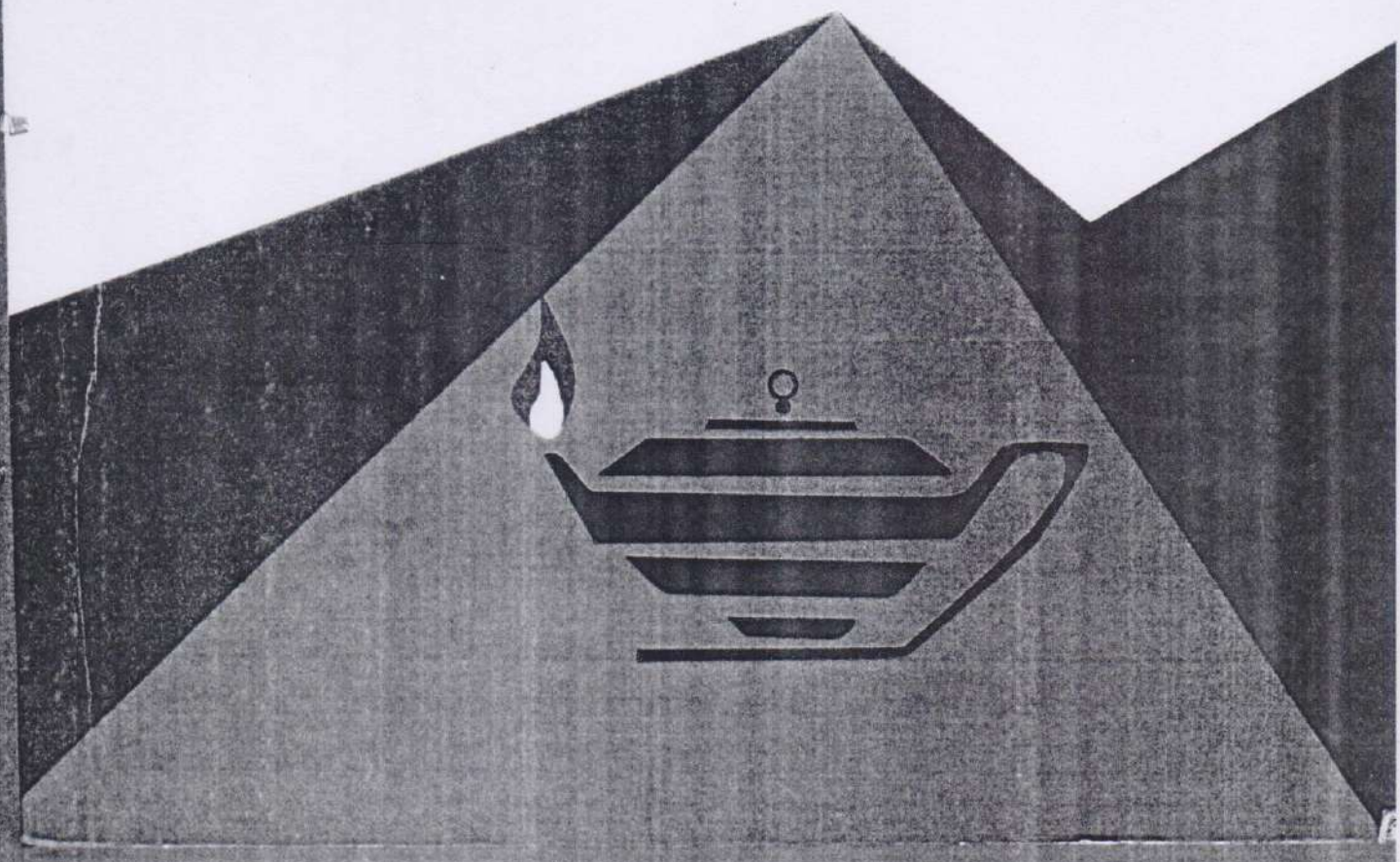
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IMPLICATIONS OF MIGRATION OF CHRISTIANS FROM THE MAINLINE TO NEO-PENTECOSTAL CHURCHES IN NIGERIA

