

**PREACHING IN THE CONTEXT OF ETHNIC VIOLENCE: A PRACTICAL
THEOLOGICAL STUDY WITHIN THE CALABAR SYNOD OF THE
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF NIGERIA**

BY

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Theological Studies, Faculty of theology, Stellenbosch University



Promoter:

Professor J H Cilliers

March 2011

DECLARATION

I, Ekong Ivan, hereby declare that this thesis is my own original work and has not been presented elsewhere for the award of degree or certificate. All sources have been duly distinguished and acknowledged.

Signature.....

Date.....

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ABSTRACT

This thesis is a practical theological endeavour that evaluates church preaching as a means of changing the paradigms relating to communal and ethnic violence in Nigeria. The study critically examines the phenomenon of ethnic conflict and violence to show the magnitude of its impact on Nigerians. The impact is evident in the number of violent conflicts recorded in the Calabar area in the last few years.

The interdisciplinary approach employed in the study helps to locate the causes of violent conflict and its impact on the people of Calabar, on the one hand, and investigating the perception of church preaching and its impact on congregants, on the other hand. In particular, the historical method is employed in the process of investigating, analysing and recovering materials on the causes of violent conflict in the area. Practical theological methods are employed to evaluate the purpose of preaching. However, a sociological approach is adopted in structuring questionnaires and interviews while using critical analysis to evaluate and interpret both the qualitative and the quantitative data.

In the first place, the data has proved that economic factors are the main causes of violence; other contributing factors are described as ethnic, political, demographic and social factors. It is noted that victims of violence have suffered physically, psychologically, economically and socially. Secondly, data has also shown that, if re-evaluated, preaching can be used to change paradigms relating to ethnic violence and to inspire concrete congregational change and societal action against ethnic violence.

Since this thesis presents views of people at the grassroots, people who are victims of ethnic violence, it has contributed, therefore, to a deeper understanding of the impact of violent conflicts on Africans, and especially on Nigerians. The most important contribution of this research to knowledge seems to be the provision of a model of transformative preaching, which can be explored further by the church.

This research effort consists of five chapters. The first chapter is the introduction while the second chapter provides a brief historical survey of the Presbyterian Church in Calabar and the history of violent conflicts in Nigeria. Chapter Three focuses on biblical perspectives on violence, theories on violence, and data analysis of violence in the Calabar area. Chapter Four is concerned with data analysis and the evaluation of contemporary preaching in the context of violence in the Calabar Synod of the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria. A transformative model is proposed as a way forward. Chapter Five, which is the final chapter, presents the summary and conclusion, as well as the contribution of the research to knowledge, recommendations and suggestions on areas for future research.

OPSOMMING

Hierdie tesis is 'n prakties-teologiese studie oor die rol van Christelike prediking as 'n medium om samelewings- en etniese paradigmas aangaande geweld in Nigerië te verander. Die studie kyk krities na die fenomeen van etniese konflik en geweld in 'n poging om die omvang van die effek daarvan op Nigeriërs aan te dui. Dit blyk onder andere uit die aantal gewelddadige konflikte binne die Calabar-area gedurende die afgelope aantal jare.

Die studie volg 'n interdisiplinêre benadering ten einde die redes vir geweld en die uitwerking daarvan op die mense van Calabar aan die een kant te ondersoek, maar aan die ander kant ook die persepsies oor prediking en die impak daarvan op gemeentes. Die historiese metode is gebruik om materiaal in verband met die oorsake van geweld in die area op te spoor en te analiseer. Die betekenis van prediking is prakties-teologies ontleed, terwyl die sosiologiese metode asook kritiese analise ingespan is om beide kwalitatiewe en kwantitatiewe data te evalueer en te interpreteer.

Bogenoemde data het eerstens getoon dat ekonomiese redes die hoof-oorsaak is van geweld. Ander bydraende faktore is etnies, polities, demografies en sosiaal van aard. As gevolg van geweld het slagoffers fisies, psigologies, ekonomies en sosiaal gely. Die data toon egter ook tweedens aan dat prediking, indien dit herinterpreteer word, 'n medium van verandering van paradigmas insake geweld kan wees, en dat dit daadwerklike gemeentelike verandering en sosiale aksie teen etniese geweld kan bewerkstellig.

Hierdie tesis verteenwoordig die stemme van mense op grondvlak, veral diegene wat slagoffers van geweld was of is, en dit bied 'n model vir transformatiewe prediking wat verder deur die kerk in Nigerië ontwikkel kan word.

Die vyf hoofstukke verloop breedweg as volg: Hoofstuk een is die Inleiding; Hoofstuk twee handel oor historiese agtergronde van die Presbiteriaanse Kerk en geweld in Nigerië; Hoofstuk drie gee 'n oorsig oor Bybelse perspektiewe op geweld, teorieë oor geweld asook 'n analise van die data aangaande geweld in die Calabar-streek; Hoofstuk vier gee 'n blik op die moontlike rol van kontemporêre prediking in 'n konteks van geweld in die Presbiteriaanse Kerk in Nigerië, en bied ook 'n model vir transformatiewe prediking vir die toekoms aan; Hoofstuk vyf bevat opsommende konklusies, asook suggesties vir verdere studie en die implementering van sommige van die bevindinge van die tesis.

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to the loving memory of my late parents Chief and Mrs S U U Ekong who provided me with good Christian upbringing. A special dedication to my precious mother who slept in the Lord while I was busy with this thesis and to many who have lost their precious lives in violent conflicts in Nigeria.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Problem Statement

One of the major issues facing Nigeria today is the reality of conflict, violence, and tension. Violence in Nigeria takes on different forms. The oil rich Niger Delta region and the Calabar area are not left out, even though these areas do not experience such religious violence as is common in the Middle Belt and the core north of the country. In the last few decades, living together has become one of the greatest challenges in modern Nigeria - from the lowest strata of the society to the highest. The family, the society, and the church have all suffered in one way or the other from one form of violence or the other.

The church in Nigeria is faced with the challenge of understanding, articulating and searching for a *mode of preaching* that is needed for people living in the context of different forms of violence in Nigeria. Therefore, the notion of preaching in the Christian Church will be examined critically to determine the role it has been playing and the role it could possibly play in building peace in the context of violence; this is the focus of this research.

1.2 Research Question

Does the preaching of the Christian church have any impact, whether positive or negative, in the lives of churchgoers that could be responsible for promoting or discouraging violence? If it does, to what extent has it helped in building peace and reconciliation, thereby, eradicating violence or at least reducing it to its bare minimum in the Nigerian society, in general, and in the South- south geo-political zone (Niger Delta and Calabar area) of Nigeria, in particular?

1.3 Hypothesis

The Christian Church in Nigeria and the Presbyterian Church, in particular, need to review its understanding of preaching if it intends to have impact on the phenomenon of ethnic violence in Nigeria. *If preaching is re-evaluated as a means to change*

mind-patterns (paradigms) of ethnic violence, to inspire concrete congregational and societal action against ethnic violence, and to address, prophetically, the systemic reasons for this violence, it could make a meaningful difference in the Nigerian quest for peace.

1.4 Methodology

This study will employ the framework of a practical theological methodology as advocated by Richard Osmer. Osmer (2008:4-29) provides a contemporary research methodology for practical theology that consists of four tasks namely:

- descriptive-empirical task
- interpretive task
- normative task
- pragmatic task

The first task consists of gathering information that helps us discern patterns and dynamics in particular episodes, situations or contexts. According to Osmer (2008:4), *what is going on* in this situation is the key to the descriptive–empirical task. Osmer (2008:4) states that:

A critical examination of phenomena such as preaching and violence must pay close attention to the historical context in which they occur, while a method of critical reflection and analysis must be employed to clarify the understanding of the main issues.

August (2001: xix) states that, “The observation within qualitative research is experienced personally, because the researcher is intensely involved with the subject matter within the field of study.”¹ Osmer (2008:60) affirms that, a researcher’s participation gives him access to the setting of the research instead of just relying on “selective impression of others”.

According to Pieterse (2001:14), the term ‘empirical’ in practical theology is interpreted very broadly; practical theologising stays close to reality and is not up in the air. This fact can be considered ‘empirical’. A wide range of scientific methods can be used to fathom concrete praxis such as historical, philosophical and literally

¹ The researcher, a Presbyterian clergy, born and bred in Calabar, has pastored congregations within the Calabar synod area, and has served as a member of Peace and Reconciliation Committee of the synod. He is a *participant observer* in this study. Babbie and Mouton (2001:293) explain that in participant observation the researcher is simultaneously a member of the group she or he is studying and a researcher doing the study.

methods, which, according to Osmer (2008:4), is the focus of the interpretative task. This study, therefore, will use personal interviews and discussions to gather information from people living in the context of violence in the Calabar area (see Appendix 4).

Osmer (2008:61) explains that an interview is a conversation between two people in which one of the parties is looking for information from the other for a specific purpose. Putting it differently, Hendriks (2004:232) argues that a researcher will try as much as possible to listen uncritically to the stories of the interviewees so that they are presented truthfully. Semi-structured questionnaires will also be distributed through a *cluster sampling method*² in order to gather information (data) from the sampled population, which will be evaluated and analysed for the study. The questionnaires will be administered to Presbyterians living in the context of ethnic violence in Calabar area. This participatory approach is to allow the people living in the context of violence to be involved in the study.

In the normative task, theological concepts will be used to interpret particular episodes, situations or contexts constructing ethical norms to guide our responses, and learning from 'good practice'. Hendriks (2004:19) describes this approach as "a hermeneutical concern that does exegesis of both the Word and the world and discerns how the Word should be proclaimed in word and deed in the world." Under the pragmatic task, the research will focus on determining strategies of actions that will influence situations in ways that are desirable.

1.5 Delimitation

This study is not focused primarily on sociology, existentialism or philosophy but is a *practical theological* endeavour that focuses on the homiletical impact in the context of *ethnic violence*. The reference point for the study is the Nigerian context, specifically, the Presbyterian Church in the Calabar area. The primary purpose of this study is to evaluate the role of preaching in building *peace* in the context of ethnic violence. Secondly, the study will address also the question of how preaching

² De Vos (1998:197) says that the cluster sampling method has the advantage of concentrating the field study in a specific section of the greater geographical area and, thus, helps save costs and time. Gravetter and Frozano (2009:139) describe the cluster sampling approach as "a way in which participants already clustered in pre-existing groups from which a researcher can randomly select instead of selecting individuals."

as a communicative act and event could be used as a tool to bring about *reconciliation* to people in contemporary Nigeria who live amidst hurts, pain, suffering and poverty.

1.6 Possible Impact of the Study

This research hopes to challenge the preaching of the Presbyterian Church in Nigeria, i.e. its relevance and effectiveness particularly regarding the issue of ethnic conflicts, wars and violence in the Calabar area of the South-South Region of Nigeria. It is important to mention at this point that efforts of the various levels of government, namely local, state and federal governments, have not been able to proffer lasting solution to the problem. Therefore, through preaching, the Christian church has a unique challenge and opportunity to present the gospel in such a way that it would make a difference in the social, familial, political, economic and religious milieu. Christian preaching, as a meaningful communication tool, will be challenged to reconsider how its content and rhetoric could be used to influence situations in ways that would produce the long desired peace and reconciliation in the context of crises, conflicts, wars, suffering and poverty in Nigeria.

1.7 Chapter outline

Chapter One of this study is the introduction and background to the study.

In Chapter Two, a brief historical survey of the Presbyterian Church will be carried out as well as an evaluation of the phenomenon of violence in Nigeria and in Calabar, in particular. Information on the subject of study will be gathered from relevant literature and documents of the Calabar Synod³ such as (i) Minutes of the synod (2001 and 2003) and (ii) Memorandum of the Calabar Synod Clerk (dated 16 April 2010). Osmer (2008:61) affirms that a researcher's participation in the field of study is very important because it gives him access to the setting of the research instead of just relying on 'selective impressions of others.'

Chapter Three will focus on the interpretative task, which asks the question, '*why is it going on?*' In the chapter, opinions of people living in the context of violence will be gathered through personal interviews, discussions, and questionnaires using the

³ The prescribed procedures of the University of Stellenbosch concerning ethical clearance will be followed. A letter of permission from the Synod moderator to carry out research in the Calabar Synod area is shown in the appendix 1 and 2.

cluster sampling method. The study will draw on theories that can be used to explain the phenomenon of violence and reasons for the occurrence of these patterns and dynamics (Osmer 2008:4).

In Chapter Four, the normative task, which inquires into '*what ought to be going on*', will be examined. In the chapter, the researcher will employ both theory and praxis, which make up the practical theological approach and theological concepts to interpret the particular situations or contexts of the phenomena, while constructing ethical norms to guide responses and learning. In the second part of the chapter, the inquiry will focus on the pragmatic approach. Therefore, a theological understanding of preaching as a transformative revelation of God's grace and righteousness will be put forward and a three-dimensional model of transformative preaching will be proposed in the last part of the chapter under the pragmatic task.

Chapter Five, the final chapter, will consist of the summary and conclusion as well as the contribution to knowledge, suggestions on areas for further study and recommendations for possible action.

CHAPTER TWO

Historical Background of the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria

2.0 Introduction

In this chapter, a brief historical background is provided beginning with history of the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria. The history of conflict and violence in Nigeria is then reviewed, followed by the history of the Calabar people and of violence in the area. Further, the contemporary experience of the Obomitiat people, being a case study for this research, will be discussed in the concluding part of this chapter. With regard to the framework employed in this study, the brief historical perspectives are an attempt to answer the question: what is going on here?

2.1 A Brief History of the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria

The history of the Presbyterian Church in the Calabar Synod is also the history of the Presbyterian Church in Nigeria. Presbyterianism in Nigeria is part of the worldwide Presbyterian tradition, which was born through the struggles of the Protestant Reformation. The influence of John Calvin's Reformation in Switzerland and John Knox in Europe, especially in Scotland, made Presbyterianism spread throughout the world.

In 1844 after the abolition of slave trade, a number of Efik leaders struggled to adjust to a new economic order. Two Efik kings, King Eyo Honesty II of Creek Town and King Eyamba V of Duke Town wrote to the Queen of England. The content of King Eyo's letter states:

If I can get some cotton and coffee to grow and man for teach me, and make sugar cane for we country come up proper and sell for trade side I very glad. Mr Blyth tell me England glad for send man to teach book and make we understand God all same as white man do. If Queen do so I glad too much (*sic*) and we must try to do good for England always (Mcfarlan 1957:3).

In a similar vein King Eyamba's letter reads:

If we could get seed for cotton and coffee we could make trade. Plenty sugarcane live here, and if some man come teach we way for do it we get plenty sugar too, and

then some man must come for teach book proper and make all men saby God like white man (*sic*), and then we go on for same fashion (Mcfarlan 1957:3).

The letters of these kings indicate that agriculture and Christian education topped the agenda of the early Christian missionaries, i.e. through the combined effort of the Scottish and Jamaican missionaries, and with the approval of the United Secession Church.

According to Mcfarlan (1957:12-13), On 6 January 1946, the mission team, which included Samuel Edgerly and his wife, Andrew Chilsolm, Edward Miller and George B Waddell, left Liverpool led by Hope Masterton Waddell and arrived Calabar on the 10 April 1846. In 1853, Mr Esien Esien Ukpabio became the first convert by the church, and in 1872, he was ordained as the first indigenous minister of the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria. Suffice it to say that the invitation of the Efik kings was instrumental to the early missionary enterprise in the Calabar area.

Progress of work in the area led to the creation of the Presbytery of Biafra for the oversight of congregations in Creek Town, Duke Town and beyond. On 1 September 1858, it became "The Presbyterian Church of Biafra." On May 4 1921, the Synod of Biafra was formed comprising of two presbyteries. The Synod became "The Presbyterian Church of Eastern Nigeria" in June 1952, and in recognition of its national character and mission, the name was changed to "The Presbyterian Church of Nigeria" in June 1960. In 1945, the Church of Scotland Mission began a plan of handing over to indigenous Nigerians that part of its Church established on Nigerian soil, to enable them become a self-governing and independent Nigerian counterpart to the Church of Scotland. The handover was completed in 1960.

According to the researcher's interview with Ugbagha on 10 August 2010, the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria has over 500,000 members, 9 Synods, 54 Presbyteries, and more than 400 Parishes in many parts of the country especially in the major cities and state capitals. However, membership is made up of mainly people from Cross River, Akwa Ibom, Ebonyi and Abia states. Calabar, the capital of Cross River State, remains the cradle of Presbyterianism in Nigeria and the Calabar Synod is the pioneer Synod of the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria.

The poor growth of the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria compared to other mainline churches such as the Anglican and Methodist churches has been traced to ethnic conflict from its inception. Thus, (Udoh 1988:4, in Onwunta 2006:28) asserts that the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria was born of divorcing parents abroad and nurtured by the proceeds of colonialism at home. He adds that the Calabar mission, like its counterparts in the continent, had an unusual birth and midwife. Its conception took place in Jamaica, the Caribbeans following the collapse of the Niger Expedition of 1841. The Nigerian (Presbyterian) Church was born at a time when Scottish nationalism was at its peak. Onwunta (2006:99) notes that the higher interests of the church and of the Kingdom of God are often sacrificed on the altar of ethnic agendas. Therefore, the argument here is that, as much as ethnicity is a problem in the society, it is also a problem within the structures of the church.

2.2 A Brief History of Violence in Nigeria

Nigeria is located between latitudes 4° 20' and 14° north and between longitudes 3° 20' and 14° 30' east. Nigeria has a geographic space of 923,768 square kilometres, with a coastline of over 700 kilometres and a distance of 1,040 kilometres straight from the coast to the Northern limits. The land consists of great diversities of vegetations, ecologies, economies, cultures and occupations.

Since the country's independence, fifty years ago, in 1960, Nigeria has grappled with the problem of nation building. During the administration of Lord Fredrick Lugard, the British colonial government amalgamated the southern and northern protectorates in 1914 into what is known today as Nigeria. "On this date the Nigerian nation was created. Before then, there was no entity known as Nigeria" (Okafor 1997:1, cited in Onwunta 2006:15). Nigeria became the amalgam of many ethnic groups made up of three major ethnic groups and so many minority ethnic groups. The three major ethnic groups are the Hausa-Fulani from the north, the Yorubas from the west and the Ibos from the east. Prominent among the minority ethnic groups are the Ibibios, the Tivs, the Efiks, the Ijaws, the Jukuns, the Edos and the Nupes.

A number of scholars strongly hold the view that after the creation of the Nigerian nation, with different ethnic groups, different languages, cultural identities and

religious perceptions, measures have not been put in place to create an integrated nation. According to Imobighe (2003:3):

The colonial regime created the Nigerian state but decided to hold on to the country through a policy of divide and rule. In the process, it encourages separate development of the constituent ethnic units that make up Nigeria without encouraging the 'Nigerianess' of the whole.

The above statement confirms Obafemi Awolowo's view that, "Though Nigeria was admittedly the artificial creation of the British and was made up of a large number of small un-integrated tribal and clannish units... British policy nevertheless helped to maintain the status quo" (Awolowo 1947:32).

Arthur Richard made the same observation in his statement that, "It is only the accident of British suzerainty which has made Nigeria one country... it is far from being one country or one nation, socially or even economically" (cited in Imobighe 2003:3). To him, socially and politically there are so many deep differences between the major ethnic groups. They do not speak the same language, they have highly divergent customs and ways of life, and they represent different stages of culture. Indeed, Britain failed to encourage maximum interaction between the various groups.

Some historians believe that conflict and violence in Nigeria started during the slave trade. Herman (2001) seems to have captured the crux of conflict and violence in different ways. Thus, he states in his article:

Originally, the British controlled Northern and southern Nigeria as two separate protectorates, but in the 1914, they joined the two colonies to form the colony and protectorate of Nigeria. During its pre-colonial existence, Muslim Northern Nigeria had developed a society with a centralized authority, administrative machinery, judicial institutions, and class divisions, while most of the North's non-Muslim groups, located primarily in what is now called the Middle Belt remained rather segmented and non-centralized.

During the colonial period, the British implemented a policy of indirect rule under which native administrations were maintained. Dali (2006:34-36) explains that, under this system, the British High Commissioner, Lieutenant-Colonel F D Lugard saw that the Muslim states were more centralized with bureaucratic socio-political institutions, and formed an alliance with them. Over the next several years, the British gradually gained control of the more resistant non-Muslim groups by the system of punitive patrols and tax assessment involving "massive destruction" of farms, human lives,

villages, and property. The non-Muslim groups were considered “primitive tribes” while the Muslims were considered “advanced communities.” This distinction was easily transformed into a notion of ethnic hierarchy, with non-Muslim groups at the bottom and the Hausa-Fulani near the top, just below the British. The Fulani were considered the ruling class by nature, and their superiority over the non-Muslims, Turaki explains, “was established as an administrative principle.”

