African Traditional Religion in the Context of Increasing Christian and Islamic Religion

By

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Abstract

African traditional religion in the increasing Christian society Religion has been the hide out of a lot of people and that is why Karl Marx said that it is the opium of the masses. African traditional religion which is the religion of the Africans has suffered in the hands of Islam and Christianity. It has been relegated to the background and has been given a lot of names which when looked critically, it would be found that the names are just given to tarnish the image. The aim of this work is to look at the three major religions we have in Nigeria critically and objectively so as to ascertain whether there is any difference between them. It is discovered that the three major religions are the same considering the essential ingredients of religion. Eg. Founders, scripture, doctrine etc. It is finally advised that the fight for supremacy among the three religions should not arise but instead, an advice is given for peaceful co-existence.

Introduction

Religion according to Karl Marx is the opium of the masses. Religion has gotten answers to a lot of things and problems people face in the world, this same religion has also ruined a lot of people because of the way people take it.

African traditional religion is one of the religions of the world, thus religion has contributed a lot to humanity because it is the bedrock and pace setter to all other religions of the world like Christianity, Islam, etc. This same religion who was, is still the bedrock of all other religions in the world has suffered tremendously in the hands of the other religions. Nevertheless, granted that it has suffered intimidation, she still struggles to make an impact in the lives of the people directly or indirectly. These impacts will be x-rayed as this work unfolds. Among the things that affected and is still affecting African traditional religion is secularism. This work will try to expose what different religions like Christianity, Islam is all about, the role of African traditional religion, factors militating against it and then its role in the increasing Islamic and Christian religion before the conclusion.

What is African traditional religion?

This is the indigenous religion of the Africans. It is the way Africans worship their god. This religion is found in almost all the activities of The African man. Awolawu and Depamu (1979) stated that this is a religion that has no written literature yet it is everywhere for those who care to see and read. It is largely written in the people as myths and folklores, in songs and dances, in their liturgies and shrines and in proverbs and pity sayings (p26) This religion has no founder and that is why it is called an indigenous religion. It is a religion that is full of life and activities through ceremonies, festivals etc. It places emphasis on virtues, values and morals.

It is popularly accepted that it has no scripture but modern researchers have faulted this on the issue of scripture. It is worthy to point out that an author should be understood not in restrictness of the writer (Ugwu, in brown, 1979:150). In other words, what is written down in a book for purpose of empirical and practical research, African traditional Religion is found in almost all activities of the African man, Awolawe and Dopamu (1979:26) in line with this stated "This is a religion that has no written literature yet it is written everywhere for those who care to see and read". It is largely written

in the people's myths and folklores, in songs and dance, in their liturgies and sayings and in proverbs and pity sayings.

However, the African traditional religion cannot be discussed without mentioning that it is the way of life of the people of Africa and so cannot be differentiated from the politics, education, and socialisation etc of the people which are all together. Thus Olikaenyi asserts that culture can be defined as the entire way of life of members of a community or language , morality, knowledge, worldview, symbols, kinship, social , relationships, types of economy, forms of government, science, religion, tools, technology, ways of feeling, attitudes, behaviour patterns etc(Olikenyi 2001:38). From the definition above, we can see that culture summarily is a way of life of the people.

There Are Some of Derogatory Words Used Against African Traditional Religion Namely

Primitive

The English word primitive, derives directly from the Latin term, primus, meaning, first. It is a relative term, that is, something is said to be first *(primus!* with the understanding that other things come second (secundus), third *(tertius),* etc. Conventionally, the adjective primitive, refers to something belonging to the beginning, or to the first times. In its origin, the word may not have had any negative connotation, as in the popular expression primus inter pores (first among equals). Over time, however, particularly with the kind of hatred and prejudice that dominated inter racial and cultural relations in the past, the word took on all sorts of derogatory undertones. It came to refer to something that not only belongs to the beginning/first-m-time, but also something thought to be crude, antiquated and uncouth. The word further took on wider ethnological and sociological significance. Researchers, particularly social analysts who came on the heels of Charles Darwin's theory of evolution, who were keen to discover cultural features thought to belong to

the beginnings of human species and society, frequently applied the term, primitive to peoples and cultures of Africa and the Oceania. In fact, in 1922, August Comte, one of the founding fathers of sociology published his voluminous work in French on primitive mentality [La Mentalite Primitiv, translated into English in 1923 as Primitive Mentality]. It was a widely read book in which the author tried to demonstrate that primitive mentality though not as logical as that of the average civilised westerner, does have it's characteristic feature, what Comte refers to as "the law of mystical participation". The primitives are not idiotic but their pattern of thought is rudimentary and inchoate (E.Evans-Pritchards 1965: 81).

Applied to African indigenous religions, the term primitive, indicates that the indigenous beliefs, ideas, values and symbols of various African peoples are antiquated, crude and unsuitable for the present age. Obviously, the lenses through which one views the indigenous religions in order to arrive at such value-laden conclusions are totally alien, negative and biased. For scholars like Levy-Bruhl, those lenses are drawn from the discriminatory standard of Graeco-Roman rationality and Judeo-Christian religious tradition. The term, primitive, is not acceptable in referring to African indigenous religious traditions as a whole, or any aspect of It. The indigenous religious heritage of most African groups is replete with ideas, beliefs and values about human life, society and environment which are comparable, sometimes nobler, to those of other religious traditions in other parts of the world.

Tribal (Tribe)

It is not uncommon to hear Africans refer to themselves as members of so and so tribe. More commonly, people readily use the adjective *tribal* to qualify and identify the indigenous religion of one African group or another. The usage of both the noun and the adjective (tribe/tribal), to identify any African language group or the religious heritage thereof is outmoded, derogatory and wrong. A tribe in current English usage refers

to a group or people usually having a common ancestry, sharing a common language and thought to be in a primitive or barbarous stage of development with a chief or leader overseeing them. Europeans employ the term in reference to other peoples, like those of Africa, South America, Asia and parts of the Pacific region. They use it with a clear discriminatory undertone; to show how uncivilized and unlike themselves (Europeans) the other peoples are. Westerners do not employ the term in reference to themselves or any of their kin-group dispersed in other parts of the world.

We maintain that African Indigenous Religions are not outmoded religions of any barbarous African group. It is a living and dynamic religion being practiced by decent people in different parts of the Continent, and in some transformed versions and degrees by Africans in the Diaspora.

