1960s leading to the Nigerian Civil War and then the religious crises, as well as political and ethnic conflicts.

The First turning point in Nigerian history came in 1804 when a Fulani preacher by name Othman Dan Fodio began what he called a "holy war" (*jihad*). That *jihad* resulted in the subjugation of the Old Hausa city states of northern Nigeria. Having conquered the Hausa city states, the Fulani adopted the Hausa language and merged with their ruling class to create a Hausa-Fulani ethnic hegemony (group) under the rule of what is today known as the Sokoto Caliphate. Many Muslim historians in Nigeria have argued that that *jihad*²⁶³ was not war against non-Muslims but an attempt at purifying Islam against heathen influences. However, historically, many traditional religious worshippers were forced into accepting Islam and Fulani were forced upon natives as their rulers. Crampton in discussing the Othman dan Fodio jihad writes,

*One of the most important events in the history of the North was the Fulani conquest. This came to have lasting effects on its political, social and religious life...At the beginning of the nineteenth century they were becoming restive under their Hausa masters and the moment was ripe for the proclamation of a jihad or religious war... Their motives were partly religious and partly a desire for gain and revenge for previous spites and grievances. The jihad was fought not only against pagans, but against the old Habe or Hausa chiefs who were accused of lukewarm adherence to Islam. Fourteen persons were given flags as authority to carry out holy war in the Hausa states and beyond.*²⁶⁴

These fourteen persons went some among the Hausa states some went beyond conquering the people and spreading Islam. Worthy of mention is Yakubu who had the

²⁶³ There had been so intense a controversy on the correct interpretation of the word Jihad. Some Muslim clerics and Christian writers have always argued that the word means war against kafirs (the infidels). There are some Qur'anic verses to substantiate this position. They could go on to describe the Jihad of Othman Dan Fodio as belonging to this. However, some Muslims claimed that jihad refers to reformation of Islam from un-Islamic practices. Many of such Clerics and writers do still use Othman Dan Fodio as an example addressing him a reformer of Islam. We shall look at this in more details in our next chapter.

²⁶⁴ Edmund Patrick Thurman Crampton, *Christianity in Northern Nigeria*, (Zaria: Gaskiya Corporation Ltd), 1975:11-12.

flag, went as far as Bauchi outside the Hausa states and conquered it. Buba Yaro another flagbearer went as far as Gombe and founded the Gombe emirate. Modibbo Adamu who founded Yola, "The vast majority of the people in his emirate which became known as Adamawa were pagans. In 1851, Barth, the famous explorer, noted that the Fulani were making great efforts to subjugate the area, but still had a great deal to do before they could regard themselves as in undisputed possession. Campaigning was still going on when the British arrived."²⁶⁵

The effects of the Fulani conquest cannot be underestimated as it had and still have lots of implication on the current relationships existing between the Fulanis and other tribes whom are serving under them. The manner through which they spread Islam in a violent manner had created lots of suspicion. Ayendele states thus, "Islam was decisively propagated by fire and sword from 1804 to 1831 in the larger part of the Northern Nigeria, by *jihadists* who drew inspiration from Usuman dan Fodio, the scholar and reformer-initiator of the Fulani *jihad*. The result was the establishment of the Sokoto caliphate which embraced most of what is now Northern Nigeria."²⁶⁶

Another major development, this time in the southern coastal and forest region, was the contact with the Europeans in the 15th Century through trade, mainly in sylvan products. It was in the 16th Century that the trade changed to that of slaves and continued for nearly three hundred years until the British abolished it in 1807. "Though significant, what is remarkable about this early European contact with the Niger Delta was not the mutual peacefulness in which transition from one commodity to the other was achieved, but the negligible impact made on the social and political institutions of the inhabitants. Record shows that except in Old Calabar the cultural result of 400 years of European contact was the evolution of the bastardized 'pidgin' English which became language of business."²⁶⁷ Colonization began in the 19th Century, when the industrial revolution in Europe spurred interest in agricultural and mineral commodities in the African interior. Along with the colonialists came Christian missionaries who converted large parts of southern Nigeria to Christianity.

²⁶⁵ Crampton, *Christianity in Northern Nigeria*, p. 13.

²⁶⁶ E.A. Ayendele, *The Missionary Impact on Modern Nigeria 1842-1914: A Political and Social Analysis*, (London: Longmans), 1966:117.

²⁶⁷ Ayendele, p. 3.

In 1914, northern and southern Nigeria, which had been governed by the British as two distinct colonies, were merged to create the colony of Nigeria. "It was in this colonial era that many of the rivalries that later explode in conflicts were fostered," historian Emeka Uzoatu said. In these circumstances the Nigeria that became independent from Britain in 1960 was 'a time bomb waiting to explode.' By 1962, the Tiv of central Nigeria revolted against their perceived domination by the northern regional government controlled by Sokoto princes. Violence exploded in western Nigeria following federal elections in 1964 and regional elections a year later when it was perceived that the Northern People's Congress (NPC), which was in control of the central government, had rigged the elections for its preferred candidates. Violence erupted as a result of political power play leading to the country's Civil War.

The history of Christian crusades by early Christians and the imposition of Muslim traditional rulers by the colonial masters during the "Indirect Rule System"²⁶⁸ in Nigeria have no doubt created suspicion, mistrust and constant friction amongst the different ethnic groups in Nigeria, more especially northern Nigeria. This could be seen in the open hostilities and violence even today, in relation with the traditional institutions and even political appointments. The Muslims in Nigeria do accuse Christians of violence and when they do, they refer to the crusades and the Christians do accuse the Muslims of domination referring to undue advantage given to the Muslims by the colonial masters and the Fulani *jihad*. Christians could make reference to places like Michika Local Government Area of Adamawa State northeastern Nigeria where the population of over 90% Christians with below 10% Muslims but the traditional ruler a Muslim settler. This is one out of several examples as the similar situation is obtained in Marama town of Hawul Local Government Area of Borno State.

Nigeria no doubt has been in the news within the past twenty years as a theatre of violence and aggression mostly religious in nature as have been for example Sudan and Algeria. The questions then are; what were the most destabilizing factors in post independence Nigeria? Was the issue of violence a recent phenomenon or was it since independence?

²⁶⁸ The Indirect Rule System is a term used by historians and political scientists to describe a system of governance adopted by the British in their protectorates of northern Nigeria where the British rule through the traditional rulers.

Most Nigerian historians and writers among them Akinjide, Kuka to mention but few hold to this fact summarized by Falola that, "When the country won its independence in 1960, the most destabilizing factor was ethnicity. Scholarly attention focused on ethnicity and the use of cross cutting institutions in solving the problem of ethnic strife. Power was gradually strengthened at the centre of the federal system, so as to keep together the country's diverse ethnic compositions."²⁶⁹

Nigeria had seven military coups after the civil war which took place after independence in 1967-1970 some were bloody, while some were bloodless. The military had ruled Nigeria for twenty nine years of the fifty six years of Nigerian independence. I will not examine the implications of the military rule on Nigeria and Nigerians, as this will divert us from our main focus. However, ethnic strife as the most destabilizing factor, changed in the late 1970s, and Falola summed it well by saying, "since the late 1970s, however, religion has become as destructive as ethnicity. There have been more than a dozen religious riots, each claiming many lives and wrecking mass destruction of property and places of worship. Each riot was ended only through the intervention of the Police or the Military. Smaller, mostly unreported incidents, have divided local communities across Nigeria."²⁷⁰

Here one will add that in the present day Nigeria, religion has become much more important than ethnicity when one looks at the role religion plays in the political sphere, in violence and all aspect of the Nigerian socio-economic life. We have to note that in the history of Nigeria however, politics and religion have never been divorced of each other. Even before the independence, religion was part and parcel of the states, a means through which power was legitimized and people identified. During the colonial period both Islam and Christianity spread rapidly. There are some reported instances where the colonial masters used the power of the gun to force people to be converted to either Christianity or Islam.

²⁶⁹ Toyin Falola, *Violence in Nigeria-The Crisis of Religious Politics and Secular Ideologies*, (U.S.A: University of Rochester Press), 1998:2.

²⁷⁰ Falola, p. 2.

The Indirect Rule that was introduced by the colonial masters favored one religion Islam over and above Christianity and the African Traditional Religion. Ayandele gave us brief on the work of Lugard's successor Sir Girouard, "The assumption of the administration of Northern Nigeria by Sir Percy Girouard in 1907 marked the beginnings of the concept and implementation of Indirect Rule as an inexorable and immutable principle of administration. Correspondingly it marked the beginnings of prohibition of missionary enterprise from predominantly Muslim areas, and when possible, from 'pagan' areas also."²⁷¹ C.L. Tempel also was so opposed to missionary activities and started the *sabongaris* (settlements for non-indigenes) an attempt to limit the interactions of aliens with the Northern Muslims. The case of the Maguzawa in Kano, pagans whom the Muslims could not subdue even through jihad is an example. They were willing to have Christian missionaries but the administration refused to allow missionary enterprise. Ayandele corroborated this,

*In 1912 these Maguzawa were anxious to have missionaries but the administration refused to allow missionaries to work among them partly because, it argued, Christian teaching would make the Maguzawa disloyal to the Muslim rulers under whom they were now put, and partly because the missionaries would not be able to resist the temptation of preaching to Muslims who might come to them. When Dr Krusius of the Sudan Interior Mission went out to those people to collect information on their customs and folklore he was allowed to do so only on the condition that he would not attempt to convert them.*²⁷²

As stated earlier that in the Nigerian context, religion and politics and other aspect of human life are intertwined, an incident at the general elections of the second democratic dispensation proves so. In 1978 during political rallies, one of the northern political parties the National Party of Nigeria (NPN) told its supporters that the Unity Party of Nigeria (UPN) symbol of two fingered V for victory was a convert symbol of polytheism which is anti Islamic. The event of the eve of the presidential election of 1979 is as well worth mentioning, "Sheikh Abubakar Gumi advised Muslims, in a speech broadcast nationally, not to vote for a non-Muslim candidate."²⁷³

²⁷¹ E.A. Ayandele, *The Missionary Impact on Modern Nigeria 1842-1914: A Political and Social Analysis*, (London: Longmans), 1966:146.

²⁷² Ayandele, p. 149.

²⁷³ Falola, p. 2.

In 1978, the Constituent Assembly was writing the Nigerian Constitution and the phrase Nigeria is a secular state generated a problem which disrupted the Constitution making process. The Muslims were insisting that the Constitution to include a phrase Nigeria to be an Islamic state. That phrase till date is still problematic to the Nigerian Muslims. Nigerian Muslims always feel that using the phrase Nigeria a Secular State is meaning Nigerians are people who do not either believe in God (*Allah*) an insult to a Muslim or Nigeria is a non-religious country. Muslims always feel that to say Nigeria is a secular state is to undermine their population thereby making them below Christianity a fact they would never succumb to. Mostly Christians who are insisting on the phrase Nigeria is a Secular State are thinking by this, Nigeria is a country that has not adopted any religion to be a state religion. However, knowing that language is dynamic and the deficiency of other acceptable terminologies in the past, in this generation, a society that has many religions in it is said to be a plura-religious or multi-religious society.

Worthy of mention at this point is that, as much as Nigerian Muslims are so resistant to the usage of the term Nigeria a Secular state, studies has shown that the secular policy of the Federal government of Nigeria had been more beneficial to Islam in Nigeria much more than the Christian faith. Doi share the same opinion and right is he when he discussed the changes Islam in Nigeria has undergone since independence that,

This policy has given freedom to Islam to further its cause and in a way it has imposed restrictions on Christianity which had so far dominated the educational and social scene of the country. Some of the Muslim organizations laid down in their constitutions that their aim was to remove the educational imbalance between Muslims and Christians and wanted to remedy the situation by opening new educational institutions where Muslim children would get the Western-derived education without being converted to Christianity, the fear that Muslim parents always had while sending their children to schools run by the Christian missionary societies.²⁷⁴

²⁷⁴ A.R.I. Doi, "Islam in Nigeria: changes since independence" in *Christianity in Independent Africa*, (London: Rex Collings), 1978:334-353:347.

It will be impossible for the researcher to give a chronicle of violence in Nigeria. This is due to the fact that not all the violence and crises were reported either by the security agents or the media. The most complex issue is the fact that sometimes even when the media reported such violence or crises, or when the victims do report, their reports at sometimes were either rejected or disputed by either the government of the day, the initiators of the violence, the authorities that helped in ending the violence, the media foreign or local and Human Rights. A typical example could be the most spoken about of the "Baga Massacre." The unfortunate incidence happened in May 2013 where the Islamic Fundamentalists popularly called "Boko Haram" otherwise known as *Ahli sunnah lidda wati wal jihad* launched an attack on the town and the Joint Operation of army from Nigeria and Niger Republic engaged them in gun dual.

The Senator representing Borno North Senatorial District Maina Ma'aji Lawan said over 2000 lives were lost with over 2000 houses destroyed. The Human Right said through their spokes person that over 185 lives were lost with over 1000 houses destroyed. The Military Defence Headquarters through their Spokes person Major-Gen Chris Olukwalade reported after sending a fact finding mission that only 36 people were killed with very few thatched houses destroyed. According to the report, the total houses in the community were not more than 1000 so there is no how 2000 houses would have been destroyed.²⁷⁵

The questions are still left open, how many people were killed at Baga? How many houses destroyed? Property worth how much was lost? Who perpetrated the destruction Boko Haram or the military as being accused? This single example seems to confirm the statement that 'during violence, truth is the first victim.'

In the course of this research, it is evident in most developing nations where freedom of speech and of the press is not so much in practice even in some young democracies as Nigeria, coupled with lack of investigative journalism, not every information from the media can be trusted as lots are imaginative than factual. Sometimes events are either under reported or exaggerated depending on the aim of the reporter, the region and religion of the reporters etc. The researcher limited quotations from News Papers

²⁷⁵ The Punch Editorial Board, "The Mindless Baga Killings," *The Punch News Paper*, May 5, 2013.

and magazines to the barest minimum only where necessary to buttress any scholarly argument.

The religious clash in 1978 between Muslims and Christians students of the Ahmadu Bello University (ABU) Zaria where six students were killed has always been seen as the beginning of religious crisis in Nigeria. The period of 1970s will be regarded as a period of verbal wrangling and public demonstration while 1980s, 1990s, 2000s till date were and still are periods of outright religious and political violence; some people among them Boar calls these periods therefore, 'Decades of Blood.' Gali has an interesting point when he says,

Observations of religious groups among both Christians and Muslims over the last few years show that each group feels it is the one being marginalized, denied its rights, looked on with suspicion by the authorities and others. Each group has somehow developed a fortress mentality, feeling itself surrounded by enemies. Therefore, each group in turn feels that it is reasonable in its beliefs, that it is not prone to violence, that it accepts everyone on both sides.²⁷⁶

This shows that religious dominance is at play and each religion is trying to unseat the other. It is never an arguable fact that in Nigeria the power-hungry often use religion as a stepping stone to power and political legitimacy. This is evident when politicians could be heard campaigning in Mosques and Churches that the other religion are trying to dominate so vote for us so that we protect our religion.

It is worth mentioning here that in Nigeria, media reporters, religious leaders, writers do use the terms violence, conflict, riots, crisis, killings, destruction, and massacre interchangeably though it is not supposed to be so as all the words have different meanings. The third chapter had already given the definition of the word violence having stated that violence is an ambiguous term and to some scholars like Heitmeyer and Hagan say is ambivalent, yet gave the definition and no need repeating.

In 1980 there was the Maitatsine crisis that claimed by government record over four thousand lives and property worth millions of naira were destroyed. Maitatsine was

²⁷⁶ Matthew Abdullahi Gali, "Destruction in Kano," in *Seeking Peace in Africa: Stories from African Peacemakers*, ed., Donald E. Miller, Scott Holland, Lon Fendall, and Dean Johnson (Pennsylvania: Cascadia, 2007), 93-96:93.

and still is a sect in Islam founded by one Muhammed Marwa who migrated to Nigeria from Marwa in the Northern Cameroon and settled in Kano in 1945. As highly contested as the term sect is when used in designation of a group, the Muslim *Ulama* in Nigeria do use the term when making reference to the Maitatsine group. As to whether the Maitatsine themselves would accept the designation cannot be verified. Marwa himself soon became an Islamic scholar whose preaching was full of abusive words. He taught that Islam was adulterated by western education and civilization. He had the singular aim of purifying Islam of these ills. He taught that killing more especially of infidels, (*kafirs*) is a blessing and guarantees one inheriting *aljana* (heaven). One will be quick to point out here that if his aim was the purification of Islam from ills, how can the killing of *kafirs* be a blessing? What is the relationship between violence and *aljana*? Alhaji Sanusi Lamido the then Emir of Kano expelled him from Kano only for him to return back to Kano soon after the death of the Emir. He soon gathered large crowd of followers. The name "Maitatsine" in Hausa language can literally be translated "those who curse." It reached a time that the Kano State Government under the governorship of Alhaji Abubakar Rimi issued them two weeks ultimatum to leave Kano. They in defiance attacked police formations, Churches, Christians, government establishments; even some moderate Muslims were not spared. The riot in Kano lasted for eleven days, it was with the intervention of the military which took them two days before the leader was killed. The sect re-gathered and attacked people in Bulumkutu, Maiduguri the Borno State Capital in 1982. Still in 1982, two religious crises occurred in Kano and Kaduna. Kano was intra-religious but leading to the burning of eight large churches and hundreds were injured on the last day of October. In Kaduna four hundred lives were lost. In 1984 violence sparked by Muslims in Yola and Jimeta with an estimated death of about seven hundred including policemen leaving nearly six thousand people homeless, Gombe followed with about one hundred deaths while property worth millions of naira destroyed.

In 1986 first week of February, the police managed to avert a riot by forcefully dispersing a Muslim crowd at the national theatre in Lagos. That same year Palm Sunday at Ilorin was disastrous as Muslims attacked Christians and burning three churches. In May of the same year, Muslim students of Usman Dan Fodio University Sokoto attacked their Christian students. At Ibadan in the south, Muslim students set

fire on the sculpture of Jesus in front of the Chapel of the Resurrection. In March 1987 Muslims and Christians in key northern cities of Kaduna, Katsina, Zaria and Kafanchan clashed with devastating consequences. In 1988 Muslims and Christians turned the Ahmadu Bello University Zaria into a battle ground leaving behind many casualties.

In 1990 students in a number of northern schools clashed on religious matters. In 1991, three religious crises were recorded, in Bauchi, Kano and Katsina located all in the north. In 1992, large scale violence returned to Kaduna State with severe damage in Zangon Kataf, Kaduna and Zaria. In 1994 two incidences revived the tension in Kano and Sokoto where the Muslims accused a Christian preacher of criticizing the Qur'an. In May 1995, a new crisis erupted in Kano where Muslims attacked Christians and southerners.

In May 1996, eight people lost their lives when a group of Muslim students clashed with the police.²⁷⁷ Boar's dates, cities, states where violent riots occurred agreed with that of Falola with former having details and the sequence not in order of the dates as he discussed each place and all the violent happenings before moving on to the other. From the years 2000, just one year after Nigeria returned to a democratic government, to 2015, there have been more than a dozen cases of mostly religious violence in the north. Plateau, Kaduna, Bauchi, Kano, Borno, Benue, Yobe, Gombe, Adamawa, Taraba and Nasarawa states have had more than three each with worse destructions and killings of innocent people. There have also been cases of political violence as a result of election malpractices where party offices and machineries were destroyed and party supporters injured.

Reading through the works of Boer, Falola, Doi, Illesanmi among others reveal uncountable dates, cities and types of violence that erupted with statements of unreported ones. From the above, can we then say Nigeria is a peaceful or a violent context? If the criteria of judging a situation to be violent or peaceful is the number of conflicts that resulted into violence within a given period of time, Nigeria more especially the north is truly a violent context. Indeed, it is unarguable to say that Nigeria is a violent context since in States like Plateau, Nasarawa, Borno, Benue,

²⁷⁷ All dates, cities and states mentioned above are from Toyin Falola's work, *Violence in Nigeria*, pages 2-10.

Adamawa and Yobe, people live amidst fear and uncertainty as to when and where next violence could erupt as a result of unending violence, certainly, Nigeria is a violent context.

Even in African Cultures, in times of wars and violence, women and children were not killed. However, the situation in Nigeria today proves otherwise. Women and children besides being the largest segment that suffer as a result of the violence, they are also killed, tortured and used as human shields by the perpetrators. Some of the girls sadly enough were turned into sex slaves and some were indoctrinated and turned to female suicide bombers. There are instances where pregnant women were killed and their stomachs butchered and the children in wombs removed, killed and laid beside the dead mothers. The gory story is this, there are reports of people destroying crops on their perceived enemies' farmlands intending to starve them to death hoping that such damage will deny them the opportunity of having food stuff thereby exposing them to food insecurity. The new dimension that the Boko Haram insurgency has introduced into the violent situation in Nigeria is targeting innocent worshippers in Churches and bombing them, shooting them. From the above analysis, we could see that context itself may not be said to be violent, but within the context violence takes place, perpetrated by people and generated by different causes, as such to say Nigeria is a violent context is not in anyway a misleading.

The researcher looks at other conflicts that have always resulted into violence. The southern part of Nigeria has not really been affected and involved in religious violence as the northern part as such, but most often by communal clashes over land matters and other related issues. Quite severally, there had been violence over chieftaincy affairs. The militancy in the Niger-Delta region that grew worse due to agitation for resource control involving frequent kidnapping of people more especially young girls, women, children and oil workers was rampant and worrisome. The militancy in the Niger-Delta region is an armed struggle against the government and oil companies operating in the region due to perceived neglect, environmental pollution and degradation resulting from the activities of oil exploration with no commensurate development. History would be helpful here to better understand the agitation of the Niger-Deltans. It was noteworthy that the pre-independent Nigeria has it on record

that agriculture was the major revenue earner of the people occupying the regions. It is important we state here that as far back as the fifteenth century, traders from Portugal and Britain arrived Nigeria and by the 1900, most parts of Nigeria had been declared British territory and British rule had been imposed. We had mentioned the amalgamation of Nigeria in 1914. As to the duration of the British rule, Omolewa has this to say,

*The length of the British rule in Nigeria varied. In some places like Lagos the rule lasted for almost one hundred years, from 1861-1960. In other places like Eastern Nigeria, British rule was not imposed until after 1885 and, therefore, lasted seventy-five years. In most part of northern Nigeria, British rule was introduced only as from 1903 and lasted only fifty-seven years.*²⁷⁸

The colonial administration made impact on almost all areas of the Nigerian life from the administrative, educational, economic, social and even religious life. Let us mention some of the positive contribution of the colonial administration to Nigeria and Nigerians. However, the researcher shall limit himself to the economic aspect as to discuss all the other areas would demand more space. The exploration of tin and coal on the Jos Plateau brought lots of revenue to the colonial government and also created employment opportunities to Nigerians. On agriculture, Omolewa says,

*The colonial administration also began to encourage the people to produce more cocoa, rubber, cotton, palm produce and groundnuts for export. By this act, Nigeria joined other countries, in producing raw materials that served the British industries.. On the side of Nigerians, an opportunity was created for farmers to become rich by hard work. Many farmers took advantage of this opening and became wealthy.*²⁷⁹

Soon the educated Nigerians regarded as the nationalists movement started to criticize the colonial administrators that their social and economic policies were not serving the Nigerian people and soon the struggle for independence took center stage. Some four years before the Nigerian independence, Shell-BP found petroleum oil in Nigeria in 1956. The petroleum product was discovered at Oloibiri in the Niger Delta. In 1960

²⁷⁸ Michael Omolewa, "Certificate History of Nigeria," (London and Lagos: Longman Group Ltd), 1986:167.