It also goes without saying that this colonial arbitrariness of political marriage of different ethnic groups in Nigeria remains fundamental to the issue of ethnic consciousness and the quest for identity on the part of all groups involved in the corporate entity now called Nigeria. Moreover, it is undeniable that the issue of the awareness of ethnic identity is closely linked to the issue of the economic survival of the various groups. This is why every discussion of ethnicity in Nigeria can also be called the matter of “being and bread” (Belcom 1998:54). However, in other contexts such as South Africa, where skin colour is an issue, the problem is referred to as racism; yet, the two terms, ethnicity and racism, overlap (Tschuy 1997: xi, cited in Onwunta 2006:)

Nigeria is the most populous and most heterogeneous country in the Africa with about 394 different ethnic groups (Mwadkwon 1979:71) and a total population of 140,431,790 (2006 census report⁴). This complexity has always resulted in rivalry and in conflict and violence. The frequent manifestation of religious, political, ethnic and inter-communal conflict and violence has brought the issue of ethnic conflicts to the fore of the country’s political discourse. The situation has become extremely worrisome especially in the present democratic dispensation. According to Imobighe (2003:13), “Within the first three years of the country’s return to democratic rule, Nigeria had witnessed the outbreak of not less than forty violent ethnic conflicts while some of the old ones had gained additional potency.”

Although Nigeria’s motto is “Unity and Faith, Peace and Progress”, in reality most Nigerians ignore that. Mwadkwon rightly notes that, “Nigeria is one giant tinderbox of religious and ethnic intolerance. The magnitude of the various conflicts in Nigeria is always changing sometimes beginning from simple misunderstandings; they metamorphose into religious, communal or ethnic configurations.”

⁴ This is according to information sourced from [http:// www.population.gov.ng](http://www.population.gov.ng)

In this study, the pre-colonial, colonial, post-colonial and the contemporary history of conflict and violence in Nigeria will be investigated.

2.2.1 History of violence in pre-colonial Nigerian

It has been mentioned above that some historians claim that conflict and violence in Nigeria began with the slave trade. However, some others argue that conflict and violence have always been inherent in human relationships though the degree of violence may differ from one situation to another.

In pre-colonial times, inter-ethnic relations were often mistrustful, discriminatory, and, sometimes, violent. At the same time, relationships, such as trade, which require peaceful communication (Onwunta 2006:87).

According to Falola,(1998:49-53)in northern Nigeria, “domestic trade began in 1380 when the trade between Hausaland and central Nigeria evolved as an exchange of horses for slaves.” Kanajeji of Kano (1390-1410) is remembered for exporting horses to the Benue valley in return for slaves while Yakubu (1452-63) introduced slave trade to the Nupe people. The legendary Amina of Zazzau (Queen of Zaria) is also said to have imported slaves and kolanuts from the Nupe (Isichei 1983:88, cited in Dali 2006:33).

The story is not different in southern Nigeria. In the south- east, the Ibos, the Ibibios and the Efik people of the modern Calabar area also traded in for sea and farm products. In towns and along the trade routes, occupations such as blacksmithing, cotton production, cattle trading, weaving, house building, and brewing of beer were often confined to or associated with ethnically defined units. Thus, ecological and economic specializations promoted inter-ethnic relations. Conversely, provoking conflict and violence, mistrust and stereotypes in ethnic relations were droughts and other factors.

Onwunta (2006:87) affirms that the slave trade started with the domestic and external slave trade, and fostered the growth of domestic slavery. This was an unfortunate incident in world history and in Nigeria, in particular. Young men and women and even children became victims of this barbaric act. Klein (1978:602, in Dali 2006:33) has rightly summarised the condition of Nigerian women slaves:

Every slave originated in an act of violence: women suffered the most, for they were ripped away from the society in which they were born and deprived of social identity. The women lacked family rights: the women did not control their children, nor did they inherit from their father.

2.2.2 History of violence in colonial Nigeria

Colonialism is defined “as a principle or practice in which a powerful country rules a weaker one, and establishes his own trade and culture there” (Yakdughur *et al in Dali 2006:34*). Colonialism in Nigeria persisted from 1860 to 1960. According to some historians, the colonial state fuelled conflict and violence because the Muslims in the north associated colonialism with Christianity (Falola 1998:50-52). Christians, however, blamed the colonial masters for supporting the spread of Islam, while hindering the spread of the Christian mission. The Muslims believe that the inherited colonial structure prevailing in Nigeria today is responsible for conflict and violence. According to them, the early British colonizers were themselves Christians and ruled Nigeria together with Christian missionaries; they left behind a structure, which is Christian in facts and outlook.

The Christian view has been presented frequently in literature. According to Dan Fulani (2001:14 in Dali 2006:34), “The early attempts of Christian missions to penetrate Northern Nigeria were a fiasco, because they met with stiff opposition from the emirs, who deliberately disseminated Islamic propaganda against it.”

The Muslims were successful in their campaign because they followed on the heels of the British colonial soldiers to ‘pagan’ areas, and laid claims to them as Muslim areas, allowing Lord Lugard’s policy of non-inference to take effect. In the Calabar area down south, the powerful kings delighted in exchanging slaves for brandy and other foreign goods. Macfarlan (1957:9) reports:

The desire for gain on the part of the European slavers was matched by the greed of the native chiefs. Their trading terms were stated bluntly, ‘we want three things – powder, ball and brandy’ and we have three things to sell – men, women, and children.

As such, stronger communities waged wars against each other and carried their victims as slaves for sale to the Europeans who were ready to buy them as cheap labour for their South American gold and silver mines and plantations Ekundare (1973:29). The Atlantic slave trade produced both social and economic problems, which were interrelated. It gradually drained the population of Nigeria.

In western Nigeria, the story was not different. According to Ekundare (1973:29):

A considerable number of able-bodied men and women were taken away as slaves, leaving behind the aged and children... villages were often destroyed during slave raids, and inter tribal wars led to constant bloodshed among the people. Inevitably, there developed a general feeling of mistrust and hatred among the various tribes. Indeed the Yoruba civil war in the second half of the Nineteenth century was a by-product of slave trade.

Nambala (1997:30 in Onwunta 2006:88) claims that colonialism was imposed upon Africans by the Europeans without regard to their nationhood, big or small. Nambala (1997:31, in Onwunta 2006:88) argues that, "Colonial states often group together several ethnic groups and created a multi-ethnic state with artificial boundaries which often run across pre-existing nations, states, ethnicities, kingdoms and empires." Many historians are of the opinion that the principle of divide-and-rule was used by the colonialists to play off one ethnic group against another, resulting in innumerable conflicts, strife and violence. It is also believed that, sometimes, the missionaries acted as collaborators with the colonial powers to divide the ethnic groups, thereby, fuelling inter-ethnic tensions.

2.2.3 History of violence in post-colonial Nigeria

In the post-colonial era, Nigeria experienced various forms of conflicts and violence. Prominent among these conflicts were military interventions through coup d'états, and the Nigerian civil war. The experience of the Nigerian civil war is an unfortunate history in which Nigerians took arms and killed one another. The war, which lasted for thirty months, ended on 12 January 1970 (Kirk-Green and Rimmer 1980:3). Millions of innocent Nigerians lost their lives, properties were destroyed and some towns were completely burnt down and devastated. People were stripped of their means of livelihood, while many were rendered homeless. Many Nigerians suffered and died of hunger and starvation, the sick could not access medical care and the dehumanizing impact of the war raped many Nigerians of human dignity. One church member who served during the war as a nurse in a government hospital relates that, "children were found by the road side crying and sucking the breast of their dead mothers" (personal interview with Eyo).

Dali (2006: 35) asserts that the Nigerian women suffered the most during the civil war. This claim is believed by the researcher to be true. Two women who were eleven and twelve years old, respectively, at the time of the Nigeria Biafra war,

remember that rape was considered a fate worse than death. One of them says, “For us and families like ours whose teenage daughters were unmarried and in hiding, it was probably the single worst worry we had.” From the researcher’s community, the story was not different as people fled to the bush, women hid in caves; others dug deep pits, covered them up and hid in them. Women hid in those places to escape from Nigerian soldiers who delighted in raping both girls and married women.

The civil war taught Nigerians that ethnic conflicts were among the most destructive forces in the life of a nation. Like other African countries, which face the problem of ethnic and cultural diversity, Nigerian’s recent history has been of civil unrest, riots, violence and conflict in the process of finding an answer to the question national integration in order to build a strong and unified country. Nigeria’s national challenges relates fundamentally to the rights of peoples and groups, particularly in the context of oppression and marginalization.

2.3 Brief History of the People of Calabar

Since conflict and violence are social problems that ensued in contexts of relationships, it becomes necessary to consider the historical background of the people of the Calabar area, which is also the larger local context of this study.

In a general sense, the people classified as the Calabar people are the natives of Cross River and Akwa Ibom states of present-day Nigeria. Perhaps the similarity of the Efik language in Cross River State and the Ibibio language and culture in Akwa Ibom State brought about the classification. Many scholars believe that the two languages are the same with minor dialectical differences. Secondly, the classification could be due to the fact that both Cross River and Akwa Ibom states were formerly together under what was formerly known as South Eastern State, which later changed to Cross River State. Subsequently, the present Akwa Ibom State was created from the former Cross River State.

When one refers to Calabar people, in a political sense, one refers to the people living within Calabar city and its environs, that is, the indigenes of the southern senatorial district of Cross River State, which is a geo-political zone within the state. The zone consists of seven local government councils namely Akpabuyo, Akamkpa, Bakassi, Biase, Calabar Municipality, Calabar south, and Odukpani local government

councils. It is important to mention that these local government areas are the geographical areas covered by the Calabar Synod of the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria. The native people of this zone are classified as Calabar people. Among them are the Efiks, Efuts, Quas, Ekois, and Okoyong peoples. Each of these groups has its own distinct language but the languages are all classified among the Bantu group of languages.

In the Calabar area, Efik is the common language spoken by residents; it is the language taught in schools and the primary medium of communication in the area. In recent times, Efik is often referred to as Calabar language.

2.3.1 Location

Calabar is located along the lower Guinea coast in the bight of Biafra, which is separated from the Bight of Benin by the Niger River Delta. The unique thing about the people of Calabar is that they migrated from two major areas. While the Ekoi and the Quas migrated from Cameroun around the Mabilla plateau, the Efiks migrated from the Ibibio mainland near Arochukwu in Abia State. McFarlan (1957:3) states that:

Before the advent of Christianity the people of the Calabar migrated from a location around Itumbuzor in Ibibio land near Arochukwu in Igbo land, the Efiks were a branch of Ibibio tribe whose territory stretched from the Cross River inland towards the Niger.

2.3. 2 Economic life of the Calabar people

From their early days, the Calabar people are known to be very enterprising. Traditionally, their main occupation includes farming, fishing, hunting and trading. Aye (1967:83-84) notes that:

... [T]he Efiks were mainly farmers and fishermen, cultivating such crops as yams, cocoyam cassava, maize, gourds, melon and a variety of other plants and vegetables. Hunting was done by them with cap guns and by trappings. Their trade with the Europeans started in the fifteenth century with the Portuguese... This period marks their first use of copper rods as means of exchange in place of barter.

The Calabar River and the Cross River facilitated commercial transaction between the Efik and their neighbouring Ibibio and Igbo people. Both rivers have played a central role in the economy of the traditional Calabar people, even till today although the new generation prefers white-collar jobs.

Prominent among the economic activities of the Calabar people during the early colonial era was the slave trade. This was the worst form of human violence, and the slave trade is often recounted in history as the worst in the life experience of the Calabar people and their neighbours (McFarlan 1957:2). The origin of inter tribal war is traced to the era of slave trade. McFarlan (1957:2) notes that:

No part of West Africa suffered more from the evil of slave traffic than the region watered by the Niger, the Calabar and the cross rivers... the overseas slave trade brought a new reason for inter-tribal warfare the desire for gain on the part of the European, was matched by the greed of the native chiefs. Their trading terms were stated bluntly, 'we want three things powder, ball and brandy; and we have three things to sell – men, women and children'... The strong preyed continually on the weak to supply the slave ship with the black cargoes. Tribes raided tribes, burning and plundering villages, carrying captives for sale to the white man... the early story of Calabar is the story of black bondage.

After the abolition of slave trade, the desire of the people to settle for a new economic life showed in their profound interest in legitimate business that could better the future of the people. MacFarlan (1957:9) quotes King Eyamba and King Eyo Honesty's letter to the queen of England thus:

Now we settle treaty for not sell slaves, I must tell you something to do for we. Now we can't sell slaves again, we must have too much man for country and want something for make work and trade, and if we could get seed for cotton and coffee we could make trade... If Queen do so I glad too much, and we must try to do good for England always (*sic*).

In the nineteenth century, the British established the Royal Niger Company in Calabar and they traded in palm oil. This company was the British version of the East Indian Trading company floated by the Dutch. They managed the company themselves throughout the colonial era, and the natives only took over the company after Nigeria became independent. Today, a lot of commercial activities take place in the area – the Calabar seaport, the airport as well as the clean and beautiful scenery, all facilitate a lot of commercial activities and tourism.

2.3.3 Socio-political life of the Calabar people

Before the advent of imperialism in Nigeria, the natives of Calabar had a well-organized political system. The Ekpe society is a secret society that helped to satisfy the socio-political economic and religious needs of the people. According to Aye (1967:70):

To the Efiks, Ekpe often known to the early Europeans as Egbo, is a secret society, a sort of freemasonry, originally said to have been introduced in Calabar from Usak Edet a segment of the Ekoi people. It was formed and adapted to satisfy the political social and religious needs of the Efik people.

Ekpe membership was open to all men, women and children who wished to be initiated into its mysteries. Some scholars hold that the fraternity was meant for religious purposes, but as Calabar began to expand in size and wealth, especially during the slave trade with Europeans, it was quickly adapted to fulfil other economic and civil functions. The Ekpe proves to be the source of supreme authority in the Calabar area. In the past, its institution provided the highest court whose verdict transcended all others. Aye (1967:70) puts it this way:

Ekpe could take life and could give it; it could condemn a whole town to a heavy fine and it was promptly paid; it could punish offenders and could forgive; even kings and Obongs could never escape Ekpe laws and edicts. Its authority was sacrosanct and was above challenge.

In other words, the Ekpe society performed both the executive and legislative functions of government in ancient Calabar.

The language groups all had similar political systems and the situation is the same even today. There was no central government, and communities were ruled by the local chiefs who were the custodians of the people's culture and tradition. The traditional chiefs had powerful influence over the people in their domain. There were two units of administration – the *ufok* (family) and *obio* (village, community or town). According to Sparks (2002:3):

Before the expansion of the slave trade the oldest member of the family was the head of the house (Ete ufok, meaning "father of the house" as oppose to Etubom, meaning "father of the canoe"). Men as fathers were accorded leadership role both in the family and in the wider society. The title "Etubom" (father of canoe) emphasised the significant role of canoes in trade and the commercial and economic life of the people in general as they sometimes send out large flotillas.

The political might of Calabar was determined largely by its economic strength. The families that grew large enough established themselves as new lineage groups, though they acknowledge their descent from the original lineage. Mcfarlan (1957: 2) clearly states that:

In the 1760s, the most important houses were Creek town, Duke town and Old town. In the mid-eighteenth century, Old town tried to wrest control of the lucrative slave trade business away from Duke town their upstream rivals, and the two houses became bitter adversaries.

Mcfarlan (1957: 46) adds that:

In 1846 King Eyamba set out on an expedition to carry war to Umon country. He left Calabar in his state canoe defiantly decked with a flag. A flotilla of canoes decked for war followed the king but Umon were well aware of their coming. The Calabar fleet was blocked by the Umon people who lay ambush against them.

Exploit in warfare was a demonstration of strength; this gave the kings more political powers and prominence within the ancient Calabar area. King Eyamba of Duke Town expected missionaries to get permission always from him before taking the gospel to people outside the Efik kingdom Mcfarlan (1957:28).

During the colonial era, the imperial government introduced British consular jurisdiction into the Efik society and the entire Calabar area in order to have effective control over the people. Compared to the native government, this move proved to be more shadowy in character (Livingstone, in Onwunta 2006:19). Nonetheless, it was implemented, as British consul was given the mandate, together with the missionaries, to ensure that the people were submissive to the new masters, i.e. the colonial and the church. E. B. Udoh (in Onwunta 2006:19) aptly remarks that, "The naval force injected irresistible authority into all of the missionary schemes combined to place the church in a position of superiority. Part of this scheme was the coronation of the kings by the new powers."

Mcfarlan relates that, "On the 25 February 1874, British consul George Hartly Crowned Ensa (Nsa) Okoho as King Eyo NSA Honesty VII of Creek Town. The ceremony took place in the Presbyterian church." The King of Calabar remains a strong political force with great influence as a first class traditional ruler in the entire area, even today.

2.3.4 Religious life of the Calabar people

Like other Africans, the people of Calabar are very religious people. Before the advent Christianity, the people worshiped in the traditional African way. The Calabar people know God as "Abasi" (meaning "the supreme being"). They sang songs, danced, made sacrifices and poured libations to different deities as their acts of worship. Events such as harvest, preparation for war, the coming of age, initiations,

marriage, and funerals were accompanied by various traditional rites and rituals. Even today, some adherents of African traditional religion, though few in number, exist among the people; but 99% of the people are members of different Christian denominations.

There is no doubt that the early Christian missionaries did exploits within the Calabar area given the high percentage of the Christian population in the area. However, the big question is, why do we have so much conflict and violence in the Calabar area? What could be responsible for it? What is the impact of the church and her preaching in this context? The main task of the next chapter will be to focus on the answer to this question.

2.3.5 Conflict and violence in present-day Calabar

In the last two decades, Nigeria has experienced two very significant changes in her life as a nation; the end of military regimes and the dawn of modern democracy. Since the dawn of the Fourth Republic in 1998, violence has become the order of the day. Many parts of Nigeria have witnessed conflicts and violence in different forms – political, religious, and social such as armed robbery, rape, kidnapping, riots, and communal and ethnic violence.

In a personal interview with the researcher on 8th August 2010, Ise reveals that the most common forms of violence in the Calabar area include communal and ethnic violence with political and economic undertone. These forms of violence have sent hundreds of people to their early graves, while others in their thousands are rendered jobless, hungry, homeless, and poor. The dehumanizing conditions of these people make them vulnerable to corrupt and criminal practices in their effort to survive.

The researcher could not access well-documented statistical data on ethnic and communal violence from the government offices visited in the course of the study. Therefore, sources of data used below include, primarily (i) personal interviews with church leaders (see Appendix 4); (ii) respondents' views from sampled questionnaires distributed by the researcher (see Appendix 3); and (iii) Calabar Synod Conflict Resolution Committee Reports (2003-2010), and other documents

available in the Calabar Synod office as well as the Eniong Edik Parish Report,⁵ signed by Umoh and Etim (2010:1-4).

Available information in official church documents mentioned above reveal cases of communal and ethnic violence in all local government areas within the Calabar Synod as shown in Table 1 below:

Table 1: Summary of conflicts and violence including fatalities in the Calabar area in the period 2000-2010

Community	Local Government Area	Incident details	Damage in Naira (₦)	Deaths	Date
1. Akamkpa	Akamkpa (CRS) ⁶	Election crisis	+2 Million	3	2002
2. Oban natives vs Akwa Ibom indigenes	Odukpani (CRS) and Itu (Akwa Ibom State)	Ethnic (Oban indigenes vs Akwa Ibom settlers)	+50 Million	12	2000
3. Ukwia Ibom vs Okpo Ihechiowa	Akamkpa (CRS) and Arochuku (Abia State)	Border dispute	+100 Million	27	9 Sept. 2008
4. Fulani vs Asang	Odukpani (CRS)	Destruction of farmlands and crops	+3 Million	2	28 Nov 2008
5. Bakassi Peninsula	Bakassi (CRS)	Border dispute	Not available	0	2006
6. Ntan Obu vs Ikpanya	Odukpani LGA, (CRS) and Ibiono Ibom LGA,	Border dispute	+200 Million	5	16 Feb 2010

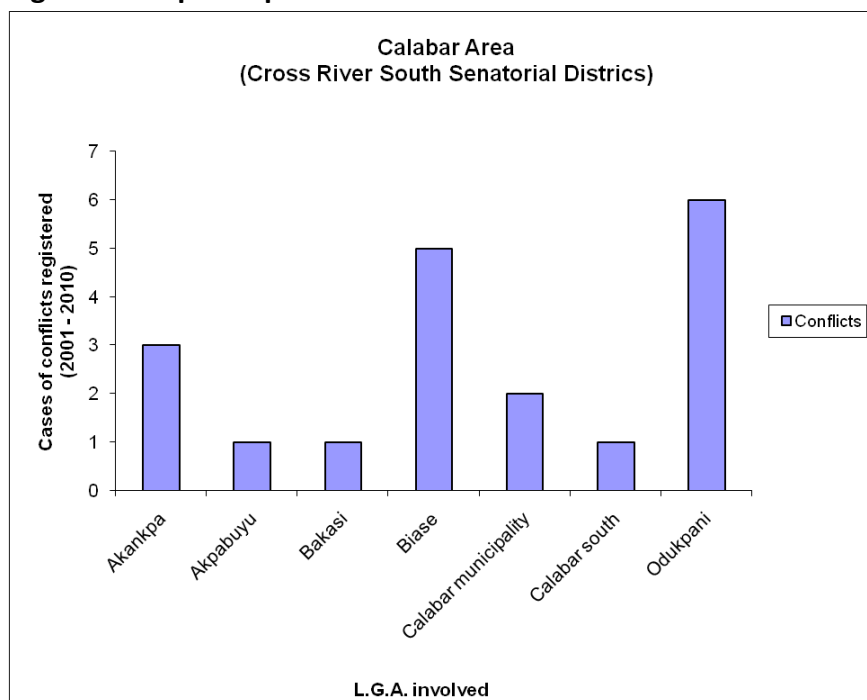
⁵ This report on the invasion and threat of extinction of their parish by their neighbours of Ibiono local government area of Akwa Ibom state was presented to the Calabar Synod Peace and Conflict Resolution committee on 23 March, 2010

⁶ CRS stands for Cross River State and LGA for Local Government Area.