Pagan / Paganism

This term, as E. B. Idowu correctly observed, is perhaps the oldest concept employed by people to refer to African Indigenous Religions and their adherents. When people use the term, most often they point to religions other than the one they themselves profess. The religion they profess is considered to be the correct one, while the one they refer to as pagan is thought to be crude, inchoate, uncivilized and false. That is, for example, largely the sense In which the concept is regularly used in the Bible to describe religions of nations other than Israel. Originally however, the term pagan comes directly from Latin, *paganus* -meaning a village or country-dweller. It primarily referred to people living in the rural area as opposed to those who live in the urban. Pagan was clearly a sociological concept rather than a religious one. To the extent however, that the customs and manners of rural inhabitants were thought to differ from those of the apparently civilized city dwellers, the religion of the rural people came also to be regarded as pagan. Over

time, the term pagan increasingly identified the form of religion of the village dweller.
Back to African Indigenous Religions, the term pagan was availed freely by Christian missionaries, European colonizers and ethnographers as label for the beliefs, rituals and traditional customs of the peoples of the Continent.

Against the background of the dominant racial sentiments, cultural and religious prejudices of the era, the term represented the prevailing thought that the indigenous religions were not only crude and primitive, but also barbaric, idolatrous, demonic and worthless. The word pagan is still very much in use in contemporary religious parlance. Many people use it simply to refer to indigenous 'belief systems, ritual practices, traditional norms, and values of African ancestors and their descendants in contrast to those of the immigrant religions like Christianity and Islam, without meaning to derogate the indigenous faith. But still many employ the term to convey the idea of something inferior, crude, demonic and uncivilized. For whatever intention the term is used, we do insist that the word, pagan, is inappropriate as a label for African Indigenous Religions. It should not therefore, be applied to the indigenous faith and rituals, of the peoples of the Continent.

Heathen/Heathenism;
This is yet another derogatory concept that people employ to refer to African Indigenous Religions and their adherents. Its usage derives primarily from the Old Testament Bible. We try to trace its usage and evolution in the Bible in some detail. Basically, the Hebrew term *goiim* in the Old Testament is translated into Greek as *erhne,* Latin *gentes and* literally in English as nation. The Jews saw themselves as "People of the Covenant", believed to be specially chosen by God and set apaii from other nations (goiim). The usage of goiim assumed fierce polemic connotation in the hands of Hebrew Prophets, particularly in the eighth-century B.C. in the prophecies ol Isaiah and Jeremiah. The Prophets delighted in Israel as a people of the covenant, to whom

God reveals himself as the true and living God. They derided and mocked their neighbours as people-outside the Covenant, whose G(g)ods were man-made, lifeless idols, that were worthless (see for example; Isaiah 2: 8, 40: IK, Jeremiah 2: 26-28; Psalms 115 and 135). It was this sense of the polemic and discriminatory usage *of goiim* (gentiles, nations ihai owned man idols and worthless gods) that passed into Christianity

Hence, heathenism became easily translated in several versions of the Bible as worship ol" man-made gods, idol-worship.

One Odoardo Lopez (Duarte Lopez), a Portuguese adventurer to sub-Saharan Africa in the sixteenth-century (1578 - 1588) was one of the pioneer employers of the term, heathen with its full biblical connotation, to, refer to the inhabitants of Congo. He had noted that the people were worshippers of idols. Several modern English dictionaries follow the example of the Bible and the seafarer, Lopez in defining heathenism/heathen in the polemic and pejorative sense. Chambers Dictionary for example, explains a heathen as "someone uncivilized, a person belonging to a people of lower form of religion, especially polytheistic, or of non-religion". Sub-Saharan Africans might not have been directly included in the Sinaitic Covenant in the Old Testament Bible, but they are neither worshippers of idols nor are their divine beings worthless. The concept, heathenism/heathen is clearly inappropriate and unacceptable for African Indigenous Religions. It should be discarded.

Fetish/Fetishism:

This term, like heathen, has evolved from its ordinary usage and meaning to become one of the negative concepts people consciously or unconsciously employ to denigrate practitioners and objects of worship of African Indigenous Religions. The ethnographer, Mary Kingsley left no one in doubt about her intention to belittle the indigenous religion

of the people in the following statement; "when I say Fetish or Juju, I mean the religion of the natives of West Africa…" Similarly, Sir James Frazer is quoted as referring to the religious head of the area as "the fetish king of West Africa". But, as Percy A. Talbot correctly states about Southern Nigeria (equally applicable to other parts of sub-Saharan Africa that "true fetishism, in which the object of worship is not symbolic, but is worshipped for and not as connected with, or representing a deity or spirit, is absent from this country.

The English word fetish is traced to its Latin root, Joctitius meaning something well made or magically artful through with its equivalent in Portuguese, /eitico, and festishe in Franch. Portuguese adventurers who called at some West African ports around the fifteenth-century were reported to have labeled the religion of the people they met along the Senegalese Coast as Jeitico. They had meant that the people whom they freely described as "wild" and "savages" possessed as their gods and themselves, things that resembled talisman and amulets Portuguese folks wore back home. Fetish, therefore, has some connotation of being man-made. It denotes a man-made idol, pieces of wood, stone, etc.

Furthermore, the concept, fetishism was later drawn into the discredited theory of Charles de Brasses about the origin of religion. Following the lead of Charles Darwin's landmark theory of evolution of biological species in 1859, de Brasses had attempted to extend the scope to such social realities like religion. He had in fact, speculated that the fetishes (enchanted objects) discovered by the Portuguese sailors in West Africa might after all, be the origin of religion. He proceeded to posit his three stage unilinear evolutionary scheme of fetishism, polytheism and monotheism- In the absence of any serious evidence, the hypothesis was easily dropped. The term should not be used to refer to African Indigenous Religions or any of their aspect.

Animist/ Animism:

Indigenous African religionists are sometimes referred to as animists, while their religion is dubbed animism. The term and the theory deriving from it, were propounded and popularized by Sir Edward Burnett Tylor in early 19lh-century. He had analyzed fetishism as formulated by de Drosses, and disagreed with it as a possible origin of religion. Instead, Tylor articulated an alternative evolutionary theory; namely, animism. According to him, the idea of ghosts appearing to people in dreams, and souls believed to be capable of separate existence after death, or destruction of the body, must have given primitive man the idea of deities and ultimately of supreme spirit (animism, polytheism and monotheism). He wrote in his work, Primitive *Culture* (2 vols. 187J) that, "...nothing but dreams and visions could ever put into man's minds such an idea as that of souls being ethereal images of bodies'" (Vol. H, 5th ed. 1913:334). Turning his attention to the belief in other souls, particularly those associated with animals, plants and other things, he stated that;

Men to whom the cries of beasts and birds seem like human language and their actions guided as it were by human thought, logically enough allow the existence of souls to beasts, birds and reptiles, as to men... Plants, partaking with animals the phenomena of life and death, health and sickness not unnaturally have some kind of soul ascribed to them.

