

Timeline Events in Christian Mission in Africa

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Abstract. The history of Christianity is a fascinating story of the manifestation of the finger of God in the affairs of mankind. The church has passed through different stages of life, and “yet has hardly reached the period of full manhood in Christ Jesus”. Sequential presentation of church historical events seems to be “generally abandoned”. Chronicling church history developments allows for better view of the progress made and the connectivity of events. This paper aims at presenting the key events in the growth and development of Christianity especially in Africa in its progressive order. It applies the chronological or annalistic approach to bring in the natural flow of events. This is carried out in five main streams for better appreciation and understanding. The paper concludes that the arrival of missionaries of both the Reformation (Protestant) and Roman Catholic faith, and acceptability of the natives has given Christianity a strong hold in the African continent.

Keywords: Timeline, events, Christian mission, Africa

1. Preamble

Chronology has to do with any system used to order time and to place events in the progression in which they occurred. The systems used to record human history, vary in scope, accuracy, and method according to the purpose, degree of sophistication, and skills of the peoples using them (*Encyclopædia Britannica*, 2015). This timeline of Christian missions chronicles the global expansion of Christianity through listing of the most important missionary outreach events. The history of the Church is a vital part of the Orthodox Christian faith which is significantly defined by their continuity with all those who have gone and died before, those who first received and preached the truth of Jesus Christ to the world, those who helped to formulate the

expression and worship of the faith, and those who continue to move forward in the unchanging yet ever-dynamic Holy tradition of the Orthodox Church.

There is a peculiarity relating to the African story of Christian history and Missiology. The insight which the timeline offers is critical for an inductive understanding of the point that Christianity is not alien to the African soil. It is fascinating to learn how that for about seven hundred years following the extinction of the North African Church, no Christian activity took place in that region. Thereafter, the missionaries arrived and established the faith across the continent. The increasing wave of Pentecostalism and modernism in Africa is taking many especially youths away from heritage of the Christian faith. Joseph Sittler said, “The map of God’s activity, then, is not a blank ocean between the apostolic shores and our modern day. So we need to remember-and search for our roots in-the luminaries, risk takers, and movements of the church through the centuries. To neglect them is not only to risk repeating past errors, it is to fall victim to a narrowing amnesia that leaves us floundering” (Onu, 2018, p. 97). The events recorded in this study are intended to bring to memory the developments in African Christian heritage. The paper uses chronological or annalistic approach to bring in the natural flow of events in the development of Christianity. This allowed for better examination of the progress made and the connectivity of events.

2. Streams of Christian Developments in Africa

There is no unanimity in the division of the number and length of the period in Christina history. Bruce L. Shelley (1995) and John Hunt (2008) divided the events into eight ages, namely: Jesus and the Apostles (6-70), Roman Catholic Christianity (70-312), Christian Roman Empire (312-590), Middle

Ages (590-1517), Reformation (1517-1648), Reason and Revival (1648-1789), Progress (1789-1914), and Ideologies (1914-1996). Philip Schaff simply put the events under three principal parts. John Laux (2012) also presented the events in three sections; The Ancient church to the beginning of the Pontificate of Gregory the Great (AD 1-590), the Church in the Middle Ages (590-1517), and Modern times from the Protestant revolt to the present day (1517-1933). The events recorded herein under are part of our Christian heritage. They are intended to bring to memory the activities surrounding the dates in the understanding of Christian heritage and developments of the church particularly in Africa. This synopsis of the origin and development of Christianity particularly in Africa is presented in five main streams.

The first era is the history of ancient Christianity. It is the apostolic and orthodox period that reveals the activities of Jesus and his Apostles, Roman Catholic Christianity and Christian Empire. It emphasizes on the role played by individuals from the Evangelist Mark, down the line to the Patriarchate of Athanasius and others. It is a period of oral tradition of transmission of Christian teaching to Africa, before the earliest gospel (Mark) was written, eye witnesses dispersing throughout Judea, Samaria, and Africa, the Conversion of Ethiopian eunuch, and treasurer to Candace (legendary) Queen of Ethiopia on his return to Africa. The preoccupation of this period is the very intellectual work of scholarly Church doctors or theologians like Origin and Augustine of Hippo who were helpful in the much required doctrinal orthodoxy.

The second period as gleaned from 590 through 1517 is the Medieval or Middle Ages and Roman (Iberian) Catholicism. It opened a fresh flood gate of Portuguese missionary activities in Africa.

The third phase is the great century reformation from the 16th century through 1789. It is the “age of Reformation (Protestantism) in conflict with Romanism, of religious liberty and independence in conflict with the principle of authority and tutelage, of individual and personal Christianity against an objective and traditional church system”. It is an era of enlightenment, reason and revival which furnishes details of established missionary societies especially of the Reformation (Protestant) groups.

The Modern Christian age spans from 1789 through 1970. It is the era of Colonialism and rooting of Christianity in Africa especially West Africa by European missionaries of the mainline churches. The church made significant progress with the emergence

of African Initiated Churches which has made the church in Africa to wear nationalistic and indigenous garb.

The postmodern era revealed increase in the development of new Christian religious movements, church revival and prosperity preaching in Africa. It was a boom for individual church founders in expression of the call of God upon their lives. The revival fire in the mainline churches began to increase as well.

3. The Timeline Events

A. Apostolic and Orthodox Era, 1- 590 AD

c. 1-7: Birth of Jesus Christ of Nazareth during the reign of Emperor Caesar Augustus of Rome.

The Matthew tradition immediately reports the flight of the Holy Family to Egypt.

c. 29: John the Baptist began his ministry in the "15th year of Tiberius" (Luke 3:1-2).

Jesus began his ministry after his baptism by John

c. 30-33: Simon of Cyrene in Libya, carried Jesus' cross in Jerusalem;

Jesus Christ crucified. Great Commission of Jesus to go and make disciples of all nations;

Pentecost- “God-fearing Jews” from “Egypt and parts of Libya near Cyrene” observe Pentecost in Jerusalem received the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, a day in which 3000 Jews were converted to faith in Jesus Christ.