	Akwa Ibom State				
7. Ikoneto vs Akpap	Odukpani (CRS)	Border dispute	+30 Million	5	Since 1965, last attack – 2005
8. Uruaetak Uyo vs Akpap	Odukpani (CRS)	Communal conflict	+8 Million	2	March , 2006
9. Calabar South	Calabar South	Succession/ Enthronement dispute		0	2003
10. Ito vs Idere	Odukpani (CRS)	Border dispute	+10 Million	6	2007
11. Ikot Offiong vs Oku-Iboku	Odukpani (CRS) and Itu (Akwa Ibom State)	Border dispute	+350 Million	35	2001
12. Ikot Ana vs Ufut	Biase (CRS)	Border dispute	+300 Million	35	3 Sept 2005
13. Biakpan vs Etono II	Biase LGA, (CRS)	Land dispute and struggle for separate identity	+150 Million	6	2008
14. Ikun vs Etono Central	Biase (CRS)	Land dispute	+128 Million	11	2004
15. Ikot Offiong Ebiti vs Omu Ekene	Odukpani (CRS) Ibiono Ibom, (Akwa Ibom State)	Land dispute	+10 Million	2	2008

16. Okpo Town vs Ikot Okuere	Odukpani (CRS) & Ibiono Ibom (Akwa Ibom State)	Land dispute	+11 Million	2	2007
17. Akpabuyu	Akpabuyu (CRS)	Boundary dispute		0	2004
18. Calabar municipality	Bakoko vs Hausa community	Ethnic conflict	Not certain	2	2005
19. Calabar municipality	Esukutan vs Hausa community	Ethnic conflict	Not certain	0	2009

Figure 1: Graphical presentation of cases of violence in the Calabar area



The above chart shows cases of violent conflicts in Calabar and the local government areas involved.

From the description given above, it is obvious that violence has become a disturbing phenomenon and it is spreading fast in our communities devastating lives and properties of innocent people. The number of communities involved in conflict and violence should shake the social conscience of any right-minded person. The situation calls for concern from members of the Christian faith community, irrespective of denomination, especially those involved in the ministry of preaching and teaching the gospel. It demands that they reflect on their task and calling with regard to people living in the context of violence in Nigeria, in general, and in the Calabar area, in particular.

2.3.6 Description of communal and ethnic violence in the Calabar area

Communal violence is that in which the participants are members of the same communal group. A communal group is one in which a primary identity prevails. Membership of the group is not attained but ascribed. With the group, the individual self is defined holistically. In other words, the totality of the individual's involvement in life is defined by the group. Examples of communal groups include the family, ethnic group, religious group and regional group. In such groups, there is a collective sense of belonging, as well as self-realization and self-affirmation within the collectivity. For instance, history of achievement and of suffering is an important component of the communal situation, which in turn increases the exclusiveness, feeling of uniqueness and, therefore, the solidarity of the group.

Communal or ethnic identity has the symbolic capability to define for the individual the totality of his or her existence including embodying his or her hopes, fears and sense of the future. Thus, individuals are sensitive to matters of communal symbolism, and any action or thought that seems to threaten or undermine the communal group identity evokes hostile responses. Such actions include those actions that diminish group status, worth and legitimacy in the eyes of its members (Horowitz 1985, in Nnoli 2003:2). An individual's self-esteem is determined, in part, by the status, worth and legitimacy of the communal group to which he or she belongs. The communal group is perceived by its members as a pseudo-family

(Goor 1994:25, in Uniga 2010:14). Any action that undermines the group strikes at the very symbolic existence of its members even though the action may not be directed at them.

Thus, some key issues in communal and ethnic violence are non-material. They are not only about power and resources that are open to negotiations but also often about status, culture and identity that are non-negotiable. This means that compromise between communal groups could prove difficult to address. It explains why, unlike conflict and violence over material concerns, communal conflict and violence are often prolonged, bloody or inimitable, and usually closed to bargaining. Often, it is a violent, messy, no-holds-barred affair in which lives are greatly devalued. Since 1945, these conflicts have caused greater loss of life worldwide than all other forms of deadly conflicts combined (Stevenhagen 1970:76, in Uniga 2010:15).

In addition to their intrinsically more violent scale (i.e. than other forms of conflicts), communal conflicts are more difficult to handle, less amenable to diplomatic intervention and standard methods of crisis management, and peaceful settlement of disputes (Carmet 1993, in Uniga 2010:15). Such violence has a more pernicious character than other forms of violence – a certain xenophobic collectivism characterizes participation in it. Associated with it is a collective sense of belonging to a group, of willingness to contribute to the success of the collective mission, and of self-realization and self-affirmation within the collectivity. There is also a feeling that the individual and the group can seize their destiny in a manner akin to the dynamics of mob action (Nnoli 1998, in Uniga 2010:15).

In the absence of communal diplomats, armies and standard forums, the fear of loss of status, worth, subjugation, and extermination ensures that communal groups make radical demands and escalate their conflicts using violence (UNDIR, in Uniga 1995:50). The most extreme demand is for the ethnic homogenization of society within a particular territory, which can lead to forced assimilation or, in the extreme, to ethnic cleansing.

The aggressive and murderous ethnic militiaman may even believe that his existence is threatened by the perceived injury to his ethnic group. For a similar

reason, poor villagers may believe that a cabinet minister from their village represents their own share of the national cake even though they may never receive any material reward from the appointment.

Therefore, one of the striking features of communal violence is the turning of every individual into a soldier by virtue of his or her group identity (Chipman 1993:146; Posen 1993:3, in Uniga 2010:15). In part, this is the result of the power of communal identity to totalize and transcend other loyalties and obligations.

2.3.7 Distribution of victims of violence in Calabar

Victims of violence are humans, and like others, they are created in the image of God. They deserve love, care and comfort but their condition often subjects them to dehumanizing conditions – often they are rendered hungry, homeless, poor, and, in some cases, completely raped of human dignity. In most cases, the government, the church and the society may not even know where they are. The situation, therefore, invokes the question: where do the victims of violence in the Calabar Synod live?

In order to attempt an answer to this important question, we shall divide the Synod into rural, urban and city areas. According to the Calabar Synod Conflict Resolution Committee Rreports mentioned above, most of the victims of violence live in the rural areas, and some live in the remotest parts of the rural areas.

Table 2: Location of victims of violence in the Calabar area

Location/Local Government Area	Number of Communities affected	Urban	Rural
AKAMKPA	4	NO	YES
AKPABUYU	2	NO	YES
BIASE	7	NO	YES
BAKASI	2	NO	YES
CALABAR SOUTH	2	NO	YES
CALABAR MUNICIPALITY	3	YES	NO
ODUKPANI	12	NO	YES

There is great disparity between the rural and urban centres in Nigeria. The difference can be expressed in terms of the degree of accessibility to basic services by the inhabitants of the areas.

According to the table presented above, in all the seven local government areas designated as the Calabar Synod area, a greater number of victims of ethnic violence in the communities devastated by violence live in the rural areas. These people have no access to basic amenities such as good roads or potable water supply. In some areas, there is no electricity and even where there is electricity, the people can hardly afford it. Some other areas have poor sanitary systems and little or no means of modern communication system. In fact, life could be rather difficult especially where many of the people have no gainful employment. Consequently, the rate of crime and poverty in such communities is alarming.

2.3.8 Terms related to conflict and violence in the Efik language

In a personal interview with Okpo on 15 July 2010, he notes that the concept of violence is derived from the cultural use of the word among the Calabar people. In terms of its semantic collocation, the concept of violence is associated with the following Efik words or terms:

- *ufin* (slavery, enslavement)
- *ewan* (fighting)
- *ekong* (battle/war or waging war)
- *uwotowo* (killings)
- *ufik* (oppression)
- *ufip* (jealousy)
- *afai* (violence)
- *utuk* (cheats or cheating)
- *idiokoesit* (wickedness, bitterness, grudge, ill-feeling)
- *ubiak* (pain)
- *ifiopesit* (hurts)
- *ufen* (sufferings)
- *ntuaha* (conflicts)
- *odudu* (power)

- *ukara* (rule, ruling)
- *afanikong* (problems)
- *uyanyang* (strife, struggle/struggling)
- *ikang* (gun, weapon)
- *eduat* (spear)
- *idang* (arrow)

The abovementioned terms often come to mind when one is talking about conflicts and violence in the Calabar context.

2.4 Violence between Obomitiat and Ediong Communities – A Case Study

It is important to mention that the researcher visited Okoyong communities where most of the victims of Obomitiat and Ediong conflict reside. Personal interviews were conducted; questionnaires were administered. It is important to state, first and foremost, that at the time of the study, the researcher employed a cluster sampling method, and collected data from members and leaders of the Presbyterian Church within the area of study. From Tables 1 and 2, and Chart 1 presented above, it is clear that cases of ethnic violence in the Calabar area occur more frequently in the Odukpani Local Government Area. Due to the high prevalence of conflicts and violence in this area, the researcher decided to select the Obomitiat versus Ediong violence as a case study. It is assumed that the facts gathered on conflicts and violence in these communities will convey the reality of the dehumanizing experiences of the people due to communal and ethnic conflicts and violence in the Calabar area.

A discussion with Tom (2010) reveals that, historically, Obomomitiat and Ediong communities are neighbours who have lived together for over a hundred and fifty years. Each of the two communities is made up of small villages. In a separate interview, Nya (2010) affirms that Obomitiat and Ediong are part of Northern Efik communities, known as Efik Mbuot Akpa (the Efiks of the upper river). The economy of the people in these communities depended largely on subsistent farming. Few members engage in petty trading while few are government workers, mainly

teachers in government schools in the area. Generally, income generated by the people is hardly enough for comfortable living.

Being people who share a common ancestry, there is no cultural or traditional barrier. A position paper presented by the Gospel Ministers' Forum of Omomitiat, Eki, and Ediong clans to the mediation and conflict /reconciliation committee from the office of the deputy governor of Cross River State (2007:9-10) states:

We have lived like neighbours in co-operation, social interaction, community relationship, sharing primary and secondary schools even though these schools belong to Obomitiat; the information in this paper is not a hear say, we are neighbours. We are friendly so we know them facially and by names as well as they know us (*sic*).

In the 1970s, the only secondary school in the area was the Comprehensive Secondary School Obomitiat where most of the young people from all the neighbouring communities including Ediong studied without any problem.

In the present political structure of Nigeria, the two communities are also part of the Mbiabo clan council, and both belong to the Obomitiat/Mbiabo/Ediong electoral ward in Odukpani Local Government Council of Cross River State.

From all available records already mentioned above, the two communities have lived in peace over the years. The peaceful relationship the two communities enjoyed went sour after the December 1998 councillorship election, which an aspirant from Obomitiat won. After the elections, conflict and violence erupted. Ediong youths blocked the only access road to the area, beating and harassing innocent people from Obomitiat. Since then, there have been threats to and attacks on Obomitiat especially on Mkpamfa village.

Obomitiat also launched a counter-attack on Ediong people and destroyed Anwa Ibok, a village in the Ediong community. According to a position paper by the Gospel Ministers' Forum submitted to the Odukpani Local Government Chairman on 6 June 2008:

The Ediong people led by their youths... came in groups to destroy our houses and burnt them, the clan head pretending to arrest arsonist; clearly, enough was enough!! The Obomitiat Edere leaders and people decided for a counter attack since our patience, tolerance and hope of Ediong reciprocation of same approach had proved useless and Ediong was bent on continuing their violence on us (*sic*), we had no option but to move for a counter attack (2008:5).

This counter attack from Obomitiat on Ediong people did not help matters; rather, it aggravated the conflict.

In 2004, there was a land dispute over the lawful ownership of Mkpamfa village by the two communities, and Ediong youths went and removed the roof from two houses in Mkpamfa. However, in the past, the said Mkpamfa village had always been known as a village in the Obomitiat community. In October 2006, some youths from the Ediong community again went and destroyed a building under construction in the Mkpamfa village, inflicting serious machete cuts on certain individuals. The local government waded into the matter but the conflict was not resolved. In a letter dated 10 October 2006, the Ediong traditional rulers' council sent out a letter signed by Etinyin Etim W. Essia, dissociating them from the act. The letter blamed their youths for the violent act and rendered an apology to the clan head and chiefs of Obomitiat for the crisis⁷.

⁷ The content of the letter in Efik language is as follows:

Mme Ete, Edi nnyin me mbong Otong Ediong ino mbofo nwed emi Nnyin imokop etop emi Clan Head mbufo otobode. Mbok nyin inam mbufo efiok et eke baba nnyin mbon Ediong idionoke edinam emi mkparawa ediong enamde oro, idighe nnyin mbong Ediong idong mmo enam.

Mbok nnyin imekpe mbufo ubok. Ekuda nte esit ayatde mbufoenam se mikpenamke. Ekuyat esit tutu nnyin isobo iso ye iso.

Nyin inemke esit ke edinam mmo.

Tiesun,

Obong Abasi odo ye mbufo

Etinyin Etim W. Essia and others.

The translation goes thus:

Dear Fathers,

We the chiefs of Otong Edoing community hereby write to inform you that we have received the message you sent to us. Please we want to let you know that none of the chiefs of Ediong knew of the act carried out by Ediong youths and we never sent them to do what they have done.

We hereby plead with you not to react according to the level of this provocation doing what you are not supposed to do. We plead with you not to be offended until we meet face to face. We are not happy with the action of our youths.

Keep well.

May the Almighty God be with you.

Signed by Etinyin Etim W. Essia and others

After such a strongly worded letter from Ediong chiefs, one would have expected a move for peaceful resolution of the conflict by both communities; but it was not so. The minister's forum position paper dated 27th September 2007 reveals that, on 4 August 2002, the Obomitiat people rescued and harboured an Ediong man who was beaten into a coma and dumped by his people (the Ediong) at Mkpamfa after he was accused of witchcraft practice. The Ediong people were offended because they wanted the man dead.

The paper also added that, the strain in relationship between the two communities brought about mutual distrust and suspicion, intolerance and rivalry. Before the crisis that led to the destruction of lives and properties, efforts were made by the government, traditional rulers in the area, and the church to restore peace. However, these efforts could not resolve the conflict.

The Executive Chairman's report, titled, Renewed Crises between Ediong and Obomitiat in Odukpani Local Government Area, which was addressed to the Deputy Governor of Cross River State (Bassey Akiba 16 February 2007) states that:

According to my informant, Etinyin Eba, Clan Head of Ndon Nwong who waded into the matter along with other neighbouring Clan Heads went to the war-torn zone for fact finding on the 13th February 2007 only to be pursued by gunmen from Ediong where the news of fresh attack spread across to their arch rival which triggered off a new attack leading to killing of persons from both sides, and burning down of houses.

A memorandum signed and distributed to all Presbyterian congregations by Etim on 16 April 2007, captioned, 'War situation within Calabar Synod and a call for prayer and humanitarian aid' reads:

I write to bring to your attention that for some time now some communities within Calabar Synod have been engaging in conflicts and wars... Recent report has it that in Obomitiat/Ediong & Eki war over hundred houses and 10 Churches have been destroyed. Also over 10 people have been killed and more than 23 people wounded. The people of Obomitiat do not have food to eat, no shelter to stay, and no money to acquire immediate needs as most of them are now refugees in other villages. Consequently, Calabar synod is appealing to all Parishes, church organizations and well meaning Christians and Presbyterians to rise to the challenge. The Synod is requesting for relief materials and money for these our unfortunate brethren.

Efforts were made by the government, traditional rulers and the Christian community to resolve the conflict and to restore peace. However, at 5.30 a.m., on 23 March

2007, the Ediong people invaded Obomitiat villages, killing people, and destroying all buildings including residential and business buildings, all government buildings such as primary and secondary schools, and all church buildings. The Obomitiat people fled and took refuge in other neighbouring villages. On 14 March 2007, the Obomitiat people who were taking refuge in neighbouring Ekim/Uyi communities were driven out by the chiefs and people of Ekim/Uyi because Ediong and Eki people threatened to attack them if they continued to harbour Obomitiat people.

In an interview that the researcher had on (7 August 2010) with Tom, a Presbyterian minister who pastured a congregation in the Obomitiat community during the said conflict, he narrates their ordeal, thus:

We were rejected by immediate neighbouring communities, they could not accommodate us because of fear of attack by the Ediong and Eki people, who had vow to attack communities that will accommodate us. We had to run to Okurikang and squeeze into small apartments. Many people slept on bare floor, many had no place to sleep, no food, no money, some have died and many took ill for many reasons.

Since then, the Obomitiat people have been living in the Okurikang community and other places as refugees. Being a predominant farming community, the people have no access to their farms or to other means of livelihood; they have no sufficient shelter, and no food. Hunger, joblessness, malnutrition, suffering and death have become the daily experience of many Obomitiat people.

2.5 Conclusion

The brief historical survey in this chapter has shown that the phenomenon of violent conflicts and wars has repeated itself severally from the pre-colonial to the colonial and post-colonial eras both in northern Nigeria where Moslems form the majority of the population and in southern Nigeria, which is predominantly Christian. Generally, causes of violence in Nigeria are multidimensional.

The situation is not different in the Calabar Synod area, which is the focus of this study as could be seen especially in the conflict between Obomitiat and Ediong used here as a case study. This development is truly worrisome. The question is why is there so much violence in the Calabar area, which is predominantly a Christian area? We shall attempt answers to this question in the next chapter.

CHAPTER THREE

CONFLICT AND VIOLENCE

3.0 Introduction

This chapter focuses on the interpretative task of practical theology. It begins with the definition and review of existing knowledge on violence. Biblical perspectives of conflicts and violence are investigated. Some theories of violence are also analysed in order to understand and explain the phenomenon of violence in the context under investigation. In addition, causes, dynamics and consequences of violence and their implications for human dignity are discussed. In other words, the chapter attempts to answer the question, why is there so much violence in the Calabar area?

3.1 What Is Violence?

The terms violence, conflict, conflict-resolution and peace will feature frequently in this chapter and in the entire study. The connection of some terms in the complex process of social change will so be explored. It is normal to expect that the definition of a term that may not be too plain to everyone would facilitate understanding without necessarily ending disagreements over application and interpretation.

The issue conflict and violence has become one of local, national and international concern. Various scholars have given great attention to this issue in an attempt to negotiate peace in the shadow of violence. They have defined violence in their own unique ways. For instance, Tamuno (1991:1) defines violence simply as “unlawful use or threat of force”. Huber (1996:127) explains that the term “violence” is derived from the Indo-Germanic root, “*val*,” which is also the root of the Latin verb *valere* (strong, powerful, and healthy). Huber’s, definition, therefore, suggests that the word violence was used in connection with personal freedom rather than with legal affairs.

3.2 Literature on Conflict and Violence

The following works provide background information on violence, in general, and in Nigeria, in particular: Onigu Otite, *Ethnic Pluralism and Ethnicity in Nigeria*; Peter Obe, *Nigeria: A Decade of Crises in Picture*; and Julius O Adekunle, *Religion in*

Politics: Secularism and National Integration in Modern Nigeria. Others include Rebecca Sako-John, *Violence against Women*; Toyin Falola, *Violence in Nigeria: The Crisis of Religious Politics and Secular Ideologies*; Jibo, Simbine and Galadima, *Ethnic Group and Conflict in Nigeria*; and Joseph S Himes, *Conflict and Conflict Management*. The remaining are Thomas A Imobighe, *Civil Society and Ethnic Conflict Management in Nigeria*; Paul Wehr, *Conflict Regulation*; Omotosho, *Religious Violence in Nigeria – The Causes and Solution: An Islamic Perspective*; Michel Desjardins, *Peace, Violence and the New Testament*, and Wolfgang Huber, *Violence: The Unrelenting Assault on Human Dignity*.

Reading the works of these authors has broadened the researcher's view on the concept of conflict and violence, generally, and, particularly, on communal and ethnic violence in Nigeria, which is also the focus of this research. Some of the works will be examined below.

- Wolfgang Huber's *Violence: The Unrelenting Assault on Human Dignity*

According to Huber (1996:128), in the Roman legal tradition, the use of the word violence was so strange that it was used to translate very different Latin terms. First, it was used for Protestants, thus defining particular political positions of ruling, but in the course of the middle ages, that definition was supplanted by the word power. This liberated "violence" to function as the translation for *violentia*, that is, direct bodily harm. Huber asserts that, "Human violence against other humans is the most disturbing and most challenging problem facing the world today."