BY

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Abstract

Migration is a global phenomenon among humans. It is an activity that is carried out by humans in every generation. People migrate from one place to another for different reasons such as economy, social, religious and so on. Individuals migrate because they think that they can improve their own lives or those of their families by doing so. The individual's decision to migrate involves a process of weighing up potential costs and benefits. Contemporary Christian faithful are fond of migrating from one Church or denomination to another. This paper examines the factors responsible for migration of Christians from the mainline to the Neo-Pentecostal churches in Nigeria and its implications. Historical and interview methods are used for the study.

Introduction

One of the issues that have continued to generate debate among mainline churches is the movement of some of their members to the Neo-Pentecostal churches. Top leaders of the mainline churches and members are concern about this trend. Some of the mainline churches at different levels have organized seminars, conferences, workshops and lectures to consider the issue. Stakeholders, pastors, heads of fellowship groups at one time or the other have met to examine the factors responsible for this ugly development[41]. Efforts have been made by some church leaders to bring back those who have moved. There are Parents that threatened to disown their children if they refuse to attend the church they are attending. Some parents went to the extent to stop paying the school fees of their children or wards if they continue to attend a church different from theirs. These and other steps taken so far have not yielded any appreciable result. This is because the migration from the mainline churches to the Neo-Pentecostal churches has been at alarming rate.

The motivation for this paper came when I was going to the church for a service. A long standing member of our church met me at the door of the church auditorium and said, "Pastor, my children are no longer interested in coming to this church with me. They said that, they prefer the worship services of the church they are now attending (a neo-Pentecostal). I made effort to force them to come to this church with me but they refused." He then asked: "What are they doing in that church that we are not doing here. If those things are not sinful why don't you adopt them in order to keep this young people because of tomorrow?" It was this comment that made me to research into this topic. The questions are: What is responsible for this migration? How would the mainline churches curb this phenomenon? Is there an end

[41] The issue was top on the UMCA General Conference Agenda for 1989. It was also discussed at the Church District Conference Levels. The Anglican Communion of Nigeria held a Conference in 1980 to address the issue of migration of members to Neo-Pentecostal churches. Some Evangelical churches in Nigeria have opened English chapels to reduce or stop migration of their members to other churches.

to this ugly development in the church? Thus, this paper examines the cause, effect and implications of migration of Christians from the mainline churches in Nigeria to the neo-Pentecostals.

Concept of Migration

Migration is the movement of large number of people, birds, or animals from one place to another (Hornby, 2015:981). Human migration is the movement of people from one place to another with the intention of settling in the new location, which they considered to be better than their former place of residence. Migration also means the regular travel from one region to another. On the other hand, migration would mean the movement of people from one place in the world to another for taking up permanent or semi-permanent residence, usually across a political boundary. According to Guerra Castillo, J.E. (2008) migration means human mobility inside (displacement) and outside (emigration) the country of origin. Substantial internal migration can also take place within a country, either (mainly related to agriculture and to tourism to urban places), or shifts of population into cities or out of cities. Migration is often caused by reasons ranging from economic, social, political and in this case religious problems. Two major forms of migration have been identified: 1. Internal migration- this is when people migrate within the same country or region. This is usually common with what has been referred to as the rural-urban migration. 2. *External migration*- this refers to when people migrate from one country to another which is often influenced by many factors. Some people migrate in search of a better life and security. Migration can be influenced by two factors. They are: 1. Push factors- this occurs where someone is currently living and make continuing to live there less attractive. A push factor could be political unrest, a lack of job opportunities, or overcrowding. 2. Pull factors- this happens in a potential destination and makes it an attractive place to migrate to. A pull factor could be better job opportunities or having relatives or friends who have already moved to this location.