34: In Gaza, Philip baptized a convert, an Ethiopian who was already a Jewish proselyte.

42: Mark went to Alexandria in Egypt.

43; Apostle James put to death by Herod Agrippa.

47-57: Missionary travels of Paul.

67: Paul Martyred.

70: The Romans under Titus son of Vespasian captured and destroyed Jerusalem, about 1.5 million Jews died.

80: First Christians reported in Tunisia and France.

99: Death of Apostle John at Ephesus.

100: First Christians were reported in Monaco, Algeria.

177: Syriac and Italian translations of the New Testament.

190: Date of Easter determined.

200-300: Appearance of Earliest Bible Translations.

251: The Council of Carthage called by Cyprian which gave incredible power to Church leaders.

287: Maurice from Egypt was killed at Agauno, Switzerland for refusing to sacrifice to pagan divinities.

303: The Council of Elvira defined the requirements for celibacy of the clergy that became an ecclesiastical law at the Lateran Council of 1139, confirmed at the Council of Trent and reaffirmed by Vatican II.

312: Emperor Constantine won the battle at the Milvian Bridge over the troops of Maxentius on October 28, through the use of cross as was revealed to him in a dream with the words, “In this sign conquer” which marked his conversion to the Christian faith.

314: Emperor Constantine established the free exercise of the Christian religion and liberated the Roman world from oppression.

321: Emperor Constantine made Sunday a public holiday.

325: Council of Nicaea, the first great ecumenical council of Bishops of the Church called by Emperor Constantine. It denounced Arius’ view and declared Jesus as, “very God of very God, not made, being of one substance with the Father...”

330: Ethiopian King Ezana of Axum made Christianity an official religion.

332: Two young Roman Christians, Frumentius and Aedesius, sole survivors of a ship destroyed in the Red Sea due to tensions between Rome and Aksum, taken as slaves to the Ethiopian capital of Axum to serve in the royal court.

337: Bishop Eusebius of Nicomedia baptized Emperor Constantine shortly before he died.

350: The Bible is translated into Saidic, an Egyptian language.

381: The Council of Constantine held in response to the teaching of Apollinarius

386: Augustine of Hippo converted from Manichaeism to Christianity.

393/395: The Council of Hippo fixed the Canon of the New Testament to 27 books.

400: Vandals invaded North Africa.

431: The Council of Ephesus (3rd general council) called by Emperor Theodosius II to settle the Nestorian heresy.

450/1: The Council of Chalcedon where the Bishop of Rome first appeared as ‘Pope’.

B. Medieval (Roman Catholicism) Era, 590-1517

697: Muslims overran Carthage, capital of North Africa.

1095: Jerusalem completely taken back from the Muslim invaders.

1204: Muslims took over Constantinople.

1219: Francis of Assisi presented the Gospel to the Sultan of Egypt.

1450s: The first printed Bible - Gutenberg Bible.

1453: The Christian kingdom of Constantinople fell to the Muslims.

1481-1846: Attempt by the Portuguese missionaries at Benin Kingdom.

1485: The King of Benin requested that a church be planted in his kingdom after he came in contact with the Portuguese.

1486: Dominicans became active in West Africa, notably among the Wolof people in Senegambia

1489: Baptism of Wolof king Behemoui in Senegal.

1491: The Congo saw first group of missionaries- Franciscan and Dominican priests, the king would soon be baptized and a church built at the royal capital under their ministry.

1492: Birth of the Church in Angola.

1498: First Christians were reported in Kenya.

1499: Portuguese Augustinian missionaries arrived at Zanzibar. Their mission ended in 1698 due to the Oman-Arab conquest.

1506: Mission work begun in Mozambique.

1515: Portuguese missionary Francisco Alvares was sent on a diplomatic mission to Dawit II, the Negus or Emperor of Abyssinia (an old name for Ethiopia)

1515: Portuguese missionaries began work in Benin, Nigeria.

C. Reformation and Enlightenment Era, 1517-1789

1517-1648: The Reformation movement initially aimed at reforming the beliefs and practices of the Roman Catholic Church.

1517, October 31: Martin Luther's 95 Theses, a document that sparked theological debate that fuelled the

Reformation challenged the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church on penance, the authority of the Pope and indulgences.

1518: Don Henrique, son of the King of the Congo was consecrated by Pope Leo X as the first native Bishop from sub-Saharan Black Africa.

1521: The Diet of Worms Council where the Roman Catholic Church ordered Martin Luther to recant his view of the Church.

1525: William Tyndale translated the Bible translated into English from Greek.

1534: The Jesuits also known as The Society of Jesus founded by Ignatius Loyola received Papal approval in 1540.

1545-1561: The Council of Trent called by Pope Paul III to reform the Roman Catholic Church; They affirmed the doctrine of transubstantiation, seven sacraments, salvation by works and importance of formal Latin mass.

1549: Act of Uniformity first enacted by the British parliament making the new Prayer Book

mandatory in all religious services requiring conformity to its religious rites.

The 2nd, 3rd and 4th Acts were passed in 1552, 1559 and 1662 respectively.

1559: The Presbyterian Free Church of Scotland Mission founded by John Knox.

The name was changed to Church of Scotland Mission in 1929.

1560: Geneva Bible, first English translation Bible to be printed with chapters and verses.

1563: Thirty-Nine (39) Articles adopted as the principal doctrinal confession of the Church of England and the Protestant Episcopal Church Convocation.

1571 and 1574: Augustinian monks led by Fr. Francisco arrived Warri in present day Nigeria.

1611: King James Version Bible

1622: Pope Gregory XV created the “sacred congregation” for the propagation of Roman Catholic faith through missions, training of missionaries and indigenous clergy. It was constituted of cardinals.

1644: Parliament abolished the Episcopal system in the Westminster Confession of Faith, and set up a Presbyterian Church.

1662: The Book of Common Prayer published as a norm of Anglican services.

1687: French activity started in what is now Côte D’Ivoire when missionaries landed at Assinie.