To Sir E.B. Tylor we owe one of the shortest definitions of religion, as "belief in spiritual beings". Animism is thus, a doctrine of Spirit and spirits. For Tylor, it is "an attendant factor in every religion, in every culture, at any level of development" (cited in Idowu 1973:134). However, as E.B. Idowu points out;

> There is a sense in which 'animism' forms a vital element in the make-up of religion in Africa; if 'animism' is properly defined as recognition of the existence of Spirit or spirits as separate from the material. It is in fact, a positive denial of the

> notion that there are people anywhere in the world whose worship is offered to material objects or natural phenomena. (Idowu 1973:134).

In the view of Tylor, therefore, animism is not a preserve of Africa. African Indigenous Religions should not simply be reduced to animism, particularly when the concept is applied in a biased and discriminatory manner.

What Is Christianity?

This is based on the life and teachings of Jesus Christ. Christianity is a missionary religion holding that Christ's message as intended for the whole world is not just for a particular area or people instead for everyone as we can see in Mark 16:15 ff,Jesus gave the injunction "go ye into the world and preach the gospel to all creation ". The basic beliefs of Christianity are stated in the apostle's creed. The concept of God as a benevolent and forgiving rather than vengeful is a main level of the Christian faith. Christianity holds values and morals at a higher esteem. Another Christian belief is that even though man has sinned and separated himself from the love of God, he can be saved by repentance.

Factors that Prepared the Way for the Rise and Growth of Christianity

According to A.R. Whitham, on whose evidence this section of this chapter is predominantly based, these factors can be discussed against the background of the socio-political and religious situation in Palestine at the time of the birth of Jesus of Nazareth (1927:1). The first among the preparations for the rise and development of Christianity and the most direct is (1) The History and Religion of the Jewish People.

Concerning the Jewish religion, Judaism, it is worthy of note that the Old Testament Books written at various times combined to teach the highest conceptions of God and His requirements the world had known and

Christianity springing out of Judaism adopted and developed this teaching but did not change it. The Jewish religious conceptions that reveal the highest concepts of God are as follows:
The first dogma of Judaism was the unity of God in contrast with the competing divinities of the non-Christian world. The Jews had learnt that there was one only God - the Universal, Almighty, Supreme, Eternal and Personal Living God who had direct relation with mankind. They believed that their God, Yahweh, was superior to any other god. The core, of their faith is contained In the shema which says "Hear O! Israel, the Lord your God is One" (Deut. 6:4-5). This belief was later taken over by Christians.

The Jews conceived of the One God as holy and a moral being. This was as profound a distinction between the God of the Jews (Yahweh) and the divinities of the surrounding nations. For these Gentile nations the gods were generally understood- and worshipped either as immoral or non-moral. They were propitiated or made enemies not by the righteousness of the worshipper but by his sacrifices and ritual observances. In contrast, God was to the Jews essentially holy and righteous. The Jewish prophets had taught that sacrifices were valueless unless accompanied by purity and justice on the part of the worshipper. God cannot be pacified for wrong-doings by offerings of bulls and -goats. These concepts were also inherited by Christians.

The Jewish God was also that of loving purpose. He was preparing "redemption" or "salvation" for mankind at large through Israel. In various ways, the hope of divine redemption from the evils of the world was gradually connected in the Old Testament with the figure of a personal Redeemer, a Messiah, an Anointed King and Prophet and'Priest. As agents of God's victory over all forces, the Jews nursed the hope of a Messiah who would usher in the Kingdom of God and reign under the divine guidance of God. This belief or messianic hope which was very prominent in Judaism was also taken over by the Christians.

The Jewish idea of the Ecclesia (a sacred congregation marked off from the world by outward observance of the Mosaic Law) was later a theocracy rather than a monarchy. This idea also dominated the minds of those who first preached Christianity. The organization of Christian believers as an ecclesia (a church) was an obvious and natural thing. The new ecclesia with its distinctive sacraments and social life was the continuation and development of the old.

There was also the wider influence of Judaism made possible by the Jewish Diaspora (Disperson) and Hellenistic Judaism. Before the birth of Christ, the splendid conception of the Jewish religion (Judaism) had spread far beyond Palestine. With the conquest of Palestine or ever since their captivity in Babylon (in 583 BC) the Jewish race had found a home without losing individuality in other countries and among other races. Large numbers never ' returned to Palestine, but remained in Syria and Babylon, The conquest of Alexander the Great had also carried the Jews into new centres as colonists. Consequently, a large number were settled by Alexander in his new capital at Alexandria. They also spread westwards and established themselves in Rome being treated as friend- and allies by Rome. According to Frend, in Rome itself, the Jews were simply one among many foreign communities wilh their own religion. Admittedly, they were numerous, their numbers having been swelled by the influx of prisoners brought to Rome by Prompey after his capture of Jerusalem in 63 B.C. The Jews appears to have enjoyed complete peace and calm in Rome throughout the Republican period protected by the Roman Government. Thus, a decree of Dolalbella, governor of Asia, soon after the death of Julius Caesar is said to have read:

> *I do, therefore, grant the Jews freedom from going into the army-as former governors have done, and permit them to use the customs of their forefathers in assembling together for sacred and religious purposes as their law requires, and for collecting oblations necessary for their sacrifices (Frend, 1965:31).*

Those Jews who settled in Syria, Greece, Asia Minor, Egypt and Rome were called Hellenists as they had adopted the Greek language and often bore Greek names. As the Jews seem to have won the privilege everywhere of practising their own religion without hindrance, almost wherever St. Paul journeyed to he found in the towns synagogues where the Christian gospel had its first hearing. Before then it was clear that through the Hellenists, the characteristic features of the Jewish religion had made a great impression on many of the more thoughtful land religious minded 'pagans'. Almost every synagogue outside Palestine seemed to have had its fringe of Gentile (non-Jewish) hearers, the God fearers who without actually seeking incorporation into Israel, looked to Israel and her scriptures for/ guidance and inspiration. ^

Living as they did, far away from Jerusalem and the temple and the leading rabbinical schools, and in close contact with the 'heathen' world, the Hellenists, notwithstanding their real loyalty to Judaism, developed a wide and more liberal outlook than the Palestinian Jews. As a result, the Hellenistic Jews proved to be of great importance in the spread of Christianity fur they made their synagogues open to anyone who was interested in their religion.