²⁷⁹ Ibid., p. 177.

when Nigeria got her independence from Britain, though the nationalist movement had severally suggested to the colonial administrators ways to improve the education and economy of the people of Nigeria. When they secured the independence to which credit has to be given the British government, because unlike the independence of Ghana, Kenya and Zambia for example where there were arrests and imprisonments of the agitators, Nigeria's case was free of arrests. However, the discovery of oil though made Nigeria and Nigerians rich, it became the main generator of the country's GDP. But what seems to be a blessing turned out to be a curse. Omolewa says it well that,

Another area in which the oil boom brought doom was in the field of agriculture. As people left the rural areas and the farms in search of employment opportunities established by oil wealth, agriculture was neglected. The government failed to stop the drift to the cities. It paid only lip service to the development of agriculture through the 'Operation Feed the Nation' and the 'Green Revolution'. These failed to provide a sufficient incentive to people to return to the farm. The result was that the people could no longer feed themselves. Food items were imported to the country. Export crops such as cocoa, rubber, cotton and groundnuts lost their former status as foreign-exchanger earners. Agriculture lost its work force and its income. This was a movement in the direction of national disaster because agriculture had employed as high as eighty percent of the work force in the country and brought in a major part of the country's revenue. To make matters worse Nigerians began to develop an appetite for rice at a time when that commodity was in short supply. This has also led to chaos.²⁸⁰

Due to such neglect and over dependence on oil, the Niger Delta was devastated due to the oil exploration and other parts of the nation were developing with the resources from a region which was under-developed. The agitation for resource control resulted into the Niger Delta militancy which is characterized by pipeline vandalism, oil bunkering, kidnapping and lots of social vices. The Federal Government of Nigeria under President Shehu Musa Yar'adua granted amnesty for the militants in 2009. About 10,000 militants were targeted within 60 days and it was successful as the amnesty was unconditional upon surrendering of weapons. The amnesty programme included among others rehabilitation, integration and education. The programme resulted into the restoration of peace in the troubled region and oil production which

²⁸⁰ Omolewa, p. 225.

slummed picked up again. One could see the power of dialogue over the use of violence to overcome violence.

Political elections in Nigeria have always been marred by violence, rigging and thuggery. A case in point by way of example was the post election violence of April 16, 2011 where in the northern part of the country over 800 persons were killed with many churches destroyed Human Rights Watch reported. The sign that there was going to be violence was obvious in the air as the country was divided along religious line with the majority in North going for a Muslim Candidate while the East and South for a Christian candidate.

Cases of domestic violence are very common in Nigeria. One aspect of domestic violence is the case of forced marriages which is on the increase in Nigeria. Boloji gave us a heart touching report when he discussed one incident out of the many cases of forced marriage when he says thus,

*Maryam Auta, a 14-year-old girl, sneaked out of her mother's room at night. She walked through the narrow path of the village in the silent night in fear, she turned occasionally to be sure nobody was behind her. She walked over 8 miles to Bida to seek refuge in Etsu Nupe's palace. This is how many girls in Nupe-speaking areas of the country risk their lives to avoid forced marriages by their parents. The cultural phenomenon, which had been an age-old one in Nigeria, persists. 'I ran away from the village because my father wanted to force me to marry my cousin.'*²⁸¹

This is indeed alarming, for this is a record in only one state out of the thirty-six states of the federation. The more disturbing was what the Chairman of the State Branch of Women Rights Advocacy and Protection Agency (WRAPA) Barr. Mohammed Awal Bida who said in his reaction over the above, "the increase in the cases of forced marriages in the state was no longer a thing of worry to my organization, rather the dimension of beating and torturing that are now involved."²⁸² From the above two quotations the report on the issue of forced marriage is authentic and verifiable. It could be seen that beating and torture was involved on the young girls some of which are minors. There are lots of gory stories in relation to forced marriages to which we

²⁸¹ Musa Umar Boloji, "I was tied up beaten for refusing forced marriage-Over 1,700 cases recorded in Niger State", *Weekly Trust*, 07 March, 2009, see f.p1.

²⁸² Ibid.

may not make reference for space. When we turn to trafficking in human beings (persons) Nigeria is not left behind. The Nigerian government had to put in place National Agency for the Protection of Trafficking In Persons (NAPTIP)²⁸³ to help checkmate this ugly trend of violence against humanity. There are many Nigerian young ladies who are trafficked to Italy and Europe for prostitution and what they are paid go to their sponsors. Although there have been in recent times arrests of sponsors and accomplices to this violence against humanity, sadly enough, it is still an ongoing menace.

4.3 Causes of Violence in Nigeria

The causes of violence are a complex and highly contested field of scholarly discussion. Most Nigerian historians and political analysts among them Kuka put the major causes of violence and conflicts in Nigeria to corruption, poverty, politics and unemployment. This is justified by the fact that most of those engaged in violence and conflicts are unemployed youths they posit. One could see some young people looting valuables from shops and homes of their victims. Even some of the religious crises may have some economic or political undertones they argue. However, the researcher has critically analyzed in the field of studies on violence and discovered that Religion as a cause of violence at the international as well in the Nigerian context has been underscored, down played and sometimes ignored. 'Religion' itself is a major cause of violence in the Nigerian context. Though sometimes politicians could use un-employed and economically disadvantaged youth for political gains but under the guise of religion or ethnicity and most of the historians mentioned above are carried by the political aspect leaving the religious aspects. The cause of violence in the Niger-Delta area has to do with exploitation of the Oil Companies and corruption of leaders who live in wealth while the youths live in abject poverty.

From the above, the causes of violence in Nigeria are multifaceted. This brings us to the words of Paden when he was addressing the issue of the multifaceted nature of causes of violence in Nigeria and how they are analyzed. He says,

²⁸³The National Agency for the Protection of Trafficking In Persons and other related matters (NAPTIP). The Agency which is the creation of trafficking in persons (prohibition) law Enforcement and Administration Act, 2003.

A caveat to mention at this point concerns the modes of analysis appropriate to the Nigerian context. Western social sciences (and indeed most Western governmental organizations) tend to distinguish between the economic, political, religious, social, and other dimensions of culture. In non-Western cultures, including those of Nigeria, these dimensions overlap. Hence it makes no sense to debate whether events (such as the 2000 and 2004 riots in northern Nigeria) are political, religious, or socioeconomic in nature. The answer is all of the above. If anything, westerners usually overemphasize the religious dimension (often in an alarmist manner) or undervalue it (secular analysts, for example, tend to assess almost everything through an economic lens).²⁸⁴

The researcher classifies the causes of violence in Nigeria into nine broad categories though with overlaps for it is not easy to draw a line between one cause and the other.

The agglomeration of different ethnic communities who had lived as entities independent of one another in one nation has been one of the most destabilizing factors in post-independent Nigeria and till date. Orji says "the manipulation of cultural and religious identity for political and economic gains, which inevitably leads to a culture of deep suspicion and hatred between different ethnic groups."²⁸⁵ Buba followed suit that some causes of conflicts in Nigeria include among others "ethnic and individual or sectional competition over access to scarce political and economic resources."²⁸⁶

It is a historically proven fact that "the colonial government had adopted a policy of allocating some power to a single tribe in a certain area. This is the situation that was prevalent in the whole of West Africa. Perhaps one could argue that in some places, the division was formed on a religious basis."²⁸⁷ Gberihwa further said, "the favouring of some tribes in certain areas eventually led to considerable advantages in socio-

²⁸⁴ John N. Paden, *Muslim Civic Cultures and Conflict Resolution: The Challenges of Democratic Federalism in Nigeria*, Washington, D.C.: Brooking Institution Press, 2005:3-4.

²⁸⁵ Cyril Orji, "Ethnic and Religious Conflicts in Sub-Saharan Africa," *African Ecclesial Review*, 1&2 (March-June 2007), 37-61:48.

²⁸⁶ Adamu Buba, "Transforming Conflict" in *Seeking Peace in Africa: Stories from African Peacemakers*, ed., Donald E. Miller, Scott Holland, Lon Fendall, and Dean Johnson (Pennsylvania: Cascadia, 2007), 175-177:174.

²⁸⁷ John Gberihwa, "Mission to Minority Tribes in Nigeria" (Mission Department :Sally Oak College, 1988/89), 35.

political economic domination to certain tribes in the whole of West Africa, and Nigeria in particular. The British Government gave some powers to the Ibos in the Eastern Nigeria, Hausa in the North and and Yorubas in the West and this became the background for tribal hierarchy in Nigeria."²⁸⁸ This then placed some minority in those areas into a disadvantaged position, turning them into marginalized and oppressed groups of people in their motherland, which constitutes a systemic injustice.

Secondly, the economic and socio-political causes of violence. The widening gap between the rich and the poor, persistent poverty, unemployment, underemployment, job insecurity and competition all put together have contributed in making the situation in Nigeria volatile. Rangjiya says, "At the root of the tension is the competition for jobs, patronage, and control of the government at local, state, and federal levels."²⁸⁹ This is against the background that some are denied employment for no just cause. Merits most often do not count serve one's region or religion. The worrisome kidnappings in the Niger-Delta, oil producing region of Nigeria is not unconnected to unemployment, poverty and competition. The political thuggery that has characterized Nigerian political scene these days is not also unconnected to the above. Securities and media reports have proven that in most cases of violence in Nigeria, most of the perpetrators are unemployed youths who are willing to die just for a meagre amount given to them. Election riggings and corruption have dominated Nigerian political space.

Thirdly, the external influences. External influences coming from foreign countries, and which, can be described as either religious or socio-political. In 1994, the African Synod of bishops "identified two kinds of wars currently going on in Africa: Wars waged by Africans on their own account and wars waged by Africans on the instigation of foreign powers, as in Angola, the Democratic Republic of Congo and other parts of Africa."²⁹⁰ Falola contributes this useful insight that "The Muslim world is concerned with furthering the development of Nigerian Islam; Iran, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, and Libya supply Nigeria with books, teachers, missionaries, and money for this purpose. Some

²⁸⁸ Ibid., p. 35.

²⁸⁹ Toma A. Rangjiya, "Christian Faithfulness and the Common Good" in *Seeking Peace in Africa: Stories from African Peacemakers*, ed., Donald E. Miller, Scott Holland, Lon Fendall, and Dean Johnson (Pennsylvania: Cascadia, 2007), 151-163:153.

²⁹⁰ Orji, Op. Cit., 40.

external influences can be linked to Nigerian conflicts. Libya and Sudan in particular, have encouraged Muslims to be aggressive in their demand for al-sharia. Nigeria actively seeks help from the Muslim world as well. Through the 1970s, when manpower was scarce in the north, the government recruited personnel from Pakistan, India, Bangladesh, and other Muslim countries. Events in other parts of the Muslim world are reported to Nigerians in such a way as to consolidate solidarity."²⁹¹

The Christian foreign revival preachers coming into Nigeria are seen by Muslims against this background. In 1991 for instance, the planned Reinhard Bonnke's revival at Kaduna, being seen from this perspective as a potential proselytism, became a cause of violence that claimed lives and properties worth millions of Naira in Kano, Kano State. This is indeed an incontestable fact which has been proven beyond any reasonable doubt. Paden added his voice by saying, "The links between Nigerian Muslims and international Muslim community have been extensive and generally constructive...The annual pilgrimage to Mecca, undertaken by Muslims around the world, and various educational links with Saudi Arabia have had enormous influence on Nigerian Muslim perspectives in recent years."²⁹²

Fourthly, educational causes have to be mentioned-Western education over and above Islamic education has been seen by Muslims to deprive Islamic fundamentals replacing it with the western (secular) educational principles, thereby the western education has been looked at with suspicion as Christian and therefore pagan. The fifty years of western education gap between the South and the North has also been seen as a means for the southerners to take over the government from the northerners. Illiteracy, ignorance, superiority and inferiority dynamics have caused violence in Nigeria. No wonder, in the northern states of Nigeria today, one see the preference of Muslims to Islamiya schools over and above the western conventional schools. At such schools, one could not rule out the possibilities of indoctrination of false ideologies to the young minds.

Fifthly, concerning globalization, it has to be noted that it contributed a great deal to human development on the one hand, and on the other hand, some aspects of it have

²⁹¹ Falola, Op. Cit., 30.

²⁹² Paden, Op. Cit., 14.

been unhelpful. Quick information dissemination which is one of the achievements of globalization has positive and negative effects. One of the negative effects is that, when crisis erupts in a certain part of the country or even the world and news reached some areas, people react differently. Sometimes the way the media outfits report violent incidences have been more incisive than preventive. Rangjiya says, "The role of the media is also crucial as local conflicts get transformed into national issues by the media coverage. This is especially true when the coverage is biased and provocative, as it often is."²⁹³

Debki shared the same view in his reporting of the crisis in Kaduna, "Between the years 1980 and 2000, there were nineteen different crises in northern Nigeria caused by Muslims. Then after the American invasion of Afghanistan, Muslims attacked Christians in Kaduna and Kano, fighting in sympathy with their Muslim brothers in Afghanistan. When there was a problem in Iraq, they reacted in Kano. Anytime there was a problem in the southern part of Nigeria, they would take revenge on the northern Christians."²⁹⁴ Gali who was a living witness to what happened at Kano whose church was burned many times concurs to Debki and says, "during the American invasion of Afghanistan in search of Osama Ben Laden, our church yet again was burned down. Six people were killed in the premises and thirty-one members lost their properties."²⁹⁵ In 2006, precisely February 18, violence erupted in Borno state in the north eastern part of Nigeria, it was a reaction by Muslims faithful against a cartoon said to be drawn of Prophet Muhammad in Denmark. That violence led to the killings of over fifty Christians with the burning of 56 Churches. All these are a result of information through the media. That happening in Borno State was a religious violence as we have seen, because the rally was at first organized by the Muslim clerics in Borno against the warning by security agencies. It was from the venue of the rally that Muslim youths went and carried out the dastardly act.

Sixthly, land and land related matters have been a major cause of communal clashes all over Nigeria. Buba says, "Some causes of conflicts in Nigeria are disagreements

²⁹³ Rangjiya, Op. Cit., 151-163:153.

²⁹⁴ Bitrus V.Z. Debki, "Crisis in Kaduna" in *Seeking Peace in Africa: Stories from African Peacemakers*, ed., Donald E. Miller, Scott Holland, Lon Fendall, and Dean Johnson (Pennsylvania: Cascadia, 2007), 89-92:89.

²⁹⁵ Gali, Op. Cit., 94.

about farm lands, the establishment of local governments, the location of local government headquarters, the location of markets, the building of church and mosques, cultural influences, and the authority of chiefs."²⁹⁶ The frequent clashes between the Jukuns and the Tivs are mostly on land related matters. In the South-South between the Urhobo and Ishekiri in Warri area, the disputes were ostensibly over electoral boundaries, the Ife-Modakeke in the South East and the Berom-Hausa in the North Central. There have always been cases of clashes between farmers and Fulani nomads (herdsmen) in many areas in the North. The list can easily be made longer.

Seventh, It is not only important to understand the concept of violence in terms of physical violence as to outright eruption of violence, but underlying this eruption of physical violence is the subtle form of structural violence which has been a long inherited culture of violence in the system. Unless one understands the interplay between the structural violence and the physical violence and accept the fact that they are intertwined one wouldn't be able to appreciate the circumstances leading to the unending violence in that context. The states seem to always control violence thereby doubling the issues. The introduction of the Islamic Shariah Legal System by some states shows some power play giving strength to political influences where a particular ethno-religious group happens to be on the majority. The symbolic violence makes illusions to scholars but the structural violence causes more damage to the victims than the physical violence. There is no doubt multiple systemic structures in Nigeria that are windows or doors openings for violence. Those in position of authority due to their ethnic and religious backgrounds or due to the two factors above and not due to their competence could always employ violence when their positions seem to be under threat. There is this ideology among some ethnic groups in Nigeria that they are born to rule while other ethnic groups are born to be subordinate, and in an event when the table seems to turn, they opt for violence to keep to that status-quo.

Eight, religious causes. As stated earlier that the researcher has critically analyzed in the field of studies on violence and discovered that Religion as a cause of violence at the international as well in the Nigerian context has been underscored, down played

²⁹⁶ Buba, Op. Cit., 175-6.

and sometimes ignored. It is to bring it to fore that religion itself is a cause of violence in Nigeria if not one of the major causes. In the words of Juergensmeyer we get this

Most people feel that religion should provide tranquility and peace, not terror. Yet in many of these cases religion has supplied not only the ideology but also the motivation and the organizational structure for the perpetrators. It is true that some terrorist acts are committed by public officials invoking a sort of 'state terrorism' in order to subjugate populace... But more often it has been religion-sometimes in combination with these other factors, sometimes as the primary motivation-that has incited terrorist acts.²⁹⁷

The religious causes of violence in Nigeria since 1980s to date have been the most devastating, destructive, and complex, yet it is the one that has so much been contested. Whenever a religious crisis occurred, there will be a quick response by either the government or some religious leaders that it is either ethnically or politically motivated and religion is hijacked as a cover. But one needs to state two important facts here, one, since it remains difficult to draw a line between crisis and religion; we have to accept the fact that religion has been a major cause of violence in Nigeria. Two, most religions especially Christianity and Islam have within their sacred texts passages that support violence and those that support peace. We shall discuss into more details and quote such passages in our next chapter. Since such passages exist, and are usually in support of violence by some of the clerics and peace, some religious leaders in Nigerian context most often than not, do preach on such passages to incite their followers to kill, as discussed above in the issue of the Maitatsine. We shall in the course of the discussion mention about the "Boko Haram" in their violent uprising in Borno, Yobe, Adamawa, Bauchi and Kano states to their interpretation of such passages in the Glorious Qur'an that seem to support war against infidels and those perceived to be enemies of Islam.

It is true the saying that politics is a function of culture and at the heart of culture religion. Falola is right that, "Both major Nigerian religions tend to see one another as rivals fighting for converts and of the state itself. Mahdist Muslims are critical of

²⁹⁷ Mark Juergensmeyer, *Terror in the Mind of God: The Global Rise of Religious Violence*, (Berkeley: University of California Press), 2003:5-6.

Christian, and many Christian missionaries fear and detest Islam."²⁹⁸ Any closer study at the two major religions in Nigeria, namely Christianity and Islam, one will discover that, "these two blocks are at such a loggerheads with each other that the country has several times tottered on the brink of another Civil War. This religious tension often cited as the other destroyer of Nigeria. The almost desperate situation the two factors, corruption and religion, have created has made for deep-seated disappointments."²⁹⁹ At the root of this is the fact that the Nigerian legal system has been looked at with religious eyes. The Christian elites think western laws are good for the country, but Muslim Ulamas aspire for sharia legal system. In the words of Ludwig,

For a long time, Nigerian Christians have been worried about being marginalized by Muslims. For an equally long time, Nigerian Muslims have worried about being dominated by the west. The shari'ah controversy is shaped by those fears, and there are clear antagonistic tendencies. Both sides have a well developed arsenal of arguments at their disposal, and they do not agree in their views on the implications of shari'ah or in their interpretation of Nigerian history.³⁰⁰

As to the explanation on the implementation of the shari'ah, some Islamic scholars among them Sanusi Gumbi based in Kaduna express the views of most Muslims in Nigeria that they had been systematically denied their rights and were made to follow the tenets of other religious beliefs. He along with others cited the weekly public holidays of Saturdays and Sundays to prove their point. This is the root cause of the call for the implementation of the shari'ah against the Christian elites' position of keeping Nigeria as a secular state. Declaring the observance of Muslim New Year by the Kano State governor, Ibrahim Shekarau by saying that the 1st of January of every year observed as public holidays is un-Islamic. Ludwig summed it up well that "Most Nigerian Muslims tend to see the introduction of shari'ah as the restitution of their rights which they have lost during the colonial period, while many Christians regard this measure as a step to Islamize Nigeria, there had been tension and sometimes violent conflicts- as for instance in Kaduna (February 2000 and November 2002), and I add May 2000, in Bauchi (June 2001, in Jos (September 2001) and I add May 2002,

²⁹⁸ Falola, Op. Cit., 37.

²⁹⁹ Boar, Op. Cit., 35.

³⁰⁰ Frieder Ludwig, "Christian-Muslim Relations in Northern Nigeria Since the Introduction of Shari'ah in 1999," *Journal of the American Academy of Religion*, 76 (September, 2008), 602-637:618.

and in Yelwa (February 2004) I add May 2004. While not all these conflicts were triggered by the shari'ah, they were clearly accelerated by the lingering debate on the implementation of shari'ah.³⁰¹

There is no doubt that over the years, there have been a growing fundamentalism (religious extremism) among both Muslims and Christians, this has brought about reoccurrence of violence in Borno 2006 to date, Bauchi 2007, 2009 and 2010, Jos 2008 and 2010 severally, Niger 2009, Ibadan 2010. Paden shares a similar view when he says, "It is important to recognize that by international standards the level of religious commitment, belief, and practice in Nigeria are extremely high, in both the Muslim and the Christian communities. Hence secularism is mainly a minority perspective in a country that explicitly regards itself as multi-religious."³⁰² So long as Nigerian government, government functionaries, political analysts, historians, scholars, more especially religious leaders could not stop politicizing the issue of religious crisis and then, the hope of having a solution to the incessant religious crisis would not be overcome. This is against the background that so long as denial continues that religion is never the cause of most of the violence more especially in the northern parts of Nigeria, each religious group will not have any self critiquing within their faith tradition as to how they will overcome the spirit and logic of violence.³⁰³ So, until all and sundry stop denying, it is only when that is done will we be sure that each faith tradition will address itself and will stop pointing accusing finger at the other.

No wonder, in line with the above thought, Raymond Hickey who had lived in Borno State of Nigeria and was a living witness to the Maitatsine uprising in 1982 in Maiduguri, Borno State says, "The violent confrontation which took place between sect of Muslim fanatics and the Nigerian Police Force in Maiduguri in October 1982 did not come as a surprise to those who understand the complexity of the religious situation in

³⁰¹ Ibid., 602-637:607.

³⁰² John N Paden, *Muslim Civic Cultures and Conflict Resolutions*, p. 4.

³⁰³ To give an illustration, one of the reasons as to why HIV/AIDS scourge in Africa reached the alarming proportion at which it is, is due to denial. Denial by people living with the virus as well as by the relations of those carrying the virus as such HIV/AIDS kept on spreading. But with recent advocacy for people to know their status and assurance that people can live positively with the virus and to deal with the problem of denial it has started yielding positive result and reducing the spread.

Northern Nigeria. It had its roots in the deeply conservative practice of Islam which is dominant in the region.³⁰⁴

Boar when looking at the motives of the riots and violence in northern Nigeria could not agree less.