1689: Act of Toleration exempted protestant dissenters.

1703-1715: “St Anthony Movement” of Prophetess Kimpa Vita (Beatrice) in the Congo

1704: Kimpa Vita baptized as Dona Beatrice founded the Antonian movement in the Congo. She was burnt at the stake in 1706 following her attack against Portuguese hegemony.

1705: The sacred congregation for the propagation of faith sent a missionary to Bornu, Nigeria.

1741: George Frederic Handel wrote his most famous hymn, Messiah.

1744: Thomas Thompson resigned his position as dean at the University of Cambridge to become a missionary. He was sent by the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts (SPG) to New Jersey. Taking a special interest in the slave population there, he would later request to begin mission work in Africa. In 1751, Thompson would become the first SPG missionary to the Gold Coast (modern-day Ghana)

1747, March 10: John Newton, a slave trader surrendered his life to Christ in the midst of a storm at sea. He later become an Abolitionist, a minister of the Gospel, and hymn writer including *Amazing Grace*.

1752: Thomas Thompson, first Anglican missionary to Africa, arrived in the Gold Coast (Ghana).

1758, March 22: Jonathan Edwards, the greatest Theologian in American history and a man most closely associated with the Great Evangelical Awakening in North America, died from smallpox vaccination after serving just one month as President of Princeton University.

1761, August 17: William Carey, the oldest of five children was born to Edmond and Elizabeth Carey in Paulerspury, Northamptonshire; He was raised in the Church of England and later converted to the Baptist mission.

1763: Senegal erected into a prefecture Apostolic.

1768: Five United Brethren missionaries from Germany, invited by the Danish Guinea Company arrived in the Gold Coast (Ghana), to teach in the Cape Coast Castle schools.

1780: The Sunday school movement founded in England by Robert Raikes, he died April 5, **1811**.

1787, October 28: William Wilberforce, member of British Parliament, wrote in his diary: *“God Almighty has set before me two great objectives, the suppression of the slave trade and the Reformation of society.”*

1787: 400 liberated slaves arrived Freetown-Sierra Leone; others groups joined in 1792, 1800 and 1807.

1789, May 12: William Wilberforce introduced a Bill for the Abolition of the slave trade before the House of Commons in the Palace of Westminster, London.

D. Modern Era, 1789-1970

1792: Rev Home of the Anglican Church reached Sierra Leone

1792, May 12: William Carey “Father of Modern Missions” published an 87-page book, *An Inquiry into the obligation of Christians to use means for the conversion of the heathen*. On May 31, **1792** in Northampton, England he preached one of the most influential sermons in history entitled; *Expect great things from God!, Attempt great things for God!* based on Isaiah 54:2-3, which launched modern Missionary movement. On **November 11, 1793** he reached Calcutta, India and started a 42-year mission of Bible translation, establishing Christian schools and first Christian college in Asia, Serampore College; He died June 9, **1835** at age 72 in Serampore, Bengal, India.

1793: Dedication of African Methodist Episcopal Church Bethel founded by Richard Allen in Philadelphia.

1794: London Missionary Society (LMS) founded in England as a non-denominational missionary society with missions in the South Pacific islands and Africa.

1795, December 21: Robert Moffat pioneer missionary to Africa under the LMS was born in Ormiston, East Lothian, Scotland.

1796, June 27: John William, pioneer London Missionary Society Missionary to the South Pacific was born in Tottenham, England.

1799, April 12: Church Missionary Society (CMS) founded, it was originally called the Society for Missions in Africa and the East.

1803, May 25: The Massachusetts Baptist Missionary Society first published *The American Baptist*, which continues as the oldest surviving religious magazine in the United States.

1804, March 7: The British and Foreign Bible Society founded to translate, publish and distribute the Bible.

1804, April 14: The CMS West African Mission founded.

1806: Haystack Prayer Meeting at Williams College; Andover Theological Seminary founded as a missionary training center; Protestant missionary work begins in earnest across southern Africa

1807: **February 22:** The slave trade Abolition Bill, led by William Wilberforce was passed in the British House of Commons Parliament with 283 votes against 16.

1812, October 16: Anglican missionary Henry Martyn who translated the New Testament into Urdu and Persian died at age 31 in Tokat, Ottoman Empire.

1813, March 19: David Livingstone one of the most influential missionaries, authors and explorers in history

was born in Blantyre, Scotland; In 1840 he entered Malawi (Africa) with the LMS.

1814, December 25: Samuel Marsden, CMS missionary conducted the first known Christian service in New Zealand at Oihi Bay.

1815, April 1: William Chalmers Burns a Scottish evangelist and missionary to China with the English Presbyterian Mission was born in Forfarshire, Scotland.

He was associated with the Revival in Scotland in 1839 along with Robert Murray M'Cheyne.

1815: Basel Missionary Society organized; Richmond African Missionary Society founded.

1820, April 7: **Samuel Ajayi Crowther** was rescued from Portuguese slave traders by H.M.S. Myrmidon of

the British Royal Navy. He landed Sierra Leone June 17, 1822, was **baptism** with the name of the Vicar of Christ Church, Newgate, London on **December 11**, 1824. He was ordained a priest June 11, 1843 and became one of the pioneers of the CMS.

He was consecrated on June 29, 1864 under the Jerusalem Act as Bishop of "West Equatorial Africa

regions beyond the Queen's Dominions", and on December 31, **1891** he died in Lagos.

1821: African-American Loll Carey, a Baptist missionary, sailed with 28 colleagues from Norfolk, VA to Sierra Leone.

1828: Basel Mission began work in the Christiansburg area of Accra, Ghana.

1829, April 10: William Booth who was born a Methodist, founded the Salvation Army to reach unchurched people working in the slums, and wrote the book *In Darkest England*.

1830, April 6: Joseph Smith born December 23, 1805 formally organized The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints at the home of Peter Whitmer Sr. in Fayette, NY. It was initially called Church of Christ changed to Church of Latter Day Saints (May 3, 1834) and April 26, 1838 the current name.