In the preindustrial era, environmental factors like droughts, natural disasters, and climate all influenced human decisions about where to migrate. It should be understood that people have been on the move from the earliest times, often across great distances and for a wide variety of reasons, including trade, epidemics, economic opportunities, asylum, war, persecution, natural disasters, even adventure. Most significantly, as mentioned above, when people move, they carry their ideas, cultures, fears, strength and weaknesses, beliefs, and religious practices with them" (Hanciles, 2003). In most countries in Africa in particular, the cities are getting congested daily because most people want to either experience live in the city or to benefit from some amenities provided only in big towns such as access to good schools, electricity and modern life. It should be noted that migrants are different from refugees. Refugee, for some reasons, may find it difficult to go home but migrants, who are often people fending for life or on mission of some kind, are those who have left their countries or lands for another. However, both of them suffer from limited rights in the new territory. Sometimes, the force that makes one to leave for safety can encourage or start up a new mission for the migrant. On other times, those having left for a mission may meet with threats on their safety such that they may become itinerant migrants struggling to settle in peace or looking for where the mission has to be fulfilled (Lossky, 2002).

Migration in Biblical Literature

Gleaning from the Bible, there are issues of people migrating for safety (Matt. 2:13-15), food (Gen. 43:1-14; 46:1-34) and by divine instruction (Gen. 12: 1-5). Deuteronomy 26:5ff has it that, "My father was a wondering Aramean and he went down into Egypt with a few people and lived there and became a great nation..." Judaism holds on to this same text when they speak of migration in the Jewish scripture. The Israelite had moved to the settlement that became the birth place of Jesus after having stayed in various different places and at different times. Again, the facts that Israelites were called strangers in the bible is an indication that they are deeply associated with migration, which means being uprooted from the original settlement and being strangers somewhere else. It is intended to show that it is God in the Bible who intentionally chose migrants such as Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph and Moses (Kim, S: 2006). We can therefore say that this can be considered as the beginning of the story of migration for the Christian history. The Bible's first confession of faith begins with a story of pilgrimage and migration.

Besides, there may have been other aspects of migration such as the migration of Adam and Eve from the Garden of Eden (Gen. 3:22-24), the movement of Abraham out of the Ur of the Chaldeans and continuation to other places (Gen. 11; 12; 13), the exile of the Jews to Babylon, the movement of Elimelech and Naomi to Moab (Ruth 1:1-5) and many others. If this be the case, then Israel was the chosen migrants of God and Christianity became a shoot from this choice of God. Even before the coming of Christ, there had been the rooted faith in migration of a people considered to belong to God. When Christ shows His head, there were also some activities done either intentionally or orchestrated by God Himself which if well interpreted will show that God intended to continue to show a people on the move and how their faith grew in that process of movement. It is not just about showing how the Old Testament witnessed to the patriarchs on the move, but also that even in the New Testament times, the bearers and helpers of the Christian faith were themselves on the move somehow.

This work acknowledges that migration had been an intrinsic part of the Christian faith. These migrations, sometimes, have led to intercultural and interreligious encounters. For us to understand migration in Christianity, then, we must try to get a glimpse of the origin and the meaning of this faith itself. Christianity got its origin from within Judaism, and this would mean that all the aspects of the nomadic life of the Jewish patriarchs also affect the general life of the Christian faith. They were a wondering people and human migration was a part of their daily life. Born from such roots, we can say that Christianity sprang from the soil of migration. Christianity might have been born by the words of the Lord but it grew rapidly as a result of its embrace of migration whether intentionally or involuntarily. Christianity is a religion of migration and migrants; the migration of the early Christians was either forced or planned (Phan, C.P: 2008). The Christian faith would not have been stronger had there not been the cause to move out of Jerusalem to other places either as sent out Missionaries or as people running away from persecutions.