The riots have had a number of different motives and shapes. Originally they were initiated by Muslims- though that is decidedly a controversial statement- while Christians sometimes started later riots. At times they are intra-Muslims affairs, with one sect attacking another. Sometimes they are by Muslims aiming at the government and could be considered political in nature, though a more accurate description might be "politico-religious," for religious and political concerns are never far from each other in Islam. At other times they are directed against Christians. In some cases, as in Plateau State, the riots begin as anti-government demonstration. The resulting atmosphere of violence remains in the air, and later the riots become Muslims verses Christians. Sometimes without a clear picture as to who took the initiative.³⁰⁵

The crusades as reported to the modern mind by Church history further buttress the above point. Who can then continue to argue and deny this? It will as well be good if the context of Nigeria be looked at in its uniqueness and to avoid generalization and applying what is in other contexts into that of Nigeria. The end result will be further to complicate the whole issues and never get any solution.

Ninth is the lack of punishment of perpetrators of violence. In most of the cases of violence, the perpetrators were never punished, to serve as deterrent for others nor reports of either judicial or administrative panels of inquiry ever implemented. Some of the contents of the reports were not even disclosed to the public thereby allowing people to take laws into their hands and resort to violent means with no fear of punishment. Lots of Judicial Panels of Inquiry Reports on Jos, Borno and other Crisis are never implemented to date.

The Boko Haram crisis of July 2009 at Maiduguri the Borno State capital, up to the present moment, the report of the panel set up by the Nigerian President Shehu Musa

³⁰⁴ Raymond Hickey, "The Maitatsine Uprising in Nigeria: A Note" *Oxford Journals, African Affairs*, Volume 83, Issue 331, Pp251-256:251.

³⁰⁵ Boar, Op. Cit. 37.

Yar'adua, the report was not submitted and the contents of the report is not known to Nigerians serve only the Committee members. No wonder, one year after that dastardly act, not fewer than three policemen have been killed by the members of the sect who announced to the government and people of Borno State that they will perpetrate another violence as they commemorate one year of what they say killing of their members by the security agents. The Borno State Commissioner of Police confirmed the incidence and said it was the Boko Haram members as they have given warning to that effect.³⁰⁶ If the report of that panel was presented and the recommendations there in implemented and perpetrators punished, such attacks will not have re-occurred as the sponsors of such act might have been identified and brought to book.

4.4 Conclusion

In this chapter, the researcher studied briefly the history of the country Nigeria. The reason for doing that is to trace the roots of the unending violence in this context. A survey of violence and conflicts in Nigeria since independence is undertaken to prove that Nigeria is indeed a violent context.

In other words, this chapter addresses very important aspects of the thesis, namely how the context of Nigeria can be understood, in terms of historical antecedents, politics, ethnical and religious perspectives.

CHAPTER FIVE

5.0 Towards Ecumenical Collaboration for an Ethics and Culture of Peace and Nonviolence

5.1 Ethics and Culture of Peace and Nonviolence

5.1.1 Ethics

³⁰⁶ Hamza Idris (Damaturu) & Sharafa Dauda (Maiduguri), "Boko Haram Snipers kill 3 Policemen," *Daily Trust*, Friday August 27, 2010"1 and 3.

- 5.1.2 Culture
- 5.1.3 Ethics and Culture of Peace and Nonviolence
- 5.2 Christian-Muslim Dialogue as Instrument of Peace and Nonviolence
 - 5.2.1 Criticism Against Christian-Muslim Dialogue by Christians
 - 5.2.2 Criticism Against Christian-Muslim Dialogue by Muslims
 - 5.2.3 Christians-Muslim Dialogue as Instrument of Peace and Nonviolence
- 5.3 Nigerian State and Societal Integration
 - 5.3.1 Constitution with Constitution a Threat to Societal Integration
 - 5.3.2 Land Matters as Challenges to Societal Integration
 - 5.3.3 Constitution as Instrument of Societal Integration
- 5.4 Civil Society Actors as Agents of Peace and Nonviolence
 - 5.4.1 Civil Society as Watchdogs
 - 5.4.2 Civil Society International Laws in Conflict with Local Laws
 - 5.4.3 Civil Society and Partisan Politics a Hindrance to Peace and Nonviolence
- 5.5 Church of the Brethren in Nigeria and Challenges of Nonviolent Practice
 - 5.5.1 Church of the Brethren in Nigerian and Faith and Praxis
 - 5.5.2 Church of the Brethren in Nigeria and a Failed State
 - 5.5.3 Church of the Brethren in Nigeria and Her Practice of Nonviolence a Gift to the Nation
- 5.6 Christian Association of Nigeria: A Critique
 - 5.6.1 Formation of the Christian Association of Nigeria
 - 5.6.2 Christian Association of Nigeria and Denominational Differences
 - 5.6.3 Christian Association of Nigeria and Grassroots Distance: A Disconnection
- 5.7 Towards Ecumenical Collaboration for an Ethics and Culture of Peace and Nonviolence

5.0 Towards Ecumenical Collaboration for an Ethics and Culture of Peace and Nonviolence

The situation in Nigeria in relation to violence can be said to be violent and not peaceful. Of course, the world at large is generally considered violent and not peaceful more so in the contemporary times. This is the context in which the Church of the Brethren in Nigeria operates. It is not only the Church of the

Brethren but the Church of Jesus Christ in Nigeria especially in Northern Nigeria have been growing and expanding in the midst of the intolerance. There are many Churches and Non-Governmental Organizations working for peace and peace building in Nigeria: There is the existence of the Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) in Nigeria with the Headquarters in Jos the Plateau State Capital. MCC as is known is a worldwide ministry of Anabaptist Churches founded since 1920. MCC is found in over 60 countries of the world and endeavors to share God's love and compassion for all 'in the name of Christ' by responding to basic human needs and working for justice and peace. As stated earlier, Mennonite is one of the three Historic Peace Churches. The Roman Catholic 'Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation Commission' (JPIC)³⁰⁷ which is also working towards Peace Building through justice is worth mentioning. The Vision of the Commission is a world where there is fullness of life for all living beings and where humans live in harmony and peace with one another and with all of God's creation. The JPIC is working hard in the northern part of Nigeria where violence over the years had been common place. The Church of the Brethren in Nigeria has the EYN-Peace Programme working towards Peace Building and Peaceful co-existence. This Programme brings in place ten Christians and ten Muslims in dialogue to champion peaceful co-existence among their adherents. Through such dialogue and interactions, better understanding of the need of peace and how to prevent crisis are achieved. Most of the meetings are held in Mubi near the Headquarters of the Church. At the Kulp Bible College which is the Prime Theological College of the Church of the Brethren in Nigeria, there is the "Course Peace Theology" that is taught to Pastors on the making. The Fellowship of Churches of Christ in Nigeria which in Hausa is called Tarrayar Ekklesiyoyin Kristi A Nigeria (TEKAN) has the TEKAN Peace Programme. This was through the initiative of the Church of the Lutheran Church of Christ in Nigeria a TEKAN member Church. TEKAN has its Headquarters in Jos the Plateau State Capital where violence since after the September 11 had robbed the State of its motto: 'Home of Peace and Tourism.' There is Centre for Peace Advancement in Nigeria (CEPAN); this is a Non-Governmental and Interdenominational Organization for the promotion of Peace. It has its Headquarters also in Jos the Plateau State Capital. The Organization brings

³⁰⁷ The Commission is responsible for promoting and supporting the integration of Justice, Peace and INTEGRITY OF CREATION (JPIC) in the life and mission of religious institutes.

Christians and Muslim Youths for dialogue, organize seminars, workshops and conferences to foster peace and prevent conflict through dialogue in a nonviolent way. In this chapter an attempt to discuss how some of these programmes are either succeeding or achieving their mandate or otherwise and the nonviolent practice of the Church of the Brethren in Nigeria under the above sub-topics are studied.

5.1 Ethics and Culture of Peace and Nonviolence

This tries to identify areas and resources from the Christian traditions, from the Muslim traditions as well as from the African Traditional Religions not excluding human rights organizations that could contribute to an ethics and culture of peace and nonviolence. The expectation is that the previously analyzed elements of the Church of the Brethren in Nigeria's theology will also serve as a solid basis for this interreligious ethical exploration on peace and nonviolence.

5.1.1 Ethics

The researcher starts with the definition of ethics and then looks at the role ethics of nonviolence played and will continue to play in the Nigerian violent context and by extension the world at large. What is ethics? There are many definitions of ethics from the secular to the religious. Field defines Christian ethics thus, "All ethics is to do with human conduct. The special concern for Christian ethics is to relate an understanding of God to the conduct of men and women and, more specifically, to explore the response to God which Jesus Christ requires and makes possible."³⁰⁸

From the above definition, ethics has to do with the conduct of man and woman in society, the moral principles governing human conduct and behaviour. Every human society, organization, establishment and the like has code of conduct so to speak, there are rules. Anybody in that society, organization, establishment etcetera that does the unexpected is looked at as unethical person. In most ancient African communities, the community spirit was very strong and human

³⁰⁸ D.H. Field, "Ethics" in *New Dictionary of Theology*, ed., Sinclair B. Ferguson and David F. Wright, (England: Inter-Varsity Press), 232-235:232.

beings are looked at as their brothers' keepers, as such relationships are developed and made stronger by sharing. In talking about ethics of peace and nonviolence is referring to in the words of Field, exploring how to relate the understanding of God to the conduct of men and women in matters of peaceful co-existence.

5.1.2 Culture

The term culture is multifarious leading to its definition to be wide and complex. As such, the researcher consults as many scholars as possible as to their definitions of the term culture. Clark defines culture thus,

*Culture is the province of values, those elements in a world-view which reflects a collectivity's notions of the ends appropriate for it and its individual members. Culture is concerned with patterns of norms and aspirations above and beyond concrete role-expectations in specific situations where specific purposes are sought; it is concerned furthermore, with the maintenance of these patterns.*³⁰⁹

From the above definition, it is evident that Clark gives one of the most comprehensive explanations on what culture is. It included values, elements in a world-view as well as patterns of norms and aspirations and how to maintain such patterns. This is relevant for our discussion to which we shall come back to. Let us look at the definition given by Guroian in the *Oxford Handbook of Theological Ethics* when he discussed Christians and Culture. In his words, "Culture is the cultivation, development, and exercise of certain distinctively human capacities of freedom, reason, conscience, and imagination. It is embodied in manners and mores and is promoted by education: producing art, craft, music, literature, science, and the like."³¹⁰ Another definition of culture which Guroian was not so comfortable with but that which has been so much accepted by academic theology, religious studies and social sciences is the anthropological definition quoted by him which reads thus, "Culture is a

³⁰⁹ Henry B Clark, "Culture, Society and Community" in *A Dictionary of Christian Ethics*, ed, John Macquarrie (London: SCM Press Ltd), 1967:79-81:79.

³¹⁰ Vigen Guroian, "Christians and Culture" in *The Oxford Handbook of Theological Ethics* ed Gilbert Meilaender & William Werpehowski, (Oxford: Oxford University Press), 2005:381-397:383.

distinctive way of belonging to a particular group or a historically formed people. This way of belonging is grounded in social tradition and values, expressed through a variety of symbolic forms, rituals, and activities, and embodied in institutions, art, literature, religion, and the like.³¹¹ This is indeed a broader definition and it encompasses civilization and society. It is seen that there is mention of religion as part of culture; this is relevant for overall discussion on the culture of peace and nonviolence.

The definition of culture by Bediako seems relevant when says, "Culture is a term that is not easily definable. However, if it is taken to mean the way of thinking and behaviour shared by a substantial social grouping which gives them identity in relation to others, then it is obvious that all persons participate in one culture or the other."³¹² The above definitions show us how relevant and important culture is and how culture of peace and nonviolence when developed not only in the Nigerian context but the world could go along way in restoring peace to the fractured world, it is against this background the research is carried out.

5.1.3 Ethics and Culture Peace and Nonviolence

Putting ethics and culture together, bearing in mind the above definitions of ethics and culture, how then is ethics and culture of peace and nonviolence? What will be the advantages to be derived when ethics and culture of peace and nonviolence are developed? Is there such a thing as ethics and culture of peace and nonviolence in existence? The researcher responds to the above questions though not in a systematic or chronological form.

It is worthy of note at this point the centrality of the home in the life of every society or religion as this will be the starting point. There is the adage which is always quoted in discussions, the adage goes thus, "The Family is the building bloc of the society," and recently this was added, "If the family is healthy, the religion is healthy, and if the religion is healthy, the society is healthy and vice versa when it has to do with sickness." Here, both the Muslims and the Christians alike handle

³¹¹ Ibid., p. 834.

³¹² K. Bediako, "Culture" in *New Dictionary of Theology*, ed., Sinclair B. Ferguson and David F. Wright, (England: Inter-Varsity Press), 183-184:183.

the family unit with all the sense of duty required. As such, both religions are to through their clerics begin to emphasize teachings to their wards on the need for peaceful and harmonious working relationship with people of other faiths. Parents and elders are to desist from using derogatory and inflammatory statements, about people of other faiths. This is indeed the best way of building culture of peace and nonviolence. In other words, we speak on the importance of peace education. Parents and religious leaders are to help the young to grow without stereotypes.

The second issue to emphasize is the aspect of the child. The popular slogan, "Catch them Young" is very relevant. The Roman Catholic most popular phrase, "Give me a child when he is small and when he is seven you can take him anywhere you cannot change him/her" is a food for thought in the quest for an ethics and culture of peace and nonviolence. A research was carried out on 1000 husbands who bully or in a lighter note beat or bully their wives, 600 of them representing 60% confess to have seen their fathers maltreating their mothers. So too with women who have problems with their husbands. In building culture of peace and nonviolence, not only depend on the verbal but to go into action.

Some Christian homes, knowingly or unknowingly, are encouraging their children to challenge the moral aspect of war. As Christian parents teach their children the worth of every man, encourage their children to love all people, and urge their children to live at peace with their playmates, they are laying the foundation for their children to challenge the practice of war. Student groups and colleges encourage their communities to challenge all existing accepted practices and opinions of society.³¹³

If the Muslim families will either knowingly or unknowingly be teaching their wards to love all people and not only Muslims and to urge them to live at peace with their playmates, they will be laying a solid foundation for the children to challenge the practice of violence and war. This used to be in practice in Nigeria in some years back, but seems to have disappeared within the past few years.

Isaiah 2:4c- Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more. "War is learned, the average citizen does not recognize the enemy

³¹³ Chester Russell, Was Jesus a Pacifist? (Nashville: Broadman Press), 1971:13.

until he is taught. The average young man does not have it in him to kill men. His attitudes and emotions must be conditioned before he can practice the acts of violence which make war. The skill necessary for use of war machinery must be taught."³¹⁴ Is this passage talking of learning of war techniques and skills or as Russell says that human beings do not have the innate idea to kill but are taught? This has been contested; some say human beings are born with the desire towards violence.

The researcher refers to the Final Declaration of the Annual Meeting of the Joint Committee for Dialogue of the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue (Vatican) and the Permanent Committee of Al-Azhar for Dialogue among the Monotheistic Religions (Cairo, Egypt)-Rome, 24-25 February 2009. We are not here going to give the names of the participants but suffice to say the meeting was jointly presided by Cardinal Jean-Louis Tauran and Prof. Cheikh Ali Abd al-Baqi Shahata, the Secretary General of the Academy for Islamic Research of the al-Azhar, Cairo, Egypt. The meeting was said to be held in the spirit of mutual respect, openness and friendship. The inspiration however was the conviction of the importance of good relations between Christians and Muslims and of their specific contribution to peace in the world. Here are what the participants agreed on and declared:

- 1. Peace and security are much more needed in our present world marked by many conflicts and a feeling of insecurity.*
- 2. Both Christians and Muslims consider peace a gift from God and, at the same time, the fruit of human endeavour. No true and lasting peace can be achieved without justice and equity among persons and communities.*
- 3. Religious leaders, especially Muslims and Christians, have the duty to promote a culture of peace, each within his respective community, especially through teaching and preaching.*
- 4. A culture of peace should permeate all aspects of life: religious formation, education, interpersonal relations and the arts in their diverse forms. To this end, scholastic books should be revised in order not to contain material which may offend the religious sentiments of other believers, at times through the erroneous presentation of dogmas, morals or history of other religions.*

³¹⁴ Ibid.

5. *The media have a major role and responsibility in the promotion of positive and respectful relations among the faithful of various religions.*
6. *Recognizing the strong link between peace and human rights, special attention was given to the defense of the dignity of the human person and his/her rights, especially regarding freedom of conscience and of religion.*
7. *Youth, the future of all religious and of humanity itself, need special care in order to be protected from fanaticism and violence, and to become peace builders for a better world.*
8. *Mindful of the suffering endured by the peoples of the Middle East due to non-resolved conflicts, the participants, in respect of the competence of the political leaders, ask to make use, through dialogue, of the resources of international law to solve the problems at stake in truth and justice.*³¹⁵

When this is observed, the ethics and culture of peace and nonviolence will be the way of life and in the long time, peace will prevail.

5.2 Christian-Muslim Dialogue as Instrument of Peace and Nonviolence

This section discusses Christian-Muslim dialogue where both religious groups are encouraged to rediscover within their religious and faith traditions how to reinterpret some of their scriptural passages that seem to support or legitimize violence in order to imbibe a culture of peace and nonviolence and to teach nonviolence to their followers. Contextually, Muslims are approached to collaborate with not only the Church of the Brethren in Nigeria but also other Churches in Nigeria towards building peace. A closer look at Nigeria Inter-Religious Council (NIREC) is taken identifying how the collaboration can be improved to contribute to minimizing or overcoming violence in Nigeria. A more conducive forum of interaction between Muslims and Christians are recommended to bring about better understandings of one another, this will greatly reduce or help in overcoming violence as most of the religious violence in Nigeria are due partly to mistrust and lack of proper knowledge of the other. Both Muslim and Christian leaders are challenged to confront one another on life as sacred and all human beings as created by God. If it is possible for both religions to speak with one voice against injustices, poverty, exploitation, corruption and all the vices that also cause violence and conflicts in Nigeria.

³¹⁵ Annual Meeting of the Joint Committee for Dialogue of the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue (Vatican) and the Permanent Committee of Al-Azhar for Dialogue among the Monotheistic Religions (Cairo, Egypt)-Rome, 24-25 February 2009.

What then is interreligious dialogue? What is the purpose of interreligious dialogue? Are there guidelines for engaging in interreligious dialogue? What are the challenges of interreligious dialogue? These questions and some more will be answered in the course of discussion. To begin with interreligious dialogue is also called interfaith encounter, and the definition of interreligious dialogue given by Sandi Fults is comprehensive enough, "Interreligious dialogue is a challenging process by which adherents of differing religious traditions encounter each other in order to break down walls of division that stand at the center of most wars."³¹⁶ As to the purpose of interreligious dialogue, most if not all advocates of interreligious dialogue hold that is to foster peace and peaceful co-existence, religious harmony and or tolerance. As to the guidelines for effective interreligious dialogue, the World Council of Churches had developed comprehensive guidelines for effective interreligious dialogue, there are many theologians that have developed theirs as well and of course there are many sources that have given guidelines for interfaith or interreligious dialogue. Fults when she says,

1. Participants in interreligious dialogue cannot use the encounter as opportunities to defend their own traditions. 2. Neither is interreligious dialogue a means to defend religion in general. 3. There is a risk of conversion. Participants may find themselves transformed by the interfaith encounter. 4. Dialogue participants must reveal the beliefs that they hold closest and that define their religious tradition. 5. Interreligious dialogue is not a philosophical, theological or intellectual exercise. It is an expression of the participants' lived faith lives. Therefore, interfaith encounters form communities of awareness.³¹⁷

It is important at this point we make reference to the address of His Eminence Card. Jean-Louis Tauran, the President of the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue presented at the inaugural Ceremony of the King Abdullah Bin Abdulaziz International Centre for Interreligious and Intercultural Dialogue (KAICIID). It will best set the ball rolling when he says,

Believers have to work for and support all that favours the human person in his material, moral and religious aspirations. So three attitudes are required:

³¹⁶ http://EzineArticles.com/? Expert=Sandi_Fults, accessed March 10, 2011.

³¹⁷ Fults.

1. *respect of the other in his/her specificity;*
2. *mutual objective knowledge of the religious tradition of each other, particularly through education;*
3. *collaboration in order that our pilgrimage towards the truth be realized in freedom and serenity.*³¹⁸

The Cardinal is true in the sense that without respect of the other and for the other, the door is already shut for dialogue and without knowledge of the religious tradition and beliefs of the other, collaboration is near impossible.

5.2.1 Criticism against Christian-Muslim Dialogue by Christians

Are all Christians comfortable with interreligious dialogue more especially Christian-Muslim dialogue? Are there challenges of interreligious dialogue? The answer is in the affirmative. There are criticisms against interreligious dialogue for which to make reference to, but first is lack of acceptability of interreligious dialogue itself. Many Christians in Nigeria are guilty of this so too our Muslim brothers. There have been instances when Christian brothers could say, "We cannot dialogue with Muslims, there is no need as we seat round table and the next is violence."³¹⁹

What are the criticisms raised by some Christians against Christian-Muslim dialogue? How can the criticisms be overcome? In responding to the above questions, the reactions of some Christian clergy and the laity do reveal that there are many clergy and Christians who are not disposed to Christian-Muslim dialogue. They are not only skeptical of interreligious dialogue but are suspicious and have the feeling that it is anti-scriptural. Some Christians thereby holding to the view that either the Muslims who entered into such dialogue are not sincere as such there is no need of such dialogue as mentioned above by Wasini. The difficulty of being open minded by participants as well as suspicion and mistrust are always obvious. The fact that many among the Christians and the Muslims who agree to dialogue are never open minded, with some being suspicious of the other thereby

³¹⁸ Address of His Eminence Card. Jean-Louis Tauran, the President of the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue presented at the inaugural Ceremony of the King Abdullah Bin Abdulaziz International Centre for Interreligious and Intercultural Dialogue (KAICIID), Hofburg, Vienna Monday, 26 November 2012.

³¹⁹ Personal Interview with Rev Noah Wasini the Resident Pastor of EYN- Church of the Brethren Damaturu Yobe State and a Masters of Theology Student at the Theological College of Northern Nigeria (TCNN), Bukuru Jos, October 10, 2012.

creating mistrust. This was proven by comments from some who are members of the Inter-Faith Free Interest Loan, a peace initiative to which we shall look at. This organization had built a Student Hostel to one of the Islamiyya Schools in Jos, but during the process, the Muslim leader in that organization and also a lecturer at the University of Jos (Kogi), an Islamic Scholar Dr Mohammed Nazeef Yusuf whose Islamiyya School benefitted from that gesture was arrested by security agents and there were proofs of his connection with the *Ahli Sunna Lid da Awati Wal Jihad* otherwise known as the Boko Haram. After his arrest, some of the Christians on that team testified that during their interactions, they had severally felt like giving up due to some of his stands. They expressed their feelings that he might have been part of that only to cheat on the Christians.

5.2.2 Criticism against Christian-Muslim Dialogue by Muslims

What are some of the criticisms if any against Christian-Muslim Dialogue by some Muslims? Are their criticisms valid? What effect do such criticisms have against Christian-Muslim Dialogue? It is a proven fact that many Muslims in Nigeria are not disposed to Christian-Muslim Dialogue, only in places where they are in the minority. The researcher has experience of fellow Muslims who would accuse those moderate Muslims of renegades when they accept to enter into dialogue with Christians. The continued situation of peace and violence in Plateau State is a typical example. There was a time the Roman Catholic Justice, Peace and Care for Creation organized a football match between Christian youths and Muslim youths. It was aired and televised on Nigeria Television Authority Jos Network Centre to which was applauded. Not long after that and the Roman Catholic Archbishop visited and celebrated one of the Ed Il Ftr with the Muslim friends, these were done in 2011. As laudable as these acts were, soon after they were followed by violent crisis and the Christians accusing the Muslims of starting it while Muslims accusing Christians of causing it. As a result of that, some Christians are feeling those events were deception. In Jos South Local Government Area with Muslim Hausa-Fulani settlers always attacking the natives, there was the community peace initiatives where sometimes and sadly so, still the night following such dialogue between Christians and Muslims where tangible agreement were reached on peace and peaceful co-existence and another attack could be carried out weakening subsequent efforts.