1835, **February 26:** Queen Ranavalona I of Madagascar forbade the preaching of the Gospel resulting to the imprisonment or martyrdom of many Christians.

1836, April 11: George Muller opened his first orphanage in Bristol, taking in 26 orphans. 40 years later, his orphanages housed 2,000 children. Muller ran a Faith Mission which did not engage in fundraising, but trusted the Lord to provide through free will donations.

1839, November 20: John William a LMS missionary who for over 20 years had planted churches and schools, translating the Scriptures into local languages was killed by cannibals in the South Pacific, on the Island of Erromanga.

1842, September 24: Rev. Thomas Freeman of the Methodist church, father of modern Christian missions in Nigeria reached Badagry.

1842, December 24: Rev. Henry Townsend of the Church Missionary Society reached Badagry to begin the

process of Anglicanization of Nigeria.

He celebrated Christmas together with Rev. Thomas Freeman in keeping with the cordiality that existed between the Methodists and the Evangelicals of the Anglican Church

1843, Jan 4: Henry Townsend first entered Abeokuta.

1844, May 24: Samuel F. B. Morse, a Christian inventor demonstrated the first practical telegraph with the message; "*What hath God wrought?*"

1844: German Ludwig Krapf of the CMS began work in Mombasa on the Kenya Coast.

1844: Hans Paludan Smith Schreuder, missionary, arrives in Port Natal, South Africa.

1845, Jan 17: Rev. S. A. Crowther, Henry Townsend, Charles Golmer and others landed Badagry.

1845, March 9: First CMS Church at Badagry opened for worship.

1845:CMS Grammar School opened in Freetown Sierra Leone

1846, April 10: Rev. Hope Waddell led the Presbyterian Mission team in a boat 'Warree' and on first arrival

in Fernanda Po was escorted to Old Calabar by Sir John Beecroft in a boat 'the Ethiope').

1848, Feb 5: First Anglican baptism in Abeokuta, one of the converts was Bishop Crowther's mother.

1848: Christian marriage celebrated in Calabar-Nigeria between Henry Hamilton and Mary Brown.

1850, April 12: Adoniram Judson an American Baptist Missionary died at age 61, at sea in the Bay of Bengal.

He was a pioneer missionary to Burma and succeeded in translating the Bible into Burmese, planted over 100 churches with 8,000 believers; also compiled the first ever Burmese-English dictionary.

1850: Advent of Baptist mission in Badagry, Nigeria by Rev. Thomas Jefferson Bowen of the Southern Baptist Convention. His team included Harvey Goodale and Robert F. Hill

1850: David Hinderer started Anglican mission in Ibadan.

1850: Ekpe law was proclaimed abolishing human sacrifices.

1850: Fr Philip of Segeni visited Bornu after hearing of the presence of Roman Catholic family of Malta origin.

1851: Slave Rebellion in Old Calabar as the slaves formed "Blood Men Organization" to challenge immolation of slaves at funerals of noblemen.

1852, Jan 10: Lagos Mission started by James White who preached the gospel first in a site at Iga Idunganran near Holy Trinity Church Ebute Ero, Lagos mother church.

1852, October 3: CMS Yoruba Mission founded.

1853: Henry Venn, Secretary of the CMS, sets out ideal of self-governing, self-supporting and self-propagating churches.

1853, October: Essien Essien Ukpabio, first convert of Hope Waddell at Calabar mission was baptized by Rev.

H. Goldie and was ordained into the ministry on April 9, 1872 as first African Presbyterian priest. He died December 3, 1902.

1854, October 29: First Confirmation at Lagos by Bishop Vidal.

1854, November 18: First Confirmation at Abeokuta by Bishop Vidal.

1885: Medical missionary work started in Calabar, Nigeria by Dr Hewan who arrived from Jamaica

1855, April 21: Dwight L. Moody who became a powerful Evangelist was converted to Christ by the Sunday school teacher, Edward Kimball.

1857, July 27: CMS Niger Mission inaugurated with the arrival of Rev. (later Bishop) Samuel Ajayi Crowther

at Onitsha for evangelism.

1857: Publication of David Livingstone's book; *Missionary Travels and Researches in South Africa.*

1857: First mission station started in Northern Nigeria during the 1857 expedition. Crowther obtained a piece of land from the Etzu Nupe where a missionary rest house was erected.

1859, June 6: First Secondary School in Nigeria founded the Anglican mission-CMS Grammar School Bariga, Lagos started with 25 boys with Thomas Babington Macaulay, son-in-law of Bishop Crowther as the first Principal, an office he held for 20 years.

1860, December 2: Charles Thomas Studd, known as C. T. Studd born in Spratton, Northamptonshire; he became a world famous English cricketer and pioneer missionary to China, India and the Congo.

1862: The New Testament was translated into Efik language by Rev. Hugh Goldie. The OT was translated in 1868 by Rev. (Dr) Alexander Robb. The next year-1868, both OT and NT was published.

1862: The baptism administered in Northern Nigeria-8adults and a child.

1863, September 8: Rebirth of Roman Catholicism in Nigeria.

1864: The Holy Ghost Fathers arrived Freetown Sierra Leone. They were by St Joseph of Cluny sisters in 1866.

1865, April 29: Missionary work started at Bonny.

1866, Feb 18: First Baptism in Badagry.

1866: Two Holy Ghost Fathers missionaries arrived the Congo River area.

1867, March 30: Governor Glover laid Foundation of Christ Church Lagos.

1867: Lambeth Conference, a month-long conference of Anglican bishops worldwide held every 10 years, in years ending in 8.

1867, October 13: Christians expelled from Abeokuta.

1869: First Vatican Council (20th Ecumenical Council) convoked by Pope Pius IX in Rome; It approved Papal infallibility.

1871: Henry Stanley founded David Livingstone in Central Africa.

1972: Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society (WTBTS) founded in USA by Pastor Charles Taze Russell of Pittsburgh. The name "Jehovah's Witnesses" was adopted in 1931 under Judge Joseph Franklin Rutherford as president.