The Jewish synagogue itself thus had great influence on Christianity because among the Diaspora, it was the centre of worship and the synagogue worship took place according to Jewish tradition. It became the chief place for reading the scriptures, teaching the law and the Prophets hence the rise of professional teachers and rabbis.

Another influence on Christianity was the Jewish Poetry (i.e. the Hymns and Psalms). The Jewish hymns and psalms became the Church's cherished property and were used both in public and private worship by Christians. The songs of Solomon, the Wisdom Literature and the Septuagint (the Greek translation of the Old Testaments) made at

Alexandria in the 3r and 2 centuries also became the treasure house of Christian mystics. The early Christian church made use of the Septuagint in the spread of gospel.

The Jewish Law-givers and Prophets also influenced the history of Christianity. The Jewish Prophets came as the mouth-piece of God. They were also law-givers and were regarded as the forerunners of Christianity. Their names, teachings and history became the property of the church that enhanced the growth of Christianity. It is apparent that by the great truths of their religion, by their dispersion over the civilized world, by their separation as a sacred nation from the Gentile society, as well as by the attraction they exerted upon some of the most thoughtful elements of that society, the Jews prepared for the coming of Christianity or the Christian Church.

The second factor or line of preparation for the origin and growth of Christianity was The Influence of Greek or Hellenistic Thought and Culture (especially the Greek Language).

What Is Islam?

The word Islam denotes self surrender or to give oneself up lo someone and accept his overlordship in the fullest sense of the term. It also means peace, purity, submission and obedience. In the religious sense of the word, it means submission to the will of Allaah (God) and obedience to His Law. Islam as a religion was not named after any person or place. Muslims consider it a misnomer to refer to them as Mohammedans and the religion as Mohammedanism. This is because Prophet Muhammad was not the founder of Islam and the name of the religion was named by Allah as Islam (Q 3:19, 3:85, 22:78). The name of the religion is also not "Hausa religion" as erroneously expressed in some parts of Nigeria. A Muslim is one who submits to an unshakable belief in the existence of

Allaah and fashion his life in accordance with the virtues prescribed by Allah in His scripture.

The basic beliefs in Islam

1. Tawhid (unity of God)

The foundational principle upon which Islam is based is belief in the unity of God which is technically called *tawhid*. The belief in the unity of God in Islam entails the acknowledgement of His existence, divinity, Lordship and Oneness. Allah in Islamic ideology does not resemble any of His creatures. The Qur'an brings this belief clearly when it states there is none like unto Him and He is the Hearer, the Seer' (Q 42:11]. Allah is the One, the Sole, the Indivisible -and He is the Lord without whom no affairs are accomplished and to whom Lordship ultimately pertains (Kilani 1997:96). Allah neither begets nor is He begotten and there is none equal to Him (Q. 112). Faith in Allah in Islam implies four things; whoever believes in them is a true believer.

i. **Belief in the existence of Allah,**

The existence of Allah is something indicated by reason and by man's innate nature. The evidence of man's innate nature that Allah exists is that every man has been created with an innate belief in his Creator without having to first think about it or be taught. Hence the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: There is no child who is not born in a state of fitrah (the natural inclination of man), but his parents make him a Jew, a Christian or a Magian" (Narrated by al-Bukhaari, 1358; Muslim, 2658). The reason that Allah exists is indicate that all created things, past, present and future, must have a Creator who brought them into existence, because it is not possible for them to have created themselves or to have come into existence by accident. According to Uthaymeen, "it is impossible for them to have come into existence by themselves because a thing cannot create itself: before it existed it

was nonexistent, so how could it be a creator'?! And it is impossible for them to have come into existence by accident, because everything that happens must have a cause. Moreover, this creation is done in a wondrous and precise manner, and every created being is in harmony with the rest of creation, and there is a strong connection between cause and effect. All of this makes it impossible that this universe could have come into being accidentally, because what happens accidentally does not happen in a precise and perfect manner, so how could it remain so precisely balanced? ['Uthaymeen 1410:36] Allah has mentioned this rational evidence and definitive proof in the Qur'an *"Were they created by nothing? Or were they themselves the creators?"(al-Toor 52:35]*

2. Belief in messengers of God

A messenger is any human who was chosen by Allah to receive revelation from Him and who was commanded to pass that revelation on (Zarabozo 1999:279). It means that a person cannot by himself, through spiritual exercises, Incantations or whatever means, reach the level of being a messenger or prophet in Islam. It is Allah alone who chooses His messengers and He knows best whom to choose (922:75, 6:124).The messengers or prophets are people among mankind who were chosen by Allah • to guide and invite people to the way of God. The first was Adam and the last was Muhammad (saw). The belief in the messengers comprises of four aspects according to Uthaymeen (1410: 36-8):

i. One must believe that the message of all them is the truth from Allah and that each messenger came with clear signs and evidence. The rejection of any of the messengers and the message- by any human being could only be based on arrogance, ignorance or hostility to the truth.

ii. A Muslim must believe in all the Messengers mentioned by name in the Qur'an or Sunnah.

iii. One must believe in everything that the Messengers stated during the years of their mission because. The communicated their messages from Allah completely and properly. They exerted themselves to propagate the message of their Lord. The messengers were the most knowledgeable of Allah and the best worshippers of Allah. They were protected by Allah from attributing to Allah something of their invention, judging according to their desires, falling into major sins, and adding to or diminishing from their religion.(AbdulKhaliq 1986:18).

iv. A Muslim must submit to, accept and act in accord with the law of the messenger who has been sent for his guidance (Q4:64)

A Muslim believes in all the Prophets and Messengers without any discrimination among them. The Messengers were great teachers of the good and true champions of the right. They were chosen by God to deliver His Divine messages to mankind. In the Qur'an, names of twenty five of the messengers are mentioned and all of them were mortal, human beings, endowed with Divine revelations and appointed by God to perform certain responsibilities. They were not God because they experience sickness, pain, thirst, hunger and. death like other fellow human beings. Allah honoured them because they achieved full submission to Him. The believer should realize that sending of messengers for the benefit and guidance of mankind is a great blessing from Allah. The knowledge they conveyed is knowledge that is beyond the grasp of the human intellect by itself since- It deals with the matter of the unseen, [n Islamic belief. Muhammad is the last of the Messenger of Allah sent unto mankind (Q 33:40).