Such ugly incidences and happening were clear indications of resistance to Christian-Muslim Dialogue by some Muslims who are not comfortable with the romance and are deliberately making the situation look ugly and further heightening tension and further breed more hatred and mistrust. This is an area where further work can be done, though both views can be seen depending on the place when violence erupts. Another challenge is lack of self control by participants to lay aside attempts to evangelize. Participants who agree to dialogue come to the dialogue table, one could see Christians coming with the desire to use the forum to evangelize and win Muslims so too Muslims who agree for dialogue coming with the desire to sell Islam in order to win Christian participants into Islam. Other challenges have to do with participants coming with attitudes of debate thereby creating the attitude of exclusive superiority of ones own faith over and above the other. Some have the attitude of resistance to enter into dialogue as they think it is compromising ones stand. Some could easily get frustrated when peace is not achieved within a short period of time. These are some the challenges of interreligious dialogue in Nigeria though not an exhausted list.

5.2.3 Christians-Muslim Dialogue as Instrument of Peace and Nonviolence

However, it is important at this point that as much as there are many Muslims in Nigeria as well many Christians who are disposed to Christian-Muslim Dialogue, there are many if not much more from both the divides that are strongly against Christian-Muslim Dialogue as discussed above. When one talks of interfaith dialogue, some Christians and Muslims are comfortable with while others are uncomfortable and can resist it at whatever length more especially among the clergy. This however was not peculiar to Nigeria as world over, interfaith dialogue has been criticized that it is a western tool to enforce non-Islamic policies in the Islamic world. Some Christians as well have always looked at interfaith dialogue with suspicion as a western agenda with the sole aim of weakening the Churches' evangelistic zeal in search of peace at the expense of evangelism. Dr Hans Kung says, "There will be no peace among the nations without peace among the religions. There will be no peace among the religions without dialogue among the religions."³²⁰

³²⁰ Musser, D & Sunderland, D., *War of Words: Interreligious Dialogue as an Instrument of Peace*, (Cleveland: The Pilgrim Press) 2005:1.

Before discussing details on Christian-Muslim dialogue, many believe that truth is relative, the age of relativism. Granted that, some people who hold to such kind of view may either argue or reject some of the issues presented. Christians and Muslims who are conversant with the Nigerian situation and are open minded, will accept the view. This will help not only to understand the challenges but to be part of the solution rather than being part of the problem as it has always been the case.

First is the growing religious activism (fundamentalism, extremism or fanaticism) amongst both the Christians and Muslims. Granted that in one religion may be stronger and more violent in nature than the other, but both religions have to accept this fact. Growing religious activism and putting fundamentalism, extremism and fanaticism in parenthesis due to the resistance these three terms will attract. In Nigeria many years back where religion was not a dominant factor when it comes to violence and division as noted in our previous chapters, during Christmas celebrations, Wedding ceremonies, funeral services among other Christian festivities, it is not uncommon to see Muslim neighbours, Muslim friends and Muslim relatives gathering and celebrating or mourning together with Christians as the case may be. The Muslims will eat of the meals cooked by the Christian families. On the side of Muslims, when they have wedding fatihahs, the Ed-El Ftri, Ed-El Kabr and all other important festivities as well as bereavements, one could see Christians there eating and drinking without asking questions and sharing pains with their Muslim brothers/sisters, friends, neighbours and relatives. There was spirit of oneness; love and the African community spirit at work.

When it came to communal work say road construction and or repairs, one would notice Muslims, Christians and African Traditional Religious worshippers all working together with no discrimination whatsoever. Inter-marriage was not a problem at that time and even conversion to either religion did not attract death or excommunication. Though the picture is not without some pockets of differences, but the general picture was this. There used to be the general statement amongst the minority tribes in Borno State in the North Eastern Nigeria where the Church of the Brethren is predominant that "A Kanuri man/woman is generally a peaceful person who does not fight over religion." That was then but not anymore, as the current happenings in Nigeria over the years, have negated that position

unfortunately. On a sad note however, over the years, that kind of community spirit, oneness and partnership seem to have evaporated due to growing religious activism leaving us with just pockets of such good relationship but mostly among the political class. Even among the families that have adherents of the three major religions in Nigeria namely Christianity, Islam and African Traditional Religions, some will not eat the meals prepared by adherents of a religion other than theirs if they could for the sake of family ties, community or friendship attend the festivities of another. Sadly enough, there were true stories of some religious adherents who beat up an adherent of another religion other than theirs who assisted by pouring dust into a grave as others were doing when there was burial of a corpse. To a modern mind and people outside Nigeria, this will sound absurd but is as a result of growing religious activism if fundamentalism or extremism may not even be more appropriate. How can eating meals together to do with peace one may ask? To answer this question directly, to the Muslim the issue of halal foods that are major concern to them is an inscription labeled on food items and restaurants to assure them of their religious aspect. Hence, as social as eating is, it has lots of religious dimension to a Muslim.

There used to be a time where in a predominant Muslim communities, Principals and teachers of schools were on the majority Christians and they were hosted well with no suspicion, fear, intimidation and or hatred so too among predominantly Christian communities where one could see a Muslim heading an organization or institution without any fear also. The story has changed dramatically in the northern part of Nigeria where a leader could be imposed on communities based on religious sentiments.³²¹ Suffice to say that admission into tertiary institutions as well as employment, religion plays a vital role over and above merit and competence. More worrisome is recruitment into security agencies and the judiciary which is always believed to be the last hope of the common person are dominated by religious sentiments. There are several examples of how things have terribly changed over the years with each religious group shutting its own doors and locking others out but thinking that this was the way to win more converts. More

³²¹ The Suit Case filed by Maina Wadai against his step brother Aji Daniel Maina over the seat of the Tradition Ruler of Chibok to which Aji Daniel Maina's father died on the throne though being a Muslim. Maina Wadai who was not a biological son of Maina contested the seat just because Aji is a Christian and Maina Wadai a Muslim. The case had been in Court since 2009.

worrisome is the current situation in most Northern States in Nigeria where you go to some prominent cities and you discover that Muslims are settling in one area while Christians in another, the case of Kano, Kaduna, Jos, Damaturu the Yobe State Capital and Maiduguri the Borno State Capital are clear examples. Christians inhabiting one area while Muslims another with well defined demarcation and a threatening statements of no go areas within same city or locality. Although this started far way back during the colonial era, it is now taking an alarming proportion. As noted earlier that some of the colonial masters were opposed to Christian missionaries activities while others were not, one of those opposed to the missionary activities was C.L. Tempel who was not only opposed to missionary activities but started the sabongaris an attempt to limit the interactions of aliens with the Northern Muslims. The case of the Maguzawa in kano, pagans whom the Muslims could not subdue even through jihad. They were willing to have Christian missionaries but the administration refused to allow missionary enterprise. Ayandele says,

In 1912 these Maguzawa were anxious to have missionaries but the administration refused to allow missionaries to work among them partly because, it argued, Christian teaching would make the Maguzawa disloyal to the Muslim rulers under whom they were now put, and partly because the missionaries would not be able to resist the temptation of preaching to Muslims who might come to them. When Dr Krusius of the Sudan Interior Mission went out to those people to collect information on their customs and folklore he was allowed to do so only on the condition that he would not attempt to convert them.³²²

Most often than note, Moon Eclipse, something in the sky to which no human being has control over, many people have been killed and places of worship mostly Churches have been burnt. These sad events happen at any time there was moon eclipse as a result of growing religious activism. The only remedy has been when troops of the Military and Police were deployed failure on the side of the government to deploy troops will always end up in blood birth and the destruction of Churches, killings of Christians and destruction of Christian properties.

³²² E.A. Ayandele, *The Missionary Impact on Modern Nigeria 1842-1914: A Political and Social Analysis*, (London: Longmans), 1966:149.

The growing religious activism in Nigeria is evident also with the recent agitation by some Muslim Clerics, politicians and Muslims generally for the removal of the "Red Cross" sign on Hospitals' Bill Boards or Sign Boards (posts) and on Ambulances and to replace it with a "Blue Colour Star Shaped" sign. What that means is nothing more than trying to depict the "Moon and Star" symbol of Islam. The Last four years had witnessed this change and the Government of Adamawa State bought and supplied Ambulances to its Hospitals and Health Centers bearing such symbols.

Towards the beginning of the year 2013, the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) Administration under the Subsidy Re-investment Programme (SURE-P) in its desire to address the transportation challenges bought and distributed vehicles to Nigerians to be repaid after some years. The Company Seal of the Vehicles looks something like a "Cross" of course the make of the vehicles was Chevrolet. As the vehicles started plying the Nigerian roads, soon some Muslims started attaching and ascribing the name "Arne" (Hausa word meaning infidel) when referring to that vehicle and some could object to getting into it when travelling. No one can argue that this was not religious extremism or fundamentalism.

The second fact is that both Christians and Muslims Sacred Scriptures have within them passages which seem to support violence and those that seem to abhor it. When we read the Christian sacred text, the Bible more especially the Old Testament where God commanded his people the Israelites to fight some wars and to kill all those they went into war against, one will but have to accept that such passages seem to support violence or legitimize it. Reading through the book of Deuteronomy beginning from chapter 17 where it states the laws governing administration of justice, there were crimes that were punishable by death when one committed such as serving other gods other than Yahweh. Christians are to be objective neither defensive nor sentimental, *"If there is found among , within any of your towns which the LORD your God gives you, a man or woman who does what is evil in the sight of the LORD your God, in transgressing his covenant, and has gone and served other gods and worshipped them, or the sun or the moon or any of the host of heaven, which I have forbidden, ... then you shall bring forth to your gates that man or woman who has done this evil thing, and you shall stone that man or woman to death with stones."* (Deuteronomy 17:2-5 RSV). This passage could be

interpreted to mean killing anyone who abandons his or her faith in the God of the Jews so for Christians it will imply killing of a person who abandons the Christian faith to be permissible. This as we know is due to the Old Testament being a sacred Scriptures of the Christians as well. 2 Chronicles 32, records to us the deliverance by God of King Hezekiah and his people from the hand of the King of Assyria. The command by God for the people of Israel to destroy all the inhabitants of the Promised Land, the destruction of Jericho by the people of Israel to mention but some few are passages which seem to support violence. In 1 Samuel 15:2-3, *"Thus says the LORD of hosts: 'I will punish Amalek for what he did to Israel, how he ambushed him on the way when he came up from Egypt. Now go and attack Amalek, and utterly destroy all that they have, and do not spare them. But kill both man and woman, infant and nursing child, ox and sheep, camel and donkey.'"* When we read the book of Prophet Joshua, we come across the passage which we could say heart breaking. Joshua 6:20-21, *"So the people shouted when the priests blew the trumpets. And it happened when the people heard the sound of the trumpet and the people shouted with a great shout, that the Wall fell flat. Then the people went up into the city, everyman straight before him, and they took the city. And they utterly destroy all that was in the city, both man and woman, young and old, ox and sheep and donkey, with the edge of the sword."* The history of the Church in her darkest periods using such passages some Churches had justified or legitimized violence at sometimes even during some of the intra-religious violence. For further details, see previous chapter that discusses the different positions taken by Churches when it comes to war namely, the Just War Theory, The Pacifist, Biblical Nonresistance, The Preventive and Anything Goes theory. Although when we discussed the above positions, we were not addressing going out to war among religious groups but more between and among nations. But those passages can be used in the above light.

Mention should be made to few passages in the Christian Sacred text which speak against war. When it is read starting from the Decalogue, *"Thou should not murder"* (Exodus 20:13) and coming to the New Testament Jesus commanding his followers to love and pray for their enemies, in fact Jesus said, *"But I say to you who hear: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, and pray for those who spitefully use you."* (Matthew 5:27-28). Indeed the New

Testament has several of passages speaking against war and violence and this had led to some Christian theologians to think of the difference between the God of the Old Testament and that of the New Testament. Some theologians say the Old Testament God was a blood thirsty and violent God while that of the New Testament is a God of Grace and a peaceful God.³²³

The Glorious Qur'an and the Hadith, there are similar facts as above. There are some passages that seem to support and legitimize war.

"Those who reject Islam must be killed. If they turn back (from Islam), take (hold of) them and kill them whenever you find them ..." (SURAH 4:89, The Noble Qur'an). This might have given rise to the killings of Muslims who abandoned so to speak of the Islamic faith and got converted to the Christian faith or other religions. In Nigeria more especially in the north, the case had always been, any Muslim that got converted to Christianity has to either leave his parents, brothers and sisters, friends and his village and town and run for his dear life or risk being killed starting with his parents if they are alive.³²⁴ And, *"So, when you meet (in fight-jihad in Allah's Cause) those who disbelieve, smite (their) necks till when you have killed and wounded many of them, then bind a bond firmly (on them, i.e. take them as captives)"* (SURAH 47:4, The Noble Qur'an). This passage might have given rise to an interpretation of the Islamic jihad which has to do with killings of unbelievers. We get another passage that seems to stress the above, *"O you who believe! Fight those of the disbelievers who are close to you, and let them find harshness in you; and know that Allah is with those who are Al-Muttaqun (the pious)"* (SURAH 9:123, The Noble Qur'an). The above passage no wonder when interpreted in a violent

³²³ For further details on this, see Marcion in the History of the Church with his followers called the Marcionites. There are many Christians even today though not Marcionites, but feel and think that way. For the Church of the Brethren to which we had earlier made reference too, they said, "No Creed but the New testament" holding to the New Testament as the final and absolute revelation of God to humanity, as such the above difficulty is solved as they hold to the belief that at that time God was allowing that to bring all people of the world to accepting Him as the Almighty god.

³²⁴ The life testimony of the conversion experience of Evangelist Binta Farouk Jalingo, a daughter of a retired Military officer, Hausa/Fulani by tribe is a typical example. She was shut with a gun by her father in an attempt to kill her. She was kidnapped severally and Muslim mercenaries had been sent severally to kill her for rejecting Islam they say. Her husband died after her conversion and her two children are currently in Saudi Arabia and she was banned as a mother from having access to her children. This quotation is from her CD and Pamphlet which are available as she runs "Daughters of Tabitha Foundation." The Conversion experience of Musa Kallamu Ali Dikwa is another example, a Kanuri by tribe from Borno State. He had similar experience of kidnapping and attempted killing. Abdulsallam is another Covert with similar story. Abdulsallam is a Pabir by tribe from Biu in Borno State Nigeria. I can go on and on, but these three examples are enough to score our point.

perspective might have been the reason where some Christians have been killed by their neighbours whom they had been together. In some passages, it seems Allah is commanding the Prophet Muhammed (SAS) to enforce killing rather than taking of prisoners. SURAH 8:67 is one of such passages and it reads, *"It is not for a Prophet that he should have prisoners of war (and free them with ransom) until he had made a great slaughter (among his enemies) in the land"* (The Noble Qur'an). Muslims of course were told to prepare themselves to fight against the unbelievers. From SURAH 8:59-60 we get these words of Allah, *"Let not the Unbelievers think that they can get better (of the godly): they will never frustrate them. Against them make ready your strength to the utmost of your power, including steeds of war, to strike terror into (the hearts of) the enemies, of Allah and your enemies, and others besides, whom you may not know, but whom Allah knows"* (All translation). As we continue we get this, *"And fight them until there is no more fitnah (disbelief and polytheism, i.e., worshipping others besides Allah) and the religion (worship) will all be for Allah Alone [in the whole of the world]. But if they cease (worshipping others besides Allah), then certainly, Allah is All-Seer of what they do."* (SURAH 8:39, The Noble Qur'an). From SURAH 4:74 we get this, *"Let those (believers) who sell the life of this world for the Hereafter fight in the cause of Allah, and whoso fights in the Cause of Allah, and is killed or gets victory, We shall bestow on him a great reward"* (The Noble Qur'an). SURAH 9:5 states thus, *"Fight and slay the Pagans wherever you find them, and seize them, beleaguer them, lie in wait for them in every stratagem (of war); but if they repent, and establish regular prayers and practice regular charity, then open the way for them: for Allah is Oft-forgiving, Most Merciful"* (All Translation). The researcher is not concerned with saying which one is emphasized more. This is an excerpts from one of the HADITHS that seems to sanction and legitimize violence. In The Hadith of Kanz Al-Muttaqi,

"A day and a night of fighting on the frontier is better than a month of fasting and prayer. Swords are the keys to Paradise. Paradise is under the shadow of swords. He who draws his sword in the path of Allah has sworn allegiance to Allah. The unbeliever and the one who kills him will never meet in Hell. Allah sent me as a mercy and a portent; He did not send me as a trader or as a cultivator. The worst community on the Day of Resurrection are the traders and the cultivators except those (of them) who are niggardly with their religion. Go in the name of Allah and in

*Allah and in the religion of the Prophet of Allah! Do not kill the very old, the infant, the child or the woman. Bring all the booty, holding back no part of it. Maintain order and do good, for Allah loves those who do good. If you find a tithe collector, kill him. Expel the Jews and the Christians from the Arabian Peninsula...*³²⁵

No body who believes in this faith can read this at first value without getting the impression of violence being legitimized.³²⁶ However, as to whether all Muslims believe in the implementation of these *Surahs* and *hadiths* and the literal interpretations, is subject to analysis.

Surahs that seem to abhor war. The first and of course the most outstanding is SURAH 2:256 which says, "*Let there be no compulsion in religion.*" No wonder, in Nigeria, it is not uncommon to see this inscription hanging in many Muslim offices expressing that killing people in the name of Islam is un-Islamic. In SURAH 76:29, "*This is an admonition: Whosoever will, let him take a (straight) Path to his Lord.*" This further buttress the point that there is no compulsion in religion since Allah has given us the freewill. SURAH 4:26 states thus, "*Allah does wish to make clear to you and to guide you into the ways of those before you; and (He does wish to) turn to you (In Mercy): and Allah is All-knowing, All-wise.*" When you go to SURAH 5:6 we get a heart touching words which speaks of Allah's wish for humanity, "*Allah does not wish to place you in a difficulty, but to make you clean, and to complete His favour to you, that you may be grateful.*" When we go to SURAH 6:35 we have this, "*If it were Allah's Will, he could gather them together unto true guidance: So be not you among those who are swayed by ignorance and impatience!*" Let us quote two more passages which seem to abhor violence and war. SURAH 10:25 has this to say, "*But Allah does call to the Home of Peace: He does guide whom He pleases to a Way that is straight.*" Last but by no means the least is SURAH 6:125 which reads, "*Those whom Allah wills to guide,- He opens their breast to Islam; those whom He wills to leave straying,-He makes their breast close and constricted, as if they had to*

³²⁵ Hadith of Kanz Al-Muttaqi, vol. II, pp. 252-286.

³²⁶ The self confession of Mustapha Umar who bombed This Day News Paper Office in Kaduna on April 26, 2012 no doubt was influenced by such hadith. Umar was seen to be crying and saying "My only regret is I didn't die in the explosion. If I had, I would have been in Aljanna(Paradise)." In his whole trial that lasted for more than a year, he showed no sign of remorse.

*climb up to the skies: thus does Allah lay abomination on those who refuse to believe.*³²⁷

The third fact is that both faiths traditions have within their sacred texts passages that speak for peace and peaceful co-existence. To reduce space consumption, the above passages quoted when substantiating the second fact that both faiths have within their sacred writings texts that abhor wars and those that legitimize it, those passages can also be used to speak for peace and against it.

Fact number four is that many if not most Christians are ignorant of Islam and Islamic teachings so too many if not most Muslims are ignorant of Christianity and Christian teachings. Here it is obvious in the way many Nigerian Christians talk about Islam including some clerics so too the way many Muslims talk about Christianity including their clerics attest to this. The Glorious Qur'an refers to the Jews and the Christians as the people of the book (al kitabs) and are not to be called infidels (kafiruna, kirdi), but you hear many Muslims in Nigeria and even in preaching by some renown clerics calling the Christians as such or softer they could call Christians not Christians but non-Muslims. One could hear some Christians addressing Muslims as children of the Wild Ass. Some Muslim Clerics could use the Bible and giving interpretations that are most often than not faulty and provocative to the Christians and sometimes you hear Christian clerics giving interpretations of some passages in the Glorious Qur'an which are unacceptable to the Muslims. For the Muslims and indeed the Qur'anic teachings, all of life is religious and therefore, to say politics for instance and religion are to be devoid of each other is absurd. Many Muslims have always considered such statement even among their politicians to be western influence and as such Christian. That is why when one speaks in Nigeria and says Nigerian Nation is a Secular State and of course that is what the constitution says, to the Muslim mind, that statement is wrong because you are making him/her a non-religious person. As such when Christians hear their Muslim friends saying religion and politics are to be kept separate, some few who

³²⁷ The testimony of Evangelist Ishaku Mhya of the EYN-Church of the Brethren in Nigeria Jos but now Abuja is relevant here. During one of the crisis in Jos the Plateau State Capital in 2001, our neighbour, an Alhaji, a good Muslims housed about hundred of us Christians for over three days until other Muslims started insisting they will burn his house, himself and all of us. Then he led all of us to escape by climbing the fence of his compound through the back and we all escaped with our wives and children. Alhaji is a very good man, he not only protected us but he fed us.

understood will not believe them. To most Christians on the other hand, "give to Caesar what is Caesar's" imply a divorce between politics and religion, between the secular and the religious. For Muslims, all of life is not only religious but spiritual, and that is why you do not rationalize what the Glorious Qur'an says or his Prophet but to accept the interpretations given and to be given by those allowed interpretations. The Christians are free to rationalize what the Holy Bible says and give interpretations under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. The understanding of Human Rights in the Christian faith and the Islamic faith are different. The case of Senator Sani Ahmed the Bakura of Zamfara when he married a minor, a thirteen years old girl from Saudi Arabia. Soon after, many Civil Society Organizations mostly women and other Human Rights Organizations picked up the matter. With unrelenting pressure, the Senate of the Federal Republic of Nigeria in 2011 set up a Committee to investigate the matter, the Committee was headed by Senator Hambagda from Borno State. It soon became obvious that the Senate were divided along religious lines so too the citizenry. Senator Sani Ahmed stood at the floor of the house and openly declared that what he did was according to Islamic Law. Immediately the Chairman Senator Hambagda said that when he lost his wife many years back, as a Muslim, most of the ladies that went to him seeking him to marry them not the other way round he seeking their hands in marriage were between ages thirteen and fifteen. As such he said those angry with the whole matter are ignorant of the Islamic Laws governing marriage. He went on to quote the example of one of Prophet Muhammed's wife Aishat (Aishah, Aishah) whom he married at the age of six though she stayed at her parent's house until she was nine years when the marriage was consummated, at that time Prophet Muhammad was 53 years old. Soon the Civil Society Organizations as well as the Human Rights were accused of being anti-Islamic. That case ended as if nothing had ever happened with some of the Senators as well as some Nigerians being confused as to what was and still is the Laws within which the electorates elect their leaders into respective positions of authorities in Nigeria. Are the electorates electing their leaders under the Islamic Shariah Legal System or under the Constitution of the federal republic of Nigeria? Granted that when an elected officer is sworn in into his elected office, it is the Nigerian Constitution that is used, but there is no adherence to the Child Right Act to which Nigeria is a signatory.