In 1888, WTbTS started in Liberia, and in 1923, it began in Sierra Leone.

1876: Fourah Bay College, Sierra Leone was founded by the CMS as the first advanced academic institution in Africa.

1876, August 5: 28-year old Scottish Presbyterian missionary, **Mary Mitchell Slessor** “Queen of Calabar”

sailed on the *SS Ethiopia* for Calabar, Nigeria, West Africa to begin effective missionary work; She was born Dec 2, **1848** in Aberdeen, Scotland and died January 13, **1915** at Ikot Oku at the age 66.

1877: Eight missionaries of the CMS arrived at Buganda, a region of Uganda.

1878: The Livingstone Inland Mission (LIM) started in Central Africa by Henry and Fanny Gratton Guinness.

1879: The Salvation Army founded by William Born. He was converted at age 15, and 2 years later became a Methodist minister which he left in 1861.

1879: The Holy Ghost Fathers received permission from the Pope to begin mission in southern Angola

1881: North Africa Mission (now Arab World Ministries) founded on the work of Edward Glenny in Algeria

1883, August 9: Robert Moffatt, pioneer London Missionary Society missionary in Southern Africa who was based at Kuruman, for over 50 years, died at age 87 in Leigh, Kent, England. He translated the Bible and *Pilgrims Progress* into Setswana, being the first complete translation of the Bible into an African language.

1883: The Boys Brigade (BB) Movement founded by William Smith.

The Young Men Christian Association (YMCA) founded by Sir George Williams.

The Red Cross was founded by a Swiss Henry Dunant.

1884: Christian Century and Ecumenical Protestant Journal founded as *The Christian Oracle* by The Disciples of Christ.

1884: The African Wesleyan church inspired by Psalm 68: 31 began properly

1885: Berlin Congress recognized Goldie’s Charter and declared Nigeria a sphere of British influence.

1885, May 22: Thirty-two (32) Christian boys were publically executed by King Mwanga in **Uganda**, for refusing to submit to his sodomite demands.

1885: The Rev. Fr Lutz arrived Onitsha to begin Roman Catholicism in Igboland.

1887, Oct 6: Rev. Samuel Alexander Bill reached Old Calabar, he moved to Ibeno and in December founded the Qua Iboe Mission, now United Evangelical Church Nigeria.

1888: Lambert Conference ruled against the practice of polygamy which undermined Henry Venn’s memorandum of 1857.

1888: The Native Baptist church branched out of the American Baptist mission.

1889, Feb 25: Consecration of Saint Stephen’s Cathedral Bonny as first Anglican Cathedral in Nigeria.

1889: North Africa Mission entered Tripoli as first Protestant mission in Libya.

1891, Sept 10: The United Native African Church (UNAC) was founded for the evangelisation and amelioration of Africa to be governed by Africans. The name was changed to The First African Church Mission in 1983, and in 2003 they changed to clergy leadership.

1892, April 29: Inauguration of Niger Delta Pastorate (NDP) at Bonny.

1892: Magena Mokone of Pretoria founded an Ethiopian church from the Wesleyan mission.

1893: The West Equatorial Africa regions beyond the Queen’s Dominions was renamed Diocese of West Equatorial Africa

1894: The policy of self support began to be paraded as *sine-qua-non* of self government.

1894: The bishopric of Lagos created to oversee the Missions of Yoruba, Niger and Lower Niger, and Niger Territories of Northern Nigeria.

1895, March 8: The Hope Waddell Training Institute opened in Old Calabar as a comprehensive school that provided technical and industrial training. The first Principal was Rev. William Risk Thomson.

1895: Arrival of the first faith mission- Africa Inland Mission (AIM) founded by Peter Cameron Scott, one of the largest missions in East Africa.

1895: Premier Church started by Chief Ikiri Solomon Agbagbue at Oduoha-Ogbakiri, marking the advent of Christianity in Ikwerreland of Niger Delta, Nigeria. He was converted at Kalabari.

1896: Ethiopia won victory over Italy at Adowa in the Abyssian war of 1891

1898: The name Nigeria was suggested by Miss Flora Shaw who later became Lady Lugard.

1898: Gideon International, an Association of Christian professionals and business persons.

1900, March 2: Australia inserted the phrase; “*humbly relying on the blessings of Almighty God*” into the

Constitution, with a promise for religious freedom by prohibiting the government from establishing a religion or imposing religious tests on the citizens.

1900: D. C. Babcock of the Seventh-Day Adventist church arrived in Sierra Leone, from where he reached Nigeria and made an indelible footprint.

1901, Oct 13: African Church Bethel founded at Lagos.

1901: Evangelist Deborah Erinwo Wojiewhor established the Church at Ibaa, Ikwereiland of Niger Delta. She took the gospel to Obelle in 1903 and Ndele in 1908, and in 1918 she died.

1901, April 8: Missionaries, James Chalmers and Oliver Tomkins were martyred (clubbed, boiled and eaten) on the Fly River in New Guinea.

1901, October 17: The African Church (formerly United Native African Church) founded in Lagos.

1902: Rowland Bringham of the Sudan Interior Mission who had close association with the North American Holiness Movement started a mission station in Northern Nigeria. The church was later named Evangelical Churches in West Africa (ECWA), later renamed Evangelical Churches Winning All.

1902: The game of football was introduced in Nigeria by Rev. James Luke, Principal of Hope Waddell Institute.

1902: Bishop Joseph Shannahan arrived Onitsha.

1904: Nnorom Chinwo converted at Bonny established the Church in Oginigba, Ikwereiland.

1904: The Sudan United Mission that was founded by Karl Kumm opened a station at Wase, Northern Nigeria. Their work gave rise to TEKAN churches a loose association of twelve churches. The name is an acronym of *Tarayar Ekklesiyoyin Kristi* in Nigeria meaning The Fellowship of Churches of Christ in Nigeria.

1906, April 9: Azusa Street Revival in Los Angeles, California led by preacher William J. Seymour that birthed Pentecostalism as a worldwide movement.