Belief in angel (Mala'ikah)

Angles are a type of creation of Allah that is, in general, unseen by man-Allaah created the angels from light. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: "The angels were created from light, the jinn were created from smokeless fire, and Adam was created from that which has been described to you." (Muslim, 2996) .The angels are by nature obedient to Allaah (66:6)-They are created in" such a way that they do not eat or drink. .Their food is tosbeeh (glorification of Allaah) and *tahleel* (saying *Laa ilaaha ill-Allaali),* as Allaah tells, us concerning them "They (i.e. the angels) glorify His Praises night and day, (and) they never slacken (to do so) *(21:201.* They submit to the command of Allah and never stray from fulfilling His orders. The angels are involved with what are true and correct at all times. The angels bear witness to the Oneness of Allaah, as Allaah says: Allaah bears witness that Laa ilaaha ilia; Huwa (none has the right to be worshipped but He), and "the Mangels, and, those -having knowledge (also give this witness); [He always) maintains His creation injustice. Laa ilaaha ilia Huwa (none has-the right to be worshipped but He), the All-Mighty, the All-Wise: [Q. 3:18],

Allaah has honoured some of the angels by choosing them as Messengers, just as He has chosen some of mankind as Messengers (Q. 22:75}.The angels are a mighty creation, and they perform many tasks, and they arc divided into many groups, which no one knows except Allaah. Among them is the one who brings down the Revelation to the Messengers. He is Jibreel (peace be upon him), who brought the Qur'an down to Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) (Q2(>:193). Another important angel is Mikaa'eel, who is appointed in charge of the rain and vegetation, and Israafeel who is appointed to blow the Trumpet when the Hour begins. And among them are the recording angels who are appointed to watch over the sons of Adam and their deeds. "But verily, over you (are appointed angels In charge of mankind) to watch you,, Kiraaman (Honourable) Kaatibeen —writing down (your deeds).

4. Belief in the books/scriptures

The belief in the Books or scriptures in Islam refers to revelation that Allah sent down to His Messengers as a mercy and guidance to lead mankind to success in this life and happiness in the Hereafter. In particular, the Qur'an is the final revelation of God and it is the uncreated speech or words of God. Belief in the Books implies four things:

i. Firm belief that all of them were revealed from Allaah and that Allaah spoke them in a real sense. Some of them were heard from Him from behind a veil, without there being any intermediary from-among the angels. Some were conveyed by an angelic Messenger to a human Messenger, Some were written by Allah's own Hand, as He says:

> *"It is not given to any human being that Allaah should speak to him* unless *(it be) by Kevelation, or jroni ueninu u* rr», *m \ inui, m. sends a Messenger to reveal wluit He wills by His Leave. Verily, He* is Most High. Most Wise" *142:51]*

ii. The Books that Allaah has mentioned by name, we must believe in by name. These are the Books which Allaah has named in the Qur'an, i.e., the Qur'an, the Tawraat (Torah), the Injeel (Gospel), the Zaboor (Psalms), and the Scriptures of Ibraaheem and Moosa.

iii. Believing whatever is true of what they say, such as what is said in the Qur'an, and whatever has not been altered or distorted in the previous Books.

iv. Believing that Allaah revealed the Qur'an as a witness over these Books and to confirm them, as Allaah says: *"And \V>' litivf sent down to yon (0 Muhammad) the Book (i/iis (hir'iin) in truth, confirming the*

Scripture that came.he/ore it mid Miiliaymin (trustworthy in *highness and a witness) over it (old Scriptures)" 15:48]*

5. Belief in the Day of Judgement

The Day of Judgment has been described with many names in Islam. It is called the Last Day because there will be no new day after it after the reward of paradise and hell must have been given out to people according to their faith and deeds. It is also called the Day of Resurrection, The Reality; The Event because it is great day mankind shall pass through. The day of judgement will mark a new beginning for each and every soul which may either be eternal bliss or eternal damnation. Islam has provided great details from ihe Qur'an and the Sunnah general aspects relating to resurrection from graves, the judgment itself and the actual reward of paradise and hell. The more one has knowledge of that Day and its .surrounding events, the greater the effects this belief will have on him.

The belief in the Day of Judgment encompasses three aspects, first is belief in the Resurrection when people will be resurrected in front of Allah. They shall be naked, barefooted and uncircumciscd. Allah says in the Qur'an "As we began the first creation. We shall repeat it. It is a promise binding on us. Truly. Wr shall do it |Q. 21:104]. The resurrection is going to be in the same body thai person had in this worldly life so that the body lhai pi'rl'orm the sins while on earth get its recompense. The second aspect is belief in the accounting or reckoning of the deeds and the reward/ punishment for those deeds (Q 21:47). The ilnnl essential aspect of the belief in the Last Day is belief in Paradise and Hell. 1'aradise is the eternal abode or reward for the believers while Hell is the eternal abode or punishment for the disbelievers. Paradise and Hell are not state of mind according to Islamic belief for they are mentioned in the Qur'an and explained in the sunnah (Bayyinah: 7-8, 18:29).

The belief and knowledge of the Day of Judgment in Islamic doctrines has very profound effects on the individual. It makes believers to rush to do good deeds in order to attain the bounties of paradise. The threat of punishment of Hell should sway the person from committing sin. The reckoning and justice of the Day of Judgment should bring comfort and solace to the heart of the believer. A life without guidance of Allah and the proper belief in Allah could result in complete despair (Zaraboso, 292).

Prayer (Salah)

The prayer is a type of worship consisting of specific statements and actions. It is begun by pronouncing the greatness of Allaah, and is concluded with salutations of peace (Sabiq 1985: 1/75). Prayer is the essence of Islam. The establishment of Salaah distinguishes a Muslim from a non Muslim and salaah must exist for Islam to stand. The Prophet said, "The head of the matter is Islam, its pillar is the prayer, and the top of its hump is jihad in the way of Allaah." Salaah is the first act of worship to be made obligatory by Allaah in Islam. In the Qur'an, Allaah severely wains those who tamper with their prayers or heedless (Q. 19:59, Q. 107:4-5). Salaat is not merely the name of certain physical movements. It is not a wooden lifeless ritual or something of a military discipline in which one's choice has no place. According to Nadwl (1976:22-23), it is an act in which all the three aspects of human existence, physical, mental and spiritual find their due expression. The body, the mind and the heart participate in it jointly and in an ideal manner.