Huber strongly maintains that human violence against other humans is a disturbing challenge in the world today. In his view, violence involves ethnic problems, sexual mistreatment, xenophobic attacks, and child abuse all over the world, while other phenomena demonstrate that violence permeates our societies and, indeed, our whole world. Huber laments that, irrespective of its most sadistic and dehumanizing forms, violence is shown openly and used as a means of so-called entertainment. Apart from the gross brutalities of crime and war, Huber finds more subtle and covert violence in childrearing, family intimacy, schools, employee relations, entertainment, and competitive sports. His book reveals how the constant, everyday disregard of human dignity is a root of violence in all spheres, how the inviolability of dignity is the

one absolutely necessary premise of countering violence, and how we can become personally vigilant in the service of human dignity. Though the context of the author is different from the context of this study, one indisputable fact is that Huber's book provides useful information on violence and its consequences on human dignity.

- Toyin Falola's *Violence in Nigeria: The Crisis of Religious Politics and Secular Ideologies*

Falola's book is significant as far as violence in Nigeria is concerned. The author presents a comprehensive historical analysis of religious violence and aggression in Nigeria, its causes, consequences and options for conflict resolution. He enumerates and elaborates on various inter-religious and inter-ethnic conflicts and violence, and the ways in which these conflicts impact negatively on the people of Nigeria.

He concludes by proposing solutions for resolving or ending violence in Nigeria such as outlining the use of local congregations, and teaching of tolerance and dialogue for better understanding between people of different ethnic and religious groups. In addition, the government should curtail the activities of violent religious leaders and groups. The book is a brilliant and well-documented scholarly work, which offers a comprehensive and integrative analysis of religious and ethnic violence in Nigeria.

- Jibo, Simbine, and Galadima's *Ethnic Group and Conflicts in Nigeria*, Volume 4

The book deals with the history of different ethnic groups in some parts of Nigeria and their history of conflicts. The authors identify leading causes of conflict in Nigeria as hunger, land, chieftaincy disputes, and struggle for homogeneity, prejudice, and elite politics. It seems that the book is primarily about the identity of diverse groups, their location, activities, and relations, which have led them into competition, conflict and violence. The result is a devastating inhuman condition of the masses. Though the authors have done a good work, it must be stated that there are several repetitions of reported cases, for instance, 'the role of the police' is seen as often exacerbating crises instead of helping to contain them. However, the issue is not only about the police, but also about the role of the government and other issues. All the same, the book is relevant to the present study.

- Rebecca Sako-John's *Violence Against Women*

In her evaluation of violence against women in Nigeria, Rebecca Sako-John defines psychological violence or torture in the context of gender violence, as “those acts or behaviours intentionally directed at the emotional state of a person, aimed at controlling the person or making life miserable for the victim.” Sako-John’s states clearly that violence against women is a sad phenomenon, which many women continue to experience in Africa. This act holds far-reaching implications and has harmful effects on the family. The author explains that psychological violence includes physical or verbal abuse, harassment, excessive possessiveness, isolation, denial of economic support, among others.

The book debunks certain misconceptions associated with domestic violence in Nigeria, the paramount being the myths that domestic violence is strictly a personal problem between husband and wife. She opposes this misconception and maintains that domestic violence has sent many women to early graves while the perpetrators are rarely brought to book. Sako-John strongly holds that due to the myths attached to this barbaric act, there is no accurate data on domestic violence, which is shrouded in secrecy. Although the book is not a scholarly work, it seems to paint a true picture of what is happening to women in Nigeria. It is evident that domestic violence against women calls for great concern, as no community can exist without women. Therefore, the findings in the book are considered relevant to the present study.

- Julius O Adekunle's *Religion and Politics*

This book presents diverse perspectives on the intersection between religion and politics. It offers a comprehensive and intellectual approach to the study of religion and politics in Nigeria from the pre-colonial era to the modern times. The arguments in the second and third chapters on religion, politics and ethnicity demonstrate their linkages with and the impact on democracy, inter-group relations and violence. Although the book is written with a sympathetic tone, in appreciation of contribution made by both Christianity and Islam, it also criticizes the conflict and violence generated by the two religions. First, it can be observed that the contributors to the volume focus on the ways in which ethnicity and religion are used to achieve political

ends. Secondly, emphasis is placed on the role of religion in politics and the use of religion in the justice system. This well-researched volume would provide a good historical background and useful information on religion, ethnicity and violence in Nigeria.

- Michel Desjardins' *Peace Violence and the New Testament*

Michel Desjardin's modern and North American definition of violence includes two complementary aspects. To him, "violence is an overt physical destructive act carried out by individuals or countenanced by institution" (Desjardins 1997:13). Often, this definition is what readily comes to mind when one speaks of 'violence', and violence of this nature ranges from a slap to murder. In support of this view, (Mcfee 1987 in Desjardins 1997:12) aptly states that violence "violates the personhood of another in ways that are psychologically destructive rather than physically harmful. In this sense, one can see pornography as 'violence' and government inaction on 'Third world' debt as 'structural violence against the poorer nations'."

Desjardins' unique book is a scholarly work appears well-researched and to be without bias. Desjardins strongly maintains a balance but bold view that the New Testament promotes and encourages peace as well as violence. His curiosity on this subject emerges from the North American preoccupation with peace and violence during the first half of the last century, the gradual change in American society's understanding of 'peace' and 'violence,' and his academic involvement in religious studies. He maintains that non-physical violence predominates in the New Testament. Desjardins (1997:6) claims that, "in this examination of the many forms in which violence manifest itself in the New Testament non-physical violence predominates." Desjardins then identifies words that relate to this key term in the New Testament such as:

- *Bia* (force, violence); Act 5:26; 21:35; 27:41
- *Biastes* (a violent person); Act 2:22
- *Polemos* (a war, a fight); Jas 4:7; Mt 24:6; Lk 14:31
- *Polemein* (to wage war, fight); Rev 2:16
- *Mache* (a battle, a quarrel) 2nd Cor.7.5; 2nd Tim2.24; Tit. 3.9
- *Machomai* (to fight, to quarrel): Jn 6:52; Acts 7:26; 2nd Tim 2:24

- *Stratia* (an army) LK 2:13;Acts 7:42
- *Anstirateusesthai* (to war against) Rom7:23
- *Stratopendon* (a body of troops) Lk 21:20

The term violence is often used in three ways. The first refers to physical human-to-human violence, and the second sense refers to the violent encounter between the forces of the good and the forces of evil, while in the third sense, the term is used metaphorically. These three usages are common in the New Testament. According to Desjardins, the New Testament terms of violence, express different levels of reality. It is obvious that the range of usages indicates some of the complexities inherent in understanding the New Testament perspective on violence. This book is relevant to this discussion.

The above definitions from different scholars show clearly that the term violence has various meanings. Nevertheless, from whatever angle one may choose to look at it, violence is a constant disregard for God's creation, and human violence against other humans is a direct disregard for human dignity and for God. In the context of this research, therefore, violence would refer to intentional acts of killing, injuring, or coercing people, and the destruction of property.

3.3 Sources of Conflicts and Violence

As earlier stated, the Calabar area is located in the south-south geo-political zone of Nigeria often referred to as the Niger Delta region. This zone is the main hub of oil and gas activities in Nigeria. Multinational oil companies engage in onshore and offshore operations, which pump between 2,5m barrels of oil a day, making Nigeria one of the world's top-ten oil exporters. The zone is a microcosm of the larger picture of the Nigerian society – of poverty in the midst of plenty. Despite the wealth of oil that is generated in the region, majority of the people are poor suffering from crumbling social infrastructure, high unemployment, administrative neglect and insecurity.

The Annual Police Reports of 1975 and 1979 (in Tamuno1991:164) published a number of public disturbances across the country that arose for a variety of reasons. The violent acts surfaced in the form of, among others, disturbances from protest of groups vexed over interstate boundary changes, chieftaincy and land disputes,

clashes between civilians and soldiers outside barracks, and clashes between Fulani/Hausa cattlemen and farmers over alleged destruction of crops and the location of local government headquarters. An example of group violence is the tragic clash between the Ife and Modakeke communities of Oranmiyan Local Government Area of Osun State (formerly Oyo State) on 14-15 April 1981. The Belgore Tribunal reported that the communal violence resulted from deep-seated antagonism between these two communities. The earlier refusal of the Oyo State Government to split the Oranmiyan Local Government Area to give the Modakeke community greater autonomy fuelled the flames of subsisting animosity.

Factors of culture are of great importance in group violence as seen in the Ife-Modakeke conflict. In this case, efforts by the Nigeria Police Force to investigate the cause of the conflict, and the missing head of a student, Bukola Arogundade, was taken over by the Ife group who resorted to consulting the Ifa oracle and the Efon Alaye centre of divination. Thus, the role of secret cults and divinations in exacerbating violent conflicts deserve extensive investigation and vigilance by the law enforcement agencies closest to the grassroots in the various local government areas. In the absence of such vigilance, they tend to get mixed up with other forms of group-violence.

Another factor to consider in communal violence is aggression. Tetlock et al (1993:8, in Uniga 2010:17) states that the phenomenon of aggression occurs at different levels of social complexity. In his argument, he emphasizes the need for understanding human social behaviour, which is necessary both to distinguish successive levels of social complexity – individuals, interactions, relationships, groups, societies, and to understand the relations between them. This factor is seen in the Niger Delta conflict, in which over the last decade, increasing agitation for resource control, and for environmental and social justice have characterized the struggle of the people. The agitation has degenerated into incidences of kidnapping of foreign oil company staff, violence, and widespread destruction of lives and properties in the region.

According to the Strategic Conflict Assessment (SCA) of Nigeria, Consolidate and Zonal Reports (2008:176-177), social and local institutions, which should arbitrate and resolve disputes, have virtually collapsed and, in most cases, do not exist.

Social stability and cohesion rely on informal group relationships that cannot turn to impartial judges when dispute occur. The south-south zone has become a confluence of insecurity aided by the proliferation of arms and ethnic militia groups. In a nutshell, seven main factors identified as sources of violence in the south-south geo-political zone, which include the Calabar area are listed as follow:

- Land space and the resources available
- Disputed jurisdiction of certain traditional rulers and chiefs
- Population growth and expansionist tendencies to sustain ethnic-bound occupations, particularly among users of land resources
- Poor law enforcement in Nigeria
- Manipulation of youth groups by local politicians
- The micro and macro social structures in Nigeria manifested in varieties of conflicting cultural interests, values and preferences
- Creation of local government councils and the location of their headquarters; similarly, ethnic claims over new headquarters and some important government projects are also sources of conflicts and violence
- Disregard for cultural symbols and “pollution” of cultural practices

3.4 Biblical Perspectives on Violence

In this section, both the Old and the New Testament views of conflict and violence will be investigated briefly.

3.4.1 The Old Testament’s view of conflict and violence

Looking at the creation account in Genesis, God’s conclusion was that all of creation was very good (Gen 1:31). The story progresses to show the human predicament that resulted from the severance of relationships – between God and humans, between humans and nature, and between fellow human beings (Gen 3). Consequently, sin became a human dilemma, which manifested in different ways

shortly after the breakdown of relationships. Firstly, Adam and Eve could no longer fellowship with God their Creator. Secondly, the situation was the beginning of interpersonal conflicts as Adam quickly laid the blame on Eve (Gen 3:12). Thirdly, creation suffered a loss of productivity; man had to sweat in order to survive in his environment. According to Kenneth Gangel:

Spiritual conflict as it is today, between human beings, Satan and his agents has become prevalent and will be terminated when Satan is consigned finally into the lake of fire. Sinful nature has become ingrained in each individual fathered and mothered by the first couple (Gangel 1992:155).

The above statement confirms that Adam and Eve sinned against the command of God in the Garden of Eden. Having known the depth of their conflict with God (i.e. sin), they decided to handle it by “withdrawing from God’s sight” as they had become aware of their nakedness. Perhaps it would have been better if Adam and his wife Eve had asked their Creator for pardon than shifting the blame as they did. It was clear that, by looking for them “in hiding,” God was willing to give them the opportunity of reconciliation. However, since they consigned themselves to solitude, God decided to handle the situation by driving them out of paradise, not only for their sake alone but also for the good of the entire human race.

Nonetheless, in the first family, one could see violent conflict displayed by Cain when he engaged his brother Abel in hostility that latter claimed Abel’s life. However, God’s way of handling the violent conflict was that Cain would remain a fugitive. Ariarajah (2002:18) asserts that, “Today such human propensity is simply depicted in some conflicts between agriculturists in their bid for survival. In spite of this behaviour, God’s mercy is ever abundant as Cain began human civilization under God’ protection (Genesis 4:13).”

It is important to note that the brutal act in which Cain killed his brother Abel through violence was a clear violation of human dignity and that was the beginning of human-to-human violence. However, the fact that what Cain did displeased God as to warrant the punishment meted to him proves that God hates violence and never intended that it should exist among his people. That God allowed Cain to live depicts God’s mercy and love for humanity despite its fallen in nature. It shows that God has

a definite plan in which man would be the vehicle through whom he would execute his future purpose. That would happen through the church.

There are various accounts of violent conflicts recorded in the Old Testament. Ariarajha (2002:18) observes that violent conflict was the practice of the tribes in Palestine due to the bid to control scarce land on which to survive. For this reason, Israel's conflict with other nations was considered approved. Ariarajha(ibid.) maintains that, "The Biblical image of God was closely associated with conquest and violent conflict" as exemplified by Deut 7:1-2:

When the Lord your God brings you into the land you go to possess and has cast out many nations before you... and when the Lord your God delivers them over to you, you shall conquer them and utterly destroy them. You shall make no covenant with them nor show mercy to them.

According to Bainton(1991:45-48) such statements meant that such conflict presented above had a divine cause. It follows that the priest and prophets became chaplains of kings, inquiring what the will of Yahweh was, as he who gave them protection. That was not all; Yahweh also fought through the instruments of nature. For instance, the plagues in Egypt, which led to the episode at the Red Sea, stem from the dehumanizing cruelty meted out to the Hebrews by Pharaoh's administration. Prophet Elijah's contest with the prophets of Ba'al was yet another proof of God's approval of conflict. The natural instruments actually intervened in resolving the conflict particularly at that time (i.e. of the Old Testament).

It can be noted here that it was in the face of given circumstances when men tried to prove their might against God that he chose to manifest his perfect power over humans to resolve conflict. Thus, when God resorted to conflicts in handling such situations, the conflicts were often devastating and resulted in extermination. Therefore, it could be inferred from the above, as Bainton also pointed out, that, for a long time, the church did not understand that such wars fought in the future would be the programme of the later Reformers. Harrison (1964:7-9) equally asserts that:

The Maccabean revolts were reactions to the challenge of profanation in the worship of Yahweh which if tolerated by the Jews could also amounted relegation of their customs. The revolt worked out favourably for them since in the event they got their independence.

Therefore, the will or hand of God can be said to manifest in certain situations of conflict to portray the gradual progression in the manifestation of His plan. It can be suggested that in God's dealings in the history of mankind, God had absolute control of every situation and He could also give the needed peace. No wonder Micah the prophet spoke of the message of everlasting peace and in whom that would be found:

He shall judge between nations, and rebuke many people; they shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning hooks, nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore (Micah 4:3; Isaiah 2:4).

Likewise, Isaiah the prophet declared that, "They shall not hurt nor destroy in my entire holy mountain, for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord (Isaiah 11:9). Violent conflict became apparent because of the effect of sin. God, therefore, used conflicts to redirect His mission, which was jeopardised by man in Eden (i.e. man was to live in perfect relationship with Him and with his fellow human and the environment). Violent conflict in the Old Testament ranged from the wars of the children of Israel to possess the Promised Land, which would be a stable place for their habitation, through the Maccabean revolts, which depict the human struggle to live at liberty under the direction of God. The Scripture assures us that at the end of it all, "I [the Lord] will give peace in the land and you shall lie down and none will make you afraid; I will rid the land of evil beast, and the sword will not go through your land" (Lev 26:6). Interestingly, the Lord himself is the Prince of peace (Isaiah 9:6) to his people.

Thus, in the Old Testament could be seen the origin of conflict and of holy war. Nonetheless, it contains, at the same time, the message of conflict resolution and peace making as discussed above. On this note, we shall proceed to examine the New Testament's view of violent conflict, its resolution and peacemaking.

3.4.2 The New Testament view of conflict and violence

In the New Testament, Jesus never promised his disciples a ministry free of conflict. Rather, he said to them, "But now, he who has a money bag, let him take it and likewise a knapsack; and he who has no sword, let him sell his garment and buy one" (Lk 22:36). This statement is the reverse of his earlier saying (Lk 9:3; Mat 10:9) that encouraged the disciples to depend on generous hospitality. The act of

possessing a sword is metaphorical. It was meant to prepare the disciples for future perilous times in which they would face hatred and persecution. Therefore, they would need defence and protection just as Paul did, and he had to appeal to Caesar (Act 25:11). In fact, the mention of the sword vividly communicated the trials they would face.

It was in the context of such challenging circumstances mentioned above, that Jesus gave the standard measures for resolving conflict and peacemaking (Mat 5:39, 44; or Lk 6:28 and Mat 18:35). Bruce (1983:69) states that:

Jesus by teaching his disciples to turn the other cheek also urge them to have their minds conformed to his which resulting action will be in accordance with the way of Christ. He was teaching them not to retaliate when wronged, injured or inconvenienced; rather they should master the situation to the point of doing something to the advantage of the offender.

The question of love for enemies was paramount to Jesus, as he considered love of the Lord and of one's neighbour the great and first commandment on which all the Law and Prophets depend. The love, which Jesus refers to, is not sentimental, but it is a practical attitude. It is not in word and speech, but in deed and in truth.

Bruce (1983:78) maintains that Jesus' standard, which he laid down for his disciples, is such that a bad turn against them deserves a good one repaid by them. They were enjoined to go an extra mile, i.e. they should do more than others did if they were to be known as followers of Jesus. This would distinguish them and make them perfect, like God the father. Otherwise, they would be no different from others who do others good in return for good. The example of the Father is that he does not hold anything against those who sin. He gives blessings equally and to all, without discrimination, rain for the just and unjust, sunrise for the evil and the good. Therefore, followers of Jesus are children of God who should do good to all, and who should be merciful as the Father is merciful (Lk 6:36).

The teaching further talks of forgiving a brother who has wronged one; this forgiveness must be from the heart (Mat 18:350). It should be done, not seven times only, but seventy times seven. This means that one needs to forgive freely. Perhaps

by the time this has been done time and again, forgiveness would have become one's second nature. According to Bruce (1983:80), "The Gospel is a message of forgiveness... He is a forgiving God; therefore, those who call him Father must display something of his character." Subsequently, love and forgiveness operate in a chain reaction – the more forgiveness is shown, the more love is produced and vice versa; and the more peace abounds among humanity.

The message from the New Testament is quite succinct. It follows that whether violent conflicts are minor or major issues, what should be paramount is the craving for peace and unity, which is the desire of God. Thus, peace making should not be an option for believers, but a necessity. In order to fulfil this demand, we must follow earnestly, diligently and continually, the path of peace without which we fall short of the path to perfection.

3.5 Theories of Conflict and Violence

Over time, scholars in different fields have developed theories and arguments to help explain the sources of conflict and violence, which have become the bane of modern human society. This study will consider a few of these theories in the attempt to interpret and explain violence in the Calabar area.

3.5.1 The theory of "territorial imperative"

Among competing theories in conflict analysis, the conflicts in the Calabar area can better be explained in terms of "territorial imperative" (Andrey 1967, in Otite and Albert 2007:84). In this study, Robert Ardrey traced the animal origins of property, nations and territoriality. A territory is defined as an area of space, which an animal or a group of animals defend as an exclusive preserve. It is within such a territory that the basic needs and interests of such animals are gratified. The needs include security of space, food, identity, prestige, etc. The animals, therefore, defend such an area at all costs, and strive to keep out those who undermine their interests and needs.

All animals including humans, have a sense of territoriality, and would patrol, secure and defend their own environment (especially land). This applies to physical territories such as it does to nations, states and ethnic communities. The animal

traits apply to man by evolutionary inheritance. To Ardrey, “If we defend the title of our land or the sovereignty of our country, we do it for reason no different, no less innate, and no less ineradicable, than lower animals.” Conflict erupts when the claims of one party to land and territory become incompatible with the desire of others to satisfy their own basic interests and needs within the same physical territory.

The territorial imperative theory of conflict and violence draws our attention to several dimensions of violence in the Calabar area especially as regards the growing population and expansionist tendencies to sustain ethnic-bound occupations. The truth remains that in many rural communities there is limited land for agricultural purposes since majority of the rural dwellers depend on subsistent farming as their source of economic survival. Historically, many of the people of the area depended greatly on their ancestral land for agricultural use, which may no longer be sufficient.