1906, July 17: First synod of Western Equatorial Africa Diocese.

1906, July 27: CMS Niger Mission began.

1908: The Boys Scout Movement founded by Robert Baden Powell.

1911/12: Prophet William Wade Harris of Liberia started his ministry.

1913, April 11- Nov 11, 1918: First World War

1914, Jan: Lord Fredrick Lugard amalgamated the Northern and Southern Nigeria. He introduced Provincial Administration system in Southern Nigeria.

1914: Large-scale revival movement in Uganda; C.T. Studd reported a revival movement in the Congo.

1915: Baptism of Simon Kimbangu at the Ngombe-Lutete Baptist church in Mbamba-Ngungu, Zaire and worked in Kinshasa; He returned to Nkamba in 1921 to preach and heal as a "Prophet" and established the Church of Jesus Christ on Earth.

1916, Feb: Bishop James Johnson declared Garrick Sokari Braide of the faith healing ministry to be an unwelcomed visitor to the Niger Delta Pastorate. The colonial administration arrested him in March 1916.

His followers founded the CHRIST ARMY CHURCH, and in 1918 he died.

1917: The United African Methodist church emerged from the Methodist mission.

1917: Holy Chapel of Miracles founded by a Calabar born midwife and former Roman Catholic, "Blessed Spiritual Mother"

1918: Church of the Twelve Apostles founded by Grace Tani with Kwesi John Nackabah in Ghana.

1919, Oct 10: The Diocese of Lagos was inaugurated with Rt. Rev. Frank Melville Jones as first bishop.

1919: Jehu Appiah started a prayer group with the Methodist Church in Ghana; in 1912 the group branched out and established itself as *Musama Disco Christo Church* (Army of the Cross of Christ Church).

1921, March 10: Diocese on the Niger inaugurated at Onitsha with Rt. Rev. Bertram Lasbrey as foundation bishop

1921: Birth of E. M. Fofana of Sierra Leone; he felt called by God on April 7, 1946 and founded the "Church of Salvation".

1921, April 6: Mkamba Pentecost led by Prophet Simon Kimbangu of Zaire. He was a Catechist of the English Baptist mission who was commissioned in a dream on March 8, to read the Bible, preach the Word and heal the sick by laying-on-of-hands.

1922: Nazarenes enter Mozambique.

1922: Sister H. Macpherson founded the Foursquare Gospel Church in Oakland, California, United States. The church came to Nigeria in 1955.

1923: Scottish missionaries started work in British Togoland.

1923: J. B. Sadare and his Precious Stone or Diamond Society branched out of the Anglican Church because of the issue of infant baptism and exclusive insistence on faith healing and reliance on vision and dreams; they organized themselves as Christ Apostolic Church.

1924: The Evangelical Union of Southern Nigeria founded. On March 14, 1930 it metamorphosed into Christian Council of Nigeria as fellowship of Churches in Nigeria working together to promote the glory of God.

1925: Moses Orimolade Tunolase founded the Cherubim and Seraphim Church with Christianah Abiodun Akirisowon. She married in 1942 and won the headship of C & S movement in 1986.

1929: The Lateran Treaty signed between Italian dictator B. Mussolini's government and the Vatican which established Roman Catholicism as Italy's official religion and regulated the church-state relations.

1929: Ruben Mukasa of Uganda who called himself Spartas branched out of the Anglican Church and founded the African Greek Orthodox Church to be

controlled by Africans and under the Protection of the Holy Patriarchal See of the (Greek) Patriarch of Alexandria.

1929: Christian Council of Nigeria founded as an ecumenical body.

1929: The Eternal Sacred Order of Cherubim & Seraphim branched out of the Cherubim & Seraphim Movement.

1930, July: Joseph Ayo Babalola began to preach the Gospel after his call in 1929. He was born in 1904 in Ilorin.

1930: The Apostolic Church emerged from the "Precious Stone" group of Breadfruit Anglican Church, Lagos started in 1916.

1930: Christian & Missionary Alliance started work among Baouli tribe in Côte D'Ivoire.

1930: Assemblies of God Mission founded in Nigeria through Augustus Ehurie Wogu in Port Harcourt.

1930: Josiah Ositelu founded the Church of the Lord (Aladura). He had a vision in 1925 while serving as an Anglican Catechist.

1935: The African Universal Church founded in Ghana allowed polygamy.

1939, Sept 3- 1945: Second World War

1940: The Church of Christ, the Good Shepherd initiated by Lucy Harriet Harrison at Lagos. she was born in 1900 in Creek Town, Calabar and died March 1981.

1941: Christ Apostolic Church adopted as the name for the Evangelist Joseph Ayo Babalola Faith Tabernacle movement. The name was duly registered in 1943.

1943, January: Establishment of Archdeacon Crowther Memorial Girls' School (ACMGS) Elelenwo by the Anglican mission in Rivers State.

1943, June: Founding of St. John's College, a Teachers' Training Centre of the Anglican mission at Diobu, Port Harcourt.

1947: Conservative Baptist Foreign Mission Society began work among the Senufo people in the Côte D'Ivoire.

1947: Birth of Celestial Church of Christ through Samuel Bilehoe Joseph Oschoffa, a carpenter turned prophet.

1948, May 14: Israel created as a Jewish nation with David Ben-Gurion as first prime minister (1948-63) and

Mr. Chaim Weizmann as first president.

1948: The World Council of Churches (WCC) founded as the "fellowship of Churches which accept our Lord Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour" agreeing to co-operate in theological, spiritual and social matters of mutual interests. The principal tasks of WCC are: (i) to call the

Churches to the goal of visible unity in one faith and one Eucharistic fellowship; (ii) to facilitate the common witnesses of the Churches in each place and all places; (iii) to support the Churches in their worldwide missionary and evangelistic tasks; (iv) to express the common concern of the Churches in the sense of human needs, the breaking down of barrier between people and people and the promotion of one human family in justice and peace; and (v) to foster the renewal of Churches in unity, worship, mission and service.

