#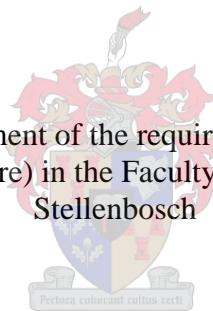 *PEACEBUILDING AMONGST CHRISTIAN AND MUSLIM IN NIGERIA: A CRITICAL STUDY OF "A MODEL OF AND FOR" RELIGIOUS LEADERS AS PEACE BROKERS*

By

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Thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Philosophy (Religion and Culture) in the Faculty of Theology at the University of Stellenbosch

Supervisor: Professor D X Simon

March 2016

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my family and those working in field of missiology in Nigeria.

DECLARATION

By submitting this thesis electronically, I declare that the entire of work contained therein is my own original work, that I am the authorship owner of thereof (unless to the extent explicitly otherwise stated) and that not previously in its entirety or in part submitted it for obtaining any qualification.

Date: March, 2016

Abstract

We live in a world where religious diversity is increasingly affecting and changing everything around us and ourselves as well. No religious community is exempt from the pressures of diversity. The crisis of age constitutes a call to religions to co-operate and work out dialogical ways of understanding ourselves, as well as others. The issue of harnessing the beliefs and practices of religions is not to form new religions, as the multiplicity of religions is not an evil that needs not to be removed, but rather a wealth that is to be welcomed and enjoyed by all because there is more truth in all religions than in one particular religion.

As a result of religious diversity and the need for peace between the Christian and Muslim religions in Nigeria, the argument is present for and against each of the typologies of theology of religions in order to understand the relation between Christianity and other religions. The theological understanding is about the beliefs and practices of peace. The approaches are done with regard to each typology in the theology of religions in relation to four selected constants in mission. This is because holistic and flexible missiological approaches require one to reflect on religious identities by strengthening and sustaining interreligious dialogue. Its purpose is to be involved in the movement of God's love towards human beings and to participate in the ecumenical movement for peacebuilding in the relationship between religion and conflict, because religion is important in the lives of people. People live their lives based on their religious traditions. Religion has a dual legacy in human history regarding peace and conflict, because religion plays the central role in human beings' social behaviours due to the influence of religion on the lives of the religious leaders and their followers. This role that religion has played and still is playing has a dynamic influence on the lives of the adherents – either positive or negative – because in most conflicts in Nigeria, religion is mentioned as one of the factors.

Religious conflict has reached a dangerous level, resulting in ethnic and religious groups becoming a threat to peace and harmony. This thesis has emphasised the dialogical missiological reflection on a model of as beliefs and for as practice of religious leaders as peace brokers in their societies, because their scriptures include a clear understanding of salvation/peace. The research argues that religious leaders are to work for justice by considering human suffering, which is not deniable in their religious beliefs and practices, because if a religion does not have love of God and human beings, then something is

dysfunctional in that religion. Due to religious pluralism and the need for peace between the Christian and Muslim religions in Nigeria, the researcher presents the arguments for and against a typology of theology of religions, with a reflection on constants in mission. The approaches bring out important aspects by suggesting practical missiological strategic solutions for how Christian religious leaders should relate with others.

Opsomming

Ons leef in 'n wêreld waarin godsdienstige diversiteit toenemend alles om ons, sowel as onsself, beïnvloed en verander. Geen godsdienstige gemeenskap is vrygestel van die druk van diversiteit nie. Die krisis van die tyd behels 'n oproep aan godsdienste om saam te werk en dialogiese maniere uit te werk om onsself, asook ander, te verstaan. Die kwessie van die aanwending van die oortuigings en praktyke van godsdienste is nie om nuwe godsdienste te skep nie, aangesien die veelvoudigheid van godsdienste nie 'n euwel is wat verwyder moet word nie, maar eerder 'n rykdom wat deur almal verwelkom en geniet moet word omdat daar meer waarheid is in alle godsdienste as in een enkele godsdiens.

As gevolg van godsdienstige diversiteit en die behoefte aan vrede onder die Christen- en Moslemgelowe in Nigerië, is daar argumente vir en teen elk van die tipologieë van die teologie van godsdienste om die verhouding tussen Christendom en ander godsdienste te begryp. Die teologiese begrip gaan oor die oortuigings en praktyke met betrekking tot vrede. Die benaderings word aangepak in verhouding tot elke tipologie in die teologie van godsdienste met betrekking tot vier gekose konstante in missie. Die rede hiervoor is dat holistiese en buigsame benaderings dit nodig maak om na te dink oor godsdienstige identiteite deur intergodsdienstige dialoog te versterk en te onderhou. Die doel hiervan is om betrokke te wees in die beweging van God se liefde na die mensdom toe en om deel te neem aan die ekumeniese beweging vir vredeskepping in die verhouding tussen godsdiens en konflik, omdat godsdiens belangrik is in mense se lewens. Mense leef hulle lewens op grond van hulle godsdienstige tradisies. Die godsdiens het 'n tweeledige erfenis in die mens se geskiedenis met betrekking tot vrede en konflik, omdat godsdiens 'n sentrale rol speel in mense se sosiale gedrag as gevolg van die invloed van godsdiens in die lewens van godsdienstige leiers en hulle volgelinge. Die rol wat godsdiens gespeel het en nog steeds speel het 'n dinamiese invloed op die lewens van aanhangers – hetsy positief of negatief – omdat godsdiens as een van die faktore in die meeste van die konflikte in Nigerië genoem word.

Godsdienstige konflik het 'n gevaarlike vlak bereik, wat daartoe lei dat etniese en godsdienstige groepe 'n bedreiging inhou vir vrede en harmonie. Hierdie tesis benadruk die dialogiese hermeneutiese nadenke oor 'n model van soos oortuigings en vir as praktyk van godsdienstige leiers as vredemakers in hulle samelewings, omdat hulle heilige geskrifte 'n

duidelike begrip van verlossing/vrede insluit. Hierdie navorsing hou voor dat godsdienstige leiers moet werk vir geregtigheid deur menslike lyding in ag te neem, wat nie in hulle godsdienstige oortuigings en praktyke loënbaar is nie, want as 'n godsdiens nie 'n liefde van God en mense bevat nie is dit wanfunksioneel. As gevolg van godsdienstige pluralisme en die behoefte aan vrede tussen die Christen- en Moslemgelowe in Nigerië, bied die navorser argumente aan vir en teen 'n tipologie van godsdienste, met 'n oorweging geskenk aan wat konstant is in sending. Hierdie benaderings lig belangrike aspekte uit deur praktiese sendingkundige strategiese oplossings voor te stel vir hoe Christelike godsdienstige leiers in verband staan met ander.

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List of abbreviations

AACC　　　　　– All African Council of Churches

AN　　　　　　_ African Union

CAN　　　　　– Christian Association in Nigeria

ECRS　　　　　– Egidion Catholic Relief Service

ECRL　　　　　– European Council of Religious Leaders

KPDS　　　　　– Kisma Peace Development in Somalia

EU　　　　　　– European Union

IMN　　　　　　– Interfaith Mediation in Nigeria

INGO　　　　　– International Non-Governmental Organisation

IO　　　　　　– International Organisation

IRCL　　　　　– International Religious Council of Sierra Leone

IMN　　　　　　– Interfaith Mediation in Nigeria

IDC　　　　　　– International Donor Community

JNL　　　　　　– Jama'atul Nasir Islam

NIRC　　　　　– Nigerian Interreligious Council

NGOs　　　　　– Non-Governmental Organisations

RSF　　　　　　– Religious Society Friends

UN　　　　　　– United Nations

US　　　　　　– United States

WCC　　　　　– World Council of Churches

WPD   – Wajir Peace and Development

DEFINITION OF TERMS

1. Da'wa – An Islamic term for witness, preaching and social engagement.

2. Ecounterology in missiology – A concept and practice explaining theological and practical themes in the encounter between adherents of different religions. It expands the themes and issues discussed in the religious typologies of exclusivism, inclusivism and pluralism.

3. 'Model of' and 'model for' – A 'model of' means the structure of beliefs; and 'model for' means the practices of beliefs – the beliefs in practice. Both influence the encounters and peace-brokerage between Christian and Muslim leaders.

CHAPTER ONE

1. Introduction

The complexities and problematic identities of religions in interreligious dialogue have raised many questions for missiology. This thesis suggests that missiology as a science of religions should explore interreligious dialogue between the Christian and Muslim religions in Nigeria, rather than what others believe or what we believe about the truth of claims of beliefs and practices of peace. According to Kritzinger's (2008:764) understanding of missiology as encounterology, or as an approach to "encounterology", a holistic and flexible dialogical approach is required in which missiology can enter into a mutual missional with other faiths. This thesis aims to contribute to the task and methods of missiology by asking what missiology can learn from the identities of religious diversities for interreligious dialogue. The thesis maintains that religious leaders have something important to offer to the features of religions for interreligious dialogue (De Villiers, 2005:131). The holistic and flexible missiological approach of religious leaders could contribute to interreligious dialogue, provided that it satisfies strict conditions of embrace.

This thesis argues that missiology can learn from the identity of other religions for interreligious dialogue: attention was paid to the model of as beliefs and for as practices of religious leaders in interreligious dialogue, especially regarding the importance of the golden rule on moral issues for interreligious dialogue and the role of religion in social solidarity with the needy and vulnerable. Theological reflection is important, and a distinction is made between the role of religious leaders' brokering of peace in relation to missiology and *da'wa* (preaching or proselytization), and human beings.

Religions and religious leaders have to accept religious diversities, and there is a need to learn the possibilities and impossibilities of an etymological understanding of peace in theology of religions for interreligious dialogue (Habermas, 2008:131). The question is: "What can the missiological approach learn from religion, and from Christian and Muslim religious leaders as peace brokers in relation to peace and conflict?" even though the roles and issues of religion and religious leaders for interreligious dialogues are problematic, as the identity of religion forms part of the fabric of religious adherents (Jeong, 2010:142). Although religion and religious leaders still play a role in society, the relationship between

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religions, religious leaders and peace building remains ambiguous, especially when it comes to issues of peace building between the Christian and Muslim religions (Bosch, 1991:476).

1.1 Critical Relation of Religion, Conflicts and Peace

Sandman (2002) argues that the relationship between religion, conflicts, peace and religious leaders for the promotion of interreligious dialogue has become a missiological concern. This is because religion, peace and religious leaders have become global issues, and both local and international news is hardly without discussion of the above issues (Sandman, 2002:177). This is due to the influence of religion, even though religion cannot be defined easily because of individual understandings and experiences of religion (Egwu, 1998). This is because some scholars define religion as something elusive that cannot be measured by individuals because it is a respect for what is sacred that describes a form of reality (Habermas, 2008: 1). From the above statements it is clear that there is no one definition of religion, as the features of the different definitions are not the same, even though they have some common features. Therefore, religions can be referred to as a set of beliefs and practices with certain features in common, but not all religions have common features, as these vary from one another due to the differences of identity (Turner, 1982:15).