Another fact is the absence so to speak of the practical demonstration of the religious beliefs in real life situations. Nigeria is generally regarded as the "most religious nation in the world" a statement that is quoted all over by the media and media houses as well as in many quotas including the religious sectors. But on a sad note, granted that the Nigerian Government will always stand in defense of this rating by the Transparency International by placing Nigeria among the highest most corrupt nations in the world that it is not true. But, it is undeniable that Nigeria being a nation abundantly blessed with both human and natural resources, the majority of the citizens are living below the poverty level of the United Nations. The Statement by the World Bank Country Director, Marie-Francoise Marie-Nelly in 2013 that "100 million Nigerians are living in destitution or extreme poverty" had attracted lots of outright rejection and criticism from government quotas with the Chief Economic Adviser to the President, Dr. Nwanze Okidegbe that the claim was "spurious and astonishing." It is true that corruption has eaten deep in every aspect and fabric of the Nigerian society. There is hardly any sector that is either free or immune from that disease. The Traditional Institutions which were hitherto revered but not anymore are discussed. Corruption could be seen even in appointments of Traditional Rulers with money bags exchanging hands. When one goes to the Federal Ministries and Parastatals, awards of contracts and using of substandard materials by contractors as a result of kick-backs are common place. When one analyzes political actors and politicians in Nigeria, the situation is alarming as credible people could hardly make it to elective positions but mostly corrupt and dubious people who could use ill-gotten wealth to find themselves there. There used to be a time in Nigeria where a member of a family who got rich over night will be investigated starting by the family members to ascertain the source of his riches. In an event he was found wanting in the manner he got his riches, it will affect his whole family with his children not getting those to marry. However, in Nigeria today, it is almost the order of the day to find that a person who embezzles public funds will be given traditional title or made a Chancellor of a University or given honorary doctorate degree.

The question one would ask is who are the perpetrators of this? They are Nigerians among the Christians and Muslims together who go to Churches on Sundays and to the Mosques on Fridays. Indeed they are among the Christians and Muslims who not

only attend Sunday Services and Friday worships respectively but also attend programmes within the week and some growing beard and wearing of clothes and dresses to show as if they are pious ones. What happens to the messages of faithfulness, honesty and transparency they receive in their worship places? Where is the religion they profess and are so active and or fanatical about? More worrisome is the fact that there are so many of the so called men and women of God among the Christians and so many among the Muslim Clerics who are corrupt and indulge in corrupt practices. With the coming into play of the "Prosperity Gospel Preaching" among the Christians with less or no emphasis on sin but over emphasis on wealth and prosperity as a mark of one's spiritual status, the situation is further worsened. Femi Adeleye in his book "Preachers of a Different Gospel" stresses the above point. Adeleye has this to say when he talked of the absence of integrity of the modern preachers, "These modern preachers affect their church members far more than they do society at large. They have a noisy presence but not a transforming one that can challenge or hinder the corruption of public or private life. Some people are attracted to their gatherings not so much because they want to see Christ but out of curiosity to see the spectacular style of the preachers ... While many operate in the name of Christ, they lack the presence and the character of Christ."³²⁸ Most of these preachers believe in sweat-less success and that poverty is a curse and self-made. These preachers and their followers understand giving offerings and tithes to the Lord in the Church as an investment which yields dividends in return. Indeed ones material blessing and health can be measured by what one gives. No wonder, one could see that such preachers live an expensive and affluent life with many having mansions, fleets of expensive cars and some even having private jets and their followers are still left poor but kept by the empty promises. "The stress on miraculous deliverance from the ailments that beset our daily lives has led some to adopt a lifestyle of lying. It is considered unspiritual to admit, "I have headache." It is more spiritual to confess, "I am healed" and deny the reality rather than dealing with it. Rather than admit that one has a neck or back pain, it is better to "confess" that "I am strong"... This gospel of ease is silent on pain and suffering because it has no theology for it. All things related to discomfort, pain, suffering, poverty and

³²⁸ Femi Adeleye, *Preacher of a Different Gospel: A Pilgrim's Reflection on Contemporary Trend in Christianity*, (Michigan: HippoBooks, WordAlive, ACTS, Step and Zondervan), 2011:49.

death are considered to be of the devil and are therefore to be rejected."³²⁹ There is lack of knowledge of the difference between the enduring faith and the overcoming faith with emphasis laid on the later.

Many of the ringing tunes of the Cell phones of followers of such preachers have these words of assurance, "Today all the failures of your life are over, you will never know suffering again in your life," or such words as, "Your are blessed in your family, you are blessed in your ministry, you are blessed in your business." One of the popular songs in such Churches goes like this:

Me I no go suffer, I no go beg for bread.

Me I no go suffer, I no go beg for bread.

God of Miracles, na my papa o, na my mama o;

Me I no go suffer, I no go beg for bread.

This is the Nigerian version of English which will best be translated, "Me I will not suffer neither will I beg for bread because God of Miracles is my father and mother." Such preachers will always play host to those in position of authority, governors and presidents of nations. One could never hear them however, addressing issues of sin, corruption and the like only assurances of peace, peace while there is no peace as said by Prophet Ezekiel (13:16).

There are many examples of such words from such kind of preachers who are having increasing followership on a daily basis and even among the Mainline Churches they have many followers. As such, there is less and less emphasis on work and the dignity of labour. The Church has now turned out not to bother on how through hard work and labour that a person can get the basic needs of life but through just the power of the tongue. The saying it and claiming it by faith with emphasis on positive thinking and living is increasingly becoming popular.

Among the Muslim the story is not any different in Nigeria with some Muslim Clerics as experts in making people rich with less work and even giving people position of authority. One will see politicians and those aspiring for political appointments

³²⁹ Adeleye, p. 99.

trooping to such *Mallams* who will read portions of the Glorious Qur'an and the Hadith in order to make rich and give positions with the payments of such Mallams in monetary values in return with no question as to the source of the wealth. It is interesting to see some Muslims looking for either contracts, appointments, healings and other wants in life going to some of the prominent Christian Prosperity preachers and some Christians going to some *Mallams* to seek for the above. In the midst of severe ailments or health challenges or crisis and violence with conventional medicines failing to cure to which prayers and incantations not a solution either, one will see even some of the Christians and Muslims going to Traditional Medicine men and women for solutions.

One other important fact to refer to is lack of patriotism by many if not most Nigerians. Unlike the spirit of patriotism which could be seen among citizens of other countries even in Africa, this is lacking among many Nigerians. The always quoted and treasured statement by John F. Kennedy one time President of the United States of America leaves most to be desired when he said, "My fellow Americans, ask not what your country can do for you, ask what you can do for your country." Among the Indians we see patriotism and they have their slogan, "Incredible India." Of course among the Swiss there is great if not greater spirit of patriotism and pride in their own country. But alas! In Nigeria, there are few who put Nigeria first above themselves, they could put themselves and even their religious beliefs first before other things. There are many Nigerians who put their ethnic, their tribal and regional sentiments first before the nation Nigeria. One could always hear such statements "this is not for the interest of the north and northerners" or south and southerners or the east and easterners. Sometimes the unity of Nigeria is not even in some Nigerians' agenda but for only what they will get out of it. We could see during the Nigerian Civil War people who gave their lives for the unity of the country ended the Civil War. Many among them were so faithful, honest and contented and they ended up not amassing wealth, but today the story is different. When you go into the health sector, the ethics of the profession has been abandoned with greedy health workers always embarking on unnecessary strikes without feeling to the sick and some operating private clinics and exploiting the masses. When you go to the tertiary institutions the story is not any different. You enroll into the institution but not certain as to when you graduate due to incessant strikes by the lecturers. Look

at how the Nigerian currency, the naira is handled with disrespect and some even among political office holders not using it but using foreign currencies. What about the Nigerian flag, the symbol of Nigerian sovereignty and authority? Many Nigerians do not respect that, while some will tear and burn it without any feeling of disrespect to their father or mother land. It is important to be first Nigerians before being Igbos, Yoruba, Hausa/Fulani, Tiv, Jukun, Bura etc? Some may object and say we are Hausa/Fulani before we are Nigerians, after all Nigeria came into existence in 1914 with the Amalgamation of the Southern and Northern Protectorates. But most of us citizens of Nigeria at present are products of post amalgamation.

What do you think is the reason behind many Nigerian politicians and rich Nigerians embezzling public funds and or taking their monies and depositing them in foreign and Banks of the developed countries? What do you think is the reason behind some wealthy Nigerians and politicians investing in other countries other than investing in Nigeria with all the available opportunities? One of the best farms in West Africa is located at Benin Republic and the name of the Farm is Songhai Farm Garden Green Engineering Co.; Ltd.; and founded by a Nigerian by name Fr Godfrey Nzamujo who was born in Kano in 1950. Why there? Looking at the Nigerian weather climate, soil profile just to mention but few, there is no justifiable reason for the location of that farm there but lack of patriotism. If that farm is located in Nigeria, wouldn't it help in reducing the unemployment rate in Nigeria? There are many other Nigerians who are controlling lots of businesses in other African Countries and even beyond the shores of Africa and they are doing very well.

There are many Nigerian Doctors in the Diaspora who are doing exceptionally well in their host communities and using their wisdom and strength in developing the already developed countries and leaving their dear country to continuously lag behind. The Diaspora community can do well to investing in Nigeria if they are patriotic to their mother or fatherland. Alas! There are many Nigerians on medical tourism and spending billions of naira annually.

It is only in Nigeria you see them rejecting their made in Nigeria products and preferring made in other countries products even when the foreign products are of

inferior quality than the made in Nigeria. When one is to buy a shoe, he will ask and when he/she is told is made in Nigeria, even if he is to buy, he will prize it so low or he will not buy at all. There is lack of patriotism so clearly in display. This attitude has led to many local fabricators of goods and products to putting made in England, Italy etc on their locally made products to attract Nigerian customers.

Another fact is that there has been growing mistrust and suspicion between Nigerian Christians and Muslims most as a result of violence, discrimination and marginalization by dominant religion in a particular region and state. In the words of Boar, he speaks of principles and practice where he stresses that what more especially our Muslim brothers say and do when it comes to intolerance are so confusing if not contradictory leading then to mistrust. Boar says,

I draw your attention here to an issue of principle versus practice. A common feature running through all these volumes that you may have noticed is that I have often expressed myself positively and appreciatively with respect to many Muslim principles, especially on worldview issues such as their view on religion and the role of mankind ... However, Muslims often become offensive in practice... For, with some exceptions, Nigerian Christian objections to Muslim issues are more often aimed at Muslim practice rather than principle... Along with my fellow Vancouverite, Irshad Manji, whom I have never met, I call upon Muslims to come clean and tell the whole story. The combination of persecution with your peace and tolerance emphasis just does not cut it. That is what makes yours [perhaps] the most misunderstood religion-and the most suspect. You are giving us two incompatible messages: peace and intolerance, not to say violence.³³⁰

This is so obvious when an instance the case of Borno State in the north-east part of Nigeria and Plateau State in the Middle Belt is addressed. There has been no a time despite the number of Christians in Borno State where a Deputy Governor is a Christian not to talk of the Governor with the exception of Military Administrators. When it comes to appointment of Commissioners, the highest number the Christian Community in the State has received is two and no more and the Commissioners were appointed out of the twenty seven Local Government Areas of the State. The researcher makes reference to the discrimination and

³³⁰ Jan H. Boar, *Studies in Christian-Muslim Relations: Parameters For Living Together, Vol. 8 Part 2*, (Belleville, Ontario, Canada: Essence Publishing), 2009:38.

marginalization of the Christian community in Borno State through and by the Mass Media knowing how important Mass Media is as a tool for education and enlightenment. In the publication by the Christian community in Borno stating the obvious on the bias by the State-owned Media against the Christians in Borno, this is what comes out,

Though the mass media in any society is to project its values, norms and morals of all the segments, the media outfits in Borno State especially those owned by the State Government has been doing just the opposite. Over the years, Christian programmes or news have never been aired. Rather, Islamic items are given relevance and prominence. For example, during the Ramadan period, Islamic programmes especially Tafsir are aired almost every hour on the Borno Radio Television Authority (BRTV) and the Nigeria Television Authority (NTA); even against network programmes that are educative and socially challenging to the youths. In fact, the NTA air Tafsir after its one o'clock news in the morning programme until the 6:30am with short-break after the 4:00am news. However, during the Christmas season hardly could a carol be aired. These are the discrimination against Christians by the media despite its known functions to the society and the Nigeria Broadcasting Code, which makes room for all segments to be given equal opportunity.³³¹

This is even not talking on the kind of inciting and provoking preaching against the person of Jesus Christ and the Christian faith. Since 1982, that was the last time a Certificate of Occupancy was given to a Church, since then, no individual is allowed to sell his/her land for the building of a Church. When a Christian is purchasing a land, he would be told not to allow a Church to be built there. In public Primary Schools in Borno State, even when there is no single Muslim pupil, there will be an Islam Religious Knowledge teacher, but the teaching of Christian Religious Knowledge is not allowed in public primary schools with the exception of some few primary schools in two out of the twenty seven Local Government Areas namely Chibok and Hawul LGA. In such a situation where State indigenes are marginalized, it breeds suspicion and hampers trust. The Muslims on the Plateau are feeling the same thing. Granted that on the Plateau, the Settler-Indigene issue makes it different than the situation in Borno State where the Christians in Borno are not Settlers but natives. The issue of employment and other services that are supposed to be given to citizens based on merit without any discrimination are not

³³¹ *Christianity in Crisis: Lesson from Borno State 18th Feb. 2006* (CAN Borno State), 2006:86.

done. When one moves to the former Seven Hausa States, even call to worship is aired on a daily basis in Media sponsored by the Governments while religion that is considered not dominant hardly gets thirty minutes in a week and some could not accept paid programmes for fear of using the Media to evangelize and convert.

Both Christianity and Islam are feeling cheated by the Colonial Masters and Government in the areas of population, spread, leadership etc. The Christians have the feeling that the taking over of the Missionary Schools and Hospitals by the Government from the Churches was a strategy which puts the Christians at a disadvantage over their Muslim friends. In the case of the Church of the Brethren Schools and Hospitals, they were taken over by the Government without paying any money by the Government to the Church unlike in other States where the Government paid some compensation to the Churches for taking over their schools and hospitals. The initial point argued to convince the Churches to hand over their Schools and Hospitals was that Government was going to maintain them better and make education affordable and free for all. One will be shocked to go to such Schools and Hospitals today; they are shadows of their former selves. Missionaries were in some areas denied to spread the gospel in areas dominated by Muslims under the Indirect Rule System. This is a typical example of how the colonial masters hindered the spread of the Christian faith in some areas. The Muslims in Nigeria also as their Christian counterparts feel Cheated by the Colonial Masters. They accuse them of destroying the Sharia Legal System introduced by the jihad of Usman Dan Fodio. It is obvious by the observance of Sunday as work free day, the New Year Day celebration of 1st January and the use of the Gregorian Calendar were areas Nigerian Muslims feel cheated by the colonial masters. When Governor Sani Ahmed the then Executive Governor of Zamfara State in 1999 introduced the Shariah as a legal system in Zamfara State, he was beside granting the yearning of the Muslims, but trying to balance the equation against perceived colonial masters' one sided favour of the Christians and Christianity over Muslims and Islam in Nigeria.

It is of great significance to set guidelines for the Christian-Muslim Dialogue. In setting the stage or guidelines for dialogue or inter-faith encounter, there is the need of respect for each others' position, faith and opinion without which the

dialogue will be a fruitless exercise which will end up further worsening the current volatile situation.

It is also important that both Christian sisters and brothers as well as Muslim friends to come on to the table of dialogue not to defend ones position but to be willing and listen to the other and explain to the other where the need arises. It is important that each group should use only their sacred texts to explain and clarify and not to use the sacred text of the other as has always been the case. Christians have severally used the Glorious Qur'an to explain something say about Jesus, Hell etc and many Muslims have used the Bible to explain things or preach on things say about Jesus as the Son of God, or the Holy Spirit etc. Muslims are the best interpreters of the Glorious Qur'an and the Hadith so too Christians are the best interpreters of the Bible.

Both Christians and Muslims are to bear in mind that those belonging to the other faith other than theirs to whom they are entering into dialogue with are not mission fields for conversion (though conversion may be possible but that should not be the aim) but rather people with whom you all have the same goal of living in harmony and peace.

Attempt should be made at our commonalities and areas that unite than those that divide. When this is made as one of the modus operandi, it will be seen that there are more areas of similarities than there are of differences. Both faiths share the same country, culture, language, schools, markets etc.

Both peoples should note that dialogue is neither debate nor argument but rather a purposeful discussion full of respect towards fostering better understanding and unity. As such, in dialogue, no attempt should be put on trying to outsmart the other.

Granted that Islam precedes Christianity in arriving Nigerian space and they are many Muslims in the northern part of the country Nigeria, however, those entering into dialogue to put the Love of the Nation first and the desire to making the nation great before any other matter, this will go a long way in ensuring objective discussion.

Let the dialogue be free of sentiments and devoid of subjectivism but full of objectivism and to avoid bias as much as possible.

Christian-Muslim Dialogue initiatives and programmes in Nigeria are analyzed to see whether they are succeeding or not, what needs to be done differently if there are etc.

The researcher starts with the "Nigeria Inter-Religious Council" (NIREC). NIREC came into being in 1999 by the then President Olusegun Aremu Obasanjo to serve as a platform for high-level dialogue between Christians and Muslims in Nigeria with the intent to promote public good and harmonious co-existence between the two major religions in the country namely Christianity and Islam. NIREC was believed to proffer solution to the unending violence, crisis and blood birth that are often attributed to religion if not religious. As to the composition and membership of NIREC, Prof Is-haq Oloyede who is the National Coordinator/Executive Secretary states;

The Nigeria Inter-Religious Council (NIREC) is a body made up of fifty (50) members (25 Muslims and 25 Christians) charged with the responsibility of promoting peaceful co-existence in Nigeria. The Council is Co-Chaired by the Sultan of Sokoto, His Eminence Alhaji Sa'ad Abubakar III, President-General National Supreme Council for Islamic Affairs (NSCIA) and Archbishop of Abuja His Grace Cardinal John Onaiyekan.³³²

NIREC since inception had always had their meeting at Abuja until 2008 when a decision was taken to have the meeting on a rotational basis among the six geopolitical zones of the country. During such meetings, papers were presented and discussed with communiqués usually issued on what the federal government is expected to do and giving hopes to the Nigerian people. Has NIREC delivered on its mandate we may ask? To answer this question directly, one could say that the impact of NIREC on Nigeria has never been felt at the grass root. If one is to assess NIREC's performance by the rate of violence which are more religious in nature, we will be quick to say NIREC has failed and woefully for that matter. As stated above, this is a high-level dialogue, so unfortunately it remained a high-

³³² Prof Is-haq Oloyede, Letter to His Excellency Senator (DR) Ali Modu Sheriff, The Executive Governor Borno State, *NIREC Meeting Holding at Borno State*, 19th February 2008:1.

level in its impact and achievement. We will agree that among the dialogue committee members, no doubt, they were made to understand one another more. For those interested in NIREC might have been happy with coming of NIREC in the religio-political life of Nigeria, but no doubt would have been disappointed at the turn of events. Many News Paper Articles have criticized NIREC with some advocating scrubbing it. The researcher suggests that NIREC advocate for the establishment of Zonal Chapters, State Chapters and Local Government Chapters. This will imply having and in other way reactivating the grass root dialogue that hitherto existed among and between Christians and Muslims. When such is done, it is not the Governments to select the delegates but each religious body to choose credible persons to be members. The present composition of NIREC is not gender sensitive, this would be considered being sensitive however of the belief of the other. After their meetings and issuance of communiqué, all delegates to report their resolutions to their sending bodies. The researcher advocates also that NIREC put in place programmes to foster harmonious co-existence to be aired and passed through audio, video and print media. When the illiterates and the semi-illiterates will see the practical relationship displayed at such dialogue fora, it will go a long way in changing the orientation of some who were either taught or are made to believe that the other is an enemy to be killed. The researcher opines that NIREC³³³ to focus more on what each faith tradition is to do towards peaceful-co-existence rather than over-emphasizing what the government will do, this is more of shifting the blame and not taking responsibility for some if not many of the lapses. Let me explain, if you talk of corruption that Nigeria is rated high. This is also the failure of religion and religious leaders. There is a problem in the statement that religion is not responsible for poor leadership in Nigeria, because in Nigeria merit and competence are most often than not never considered rather than religion and ethnicity. The researcher also opines that the composition of NIREC should include African Traditional Religion worshippers as they are many in Nigeria. This would ensure inclusivism.

Another point of discussion is the Institute for Peace and Conflict Resolution (IPCR). The Institute was established in February, 2000 under the Federal Ministry

³³³ The Nigeria Inter-Religious Council (NIREC) comprising of 25 Christians and 25 Muslims, which was founded in the year 2000 and enthusiastically supported by the government.

of Foreign Affairs. The Institute is primarily a research centre, a think-tank and an agency to strengthen Nigeria's capacity for the promotion of peace and conflict prevention, management and resolution. Nigeria no doubt in Africa has played a key role in peace advocacy and conflict resolution. However, internal crisis has put to test the good work Nigeria has played even in Peace Keeping within and outside the African shores. Functions of the Institute are:

- (1) The Institute shall be responsible for-*
- (a) promoting peace and security internally within Nigeria and externally in Africa;*
- (b) conducting research into the cause, patterns, dynamics, factors and forces behind conflicts and insecurity in Nigeria and Africa;*
- (c) publishing and disseminating case studies from its researches with a view to offering insights into the success or failure in conflict resolution and peace building;*
- (d) identifying these factors, issues, historical phases, capacities and the balance of power of different groups in a conflict situation;*
- (e) promoting a culture of transparent, credible and peaceful democratic succession as a mechanism for conflict prevention;*
- (f) getting practically involved in the task of mediation, conflict management and conflict resolution;*
- (g) encouraging the establishment of regional affiliates of the Institute in Africa and other parts of the world and fostering collaboration with those affiliates;*
- (h) designing strategies for funding people-centred development programmes to support peace;*
- (i) providing government with relevant policy options on fundamental issues required in designing an effective and durable peace process;*
- (j) initiating, encouraging, organizing, hosting, arranging and conducting policy-relevant courses, national or international seminars, symposia, conferences, and workshops, training programmes and other actions that are incidental to peace making and peace building as part of its intensive effort in capacity building.³³⁴*

Taking a closer look at the above functions enumerated, one will have his hopes raised that solutions to Nigerian persistent crisis would have been gotten. Had the Institute not delivered on its mandate? Since it is a research centre, a think-tank, it has and is still carrying on. But one could say this and join many well meaning Nigerians that have echoed this over and over again, that "Nigerians are so good at making policies but very poor at implementation." There are indeed many white

³³⁴ Institute For Peace and Conflict Resolution (Establishment Act) Part III.

papers, many Blue Print for Action Documents which are left on the shelves with none of the provisions there in implemented. To restore peace in our troubled nation, there is need to implement reports and well researched recommendations more especially of the Institute.