Prayer is obligatory upon every sane, adult Muslim. Muslim children must be made to practice establishment of their prayers when they reach the age of seven so as to become used to it before attaining puberty. The establishment of prayers five times in a day inculcates a sense of duty, remembrance of God, God-consciousness and collective life among Muslims. The prayer is a means of support and assistance to a Muslim in times of distress and grief and it also prevents from evil and shameful deeds (Q 2:45, 29:45). The aim of Salaat in Islam is to generate within the

subliminal self of man such spiritual power, light of faith and awareness of God as can enable him to strive successfully against all kinds of evils and temptations and remain steadfast at times of trial and adversity and protect himself against the weakness of the flesh and the mischief of immoderate appetites (Nadwi 24). It is this respect that Prophet Muhammad said that:

> *Allah has obligated five prayers. Whoever excellently performs their ablutions, prays them in their proper times, completes their bows and the heart is attuned to the prayer (khushoo) has a promise from Allah that He will forgive him. And whoever does not do that has no promise from Allah. He may either forgive him or He may punish him. (Saheeli al Jam! 1986: 6 Id).*

There are other conditions which guides the validity of prayers in Islam and they include: being Muslim, being of sound mind, and having reached the age of discretion, facing the qiblah or direction of the Sacred House, freedom from impurities and having the intention of praying... (Uthaymeen 1996: 2/95,).

In Islam by ceasing to perform prayers, a person is judged to be an unbeliever *(kaafir),* based on several *ahaadeeth* of the Prophel (peace be upon him), one of which is:" *The obligation and pact between its and them (the hypocrites) is the prayer, so whoever abandons it has indeed committed disbelief* (Tirmidhi, no 2621). The Prophet further says, "What is between a person and committing shirk (associating partners with Allaah) and *kufr* (disbelief) is.abandoning the prayer." (Sahih Muslim, 82)

1. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) made prayer the dividing line between kufr and faith, between the believer and the disbeliever.
2. Prayer is one of the pillars of Islam, so when the person who neglects it is described as a kaafir, this implies the kind of kufr that puts a person beyond the pale of Islam,

because he has destroyed one of the pillars of Islam.

Prayer or Salaat is the soul of Islam and where there is no salat, there can be no purification of then soul hence the non- praying man is like a soulless man. It is with prayer that a person attain the consciousness of God and selfless love for humanity and the inner sense of piety. Salaat is therefore the first,, the highest, and the" most solemn phenomenon and manifestation of Islam.

Fasting (Sawm)

Fasting in Islam is, abstinence from food, drink and sexual intercourse during the days of the month of Ramadan. It is one of the pillars of Islam. The aim of Islam in prescribing fasting just like other acts of worship is to transform the whole life of mankind inio ;i hie of worship. Fasting is a month-long training in which the faith of all Vliii.lmr. are pin 10 test and the extent one comes out of the spininal IC.M determines the deepness and firmness of your faith |Maududi l')S5: 1851.

Fasting is a source of self restraint, piety and (iod consciousness. It was prescribed by Allah for the prophets before Prophet Muhammad. Allah says in the Qur'an, " O ye who believe! Fasting is prescribed to you as it Was prescribed to those before you, that ye may (learn) self-restraint/Q.2.I83).

> *The month of Ramadan in which was revealed the Qur'an, a guidance for mankind and clear proofs for the guidance and,the criterion (between right and wrong) So whoever of you sights (the crescent on the first night of) the month (of Ramadan i.e. is present at his home), he must observe Sawm (fasts) that month, and whoever is ill or on a journey, the same number [of days which one did not observe Sawm (fasts) must be made up from other days. Allaah intends for you ease, and He does not want to make things difficult for you. (He wants that you) must complete the same number (of days), and that*

you must magnify Allaah having guided you so that you may be' grateful to Him. [2:185].

This blessed month is a great opportunity for goodness, blessing, worship and obedience towards Allaah. It is a great month, a noble season, a month in which rewards for good deeds are multiplied and in which committing bad deeds is more serious than at other times. The gates of Paradise are opened and the gates of Hell are shut, and the sinners' repentance to Allaah is The month of Ramadan is the month of great gams and profits. The smart trader is the one who makes the most of special occasions to increase his profits. The purpose of fasting is that the spirit of man is released from the clutches of desires and moderation prevailed in his carnal self and through it, he realized the goal of purification and everlasting felicity. It is aimed at curtailing the intensity of desire and lust by means of hunger and thirst, at inducing man to ".realize how many are there in the world like him who had to go even without a small quantity of food. It also restrains the organs from turning to things which are the loss of this world and the Hereafter. Fasting is the bridle of the God-fearing, the shield of the crusaders and the discipline of the virtuous (Nadwi 173).

In Islam, the month of Ramadan is superior to others months in four things:

i. **In it there is the best night of the year, which is Laylat al-Qadr. Allaah says:**

"Verily, We have sent it (this Qur'an) down in the Night of Al-Qadr (Decree) .And what will make you know what the Night of Al-Qadr (Decree) is? The Night of Al-Qadr (Decree) is better than a thousand months (i.e. worshipping Allaah in that night is better than worshipping Him a thousand months, i.e. 83 years and 4 months).Therein descend the angels and the Rooh [Jibreel (Gabriel) 1 by Allah's Permission with all Decrees, (All that night), there is peace (and goodness from Allaah to His believing slaves) until the appearance of dawn" *197:1-51.*

> The worship done on this night is better than worshipping for a thousand months Ill tins monthIhe''ate:, o| I'ai adr,e,nc .ipenr, I.1 gates of Hell arc shnl. and the de\ if, aie >li.lined up li was narrated from Abu Ilinayrali imay Ailaah he plea(,ed with him) that the Messenger of .Ailaah (peace and blessings of Ailaah be upon him) said: "When Kamadan comes, the gates of Paradise are opened and the gates ol Hell are closed, and the devils are put in chains" (Agreed upon).
>
> There are many kinds of worship in Ramadan, some ol which are not done at other times, such as fasting, praying night prayers (qiyaam), feeding the poor, seclusion (i'tikaaf). charity (sadaqah), and reading Qur'an. Fasting is obligatory for a person if he fulfils five conditions: *S/he* is a Muslim, s/he is accountable or has reached the age of puberty (mukaflq/), the person is able to fast, not traveling and there are no impediments to fasting (Uthaymeen 1996: 6/330.