Different religions have different beliefs and practices. This affirms that religion is a practical sphere of human life through meaning, social and cultural systems, because religious meaning, social and cultural systems make religion (Geerzt, 1973:89). Even though the world today exists due to the role of religion, understanding the relation of religion, conflicts and peace is a challenge because it is easier to understand the absence of religion. Religion apparently seeks to promote peace within and outside religion. In most cases, especially in Nigeria, religion has failed to promote peace. As a result, religious failure to promote peace is an indication that religious leaders are promote violence, mistrust between individuals, groups, communities and other faiths; that religion that seeks to help individuals or group of individuals to worship a divinity, and to have a relationship that, in the perception of the worshipper, gives joy, peace and satisfaction, has now turn into a different dimension.

Therefore, there is a need to consider some of the critical conceptual understandings of religion, conflicts, peace and religious leaders as peace brokers. Geertz (1973:93) defines religion as "a cultural system" that provides a "meaning system" for the practitioners, with a model of as 'belief' about supernatural that contains a form of reality with symbols of

identity, and a model for as 'practices' that are seen in the lives of religious practitioners as a form of reality within the general order of existence (Schilbrack, 2002:312). Although religion is a common experience among humankind, it remains largely unexplored within the developmental sciences. The element of how the human system works within the developmental sciences of religion as a meaning, social and cultural system has resulted in human beings having high levels of a model of as 'beliefs' and a model for as 'practices' due to the moral contribution of religion to human lives (Kerestes & Younis, 2003:165). Therefore, religion can be referred to as "a search for significance in ways that are related to sacred", which are found in a religious 'model of' scriptural beliefs. In essence, religion can be seen as 'model for' in the practices of people's motives because it contains some sources that encourage certain feelings, attitudes and experiences, and inculcates ritual, aesthetic and ethical behaviours that mobilise and orient people's lives (Pargament *et al*., 1998:710).

This indicates that the model of and for religious leaders involves all aspects of human lives, as it connects conduct to reality – in the sense of "real things" – by the order and nature of reality. In other words, the identities of the model of and for religious leaders as peace brokers in interreligious dialogue can be seen as a factor that promotes positive and negative outcomes in the lives of the practitioners through the order of reality in connection with religious meaning, as well as cultural and social systems (McCullough & Willoughby, 2009:69). This is because of the influence of the identities of religions that grow out of the human need for comprehension of the deepest problems of existence on the basis of the model for 'as practice', which offers practical support for the moral, social, cultural and physical welfare of people. The above statements make it clear that religious beliefs and practices serve as the basis for the lives of the adherent, as they sanction and uphold moral and physical approval and disapproval in terms of rewards and punishments in the lives of the practitioners (De Juan & Vüllers, 2010:6). The above scholars' understanding of the model of and for religious leaders portrays that religion could be for peace and conflict, because there is a lot of literature that discusses how the meaning, cultural and social systems of religions through religious leaders' model of and for religious leaders can contribute to the outbreak and furtherance of religious conflict This shows that the model of and for religious leaders that influences the lives of practitioners could serve as an instrument of peace and has indeed served as such in many civilizations. Paradoxically, however, it also serves as a motivation for conflict. This statement affirms scholarly acceptance of the link between the model of and

for religious leaders and conflict, even though it may not only incite conflict, but also contribute to peace, if there is proper encounterology for interreligious dialogue. where there is no adequate missiological approach to interreligious dialogue, the model of and for religious leaders today does not serve as a source of healing sickness by eliminating hunger and poverty and stimulating peaceful co-existence among human beings, but rather is used to cause sadness by bringing pain instead of relief, hatred instead of love, division instead unity, sadness instead of joy, discrimination and destruction instead of accommodation and development. This is due to the fact that the model of and for religious leaders might form a group identity that can result in an escalation of conflict due to individual understandings connected with the religions (Harpviken & Røislien, 2005:351). This indicates that there is a form of association between religious leaders and conflict that may be negative or positive. However, scholars are debating and critiquing the association between religious leaders and conflict, especially when it leads to violence between the Christian and Muslim religions. This kind of conflict undermines human dignity and renders humanity animalistic. There is a lot of evidence that some malicious religious leaders hide under the identity of religious pretence to cause conflict when they notice that their interests are not being protected or granted. But the situation should not be allowed to continue forever, and prompts a call for holistic and flexible encounterology for interreligious dialogue (Kwaja, 2009:105). This is because peace may exist in conflict between the Christian and Muslim religions if religious leaders are committed to holistic and flexible encounterology by reconstructing and deconstructing their religious identities for interreligious dialogue (Kritzinger, 2008:767).

Nigeria is a multi-religious country, with a fairly equally balanced proportion of Christians and Muslims, and a small minority adhering to traditional religions. The statistics of the breakdown of religious groups are either unavailable, unreliable or out of date, and hence highly contested. In terms of Christian and Muslim religious conflict, the religious leaders in Nigeria need to be given the mandate to and ownership of peace brokering, whether there is conflict or not (Lederach, 1997:65).

1.2 Statement of the Problem

There has been an increase in incidents of religious conflicts from the mid-1980s to the present day. Religious conflict as a result of the model of and for religious leaders has taken centre stage, especially in Nigeria, where the killing of people and the destruction of property

deny people freedom of mobility, equality of religion, sex and ethnicity, etc. Scholars such as Kukah (1993) understand conflict between Christian and Muslim in Nigeria as being the result of political and ethnic interests. This is evident because the identity of the Arabs' Islamic religion has heavily influenced the majority of resident Muslims. They have sought a special place for Islamic Sharia (Islamic law) in the affairs of government. This is because of the desire of Muslims to rule by means of Islamic jurisprudence, an aspect that has caused concern among Christian Nigerians (Kenny, 1996:338).

The Igbo people and minority tribes in the northern region are often victims of religious conflict because they are largely Christianised Nigerians. In Nigeria, as in all of Africa, political competition via the electoral process inevitably and inescapably embraces an uneasy tension between conflict and consensus. Violent conflicts on religious identity have been encountered since the mid-1980s, and are a method of collective action by people who cause religious conflicts in contestations for political power. The political identity of Christians and Muslims in demanding greater economic, social and political power to satisfy their egoism has led the country into religious conflict (Meagher, 2009:397).

As a result, since the 1980s, conflicts on political religious identity have been recurring in the country, especially in the northern region. One of the claims for the importance of democracy as well as democratic consolidation in Nigeria is that democracy is the only institutional arrangement that can guarantee religious peace and counteract conflicts. Despite strong optimism that the introduction of democratic rule in Nigeria in 1999 would mitigate religious conflict, the country has rather witnessed a resurgence of high-level religious conflicts, with shocking consequences (Osaghae & Suberu, 2005:12). This confirms that religious conflicts in Nigeria are linked to citizenship within the context of inclusive and exclusive politics, arising from claims and counterclaims over identity as a basis for determining who is excluded from or included in decision making, as well as who has access to opportunities and privileges under the outlook of 'us' versus 'them' (Osaretin & Akov, 2013: 349). The model of and for religious leaders' identities on conflict has had far-teaching consequences for the country. One of the major areas of religious conflict is the religious minority versus the majority. This is seen in northern Nigeria, where seventy percent are Muslims and thirty percent are Christians. In most areas in northern Nigeria, Muslims are in the majority, and they incite conflict in the name of religion, although this does not mean that the minority Christians do not perpetrate conflicts. This has become a trend that has serious implications

for religious relations, because where religious leaders are the minority they do not have any influence as peace brokers due to the fact that the religious leaders of the majority are more influential. As a result, they can decide whether or not to perpetrate conflict (Kwaja, 2009:105).

In this case, the incentives amongst religious leaders for co-operation, consensus and compromise in interreligious dialogue have been undermined, thereby posing huge challenges to these leaders. As a result, they are forced to co-exist in an environment of mutual mistrust and suspicion, in which peace brokering for interreligious dialogue hardly ever occurs. Above all, one of the problem of the model and for religious leaders in Nigeria is exclusion from the understanding of the concept of salvation/peace, which could be personal or institutional and involves the destruction of lives and property in the name of God. On the basis of this research, it was deemed right to come out with this work so that the model of and for religious leaders could help them serve as peace brokers for interreligious dialogue. Thus, this research aimed to investigate and explore a possible model of and for peace building between Muslims and Christians in Nigeria.

1.3 Motivation

Many scholars, such as Clarke and Linden (1984), Ibrahim (1989), Adesoji (2010), Kukah (1993) and Sampson (2012), have researched and written on the role of religious leaders as brokers of peace, the relationships between religions, and conflict, especially between the Christian and Muslim religions in Nigeria. The above scholars and others that were not mentioned have indeed explored sufficient discourse on how the beliefs and practices of religious leaders can contribute towards peace building in Nigeria. Therefore, this research is motivated with the missiological approach that has implication on the beliefs and practices of peace amongst Christian and Muslims religions which need a model point of view.

Now scholars are focusing on the beliefs and practices of Christian and Muslim religious leaders in the brokering of peace. Not enough justice has been done to this phenomenon in recent times, most especially regarding multiple religious conflicts enveloping the nation. Therefore, this study aimed to provide a missiological approach for peace building between the Christian and Muslim religions and to explore the relationship between religion and conflict to foster a solution so that religious leaders can serve as brokers of peace. Thus, the objective was to push further a thread of discussion on this topic and thereby to contribute to

an existing body of literature on the phenomenon by examining the beliefs and practices of missiology and da'wa discourses on peace building between the Christian and Muslim religions.

The study was motivated partially because the practice of peace building in Nigeria, by groups such as the Christian Association in Nigeria (CAN), Interfaith Mediation in Nigeria (IMN) and the Nigeria Inter-Religious Council (NIREC), has not been harnessed effectively. These groups implement peace brokering by means of politics through partial agreement by signing documents. This is due to the fact that the beliefs and practices of religious leaders to broker peace building has not been a proper discourse in the missiological approach to theology of religions, which means that peace might not be attained for a long time (Kritzinger, 2008:746). In the words Kukah (1993:158), there would be a higher probability of restoring peace and ensuring peaceful coexistence between different religious factions (especially amongst Christians and Muslims) if religious leaders were to be engaged in a missiological approach to identity in the theology of religions by harnessing their beliefs and practices for interreligious dialogue, as they command the respect of their followers. The issue of harnessing the beliefs and practices of religions is not to form new religions, as the multiplicity of religions is not an evil that needs to be removed, but rather a wealth that is to be welcomed and enjoyed by all because there is more religious truth in all religions together than in one particular religion (Knitter, 2007:3). If they can harness their religious identities in recognition of human beings as God's creations through inclusion without exclusion, there will be peaceful coexistence between the religious groups and in society at large. Thus a model of and for peace amongst religions could be changed in the process to improve religious leaders' brokerage of peace.

However, current researchers on the same subject matter call for a revisiting of the nature of qualitative research such as this in order to reposition the model of and for religious leaders for interreligious dialogue. Another motivation is that, as a participant, I have found weaknesses in the forum because Christian and Muslim peace building in Nigeria (especially in north-eastern Nigeria) is individualistic in nature. This means that both the Christian and Muslim religious leaders single themselves out and negotiate for peace without understanding how to approach another theology of religion from a flexible missiological perspectives. As a result, negotiation does not last because not all religious leaders understand faith-to-faith encounterology for interreligious dialogue.