Concept of the Church

To some people, a church is a building. Others believe that a church is a denomination like the UMCA, ECWA, Baptist, Methodist, Anglican, Roman Catholic or Christ Apostolic Church[42]. In the Old Testament, the Hebrew word *qahal*, which

[42] Common view expressed by Christian adherents from the mainline churches in Nigeria.

means "meeting" or gathering is the direct translation of the Greek word *Kuriakon* meaning 'Church'. Later in the LXX, the word *Kuriakon* was rendered as *Ekklesia,* which is used for meeting of all sorts. Originally, the word denote "an assembly' or congregation of free citizen" or those "called out" by a herald in connection with public affairs' (see Acts. 19:39). In the LXX, the Congregation of Israel was referred to as *ekklesia,* which implies that the Jews had been "called out" from other nations to be God's special people (Rom. 9:4). Out of the 114 uses of *Ekklesia* in the New Testament, in 109 times, the word is used to describe the community of God's people. In other words, the Church comprised those who migrated from one faith to Christianity. From the foregoing, the Church denotes the assembly of the recipients of His divine grace, called out to be ambassadors for Christ in the World (Elwell, 1992:95; Awojobi, 2002:2).

In the New Testament, the Church is called the body of Christ (Eph. 1:22; Col. 1:18; I Cor. 12:27); the temple of the Holy Spirit (I Cor. 3:16; Eph. 2:21; I Pet.2:5); the New Jerusalem (Rev. 3:12; 21:2; Heb. 12:22); the new Israel (Mt. 21:434, Gal. 3:29; IPet. 2:9) and the bride of Christ (Mt. 9:15; 25:1-2; Mk. 2:19; Lk. 5:34-35; Jn. 3:29). In a nutshell, the Church is the assembly of believers in Christ, which are called out, baptized by the Holy Spirit into His body, and joined to the Lord and to one another by the Holy Spirit (Elwell, 1992:95; Awojobi, 2002:2). The Church is a spiritual organization and we belong to it by being born again. The Church is also an organism and is expected to continue to grow and meet the purpose for which it was established. Christ is the head of the Church (Mt. 16:18; Eph. 1: 22-23; 3:10-21; 5:23-32; Col. 1:18; Heb. 12:23) (Awojobi, 2003:2).

It should be noted that there is no distinction between the Universal Church and the local church in the New Testament. In fact, most of the books that mentioned the 'church' were referring to local communities of Christians (Awojobi, 2002:3). For instance, the New Testament speaks about local churches in certain places such as Antioch, Ephesus, Corinth, Philadelphia, Smyrna e.t.c. Therefore, the Church refers to a group of people with a common goal that meet regularly for fellowship.

One of the function of the Church is praise and worship to the only true God (Eph. 1:12). This is the primary and the highest call of any Church. All nations have been created to worship the creator. The Church, as the called out ones, is to worship the Lord. The worship referred to here is not the aspect to a worship service called 'Praise worship'. It is the giving of our being to God. In other word, all that we say and do should give God the glory (Murphy, 2000:204). Also, the Church exists to bring people to the saving knowledge of Christ (Acts. 1:8). The Church is the only qualified entity on earth capable of telling the unsaved of the world about the love of Jesus. This can take place in a number of different ways. Every local church is expected to have a well-planned evangelism programme. The main purpose of evangelism is to get the gospel message out to the lost souls. In other words, getting the unsaved saved is the primary goal of evangelism. Getting them to come to church is secondary. The Church has the mandate of evangelizing the world (Murphy, 2000:204).

Furthermore, the church exists for good works. The Church is to set the pace for the world to follow. (Eph. 2:10). The church is to be exemplary in conduct. Members of the church are to distinguish themselves from the world. However, the Church exists for fellowship, that members may come together to encourage one

another (Heb. 10:25). The Church is the Fellowship of those who believe in Jesus Christ and the chosen instrument for the mediation of salvation. The marks of the Church on arth are the recognition of the word of Christ, the proclamation of the word, the use of the sacrament, the existence of the office of the ministry and the reality of communion in the exercise of faith and love. The primary reason for fellowship in the church is to strengthen one another in order to build a strong Church (Awojobi, 2002:8). It is clear from the fore going that the Church is to worship God (I Pet. 2:9; Heb. 12:28-29; Rm. 15:5-21) and minister to the saints and the world (Eph. 4: 12-16; Lk. 24:48; Acts. 5:32). The means of the ministry include the word, orderliness, love, mercy and compassion. It is the ministry of the Church to uphold the truth in the world and oppose sin and errors that threaten the soul of man.