Islam has placed a great value on fasting because it is a way to piety and God consciousness. A fasting Muslim who intends to attain the lofty status must abstain from falsehood, avoid all forms of sins and engages in self scrutiny.

Zakaah (Almsgiving or Charity)

The word Zakaah primarily means purity, cleanliness growth and blessing. Islam uses this word for the act of setting aside a portion of one's wealth for the needy and poor and it means by implication that, it is by giving out from one's wealth to oilier, that one's wealth is purified and increased (Maududi I'JSi: I[1])/). The spending of wealth for the sake of Allah purifies ihe heaii ol man of the love of material wealth. The one who spends wealth offer it as a humble gift before the Lord and thus affirms the truth that nothing is dearer to him in life than the love of Allah.

The teaching of Islam through the institution of Zakaah by making Muslims to part away with their wealth and give to the poor is a test of faith through wealth and possessions. It indicates that only those who are ready to do such deed without expecting a worldly return from

anybody that deserve to be counted among the faithful, Zakaah is a sign of true faith in Islam. Zakaah inculcate In Muslims the principle of sacrificing wealth for God, It implant in believers to be large hearted and magnanimous as against miserliness and stinginess. It is only a heart with these qualities that can be described as a pure heart that is Imbued with selflessness and ready to give out either in affluence or in adversity for the pleasure of God alone. There is no doubt in Islam that among the pillars of Islam, Zakaah ranks very close to that of prayer. The payment of Zakaah purifies a person and the wealth of the person. Allah says, "Of their wealth, take alms, that so that you might purify and sanctify them; and pray on their behalf. Verily your prayers are a source of security for them: And Allah is One Who hears all and knows all".

There are eight categories on which zakaah must be spent. They are mentioned thus in the Qur'an:

> *As-Sadaqaat (here it means Zakaah) are only for the Fuqaraa' (poor), and Al-Masaakeen (the needy) and those employed to collect (the funds}; and to attract the hearts of those who have been inclined (towards Islam); and to free the captives; and for those in debt; and for Allah's Cause, and for the wayfarer (a traveller who is cut off from everything); a duty imposed by Allaah. And Allaah is All-Knower, All-Wise (Q 9:60]*

The institution of Zakaah is a means of linking the well being of the individual with that of the larger society. Man's selfishness and greed deprives the poor, the orphan and the weak- in the society of basic necessity of life, Islam through benevolent spending in the way of Allaah wants mankind to put Allaah into remembrance as the sole owner of all things and human beings should therefore refrain from avarice and selfishness because such qualities are the root of all evils in the society. The essential conditions for the giving of Zakaah in Islam include: one should give out Zakaah to please Allaah alone, one should not treat with contempt those who are entitled to Zakaah, Zakaah should be given out. from good

things, Zakaah may be given out openly or secretly but secret chanty protects the giver from the risk of hypocrisy and show off or ostentation, our family must not be neglected in order to give out charity and Zakaah should be given to those who deserve it as enunciated in the Qur'an.

The institution of Zakaah plays crucial roles in Muslim society in that, it helps the poor of the society to be able to meet their needs thereby strengthening the bond of brotherhood within the Muslim society. It makes the rich to see their wealth as a blessing from Allah and make them ready to spend it in the way pleasing to Allah.

Hajj (Pilgrimage)

Hajj in the usage of Islamic Law means a particular going or traveling at a particular time to a particular place for the purpose of worshipping Allah. It is the journeying to Makkah during the months designated for the performance of Hajj as an act of worship for the sake of AllahfZaraboso, 574). Hajj is an obligation upon every Muslim who has the means to perform it. Hajj is one of the foundations or pillars of Islam. The Qur'an states:

> *Pilgrimage (Hajj) to the House is a duty mankind owes to Allah, those who can afford the expenses of the journey; but if any deny faith, Allah stands not in need of any of His creatures (Q. 3:97)*

The reward for the performance of Hajj is great in Islam. The Prophet Muhammad said "Whoever performs Hajj and does not utter obscenities or commit sin, will come back as on the day when his mother ho re him"(Bukhari and Muslim). He also said, "From one TJmrah to the next is expiation for whatever (sins) came between them and for an accepted Hajj there is no reward but Paradise" (Bukhaari, 1773; Muslim, 1349). Hajj is a place for the Muslims all over the world to come and worship Allah together. It is an excellent opportunity for Muslims to meet each other, understand each other and get closer to each other (Zaraboso 376). In Hajj, all Muslims dress in the same attire and perform the same rituals. The

rich, the poor and the powerful ones in the society all standing in the same manner in front Allah. The conditions of Hajj being obligatory, which, if they are met, make it obligatory for a person to perform Hajj, and without them Hajy is not obligatory include being Muslim, being of sound mind, being an adult, being free and being physically and financially able to do it (Ibn Qudamah, 1984:, 5/35).

Hajj is the perfection of faith since it combines in itself all the distinctive qualities of other obligatory acts. It represents the quality of prayer, it encourages spending of material wealth for the sake of Allah, the chief characteristic of Zakah. A pilgnm also dissociates himself from his family, home and suffers privation and undertakes the hardship of journey which is the lesson of fasting. In Hajj one is trained to be completely forgetful of the material comforts, pomp and show of worldly life. The physical pilgrimage is a prelude to spiritual pilgrimage to God, when man would bid goodbye to everything of the world and present himself Him.

What ATR Is Not

The African traditional religion has been seen by a Lot of people from the negative point of view, these input might have been caused by those who claim that they are ATR adherents yet they go to the extreme in other to convince people that the religion is powerful. Those excesses are as far as we are concerned not ATR. We would mention few names which people use for ATR that is not ATR: they are:

1. **Archaic:** this implies old, old fashioned, antiquated, no longer in use. Having observed very well from every little discussion above, we can deduce that ATR is not archaic because it is a life of the people which and has to do with the day to day life of an African.
2. **Paganism:** this implies indigenous and polytheism, ATR is not a polytheistic religion instead a monotheist one. It cannot be paganism.

3. **Animism:** this is a belief that spirits inhabit some or all classes of natural objects.
4. **Heathen:** this implies an uncultured or an uncivilised person or religion. The ATR is seen as a religion that is not refined, but crooked. But if it is the religion of the people that has to do with their ways of life then ATR is not heathenism.
5. Idolatry: this implies a religion that worships idols. ATR does not worship idols, its adherents worship the supreme being just like every other religion.