1.4 Research Question

Thus, with encounterology in missiology as a framework, the main research question that this study sought to explore was:

How and to what extent can Christian and Muslim leaders contribute to peace-building when particular understandings of beliefs about peace ('model of') and peace practices ('model for') influence religious encounters in Nigeria?

1.5 Aims of the Study

The aim of this study was to explore faith-to-faith encounters in interreligious dialogue in order to discover the beliefs and practices of peace amongst Christian and Muslim religious leaders as peace brokers. This will help the researcher understand proselytization in relation to loving God and humankind, as there is something dysfunctional about any religion whose approach of missiology or *da'wa* which does not include God's love for humankind (Knitter, 2007). As a result of the above factors, the researcher aimed to explore the etymology of peace between the Christian and Muslim religions, and also to compare the concept of peace for interreligious dialogue. Therefore, the aims of this study were to understand and explore the following:

I. To explore typologies of the theology of religion in relation to the model of and for religious leaders as peace brokers in interreligious dialogue, and also to determine the reasons for the failures of religious leaders' peace brokerage and to recommend the features of missiology for interreligious dialogue. As there is no religion that will abandon its identity in religious pluralism, there is a need for missiology to stabilise and harness the model of and for religious leaders for interreligious dialogue, because in many cases where religious leaders act as peace brokers, the result is believed to be long-lasting peace (Mbona, 2011:245). Therefore, for peace to reign in situations of religious conflict, the missiological approach of the model of and for religious leaders should be brought together for the purpose of finding lasting solutions. Sometimes the conflict could be resolved and at other times managed.

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II. To explore the influence of the model of and for religious leaders as peace brokers, which cannot be underestimated – whether there is religious conflict or not – because religious leaders as peace brokers are involved in the effort of rehabilitating and reconciling the affected people in their midst after conflict by providing them with material relief. However, whether or not there is conflict, religious leaders will have a role to play as peace brokers in interreligious dialogue through the promotion of peace and mutual trust amongst people (Akpuru-Aja, 2007).

III. To explore the competency of religious leaders as peace brokers in interreligious dialogue in areas like Nigeria, where religious conflict has increased steadily and significantly. In other words, leadership and peace building are inextricable. The social-religious context of a leader's position enables him/her to act decisively wherever there is conflict. This singular role of religious leaders places them on a platform to carry out peace building, whether there is religious conflict or not (Curtis & Ellison, 2002:576).

IV. To explore the relationship between religion, religious leaders, peace and conflict, as well as the role of the model of and for religious leaders as peace brokers, which has not been harnessed in the theology of religion, through a comparative theology of religion for interreligious dialogue. The influence of the model of and for religious leaders can also be found in the way and manner in which their respective religious communities are protected and probably shielded from future religious conflicts. In the light of the arguments of the various scholars presented above, it is evident that not much work has been done on the theology of religious leaders as peace brokers through a comparative theology of religions for interreligious dialogue. Therefore, there is a need to explore further in this regard in order to create more literature on what, why and how the model of and for religious leaders as peace brokers should be incorporated into interreligious dialogue (De Juan & Vüllers, 2010:12).

VI. The study explores a comparative theology of the Christian and Muslim religions on the concept of peace in relation to the model of and for missiology and *da'wa*. This is because, for more than two decades, Nigeria has been experiencing constant efforts to build a bridge of peace and harmony between the two major religions. Although most violence is linked to cultural, geographical and social differences and other issues, and threatens the meaning of life, conflict based on religion tends to lead to dogged, stubborn and brutal types of war. When conflicts are couched in religious terms, they become transformed into value conflicts.

This is very clear in Nigeria, because religious violence has become a tradition in the country and it is no longer news to hear that people have lost their lives as a result of religious violence, especially in the northern region of the country. As a result, there is a need to explore the model of and for religious leaders as peace brokers in interreligious dialogue in order to find a solution to mitigate the phenomenon presented in the research question. Therefore, the study is critically conceptual in its approach to the Christian and Muslim and other religious approaches, because it involves an inquiry into religious meaning, and social and cultural peace. This will lead to an understanding of the identity of peace between the Christian and Muslim religions. This will help the researcher understand the theological perspectives of peace (Baidhawy, 2007:50). Therefore, the study does not reject any etymological understanding, but it undertakes a critical reflection on the model of and for peace through a comparative theology of religion in relation to missiology and *da'wa*.

1.6 Limitations

This research makes use of records and previous works carried out by scholars in the study of religious conflict and the influence of the role of religious leaders as peace brokers. The scope and limitations of this study are basically faith-to-faith encounterology for interreligious dialogue in the Nigerian context. Therefore, the study is limited to peace building in the Christian and Muslim religions in Nigeria: A model of and for religious leaders as peace brokers, with a focus on the missiological approach to interreligious dialogue, by relying on scholarly literature, as well as things such as media reports, newspapers, presentations, etc.

1.7 Research Design and Conceptual Framework

Research design refers to the plan, structure and strategy that the research adopts in order to obtain answers to the research questions and test hypotheses formulated for the study. This affirms that the research design is different from the conceptual framework. It is also not the same as research experimental design; the latter may, however, be a subsection of research design. Research design is the plan containing the structure and strategy of investigation that is conceived in order to obtain answers to research questions, and to control discrepancies. Research design therefore is the plan for the research because it provides the general scheme to be followed in the research study, which may include an outline of the research hypothesis and its operational implications through an analysis of data. A research design encompasses

both the structure and strategy for conducting a study. As a structure, the research design provides a specific outline, scheme and paradigm of operation of the variables (Kerlinger, 1973:337).

The conceptual framework of the research therefore is taken from the relevant approach to the field of practical theology and missiology in order to understand the concepts of peace and conflict as aspects of the identity of the Christian and Muslim religions in relation to the typology of the theology of religions that was employed in a comparative theology of religion in relation to the concept of peace for interreligious dialogue. Therefore, the conceptual framework is the heart of the research because it serves as a guide for the research to answer the research question on the phenomenon. This study explores faith-to-faith encounters in the understanding of the etymological relationship of religion, conflict and peace between the Christian and Muslim religions, as religions are like any other science that tries to develop peacebuilding that can be generalised to phenomena of religious pluralism. In practical theology and missiology, this is done by studying the identity of religion through comparing the identity of religious theological practices, beliefs, values, hopes, attitudes, desires and responses in relation to God and humanity. Another focus is on the conceptual understanding of the model of and for religious leaders as peace brokers for interreligious dialogue, by examining this role of religious leaders as related to the research question on the phenomenon, and how the Christian and Muslim religions understand the concept of peace in relation to the beliefs and practices of missiology and *da'wa* for interreligious dialogue. The research focuses on the features of missiology for interreligious dialogue, and how to acquire knowledge about the phenomenon. This stems from the researcher's conceptual understanding of views that can be investigated through a critical, traditional epistemological understanding of the theology of religions, as put forward in studies by Knitter, Clooney, and Bevans and Schroeder, among others (Bevans & Schroeder, 2004; Cavell, 1979).

An understanding of the various typologies in use when engaging a theology of religions, such as exclusivism, inclusivism and pluralism, are explored in relation to how they impact on the construction of the identity of religions on truth claims of ultimate reality for interreligious dialogue. This approach involves a dialogue that aims to understand the beliefs and practices of religious leaders as peace brokers for interreligious dialogue via a conceptual study. The missiological approach of the concept of peace between the Christian and Muslim religions is positioned to address how the conceptual framework of typologies in the theology

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of religions can be employed and described, and how it may affect religious leaders to react to or engage as peace brokers for interreligious dialogue in pluralistic contexts (Knitter, 2007). Adequate attention is paid to how the model of and for religious leaders as peace brokers for interreligious dialogue could influence and affect missiology. The focus on peace entailed by the typologies of the theology of religions proposed by several scholars is explored. The research also clarifies some of the ethical bridges in the framework of moral issues that need to be embraced for interreligious dialogue. As a result of the typology involved in the theology of religions, the research explores the comparative theology of the Christian and Muslim religions in relation to the concept of peace in these religions in order to understand their relationship for interreligious dialogue, as well as their missiological implications for the golden rule on moral issues. This is done through a comparative study of the concept of peace between Christians and Muslims in order to understand their values and shortcomings for interreligious dialogue (Knitter, 2002).

The researcher maintains that God's revelation of peace through Christ is universal in all religions, but in an implicit form that needs to be made explicit through faith-to-faith encounters on moral issues for interreligious dialogue. This is because 'by their fruits we shall know them', because in any encounter or *da'wa* for interreligious dialogue that does not foster God's love for humankind it means that there is something dysfunctional in that theology of religions). Therefore, the conceptual framework of this research was designed to gain knowledge through a conceptual hermeneutical understanding of religious diversity, because in religious diversity the adherents of different religions live side by side in the same communities as they study their religious identities.

This has been the case in Nigeria, for instance. In interaction with adherents of other religions living in the same context, people tend to construct or reconstruct the identity of their religious views and values. The typologies of the concept of peace in the theology of religions are put to test because it is presumed that the typologies can provide and highlight some insight into the mind-set of the adherents of other religions. The assumption of the typologies in the theology of religions has to be confirmed by conceptual understanding derived from the existing literature (Knitter, 2011:117). This research identifies the features of missiology that are useful and applicable to the model of and for religious leaders as peace brokers because, in a society of religious pluralism, people tend to develop a pragmatic approach to other religions. The typologies of the theology of religions open the willingness

to find the presence and a genuine revelation of God's peace in and through other religions. Greater weight will fall on the view that God's universal peace is present in all religions. The imperative of the missiological approach to interreligious dialogue here is that dialogue with other religions needs an ethical bridge to moral issues, as such a bridge will abide by the golden rule of reciprocity, which is 'doing unto others what you want them to do unto you' – through loving one's neighbour, by listening and opening up to one another in order to learn (Knitter, 2012:139).

1.8 Methodology

Methodology suggests, amongst others, the method of the research - the tools, processes or ways by which the researcher obtains data (Guba & LincoIn, 1982:232). Also, this is a conceptual study, collecting qualitative data from primary and secondary literature; relying on conceptual understanding of scholars. This is because the qualitative method employed for this research provides the logic tools, procedures and process for the understanding of the identity of the Christian and Muslim religions in relation to peacebuilding. It focuses on scholars' claims to knowledge regarding the phenomenon of the subject matter that serves as an instrument for a method towards missiological approach to interreligious dialogue (Guba & Lincoln, 1982:233).