There is the Programme for Christian-Muslim Relations in Africa (PROCMURA)³³⁵. This programme is made up of Christians and Muslims coming together and dialoguing in order to promote peace and harmonious relationship. Emphasis is laid on the similarities between the two sacred literatures of the two major religions in Africa namely Christianity and Islam. PROCMURA was founded in 1958 under the name Islam in Africa Project (I.A.P) which evolved to Project for Christian-Muslim Relations in Africa finally bearing the Programme instead of Project. The Current Chairperson of PROCMURA is Right Rev. Josiah Idowu Fearon.

Brief history of the founding of PROCMURA, Samwini has this to say,

early on in Africa a conference of the International Missionary Council (IMC) was held in the University of Ghana to consider how the African Church would fare with Islam in post-independence Africa. This meeting was followed by the African Conference of Churches (AACC) in Ibadan in 1958. In the Ibadan Conference Bishop S.O Odutola, a Nigerian Anglican Bishop spoke on Islam and Christianity. Following the discussions at the two African conferences it seems the Protestant fraternity in Africa with its European partners agreed to consider the mission of the churches in Africa vis-à-vis Islam as a matter for exploration. The combination of the Uppsala meeting, the IMC, the AACC and Vatican II, in which initiatives the churches in Africa and Ghana took part, was the beginning of the new thinking in Christian-Muslim relations in Africa. The Islam in Africa Project (now Project for Christian-Muslim Relations in Africa, PROCMURA) with Ghana, Northern Nigeria and Southern Nigeria as its founding members, was born out of these initiative in 1958.³³⁶

What was the aim at the beginning? Samwini still has the aim, "To keep before the churches in Africa their responsibility for understanding Islam in their region in view of the Church's task of interpreting faithfully in the Muslim world the Gospel

³³⁵ The Programme for Christian-Muslim Relations in Africa is the oldest and pioneer interfaith organization in the Continent of Africa, with a specific focus on Christians' relations with Muslims founded in 1958.

³³⁶ Samwini, Nathan, *The Muslim Resurgence in Ghana since 1950: Its Effects upon Muslims and Muslim-Christian Relations*, (Munster: LIT Verlag), 2006:217.

of Jesus Christ and to affect the research and education necessary for this.³³⁷ One could deduce that due to the persistent crisis between Christians and Muslims that the issue of peace now takes centre stage in Programmes and activities of PROCMURA. The Programme as seen is the oldest when it comes to Christian-Muslim relations, but peace aspect is a later addition. Now year in and year out, conferences are organized where Christian leaders and Muslim leaders all over Africa are usually brought together where they could discuss how to foster peaceful co-existence. This efforts too as laudable as it has been, the impact is still farfetched.

There is also Center for Peace Advancement in Nigeria (CEPAN)³³⁸, the major approach has been on Christian-Muslim dialogue where Muslim young men/women and Christian young men/women are brought together to dialogue on peace and religious tolerance. This is a Non Governmental Organization which EYN is a founding member. The Headquarters is in Jos the Plateau State Capital. The usual approach has been through Seminars, Workshops and Conferences where papers are presented and areas of mutual agreement and peace explored. In Jos, the impact of CEPAN has been felt in some quotas but with the lingering violence which mostly could end up taking religious dimension, one would be tempted to ignore the achievement of CEPAN. The more such organizations are the better as always say a journey of a thousand miles begins with a step. There is a slogan in Hausa, "Mai Zuwa Sama ko ya taka leda ya rega tafiya" which literally can be translated to mean "The one going to the sky even if he/she steps on a paper he/she has reduced the distance."

The Imam Muhammad Ashafa and Pastor James Wuye co-founders and co-directors of the "Muslim-Christian Interfaith Mediation Centre" with the headquarters in Kaduna is another dialogue forum. These two leaders were before then leading opposing, armed militias who were so committed and dedicated in defending their respective communities in the restive city of Kaduna and environs. In the 1990s, Pastor James Wuye lost his hand in one of the violence while Imam

³³⁷ Ibid.,

³³⁸ CEPAN is an NGO that was established in February 2004 in response to the plethora of violent sectarian conflicts in Nigeria. The organization works to strengthen the values of peace, cultural and religious harmony among the diverse people of Nigeria through a broad spectrum of community-based peace building and people-oriented development activities.

Muhammad Ashafa lost his spiritual mentor as well as two close relatives. Both indeed suffered deep loss and had hated each other before. But they come to understand that such an attitude does no one any good. They forgave each other and started a grass-root initiative to rebuild communities torn apart by conflict and violence. Imam and Pastor have produced CDs and DVDs of their testimonies which have been used to broker peace among communities. They have also held conferences, seminars and workshops of how forgiveness, trust and understanding could lead to healing and peaceful co-existence. Contrary to the generally held view among many Nigerians that it is difficult if not impossible to live at peace and to enjoy harmonious relationship among the different ethno-religious peoples of Nigeria, Imam and Pastors shows to us that it is very possible. Granted that they are some Muslim extremists who are accusing Imam Ashafa of renegade while some Christians are not comfortable with the romance between the Pastor and the Imam, their efforts have yielded positive results. Worthy of note is this that Imam and Pastor have gone round the globe teaching and sharing their testimony of grass-root peace initiatives. Imam and Pastor have to do more home based work of fostering peaceful co-existence than the outside. It is most often easy to love someone who is thousand miles away than to love someone who is close or the next door neighbour.

EYN Peace Programme³³⁹ is also a programme working towards dialogue and peaceful co-existence between Christians and Muslims. The Programme is handled by a Coordinator who oversees the activities of the Programme. The approach in the operation of the Programme is multifaceted and multidimensional. This could be seen in the activities carried out by the Programme. There were times traditional rulers are involved in partnership with the Church to bring about peace and peaceful co-existence. The Programme do regularly organize Seminars, Workshop and Conferences more especially to Church leaders enlightening them on ways to remain faithful to the Gospel of Peace even in situations of violence. Through the initiative of the EYN Peace Programme, Kulp Bible College the Prime Institute of EYN now offers Peace Studies as a Course. This is a land mark achievement. Since the establishment of the College, Peace Studies has never been offered as a Course. Many EYN Pastors and leaders are now better informed

³³⁹ Programme Reorganization and Development Proposal. Draft 31/10/2011.pp. 1-5.

of the Church of the Brethren Peace Heritage. Victims of violence have at some times been assisted through this Programme. The uniqueness of this Programme is in the areas of identifying and recognizing Muslims and Christians alike who have exhibited uncommon effort of being one's brothers' keepers regardless of one's religious difference. This has always been a morale booster to many people and creating in them the desire to do as those recognized.

There is Christians and Muslims for Peace Building Initiative (CAMPI) where ten Christians and ten Muslims always meet to study together. This organization is also an EYN-Church of the Brethren in Nigeria Programme. Mostly the meetings have been held in the EYN National Headquarters at Kwarhi near Mubi and sometimes at Mubi. This initiative has been helpful in that those involved are vanguard of peace building and peacemaking. The major thrust has been creating awareness, building mutual trust through improved understanding of the other and reducing ignorance.

Worthy of mention also is Centre for Caring, Empowerment and Peace Initiative (CCEPI)³⁴⁰ a Non-Governmental Organization of Dr Rebecca Dante Dali. The vision and mission statement of this organization is caring for those ravaged by HIV/AIDS, Violence and the disadvantaged. It works to rehabilitate victims of violence by providing assistances and scholarships to Children of Parents killed during violence or by AIDS. Mission Statement, "Train and Help others to help themselves and help train others" while the aim of CCEPI is "To help train widows, orphans, women, disadvantaged and helpless groups and people, especially acid victims, war victims, orphans etc." The founder of this NGO is an EYN-Church of the Brethren female theologian. This NGO has done quite a lot in assisting such victims.

The researcher is advocating for a grassroots inter-religious dialogue. Not rejecting the efficiency of the normal dialogue between the clerics of both faiths, but, another aspect can be added. The followers now are to take the lead by going

³⁴⁰ Centre for Caring, Empowerment and Peace Initiative (CCEPI) is non-political, strictly humanitarian, tax exempt, non-profit organization registered in Nigeria in 2011. Who has its unique purpose to serve and care for vulnerable groups of people includes orphans, vulnerable children, widows, internally displaced and refugees, people living with HIV/AIDS etc, regardless of their religious and cultural background.

back to the way the African and Nigerian people lived before this current wind of extremism and violence. The community spirit of Africa of old needs to be reinvented.

5.3 Nigerian State and Societal Integration

The history of the Nigerian state and the issues of violence and its causes have been discussed. In this sub-topic, societal integration in the Nigeria context is analyzed. Here not details about the country Nigeria are discussed. However, there is the need at this point to state that Nigeria has three tiers of Government. These are the Federal, The State and the Local Governments. Due to the Revenue Allocation and Sharing formula, the Federal Government controls the resources and the power is concentrated at the centre. The effect of this could be seen in the fact that the Local Governments which are at the grass root is not autonomous financially and even through the electoral process thereby making them ineffective. The Local Government has wards and villages that it is supposed to develop. The Local Government Council is made up of elected representatives from each ward called Counselors with the Chairman and Vice Chairman at the helm of affairs. In the State, each State comprises of some Local Governments and the State is expected to develop the Local Governments and areas linking one Local Government to the other. The State Houses of Assembly is made up of elected representatives from each of the Local Governments who make laws for the State. The State has also the State Executive Council made up of the Commissioners appointed by the Executive Governor and his Deputy who were elected officers. The Executives are the implementers and executors of Government programmes and policies. At the Federal level, there is the Federal Executive Council (FEC) with the powers vested in the President, Vice President and the Ministers. The Legislature with the powers vested in the National Assembly and the Judiciary with the Powers vested in the Courts. The Executive is made up of the Ministers of various ministries appointed by the President assisted by the Vice President. Then the Senate headed by the Senate President deputized by the Deputy Senate President and the Lower Chamber which is the Federal House of Assembly which comprises elected members from the States. The Federal Government has the sole responsibility of developing the States and the inter-states development.

5.3.1 Constitution within Constitution a Threat to Societal Integration

Since concern is neither with the structure of the Nigerian Government nor with government programmes and projects but with areas of mutual co-existence, what is the Constitution saying about the citizenship of Nigeria? The Nigerian Constitution 1999 as amended granted freedom of religion and association to all her citizens. In Chapter I Part II of the 1999 Constitution as Amended Section 10 states thus. "The Government of the Federation or of a State shall not adopt any religion as a State Religion." The Constitution had a provision on Fundamental Rights and it states thus in Chapter IV 38. (1) Every person shall be entitled to freedom of thought, conscience and religion, including freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom (either alone or in community with others, and in public or in private) to manifest and propagate his religion or belief in worship, teaching, practice and observance. (2) No person attending any place of education shall be required to receive religious instruction or to take part in or attend any religious ceremony or observance if such instruction ceremony or observance relates to a religion other than his own, or religion not approved by his parent or guardian. (3) No religious community or denomination shall be prevented from providing religious instruction for pupils of that community or denomination in any place of education maintained wholly by that community or denomination. The State has a major responsibility in ensuring a violent free state. That is why the Government has put in place Security Agencies and Outfits namely the Nigeria Armed Forces comprising of the Nigeria Army, the Navy, and The Air Force, then the Nigeria Police Force and the Para-Military made up of the Nigeria Immigration Service, the Nigeria Customs Service, The Department of State Security, the Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps, the Federal Road Safety Corps besides some Local Vigilante Groups. Chapter II 15. (1) states thus, "The motto of the Federal Republic of Nigeria shall be Unity and Faith, Peace and Progress." While 15: (2) states, "Accordingly, national integration shall be actively encouraged, whilst discrimination on the grounds of place of origin, sex, religion, status, ethnic or linguistic association or ties shall be prohibited." And 15: (3) c and d states thus, "encourage inter-marriage among persons from different places of origin, or of different religious, ethnic or linguistic association or ties; and promote or

encourage the formation of associations that cut across ethnic, linguistic, religious and or other sectional barriers." At the Federal Level the President is the Chief Security Officer while at the State and Local Government Levels the Executive Governor and the Chairperson are the Chief Security Officers of the State and Local Governments respectively. Since it is the responsibility of government to protect lives and property of her citizenry and to also ensure a violent free and crime free society, the Constitution of the country also prohibits any State to adopt any religion as the State religion and therefore adopted the phrase "Nigeria a Secular State." However for the government to succeed in this, it can only do this if there is justice, equity and fair play. The government is to make frantic efforts to address poverty and unemployment. Leadership and the challenges to contemporary leadership are areas that have been problematic in Nigeria. It is true that Nigeria is governed through democracy. However, Nigerian democracy is young and still developing. As stated above, the Military have had a larger share of leadership of the country much more than the democratically elected leaders, as such; many of the leadership challenges of Nigeria can be traced to the frequent military interferences which hindered the democratic structure to mature. The relationship between the Nigerian government and the churches needed to be improved upon as some states governments have not been fair in handling issues in relation to the churches. The promotion of other religious groups and their interest over and above the others needed to be stopped. On the part of the churches, the churches are to play their prophetic roles.

The establishment of the Institute of Peace and Conflict Resolution in February 2000 under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was and still is an important development. Its objective primarily is a research centre, a think tank and an agency to strengthen Nigeria's capacity for the promotion of peace, conflict prevention, management and resolution.

The establishment of the Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies (CEPACS) University of Ibadan was done in 1994 is an important development in the history of Nigerian Tertiary Institutions is made up of 24 members.

Here, the Nigerian government should do all within its legitimate powers to ensure that all her citizens are treated equally and the citizens to see that nobody is above the law. Nigerian government to ensure that merit and competence take their rightful place when it comes to appointment and or admission. The government at all levels to adhere to the constitution governing the nation and all sections of the country. The government is to address the issue of corruption headlong and corrupt public office holders to duly be punished. The issue of poverty and youth unemployment is to be addressed, this is against the background that due to poverty and youth unemployment, it has resulted into making the youths willing and easy tools in the hands of politicians or evil people to manipulate and perpetrate violence and heinous crimes.

What is constitution within constitution? In most of the states in Northern Nigeria, contrary to the provision of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria 1999 as amended and quoted above, there are lots of discriminatory policies based on religion. Such policies are so strong and the courts can do virtually nothing about. A case in point is the Borno State government where there had been discriminatory policies in the educational sector. Let me mention the issue of the refusal by the state government over the years to employ "Christian Religious Instructors to teach Christian Religious Knowledge in public schools while actively employing and paying from public funds Islamic Religious Knowledge teachers in same schools."³⁴¹ Mention needs to be made of the prohibition of Chapels and churches in tertiary institutions whereas mosques are built with government funds. Mention is to be made also of the entry pass marks required for secondary schools (post primary schools known as high schools in other contexts). Christianity in Crisis records this, "Another discriminatory policy is the pass mark required for entry into secondary schools. In the Southern Borno 75% pass mark is required whereas in the North it is 40%."³⁴² It is interesting to note that Southern Borno is predominantly Christian. One could see in most of the northern states of Nigeria, lots of Muslims are not attending conventional primary and secondary schools alongside Christians but attending Islamiya schools in the afternoons after conventional school hours. One wonders what are the teachings they are receiving

³⁴¹ *Christianity in Crisis: Lesson From Borno State 18th Feb. 2006*, p. 38.

³⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 42-43.

and government funds that. The adoption of the Islamic Sharia Legal System by the government of Borno State in the 2000 was to give a preferential religious status of Islam over Christianity. The end result however is the denial of Christians from being appointed to key positions in the Civil Service, denial of Christians from holding traditional offices as well as holding political offices. The discriminatory situation in Borno State cuts across most of the states in the northern part of Nigeria. Suffice it to mention that the introduction of the Sharia Legal System was first introduced by the Ahmed Sani the Executive Governor of Zamfara State and adopted by most of the States in the north with the exception of Benue and Plateau States. The judiciary that is considered the hope of the common man is not spared of the discrimination against the Christians in the northern part of Nigeria among others.

From the foregoing, one could see that Nigeria has a constitution within constitution which has been one of the major threats to societal integration. How can the citizenry be truly integrated where there is discrimination which is fueled and funded by the same government which is supposed to uphold, defend and protect the constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria?

For national integration for growth and development to be achieved, all states more especially in the north where such discriminatory policies exist, the Federal Government to ensure that such policies are abrogated and the single and only constitution of the Federal Republic be upheld.

5.3.2 Land Matters as Challenges to Societal Integration

Land Matters in Nigeria have posed serious challenge to societal integration. As quoted above and will quote here again for the purpose of emphasis. In the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria as amended, Chapter V 41. (1) states thus, "Every Citizen of Nigeria is entitled to move freely throughout Nigeria and to reside in any part thereof, and no citizen of Nigeria shall be expelled from Nigeria or refused entry thereby or exit therefrom." This section serves as a platform for societal integration for national growth and development. However,

land and land related matters have been one of the major causes of violence in the Nigerian context. Contrary to this section of the constitution, in Nigeria, a citizen can reside in a locality for decades but will not get right of citizenship of that place. Such a one is regarded as a settler and he or she cannot contest any position of leadership in that area.

This is another area where the Federal Government of Nigeria needs to enforce this section of the constitution as it will go a long way in solving the problems that had hitherto existed making some people second class citizens in their land of origin.

5.3.3 Constitution as Instrument of Societal Integration

The constitution of any given organization is supposed to be a guide towards the smooth operation of such an organization. Constitutions protect, defend and direct the organization, state or association having that constitution. The Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria is not an exception. From the opening of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria 1999 as amended there are captivating words,

*We the people of the Federal Republic of Nigeria
Having firmly and solemnly resolve, to live in unity and harmony as
one indivisible and indissoluble sovereign nation under God,
dedicated to the promotion of inter-African solidarity, world peace,
international co-operation and understanding
And to provide for a Constitution for the purpose of promoting the
good government and welfare of all persons in our country, on the
principles of freedom, equality and justice, and for the purpose of
consolidating the unity of our people
Do hereby make, enact and give to ourselves the following
Constitution:-*

When the provision in this Constitution is upheld and lived out by the Nigerians, then societal integration would not have been difficult. Chapter II of the said Constitution deals with 'Fundamental Objectives and Directive Principles of State Policy' while Chapter IV deals with 'Fundamental Rights.'

What then is the problem? The problem is multifaceted and multidimensional. On the one hand, the level of illiteracy in the country is a major challenge as many Nigerians are ignorant of what the Constitution says. This has made some of those in governance to take advantage of the citizens and sometimes even exploit them. These factors have then made the Constitution which should serve as the major instrument towards societal integration not to achieve its aim.

The researcher suggests that from the Primary Schools through to post primary schools, subjects such as social studies to include teaching on the Constitution. The media should also take up the issue of constitutional awareness as many of the illiterates listen to radio stations and watch televisions. This will go a long way in educating the citizenry on their rights and make those in governance to do the right things. When such is done, the Constitution will truly serve its purpose.

5.4 Civil Society Actors as Agents of Peace and Nonviolence

The civil society organizations among which include the human rights organizations, the different unions, non-governmental organizations that have peace and struggle for justice and freedom as part of their Constitutions and policy documents are to see themselves as agents of peace through nonviolence. Granted that some among the civil society actors may be comfortable by the designation agents of peace, some may hesitate to be addressed as agents of nonviolence. Most of the civil society actors operating in Nigeria where peace is emphasized will not object to them being considered as agents of nonviolence also. It is against this background that the researcher explores their relevance and expects contribution. If the civil society actors will through collaboration with the churches adopt a new ethics and culture of peace and nonviolence, their impact will be felt much more than it is at present.

5.4.1 Civil Society as Watchdogs

This is against the background that such organizations have a wide-range, receptive membership and they are major stake holders when it comes to issues of the whole society. However, it shall not be neglected that some social activists

while promoting their claims, are also inciting violence or are involved in it. State institutions are weakened, thus civil society has a preponderant role to play in offering alternative ways in forging a peaceful society; a coalition of civil society actors is needed to provide a wide-spread support- not only for religious people- but for all people towards a new ethics of nonviolence.

It is interesting to note at this point that there are so many of such Non-Governmental Organizations and Human Rights Organizations and it will be near impossible to mention all that are pursuing peace, justice and freedom. In Nigeria, such organizations are on the increase on a daily basis, some for genuine purposes while others for selfish and unhealthy reasons. If the civil society actors will see themselves as watchdogs of the society, it will make them more relevant.

Worthy of mention though not in any order of importance or prominence is the Human Rights Monitor (HRM) with its Headquarters at Kaduna in the northern part of Nigeria with Festus Okoye as the current Director. This as stated above is a voluntary, non-governmental, non-partisan human rights organization committed to the promotion and protection of human rights in Nigeria. It was founded in 1992 in Kaduna State, and members include lawyers, academics, workers, students and journalists. HRM does:

1. To defend freedom of thought and expression, due process and equal protection of the law.
2. To provide free legal assistance to indigent victims of domestic violence.
3. To educate labour unions, students unions, and professional bodies on the laws governing their trades and professions.
4. To empower Nigerian citizens to understand and defend fundamental rights and freedom.
5. To campaign for the promulgation of Human Rights and people oriented legislation.
6. To promote the principles of accountability and transparency in the public and private sectors of the society.
7. To engage in programs that will strengthen the legal system and guarantee a free and independent judiciary and other democratic institutions.

8. To investigate human rights abuses and issues reports on human rights situation especially on Women, Children, the Area Courts, the Police and other paramilitary organs and institutions.

The HRM has been working in collaboration with other civil society organizations in creating human rights awareness among the different strata of society more especially in Northern Nigeria. They have been doing this through workshops, organizing of trainings and advocacy and through carrying out research on violence.

Human Rights Monitor has been doing pretty well and delivering on its mandate. However, it has attracted lots of criticism as is common to all human organizations. Weaknesses are sometimes noticed with the international influences on HRM which at many times seem to be too insensitive to the plight of some genuine victims of violence. The comments, reports and accusations of the HRM over the years on the cases of the violent activities of terrorists or religious fundamentalists have attracted lots of criticism putting the HRM on a bad light with some beginning to think it is a political group or a religious group. When the HRM accused the military of excesses and are advocating for amnesty and compensation to terrorists and religious zealots while paying less concern on the plights of the victims of the activities of those crimes raises too many questions than answers. Nothing has been heard from the HRM on the denial of Certificates of Occupancy to the Christians in Borno State, denial of teachings of Christian religious knowledge in public schools among others which infringes on their fundamental human rights are major weaknesses of HRM. Just as they are also and most often criticism against the Church when it comes to matter of violence, through the workshop, training, seminars, conferences etcetera, the Church and HRM will collaborate and a true and balanced human rights to all regardless of one's religious or political affiliation will be achieved.

There is the Civil Rights Congress of Nigeria (CRC) with Shehu Sani as the current Director. This is regarded as the Northern Nigeria's foremost Human Rights Organization.