The Mainline and Neo-Pentecostal Churches in Nigeria

The mainline or established churches in this paper are the churches that were started by the white missionaries or expatriates many years ago. Examples are the Catholic, Methodist, Anglican, Baptist, UMCA, ECWA, Presbyterian, and so on. These groups of churches are also known as Orthodox and Evangelicals. Their main emphasis is salvation of the soul. These groups are the pioneer of the Christian faith in Nigeria. The Pentecostal in Nigeria today are off-shoots of the mainline churches. The second group is the Pentecostals. This group believes so much in the manifestation of the spirit with the evidence of speaking in tongues. They are not as old as the mainline churches. In fact, most of them are splinter groups from the mainline churches. Examples of churches in this category are, Christ Apostolic Church, The Apostolic Church, Redeemed Christian Church of God, Deeper Life Bible Church and a host of others. These are Churches founded by Nigerians. Some of the founders of these churches at one time or the other were prominent members of the mainline churches who claimed to have received a revelation from God to float a church.

The neo-Pentecostals are the new generation churches. Most of them came from among the Pentecostals. Their doctrines and services are more or less the same with that of the Pentecostals. But they are more radical than the Pentecostals. In fact, in some quarters they are referred to as Pente-rascals. Examples of churches in this category are Winners Chapel, Mountain of Fire and Miracles (MFM), Christ Embassy, Commonwealth of Zion Assembly (COZA), Daystar Church and a host of others. It is believed in many quarters that the mainline produced the Pentecostals while the Pentecostals produced the neo-Pentecostals. They claimed that it was the failure of the mainline churches that brought about the Pentecostal, while the failure of the Pentecostals produced the Neo-Pentecostals[43]. It should be understood that most of the founders of Pentecostals and Neo-Pentecostals are Nigerians. As Christians are migrating from the mainline churches they are also moving from the Pentecostals churches. It has been observed that most of the members of the Mountain of Fire and Miracles (MFM) today were once in Deeper Life Bible Church (Kuranga,2012).

Causes of Migration from Mainline to Neo-Pentecostal Churches

One of the causes of migration from the mainline to the Neo-Pentecostals is

[43] There was a popular view of church leaders that the researcher intended with. This opinion is frequently express in meeting at different times.

schisms or division. The movement came up under some strong charismatic African leaders as an alternative to the prevalent anemic Christianity and spiritual sterility evident in the mainline Churches. Some of the established Churches had conflicts that shook the church to their foundations. It was the irreconcilable differences among the rank and file of these churches that led to the breakaway of some members (Abogunrin, 1986:86). It should be noted that there are also schism in the Neo-Pentecostal churches today. Also, it is believe in many quarters that the mainline churches did not address the felt needs of multitudes of Africans who were constantly searching for security. Abogunrin, opines that, the mainline churches apply the gospel to the salvation of the soul and never considered the gospel in relation to man's body, health, victory over demons, protection from demonic agents, provision of daily needs and man's total wellbeing (Abogunrin, 1986:87). In other words, the mainline churches did not preach holistic gospel. Their emphasis has always being how to make it to heaven. Study has revealed that Africans can relate better with a savior that identifies with human situation in all aspects. According to Kato, for the Evangelicals to make impact, they must learn to move beyond the divinely revealed source to the human dimension (Kato, 1985:45). In other words, practical Christianity is the key to success in evangelistic enterprise. This is because Africans are always seeking solutions over challenges that confront them daily. Africans are in need of a savior who can save the soul, body and spirit as well. As far as D. T. Adamo is concerned, the African had their ways of dealing with problems like diseases, sorcerers, witches, enemies and lack of success in life before the advent of Christianity. The western missionaries taught African Christians to discard these ways without offering any concrete alternative (Adamo, 2005:49). However, the Neo-Pentecostals present to the people a savior who specializes in meeting all human needs. He is concern about the feelings of man in all facet of life.