The above statements relate to the view of Cavell (1979:267) who acknowledgesg two forms of interpretive understanding – interpretative understanding and conceptual interpretative understanding. The (phenomenological) interpretative understanding is based on facts, while (conceptual) interpretative understanding is based on the meaning of concepts made up of claims and reasoning that lead to the understanding of various concepts through scepticism, and using consciousness and senses to understand the phenomenon. Therefore, this study employed a conceptual interpretation in order to understand religion, conflicts and peace in the theology of religions that employs comparative theology of religions in the pursuit of meaning and social and cultural peace between the Christian and Muslim religions for interreligious dialogue. A conceptual understanding of conflicts and religious leaders as peace brokers was pursued. The missiological understanding of the concept of peace employed in this study is that peace is not the absence of conflicts, but where religious adherents are practicing loving God and human beings (Galtung, 1969:167). The question is

how does missiology promote dialogue with other religions? What are the theological and practical problems for interreligious dialogue?

Missiology and science of religions plays a most significant role in the theology of religions. It focuses on theology of religions in interreligious dialogue. Hence, missiology as a discipline can be described as a branch of theology that considers the claims of the ultimate truth of the reality of other faiths in the light of their beliefs and practices (Dupuis, 2001:13). The questions are: What approach of missiology (encounterology) leads to the variations in beliefs and practices? How can this missiology inform inter-religious dialogue in the context of religious pluralism? The study attempted to structure some criteria for interreligious dialogue from the perspective of encounterology. This is because missiology begins with self-reflection in relation to other religions based on the conviction of missio Dei (Bosch, 1991:389); that is, 'Father, son and the Holy Spirit' sending the church into the world (Bosch, 1991:390). Missiology exists in the movement of God's love towards people. Therefore missiology journeys with people and participates in the movement of God's love towards people (Bosch, 1991:392; Migliore, 2004:3).

According to Sundermeier (2003:563), "it is the glory of God to conceal things but the glory of missiology is to search things out". This is because missiology as an academic branch of the science of religions is about encountering the identity of the model of 'as beliefs' and for 'as practices' of other religions by describing and comparing the etymological perspectives of the features of all theology of religions for interreligious dialogue (Sundermeier, 2003). Therefore, moving from exclusivists to inclusivists the missiological flexible approach leads to pluralistic approach.

As a result of the participation of missiology in the movement of God's love towards people, missiology explores and mediates in the identity of other religions for interreligious dialogue (Kuester, 2004:97). In the words of Kritzinger (2008:790), the missiological approach to interreligious dialogue should not be followed merely on the basis of what others believe or what we believe about the possibility of peace in other religions. The primary concern of missiology is not (only) the rightful beliefs of religious identity, but the rightful practice with other religions for interreligious dialogue. The identity of religions lies in the fact that they have received (some) truth about peace (Gioia, 1997:39). This is due to the differences in the ways in which the religions understand their relation to the received reality of peace and how

it is being practised. Kritzinger (1995:396) says that missiology as an agent of change that promotes interreligious dialogue requires a holistic and flexible mutual approach to other religions. Bosch (1991) argues that both dialogue and mission can only be conducted in an attitude of humility. Therefore, this study employed Bosch's understanding of dialogue and mission and Kritzinger's approach of faith-to-faith encounters by suggesting some features of missiology for interreligious dialogue. The best way for missiology as a science of religions is to enter intellectually into mutual dialogue with other religions. The method of encounterology is holistic and flexible in order to participate in and foster the movement of God's love towards other religions for interreligious dialogue. The question is, what are the adequate outcomes that such encounterology can bring to inter-religious dialogue, and to what extent will such encounterology be productive for interreligious dialogue?

In the document *Dialogue and Mission*, Amaladoss (1986:241) states that the principal elements of the mission are commitment to the identities of religions in social development, human liberation and interreligious dialogue and, finally, a proclamation of the movement of God's love to humankind. This is why missiology, as faith-to-faith encounterology, requires a holistic and flexible approach, especially when it comes to interreligious dialogue (Kritzinger, 2008:790). This is the real witness of Jesus that is required in our work and teaching, in our work of liberation, and in entering into the poverty of people's lives, their destitution and oppression, and in giving respectful recognition to every individual as a child of God, which is what is most required of us as Christians today, thus bringing the joy and peace of Jesus Christ to the world (Renato Raffaele Martino, 2010:216). To accomplish the above missions, missiology must enter into the meaning, social and cultural identity of religious through interreligious dialogue perspective by recognising the religious identity of other believers. Missiology will also be enriched by learning and experiencing the goodness of other believers, or their spiritual dimensions (Gioia, 1997:689). The overall method of this research is to reflect on the missiological approach by avoiding exclusivism without opting for belief.

Another reason for the holistic and flexibility of the research approach is that there are two realities of acquiring knowledge, especially amongst religious groups. First and foremost is the personal, experiential reality of acquiring knowledge – that is what a person knows personally; and the second aspect is agreement reality, which is what a person has learned about something that he/she does not know about and what most people agreed on, and the

person is convinced of such reality (Mouton, 1996). The problem with such an acquisition of knowledge is that how can someone really know what is real in the reality between the person's experiential reality and agreement reality? For example, the study of peacebuilding between the Christian and Muslim religions is a personal experiential reality, while other aspects are agreement reality (Mouton, 1996). It is a personal experiential reality because the meaning, social and cultural systems of religious identities are from the Westerners' and Arabs' perspectives, which comprise personal experiential reality, and the agreement reality is what is accepted about the personal ideological experiential reality of Westerners' and Arabs' social and cultural religious identity. As a result, the identity of reality becomes suspicious and sceptical, and the suspicion and sceptical understanding of the reality of Christian and Muslim religions is as a result of different social and cultural understandings of religious identity and the ultimate truth of reality, especially when it comes to the understanding of the ultimate truth of the reality of peace as an identity (Bevans & Schroeder, 2004:37). Therefore, in order to understand the experiential reality and personal reality of the Christian and Muslim religions, the study employed the conceptual method, which is followed flexibly, without egotism.

The conceptual understanding of the identity of religious meaning, social and cultural systems of peace was studied in relation to the Christian and Muslim religions. As a result of the above factors, the study was carried out by means of a literature review through qualitative research, which involves a conceptual understanding of the model of and for religious leaders as peace brokers for interreligious dialogue in relation to the approaches of Geertz, Knitter, Clooney, and Bevans and Schroeder, among many other approaches to the theology of religions and a Christian comparative theology of religions for interreligious dialogue. These approaches are related to the lived experiences of the subject - the phenomenon of the research question (Bevans & Schroeder, 2004; Clooney, 2010; Geertz, 1973). The reason for embarking upon Knitter's, Clooney's and Bevans and Schroeder's approach to the typologies of the theology of religions is an attempt to understand the concept of peace as a phenomenon in the typologies of the theology of religions, which are categorised into three: exclusivism, inclusivism and pluralism. These describe the identity of peace between the Christian and Muslim religions in relation to interreligious dialogue (Bevans & Schroeder, 2004:37; Clooney, 2010: Knitter, 2002).

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Schilbrack's (2002:212) understanding of the comparative theology of religions as an interreligious moral dialogue is employed in order to compare the understanding of the etymological concept of peace in the Christian and Muslim religions for a moral inquiry into pluralistic religious diversities. Schilbrack (2002:212) affirms that the moral inquiry involves the golden rule dimension by interpreting the meaning and cultural systems and patterns of reasoning in their social context, with the latter including both intra-cultural and cross-cultural diversity. The critical dimension involves analysing the social, political, economic and institutional influences within their systems and patterns. The practical dimension involves identifying and developing intra- and intercultural moral procedures and resources for proposing practical strategies for advancing human wellbeing (Schilbrack, 2002:312). Schilbrack's understanding of the methodology of religious comparative theology is in line with interreligious dialogue as an ethical bridge between moral issues. As a result, the religious comparative theological method are classified by Shilbrack into four perspectives: (1) The formalist conceptual comparative theological method – this is a Western theistic tradition of moral theories used for a moral, critical and conceptual analysis of human cognition; (2) The historical comparative theological method – this is about how to understand historical concepts of religious diversity in comparison to religious ethics; (3) The hermeneutical comparative theological method – the emphasis here is on the dialectic of translation from one religion to another; and (4) The comparative theoretical/conceptual method – this is about the practical aspect of the interpretive approach of scholars to paradigms of comparative interreligious dialogue (Schilbrack, 2002:293).

Based on the Schilbrack's understanding of the distinctive vision of the comparative theology of religion for an ethical bridge in the inquiry on religious diversities, this study employed the critical conceptual approach because of the complexities of the identity of religions, because Christian and Muslim religious comparative theology offers interreligious dialogue when the approach is from flexible perspectives (Knitter, 2012:139). Therefore, as a result of the above typologies in the theology of religions, Geertz's (1973) concept of the model of as beliefs and for as practices of religions was employed in order to understand religious meaning, and social and cultural systems. The beliefs and practices of religion were narrowed to the concept of peace in the Christian and Muslim religions for interreligious dialogue in an attempt to answer the research questions. Geertz's work is rich and complex and I do not intend to consider its points. It is sufficient for my purposes to borrow from his understanding

and relate it to religious leaders' beliefs and practices as brokers of peace buildings – that is, they are sets of symbols whose relations to one another "model" relations among entities (Geertz, 1973:169).

Therefore, as "not everything that can be counted counts, and not everything that counts can be counted", the interpretative understanding employed the questions of "how many" or "how much", which are answered by quantitative methods (Cavell, 1973). Therefore, the secondary literature research provides the understanding of peace in the Christian and Muslim religions, which is important, as it determined the process and outcomes that are the basis of the research questions and problems. This was done in order to proffer solutions and recommendations in line with the research questions and problems.

The nature of this study, which involves the understanding of human action from the perspective of the identity of religions, calls for a need to explore the model of as beliefs of religious leaders and model for as practices of religious leaders in fostering interreligious dialogue; and also to perceive the concept of peace in religions as understood within their setting as they interact in interreligious dialogue (Babbie & Mouton, 2002). The above factors necessitated the employment of secondary research which is a qualitative approach. This is order to understand the complexity of religious understanding of the concept of peace, as most knowledge of religious identity and background is gained through cultural and social constructions such as language, consciousness, shared meaning and claims that contribute to people's lives (Babbie & Mouton, 2002).

Therefore, as a result of the nature of this research, a conceptual understanding of peace building/brokerage and religious conflicts between Christian and Muslim religious leaders as peace brokers was gained through qualitative research of the works of various authors. This was in order to allow a greater appreciation of the complexities of and ambivalences in the Christian and Muslim conceptual interpretative understanding of peace, and the model of and for religious leaders as peace brokers in interreligious dialogue (De Villiers, 2005).

1.9 Outline of the Chapters

As detailed here, this research has five chapters. Chapter one is the introduction and background to the study. The chapter has provided the conceptual relationship between religions, conflict, peace and religious leaders in relation to anthropological and ecological

settings for interreligious dialogue. This was followed by the research question and sub-questions. The motivation and aims of the study were explored, followed by the limitations of the study, as well as the research design and conceptual framework, finally followed by the methodology and the significance of the study. Chapter two discusses the conceptual understanding of religious leaders in the theology of religions for interreligious dialogue. The chapter also explores interreligious dialogue between the Christian and Muslim religions. This is followed by a discussion of the conceptual understanding of the typology of the theology of religions in relation to peace. The chapter also explores the missiological approach to interreligious dialogue and concludes with Knitter and Clooney's proposal for a practical ethical bridge in interreligious dialogue. Chapter three explores the comparative theology of religions in relation to Christian and Muslim etymological understandings of peace. Chapter four focuses on a model of and for religious leaders as peace brokers. Chapter five summarises the study and provides recommendations and suggestions for future research. It explores how to foster peace between the Christian and Muslim religions in the Nigerian context.