On the other hand, some communities have a great portion of unused land, and they must protect their territory against external aggression at all costs. Any attempt to encroach on their territory is not only a threat to their security of space, food, identity and prestige, but a threat to their existence as a people. An important practical implication of Ardrey’s theory is its significance in helping communities engulfed in conflicts to learn from past occurrences such as the experience of the Ediong and Obomitiat communities, and to know their vulnerability to violence. This may also help preachers to select teaching and preaching topics as part of their attempt at peace building and conflict resolution.

3.5.2 The theory of “acquisitive mimesis and rivalry”

According to Townsley⁸:

Girard proposes that much of human behaviour is based on “mimesis”, an all-encompassing expression of imitation, but focuses on acquisition and appropriation as the object of mimesis, contrary to most of the extant literature on imitative behaviour (Girard 1979:9, cited in Townsley 2003:1).

Girard described a situation where two individuals desire the same object. As they both attempt to obtain this object, their behaviour becomes conflictual, since there is only one object, but two people. He claims that, “Violence is generated by this

⁸ In <http://www.jeramy.org/girard.html>.2010/09/27

process; or rather, violence is the process itself when two or more partners try to prevent one another from appropriating the object they all desire through physical or other means.” In his argument, Girard takes issue with the dominant conflict models that focus on aggression or scarcity as the sources of conflict. Such models propose that, “Many of our problems are the direct result of concentration of wealth and power” as well as “exploitation and colonialism” (Farley: 17-18 in Townsley 2003:1). While this perspective goes a long way in explaining various types of conflict that society experience, Girard believes they are insufficient to explain the diversity of situations around which we find conflict.

Girard has helped us to understand the cyclic aspect of violence. He argues that violence generates itself. Whoever finds himself or herself in this cycle of violence, always has a good reason to retaliate. Violence builds on previous violence and anticipates more and more violence to come. This is very true and quite typical of much of the violence in the Calabar area especially cases of ethnic violence. The study reveals that, in most cases, parties in communal or ethnic violence have had long history of conflicts with each other. For example, the report on Ikoneto and Akpap Okoyong boundary dispute submitted by Police Management sub-committee Odukpani Local Government Area dated 12 March 2007 affirms that Ikoneto versus Akpap Okoyong conflict dates back to 1865 about 145 years ago. The challenge, therefore, is to break the cycle.

The theory of acquisitive mimesis and rivalry also manifests in some of the conflict types common in the Calabar area and in Nigeria, at large, especially as regards economic and political struggles. Afuru, Ndoma in an interview on July 18th 2010 says

“Since the political offices and other means of economic empowerment are limited, available ones are always shared based on certain perimeters such as state of origin, senatorial district, federal constituency, local government area, political ward, clan, community or ethnic divide.”

This form of sharing of power or wealth is often characterized by political opposition and rivalry, which often result in violence. Some people traced the genesis of Obomitat versus Ediong crisis politically to the councillorship election of 2008 in which youths were manipulated by political rivals to cause conflict in communities

that have enjoyed peace over the years. This confirms Laue's (1991 in Townsley 2003:1) definition of conflict below:

Conflict as escalated competition at any system level between groups whose aim is to gain advantage in area of power, resources, interests, values, or needs and at least one of these groups believes that this dimension of the relationship is based on mutual incompatible goals.

3.5.3 Psychoanalytic theory

According to Strachey (1960:103-104), the psychoanalytic theory emphasizes the role of external factors in producing aggressive outcomes. Freud argued that when the death instinct is turned inward, it results in self-punishment (in the extreme, it results in suicide). When directed outward, it results in hostility and anger, leading to murder. Destructive behaviour or even aggression is considered a valuable instinct necessary for survival because it enhances the ability to hunt, defend territories, and compete successfully for desirable mates. Every human is born with powerful instincts for love (*Eros*) and death (*Thanatos*) However that strong inhibitory mechanism co-evolved, enabling humans to suppress aggression when needed.

Marcuse (1955:33) asserts that:

The terrible necessity of the inner connection between civilization and barbarism, progress and suffering, freedom and unhappiness- a connection which reveals itself ultimately as that between and Eros and Thanatos... He adds that Freud questions culture not from romanticist or Utopian point of view but on the ground of suffering and misery which its implementation involves.

Although most psychologists accept the role of biological factors in aggression at some level, some have focused on external factors that elicit such behaviours. To social psychologists of the 1990s, biological factors provide background conditions that moderate the effects of aversive stimuli in the individual's immediate situation, particularly those that involve conflict with other people. Freud's theory emphasis on external factors adequately explains the roles of some neighbouring communities in the Obomitiat /Ediong conflict. A position paper submitted by the Gospel Ministers Forum on 27 September 2007 confirms the role of Eki clan in fuelling the conflict and their support of Ediong in the fight against Obomitiat. The role of external factors could be seen in almost all the conflicts and violent cases in the Calabar area. These psychoanalytic theories apply in their distinctive ways to conflict and violence in the

Calabar area thereby confirming the multidimensional sources of violence in the area.

3.6. Data on Communal and Ethnic Violence in Calabar Area

In the remaining part of this chapter, the data collected will be presented as well as an interpretation and analysis of findings. To ascertain views on the awareness of violence, its impact and the perception of the preaching by respondents, data was generated by means of interviews and distribution of questionnaires among Presbyterians within the conflict zone in the Calabar area. The analysis of data in this chapter is a way of discerning the views of people on how the church's ministry of preaching impacts on people living within the context of violence.

The use of questionnaires enables the researcher to collect information from a cross-section of Presbyterians living within area identified as the conflict zone. The interview of selected people especially leaders of the Presbyterian Church generated qualitative data in the form of interpretive and collective opinions. Some of the church leaders interviewed are among victims of violence in their communities. This is significant because the people in the affected areas are the eyewitnesses; therefore, their stories come out of personal experiences.

The question is why is there so much communal and ethnic violence in a predominantly Christian area, where so much preaching is going on? It would be helpful to find out why the preaching of the church fails to rise up to the challenge and task of peace building and conflict resolution in the Calabar area, in particular, and in Nigeria, at large. It is believed that this study will provide a way forward in finding a solution not only to the suffering of innocent people who are completely raped of human dignity as a result of violence but also to the issues of conflict and violence in our society as a whole.

There is no doubt that many law abiding and innocent Nigerians in the Calabar area have suffered diverse effects of violence. However, those who live in the affected rural areas such as Ntan Obu, Ikot Ana, Ufut, Etono central, Etono 11, Biakpan, Ikonoeto, Ubambat Okoyong, Ikot ofiong, Uruaetak uyo, Adim, Ikot Offiong Ebiti, Okpo Town, Ukwa Ibom Mbiabong Ukwa, Obomitiat, Ediong, Ikun, Ito, and Idere, have suffered the most. This means that people living in the abovementioned

communities are living witnesses to the multidimensional impact of conflict and violence. Since they are from predominantly Christian areas, what these witnesses relate are important because they are sharing from their experiences. They provide information that can be trusted and that can be considered as more reliable, being testimonies of those who are affected by violence, either directly or indirectly. Nevertheless, this is not to say that everything they say is true.

It is also important to note that the views of these people must be seen here as interpretations of the situation from their own perspectives, which are influenced by their historical experiences, gender, as well as ethnic and political backgrounds. Some respondents' views are influenced by their dissatisfaction with the current emphasis on materialism on the part of political and church leaders. This will be discussed fully, later in the chapter.

3.7 Presentation and Analysis of Data

Data analysis is divided into two sections – A and B. Section A: shows the characteristics of respondents while section B covers research questions. Tables and simple percentages are used to analyse the data. The analysis is based on the study undertaken by the researcher. In the course of this work, the researcher visited communities, and interviewed various people including pastors that work in warring communities. Information was also gathered from the Calabar Synod office of the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria through documented reports and oral interviews. Another important source of information was the government press releases as well as some other confidential sources on ethnic and communal violence in the Calabar area some of which are mentioned above. The findings are so amazing and they will constitute the focus of the rest of the chapter.

Section A

3.7.1 Characteristics of respondents

In this sub-section, various indices for identifying respondents are analyzed such as gender, age, marital status, religious affiliation, occupation, and literacy levels, etc.

Table 3: Distribution of respondents according to

Sex	Number	Percentage
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Female	78	52%
Male	72	48%
Total	150	100%

Table 3 above shows the distribution of respondents according to their sex. Seventy-eight respondents representing 52% of the sampled population were female and the remaining 72 respondents representing 48% were males.

Table 4: Age distribution of respondents

Age	Number	Percentage
18-30	40	26.6%
31-40	72	48%
41 and above	38	25.3%
Total	150	100%

In Table 4 above, the age distribution of respondents can be analysed as follows: Under age group 18-30 were 40 respondents representing 26.6% of the sample population. Under age group 31-40 were 72 respondents representing 48% while under age group 41 and above were 38 respondents representing 25.3% of the sample population.

Table 5: Marital status of respondents

Marital status	Number	Percentage
Married	45	30%
Single	34	22.6%
Separated	25	16.6%
Divorced	21	14%
Widowed	25	16.6%
Total	150	100%

Table 5 shows the current marital status of respondents. Forty-five respondents representing 30% of the sampled population were married, 34 respondents representing 22.6% were single, and 25 respondents representing 16.6% were

separated. Additionally, 21 respondents representing 14% were divorced and 25 respondents representing 16.6 % were widowed.

Table 6: Religious affiliation of respondents

Religious affiliation	Number	Percentage
Christians	147	98%
Moslems	0	0%
Non-church members	3	2%
Total	150	100%

In Table 6 presented above, 147 respondents representing 98% were adherents of Christian religion, 3 respondents representing 2% were non-church members and there were no Moslem respondents.

Table 7: Respondents' church denomination

Respondents church denomination	Number	Percentage
Presbyterian Church of Nigeria	137	91.3%
Other Christian Denominations	10	6.7%
Not applicable	3	2%
Total	150	100%

The analysis in Table 7 above represents the responses to the question, "If you are a Christian, which church denomination do you belong?" The table, which shows the church denomination of respondents, indicate that 137 respondents were members of the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria representing 91.3%, 10 respondents were Christians from other church denominations representing 6.7%, and to 3 respondents representing 2%, the question was not applicable.

Table 8: Attendance in church worship

Rate of church attendance	Number of Sundays every 3 months	Number	Percentage
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Very frequent	9-12 Sundays	41	27.3%
Frequent	5-8 Sundays	77	51.3%
Not very frequent	1-4 Sunday(s)	29	19.3%
Not applicable	Not applicable	3	2%
Total		150	100%

From Table 8 above, it could be seen that 41 respondents representing 27.3% of the sample population were very frequent in church, 77 respondents representing 51.3% were frequent in church, 29 respondents representing 19.3% were not very frequent in church and to the remaining 3 respondents, representing 2%, and the question was not applicable.

Table 9: Literacy levels of respondents

Literacy level	Number	Percentage
Not literate	27	18%
Primary level	52	35%
Secondary level	48	32%
Tertiary level	23	15%
Total	150	100%

Table 9 above shows the literacy level of respondents. Twenty-seven respondents were illiterate representing 18% while 52 respondents representing 35% were literate with primary education. Forty-eight respondents representing 32% were literate with secondary education and 23 respondents representing 15% were literate with tertiary education. Table 8 also shows regarding the literacy level of respondents from the sampled population, 123 respondents (i.e. 82%) could read and write, while 27 respondents representing 18% were unable to read and write.

Table 10: Occupation of respondents

Occupation	Number	Percentage
Farmers	51	34%
Civil servants	10	6.6%
Self-employed/artisans	16	10.6%

Students	28	18.6%
Unemployed	45	30%
Total	150	100%

Table 10 shows respondents occupation as follows: 51 respondents representing 34% were farmers, 10 respondents representing 6.6 % were civil servants, 16 respondents representing 10.6 % were self employed/artisans, 28 respondents representing 18.6 % were students, and the remaining 45 respondents representing 30% were unemployed.

Characteristics of Respondents

Section A above presents the characteristics of the sampled population, which include sex, age, marital status, religious affiliation, church denomination, literacy level and occupation of respondents.

SECTION B: (Research Questions)

Table 11: Awareness of conflicts and violence in Calabar area by respondents

Awareness of conflict and violence	Number	Percentage
Yes	149	99.3%
No	1	0.6%
Total	150	100%

In Table 11 above, 149 respondents representing 99.3% claimed awareness of conflict and violence in their area, while only 1 respondent representing 0.6% claimed ignorance of conflicts and violence in the area.

3.7.2 Research question 1 - Causes of violence

Below, the causes of violence, as described by respondents, will be examined. Some of the causes include land dispute, boundary demarcation, political marginalization, and other social factors, etc.

Table 12: Causes of communal and ethnic violence

Causes of violence	Number	Percentage
Economic	51	34%
Political	20	13.3%
Ethnic/citizenship	31	20.6%
Demographic	26	17.3%
Religious	-	0%
Social	22	14.6%
Total	150	100%

Table 12 above presents the analysis of the responses to the question, “What are the causes of violence in Calabar area?”, shows causes of communal and ethnic violence in the Calabar area. As shown in the table, 51 respondents representing 34% identify economic reasons as the cause of violence. Twenty respondents representing 13.3% said the cause is political, while 31 respondents representing 20.6% hold that the cause is citizenship and ethnicity, 26 respondents representing 17.3% claimed the cause is demographic, and 22 respondents representing 14.6% believed the cause is social. No respondent identified religion as a cause of violence in the area; therefore, religious factor scored 0%.

In Table 11 above, data from respondents indicates clearly that the cause of violence in the area is mainly economic especially the struggle for farm land and enough land for rents, although other causes exist such as political, ethnic and demographic, but the quest for economic resources has been the main cause of violence.

Available sources through interviews, focus group discussions, and Calabar Synod reports noted above, (see also Table 12, Appendices 3 and 4) show that the following points could explain the remote causes of violence:

1. Some warring communities have co-existed for over a century; most of them speak the same language and intermarry.
2. However, there existed deep-seated animosity and hatred, which came up at a later stage of their co-existence, and was occasioned by land ownership tussles, the claims and counter claims of landlord versus tenant in the area,

political marginalization, social interactions/youth activities, development projects and administrative/bureaucratic bottlenecks as well as long-lasting mutual suspicion and distrust.

3. It is also noted that, there is a belligerent attitude on the part of sections of the people whose faith in the power of black magic to make them invincible in war was unshakable. The immediate causes of conflicts and violence are always destructive attacks that usually result in the lost of many lives and property worth millions of Naira as could be seen in Table 2 above. In an interview with some respondents in the area, it was gathered that, very often, minor events trigger off conflicts, which lead to massive destruction of lives and property and in some cases even to extermination of a community. The results presented in Table 12 above confirm that causes of violence in the area are multidimensional but the main cause is economic and the percentage value of the results is significant.

The analysis of the causes of violence mentioned above will be enumerated below.

- **Land dispute**

In most of the affected communities, it was discovered that disputes often occur from claims over an idle land, and in many cases, the dispute may have spanned over a hundred years. Land dispute, then, is often part of the remote causes of conflict, which has a geo-demographic import. A recent security report (Ayi 2010) states thus:

The matter between Akpap and Ikoneto has been an age long problem. The contention has been over the ownership of a piece of land. Various court judgements, committees after committee have not solved the problem. This problem has a seasonal outlook. What this means is that the people of Akpap and Ikoneto will always renew their hostility each time it was farming season. That time is now. Report has it that, this year may not be different. Even though there is government white paper committee handling the matter, government should strengthen existing security apparatus.

The above report is one of many such cases that spotlight long-standing land disputes, as remote causes of conflicts and violence with a geo-demographic import.

- **Boundary demarcation**

Attendant to the land factor is the issue of disrespect of the Supreme Court boundary judgment and the issue of ill-defined and or poorly demarcated land boundaries.

Some of the people interviewed by the researcher blame the recurring cases of violence especially in the border communities on disrespect of Supreme Court judgments. A position paper presented on 28 October 2009 by the Executive Chairman of Odukpani Local Government Council, Akiba during the visit of the Director General and members of the Cross River State Border communities Development Commission, confirms this claim thus:

Odukpani Local Government Area has over the years suffered numerous molestation and unprovoked attacked by neighbouring Local Government from other states. Notably Itu and Ibiono Ibom Local Governments in Akwa Ibom State and Arochukwu Local Government in Abia State. In the name of boundary... Odukpani as a Local Government has always tried to abide by these fundamentals. Unfortunately, neighbouring local governments of the other two states ...have refused to respect this basic tenet... Let me quickly chronicle some attack on our people that left them in a pitiable state.

1. Ikot offiong Ebiti in Eniong was attacked by the people of Omu Ekene in Abia State. A situation that has made the people refugees for a number of years today.
2. The attack on the people of Ukwa Ibom on 4th of September, 2008 by their Okpo Ihechuwa neighbours. A situation that lead to the destruction of lives and property worth millions of Niara. This caused the council quite a fortune to station a Mobile Policemen at Ukua Ibom for months to ensure that peace return to the area.
3. Also, the people of Inuakpa were attacked by the people of Oku- Iboku. The same Oku-Iboku attacked Isong- Inyang in Odukpani.
It is worth mentioning here that the people of have persistently suffered harassment from the people of Idoro in Akwa Ibom State.

OUR POSITION

1. The Akwa Ibom State should be caused to respect the Supreme Court judgement of 2004.
2. That the National Boundary Commission be empowered to effect the Supreme Court Judgment of 2004 by clearly delineating the both local government and state boundaries

- **Political marginalization**

It is important to note that, from findings, some village communities are large and more populated than some others, which have well educated people who held or who continue to hold political offices at various tiers of governments. In some cases, the communities with larger population often dominate their neighbours and, in other cases, influential political office holders use their positions to manipulate both the location of government projects and political offices to the advantage of their community and the disadvantage of others. This development always results in deep feelings of oppression, which, over time, escalate into conflict and violence as a

struggle for freedom. From the study findings presented above, 13% of the total respondents claim that the cause of violence in their area is political.

- **Social factors**

Although communities in the conflict areas share similar cultures and traditions and, in some cases, this similarity promotes social interactions, there are few others communities with a high degree of cultural difference. The Fulani cattle rearers and the Ibos from Abia State have completely different cultures from the Calabar people. One of the major barriers is language. The study reveals that often a wide divide keeps these communities apart from each other and makes social interaction suspicious. These suspicious interactions are often the root cause of conflicts, and, in many cases, they are triggered and fuelled by youth activities. Table 11 above shows that 14.6% of respondents attribute the cause of violence in their area to social activities, and these should not be ignored.

- **Application of latent force**

The study also reveals that widespread belief in occult powers as well as membership of cults especially by youths in the Calabar area is a cause of conflict and violence. In an interview with some residents, there were claims and counter claims from people in rivalry communities that their opponents employed fetish means for their aggressive onslaught. Others report that shrines were often visited before, during and even after crises. A security report from the security adviser of Odukpani Local Government Area (dated 2 August 2010) confirms this allegation:

There is a report that two cult groups may clash seriously due to disagreement that can hardly be conjectured... The identified cultists had gone into hiding but re-emerged because the police had relaxed its search efforts... It won't be out of place to describe Odukpani today as a home of cultism due to the rate of reports we receive concerning their nocturnal activities.

The study reveals that cult membership of retired veterans in some warring communities also contributed to the violence in the areas. It was alleged that the veterans organised training in modern combat strategies, and use of weapons for their local hirers. Thus, wars were fought on the basis of bizarre co-operation

between military methods and methods derived from the most ancient and occult traditions.

The most disturbing aspect of violence in the area is the institutional rise in communities of what approximates a standing army. This development was hitherto completely alien to the institutional arrangement in the area. Traditional war mobilization efforts used to be conducted on an *ad hoc* basis, on the spur of the moment, in heated times when sentiments seemed to act in outright defiance of seated reason. That there was a deliberate preparation for war at a time of relative peace was a spin-off of a global illogic traceable to Karl von Clausewitz’s dictum that if you will have peace you must prepare for war. The illogic of this doctrine must be exposed and its danger demonstrated to the people of the Calabar area and to Nigerians, at large. True peace can only come through the knowledge God in Christ Jesus – that is the centre of the church’s preaching.

4.3.1 Research Question 2 – Impact of violence

At this point, the various effects of violence in the Calabar area will be addressed. These are classified under economic, social, political and demographic impact.

Table 13: Impact of violence on people in the area

Respondents view of the impact of violence	Number	Percentage
Economic	129	86%
Social	4	2.6%
Political	6	4%
Demographic	3	2%
All of the above	8	5.3%
Total	150	100%

Table 13 above presents the analysis of the responses to the question, “What can you say is the impact of violence on people of Calabar area?” The table shows that 129 respondents representing 86% identify the impact of violence in the area as economic, 4 respondents representing 2.6% said the impact is social, while 6 respondents representing 4% claimed the impact is political. In addition, 3

respondents representing 2% identified the impact as demographic while 8 respondents representing 5.3% identified all of the above as the effect of violence in the area.

From Table 13 above, it is evident that the impact of violence on the people is multidimensional. Although the greatest impact is economic according to 86% of the sampled population, political, social and demographic impact is also involved.