1951, January 4: Death of Dyigba Dawono known as Marie Lalou (ashes) of Ivory Coast who healed diverse

illnesses with miraculous water.

1948, Nov 14: Brotherhood of the Cross and Star started in Duke Town.

1951, April 17: Inauguration of Anglican Province of West Africa at Freetown, Sierra Leone by Archbishop

of Canterbury, His Grace, Most Rev. Geoffrey Fisher for more effective administration of the Dioceses in Sierra Leone, Gold Coast (now Ghana), Nigeria, The Gambia and Rio Pongas. Bishop of Lagos L.G. Vinning was elected the first Archbishop.

1951, December 24: "The Church of Christ on Earth according to the Prophet Simon Kimbangu" that was organized by Simon's sons and became legalized. It became a member of World Council of Churches in 1968.

1952, Jan 1: Inauguration of Niger Delta Diocese (Anglican Communion) at Saint Stephen's Cathedral

Bonny. From NDD emerged the Dioceses of Calabar-December 20, 1990; Uyo- November 27, 1992; Niger Delta North-May 16, 1996; Niger Delta West- November 28, 1999 and Okrika-November 17, 2003.

1952: The United States Congress designated a National Day of Prayer

1952: Rev Josiah Olufemi Akinlayomi started the Redeemed Christian Church of God in Nigeria

1953: Walter Trobisch, who would publish *I loved a girl* in 1962, began pioneer missionary work in Northern Cameroon

1954: Founding of Evangelical Churches Winning All (ECWA), formerly Evangelical Church in West Africa when the Sudan Interior Mission related churches in Nigeria came together as an indigenous body.

1954: The Lumpa Church founded by Alice Lenshina Mulenga Lubuha "Prophetess Leshina" of

Zambia. She was born in early 1920s, imprisoned under Kenneth Kaunda government in 1964 and died in 1978.

1955: Foursquare Church founded.

1955: The Guta la Jehovah Movement (City of Jehovah) founded by prophetess Mai Chaza of Shona, Zambia. She died in 1960.

1960, October 1: Nigeria Independence Day.

1960s: Church Growth Movement started by Donald A. McGavaran.

1961, May 16: Catholic Diocese of Port Harcourt erected from Calabar.

1962, June 16: Pacelli School for the Blind opened in Lagos by Archbishop Taylor.

1962, August 16: First Jesuit priest, Fr Joseph Schuh arrived Lagos to begin mission work in Nigeria.

1962: The Vatican Council II called by Pope John XXIII (October 11- December 8, 1962; September 29-December 4, 1963; September 14-November 21, 1964, and September 14-December 8, 1965) changed the Roman Catholic world overnight by declaring that "an individual could be a Christian without being a [Roman] Catholic", replacement of Latin with national native language during mass, Supremacy of Scripture over tradition, approved lay ministerial participation and introduction of married diaconate.

1963: All African Conference of churches embracing virtually all Christian denominations in Africa founded. The six principal aims of AACC are: (i) to keep before the Churches and national Christian Councils the demands of the Gospel pertaining to their life and mission, for evangelism, for witness in society, for service in society, for service and for unity, and to this end, to promote consultation and action among the Churches and Councils; (ii) to provide for a common programme of study and research; (iii) to encourage closer relationship and mutual sharing of experience among the Churches in Africa through visits, consultation, conferences and the circulation of information; (iv) to assist the Churches in finding, sharing and placing personnel and utilising other resources for the most effective prosecution of the common task; (v) to assist the Churches in their common work of leadership training, lay and clerical, for the task of the Churches today; and (vi) without prejudice to its own autonomy, to collaborate with the World Council of Churches as other appropriate agencies, in such ways as may be agreed.

1963: Legio Maria Church of Africa started by Guadencia Aoko with Holy Father Melkio L. S. Ondeno in Kenya.

1964, Jan 20: Blessed Venerable Cyprian Michael Owene Tansi died in England. His Mortal Remains arrived Lagos September 19, 1986. The Remains was reinterred at Holy Trinity Cathedral Onitsha October

17, 1986. His Beautification was March 22, 1998 by Pope John Paul II.

1964: A Sudan Interior Mission missionary Gerald Swank started the New Life for All (NLFA) in Northern Nigeria.

1966: Council for World Mission formed as successor to the London Missionary Society.

1967: All foreign missionaries expelled from Guinea.

1967, May 27: Gen. Yakubu Gowon created 12 states in Nigeria.

May 30, 1967 Col. Chukwuemeka Odimegwu Ojukwu declared Eastern Nigeria the "Republic of Biafra". Federal Government of Nigeria declared civil war initially termed "Police Action" on July 6. A full-scale war against Biafra was declared August 9, 1967. On January 12, 1970 Gen. Philip Effiong, Biafran Chief of Staff surrendered "Biafra" to Nigeria. Ojukwu left to Côte D'Ivoire. The civil war ended January 14, 1970.

1967: Prophetess Theresa Sunday U. Inyang founded the Church of God Lamentation of Jehovah in Calabar.

1969: The Egba expelled European missionaries from Abeokuta.

1969: Mrs Maddie Raymond of Ibibio founded the Mount Olive Church of Christ

1970: Frankfurt Declaration on Mission; Operation Mobilisation launched MV Logos ship; Archbishop Makarios III (Mouskos) of Cyprus baptizes 10,000 into the Orthodox Church in Kenya.

1972: Greater Evangelism World Crusade founded by Apostle Geoffrey Daibipi Numbere. He was converted on May 11, 1969 at the Ibadan campus of University of Ife (now Obafemi Awolowo University).

1972: The Uma Ukpai Evagelistic Association founded as an inter-denominational fellowship, multifaceted and global evangelistic ministry that features crusades and evangelistic meetings.

E. Postmodern Era, 1970 forward

1973, February 4: Primate Theophilus Oluwasanu Olabayo founded the Evangelical Church of Yahweh (Worldwide). He was miraculously born on February 24, 1946 at Ogori, Kogi State, and started demonstrating prophetic gifts of God at the age of 3.