1.10 Significance of the Study and its Contribution to the Field of Study

This research is significant because it will contribute to the ecumenical call for religious dialogue that is done academically and practically, as contact and dialogue are crucial to breaking down religious conflict. Practical dialogue, which is faith to faith dialogue, is very important if done in a straightforward manner with factual information and without a monopoly from the identity of religions. This research is significant because most of the research done in relation to religious leaders is not at this level, and does not explore faith-to-faith encounterology in the model of and for religious leaders as peace brokers for interreligious dialogue in the Nigerian context. As a result of this research there is a need for a missiological approach in order to foster interreligious dialogue in religious diversity. The road map for interreligious dialogue can be followed only if there is an understanding of faith-to-faith encounterology in the identity of religions for interreligious dialogue, especially amongst Christians and Muslim religious leaders. This study is significant because it will contribute to the lives of religious leaders to help them see themselves as peace brokers in harnessing their model of and for religions in interreligious dialogue. This can be done by providing insight into and understanding of how the model of and for religious leaders as peace brokers can foster peace through interreligious dialogue, especially in Nigeria.

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CHAPTER TWO

RELIGIOUS LEADERS IN THE THEOLOGY OF RELIGIONS

2. Introduction

This chapter seek to explore the role of religious leaders in theology of religion. The question is how and why can religious leaders engage in theology of religions? This question prompted the researcher to explore the roles of religious leaders in the theology of religions because the researcher observed that many concepts of interreligious dialogue in the theology of religions often attempt the need for a critical study of the identity of religions for interreligious dialogue. This is because, most of the causes of the conflicts are socially constructed cultural claims to the ultimate truth as it relates to identity (Pargament *et al*., 1998:710). Religious leaders are in a position to harness the identity of their religions in relation to moral issues for interreligious dialogue.

Religious leaders are at the crux of peace or conflict, and they are closer to the people (grassroots) and understand how religious identities are formed among their members. Therefore, because of the roles of religious leaders, peace might be attainably because of their reputable and influential roles in their communities, and they can contribute a lot to the success and progress of interreligious dialogue (Abu-Nimer, 2001a:685). Therefore, this chapter explores the role of religious leaders in the theology of religions by conceptualising the typology of the theology of religions in order to understand how religious leaders can engage in a theology of religions for interreligious dialogue. Emphasis is placed on Christian religious leaders as prototypes to view interreligious dialogue as a mission that requires an understanding of other religious theology through its inclusion, rather than exclusion, for interreligious dialogue in a pluralistic, religiously diversified setting.

2.1 Critiques of Religious Leaders

The identity of religions has become one of the issues in the world. Braaten (1992:35) says that other religious traditions have critically challenged faith-to-faith encounterology in the theology of religions for being fundamental by validating the truth with ideologies. Kritzinger (2008) notes that faith-to-faith encounterology is built on God's movement of love toward humankind. Knitter (2007:26) adds that none of the other religious traditions have these

truths as part of their belief system, and this makes it impossible for them to understand God's message of salvation and to accept it. To them, it might seem as bondage when one makes the choice of accepting, and living out, his salvific message, but for those who do so, it is liberating and fulfilling (1 Cor. 2:14). To those who are perishing, this is foolishness (NIV, 1 Cor. 1:18). Braaten (1992:35) says that Christianity's promise of a future of fulfilment, through the Gospel of Christ, would be meaningless apart from the universal context of humanity's religious history. The uniqueness of Christianity lies particularly in its individuality and making its claims to absolute truth and validity over every other religion. Braaten (1992:37) says that this allows one, under the conditions of historical relativism, to continue to appreciate Christianity and still regard it as the highest religion, as long as one adopts it as a criterion to evaluate other religions. Christianity's claims of truth as the only true religion do not rest on its encounterology with other religions, but it is established and builds on the work, life and death of Jesus Christ (Knitter, 2002:26). This is unlike the other religions that, until recently, were viewed as zones of spiritual and theological darkness.

In the words of Pinnock (1992:81), Luther and others underwent unpleasant manifestations of the corrupt aspects of religion; therefore, Luther commented that all worship and religions outside of Christ re to be viewed as the worship of idols. Johnson (1997:7) points out that, 2000 years ago, God entered human history through Jesus Christ, who was nailed to and died on a cross, hanging between two thieves. Three days later He arose from the dead. This is the central claim of missiology. Johnson (1997:7) adds that "the truthfulness of encounterology depends upon a critical historical resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead". The above statements are quotes from the Scripture, where Paul wrote about the significance of Christ's resurrection: "If Christ has not been raised, our preaching is useless and so is our faith" (1 Cor. 15:14), because Christian faith and allegiance in following Jesus Christ would have been in vain and false if Christ had not risen from the dead.

Therefore, the missiological approach in interreligious dialogue offers criteria by which its truth claims can be evaluated, and the best way to begin examining the theology of religions is to carefully study the accounts of Christ's life as found in the Gospels in the New Testament. It is important to recognise that evil is real and in our midst. Despite what influential religious leaders try to project, Knitter (1995:222) affirms that philosophers always try to sophisticate language; there is an imbalance in this world that "something is wrong with missiology and the world". According to Johnson (1999:5), the reason for

interreligious dialogue is that there is a human dilemma worth mentioning and that no other religion presents a solution in the same way that missiology does. Knitter (2007:52) says that Evangelicals refer to missiology as "good news", as there is a "Higher Power", a "Divine Reality", who can help us or perhaps save us and make it possible for us to exceed our own limitations.

Knitter (2007:51) argues that Evangelicals hold to the belief that the Bible is infallible as the foundation on which all claims are built. Therefore, any claims made contrary to it are false. This understanding is exclusivist, because it considers the Bible as the main authority of God's revelation. Therefore, exclusivists need to recognise that other religions carry truths and values in regard to their conclusions found in the Gospels that Christ is the only true model of salvation, even though the scripture declares that Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life (John 14:16). But, according to Wright (2010:17), the mission of God from Genesis to Revelation unifies the Bible, because the focus of the Bible is God's mission in bringing salvation to the world.

As a result of the above exclusivist's perspectives of salvation, scholars like Knitter (2007) and Clooney (2010) are prompted to support interreligious dialogue by studying and understanding the theology of religions through a comparative theology of religion with the purpose of defusing tension, transforming conflicts and building peaceful societies. It is this that has led to the theology of religions and comparative theology of religions becoming an academic discourse (Clooney, 2010; Knitter, 2002). There thus have been calls for a need to explore typology in the theology of religions as thus: exclusivism, inclusivism and pluralism, in relation to some selected constants in mission for interreligious dialogue, because we live in a world in which diversity is increasingly affecting and changing everything within and outside the dominion of religious leaders. As a result, no religious community is exempted from the pressures of diversity.

Therefore, the diversity of religious identity is a reality of the 21st century. This statement calls for a harnessing of the theology of religious leaders through comparative interreligious dialogue (Clooney, 2010). This is because God's presence is in the identity of other religions. Knitter (2007:33) stresses that, in theological terms, the notion of some Evangelical exclusivists, such as the Evangelical and the Pentecostal Churches, whose ideology is that of the total placement of God's revelation and salvation, and that God's presence is absent in

other religions, means that dialogue cannot be established with them. For them, no revelation and no salvation are found in other religions. However, this stance has been redeemed by some Evangelical religious leaders who, without compromising their faith and being true to Christianity, seek ways to enter into dialogue with other faiths while recognising God's presence in other religions. Even though they acknowledge the fact that God is present in other religions, God's salvation is absent in other religions.

Therefore, there is a need, especially for religious leaders, to embark on theology of religions for interreligious dialogue, as we are living in an age that urges religious leaders to learn from other religions for interreligious dialogue (Knitter, 2011:117). A model of and for religious leaders as peace brokers for interreligious dialogue, through an understanding of the identity of religions, has become an urgent need in this time of religious pluralism because of the global religious need for interreligious dialogue. Therefore, understanding the identity of religions suits religious pluralism, which requires commitment to one's own religion and at the same time openness to the truth found in other religions. Therefore, for faith-to-faith encounterology to be successful, religious leaders need to harness the identity of religions for interreligious dialogue. In the missiological approach, one needs to be aware that the followers of other religions have their own lists of wrongs, perpetrated perceptions and misperceptions of their exclusion (Kritzinger, 2008:764). This understanding needs to arise from love and respect for religious traditions.

2.2 Critiques of the Theology of Religions

Conceptual perspectives are the most difficult faith-to-faith encounterology for religious leaders to overcome in the theology of religions for interreligious dialogue, and moving beyond these burdens by crossing religious borders through the theology of religions is one of the most valuable tools for fruitful interreligious dialogue (Kritzinger, 2008). Therefore, in order to cross these religious borders, religious leaders need to be convinced, through the theology of religions, that they are not prisoners of the past, because there is freedom and openness in living and working together in the hope that individuals and the community can change their attitudes. This is because missiology for interreligious dialogue requires the inclusion of other religious identities and a flexible approach (Knitter, 2012:139). The inclusion of other religious identities calls for a missiological approach by abiding by the call of the Vatican II Council on the global need for interreligious dialogue.

This study will avoid strong, negative commentary on the theology of other religions for interreligious dialogue in order to foster a missiological approach. Therefore, the missiological approach of this study is in relation to Christian constants in mission. The aim of the approach taken here is to reflect on several scholars' conceptualisations of the typologies in the theology of religions, as the intention is to understand the Christian and Muslim beliefs and practices of religious leaders as peace brokers, and not to cause conflict in the name of religion. For these reasons, the study explores the typologies in the theology of religions, namely exclusivism, inclusivism and pluralism, in a reflection on peace (Knitter, 2002). Therefore, this study explores a few preliminary distinctions between the typologies in the theology of religions regarding the model of and for religious leaders as peace brokers.

The faith-to-faith encounterology of religious leaders as peace brokers in the theology of religions will play a significant role in understanding other religions in the 21st century. The question posed here is why, what and how religious leaders can serve as peace brokers in the theology of religions? To answer why religious leaders need to engage in a theology of religion, it is necessary to point out that, in the present age, the model of and for religious leaders as peace brokers has not been harnessed in interreligious dialogue in African countries, especially in Nigeria (Kritzinger, 2008).