Furthermore, most worship patterns in the mainline churches are modeled after church missionaries' societies that started them. The prayer books, liturgies, clerical dress, musical instruments, hymn book e.t.c. were imported. The systems of church government used were also imported. According to Mbang (1978:42), the decisions affecting the lives of millions of adherents of these churches are made outside Nigeria. In these churches, Nigerians are still singing the Lord's song in a strange tongue. In other words, worship services were not properly contextualized in the mainline churches. However when the Pentecostals came on board, some Christians preferred their mode of worship and as such migrated to those churches. It was observed that their worship services were not stereotyped like the established churches. They also design their programmes to meet the felt needs of the worshipers (Alokan, 1991:298). Unlike the mainline churches; their worship services are very short. Some run from 7-8am on Sundays and 5-6pm or 6-7pm for mid-week programmes. Some of the Neo-Pentecostal churches have house caring fellowship instead of evening services. Church members in a neighbourhood gather in the house of one of them for worship. Examples of churches that operate this are Redeemed Christian Church of God, Deeper Life Bible Church and Winners Chapel. It should be noted that until early in the fourth century when Emperor Constantine of Roman Empire declared Sunday as day of worship. Christian were meeting for worship either early or late in the day (Ademiluka, 2007:16).

Besides, prayer books were used in some of the mainline churches. These books were read during worship services. Worship services in mainline churches were solemn. Although occasions like Harvest or Song Service when they were introduced made these special services vibrant. Members were not allowed to dance

in the church. In the past some mainline churches like ECWA and UMCA members were not allowed to shout "Halleluyah" during worship services like the C. A. C and C & S Churches. The Neo-Pentecostals have what they called praise worship in their worship services. It is a time to sing praises to God. According to Ademiluka:

> This is where every gifted dancer has the avenue to exhibit the talent. Sometimes the dance is not only frenzied but, in fact, competitive. In some churches, it is combined with month-whistling and blowing of whistles and with the type of ululation one witnesses when a famous musician is on stage (Ademiluka, 2007:32).

It should be noted, however, that today this kind of dancing is not limited to the Neo-Pentecostals alone; some mainline churches have been influenced. Prayers were always said quietly and the name of Jesus mentioned only at the close of the prayer. However, when the Pentecostals and Neo-Pentecostals came on board, they introduced a praying pattern that some Christians preferred. To them prayer must be offered with total concentration, zeal, and gestures of the hand and head by the prayer leader and the congregation. They display high level of emotion during prayers. They organize different types of prayer meetings at different time and places to meet the felt needs of the worshippers. In some of these meetings, worshippers testify to the fact that they have received one miracle or the other. This made people who are facing some challenges feel that someday they also will have a testimony if they continue to attend the church[44].

Moreover, unemployment and poverty are strong factors behind this migration. According to Ogunkunke "It is obvious that there are many cases of well-educated and hardworking young men and women who have graduated from universities and other tertiary institutions for years and have no jobs and the possibility of getting one is nil." (Ogunkunle, 2007:167). Some of the Neo-Pentecostal Churches assure worshippers of financial break through and good jobs. Some of these churches even make effort to source for employment for the unemployed worshippers. They operate loan schemes for members of their churches. Whenever they have projects to execute, they give preference to members of their church, who are contractors. Some people migrate to this type of church for job opportunities. Some of the Pentecostal churches have established institutions of learning that provide jobs for their members and others. It should be noted that some mainline churches also have institution of learning of their own.

In addition to these, the Neo-Pentecostal churches engage in community development service. They dig wells or sink boreholes, build roads, schools, health care centres, provide scholarships to indigent students and so on. The Pentecostals appears to be making more impacts in the lives of the people in these areas than the mainline churches. They also have programme for the widows, orphans, widowers and different categories of indigent members. It is important to mention that some of the mainline churches are involved in community development service as well. In fact they started it but some Neo-Pentecostals are doing better. Also, the Pentecostals emphasise miracles. They organize programme where they assure worshippers of signs and wonders. People with diverse challenges always avail

[44] These are the common features in most revival meetings of the Pentecostals. The persons that have been touched by God in a service are encouraged to give testimony publicly in order to retain the miracle received.

themselves of these opportunities. In some cases when their needs are met in a particular church they relocate to that church. Worshippers in Neo-Pentecostal churches from time to time testify to the salvation, hearing miracles and deliverance they have received from God.