- **Economic impact**

The central economic concern is poverty exacerbated by near absence of infrastructure and the high rate of unemployment. Many youths who responded to the interview explain that people have suffered hardship, as they could not gain access to their farms to get food supplies either for consumption or for trade purposes. Other economic activities also ceased such that there is no means to earn income. The insecurity occasioned by the crises, coupled with loss of commercial links with other communities and the economic strain, made the whole exercise unnecessary.

The researcher's interview with the Rev Tom, earlier mentioned, confirms the claim of majority of the respondents. According to Rev. Tom, "Life and living have rather become very embarrassing due to the crises in the area. Many have lost their lives or their loved ones, many families are separated, others lost their bread-winners, [there is] no food, no shelter, no money; life became bitter as people lived as animals."

It is no wonder that Kobia, reflecting on the life of poor Africans in Kenya, rightly states:

... When we encounter the many cases of senseless killings, we can only conclude that life has lost meaning to many; hope is a dream that for so many may not come true. To many people especially the very poor, life is but stretched death. Instead of living, they are dying slowly.

As could be seen from Table 13 above, the greatest impact of violence on the people is economic. A woman who lost everything during a communal violence in her community narrated her ordeal of how she was constantly raped by men because she had no place to sleep until she decided to be sleeping in a church building in a neighbouring community. It is a known fact that during crises, many husbands and able-bodied sons loses their lives; others run away leaving their wives and children

behind to fend for themselves. The children and many women, therefore, resort to begging, while others engage in prostitution and human trafficking as a means of survival. The question one may ask is, could violence and its attendant impact account the increasing number of street children in Calabar and in many other Nigerian cities? Did conflict and violence contribute in any way to the increase in crime rate and criminal activities in Nigeria? Nell (2009:234) maintains that, "Thorough research in various fields of research has already offered convincing evidence of key role that economic inequality plays in violent crime." This should be a point of concern to both the Christian church and the larger Nigerian society.

- **Social impact**

The social manifestations of conflict and violence are linked with deep-seated hatred, suspicion and antagonism following the death and destruction of lives and property. This automatically caused every social interaction among people of warring communities to cease. Some people interviewed by the researcher affirm that the crises have led to the breakup of many marriages. Presently, young people are afraid of marrying from their rival community, which they often tag, "the enemy community." Fear of insecurity occasioned by violence has rendered some roads impassable making movements in some areas rather difficult. Warring communities are often ostracised and stigmatised by the larger society and by strangers for their barbaric acts. They are considered to be hostile people who have refused to embrace civilized forms of conflict resolution. In most warring communities, youths and men constitute themselves into vigilante groups to keep watch over their territory against external aggression. No wonder Samuel Kobia in Mugambi (1989:1) states that:

Man has created all sorts of institutions to ensure that life is orderly and efficient, economically; man has exploited sometimes plundered nature to enable him to have a comfortable life. But perhaps more than in any other way, man has excelled in military build up... What is interesting is to observe that man is trying to guard himself against his fellow man not against animals, not against terrestrial powers but against himself.

- **Political impact**

There is no doubt that most acts of violence in the area are not just economically motivated but also politically motivated and manipulated. The conflicts often emanate

from power struggle within the political class especially among the so-called 'political god fathers,' who often manipulate youth groups in order to achieve their political ambitions. Strategic Conflict Assessment in Nigeria (SCA) in Nigeria Consolidated and Zonal Report (2008:179) states that:

Political conflicts in the region emanate from power struggles within the political class and often involve use and manipulation of youth groups. The transition to democracy in 1999 exacerbated youth militancy in the south- south as unscrupulous politicians used hired "thugs" to carry out violence to ensure their victory at polls. Prior to the 1999 and 2003 general elections all parties, most respondents interviewed alleged that political parties, particularly the ruling People's Democratic Party (PDP), recruited and armed members of youth groups to intimidate opposition politicians and their supporters.

In an interview on 17 June 2010, Etim of Odukpani area stated that:

Violence makes political activities difficult during general elections. Some communities are completely cut off, while others who have been driven away from their ancestral homes are unable to fully participate in elections because they are all scattered as refugees in various places.

This was the experience of Ikot Offiong people, who were alienated because of a violent clash with the Oku Iboku community and till date are yet to return to their ancestral home. Today, it is alleged that many politicians are fond of using as thugs Ikot Offiong youths who settle as refugee at Ikot Ekpo, an urban community situated at the outskirts of Calabar; others use them as war machinery. Some of the youths have lost their lives due to this dirty trade. In the researcher's personal interview with one of them on 16 July 2010, Edet confesses, "We are not doing this because we want to do it but we have no farm, no job, no home of our own, how do we survive?" The situation is sad and pathetic, but it has also left strong stigma on the people that may affect generations yet to be born.

- **Demographic impact**

From the demographic data, it is evident that many people were killed, while many were displaced and rendered homeless. Many others have wilfully left their former communities to settle in other places for fear of insecurity. There is a great depletion in the population sizes of affected communities and an increase in squatting communities in the area. This has bearing on matters of population census, sites for development projects and the workforce among others.

Besides economic, social, political, and demographic of violence in the Calabar area highlighted above, some other consequences of violence are attested in the lives of the victims. For instance, in some of the interviews conducted in this study, women shared stories of how they went through the sad experience of watching their daughters abused sexually. The women reported that their aggressors raped them, their daughters or female relations in their presence. This inflicted severe psychological pains on them. Indeed, conflict and violence left many women not only physically and psychologically raped and brutalized but also completely raped and abused of the very essence of womanhood and the dignity of human person. The extent of the impact is difficult to ascertain or imagine.

Furthermore, from 2002 to 2004, Cross River State was rated the state with the highest cases of HIV and AIDS in Nigeria. Most of these victims were rural dwellers. Of course, it is a known fact that HIV and AIDS spreads fast among poor communities, therefore, one may not hesitate to link the high prevalence rate of HIV and AIDS and its antecedents to the dehumanizing condition of the people in the Calabar area of Cross River State who have been affected by ethnic and communal violence.

Research Question 3 – Emphasis and focus of preaching in the Calabar area

Table 14: Emphasis and focus of church sermons in the last ten years

Emphasis focus of church sermons in the last ten years	Number	%
Salvation through faith in Christ	30	20%
Holy Spirit and power	31	20.6%
Giving and prosperity	73	48.6%
Ethics and morality	11	7.3%
No idea	5	3.3%

Table 14 above presents the analysis of the responses to the question, “What do you consider the emphasis and focus of Church sermons in the last ten years?” Thirty respondents representing 20% claimed that the emphasis and focus of church sermons in the last ten years have been on salvation, while 31 respondents representing 20.6% affirmed that the emphasis and focus of their church sermons

have been on the Holy Spirit and power. Additionally, 73 respondents representing 48.6% indicated that the emphasis and focus their church sermons have been on prosperity and giving, and 11 respondents representing 7.3 % claimed that theirs have been on ethics and morality, while 5 respondents representing 3.3% claimed not to have any idea. The analysis of Research Question 13 will be conducted in the next chapter, which considers preaching.

Table 15: Awareness of efforts made toward reconciliation and peace

Awareness of past efforts towards reconciliation and peace	Number	Percentage
Yes	137	91.3%
No	13	9.6%
Total	150	100%

From Table 15 above, out of 150 respondents, 137 respondents representing 91.3% confirmed their awareness of efforts made by various institutions towards reconciliation and peace in the area while 13 respondents representing 9.6% said they were not aware of any effort.

Table 16: Efforts by various institutions

Institution	Number	Percentage
Government	64	42.6%
Community leaders	25	16.6%
NGOs	9	6%
Church organizations	22	14.6%
Town unions	17	11.3%
Social organizations	13	8.6%
Total	150	100%

Table 16 above shows that 64 respondents representing 42.6% indicate their awareness of government effort towards reconciliation and peace in the Calabar area. Twenty-five respondents representing 16.6 % said they are aware of the effort by the community leaders, 9 respondents representing 6% claimed to be aware of the efforts by Non-Governmental Organizations, and 22 respondents representing

14.6% confirm their awareness of efforts by church organizations. Additionally, 17 respondents representing 11.3 % said they are aware of the effort of town unions and 13 respondents representing 8.6% claimed their awareness of effort of social organizations towards reconciliation and peace in the area.

Research question 4 – Preaching as a means of transformation

Table 17: Church preaching as a means of changing congregant’s view on ethnic violence

Respondents views on church preaching as a means of changing the mind patterns of members on ethnic violence	Number	Percentage
Yes	78	52%
No	26	17.3%
Not sure	46	30.6%
Total	150	100%

Table 17 above presents the analysis of responses to the question, “Do you believe that church preaching could be used as a means of changing the mind patterns of congregants on ethnic violence?” A total of 78 respondents representing 52% confirmed that church preaching could be used as a means to change the mind patterns of congregants on ethnic violence, while 26 respondents representing 17.3% do not agree, and 46 respondents representing 30.6% claimed they simply were not sure. This question will be analysed in the next chapter.

3.8 Violence and Human Dignity

In many of African societies today, conflict and violence are recurring phenomena, as in other parts of the world. Apart from unemployment and hunger, the level of destruction of human life and property is a source of concern especially in the light of the present quest for global peace. Armed action and the use of violence are the most evident forms of conflict behaviour, and their destructive effects on relationships between groups and individuals are a reality as confirmed by daily media reports. The big question is does man really have value and regard for his fellow man’s life? The demonstration of total disregard for the value and worth of the human person commonly displayed through various forms of violent behaviour when disagreements ensue is a major challenge on human dignity.

People are being massacred on daily basis, while others are rendered homeless and sleep in the streets, or are hungry and beg for food. No one seems to identify with the plight of the poor victims of violence who exist without hope. According to (Kobia 1989, in Mugambi 1989:1):

Today we live in a world where the majority of the people simply exist, for the majority, life is meaningless, the future is hopeless... but life is the most precious thing ever created... Yet when you look around, you will realize that for many, life is still meaningless because there is very little hope for the future. Today, life is characterized by hopelessness, meaningless and despair.

Huber (1996:9) asserts that, "The only way we can confront increasingly widespread violence is if we once again become aware of our responsibility shared by all." It is important to mention here that two notions of human dignity have been expounded right from the ancient world. According to Huber (1996:115):

Talk of human dignity has appeared in two distinct forms in European tradition. The first refers to particular rank of different persons within a society, the concept of dignity(dignitas) is here related to that of honor (honor). The second refers to that which distinguishes humanity from all other forms of life and give a reason for its special position in the cosmos. In the former, the result is different rankings among people; in the latter the result is the fundamental equality of all humans.

Dirkie Smit emphatically affirms the two different perspectives on human dignity thus:

Since antiquity: two notions of human dignity; two understandings; two discourses. Two traditions- honour, status, worth, difference, influence, power, respect for value and contribution versus equality, sameness, need for protection, care, and respect simply for being human.

The first notion of human dignity has to do with according people respect, honour and worth based on how we perceive them, particularly, in terms of their wealth, knowledge, position in life, contribution to the society, and so on. It is true that many are often busy identifying with the wealthy and the affluent in the society. However, the concern of this study is directed towards the second notion of human dignity, which emphasizes quality and sameness of the human persons, irrespective of who they are, because all are humans created in the image of God. The study is directed to the concern for the plight of the poor and the downtrodden, the homeless and the hungry, the powerless, the weak and the hopeless in our society. How can they be helped and cared for in order to restore to them the dignity of the human person

psychologically, economically, emotionally and physically? It is this second notion of human dignity that is the concern of this research study.

3.9 Conclusion

In view of the above causes of conflicts and violence and the magnitude of its impact shown through data analysis in this chapter, the question is what can the church and her preaching do to give hope and meaning to many people in the context of conflict and violence? Could the preaching of the Christian church, particularly the preaching of the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria, help change the mindset of people living with hurt and bitterness? Can it offer forgiveness, reconciliation and peace, thereby, reducing conflicts and violence to its barest minimum in contemporary Nigerian society and in African at large? These are the challenges of the normative task of a practical theological interpretation, which will be considered in the next chapter.

CHAPTER FOUR

PREACHING AS AN AGENT OF TRANSFORMATION IN THE CONTEXT OF ETHNIC VIOLENCE

4.0 Introduction

In the previous chapter, an extensive discussion of ethnic violence, its causes and impact in the Calabar context has been provided. The current chapter focuses on the normative task of practical theology by using biblical perspectives in an attempt to answer the question “What ought to be going on?” In addition, an analysis of the views of respondents on preaching as an agent of transformation in the context of violence vis-à-vis biblical perspectives is provided. Finally, a model for transformative preaching in the context of ethnic violence is proposed as a pragmatic approach.

4.1 Analysis of Respondents’ View on Contemporary Preaching and Its Impact on Congregants

Before we begin the discussion of the practice of preaching in the context of violence, it is important to say that, in the course of this study, data was collated from respondents within the violent area of Calabar on their perception of contemporary preaching and its impact on people living in the context of communal and ethnic violence. This is because it is believed here that the people who can better assess the effects of violent and non-violent preaching are those who live in the context of conflicts and violence themselves.

The Presbyterian Church of Nigeria was chosen for this study for various reasons. First and foremost, the church pioneered Christian mission in the area and as such has a long and rich history that provides for learning. Secondly, there are Presbyterian Church congregations in all the conflict areas mentioned in this study and most of the natives who have been impacted by the church mission in one way

or the other (educationally through the Presbyterian mission schools or through church membership). The third reason is the fact that the researcher himself is a Presbyterian clergyman and this makes accessibility to information it a little easier especially from the church office, and from members of the church clergy and of the laity.

It is pertinent to mention at this stage that the researcher made every effort to get written sermons but, unfortunately, none of the preachers could lay hand on even one. Most of the pastors and lay preachers contacted say they do not write out sermons. It is the researcher's belief that the oral culture common in a typical African society must have accounted for this. For this reason, the analysis of contemporary sermon perception and impact shall be based strictly on respondents' views. The research questions to be analysed are Research Question 3 in Table 14 and Research Question 4 in Table 17 above.

4.1.1 Research Question 3 – Emphasis and focus of church sermons

What, in your opinion, has been the emphasis and focus of church sermons in your church congregation in the last few years?

The perception of respondents as shown in Table 14 above can be analyzed as follows:

- **Sermons with emphasis and focus on salvation and faith in Jesus Christ**

It has been stated that 20% of the total respondents indicated that their perception of sermons emphasis and focus in their congregations in the last few years has been on salvation and faith in Christ. This is an indication that, in the last few years, some preachers preaching in the context of violence, in an attempt to give an answer to many who ask the question, "Where is God in the midst of all this?", offer a solution through "salvation theology" with an emphasis on "the word made flesh." According to (Wilson 1982:26 in Melancthon 2004:280), "Salvation theology has the capacity of engendering an individualistic and personal approach to the Christian faith thereby promoting psychological dependency, political positivity and communal exclusiveness among Christian."

Wilson affirms that:

Such theology is built upon the edifice of human weakness and nurtures a low self-image and a sense of helplessness. Such a theology locates the root of the problem of people on the people themselves thereby sheltering the varied institutions that promote operation (1982:26, in Melancthon 2004:280).

We would like to agree with Wilson's view partially because it is assumed here that the theology of salvation ought to be the basis of the Christian faith in whatever context. We also disagree with the view that that theology builds on human weakness. Rather, the view here is that salvation theology presents a platform for humanity, though weak, to locate grace and strength through faith in Christ. On the other hand, Wilson is correct his view that over-emphasis on salvation theology is not necessary, because it could lead people to neglect or sometimes to exclude the social salvation. It has also influenced the way the church views economics, politics, culture, social relationships and international affairs.

In the light of the above, it will be argued here that there is a need for an emphasis on "the word which became flesh" and "dwelt with us," the historical Jesus who identified with the oppressed, who dwelt with us and lived a life of protest and struggle against forces of oppression in a non-violent way. Nevertheless, Charles Campbell has warned contemporary preachers who focus on the identity of Jesus not to proclaim wisdom gleaned from general experience but from the identity of Jesus that is not substitutable.

- **Sermons with emphasis and focus on the Holy Spirit and power**

The views of respondents on emphasis and focus of sermons on the Holy Spirit and power is somehow similar to views recorded on salvation sermons. A total of 31 respondents out of 150, representing 20.6% claim that in their congregations, sermon emphasis has been on the Holy Spirit and power. During the group discussion conducted with some church leaders, it was also mentioned that there is an increased level of teaching and preaching on the person, gifts and fruit of the Holy Spirit in the Church in recent times. This emphasis has brought about some spiritual renewal in the life of many members and within the entire Presbyterian Church of Nigeria. Donatus Ukpong (2006:26) asserts that:

The charismatic renewal in various churches and the general quest (*sic*) for an effective spirituality among Christians of all denominations are the effects of Pentecostalism. The penetration of Pentecostal spirituality into mainline churches constitutes a theological and ecclesiological obstacle for many theologians.

It is undisputable that Pentecostalism,⁹ which is the result of preaching and teaching on the Holy Spirit and power, has come to stay in most churches in Nigeria today.

Olupona (in Ukpong 2006:26) argues that the realness of the divine power is intrinsic to African worldview. Ukpong (2006:26-27) affirms that:

The question of cessation of charisma and miracles, the divine that will not intervene in the living situation and in everydayness of the people, was a bitter theological pill that many Africans were advised to swallow but, which only stuck in their throats... The outburst of the charismatic experience in the historic churches of the west and its diffusion to Africa was seen as the divine way of proofing the western theology of mechanistic world, where God is a hidden and silent observer.

Kalu (2008:250) asserts that:

Fundamentalism considers Pentecostalism a deviant form of Christianity because of major structural differences: Pentecostalism represents a paradigm shift that unshackles theology from rationalistic/scientific ways of thinking and expands the understanding of the spiritual dimensions of reality and the operation of the invisible world.

Therefore, charismatic experiences in mechanistic world, in the mainlines churches in Nigeria as “manifestation of spiritual gifts and evident power of the Holy Spirit are being lived and seen as normal Christian life and not as an expression of particular movement” (Hocken 2002:510, in Asonzeh 2007:25). It is the researcher’s view that much as this form of preaching have some positive impact, there are also some negative impact but the discussion of such negative impact will come up later in the chapter.

- **Sermons with emphasis and focus on prosperity and giving:**

Views from respondents on sermons with emphasis on giving and prosperity are quite significant and worthy of note. Seventy-three (73) out of 150 Respondents representing 48.3% indicate that sermons with emphasis and focus on prosperity and giving in violence affected areas featured more frequently than in most other

⁹ Cox (1995:14) explains that, “Pentecostalism is the most experiential branch of Christianity, a movement that first arose at the turn of the century as a protest against ‘man -made creeds ’ and the ‘coldness’ of traditional worship.”

Presbyterian congregations in recent times. An in-depth study of this development reveals that the reason is multidimensional, ranging from the demands of church building projects, levies on congregations from higher courts of the church, influence of Pentecostalism, the people's cultural dependence on divine provision and the culture of flamboyant lifestyle.

These reasons may not be doubted because in every community the researcher visited, it was observed that the churches engaged in one form of building project or the other going. Some communities embarked on a new church building, others engaged in renovation work, but one common observation was that most of those building projects especially in the rural areas have been abandoned for some time and at different stages. This development confirms the fact that the people are not economically stable. In an interview on why churches in the area embark on building projects, Okon (2010) reveals that:

Some churches were using buildings built eighty or a hundred years ago, but population growth in church membership was said to be the main reason why churches embarked on building projects. Another reason was the fact that in some communities, the Presbyterian Mission built schools and churches together, one of the halls was used by the church for Sunday worship and during the weekdays, it is used by the school for classes. Even when government took over schools, it remains the same until few years ago when government banned use of schools by churches. This development made affected churches to embark on building projects.

In a way, the above point explains the reason why the emphasis and focus of church preaching have been on giving, as many pastors struggle to accomplish one project or the other in order to make a name without minding the economic impact of these projects on their members. Findings also reveal that, in the last ten years, the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria has focused on mission work and church planting in order to triple her membership. Consequently, parishes, presbyteries and synods were challenged to perform the task. The Calabar Synod Report states:

We are happy to mention that the strategic church planting exercise, mission stations were opened... it is our desire to continue to open more mission stations... all we need is for parishes to partner with us to fulfil this great task. In view of the fact that the mission is growing numerically alongside with increase in financial responsibilities, it is noted that a Sunday set aside for exchange of pulpit and fund raising appeal is not enough to enable us fund mission adequately. We propose that parishes support the Synod mission monthly (p. 40).

It was observed also that many congregations embark on one form of fundraising activity or the other and that, members often complain of too many financial demands by church authorities. Church leaders at congregational level interviewed by the researcher were of the opinion that most of those demands were direct instructions from superior courts, which the congregations could not disobey. From the foregoing, it is evident that one of the reasons for the emergence of prosperity preaching, which majority of respondents identify as the focus of sermons in most Presbyterian congregations in recent times, may well be a strategy adopted by pastors and preachers to meet the growing financial demands imposed on congregations by superior courts of the church. This is quite unfortunate. Secondly, it is can be argued here that the cultural context of the people, which is dependent on divine provisions, provides a fertile ground for 'prosperity gospel' to thrive. A similar remark has been made by Kalu (2008:255):

Prosperity theology emphasise that God's promised generosity, as demonstrated with Abraham, is available for every believing Christian on earth today. As the covenant was legal contract, so is the promise part of a spiritual contract. Each believer has ability to asses it, claim it, and posses it.