Therefore, the question is to what extent a model of and for religious leaders as peace brokers can make valuable contributions to interreligious dialogue? And where is the place of religious leaders as peace brokers in addressing the concept of peace in the theology of religions for interreligious dialogue? One of the reasons for the model of and for religious leaders for interreligious dialogue in addressing the concept of peace in the theology of religions is that, because everybody is talking about the role of the model of and for religious leaders as peace brokers, something must be wrong. The things that are wrong today are conflicts that are happening in the world amongst religions, especially the Christian and Muslim religions, which need faith-to-faith encounterology on the concept of peace for interreligious dialogue. Another question is what is the theology of religions? The theology of religions is to learn by crossing other religious borders for interreligious dialogue on the treasures of peace that God has generously distributed amongst religions. The purpose is not to form a new religion, but to form an interreligious dialogical community of communities in order to understand the concept of peace in other religions and to learn from one another, because people are living in multi-religious, multicultural and multilingual societies (Knitter,

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2012:139). This affirms that the model of and for religious leaders as peace brokers is facing problems of challenging questions about the concept of peace amongst Christian and Muslim religions for humanity. One of the challenges, amongst many, is whether the practice of peace in other religions calls for a theology of religions.

The question is, why does pluralism vary in the concept of peace in religions? Since God's peace is one, should all faith-to-faith encounterology in the beliefs and practices of peace in other religions be valid in God's eyes? Is the conceptual understanding of the model of and for religious leaders as peace brokers in religious diversities equal, and how can they relate to each other for interreligious dialogue? To answer such questions calls for the need to study and measure the typologies in the theology of religions (Bosch, 1991). This is because the missiological approach fits the theology of religions in harnessing the model of and for religious leaders as peace brokers. Therefore, missiology in the theology of religions is a response to the model of and for religious leaders as peace brokers in this 21st century, because it is a matter of taking the approach of missiology seriously, truthfully and openly. The motive for the encounterology in the theology of religions for interreligious dialogue is not about the truth, nor to be judgmental, but to understand the authenticity and the reality of the truth involves how the truth is perceived and implemented for interreligious dialogue (Clooney, 2010; Knitter, 2007). For this reason, many religious leaders admit the need for faithful encounterology in the theology of religions, with a concern for issues that might lead to interreligious dialogue, because fruitful missiology with other religions – if grounded in personal exchanges and loving one another – may salvage the differences of exclusion in pluralism, as genuine faith-to-faith encounterology for interreligious dialogue is not concerned with the doctrine in the theology of other religions, but with the beliefs and practices in relation to human suffering, which is common among religions (Knitter, 2011:117).

The question is how can religious leaders serve as peace brokers in the theology of religions? As noted above, faith-to-faith encounterology in the theology of religions is done with a mind-set of a pluralistic religious environment that has varying degrees of identity. Therefore, the encounterology can be done through a conceptual understanding of the identity of religions in one's own religion, by comparing it with the other for interreligious dialogue (Johnson, 1997:7). The missiological approach in the theology of religions has dominated the

theological agenda, as the nature of religious disciplines for interreligious dialogue has become a subject of theological discussion (Knitter, 2007).

However, what is experienced in the Nigerian context in terms of interreligious dialogue calls for faith-to-faith encounterology between Christian and Muslim religious leaders in order for them to reposition themselves in the current pluralistic context by engaging appropriately in peace brokerage through the theology of religions. In order to be successful in interreligious dialogue, the identity of the theology of religions needs to be truthful in harnessing the beliefs and practices of religious leaders by accepting the fact that both religions contain truth about their identity, as the theology of religions for interreligious dialogue is not about exclusion, but about inclusion in a pluralistic context (Clooney, 2010). The question is how can religious leaders as peace brokers undertake encounterology in the theology of religions for interreligious dialogue without necessarily having been a member of other religions? What is the role of the model of and for religious leaders as peace brokers? Typologies in the theology of religions pose such questions, with solutions and suggestions for religious leaders as peace brokers.

If there are challenges in missiology that require a paradigm shift, then the theological religious paradigm shift is also affected. Therefore, as a result of the diversities of religious theology, there is a need for a new paradigm shift, because the new paradigm shift is necessarily due to the issue of the Christian faith that has become an urgent challenge among other faiths in this multi-religious and religiously polarised world (Bosch, 1991).

In the words of Saayman (2009:228), according to Edinburgh's 2010 common call, Christians are called to authentic dialogue, respectful engagement and humble mission in other faiths, even though some questions have been raised about how Christian religious leaders can act as peace brokers in interreligious dialogue and respond to other faiths and those without being in the other religion? Christian religious leaders as peace brokers in interreligious dialogue should be a theological and sociological entity, because it will be significant if Christian religious leaders could emerge as missiologists to devote themselves to the important issues in the area of sociology and human dignity. It will help Christian religious leaders as peace brokers to relate with others through a dialogical approach, as dialogue from the Christian perspective means witnessing to the deepest convictions in regard to the uniqueness of Christ, whilst respecting, listening to and learning from other religious identities (Bosch, 1991).

As a result of the challenges elucidated above, there is a need for the model of and for Christian religious leaders as peace brokers in interreligious dialogue to make a paradigm shift in relation to the missiological approach in the theology of religions in order to understanding other religions, as the purpose of interreligious dialogue is not about the truth claim, but about religious perspectives on their relationships with God and loving humankind. This is despite the fact that differences of beliefs and practices amongst religions may also point to differences in the ultimate, Divine truth about peace (Hick, 1988:377). Therefore, the differences in the theology of religions should be a way for learning in a new direction through interreligious dialogue. The solution is not to do away with the Christian belief in the concept peace or other Christian identities, but to take such belief to understand other religions. Understanding peace, especially between the Christian and Muslim religions, is an opening for a missiological approach to interreligious dialogue if it is done in relation to ethical issues. This is because the missiological understanding of peace by Christian religious leaders as peace brokers for interreligious dialogue must empower other religions in the task of the social transformation of human lives in the changing world, despite the fact that there must be some missiological risks encountered by Christian religious leaders as peace brokers for interreligious dialogue (Clooney, 2010).

2.2.1 Diversities

Bosch's influential book, *Transforming Mission,* is important because of his multidimensional approach that has contributed to the understanding of mission. This is seen in Bosch's high-fidelity expressions of mission that respond to the diversities of the theology of religions in which Christian theology of religion finds itself, because mission has found itself in a testing time of paradigm changes when danger, opportunity and dialogue meet (Bosch, 1991). Therefore, missiology should experience a paradigm shift by giving birth to a new approach, as the postmodern view of the future is that "opposite things happen at the same time without being contradictory". Bosch asserts that it is only within the force field of apparent opposites that mission will begin to approximate a way of theologising in the midst of paradigm changes.

Saayman (2009:228) has described Bosch's approach as one of the greatest contributions to missionary thinking and practice because of his open-minded approach to how to talk, think and write about mission in the wave of changes that are changing the face of the world and

the church. These changes occurring through the abundance of resources and relationships made easily accessible via the internet are increasingly also challenging mission, therefore there is need for mission to revisit its role by introducing a new methodological approach and also educating people for the promotion of mission (Saayman, 2009:214). As the church is called to be a missional church, there is need for the church to be inclusive in beliefs and practices, not denying the identity or position of Christ, but being ready to respect, listen and learn from other religions in a dialogical approach that might make room for evangelism (Twiss & Bruce, 2000). Therefore, the missiological challenges for the Christian theology of religion for interreligious dialogue are to use and understand the benefits and challenges and to develop the missiological opportunities that arise through interreligious dialogue. This is a time of unprecedented opportunity, as the interconnected, globalised world shares quantities of technology, education and data never before imagined, and religious plurality is increasing by the day (Bosch, 1991). The changes and challenges are occurring through the abundance of resources and relationships made easily accessible via the internet. These are increasingly challenging mission, therefore there is a need for Christian religious leaders, through missiological approaches to interreligious dialogue, to revisit their role by introducing new missiological approaches and also educating people for the promotion of mission through interreligious dialogue.

Christian religious leaders as peace brokers for missiology through interreligious dialogue must respond to the challenges and point the way forward for the present and next generations, because missiological approaches to interreligious dialogue are aimed at building trust amongst religions with the understanding that it is a respectful exchange and not a conversion strategy Christians and Muslims in the theology of religions should express respect for the freedom of religious identities, because religious meaning and social and cultural systems vary as a result of the fact that religion is not a word with one fixed meaning. Rather, it falls into the category of equivocal words; in one sense, religion is what human beings are "born into", yet in another sense, it is what human beings are "reborn into" (Knitter, 2012:139). Religion by birth and religion by conviction may be described as "religion by clan solidarity" and "religion as life vision". These concepts are very different from each other, and it is only the second one that is religion proper. The first type is a religion of cultural form, which has great value of its own. The second type, religion as life vision, answers quite another need of human beings. The purpose of religion as life vision is

simply to make a person grow, mentally and emotionally, into full adulthood – it is to be "reborn again" Saayman, 2009:214. Over the past centuries, moral and physical force was sometimes used to induce people into the Christian faith without being Christian by conviction or by birth; hence, people were forced to be reborn into Christianity.

According to Markham (1993:33), the impact of religion and globalisation calls for the new missiological approach for interreligious dialogue, since Vatican II presupposes acceptance of religious freedom, which encourages people to follow their free and responsible judgment without pressure. The Vatican II declaration was on the right path to religious freedom because it is based on the very dignity of the human person, as known through the revealed Word of God and by reason itself (Markham, 1993:41).

2.2.1.1 Relativism

The risks in which religious leaders as peace brokers involve themselves in their bid to engage in a missiological approach to religious theology for interreligious dialogue are obvious, because nothing is done to mitigate human lives without risks, even though the refusal to take the risk of dialogical encounterology in the theology of religion for interreligious dialogue is itself a risk due to the religious diversity of identities (Knitter, 2002). There is a fear that faith-to-faith encounterology for interreligious dialogue may meet with other religious theology, especially with theologians who are better prepared, more sophisticated and better able to articulate their identities. Some religious theologies may be better structured and personalised than others. In the words of Knitter (2012:139), the greater risk is that the "weaker" partner in the theological dialogical encounterology may become confused, may be theologically overpowered, and may be imperceptibly plunged into religious theological doubt, or into abandoning the faith and embracing that of the more "powerful" theological dialogic partner.

Another fear in relation to missiology for interreligious dialogue is the risk of religious relativism, which claims that all models of and for religious theological meaning, social and cultural systems of salvation/peace are equally true and propose one universal religious theological concept of salvation/peace for the whole of humankind. Knitter adds that relativism fails to understand that the theology of religions is not saying the same thing on every point at issue, as every individual in a religion has a personal responsibility and the freedom to look for objective religious truth. Importantly, the need at present is not for

religious theological truth, but for mutual understanding, respect, love and tolerance for interreligious dialogue (Knitter, 2011:117). This is clear in terms of the existence of objective truth, allied with respect for everyone's identities, even when one disagrees with some aspect of others, but it is a necessary requirement for safe, fruitful interreligious dialogue. One of the risks for religious theological dialogical encounterology for interreligious dialogue is that of its syncretistic nature.

2.2.1.2 Syncretism

One of the fears relating to holistic and flexible faith-to-faith encounterology for interreligious dialogue is syncretism, which is the effort to put several theologies of religion together and carve a new religion out of them, or to combine two theologies of religion. This may be guided by the desire to preserve all factors that seem to be common to all theologies of religion. It may be the desire not to offend any of the other theology of religion, but rather to work out a missiological dialogical approach in which none of them feels threatened (Knitter, 2002). Syncretism may often appear in particular practices, such as exclusion in the missiological approach to interreligious dialogue, when it does not respect the religious identity of the others but presents them as members of one religious community of faith.