Another reason for migration to Neo-Pentecostal churches is leadership opportunities. The mainline churches have put in place some conditions, which are pre-requisites or mandatory requirements for those that will be involved in leadership. Some have made theological education a mandatory requirement for Christian service. In most of the mainline churches, women are not ordained as priests. Those who desire to be in leadership position but discover that the mainline setting may not allow them to realize their goal usually move to where they think this will be possible. In fact, there are indications that some of the leaders of the Neo-Pentecostal churches today were youth leaders, fellowship group leaders, choirmasters, pastor etc in the mainline churches yesterday. There were those that were disciplined or ex-communicated by some mainline churches on the grounds of misconduct or doctrinal difference who floated a ministry or church later. The Neo-Pentecostals involve women in church leadership. Some of their assembly pastors are women. Founders and General overseers of some of their churches are women. This made those who feel called to Christian ministries think that they can only fulfill divine purpose if they join the Neo-Pentecostals.

Besides, dressing is a factor for migration of Christians from mainline to Neo-Pentecostal churches. In the mainline churches, emphasis is placed on the use of veil for women especially during worship services. The Neo-Pentecostals, quoting the same scripture with the mainline, believe that the woman's hair was already a covering (I Cor. 11:3-15). It is also common to see women members of some Neo-Pentecostal groups in trousers in church, which the mainline churches frown at. It has been observed that most people would want to worship in churches with less restriction (Ademiluka, 2007:52).

Implications of Migration of Christians on Nigerian Society

Constitutionally, Nigeria is a secular state. Every citizen is free to practice his or her religion. Nigerian like any other African nation is notoriously religious. Being a religiously multifarious society, there are many types and brands of religion. By reason of passion for spiritual fulfillment, the Nigerian society is bustling with various forms of religious activities. This accounts for migration of religious adherents from one group to another. The migrations of Christians from one group to another have great implications on the Nigerian church and society at large. It has actually touched all aspects of our national life. Some of these implications are discussed below.

In the first place, theology of the church has been greatly affected. Theology is discourse about God. It is expected that every religious adherent will have correct knowledge of God. Church activities are to be designed toward a proper understanding of God by the members. Some migrate to other churches today in search for the true knowledge of God. To them the mainline churches lack the correct understanding of God. The resultant effect is the movement of these people to places they believe will meet their needs. These people consider mainline churches as dead. Mainline churches have lost great preachers and members to Neo-Pentecostal churches. Unfortunately, some of the Neo-Pentecostal churches are not well rooted in scriptures. There are cases of erroneous teaching and preaching by top leaders of these groups. Some are even involved in occult

practices for their churches to grow. As observed by Dada, "they attend the church during the day and attend the shrine service at night. As a result Christianity in Nigeria has spread widely but without deep roots in the lives of the people." (Dada, 2007:49). This is an indication that there is something wrong with our theology. Church members in either mainline or Neo-Pentecostals are involved in vices in this nation. As noted by Abogunrin, "religious houses are not moving fast enough to cope with ethical problems" (Abogunrin, 1986:11)[24] in the society. What we have is religious milieu froth with different levels of syncretism and misunderstanding. There are cases of occult involvement of church leaders. There are also church leaders who rape and dupe members.