*Human Rights Congress of Nigeria is a coalition of likeminded individuals and organizations dedicated to the achievement of a comprehensive democratic culture in Nigeria. The founding of the organization has been necessitated by the need to develop a veritable instrument to combat massive abuses of power by governments and their coercive instruments-both military and civil resulting in a macabre denial of people's basic political, economic, social and civil rights in a bid to keep them in perpetual servitude through keeping them permanently immobilized.*³⁴³

Studying closely the goal of the Congress, there are lots of overlaps and convergences with Human Rights Monitor discussed above. But worthy of mention is the objective of the CRC,

*Our objective is, the achievement of unity, peace and good governance, the advancement of the social, economic and political well-being of the people and the protection of their lives, dignity and freedom against the vagaries and excesses of the state, its agents and the dominant class within which the state is located.*³⁴⁴

The way CRC carries out its mandate is through lectures, seminars, conferences, training and workshop through which the populace is enlightened, mobilized and sensitized. Assurances were at some times given on legal matters and issues to the under-privileged and the needy in the society and CRC do carry out research as well.

Civil Rights Congress has also suffered the same criticism despite the achievement it recorded in some aspects. The achievements in the areas of speaking out against human rights violation and abuses which hitherto was not so much talked about. However, just as in the case of Human Rights Monitor where it has severally been accused of playing partisan politics, in the case of Civil Rights Congress, the actions and inactions of the director Comrade Shehu Sani has attracted more of such criticisms. As he stands in defense of the rights of people, more often than not, he has lots of foreign influences and the Congress seem to lose touch with reality and is seen as being insensitive to the plight of the real and true victims of violence. Severally, the Congress has severally spoken against

³⁴³ Constitution of the Human Rights Congress.

³⁴⁴ Ibid.

governments and its policies and programmes no matter how good the programmes are. Here is where the Church and the Civil Rights Congress will collaborate to build on the achievement of the Congress and strengthening the weaknesses and lapses of the Congress. At anytime violence erupts in certain part of the country, both the Church and the Congress should be objective in their rapporteur and to have genuine human feelings of the true victims, in other words to empathize with the real victims. The comments and statements from the Congress had at sometimes been biased and seen as supporting a particular religion over and above others or the other. When the Congress and the Church collaborate, this negative impression will easily be erased.

Here, for space, the researcher enumerates some of the Civil Rights organizations and Civil Society Groups. The list is not comprehensive as Non-governmental organizations are on the increase on a daily basis. The League of Democratic Women with Rebecca Sako-John as the Coordinator with the Headquarters still at Kaduna. Then Rural Women and Youth Development Coordinated by Abdul Yusuf is worthy of mention. Community Centre for Development is relevant to our discussion having Ibrahim Shuni as the Coordinator. Aishat Moh'd Namera Coordinates Women Support and Development Initiative and Wasila Idris handles Resource Centre for Human Rights & Civic Education. Yushau Sani Yankuzo coordinates United Action for Democracy (UAD) while Women Health and Development Network is handled currently by Hajia Amina T. Soleiman and Sanusi Hashimu takes care of Peace and Development Organization. Transition Monitoring Group (TMG) is chaired by Ibrahim M. Zikirullahi and Civil Society Legislative Advocacy Centre (CISLAC) having Rafsanjani Ammed as National Coordinator with the headquarters at Abuja. Mention must be made of Women in Nigeria (WIN) which is coordinated by Dooshima Agur, then Centre for Citizens Rights (CCR) with Abdullazeez Bako as Coordinator. There are many and various State Centre for Women, Youth and Community Development, then the Muslim Sisters Association of Nigeria and also the Centre for Human Rights and Conflict Resolution (CHRCCR) under the leadership of Idris Miliki Abdullahi. We have Centre for Social Justice

(CSJ)³⁴⁵ a non-governmental organization training lawyers, law students and members of the lower judiciary on how to work on human right issues with special focus on the rights of women and vulnerable groups.

There was held on Thursday 6th September 2012 Presidential Retreat for Civil Society Organizations and Professional Associations where the then President of Nigeria Dr Goodluck Ebele Jonathan told the participants that they were invited because of their closeness to the people and their understanding of their fears and desires. This was at the time of the Constitutional Amendment. The President went further to say,

*I will listen to your ideas and government will respect your opinions and consider every actionable suggestion that will strengthen the social contract between the government and the people. I will vigorously champion those ideas that will make us stronger, more caring and more united as a nation under the Almighty God. I am confident that I can count on our partnership in the process as we look forward to a better tomorrow. As we go forward, I call on you to put your thought to those things that ensure justice for all.*³⁴⁶

Although the emphasis in most of the above civil society organizations are on the current crises and sometimes research carried out on remote causes of violence and crisis and covered by the crisis on ground. In the collaboration the researcher had the opportunity to attend one between the Church and some of the above Civil society organizations where the research looked at how to develop the ethics and culture of peace and nonviolence. When children are raised knowing the value of human life, respect to neighbour, support to all people without any recourse to one's religious affiliation we are sure to be on the right path. When such are done, the level of achieving peace and peaceful co-existence will be a reality. As stated earlier in our research, the reason why lots of people are living at peace with Muslim brothers and sisters is because most of the reasons that contributed to this is when people were taught of the dignity and sanctity of human life, there was never for once any teaching among the Christians as far as the researcher could

³⁴⁵ Centre for Social Justice (CSJ) is a think-tank co-founded in 2004 by Iain Duncan Smith and Tim Montgomerie. The Organization's stated aim is to 'put social justice in the heart of British politics.'

³⁴⁶ The Guardian Newspaper, Presidential Retreat for Civil Society Organizations and Professional Associations, Thursday 6th September, 2012.

know where Christians are taught to hate a Muslim and Muslim brothers and sisters should emulate and reciprocate same.

5.4.2 Civil Society International Laws in Conflict with Local Laws³⁴⁷

Are all civil society international laws in agreement with local laws or are there some that are in conflict with local laws? When international laws conflicts with local laws, which one to be followed and how? What happens to the sovereignty of the country where such local laws exist?

It is obvious that not all international civil society laws are in agreement with local laws, this is however not peculiar to the Nigerian context but the world at large. In other words, some of the laws governing most of the civil society organizations are in tension with local laws that have been governing the people for decades. Before addressing how to solve the tension, there is the need by way of example to mention one or two of such laws.

The Child Right Act with the emphasis on the right of the child to life, to education, to fair treatment etc. This could be seen where corporal punishment is rejected and children have the right in some countries to seek redress from social welfare against parents who they suspect to have tempered with their rights. In schools, teachers are now being restrained from using the cane on pupils as this is seen as barbaric. The local laws in Nigeria and some neighbouring countries have this adage, "spare the rod and spoil the child." One could see the tension so obvious.

The second example is the controversial anti-same sex marriage laws that nations are threatened when their leaders respecting the culture and religious beliefs of their people mostly in African countries approve. This is not limited to the secular arena but even the religious circle is not immune to these threats. One could see the tension there in.

What of the right to life where even the perpetrators of violence are sometimes enjoying more protection than the victims. In other words the aggressor becomes

³⁴⁷ www.cso-effectiveness.org accessed 22/09/2016.

more protected than the one who is oppressed. The case of the Nigerian Military in their over eight years' war against the Islamic Terrorists group Boko Haram had suffered literal defeat as a result of such international laws where the military had been accused of manslaughter.

How is such a dicey situation to be treated? To handle this, there is the need for understanding and respect for one another. This however, had not always been possible because the world is generally an unfair place where the powerful and rich are most often than not seen as always right and they could impose their idea and opinion on others. Mention must be made of the Gulf War where the United States of America went into it even without the agreement of the United Nations. There should be respect for the territorial integrity of all nations and respect for ones culture in areas where it does not infringe on human rights.

5.4.3 Civil Society and Partisan Politics a Hindrance to Peace and Nonviolence

One of the persistent and strong criticisms against most of the Civil Society Organizations is partisan politics. It has been obvious that some Civil Society Actors instead of being as societies' watchdogs, they ended up playing partisan politics thereby blinding their eyes sometimes from seeing, identifying and addressing real issues affecting societies. Such kind of Civil Society Actors most a times could end up either as tools in the hands of opposition political parties or as ruling party's mouth piece. In Nigerian political space, some Civil Society Organizations are cut in this quagmire. Mr. Shehu Sani of Civil Society Congress of Nigeria by way of example had always acted more as an opposition party in Nigeria making himself into being looked at as playing partisan politics an accusation he has always objected but there are some elements of truth. This could be seen in the role he played in sometimes calling for Amnesty for the Boko Haram Nigerian terrorists group. This attitude no wonder have been a hindrance and sometimes been outright obstacles to peace and nonviolence in the Nigerian context.

The researcher strongly suggests that Civil Society Actors not only in Nigeria but globally need to perform their functions as watchdogs of society and desist from partisan politics and those identified to be politicians using such outfits to be delisted as it has many negative implications.

5.5 Church of the Brethren in Nigeria and Challenges of Nonviolence Practice

This is against the background studied earlier that Nigeria is truly a violent context so too the world at large. One important point to state here is the fact that the Nigeria Constitution has one sentence on Conscientious Objectors.

In Chapter IV 31. (1) Every individual is entitled to respect for the dignity of his person, and accordingly-
(a) no person shall be subject to torture or to inhuman or degrading treatment
(b) no person shall be held in slavery or servitude; and
(c) no person shall be required to perform forced or compulsory labour.
(2) for the purposes of subsection (1) (c) of this section, "forced or compulsory labour" does not include-
*(c) in the case of persons who have **conscientious objections** to service in the armed forces of the Federation, any labour required instead of such service;*

The bold and underline is for emphasis by the researcher. Worthy of note is that during the Nigerian Civil War of the 1967 through to the 1970 there was the draft to the Nigeria Army, but then this constitution was not in force and no denomination or religious body applied for conscientious objection.

The greatest challenge posed to the Church of the Brethren in Nigeria practice of nonviolence is addressed.

5.5.1 Church of the Brethren in Nigerian and Faith and Praxis

The Church of the Brethren in Nigeria does not see the practice of peace and nonviolence as a theory which needed interpretation but as a faith matter that needed to be lived out. This is challenging due to how society is and eruption of

violence where the governments and sometimes the Christian Association of Nigeria could only make statement but unable to stop the violence. How is the Church to live out the teaching of Jesus Christ in relation to nonviolence where violence is unending? In the Bura Language one of the languages spoken by one of the major tribes constituting the Church of the Brethren in Nigeria membership, there is this adage, "mpa ana ngila a nyarfur kanadi." This can literally be translated, "violence rests at the door of the kind hearted." This adage means that for a kind hearted and gentle person, she/he has always violence to contend with. This shows that the Church of the Brethren in Nigeria had several challenges living out their faith of peace and nonviolence. The society and culture is not conducive for their faith and praxis of nonviolence.

Of course the challenge to faith and praxis is not only limited to the Church of the Brethren in Nigeria and is neither limited to the issue of peace and nonviolence. By way of example, the evangelism command of the church as contained in the Bible as recorded in Matthew 28:18-20 faces several challenges in praxis more especially in predominant Muslim communities.

There were several times when the Church of the Brethren in Nigeria was shaken to its foundational faith in peace and nonviolence and the thought of giving it up did dominate. When their communities were overrun, taken over by fundamentalists and murderers and caves, mountains and bush became safe haven for people. From the leadership of the church to the followers, many questions have been raised as to how the faith and praxis of peace and nonviolence be maintained. Despite all the difficulties and challenges, the Church of the Brethren in Nigeria still believes in their heritage of peace and nonviolence and is ever determined to live it out. The brethren like Bonhoeffer have the inherent understanding of faith in Jesus that,

Jesus must therefore make it clear beyond all doubt that the 'must' of suffering applies to his disciples no less than to himself. Just as Christ is Christ only in virtue of his suffering and rejection, so the disciple is a disciple only in so far as he shares his Lord's suffering and rejection and crucifixion. Discipleship means adherence to the

*person of Jesus, and therefore submission to the law of Christ which is the law of the cross.*³⁴⁸

The Brethren seeing themselves as Jesus' disciples in the Nigerian context are living out their faith amidst the challenges and literally accept to suffer as Jesus did. Another interesting point from Bonhoeffer that depicts the Brethren faith and praxis is when he wrote on the Beatitude, '*Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God.*' He explained thus,

*The followers of Jesus have been called to peace. When he called them they found their peace, for he is their peace. But now they are told that they must not only have peace but make it. And to that end they renounce all violence and tumult. In the cause of Christ nothing is to be gained by such methods. His kingdom is one of peace, and the mutual greeting of his flock is a greeting of peace. His disciples keep the peace by choosing to endure suffering themselves rather than inflict it on others. They maintain fellowship where others would break it off. They renounce all self-assertion, and quietly suffer in the face of hatred and wrong. In so doing they overcome evil with good, and establish the peace of God in the midst of a world of war and hate.*³⁴⁹

The above statement explains why the Brethren could endure such hate and wrong and agree to suffer but not to inflict pains on others. This is so because as the followers of Jesus Christ who himself agreed to be wronged, they want to follow in Jesus' steps. The Nigerian brethren have been accused of cowardice and always trying to benefit from the sins of the military or security agents. This has been the same accusation leveled against pacifists, but could in no way make the brethren to abandon their heritage.

5.5.2 Church of the Brethren in Nigeria and a Failed State

What is a failed state? Has there been a time that Nigeria became a failed state? How did the Nigerian brethren behave at such a time when all things seem to work against them and by extension against the Church? These are some of the questions addressed in this subsection.

³⁴⁸ Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *The Cost of Discipleship*, (New York: The Macmillan Company), 1967:96.

³⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 126.

Although there is no universally accepted definition of a failed state, the less offensive definition is this,

A Failed State is a state perceived as having failed as some of the basic conditions and responsibilities of a sovereign government... The Fund for Peace characterizes a failed state as having the following characteristics:

** Loss of control of its territory, or of the monopoly on the legitimate use of physical force therein* Erosion of legitimate authority to make collective decision*

** Inability to interact with other states as a full member of the international community.*

Common characteristics of a failing state include a central government so weak or ineffective that it has little practical control over much of its territory; non-provision of public services; widespread corruption and criminality; refugees and involuntary movement of population; and sharp economic decline.³⁵⁰

When Nigerian state is taken as a case study applying the characteristics of a failed state mentioned above, some of the characteristics may be seen. Between 2009 and 2015 since the emergence of the violent activities of the Islamic Sect Boko Haram, Nigeria had lost some of her territories to them in the attempt to create an independent Islamic state. As at February 2015, Boko Haram controls 20 out of the 27 Local Government Areas of Borno State, 6 Local Government Areas in Adamawa State and 5 Local Government Areas in Yobe State. There are hundreds of thousands of Internally Displaced Persons and Refugees in the neighbouring Cameroon, Chad and Niger Republic. As to corruption, Nigeria is ranked high in the Corruption Index. However, economically Nigeria is not doing badly so too in the areas of development and governance in other parts of the country especially in the Eastern and Southern parts of the nation.

Yet, in the ranking of failed states published by the United States think-tank and an independent research organization, "Nigeria was ranked 15th most failed nation in the world, out of a total of 177 countries that were surveyed."³⁵¹The same group ranked Nigeria 18th in 2008 and 17th in 2007. This ranking may have been influenced besides the above vices mentioned but also by the kidnappings and armed robbery activities in some part of the nation. The rate of youth

³⁵⁰ en.wikipedia.org/wiki/failed_state, accessed 11 January, 2015.

³⁵¹ www.proshareng.com/news/7135.html, accessed 12 January, 2015.

unemployment and the wealth of the nation are in the hands of the rich few while the generality of the citizenry live in abject poverty. With all these pictures, this is an area where more research is needed as the Nigerian government will not accept the designation as a failed state. In July 2015 after the Boko Haram abducted the over 276 Chibok School girls which attracted global attention and developed nations like France, the United States, Germany, Russia among others sent into Nigeria some highly trained personnel to assist in rescuing the girls which as at March 2015 they were nowhere to be found. Senator John McCain who had contested for the post of the American President said Nigeria was on an auto-pilot a statement which was resisted and he was called all manner of names by the government of Nigeria. It was until on the 18th May, 2016 that one of the girls by name Amina regained her freedom with a child for the sect member. As of May 2016, eight of the parents of the abducted girls are said to have died as a result of trauma. On the 13th October, the whole nation was in the mood of celebration as 21 of the Chibok girls regained their freedom leaving the rest still in the custody of the insurgents.

In such a situation where the government has the constitutional right to protect lives and properties and the government seems to have failed, how is the Church of the Brethren reacting? The Church of the Brethren in Nigeria as stated earlier that it was the church that was worst hit by the activities of the Boko Haram, due to her peace heritage, it has maintained her peace and nonviolent stance and have not abandoned this teaching. Yes, there were times both the clergy and laity raised questions as to what to do in such a situation when those paid with tax payers' money are not able to protect citizens from annihilation or genocide? Would the theology of self-defense be an option? The Church of the Brethren true to her nonviolent teaching had been speaking out against violence, injustice and corruption and advocating for dialogue and peaceful resolution of all the crises.

5.5.3 Church of the Brethren in Nigeria and Her Practice of Nonviolence a Gift to the Nation

Is there anything in the practice of nonviolence of the Church of the Brethren in Nigeria that will serve as a gift to the Nigerian state? In responding to the above

question, the Church of the Brethren in Nigeria considers her peace heritage and nonviolence practice to be a gift Nigerian nation will appreciate.

There are situations where communities were overrun, captured by violent Islamic Fundamentalist group as the Boko Haram with no protection from the government, would the church resort to violence as the last option? Would the church carry up arms against the aggressors? I have to make it categorically clear here that, in such a violent context, such a doctrinal position could be vulnerable, but it doesn't mean it be discarded rather that it needs to be in constant interrogation so that one can solidify this position. The question is how do we hold on to this position until the end? When the church was faced with such seemingly hopeless situations, severally the last option left was for the people to flee. Is this not a defeat? When people are asked to flee, they are to flee to where and how? Can't this be regarded as treasonable or collective suicide? Is this not proving that the nonviolent doctrine could be weak and not strong?

In responding to the above questions, it should be noted that to flee is not a defeat, it can be a courageous thing to do, it is practical and we do not just flee without consideration. Fleeing is done consciously and deliberately and not to death as the church had a long history of fleeing from violent contexts. As mentioned earlier in the cause of this research work, from the history of the Church of the Brethren, we saw that they had to migrate from Schwarzenau in Germany to Pennsylvania in the United States. There are historically some Christians who lived this out. Bonhoeffer when he wrote on 'Single-Minded Obedience' he charged us as disciples to obey all that Christ Jesus taught us. In his discussion on 'Revenge' he had this to say,

At this point it becomes evident that when a Christian meets with injustice, he no longer clings to his rights and defends them at all cost. He is absolutely free from possession and bound to Christ alone. Again, his witness to this exclusive adherence to Jesus creates the only workable basis for fellowship, and leaves the aggressor for him to deal with. The only way to overcome evil is to let it run itself to a standstill because it does not find the resistance it is looking for. Resistance merely creates further evil and adds fuel to the flames. But when evil meets no opposition and encounters no obstacle but only patient endurance, its sting is drawn, and at

*last it meets an opponent which is more than its match. Of course this can only happen when the last ounce of resistance is abandoned, and the renunciation of revenge is complete. The evil cannot find its mark, it can breed no further evil, and is left barren.*³⁵²

Nonviolence is not weakness, is courage, it is not defeat but it defeats, it is not cowardice but boldness. It is not collective suicide or treasonable as in aiding the aggressor, but we need to know that it is possible the church to loose all her members if the courage to flee is not adopted. Where is the courage in fleeing? The courage is in the determination to detach oneself from the known and to venture into the unknown. The courage rests also in the strength to let go of all that one has and to look ahead for carrying one's cross and following Jesus. By so doing, Bonhoeffer says,

*To leave everything behind at the call of Christ is to be content with him alone, and to follow only him. By his willingly renouncing self-defense, the Christian affirms his absolute adherence to Jesus, and his freedom from the tyranny of his own ego. The exclusiveness of his adherence is the only power which can overcome evil.*³⁵³

Thus, to flee is to protect lives, to preserve lives and to do the courageous thing in the face of unending violence in a seemingly failed state. The Headquarters of the Church of the Brethren in Nigeria having been captured by the insurgents on the 30th October 2014 fled along with the Bible College, the comprehensive Secondary School, The Women Development Center, The ICT as well as the Rural Health Centre and operated temporarily in Jos the Plateau State capital. If the church had not taken the courage to flee, what would have been of the church today? But for the singular fact that the church acted, it avoided collective suicide and is alive to testify of the love of Jesus to the aggressors.

Where does the Brethren, Bonhoeffer and other believers learnt to flee from aggressors and violent people? The answer to this question is obvious; they learnt it from Jesus' teaching as recorded in Matthew 10:23 which read "When you are

³⁵² Bonhoeffer, p. 157-158.

³⁵³ Ibid.

persecuted in one place, flee to another. Truly I tell you, you will not finish going through the towns of Israel before the son of man comes.”

Worthy of note is the fact that there are many Nigerian leaders who are appreciating the Church of the Brethren for her fleeing. The Borno State Governor, Kashim Shetima said thus, “We as Muslims and Borno people are to thank you for the way you acted and reacted to the violence. If what happened would have been the other way round where say a Christian was the one who stroke a Muslim, Borno State would have been consumed. But you did not react violently, we are grateful to you.”³⁵⁴

5.6 Christian Association of Nigeria³⁵⁵: A Critique

This is how the Church is analyzed, how the Church in its ecumenical setting has been responding to the issue of violence in the Nigerian context. Brief history of the formation of the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) is given, emphasis is to critique CAN pointing out areas where there is need for CAN to go beyond making statements during or after violence to developing culture of peace and nonviolence.

5.6.1 Formation of the Christian Association of Nigeria

Brief history of the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN). CAN is the umbrella body containing many Christian denominations and ecclesial bodies in Nigeria. To say that CAN is the largest Christian Ecumenical Body ever established in Nigeria and indeed Africa is not an overstatement. CAN was founded in 1976 during the reign of General Olusegun Obasanjo, the then Military Head of State. It was generally held that the then Head of State invited Christian leaders to discuss with them the government intention of introducing the National Pledge and salutation of the National Flag in the Nation’s Primary and Secondary Schools (high schools).

³⁵⁴ Speech by the Executive Governor of Borno State, His Excellency, Kashim Shetima on the occasion of the Courtesy Call on him at the Government House, Maiduguri by the President of EYN Rev Joel S. Billi and his team on the 21st July, 2016.

³⁵⁵ EFFECTIVE DATE: This Constitution was unanimously passed at an Extra-Ordinary Meeting of the National Assembly of the Association holding at the National Ecumenical Centre, Abuja, this Thursday, the Seventeenth day of June in the year of our Lord, Two thousand and four (17-06-2004).

After that meeting held at Dodan Barracks, Lagos³⁵⁶ where the Christian leaders did not object to the above issues, they went to the Catholic Secretariat and held a meeting which later on bears the name Christian Association of Nigeria. However, that did not just happen spontaneously. Before 1976, in the northern part of Nigeria, there had been a fellowship of Churches which was founded in order to unite and resist the perceived Islamization of the north by the Usman Dan Fodio Jihad³⁵⁷ under the name Christian Association of the North. The Christian Association of the North was founded in 1975 a year earlier than the Christian Association of Nigeria. That was generally seen as the foundation of the Christian Association of Nigeria. Of course, the northern representatives at the meeting in 1976 that led to the formation of Christian Association of Nigeria suggested during deliberation of which name to adopt stated that North be replaced with Nigeria to read Christian Association of Nigeria instead of the North (CAN) which was accepted. Before the present organizational structure of CAN, at the onset, CAN classified the Associations' church members into three groups namely the Roman Catholics, Protestants mainline groups under Christian Council of Nigeria (CCN) and others, but it later expanded to include the Pentecostals and the Organization of the African Instituted Churches. At present, the organization of CAN is this that, it is made up of five blocs, namely: the Christian Council of Nigeria (CCN), the Catholic Secretariat of Nigeria (CSN), The Pentecostal Fellowship of Nigeria (PFN), the Organization of African Instituted Churches (OAIC) and last but in no means the least is the Fellowship of Churches of Christ in Nigeria/Evangelical Church Winning All (TEKAN/ECWA). CAN had Women Wing (WOWICAN) and Youth Wing (YOWICAN). The National Executive Council of CAN is made up of 105 members who are responsible for electing the President of the Association and the General Assembly is made up of 304 members who ratify the election of the President.