The third explanation bothers on the culture of flamboyancy. It is observed that most cultural settings in Nigeria encourage a flamboyant way of life. This manifests in many ways. The traditional attire of the Hausas, Yorubas, Igbos, and the Efiks, can be very flamboyant. They are often displayed during special events such as marriage ceremonies, birthday celebrations, coming of age ceremonies, child dedications, Christian as well as Moslems festivals, and other cultural events.

Nigerians generally spend a lot of money on dressing simply because they want to look gorgeous. Apart from dressing, the culture manifests also in the quest and passion for high taste for material things. The wealthy and the upper class members of the society display their wealth by building very expensive houses, buying expensive cars and jewelleryes, while the middle class struggles to join them. No one cares for the poor and the downtrodden in the society. However, to Huber (1996:10):

Human dignity is the decisive criterion not only for government action; it also forms the basis for all other forms of human interaction; having ethical implications wherever human dignity is denied it destroys not only the legitimacy of governmental behaviour but also the humanness of social intercourse as a whole.

The quest for flamboyant living is often displayed not only in Nigerian culture but also in many other cultures. This wrong notion of human dignity aptly captured by Smit in the third chapter of this study, as dignity based on honour, status, worth, difference, influence, power, respect for value and contribution is a bane to our society. Although this concept is not the focus of this thesis, it is sad and unfortunate that the flamboyant culture has been brought into the church through prosperity gospel preaching. Fakoya (2008:3) laments that:

While majority of Nigerians can hardly afford a three square meal, Nigerian men of the word are busy counting billions and flying in private jets. While the nation is burning, our pastors are busy banking and eating cake. The people have been starved of Divine knowledge because uninformed people remain a threat to the interest of the “church”. The moral fabric of the nation is weak and appalling, almost non-existent. Yet Nigeria boasts of thousands of churches with stupendously rich ministers. Deception is being actively pursued under the guise of Christianity. While we have no quarrel with an honest business that generates profits, all we ask of these material men of God is to be sincere and stop this deception. All we desire is the truth in our efforts to sensitise the Nigerian society. Jesus brought the gospel of love, peace and redemption but Nigerians are being short-charged as what we are getting is plainly gospel of materialism. It is so bad that the whole thing has been turned into ridicule and the pastors are busy fleecing the society blind.

It is little wonder that, in 2007, Nyansako-ni-Nku, the president of the All Africa Conference of Churches, described the phenomenon as a “*disease*”. There is no doubt that preachers in Nigerian have contributed, in no small ways, to the social upheaval the Nigerian nation is currently experiencing. They have laid a foundation of greed and social discontent from which the society is yet to come to terms. They have departed radically from the preaching of Jesus Christ, which emphasizes contentment; instead, they have substituted contentment with greed and avarice in the social lexicon. They offer wishy-washy holiness and continue to inundate us with the doctrines of prosperity, even prosperity at all cost. As Price (2005: in Asonzeh 2007:12) asserts:

They promise individuals a comprehensive solutions to all their worries on the condition that they become born again and give generously to the religious leaders in exchange for material and spiritual blessings in form of healing, wealth, abundant life success and earthly promotions... this new form of Christianity has flowered, rapidly changing the social, religious, economic, and political landscape. There are certain important social characteristics of the new churches espousing the theology of prosperity and abundance.

Similarly, McConnell (1987, in Asonzeh 2007:1) observes that, “there is a discernible American influence in both theology and organizational structure and practice in these churches.” The theology of prosperity itself has been regarded as an “American export” but many of the founders of these churches claim divine authorization for establishing what seems now more like an economic empire than a religious organization. Asonzeh (2007:1) confirms that:

These churches are organized as firms or commercial enterprise engaged in the production, distribution and pricing of religious and nonreligious commodities with primary motives of making satisfactory profit and maintaining a market share. Their courses of action are geared toward the achievement of these objectives. They are founded and owned by one person who claims a special divine authorization with a specific mandate with global ramification. Although there is a Board of Trustees (BOTs) appointed by the founder and registered by appropriate government agency, the locus of control of the organization is the chairman of the BOTs, who doubles as President/General Overseer (GO). He is the “bank of grace”, a repository of charismata, and a special bridge between his followers and God. He controls both the charisma and cash; his word is law. He is an oracular instrument and initiator of doctrines and orientation. He alone holds a special privilege of interpreting the will of God to his followers. While resources such as money, time, and expertise are mobilised aggressively from followers and the general public (believers and non-believers alike, the control of these is wrested on from the contributors and rested solely on the founder/ owner of the church and his or her spouse.

Putting it differently, Udoh (2003:7-8), in a keynote address, asserts that:

Faith practice has become big business in Nigeria, second only to politics perhaps. They spring up like mushrooms, each claiming to be the embodiment of the spiritual gifts in ways that are inaccessible to others. Their leaders draw attention to themselves as masters rather than servants and claim to have had a monopoly on the source of miracles. Through vision and prophecy in a bizarre and unusual manner, they promise their followers protection, employment and prosperity. But among their rank and file are reports of litigation, of unending chain of breaking away, of open bouts and questionable rites and rituals so strange to the gospel mandate. They suspect others as being witches or possessed. Children have beaten up their parents, dragged them out of the household, set the house ablaze and disown them for life at the instance of their pastors.

The above-mentioned points indicate that certain teachings and preaching may be even instrumental to violence rather than being vehicle for peace. It may be argued that, if the Christian’s spiritual battle is not against flesh and blood, then putting on the whole armour of God becomes unnecessary (Ephesians. 6:11-18). The scripture in Romans guarantees victory over principalities and powers of darkness without resorting to violence (Romans 8:38-39). Much as the researcher believes that prosperity gospel can bring about a change in the mindset of people, and that not all

preachers engage in this practice, yet he strongly considers that prosperity gospel is a common feature of most Pentecostal and even mainline churches today.

There is no doubt that some Presbyterian Pastors are being influenced by this wave of Pentecostal practice in order to check the drift of their members to Pentecostal churches. Kalu (1996: IV) warns that:

The Presbyterian Church in Nigeria being part of the reformed church world wide must remain true to the preaching of the true gospel of Christ which emphasises the sovereignty of God and salvation by grace through faith in Christ, and must keep to very popular protestant watchwords “sola gratia”, “sola scriptura”, “sola fidei”, “sola Christus” (meaning grace alone, scripture alone, faith alone, Christ alone). The Presbyterian Church and her preaching must remain true to the basic affirmations of the reformed tradition, which include the affirmation of the majesty, holiness, and providence of God who creates, sustains, rules and redeems the world in the freedom of sovereign righteousness and love... Shunning ostentation and seeking proper use of the gifts of God’s creation and the recognition of the human tendency to idolatry and tyranny, which calls the people of God to work as well as the integrity of creation and the need to live in obedience to the word of God.

- **Sermons with emphasis and focus on morality and ethics**

In Chapter 3, the study has also revealed that only eleven respondents, representing 7.3% of the total sample population, claim that church sermons in their congregations were focused on Christian ethics and morality. This indicates that ethical and moral issues are being seriously neglected. It appears, therefore, that the failure of church sermons and teachings to effectively address ethical and moral issues and the over-emphasis on prosperity gospel could be one of the major reasons the church and her preaching have no effect on people living in the context of ethnic violence in Calabar. Udoh (2003:15), in a keynote address to the sixteenth Synod meeting, asserts that:

What is happening in our streets... is worrying it takes many forms – political religious, domestic moral and communal among others. There seems to be a sub culture that accepts acts of violence as a way of life and legal means of settling scores. Violence is rooted in corruption and is fed by it. Genesis (6:11-13) explains that God destroyed the world by flood because of the two vices .Today nowhere seems safe. The activities of the underworld, thugs, area boys and girls, robbers, assassins and cultic fraternities are holding the nation to ransom. Holy places and objects have been desecrated. Holy men and women of God have been defiled.

If the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria and the Calabar Synod in particular, would consider seriously the lament of people like Udoh, then, it would be agreed that there

is an urgent need for the Synod and the Church in general to re-evaluate her preaching if she must remain relevant to the people living in the context of violence.

4.1.2 Research Question 4: Preaching as a means of changing mind patterns of congregants on violence

The question posed here is, “Do you believe that church preaching could be used as a means of changing the mind patterns of congregants on ethnic violence?” This research question is derived from Table 17 of Chapter 3 on page 62 of this study, but before the question is analyzed, a brief comment on Tables 15 and 16 in page 61 of this study will be helpful.

On the whole, the views of respondents show that they were aware of conflict and violence in the Calabar area. This claim was affirmed by 137 representing 91.6% of a sampled population of 150, although 13 respondents representing 9.6% claimed they were not aware of any conflict. It is important to mention that respondents indicate, as could be seen in Table 16, that they were equally aware of efforts by various institutions towards peace building and conflict resolution in the area.

The question on whether respondents view the church sermon as a means that can be used to change the mindset of congregants on violence, and respondents’ views are, therefore, crucial to this study. Answers to the question show that 52% of respondents believe that church preaching can be used to change the mindset of people on violence, although 30.6% of them claim they are not sure and 17.6% claim out rightly that church sermons cannot be agent for changing the mindset of congregants. However, the researcher’s interviews with some church leaders indicate that many of them believe that church sermons can change the mindset of people on violence. For example, William (2010), in an interview with the researcher states that, “A sermon is a prophetic word of God and a preacher has no word of his own. Therefore, every sermon directed by the Spirit of God is potent enough to bring about a change of mindset in people including those living in the context of violence.”

In a separate interview, Tom (2010) who spoke from a practical point of view, having lived and worked among people living in the context and violence in the Calabar area for years, argues that:

It is only the grace of God that brings positive change in the mindset of people devastated by violence. Though it is difficult yet it is possible; we have preached to many and witness them manifest true sense of repentance and forgiveness even when it pains most (sic). But one cannot run away from the fact that hurts, bitterness and the tendency to revenge or avenge are only natural in man brutalized by violence. It is only the experience of regeneration that makes the difference. No man can manipulate preaching for positive results. But God alone in His divine wisdom through the power of the Holy Spirit can use sermons to bring about positive change in the mindset of people living in the context of violence.

Hoefler (in Feltman 1996:12) begins his argument, like others, with a description of changed behaviour. To him, preaching is fundamental in bringing people to act as God says. Lueking (1985:18) states:

Preaching is witnessing to the mighty works of God. It proceeds on the conviction that he has put his saving power into a Word that can be spoken. The word is centered in Jesus Christ, crucified and risen. The word is for people not as a moralizing harangue, not as a specious argument, but as good news for sinners... God is who he is for the world in Christ.

To Feltman (1996:16):

Theologies of preaching include an understanding that the task of preacher is to reveal or proclaim the good news of God's redeeming and reconciling work to God's people His work teaches that having heard the good news, the listener should be moved to a level of change. The specifics of that change and the degree to which transformation is the goal of preaching varies from one writer to the other but there is clear consensus among scholars that transformation is an important part of preaching.

From all data collated, 52 percent of respondents are of the opinion is that sermon can bring about a change in the mindset of listeners, even in the lives of people living in the context of violence. However, change in the mindset of congregants comes not by the power of the preacher but through the working of the Holy Spirit.

It could be argued here that if positive change in behaviour can occur in humans when they hear the preached word of God, then, it implies that the word can transform; and if preaching can bring about transformation in the life of listeners, then, it can equally change a person's mindset. There can be no transformation

without a change in mindset although there could be a change of mindset without transformation. Perhaps that is what Stott meant by the statement that preaching is indispensable in our attempt to build bridges between the word and the world. It is important to note Campbell's position, earlier mentioned in this chapter, that if preaching must be transformational, it must begin with the preacher.

Similarly, Mitchell advocates the use of behavioural purpose in preaching because it gets to the very heart of why we preach (that is, a change in behaviour). He also believes that there are other practical reasons that behavioural purpose should be part of every sermon. First, that Jesus' preaching and teaching focus on changing behaviour in peoples' lives. Jesus was less interested in the listeners' knowledge, assent, or verbal confession than he was in their observing what he commanded. Secondly, it is assumed here that behavioural purpose gives the sermon a narrow focus and concentration that is uncommon, if not impossible, aimed, primarily, at intellectual enlightenment.

Based on these findings, a structure for transformational preaching in the context of violence, as a pragmatic practical theological approach, will be proposed in what follows.

4.2 Framework for Transformational Preaching in the Context of Violence

If there must be peace and reconciliation among people living in the context of violence, it is the place of the church as a prophetic voice to rise to the challenge of approaching the biblical text with a view to interpreting its preaching in the context of violence. At this point, it is important to recapitulate for the purpose of clarity, that the context of violence here is tantamount to conditions of hunger, hurts, bitterness, pain, helplessness, nakedness, homelessness, and poverty. Victims of ethnic violence squatting in many rural communities in the Calabar area are raped of human dignity, that is why most of them resort to begging, human trafficking, prostitution, etc., and perhaps, that is why some of them become more susceptible to crime and criminal activities. No doubt, people living in the context of violence are equally humans created in the image of God and as such, they deserve to be cared for and protected. Our preaching, therefore, must address their situations if such

preaching were to be relevant and meaningful to them. Pieterse (2001:88-89), clarifying the notion of prophetic preaching in the South African context states:

...from our theological point of view, we approach the Bible with our existential knowledge of poverty in which we will be preaching. Our basic attitude is one of a prejudice or bias towards reading the Bible in the perspective of the poor and in terms of their interest... Hence the content of our preaching has to be the living word of God, the father of Jesus Christ, and his promises based on the evangelical truth of Jesus' salvific deeds.

Such prophetic hermeneutics allows us to interpret the message of the text creatively so that our preaching to victims of violence could be transforming and liberating. The church must engage in prophetic preaching so that listeners respond to them obediently and transform the situation for the better through action.

In order to adopt preaching as a tool of transformation among people living in the context of violence, this study proposes the adoption of a three-dimensional practical theological approach referred to here as transformative preaching model. This model explains preaching as a transformative revelation of God's grace and righteousness. The model will be discussed in detail later in this section.

It should be recalled that mention has been made above of the concept of transformation and transformative preaching especially in the analyses of the research questions. It is important to point out, however, that this notion has several meanings and dimensions. Just as there is no specific definition of preaching, so also is there no clear-cut definition of transformation. Feltman (1986:52) clarifies this statement as follows:

We have seen that even scholars who work specifically with the term have a difficult time being clear about the specifics of transformation. Brueggemann and Wink both describe it in terms of a deeper sense of God as a source of power for life, a renewed commitment to the will of God over the will of the self, and a keener understanding of the neighbour as indispensable for health.

However, for the purpose of this study, transformation will be considered in line with Feltman's view that it entails a change of heart and change of mindset, a change that moves from a life lived with materialism, individualism, and "self" as its goal, to a life rooted in community. The goal of transformative preaching, therefore, is to help the listener move from a life and community, which is rooted in self and in ways of

destruction, to a life and community lived the way of the covenant and, which is rooted in the love of neighbours (Feltman 1986:52).

Before proceeding, two issues need to be clarified. The first is that transformation is different from a feeling of “spiritual touch” or a claim to being “born again;” but, rather, it refers to a life lived in covenant relationship with God that is consequently motivated to care for the neighbour by God.

The second is that the concept of transformative preaching does not mean that this has to be the specific goal of every sermon. The preacher does not need to be restricted. Preachers can preach on other spiritual topics but the sermon, sometimes, must comfort and remind listeners of God’s continual presence and care.

4.3 Preaching as Transformative Revelation of God’s Grace and Righteousness

In this section, the proposed model for transformative preaching will be presented. Three dimensions are proposed for the model namely preaching that changes mindset from individualism to communalism; preaching that changes one’s mindset to be like Christ’s; and preaching that transforms social structures and calls for justice. The three-dimensional model of transformative preaching presented below in Figure 2; is the researcher’s creation that could be further developed by the church into a framework for preaching in the context of ethnic violence in Nigeria.

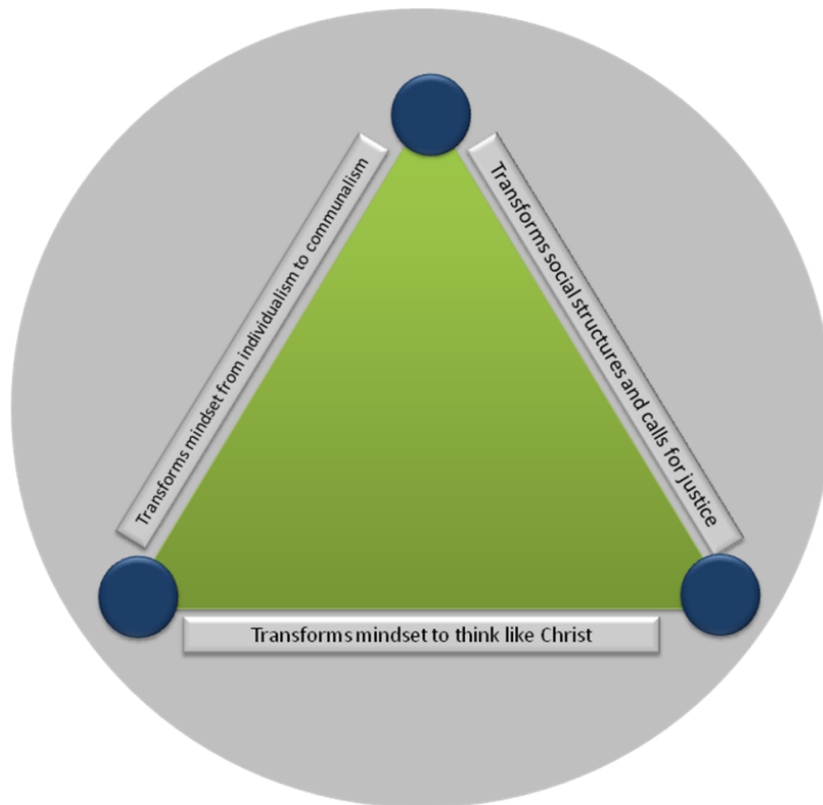


Figure 2: Transformative preaching model

4.3.1 Preaching that transforms mindset from individualism to communalism

The most difficult aspect of the notion of transformation is the question of individual versus communal change. Feltman (1986:53) states that, “One of the reasons that a clear definition of transformation is so elusive is that it is not clear especially when talking about preaching, whether one is attempting to transform the individual believer or the community of believers.”

He argues, although transformation is the changing of human heart, it is also the call to turn the human, sinful heart to the heart of God. In a sense, it is an individual matter, but the community of believers is made up of individuals with separate wills, desires, prejudices and cultural baggage. Preaching on transformation must appeal to the individual but one must elicit change in the community as well. In this context, transformative preaching as a way of changing the mindset of people living in the context of communal and ethnic violence in Calabar, in particular and in Nigeria, in general calls to mind the communal way of life, which is typically African.

The concept of “*owo edi inyene*” (which means humanity or human being is wealth) is popular in the Calabar culture and worldview. The “*owo edi inyene* concept” places the highest value on the human person. It makes the Calabar person eager to protect his fellow human when in danger and to abhor any act that treats a fellow human as “a thing”. Perhaps this is the reason Calabar people are regarded as hospitable people and Calabar city is designated as the peoples’ paradise and the number one tourism destination in Nigeria.

This *owo edi inyene* concept of the Calabar people is a typical expression of African humanism, respect, value, care, helpfulness, etc. It finds equivalence in the South African concept of “*ubuntu*,” which stems from the belief that one is human through others; “I am because you are” (Ramose 1999:46; Shutte 1993:46, in Cilliers 2008:1). The concept of *ubuntu* forbids man’s maltreatment of fellow humans and evokes human feeling of sympathy, empathy, care, concern, especially for the poor and the weak in the society; it provokes concern for security for the unprotected just because s/he is human.

It is remarkable that, until recently, there were no cases of homeless people in the Calabar area. Moreover, the Calabar people were always willing to provide shelter to strangers even when they have just met the stranger for the first time and had no hope of seeing the person again. This kind of hospitality stemmed out of their love for the human person and from the cultural belief that some strangers may be angels in disguise especially when the opportunity for second encounter was not there. Ministering to the stranger was believed to equal ministering to God, which would attract manifold blessings not from the stranger but from God.

Thus, the church has a responsibility to explore the philosophical concept of “*owo edi inyene*” (“humanity or man is wealth”), and consider using it as a paradigm for transformative preaching in the context of ethnic violence in the Calabar area in particular and in Nigeria in general.

4.3.2 Preaching that transforms mindset to that of Christ

In the Nigerian context, the change in the mindset of individual believers and the faith community must move from the wrong cultural notion of human dignity, which is

based on honour and respect, and which promotes materialism, individualism, and selfishness. It must move toward a new and true culture of human dignity based on godly love for neighbour, and which promotes care, protection and respect for the human person simply for being human. It should seek to emulate Christ's humble, selfless, but sacrificial example, which remains the perfect model of true leadership.