Another implication is that of economy. It has been discovered that the migration to Neo-Pentecostal churches has robbed the mainline churches of members who were at a time financier of projects. These were donors to the life and ministry of these churches. There were also young men and women who have been trained by the leaders of mainline churches who suddenly moved to the Neo-Pentecostals. Some of them are graduates who have good jobs with fat salaries. Their movement has impoverished their former churches. This is because their financial obligations to the church in form of tithes, offering, pledges, special donations now go to the new church (Awojobi, 2003:22). In this way, the new church is getting richer while the old church is becoming poorer. Some of these funds are channeled towards building of institutions of learning, medical centres, community development service etc and thus providing employment opportunities for people. Most of the mainline churches are walking on a tight financial rope. It is becoming increasingly difficult to embark on project that involves heavy finance in some mainline churches. This has also affected, adversely, the welfare packages given to staff of the church. There are cases of pastors moving from the established or mainline churches to Neo-Pentecostal churches because of remunerations.

Furthermore, some Christians move from mainline church to Neo-Pentecostal for social reasons. For instance, young people are very comfortable were their peers are. As a pastor for over two decades, I have heard some young people complain that they are not comfortable in a church where their parents are attending. Some are not active in fellowship group meetings because their parents or mothers or fathers-in-law are members. They always prefer a neutral place where majority are in the same age bracket with them. Besides, some congregations bear distinctive community images as "the status church" or the "elite church" where you will find lawyers, judges, doctors, engineers, bankers, captains of industries, administrators, community leaders etc.[45] Some of the mainline churches are considered as old school and anti-social. It should be noted that migration from one church to another has affected interpersonal relationship badly. Experiences have shown that this phenomenon have generated conflicts, death, bitterness, litigations and bad blood among the laity and the clergy in the Nigerian church today.

Also, some of those who left the mainline churches for Pentecostal churches have returned. For instance, my church, UMCA has begun to see some of our members who left for the Neo-Pentecostals return. Some of them are now in leadership position. Some of those who have returned complain of abuse of power among the Neo-Pentecostal leaders. They opine that it is difficult to check or correct

[45] This is the general opinion of leaders of Evangelical churches. Most of them see the poverty in their Churches as a product of the movement of some of their members to Neo- Pentecostal Churches.

them because they always claim that no member of the church was there when God was giving them the ministry. They also accused some Neo-Pentecostal leaders of running the church under their care as a personal family estate. This is because these leaders take unilateral decisions on crucial issues in the church. The members have no voice or their view about an issue does not matter. They claimed to have been dissatisfied with the activities of the leaders of the Neo Pentecostal churches. To them the mainline churches are better than the Neo-Pentecostals.

Concluding Remarks

It is clear from the study that Christians are migrating from one church group to another and that there are factors responsible for this. It is important for church leaders in Nigeria to attend to the factors responsible for this migration in order to fulfill her mandate. The gospel must be seen to be meeting the needs of her adherents to maintain relevance in any generation. J.D Gwamna observed:

> The question of relating the Gospel message to contemporary human experience gives the gospel its relevance in this modern age of science advancement and secularism, which have altered the course of human history and values. The need for the gospel to present itself in a more acceptable fashion and to relate its message to the daily needs of the people is the challenge for today's church (Gwamna, 2008:15).

According to him, the church needs a message that would grapple with not only their existential questions or answers in an intelligible way, but which would also meet their daily physical needs. There is the need to relate the gospel to the whole man.

Also, all the issues that promote migration of church members from one church to the other must be addressed properly by church leaders. This will bring it to the minimum. In other words, church worship services are to be properly contextualized. That is to say those foreign influences in worship services must be stepped down for African elements to be prominent. Worship services should be solemn and vibrant. Furthermore, for the church to make impact in this generation, issues to like poverty, unemployment, sickness, demonic affliction and a host of others that threaten the existence of man must be tackled. The clergy, as well as, the laity must be interested in the physical and spiritual wellbeing of the church members. Messages from the pulpit and other church activities must address critical challenges in man's life.

Besides, leadership opportunities must be accorded members who have been genuinely called by God. In the event of misconduct, discipline must be done in love. Church leaders are to create conducive atmosphere for worship and ministerial service for different categories of members. Finally, efforts should be made by church leaders to address issues that threaten the existence of man. As a church in Africa, her leaders must ensure that the gospel is presented in a way that it will be acceptable to the African people.

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