1973, March 16: Inauguration of the Catholic National Laity Council in Lagos.

1973: Deeper Life Bible church founded by Pastor William Folorunso Kumuyi at Lagos.

1979, Feb 24: Inauguration of the 16 Diocese of Anglican Communion within Nigeria as Province of Nigeria

with Archbishop Timothy Olufosoye as the first Primate.

On April 20, 1997 the Church of Nigeria increased to 3 Provinces with their foundation Archbishops: Province One- His Grace Most Rev. J. A. Adetiloye, Province Two- His Grace Most Rev. B.C. Nwankiti and Province Three- His Grace Most Rev. P. J. Akinola.

On January 19, 2003 the Provinces increased to 10, and in 2009 it became 14.

Primate Olufosoye was succeeded by Joseph Abiodun Adetiloye on 7th June 1988, Peter Jasper Akinola on 25th March 2000, Nicholas D. Okoh on 11th September 2005 and Henry Ndububa on March 22, 2020.

1969: The Agbala Daniel Church was founded by Archbishop Dorcas Olaniyi

1980, February: Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) inaugurated to embrace all the Christian denominations in Nigeria as it was “felt that the churches in Nigeria CAN and WILL achieve great things for Christ, with the help of the Holy Spirit”. CAN is an “association of Christian churches with distinct identities, recognizable church structures and a system of worship of one God in the Trinity of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, which makes Christ the centre of all their work and which promotes the glory of God, by encouraging the growth and unity of the churches, by helping them to lead the nation and her people to partake of Christ’s salvation and all its fruits”. The five groups of CAN are: (i) The Catholic Secretariat of Nigeria (CSN); (ii) The Christian Council of Nigeria (CCN); (iii) The Christian Pentecostal Fellowship of Nigeria (CPFN) /Pentecostal Fellowship of Nigeria (PFN); (iv) The Organization of African Instituted Churches (OAIC); and (v) TEKAN/ECWA Fellowship

1980, May: Religious violence in Zaria. December 18-20, riots in Kano, the Maitatsine sect killed 4,177.

1987, March 5 and following days Christians and Muslims clash in Kafanchan, Kaduna State with over 100 Churches and Mosques burnt. September 7, 2001 Christian-Muslim conflict in Jos, over 500 killed.

1981, March 1: Consecration of first native bishop of Ikwereiland, Niger Delta, Samuel Onyuku Elenwo at St.

James Church Oke-Bola, Ibadan. Other Ikwere Anglican bishops consecrated thereafter are Blessing C. Enyindah on April 18, 2007, Innocent U. Ordu on July 12, 2009 and Wisdom B. Ihunwo on June 3, 2018.

1982, Feb 12-17: Pastoral visit of Pope John Paul II to Nigeria. He ordained 92 priests in Kaduna.

1982, November: The Temple of God Church founded through a female initiative in Nigeria.

1983, September 17: David Olaniyi Oyedepo’s Living Faith Church a.k.a Winners Chapel commissioned.

He was born September 27, 1954, experience salvation February 19, 1969 and his walk with God started September 12, 1976 when he had an encounter.

1983: Inauguration of Christ Life Church International a.k.a Sword of the Spirit Ministries founded by Francis Aderibigbe Olubowale Oke. He was born September 8, 1956 and gave his life to Christ in December 1975

1989: The Mountain of Fire and Miracles Church birthed in the sitting room of Pastor (Dr) Daniel Kolawole Olukoya at Lagos with 24 worshippers.

1990, Jan 1: His Grace The Most Reverend Joseph Abiodun Adetiloye proclaimed Northern Nigeria for Christ to mark the beginning of the Decade of Evangelism and symbolically unveiled a mighty cross. He stood on the very spot where the first Governor of Northern Nigeria in 1900 ceded the north of Nigeria to Queen Victoria, and specifically declined to interfere with Islam.

1992: World Gospel Mission (National Holiness Missionary Society) started work in Uganda.

1992: The Kingsway International Christian Centre (KICC) founded in London by the Nigerian born Pastor Matthew Ashimolowo.

1996, May 16: Inauguration of Anglican Diocese of Niger Delta North (DNDN) at St Paul’s Cathedral Diobu, Port Harcourt. DNDN has birthed the dioceses of Ahoada- July 27, 2004; Ogoni- March 16, 2005; Etche- March 19, 2007; Ikwerre- April 20, 2007 and Evo- July 13, 2009.

1997, Sept 5: Death of Mother Teresa of Calcutta.

1998, March 21-23: Pastoral visit of Pope John Paul II to Nigeria for the Beatification of Blessed Cyprian Tansi at Onitsha on March 22.

1999: The water from the Rock Church (Faith Covenant Church) founded Stella Ajisebutu.

2003: Coptic Priest Fr. Zakaria Botros begins his Television and Internet mission to Muslims in North Africa, the Middle East, Central Asia, and Western countries, resulting in thousands of conversions nationally.

2003, November 21: Primate Peter Jasper Akinola led the Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) to declare itself in “impaired communion” with the Episcopal Church of USA for their tolerance of homosexuality relationships.

2008, June 22-29: The first Global Anglican Future Conference (GAFCON) was held at Jerusalem as a rescue

mission based on biblical gospel.

2011, November 7-11: Maiden edition of Divine Common Wealth Conference (DIVCCON) held at National Christian Centre, Abuja. It is an annual International conference put together by the Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) for Anglicans and non-Anglicans cross the globe.

4. Conclusion

This survey has given illumination to the effect that Christianity in its earliest origin has its roots in the Northern African soil of Egypt. There existed from the very onset church fathers that succeeded Evangelists like St. Mark. These fathers such as St. Augustine and Tertullian played very prominent roles in the development of the Church. The incursions resultant from Muslim and Vandals attack on the Ethiopian and Egyptian churches annihilated Christianity for close to six hundred years. The arrival of missionaries of both Reformation and Roman Catholic faiths and acceptability of the natives has given Christianity a strong hold in the African continent with the emergence of African Christianity. Thus, the church in Africa is on the offensive with the gospel of salvation.

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