However, one must be careful not to syncretise one's theological faith, conviction and/or understanding, or to relativise one's theological uniqueness in a bid to arrive at a common ground for interreligious dialogue.

2.2.1.3 Indifferentism

Another risk of the missiological approach to the theology of religions for interreligious dialogue is the danger of religious indifferentism. As a result of common goods and problems with other theologies of religion, and with their religious convictions, one may also lose belief in one's own religious theological identity. When one finds no differences in the theologies of religion, or finds all theologies of religion essentially to be equal, then there may be a risk of losing faith in one's own theology of religion, which may lead to indifferentism (Knitter, 1995:222).

These risks and dangers of encounterology for interreligious dialogue can be avoided if Christian religious leaders are well grounded in their own theology of religion and are living

in their religion with sincerity and faithfulness; if one is steadfast and committed to one' identity, one will not lose one's faith. Therefore, the missiological approach in interreligious dialogue is not to be silent regarding the message of Jesus Christ, but rather to proclaim the uniqueness of Christ in a holistic and flexible approach.

2.3 Typologies

The approach of the constants in mission is painful, because the quantity of information and quality of new awareness of other religions today has set off a barrage of questions as thus: why are there so many different beliefs and practices of peace among religions in relation to the understanding of constants in mission? If God is one, should there not be one belief and practice of peace? Is a religious etymological understanding of peace valid in God's eyes and equally effective in putting people in contact with the human and the Divine? Are the differences of beliefs and practices of peace more a matter of varied religions than of conflicting content? How can the model of and for religious leaders relate to each other for interreligious dialogue? Or how can the various identities of religious beliefs and practices of peace relate to each other? (Knitter, 2007). These questions have constituted the agenda of faith-to-faith encounterology in order to understand constants in mission for interreligious dialogue. Based on the table on the following page, the typologies of theology of religions in Knitter's and selected Bevans and Schroeder's missiological approaches in relation to constants in mission, will be explored in relation to interreligious dialogue (Bevans & Schroeder, 2004; Knitter, 2002).

This is because, today, the presence, power and richness of the understanding of constants in mission in relation to typology in the theology of religions have affected faith-to-faith encounterology for interreligious dialogue.

The below table of four constants in mission shows the understandings of Evangelical faith-to-faith encounterology of some exclusivists, who hold that there is no value in other religions. Wan (2007) says that "there is no valid religion", therefore he denies faith-to-faith encounterology in the theology of religions for interreligious dialogue. Knitter (2002:17) states that, due to the considerable abnormal appearances and inadequacy of other religions, missiology as a science of religions has the responsibility to move in and take over the leading role to guide all other faiths into a clear and proper relationship with God and humankind. According to him, this has been the missiological perspective in church history

to date. Missiology has not only become the science of religion for human suffering only for Christians; it has to propagate its mission in the theology of religions for interreligious dialogue. This is seen in the missiological challenges today, where there are some exclusivists whose Evangelical belief is a strong force in the theology of religions that grants no value to the identity of other religious beliefs and practices of salvation, because they believe that Christianity is the only religion with an absolute message across the world (Knitter, 2011:117).

THE FOUR CONSTANTS IN MISSION	EXCLUSIVISM (No openings for interreligious dialogue)	INCLUSIVISM (Partial openings for interreligious dialogue)	PLURALISM (Total openings for interreligious dialogue)
Christology	Christ is the only true salvation/peace.	Christ is the only true salvation/peace. However, there is little truth about Christ in others that requires missiology.	Christ is one of the truths of salvation / peace.
Salvation/Peace	Salvation/peace is in Christ alone.	Salvation/peace is not in Christ alone, there are other salvations that require missiology.	Salvation / peace is universally present in different understandings.

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	Human beings know nothing about the salvation/peace of Christ. As a result, they need Christ.	Human beings know little about the salvation/ peace of Christ that requires missiology.	Human beings know about the salvation/ peace, but in different ways.
Anthropology			
Culture	Human cultures of salvation/ peace are invalid apart from Christ alone.	Human cultures of salvation/peace are partially valid because there are some elements of good.	Human cultures of salvation/ peace are valid in different ideologies, not in Christ alone.

2.3.1 Exclusivism

Exclusive encounterology for interreligious dialogue is one of the concepts that excludes other religious beliefs and values of peace. Here, there is no agreement between the views and the practices of peace in one religion and those of another. The exclusivism model of and for peace amongst religions can be defined as differences in ideas, where one considers his/her own to be unique and superior in comparison with that of the other (Knitter, 2002). Religious leaders in exclusivism present the beliefs and values of peace from their identity as the ultimate answer to everything (Clooney, 2010). Exclusivism has dominated the truth of the beliefs and practices of peace, which go against the reasonable conclusion that missiology is inevitable. This is because exclusivism counts the beliefs and practices of peace as sole criterion by which all religions can be understood and evaluated, and holds that inspiration for the exclusivist's missiology comes chiefly from some Evangelical and Pentecostal religious leaders who are orthodox fundamentalists. The exclusivist's missiological approach for interreligious dialogue needs to be opened sincerely by considering human nature that treats the identity of other religions equal in all respects, and by recognising and respecting religious dignity with openness, cherishing relationships, and ensuring freedom of religion by doing unto others what others want done unto them.

The exclusivism that holds that there is only one set of true values and practices of peace in religion needs to understand that other religions value their own beliefs and practices also.

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Looking at exclusivism, faith-to-faith encounterology seems to have played a greater role in other religions through the 21st century, because the greatness of human achievement in relation to peace in other religions and cultures is reflected in them, even though there are limitations. This is seen in the exclusivists' model of peace that functions independently of the knowledge of other religions by allocating a central function to one's own model for peace. The above views show that, if beliefs and practices of peace rest on exclusivism, then, by logical implication, the other religious beliefs and practices of peace must be false or illusory (Tilley, 1999:318).

The exclusivists need to know that the model of peace for interreligious dialogue is carried out by considering other religions; in addition, there must also be a reverencing of human dignity in religions. However, the idea of the exclusivist model of peace for interreligious dialogue today might be considered as one of the more extreme ways of portraying one's religious arrogance in relation to religious diversity. The truth is that exclusivism is going too far in condemning other religions' models of peace for interreligious dialogue as meaninglessness, simply on the basis of what seems to exclusivism to be the force of judgement (Küng, 1967:25). The exclusivist model of peace towards other religions has a negative formulation of heresy, because differences in the understanding of the model for peace amongst religious leaders does not place them outside interreligious dialogue. Religious leaders' faith-to-faith encounterology should not be denied to those who sincerely want to engage in interreligious dialogue (Küng, 1967). Therefore, exclusivists who declare the model of peace as absolute should be prepared to learn from the model of peace in other religions for interreligious dialogue, knowing that the ideologies of the exclusivists, inclusivists and pluralists are all about learning through open and humble dialogue.

To learn is to give an answer to the model of and for peace when other religions ask specific questions, such as how can religious leaders as peace brokers in interreligious dialogue understand the beliefs and practices of peace in other religions without explicitly knowing other religions? Can religious leaders as peace brokers approach the model of peace explicitly for interreligious dialogue without understanding other religions? Are religious leaders as peace brokers explicitly required to be members of other religions before engaging in interreligious dialogue? The exclusivists' religious peace brokerage believes that, without explicitly having Christ's model of peace, there is no model for peace in other religions (Haron, 2007:257). The exclusivists' model of peace will pose difficulties for interreligious

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dialogue. Even though, for many centuries, the exclusivists' faith-to-faith encounterology has led Christianity to all corners of the world, in today's multi-religious and multicultural world it is not possible for exclusivists to abound, knowing that the basis of interfaith dialogue brings out clearly what is bound to be a central issue for anyone who has a deep commitment both to his or her own religion and to dialogue with others (Knitter, 1995:222). Therefore, faith-to-faith encounterology is to speak on what is common to all religions with regard to peace; that is, those points in other religions that inwardly compel religions to claim a universal significance and finality of the true model of and for peace.

Therefore, faith-to-faith encounterology for interreligious dialogue involves a dialogue between religions that categorically make conflicting claims of identity that do not cause other religions to be levelled to indifference so that anything worthy of being called a "religious identity" has been silently suppressed. This is because the missiological approach in the theology of religions for interreligious dialogue involves mutual understanding and self-correction (Clooney, 2010). All religions are exclusivists in regard to the understanding of their beliefs, values and practices of peace within themselves, as they have common goods and problems in their understandings. Therefore, faith-to-faith encounterology for interreligious dialogue needs to see the model of and for peace in other religions beyond itself, and must not to condemn, but must love, other religions.

In an exclusive missiology it would be fit to see beyond and to try to experience the goodness of peace that will stand in interreligious dialogue (Knitter, 2002). This is because there is much to discover and to experience in a faith-to-faith encounterology with other religions, and more so by experiencing the goodness of the other religions. Therefore, missiology must take up the challenge of going beyond and entering into other religions' boundaries and experiencing other religions (Knitter, 2012:139). The faith-to-faith encounterology for interreligious dialogue asks exclusive religious positions to look outside and to open their eyes to other religious traditions, and then to look at themselves again from this perspective, because they ought to learn not just from principles, but also from experiences.

Therefore, exclusivist religious leaders as peace brokers in faith-to-faith encounterology for interreligious dialogue should know that, in a world that is increasingly interdependent, there is a greater need for dialogue and co-operation amongst various religions, as interreligious dialogue is a matter of giving and also a subject of speech. This seems to be violated when

the understandings of other religious interpretations are considered to be true only in one's own religion (Abu-Nimer *et al*., 2007). There is a need to test the four constants in mission for interreligious dialogue in relation to the typologies of the theology of religions.

2.3.1.1 Christology

Exclusivism's understanding of Christology in relation to some Evangelical and Pentecostal claims is that the beliefs and practices of Christ's peace are the only way, along with God's revelation of peace. This missiology arises from the Biblical perspectives that Christ's peace is not only a peace of God, but the peace of God, nor is it just a peace, but the peace of the world (Pinnock, 1992:54). Despite differences in missiological approaches, the truth is that, according to some Evangelicals and Pentecostal perspectives, Christ's peace is the only way in which beliefs and practices of peace can lead to God and the revelation of God's peace. The belief is based on biblical evidence in the New and Old Testament – of Jesus as the Saviour, the only one who can save humanity from the conflict in which it has placed itself; this is constant in mission for some of the Evangelical religious leaders (Knitter, 2007). Some Evangelical religious leaders, their ideology of Christ is that Christ has saved human beings from condemnation by reconciling them with God, that Christ, in his obedience, has built the bridge and established a permanent salvation between God and humankind (Knitter, 2002:28).

Cox (1988:7) says that the above exclusivists' faith-to-faith encounterology is based on New Testament scripture that declares that all the fullness of the Godhead was present in Jesus Christ.