Functions of ATR In Increasing Moslem And Christian Society

Liturgy

According to Tagbo (2012) "Liturgy is the prescribed forms of ritual for public worship. It is the vehicle of communication between man and the Divine being. And since liturgy is the set pattern of worship in each cult, we have reason to believe that it has been preserved without being much distorted" Africans have been grounded in liturgy; they know the importance of worship. This knowledge was an advantage over Islamic religion when they enter into African territories. They have mastered the attribute of gods and deity. According to Idowu (1973:85)… from the invocation and prayer we learn the names, the attributes of Deity and the divinities, the confidence and hopes of the people, capabilities attributed to divinities, and general relationship between Deity and man.

Song And Dances

Some practices of Islamic Religion were just a continuation of some of the African cultures, Africans love songs and dances much that in almost all situations they find support and consolation in songs and dances. So, when some of Africans were converted to Islam they continued with what they learnt already. Traditional songs and dances are somany in African Religion. There are just enough to reflect different situation in life such as

traditional wedding, naming ceremony, funeral, wrestling, working in farm, praising people going to war etc. In dancing to the rhythm of the songs religious feelings are also exhibited. In all songs and dances they tell stories of the peoples' past. They convey faith of worshippers, and also express joys and sorrows of the people, their assurances, hopes and fears of the future and life after death.

Religious Syncretism:-

In the modern society that is saturated by Islamic thought and emerging movements, we still observe some notable influence of the African traditional religion in the affairs and religious lifestyle of some adherent of Islam. Moslems still exhibit some syncretic characters which show their affinity to their indigenous religion. It is still observable that many Muslim adherents still patronize the traditional medicine men and soothsayers from whom they hope to get answers to their many problems .This behaviour however does not suggest that the Muslims do not trust in Allah, it rather shows the fact Africans find it very difficult to leave their primitive way of life especially in matters of religion.

Polygamy

In Islam today, polygamy is permissive, and in some cases, even encouraged. Polygamy is the practice of one man taking more than one wife. This practice was very much common and is still common among the adherents of traditional Africa religion this implies that polygamy may not be an evil thing to do in itself. What is clear however, is the fact that has two sides, depending on the perspective one in coming from. Economically, we know that in the modern society polygamy has not really fared well since we see the difficulty of men catering for extra-large families.

Belief in God

God is real and unique to the African. He is believed to be the absolute controller of the universe. He is Supreme Being. The concept of Supreme

Being is universal in African Traditional Religion. The clear cut belief in Supreme Being by Africans is seen well in the names given by Africans to Him. The principal God of Igbo is called "Chineke" or "Chukwu". The first means the creator God while the second means Great God. Among the Nsukka people the name "Ezechitoke" is frequently used for the Supreme Being. It means the King Spirit that is the Creator. Here emphasis is placed on the creative activity of God. In fact, this fundamental belief in God, the creator is something one knows without being taught. One only needs come to the age of reasoning in order to realise this. This is to say that the belief in the Supreme Being in Igbo religion as well as in African religion is axiomatic.

Christian Artifefacts:

Today Africans carried traditional practices into Christianity, especially in their quest to protect life and properties. Africans love artefacts, an imaginary representation of their smaller god. Hence, it gives them the assurance of gods every protection and guidance on them. Thus, these things could be seen in today's Christian societies, who condemned it formerly as being fetish. The modernised it and gave it applauding names, but the idea was born out from African traditional religion. Christians now have different category of artefacts with each assigned different powers but, all gearing towards protection and guidance. Thus, Africans who love to move around with their chi and charms for protections and guidance can now freely carry Christian artefacts for protection. Such artefacts are scapular, olive oil and holy water, moulded pictures of different saints.

Community Life

Community life practices among religious groups in Christian societies must have had its teaching and foundation in African traditional religion. Community life living is one of the core values cherished by Africans in ancient and modern times. Thus this has become thebedrock to the formation of Christian religious congregations.

The Meeting Point of the Three Religions; ATR, Christianity and Islam

Every religion has something good to offer to humanity. The three religions we are discussing can still come together and cohabit without any problems. Thus each must see something good in the other. Let me take the areas where the three religions can cohabit without any problems.

1. **Values:** each of the three religions has core values of hospitality, honesty, peace in them and each is struggling to preach this in their own different ways. The approach may differ but these values are in all the religions.
2. **Morals :** this has to do with the principles of right and wrong in behaviour, especially for teaching right behaviour. Each religion has this, they have a way of teaching its morals so that when you are born, you follow the traditions of the people on the issue.
3. **Circumcision:** circumcision cuts across the three religions. ATR encourage male circumcision, Christianity encourages male circumcision but Islam encourages female circumcision mostly and they do this for a purpose. This purpose will be explained in details during the presentation.
4. **Scripture:** each of them has scriptures, ATR use unwritten scripture, Islam uses Koran while Christianity uses the bible. All these scriptures for different religions are used to educate people the way forward and on how to live with one member of the religion. Everything about the religion is embedded in their scriptures.
5. **Protective means: each** religion has its own protective means, and its own work for them. Looking critically at each religion it serves the same purpose. The functionality of this protective means is what we are interested in and not the components. ATR uses charms, Christianity uses stickers, Holy rosary, crucifix, holy water, olive oil etc. and Islam uses Chesbi as an object of reaching Allah for protection.

6. **Marriage:** in each of the three religions they encourage marriage but have their own understanding of it and its works for them. Christianity encourage monogamy, ATR encourages polygamy while Islam encourages polygamy. Each has its reason and base for what they practice and has no problem with it.
7. God: each is a monotheistic religion. They worship one God. ATR has Chineke, Islam has Allah and Christianity has God.

Summary and Conclusion

Religion according to (Ugwu 1999:2) can be seen as faith practices involving the relationship between mankind and what is regarded as scared.

Religion generally includes beliefs in the supernatural and a code of ethical behaviour. This definition of religion takes care of the religion we are talking about. Moreover, each religion is important and has a lot of things others can learn. No religion should be been as supreme to the other. My humble advice is that each should encourage the other, see something good in the other, appreciate the other, applaud the other and equally condemn the negative sides of the other. Hence, no one should single out itself as the best because they are all monotheist by nature. By doing these ATR, Christianity and Islam can co-habit and have peace, love. Unity and understanding amongst others.

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