³⁵⁶ Dodan Barracks was the residence of the heads of states of various Military Governments in Nigeria and of course the Supreme Military Headquarters until the Nigerian Capital City was moved from Lagos to its present location Abuja in 1991.

³⁵⁷ The Islamic Holy War carried out by Usman Dan Fodio other historians write Othman Dan Fodio from Sokoto to which lots of interpretations were given. Some hold to the view that he Usman was concerned with bringing sanity in Islam and among Muslims who were at that time more syncretistic. However, many historians hold to the view that it was not only to sanity Islam but also war against pagans, heathens and non-Muslims. One of the results of which was the imposition of Hausa/Fulani Islamic Emirs/Rulers wherever they conquered. The effect of that Jihad is still evident in Nigeria where even in Michika Local Government in Adamawa State with over 90% of the population are Christians the Emir is a Muslim, so too in Adamawa where the Hausa/Fulani are but Settlers are the ruling class.

Details on the bloc membership of Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN). Let us look at the breakdown of the different blocs under this umbrella. However, it is at this point that it is not as easy as one could think due to the fact that some of the blocs are having increasing membership on a daily basis as a result of further proliferation.

First but is by no means the largest or most prominent or the earliest but simply based on my personal arrangement and bias is the Organization of African Instituted Churches (OAIC). OAIC Nigeria Region was founded in 1978 when the Nigerian leaders attended the meeting of African Instituted Churches (AIC) which was held at Cairo, Egypt. That meeting gave birth to the formation of the OAIC and had their headquarters first at Cairo, Egypt before it was transferred to its present place in Nairobi, Kenya in 1982. The name of the fellowship at first was called 'African Independent Churches' but at the request of the Kenyan Government for a change of name, the present name 'African Instituted Churches' was adopted. As the name implies, this is the organization of Churches that have not been founded by any missionary body or by the mainline Churches but are founded by Africans themselves, of course Africans who were Christians and members of Churches founded by missionaries.

The Vision of OAIC is the people of Africa:

- ❖ *Building on their culture and values*
- ❖ *Transformed by the good news of Jesus Christ*
- ❖ *Blessed by the Spirit of God*
- ❖ *Creating abundant life in community for their Children and the world.*

OAIC'S Mission Statement is, "The OAIC seeks to bring African Instituted Churches together in fellowship and to equip and enable them to preach the good news of Christ in word and deed."³⁵⁸

As to OAIC's Ecumenical Relations, it has right at the onset consistently sought to work with other Christian Churches and organizations. OAIC is an associate member of the All Africa Conference of Churches (AACC) and is recognized as an ecumenical body working in partnership with the World Council of Churches

³⁵⁸ OAIC Constitution para. 3a.

(WCC). OAIC is a member of World Conference of Religions and Peace (WCRP) with which it works closely for the development and implementation of HIV/AIDS programme. Just as in other African countries where OAIC Chapters and Regions enjoy and have good working relationships with national ecumenical bodies so too the Nigerian OAIC Region is a strong member of the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN), a bloc of CAN.

Some to mention few of the churches that made up the OAIC Nigerian Region are: The Celestial Church of Christ, The Cherubim and Seraphim Church Movement, The Church of the Lord ALADURA, The African Church etc.

The second Church bloc of CAN is the Christian Council of Nigeria (CCN). As the name indicates, one would of course guess and will be right that this bloc is right at the beginning an ecumenical body. From the historical point of view, Christian Council of Nigeria was a child of Edinburgh Conference of 1910 where lots of discussion and emphasis was put on cooperation and promotion of unity among Christian bodies. This was against the background that, prior to the Edinburgh Conference there were competition amongst denominations resulting into schisms and unhealthy rivalry. Denominationalism was discovered to be a major hindrance that retarded church growth. It was until 1923 in Abeokuta during the meeting of independent Christian assemblies that Christian Council of Nigeria was born. At that meeting, below were the terms of reference:

- ❖ To make African Christians aware of the need for unity.
- ❖ The need to adhere strictly to the golden precepts of unity earlier decided at Edinburgh Conference.
- ❖ To integrate both orthodox and protestant churches into merger.
- ❖ To appraise the foundation of churches and dissuade obnoxious discriminations among Christians.

The aims of the Council as stated in Article II of the Constitution of CCN are: To foster and express the fellowship and unity of the Christian Church in Nigeria, to further the realization of its oneness with the Church throughout the world; to keep in touch with the International Missionary Council and the World Council of Churches.

It is note worthy that CCN provided a framework for co-operation and dialogue about unity among the different member churches. EYN- Church of the Brethren in Nigeria has always been a member of CCN. The Roman Catholics are not members of CCN and this indeed raise lots of suspicion. Some other Church members of CCN to include among others but not limited to are: The Nigeria Baptist Convention, The Church of Nigeria Anglican Communion, The Church of Christ in Nations formally Church of Christ in Nigeria (COCIN), The Mambila Baptist Convention (NBC), The Presbyterian Church of Nigeria, Methodist Church, Four Square Gospel Church, EYN- Church of the Brethren in Nigeria, Orthodox Churches etc.

The Catholic Secretariat of Nigeria (CSN) is the next bloc of CAN. This refers to the Secretariat of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of Nigeria (CBCN) which is the organ of unity, communion and solidarity for millions of the Catholics spread across Nigeria. This organ was incorporated in March 15, 1958 and covers all Catholic Churches in Nigeria. It is the Conference of the Bishops that the idea of the church as family is expressed. The Conference provides the opportunity for the Bishops to pray together, study together, work together and with one voice speak and spearhead the teaching, prophetic and pastoral ministry of the Catholic Church in Nigeria. The Roman Catholic Church being of course the more organized with her structure solid, we may not say much on them, suffice to say, they have one of the largest population amongst the blocs of CAN and do actively participate in CAN activities and programmes. The Catholic Secretariat unlike the two Blocs discussed earlier is not an Ecumenical Organization but a Church Ecclesial body. At the formative stage of CAN, the first meeting was held at the Catholic Secretariat and most often than not, CAN Secretariats of many States, Zones and Local Governments had and some still have their Headquarters at the Catholic Secretariats.

For a better understanding of the Catholic Secretariat of Nigeria involvement in CAN, the obvious historical fact is discussed. Prior to the Vatican 11, the official Roman Catholic Church position had been: "Unless other Christian 'sects' agreed to accept the authority of and teaching of the Roman Catholic Church which was alone in possession of the full truth, then there was no point in co-operation at any level."

Here we could see that the Roman Catholic was so bitter and could not address other Churches as anything but 'sects.' But Church historians have told us that Vatican 11 held between 1962-1965 was one of the most important councils in the history of Christianity not only for the Roman Catholic Church. The effect of the pre-Vatican 11 on the Roman Catholic Church in Nigeria was obvious, continued rivalry with other Churches and other ecclesial bodies, lack of ecumenical collaboration among others. It was after Vatican 11 that the Roman Catholic Church agreed to enter into ecumenical relationship with other churches and ecclesial bodies.

The fourth bloc is the Christian Pentecostal Fellowship of Nigeria/Pentecostal Fellowship of Nigeria (CPFN/PFN). This is the umbrella body that came into existence in 1987 comprising of many Pentecostal Churches in Nigeria. As to the member Churches under this umbrella body, one would hardly count as they are on the increase on a daily basis in Nigeria. This fellowship is ecumenical in nature right at the formative stage. The fellowship is made up of Churches founded mostly by Nigerians with some having international influence but most were not founded by missionaries. This fellowship is of Churches that strongly believe in the present manifestation of the Holy Ghost powers comprising of miracles and speaking in tongues. Most of the Churches in this category revolve around one strong leader most often than not the President and Founder who may be charismatic in nature. Some to mention few of the Churches under this umbrella are: The Church of God Mission, Redeemed People's Mission, The Redeemed Christian Church of God (RCCG), The Word of Life Bible Church, The Living Faith Church a.k.a. Winners Chapel, Christ Embassy, the Deeper Life Bible Church, The Apostolic Church, the Chapel of Mercy, Wisdom Chapel, Biblical Christian Church (BCC), Rhema Assembly, Dunamis International, Oasis of Love, Fountain of Life, Pool of Bethsaida, and we can go on and on.

The last bloc is the Tarrayar Ekklesiyoyin Kristi A Nigeria (TEKAN) which in English is Fellowship of Churches of Christ in Nigeria/Evangelical Church Winning ALL formally Evangelical Churches of West Africa (ECWA). TEKAN is one of the largest ecumenical bloc of CAN with over three million adherents, comprising of fifteen member churches with two Associates and was founded in 1955. The Churches are, Church

of Christ in Nations (COCIN), Evangelical Reformed Church of Christ (ERCC), United Methodist Church of Nigeria (UMCN), Christian Reformed Church of Nigeria (CRCN), Lutheran Church of Christ in Nigeria (LCCN), Ekklesiyar Yan'uwu A Nigeria (EYN- The Church of the Brethren in Nigeria), Nongo U Kristi Hen Sudan Ken Tiv (NKST), Hadaddiyar Ekklesiyar Kristi A Nigeria (HEKAN), The Mambila Baptist Convention of Nigeria (MBCN), Nigeria Reformed Church (NRC), Evangelical Church of Christ in Nigeria (ECCN), Reformed Church of Christ in Nigeria (RCCN), United Missionary Church of Africa (UMCA), Christian Evangelical Fellowship of Nigeria (CEFN) and last but not the least is All Nations Christian Assembly (ANCA), while the two associates are The Church of Nigeria Anglican Communion and The Presbyterian Church of Nigeria. The Evangelical Church Winning All (ECWA) former Sudan Interior Mission (SIM) was not a member of TEKAN but was put together with TEKAN as a bloc of CAN. TEKAN fellowship bloc is made up of distinct denominations but is all missionary churches or mainline churches. Through the TEKAN fellowship, one of if not the biggest Ecumenical Theological College in West Africa if not in Africa was founded with the name "Theological College of Northern Nigeria" (TCNN) located at Bukuru in Jos the Plateau State capital.

CAN as a body starting with the aims and objectives then the other components of the association.

The Objectives of Christian Association of Nigeria shall include the following:

- (a) To serve as a basis of response to the unity of the Church, especially as contained in our Lord's pastoral prayer: "That they all may be one." (John 17:21).*
- (b) To promote understanding, peace and unity among the various people and strata of society in Nigeria, through the propagation of the Gospel.*
- (c) To act as a liaison committee, by means of which its member-churches can consult together and when necessary, make common statement and take common actions.*
- (d) To act as watch-man of the spiritual and moral welfare of the nation.³⁵⁹*

As stated earlier, CAN has Zonal Branches, State Chapters and the Local Government Branches. The Women Wing (WOWICAN) and the Youth Wing

³⁵⁹ Constitution of the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) as amended 2004, pp 1-2.

(YOWICAN) are very strong arms of the association. CAN has five Directorates namely: Department of Ecumenism and Inter-Faith; Department of legal and Public Affairs; Department of National Issues and Social Welfare; Department of Education, Youth and Women Development and last but not the least is the Department of Planning, Research and Strategy.

5.6.2 Christian Association of Nigeria and Denominational Differences

Denominational differences have been one of the major challenges to ecumenism and more so the Christian Association of Nigeria. Such differences are obvious when it comes to election of officials of the association. Due to the denominational differences, most a times those elected to lead the association are either people of questionable characters or those not acceptable to all thereby having negative effects on the acceptability of the association. There were times when the Roman Catholic Church as well as some of the Episcopal churches would either be inactive or even anti-CAN when their own are not at the helm of affairs of the association. In Borno State at anytime the Roman Catholics and the Anglicans are not at the leadership position, even participation in CAN activities will stop and they will begin to run activities as if replacing or act as representing CAN. The current constitution of CAN has helped in addressing such but more have to be done to help reduce this rift. On the side of the Pentecostals, they have their perceptions of other Christians as not spiritual enough but lack administrative skills as they are more of one man or one woman organizations.

It is worthy of note that the leadership of the Christian Association Of Nigeria in Borno and Adamawa States Chapters both in the north-eastern part of Nigeria, had severally been in the hands of Pastors of the Church of the Brethren in Nigeria. The impact of their peace heritage had been obvious due to non retaliation from all the unprovoked attacks on the Church by some extremists and fanatics. At anytime there was violence and the National Leadership of the Christian Association of Nigeria made a pronouncement which involves defense or so, the Church of the Brethren have always challenged such pronouncements and calling on Churches to have self-critiquing when handling issues of violence and conflicts. The Fellowship of

Churches in Nigeria under the auspice of the Christian Association of Nigeria and the Fellowship of Churches of Christ in Nigeria (TEKAN) to which the Church of the Brethren in Nigeria is an active member have unarguably been influenced considerably when it comes to issues of peace and peace building or conflict management the Church of the Brethren in Nigeria Peace Heritage. Church of the Brethren in Nigeria is also a founding member of Centre of Peace Advancement in Nigeria of course the Headquarters of CEPAN used to be sited in Church of the Brethren in Nigeria Compound in Jos. What then are the strategies the Church is to adopt in order to initiate a process of self-critiquing and self-examination on her understanding of violence and nonviolence? The Church of the Brethren in Nigeria as well as some Churches sharing similar belief and worthy of mention the MCC³⁶⁰, taking a leading role, have been actively involved in peace making and peace building and always calling and challenging some Churches that have not been actively involved to join. Churches have always been encouraged to engage in the ministry of reconciliation. Churches have been encouraged to start addressing the culture of violence with nonviolent stories, films, computer games, toys among others. The Children Sunday School system had been a target area where teachings are geared towards inculcating nonviolent virtues in the younger generations.

Mention have to be made at this point that even the peace and nonviolence position of EYN had been challenged by some of the churches that made up CAN due to the denominational differences thereby making CAN an association where more needs to be done to lessen the impact of denominational differences by emphasizing the commonalities.

5.6.3 Christian Association of Nigeria and Grassroots Distance: A Disconnection

Having discussed the brief history and composition of the Christian Association of Nigeria, one thing that came out so clearly is the disconnection between the grassroots and the leadership of CAN at the various levels. Interesting enough is the

³⁶⁰ Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) is a relief, service, and peace agency representing 15 Mennonite, Brethren in Christ and Amish bodies in North America. MCC is a global, nonprofit organization that strives to share God's love and compassion for all through relief, development and peace.

facts that even the Local Government CAN that is supposed to be close to the grassroots is not felt at the grassroots and its activities not appreciated. In other words, for now CAN is more remote to the people. When one hears the mention of CAN by members of a particular denomination, most often than note, it will be at CAN Easter Rallies or when there was a crisis and CAN is expected to act and it didn't or it made a statement which was either appreciated or became subject of controversy.

One would note something crucial missing in the departments of CAN and that is the absence of the Department of Peace, though we guess it is believed to be handled under that of Ecumenism and Inter-Faith. But seeing how violent Nigerian context has been, Peace should have been a department in CAN structure. Due to the absence of such a department and the complexity due to the composition of the body, at anytime there is crisis or conflict or violence in the nation, CAN has always had problem making an official statement. There were times the National Headquarters advocated for Self-Defense without recourse to the nature of the crisis or the theological issues involved or the positions of the various Churches that made up the organization.

The researcher is of the opinion that CAN be re-organized in such a way and manner that the disconnection between the leaders, pastors or clergy and the grassroots be solved failure of which the activities of CAN will continue to be less effective. One way to handle this is to put in place local church CAN committees that will always liaise with the Local, Zonal, State and National bodies and keep their local assemblies informed of the activities of CAN. When this is done, CAN is to harness the grassroots ways of bringing peace and develop it for the larger community.

CAN to set up a research committee to undertake a research on the eruption of violence and how to build the culture of peace and nonviolence.

5.7 Towards Ecumenical Collaboration for an Ethics and Culture of Peace and Nonviolence

Is it possible to develop a culture of peace and nonviolence? The researcher analyzed the sacred texts of both the Christians and Muslims highlighting passages where violence seems to have been supported and passages where violence was condemned. Christian-Muslim Dialogue and how to bring back the African Community spirit which hitherto existed is discussed. The Christian Association of Nigeria as the largest ecumenical body on the African soil pointing out its challenges and how to overcome those challenges are addressed. How then can ethics and culture of peace and nonviolence be made acceptable and relevant? This is where ecumenical collaboration comes to play.

In developing an ethics and culture of peace and nonviolence, it should not be the responsibility of a single denomination or just one ecclesial body. It should be the collective responsibility of the entire body of Christ in the Nigerian context and can have a world wide influence. The question then is, can it ever be possible for the Church to develop an ethics of peace and nonviolence?

The answer to the above question is not as easy as can be seen. This is against the background as noted earlier when the Christian Association of Nigeria and Denominational Differences are studied. The belief in the different theories of Christian attitudes to war comes to play. However, as much as the earlier on discussed theories have influences and are holding grip on their advocates, there is better understanding now than had ever been that all the theories are not in anyway sanctioning war so to speak but limiting war and violence.

Looking at it from this perspective then and the contemporary emphasis on Just Peace, one could see that the urge and desire to develop an ethics and culture of peace and nonviolence ecumenically is possible. How do churches collaborate ecumenically towards the ethics and culture of peace and nonviolence as discussed at the beginning of this chapter? Some few guidelines towards ecumenical collaboration for an ethics of peace and nonviolence is hereby presented.

To collaborate towards an ethics of peace and nonviolence, first emphasize again what is said in chapter three and four of this research work. As much as noted that

violence is ambiguous and ambivalent, but modern weapons have put to test some of the theories of limiting war and making some of the theories obsolete.

When talking of ecumenical collaboration for an ethics of peace and nonviolence, it is not about advocating for or asking Christians to abandon their position and adopt pacifists view a demand which will be unrealistic and irrational to ever imagine. By doing this is an attempt to limit violence, addressing this challenge of violence from the root. By developing an ethics of peace and nonviolence is the sure strategy for limiting war and defeating or dealing with violence even before it erupts.

Towards ecumenical collaboration is a clarion call towards giving meaning to the church thereby making the church truly the salt and the light of the world, and this is possible learning from the of Tower of Babel story, when the people have one language, one purpose and one mind, God could say there isn't anything they will plan to do which will be impossible for them (Genesis 11).

For the church to succeed in this aspect, it should have a self-critique not only of our sacred texts, but of denominational doctrines and ecclesial self understanding, identify areas that have hitherto serve as either bridge builders or bridge destroyers and build on or discard as the case may be.

The suggestion for collaboration is for every church denomination or ecclesial body regardless of the theory it holds to adopt nonviolence as its stand and work towards developing the culture of peace and nonviolence.

CHAPTER SIX

6.0 Summary

6.1 Conclusion

6.0 Summary

The researcher gives a general over view of all that is discussed highlighting some of the main points.

In the five chapters of this research project, the first chapter is subdivided into four subsections. The discussion started with the Church of the Brethren in Nigeria and that the Hausa name of the Church is Ekklesiyar Yan'uwaa a Nigeria. The research revealed that though the Nigeria Brethren were not taught pacifism as was in the mother church's understanding, the Nigerian Brethren are pacifists through practical pacifistic lives of the missionaries and not through taught peace theology. This was against the background that knowledge can either be obtained formally or informally. The Nigerian Brethren was successful in her reconciliation ministry by reconciling warring tribes and by restoring peace amongst families. The Brethren got their nonviolence teaching and demonstrated it based on the teaching of nonresistance of Jesus. This they held very tight and is referring to violence of all types.

Chapter two discussed the ecclesial self-understanding of the Historic Peace Churches. The Historic Peace Churches are the Mennonites, Society of Friends otherwise known as Quakers and the Brethren. We undertook a scrutiny of their distinctives and commonalities and understood that they were influenced by the pietists and Anabaptist movements of their time. However, we noted their emphasis on nonviolence and that all of them are pacifists denouncing all forms of war as evil.

Chapter three discussed the theoretical approaches to violence. That chapter played a major role in shaping chapter four that followed. It started by giving an overview on the interdisciplinary research on violence where it shows how ambiguous violence is and how ambivalent it is as well. The implication of the ambivalent nature of violence on the Church of the Brethren was discussed. We noted that for the Church of the Brethren however, all forms of violence is evil and nothing good in violence neither can violence give birth to good. Then pacifism from its origin to the arguments against and for was

analyzed. The research showed that pacifism was the earliest church's position in matters of war. It was after Constantine that pacifism became a minority position of the church. When we had a searchlight on the just war theory, we noted that it originated from the secular world but found its way into the church and took the majority position amongst the Roman Catholics, Lutherans, Anglicans to mention some. In the course of the discussion, it was seen that the theory has never been put to use and to make matters worse, by the invention of weapons of mass destruction, the theory then crumbles. Just Armed Struggle was like the case of the struggle of South Africans against the Apartheid regime where the World Council agreed to sending some financial support to those engaged in that and the Historic Peace Churches expressing resistance to that. Then the concept of Just Peace was studied and we saw that peace could only be obtained through justice.

Chapter four built on chapter three. The issue of violence in the Nigerian context from both the theological and ethical perspectives was discussed. The causes of violence are multidimensional and multifaceted, but just as there was from church history conflict of religion and politics in Europe (the 16th Century Religious Conflict in France), there are similarities with the Nigerian context.

Chapter five gave details towards ecumenical collaboration for an ethics and culture of peace and nonviolence. This was done through looking at Christian-Muslim Dialogue with those agreeing to and those disagreeing to but maintaining our argument for dialogue. Then it identified the challenges of the Nigerian Constitution towards societal integration. A critique of the Christian Association of Nigeria recommending that a research be carried out by CAN on eruption of violence and to stress peace education. Emphasis was laid on ecumenical engagement as a must needed for an ethics and culture of peace and nonviolence to be developed.

6.1 Conclusion

Having gone through this research from the first chapter to the summary, some recommendations and suggestions for the wider world community on this crucial subject of nonviolence is presented.

The researcher understood the gravity of the violent question and how challenging each of the various theories of overcoming violence is facing in the face of unending violence more especially in the Nigerian context.

The Strength of this thesis has been the fact that it was not a thesis written outside the context of violence but within the context. The researcher has been able to establish that for the Church of the Brethren, nonviolence goes beyond just theory but has taken a status of doctrine.

To the wider world community, the researcher is hereby recommending and suggesting that we should avoid stereotyping when it comes to violence issue and its causes. Each context be handled independently and the story from each context be appreciated.

Ecumenical engagement is to be stressed in all contexts towards developing the ethics and culture of peace and nonviolence not showing as if the position of one church is above that of others.

Each ecclesial body, each religious body and community to engage in self-critiquing to see from their sacred texts passages that seem to sanction violence and to work towards reinterpreting such passages.

Emphasis be laid by all religious groups and by every person on the dignity of life and respect for one another.

Love for fellow human beings and patriotism be taught and emphasized by all.

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