Transformative preaching should seek to give expression to the dynamic relationship between God and the world as it was portrayed in the story of the covenant people of Israel, and later in the birth, life, death and resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth. As Nell (2009:204) asserts, "Preaching has the responsibility to show the many different ways in which we can and must "take hands" through accepting this otherness".

In such a diverse cultural society as Nigeria, which is devastated by various forms of violence, the need for transformative preaching need not be over-emphasized. However, as Campbell has rightly observed, transformation must begin with a change of mindset of the preachers. In other words, the bishops, prophets, pastors and preachers, as well as members of the faith community in Nigeria, who promote oppression and injustice under the disguise of false dignity by the display of "power" influence through prosperity preaching and flamboyant lifestyle must first undergo a transformation in mindset. Richard Osmer (2008:198) states that:

Power is not a matter of resources, might or status. Nor is it a matter of wielding influence for one's own advantage. Rather, power pre-eminently is self-giving love in which needs of others and the community takes precedence. It is a matter of love that is willing to suffer with and for others.

This transformation must move both the individual and the faith community towards God's kind of love, the love that seeks to give rather than to receive, to serve rather than to be served, to reconcile and to forgive no matter the degree of pain and hurt. The mindset of listeners or congregants must move from greed, and quest and passion for materialism to kingdom possession and a covenant way of living that would impact positively on humanity and creation at large.

Transformative preaching should expose believers to the exemplary life of Jesus, His suffering and its meaning for the community of Christ's followers as expressed in

Scriptures. One of the passages in which this theology comes to expression is Philippians 2: 4-11:

Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interest of others. Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus: Who being in the very nature of God did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedience to death even the death on a cross! Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow! In heaven and on earth and under the earth and every tongue confess that Jesus is Lord to the glory of God the father.

Throughout the book of Philippians, Paul appealed to this portrait of Christ in the form of a royal servant to describe the life of the community of Christ's followers also calling on Philippians to imitate him, just as he imitated Christ.

Transformative preaching should evoke a kind of understanding that makes believers to reject power in the form of violence and retribution. Paul demonstrated this by teaching his congregation to shun violence and retribution but rather to practice non-violent love. In Romans, Paul echoes Jesus' teaching on non-violent love in the Sermon on the Mount.

Bless those who persecute you. Bless and do not curse. Rejoice with those who rejoice and mourn with those who mourn. Live in harmony with one another do not be proud, but be willing to associate with people of low position do not be conceited. Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Be careful to do what is right in the eye of everybody... Do not take vengeance my friends but leave room for God's wrath, for it is written : "It is mine to avenge I will repay" on the contrary "If your enemy is hungry feed him, If he is thirsty give him something to drink In doing this you will heap coals of fire upon his head. Do not be overcome by evil but overcome evil with good. (Romans 12-14-21).

There is no doubt that the Pauline message in the passage above, primarily, emphasizes Christians' relationship with their neighbours. According to Osmer (2008:190), "they are to resist the reciprocity of power found in the surrounding culture." To him, the cycles of violence and revenge, and this sort of reciprocity of power that is set in motion were ever-present in Paul's world as they are in our own. Believers, therefore, have a challenge to preach transformative sermons aimed at a change in the mindset of listeners, if they are to break this cycle. In order for the preacher to do this, s/he must have a good understanding of the listeners. According to Pieterse (2008:19):

In hermeneutic process, preachers should constantly transpose themselves from the world of the congregation to the world of the text, and then back to the present day world of the congregation. In their hermeneutic capacity, preachers are messengers who continually move between the text and the context, until the two worlds merge and the message of the text becomes apparent in the context of the congregation.

Preachers need to spend quality time, hermeneutically, digesting the text. They must humble themselves in order to be encountered by the text.

Long (1989, in Pietrese 2008:20) affirms that:

If preachers spend enough time hermeneutically digesting the text for Sunday's sermon the text start addressing them. It takes over, illuminating their entire existence... When the text thus addresses us and does something to us, we can go out to preach that text as witness to our own experience. This must come from the true understanding of God's love towards humans.

Such preaching promotes the kind of love that makes a Christian to see a Moslem as one created by God and will not dare to hurt him/her during conflict. This kind of preaching changes the mindset of people or communities by promoting love, and discouraging communal and ethnic violence at the slightest provocation or disagreement, but rather, by provoking concern for people who hurt with a view to offer forgiveness in place of retaliation and revenge, seeking peaceful resolution of conflicts through non-violent actions. The truth remains that the situation of congregants also relate to the society in which members live and work. Therefore, addressing situations in the life of congregants through preaching translates to addressing the societal situation while equipping listeners to be responsible Christian citizens at the same time.

4.3.3 Preaching that transforms social structures and calls for justice

One general characteristic of preaching aimed at transforming the social structures and calling for justice is the element of the prophetic. In the prevailing situation in Nigeria where corruption and violence have devastated the socio political, economic, and even the religious structures, the only hope is divine intervention through preaching. Fundamental change in our setting requires both structural and spiritual transformation. In Apostle Paul's words, we are wrestling with:

... authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. Therefore put on the full armour of God, so that when the

day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand (Eph 6:12-13).

Transformative preaching in this context, therefore, becomes a non-violent but militant action crucial in the encounter with principalities and powers in their multidimensional forms.

According to Wink (1987:52-58), non-violent revolution has recorded much success in different parts of the world - in the Philippines, led by Corazon Aquino; in North America by Martin Luther King Jr.; in India, in Latin America, as well as in South Africa led by Nelson Mandela. Nonviolent action as an agenda for prophetic preaching that will change our structures and bring justice in our society is what is proposed in this study. It denotes the unique quality of the kind of response that Jesus taught and lived. This kind of response brings about justice. Non-violence brings about reconciliation and affirms the human equality of the opponent. It can be accomplished through the preaching, which does not condone pseudo-neutrality on the part of pastors and church leaders who preach reconciliation without being equivocally committed to struggle on the side of the oppressed for justice.

Church leaders in Nigeria must leave their comfort zones, and raise a prophetic voice for victims of violence. They are to learn from the likes of Archbishop Desmond Tutu, Alan Boesak, and others who risked death to save many under the apartheid government in South Africa. We must follow the way of Jesus and the Bible by being transformed, and the change in us must make us learn to resist violence in a non-violent way. Jesus taught us in Matthew's gospel to confront violence, not by reciprocating with violence or by passivity but rather, by non-violent action:

You have heard that it was said, Eye for an eye, and tooth for tooth. But I tell you. Do not resist an evil person. If someone strikes you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also. And if someone wants to sue you and take your tunic, let him have your cloak as well. If someone forces you to go one mile go with him two mile. (Matt 5:38-41)

According to Wink (1987:13), a proper translation of Jesus' teaching in the above scripture would be, "Do not strike back at evil (or, one who has done you evil) in kind. Do not give blow for blow. Do not retaliate against violence with violence." A normal human response to evil attack is either to fight or to take to flight. On one hand, to

fight means retaliation, revenge, violent rebellion and armed revolt, while flight denotes submission, withdrawal, surrender and passivity. However, Jesus' teaching does not support any of the two options; rather, it provides a new way through non-violent action, a way that can make possible real transformation and usher in justice. Wink (1987:13) maintains that:

Jesus' listeners are not those who strike, initiate lawsuits or impose forced-labour, but... victims... there are among his hearers people who were subjected to these very indignities, forced to stifle their inner outrage at the dehumanizing treatment meted out to them by the hierarchical system of caste and class, race and gender age and status, and as a result of imperial occupation.

Turning the other cheek to the aggressor in Jewish culture denotes equality and, therefore, robs the oppressor of the power to humiliate. In other words, the person who turns the other cheek is indirectly saying, "I deny you the power to humiliate me." Non-violence is Jesus' recommended option, which should be carried out by his followers because there is an inward transformation that makes believers different. Certainly, the option of non-violent action is not attractive, neither does it sound reasonable to many people. It may not even usher in immediately the needed peace and justice as may be expected, but it remains the best way to break the cycle of violence in our society. It may be the only way to reduce conflict and violence to its barest minimum, transform the society and, thereby, ushering in peace and justice. The church in Nigeria, as a faith community, has a task to raise a prophetic voice against violence and injustice, by proclaiming the gospel of Christ to her listeners through teaching and preaching ministry, the transformative non-violent action must also be considered a serious option, if social transformation and justice must occur.

4.4 Conclusion

From the discussion in this chapter, it is obvious that, although there is a strong belief that the church's preaching could be an agent of transformation, the preaching of the Presbyterian Church as well as other denominations in Nigeria is not effective enough to address meaningfully the phenomenon of violence in the Calabar area, and in Nigeria, at large. The influence of 'prosperity gospel' has also been identified as a major reason for its weakness. It should be noted that the church and her preaching represent only one role player among other agencies conducting

programmes and projects to assist people living in the context of conflicts and violence. The truth remains, therefore, that the church cannot do it alone. In order to bring about transformation, there is a need for collaboration with the government, the NGOs and other agencies; such collaboration will go a long way in resolving the problems associated with these conflicts.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Summary of Findings based on Data

The causes of conflict and violence in the Calabar area, as indicated in the data analysis in Chapter 3, range from economic, ethnic, political and demographic reasons. Respondents from different locations in the affected area testified that they were fully aware of violence in their area. They confirm that they have witnessed people being murdered during violent conflicts in their respective communities. Female respondents alleged being raped, while men claimed they witnessed their wives, children or relations being raped in their presence. Some respondents also claimed that they were injured, while others lamented the loss of properties, money and other valuables.

Available reports from the conflict resolution committee of the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria, Calabar Synod (see appendix 2); the Strategic Conflict Assessment of Nigeria - Consolidated and Zonal Report (2008); and other relevant church documents on violent conflicts in the Calabar Synod accessed by the researcher with official permission of the Synod moderator (see appendices 1 and 2) confirm the presence of ethnic violence in the area.

Respondents believed that the suffering of people living in the violent area of Calabar is due to poor economic condition of the people. Many of the victims have suffered physical injury, dehumanizing and emotional imbalance, while many others have lost their properties, money and sources of livelihood. The condition has also led many into prostitution, human trafficking and other illicit trades that promote low self-esteem. Some have felt disappointed by God and by the government, which failed to provide effective security machinery to prevent their suffering.

In Chapter 4, the views of respondents and the literature analysis indicate that preaching can actually change the mindset of its listeners. This is evident in the Pentecostal prosperity gospel currently flourishing in Nigeria, which has actually changed the giving attitude of many believers. Perhaps they give because they are

made to understand that in giving, they are giving to God, and because they are always promised more money and wealth.

On the other hand, the impact of prosperity gospel is displayed through flamboyant lifestyles of religious leaders which resemble those of political leaders in the country including the wrong notion of human dignity which promotes materialism, power, corruption, domination, oppression, self, greed and injustice. The shift from sound theological teaching to the prosperity type of gospel has created a gap that weakens the church and her preaching. Hence, preaching makes little or no impact on people living in the context of ethnic violence. The church must return to the servant leadership style taught by Jesus in the Scripture, a style that is selfless but sacrificial. The church's understanding of human dignity must be based on the principles of love, justice, care, protection and respect for the human person, if she would be relevant to people living in the context of violence.

From the study, it is obvious that the Christian church in Nigeria including the Presbyterian Church, in particular, need to review its understanding of preaching if it intends to have an impact on the phenomenon of ethnic violence in Nigeria. If preaching is re-evaluated as a means of changing mind-patterns (paradigms) on ethnic violence, to inspire concrete congregational change and societal action against ethnic violence, and to address prophetically the systemic reasons for this violence, it could make a meaningful difference in the Nigerian quest for peace.

5.2 Conclusion

In Chapters 2 and 3, literature on the main themes of this study have been reviewed and used for the arguments in the study. The works of several authors are examined, which contain a lot of useful information on the motives of violent conflicts and preaching.

It is stated that religion, if not properly guided, can be equally manipulated and used to promote violence, as seen in Chapter 3. Therefore, great attention must be paid to theological interpretation if homiletics would bring about an encounter between God and human beings. Similarly, preachers should be thoroughly acquainted with their congregations or listeners, their situations, experiences, needs and problems. They

are to know these things existentially. Preachers also need to read newspapers, and listen to the radio and television, and together with members of their local congregations, they should conduct social analyses of their local situations. They are to listen to the voice of God by studying the Scripture and totally depending on the Holy Spirit in order to engage effectively in preaching that transforms. In the view of this researcher, the true reason for violent conflicts may be attributed to a lack of true understanding of spiritual and moral values, which is the task of transformative preaching.

5.2.1 Contribution to knowledge

The expected contribution of this work to the academic field is in the area of the understanding of ethnic conflicts and violence, the causes as well as the impact on people in the Calabar area, and in Nigeria, at large. It has attempted also to understand the people who are suffering due to violent conflicts, many who have been brutalized or raped, and who have lost properties, monies and their means of livelihood.

It is expected to contribute to a deeper understanding that economic, political, social, demographic and ethnic factors are the root causes of violence in the Calabar area. Since the study has afforded the people living within the context an opportunity to speak for themselves, their expressions help to understand how the people have suffered in their own context, physically, psychologically, economically, socially, politically and spiritually.

Furthermore, it seems that the most important contribution of this work to knowledge is that it has provided a framework or model for transformation in the context of preaching in Nigeria (the researcher is not aware of one before now). This framework, therefore, can be appropriated by the church.

The study has offered also a rich African philosophical concept that could promote human dignity i.e. the "*owo edi inyene*" (humanity or human being is wealth) concept of the Calabar people. This can be explored further by the church as a platform for transformational preaching if the church is to communicate meaningfully with the people.

Lastly, the secondary materials such as published books and journals used in this research and the primary sources such as archive materials and the oral sources, presented in the form of quantitative and qualitative data that conveyed the opinion of people affected by ethnic violence in the Calabar area, provide a resource for future researchers who would be interested in further research on ethnic violence in Nigeria.

5.2.2 Suggestions on areas for further study

This study recommends that a major research be conducted on the problem of human trafficking and its challenge to liberation and community development in Nigeria. A study of the sufferings of women living in the context of violence and the role of the church's practical ministry of liberation in Nigeria also needs urgent attention.

In doing research in these suggested areas, a participatory approach (see page 2) that allows the rural populace to be involved is strongly recommended. This will present a balanced view, which could proffer solution to the problems that such research intends to address.

Finally, the researcher suggests that there should be ethical and philosophical analysis of people suffering various effects of ethnic violence.

5.2.3 Recommendations

Since several communities in Cross River State are engaged in conflict and violence, and since parties involved and interests are so diverse, it is obvious that any genuine attempt to resolve conflict, heal its lingering wounds in order to build peace, would require the efforts of all and sundry, as well as a comprehensive approach. Therefore, it is recommended that:

- (1) The Presbyterian Church of Nigeria and the entire Christian community in Nigeria, irrespective of denominations, re-evaluate preaching as a means of changing paradigms on ethnic violence, and of inspiring concrete congregational and societal action against violence.
- (2) The church should frequently organize workshops, seminars and conferences on transformational preaching especially for pastors and lay preachers in conflict areas as a retraining exercise to help build capacity. These would also

equip them for more meaningful and purposeful transformational preaching to people living in the context of conflict and violence.

- (3) The church should address, prophetically, the systemic reasons for violence with emphasis on the notion of human dignity, which promotes love, justice, care, respect and protection for the human person, rather than power, influence and flamboyant lifestyles, which lead to oppression and injustice.
- (4) The church should call on relevant government agencies to enforce implementation of the Supreme Court boundary judgments in order to demarcate clearly the boundaries between border communities.
- (5) Infrastructural development in the area, which has slowed down due to conflict and violence in the geo-political zone should be accelerated. Roads, electricity, potable water, hospitals, post offices, police stations and customary courts should be provided for the people.
- (6) The church, government and individuals should explore the possibility of locating agro-allied industries and establishing tertiary educational institutions in the area. This will help break the total focus of the people on farming and help persuade them, in practical ways, to appreciate other viable options in life. Once they perceive their livelihood to be more reasonably protected by a culture of peace, it is less likely that they would readily engage in violent conflicts. This is significant if one bears in mind that the causes of violence in the area, according to the research findings and analysis of data were rooted mainly in economic factors.
- (7) Issues of political representation should be based on justice, equity, and fair play, not on ethnic sentiment, nepotism and injustice.
- (8) The government, the church, NGOs, Town Unions, political and community leaders, royal fathers and traditional institutions as well as other interest groups, should collaborate by means of dialogue and using persuasive methods rather than coercion.

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APPENDIX 1



UNIVERSITEIT·STELLENBOSCH·UNIVERSITY
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TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

I, the undersigned, hereby confirm that Reverend Ivan Ekong is currently busy with his Master Degree studies under my supervision, and is making good progress. As it is important for the thesis that he is writing on the topic: *Preaching in a context of ethnic violence: a practical theological study within the Calabar Synod of the Presbyterian Church in Nigeria*, I hereby request that, if possible, he be granted access to documents and discussions with relevant people that might aid him in attaining data and other information concerning this topic. I am of the opinion that his work might contribute towards finding solutions for the problem stated in the thesis title.

Please do not hesitate to contact me for further information.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'JH Cilliers'.

With regards
Prof JH Cilliers
Department Practical Theology and Missiology
University of Stellenbosch
Tel: 021 8083264
Email: jcilliers@sun.ac.za
14 June 2010



FAKULTEIT TEOLOGIE
FACULTY of THEOLOGY
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APPENDIX 2



THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF NIGERIA

CALABAR SYNOD

Bungalow 5
Hope Waddell Training Institution
P. O. Box 13, Calabar

September 29, 2010.

Prof. J. H. Cilliers,
Department of Practical Theology and Missiology,
University of Stellenbosch,
South Africa.

Dear Sir,


REVEREND IVAN EKONG – MASTER DEGREE RESEARCH WORK

Thank you for your letter dated 14 June, 2010 in respect of your student, Rev. Ivan Ekong and your request to grant him access to documents and discussions relevant to his research work. I must apologize for the delay in sending this report which was due certain difficulties I encountered sending it initially.

Reverend Ekong spent a considerable time with me as the Calabar Synod Moderator of the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria and Community leaders and members of the Church who handle issues of violence in and outside of the church. He had opportunity to available documented reports and materials which, he said were very useful to his thesis. Reverend Ekong had for three years served as a member of the Calabar Synod Peace and Conflict Resolution Committee before leaving for studies. So he has some experience in this field.

We hope that his work will be found useful not only to the Church, but to the larger society.

Yours sincerely,


Rev. Esemé D. William
Moderator.

"I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me." Phil. 4:13

APPENDIX 3

Questionnaire on “Preaching in the Context of Violence in the Calabar Synod Area” administered to respondents (Presbyterian Church members in the Calabar Synod).

I am Ivan Ekong a Presbyterian Pastor studying Practical Theology in Stellenbosch University, South Africa. My research is on “Preaching in the context of ethnic violence: a practical theological study within the Calabar Synod of the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria.” The aim of this questionnaire is to help me gather information for this research. Kindly fill this questionnaire.

INSTRUCTION: All information supplied shall be treated confidentially.

Tick the option applicable to you, and where options are not provided, supply the answer in the space provided.

Name.....

..... (optional)

1 Sex: Male Female

2 Age: 18-30 31-40 41-Above

3 Marital Status:

Married Single Separated Divorced Widowed

4 Educational Status: Not literate Primary level Secondary Level Tertiary level

5 Occupation: Farming Civil servant Self-employed/artisan Student
 Unemployed

6 Religious affiliation Christian Muslim Traditionalist

7 If you are a Christian, to which denomination do you belong? Presbyterian Others

8 How frequently do you attend Church worship service? Very frequent
 Frequent Not very frequent Not applicable

9 What do you think has been the main emphasis and focus of sermons in your church?.....
.....
.....

10 In your opinion, do you think preaching can change the mind patterns of congregants? Yes No

11 Are you aware of conflict and violence in your community? Yes No

12 What are the causes of violence in Calabar area?

Economic Political Ethnic Demographic Religious Social

13 What do you think is the impact of violence on people in Calabar area?

Economic Social Political Demographic All of the above

14 Are you aware of any effort previously made towards reconciliation and peace?

Yes No

15 If Yes, by which institution? Government Community leaders NGOs

Church Organizations Town Union

16 Do you think church preaching could be used as a means to change congregants' mind patterns on violence? Yes No Not Sure

APPENDIX 4

QUESTIONS FOR RESEARCH INTERVIEW AND FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION

- 1 Are you aware of violence in Calabar area?
- 2 If yes, what in your opinion are the causes of violence in the Calabar Synod area?
- 3 In your opinion, what are the effects of violence on the people in the Calabar area?
- 4 What are the words or terms associated with violence in the Efik language?
- 5 What is the role of the church in building peace and reconciliation?
- 6 What do you think has been the focus and emphasis of sermon in the last ten years?
- 7 Do you think church sermons can be used to change the mindset of congregants on ethnic violence?