Netland (1991:262) notes that no other religious mission has made claims such as the ones made of Jesus, as a broker between God and humankind and saving human beings from suffering. Pinnock (1992:49) says that God reconciled human beings through Christ. According to Knitter (2002:31), exclusivists claim that Christ is the only salvation for human beings. Knitter's (2002:27) understanding of the exclusivist view of the uniqueness of Christ is that it is very dear to their cultural beliefs and values. Most Evangelicals adhere to such beliefs of exclusivism because they base their beliefs on the Bible, especially the New Testament, which witnessed the missiology of Christ. Thomas (2000:63) notes that the faith-to-faith encounterology of Christ is not confined to the exclusivists' settings, but also is among those who are outside, because some religious paths do not encounter God's way of

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missiology that leads to salvation, as in Christianity. Therefore, Christ is not only a means to salvation, but there are no other beliefs and practices of peace besides Christ. According to Shenk (1997:154) and Netland (2005:141), the leverage of Christ's missiology comes from God, who gave Him the authority to become a peace broker. This authority is found in Christ's statement that "All authority 'of salvation' has been given unto me…" (NIV, Matt. 28:18). Since Christ made the above claims, therefore, the practices of Christ's peace are the only beliefs of peace in the exclusivists' context. The above views are certain, because denying the exclusivists' view is reducing Christianity, because it is the core message of missiology (Knitter, 2011:117)

Based on Shenk, Netland and Knitter's understandings of the beliefs and practices of Christ's peace in the context of pluralism above, it is clear that there are three positions that commonly can be distinguished from each other: an exclusive understanding of salvation that confesses Jesus alone as a means of salvation, an inclusive understanding of salvation that God's salvation through Christ is implicitly present in other religious ways, and a pluralist understanding of Christ's salvation as merely one of the many models of salvation among human beings.

Exclusivism will not agree with the above view, because its position is that, without explicitly being in Christ's salvation, other religions have no peace. Religious leaders as peace brokers who ascribe to such an exclusive understanding will not lead to peace brokerage for interreligious dialogue. Regarding the effort of the Vatican II Council on the urgent need for interreligious dialogue, they consider it as useless, because they believe that they have nothing to learn from such conversation and co-operation, which is dangerous because they do violence to the imperative of interreligious dialogue (Knitter, 2007). Missiology for interreligious dialogue is acceptable only when its aim is to learn and to know other religions, by accepting the fact that the beliefs and practices of peace in other religions, which is implicitly God's revelation through history, nature and conscience. With this in mind, it is of great importance for the exclusivists' missiological approach to interreligious dialogue to know that the beliefs and practices of peace are revealed in other religious traditions in conscience, history and nature by God through Christ (Bevans & Schroeder, 2004). This might call for interreligious dialogue, because God's revelation in Christ is not for Christians alone, but also for others.

Phan (2003:495) says that the revelation that God was revealed by himself and then to the human spirit, and not through the human spirit, is only for Christians because of its distinct identity from others, and because Christianity contains the nature of the absolute revelation of God's truth. According to Veitch (1971:1-22), Phan's beliefs are related to some of the exclusivists' faith-to-faith encounterology, such as Barth's mission, which states that God's revelation cannot be understood by human ability, but by God through his Holy Spirit. It is clear that God's revelation is found in the heart of human beings through the spirit of God, and not by human effort (Phan, 2003:495). Therefore, God's revelation of salvation through Christ is found in the heart of human beings, but with different practices based on their cultures. Barth's exclusivist model of salvation/peace as only through Christ's model for salvation/peace is not exclusive to Christians. Knitter (2002:34) says that what Barth and others like him overlooked was the Biblical evidence regarding God's revelation in the heart of human beings through nature and their consciences. Therefore, God's ability and desire to communicate with people of other faiths is not limited to exclusivism.

Heilbron (2012) affirms that Paul Althaus believed that revelation is an ever-occurring reality and takes place through the visible reality of creation and humanity's power to perceive and reason. He says that, for Althaus, this general revelation is necessary because, through this, humanity would experience God's judgment and its own need for redemption. He adds that Althaus's views are taken from Luther, who said that God's revelation was in the hearts of human beings and thus is ineradicable. But this general revelation of God is limited because it does not enable humanity to grasp God's mind and will concerning the human future, but the special understanding of God's revelation comes only through Christ's revelation.

In the words of Knitter (1974:64), Althaus's believed that human beings are sinful and need to realise their sinful nature. According to Althaus, human beings must know God in order not to sin against Him and also not to wholly reject Him. But Knitter (1974:135; 2007:35) says that Althaus's understanding of God's revelation of peace is contrary to Barth's understanding, because Barth believes that there is no real revelation and beliefs and practices of peace outside Christ. This is because Barth has silenced other religious beliefs and practices of peace as manufactured by humans. This means that other human beings' understanding of God's revelation and peace in their hearts, apart from Chris's peace, is a human construction. Barth should understand that God's revelation of peace, whether human made or not, is from God, because God reveals such beliefs of peace in their hearts, which

they construct for practices, but due to the limitations of human beings they could not comprehend all of the revelation. As a result, they need to understand the right beliefs and practices of peace through Christ. This can be done only through a missiological approach to interreligious dialogue. Knitter (2002:34) says that some Evangelicals and Pentecostal religious leaders who follow this more moderate viewpoint recognise and affirm and even rejoice in a genuine revelation of God in the hearts of human beings and through other religions. The authentic presence of God's revelation within the persons and structure of other faith communities represents more than groups of human beings asking questions, wrestling with the big issues of human existence, and the ways in which God gives answers and reaches out to humans. The Exclusivists conclude that human beings do not have salvation outside of Christ, although they have God's revelation in their hearts, and other religions do not qualify as bearers of salvation, although they have God's revelation; thus that which is implicit needs to be explicit.

2.3.1.2 Salvation

Exclusivism's understanding of the beliefs and practices of salvation/peace holds and accepts the notion that the right revelation, beliefs and practices of salvation/peace evidently are present in the hearts of human beings and in other religions. However, this does not resonate with the idea of the model of salvation/peace being present in other religions. The next section will explain why the some Evangelicals discard the notion of the model of salvation being present in other religions and why they claim its legitimacy only in Christ. Knitter (1995:222) says that the modern Evangelicals believe that God's salvation through Christ is revealed in the heart of human beings and in other religions, but it does not lead to the right practices. Knitter (1974:138) says that Althaus not only refutes the notion of salvation in the limitations of religions other than Christ, but also the idea that revelation is to become a means of salvation. This is observed when he reluctantly disallows "God's salvation to be mediated through any history outside that of Christ" (McGrath, 2001:546). Here Barth stands strong by agreeing with Althaus that salvation is only available and possible in and through Christ, in the scope of God's universal salvation. McGrath (2001:546) maintains that one cannot find God's salvation other than through Christ. God's salvation is possible only through Jesus Christ and, at the end of history, it will be the missiological approach to interreligious dialogue that will engage human beings to understand God's revelation in Christ. He declares that, while an exclusivist may believe that all non-Christians' salvation is

condemned, they do not have to believe this because, according to Barth's theology, exclusivism is compatible with the universal revelation of salvation. Lindell (1949:117) says that "God does not reveal Himself through other means than … through the church mission to the world".

McGrath (1996:167) states that the New Testament thus affirms the exclusive salvific act of God in Christ. These differences in the model for salvation should not be ignored or merged into the various concepts of divinity found in other religions. McGrath (1996:167) adds that God's revelation about Himself to other faiths is neither new nor controversial. He believes that other religions have some true things about God through creation and the Gospel, although he says that God's natural revelation does not let human beings into the right practices of salvation, as the right model of and for salvation is found only through Christ. McGrath (1996:178) says that God's ability to save is not limited to the effort of missiology for interreligious dialogue. He adds that God has the ability to save all people, without making use of faith-to-faith encounterology for interreligious dialogue, even though the building of trust, hope and the alleviation of human suffering informed by the Bible have not taken place. As a result, it requires faith-to-faith encounterology. The above statements show that McGrath (1996:167) has defined the relationship between revelation and salvation, whereas Althaus's understanding of God's revelation and salvation (Knitter, 1974:137) is that God's revelation to other religions is not salvation, because revelation is not equivalent to the practices of salvation. This means that God's revelation can exist and be active to bring forth fruit in a context where the right model for salvation does not yet exist. He adds that, even though this might be the case, it does not mean that revelation substitutes for salvation. Therefore, Christian beliefs and practices of peace can be used in missiology as a means of involvement in God's love towards humankind.

Vlach (2010) agrees with McGrath's (1996:178) distinctiveness of the Christian model of and for salvation. Vlach (2010) says that God is not restricted from stepping into reality and may use missiology as a means of involvement in God's plan of salvation for humankind. Vlach adds, in tune with McGrath's claims, that God may use the missiological approach for interreligious dialogue to bring people to faith through common moral values Vlach (2010).

The exclusivists Knitter (2007) says that individual salvation depends on an explicit, personal faith in Christ, which is an orthodox perspective. Knitter should understand that belonging is

not believing, just as believing is not belonging. God's salvation through Christ is revealed in other religions in their nature and conscience, and also in Christian scriptures and history. Therefore, practices of salvation do not necessarily belong explicitly to the orthodox exclusivist community. However, Vlach (2010) says that this view has been the traditional view of some religious leaders up until the Enlightenment, and still has many adherents today. For them, salvation is found in Christ, based on John 14:6 and Acts 4:12. He agrees with the standpoint of Knitter regarding the Biblical account that places sound judgment on the New Testament view that Christ is a prerequisite model for salvation. Braaten (1992:74) says that Christ is not merely an expressive model for salvation that is equally available in the plurality of religions; salvation is constituted by the coming of the concrete history of Christ. According to Knitter (2007:39), we can conclude that one can only come to know God's salvation by faith in Christ alone; this not only resonates with Biblical evidence, but is confirmed "according to Evangelicals, by what is evident when one takes a closer look at the teachings and workings of other religions by their fruits". One therefore can conclude that God's salvation is in Christ alone. Johnson's (1999:5) response to Knitter is that one would only find this in Orthodox Judaism and the Muslim belief, which certainly share our belief in a personal Creator-God, although the understanding of the model of and for Christ's salvation is unique with regard to the model for salvation in other religions.

There are truths about Christ's salvation in common with Muslims – that He was a peace broker between God and humankind and ministered to human suffering by healing the sick and feeding the hungry. The above model of Christ's salvation is among the common goods in other traditions (McGrath, 2001:545). The above common goods in other religions will not hinder faith-to-faith encounterology in witnessing the uniqueness of Christ as the author of peace. This is because the issues of salvation/peace have become faith-to-faith encounterology for interreligious dialogue because the identity of religions has abused how dialogue can be carried out.

This understanding of the exclusivists' model of salvation for the redemption and liberation of human beings through God's salvific activities is not distinguishable from God's actions on behalf of humans (Bosch, 1991). Therefore, the activities of religious leaders for interreligious dialogue should be linked with some charitable work; the charitable work should not be seen as witnessing or bringing God's salvation/peace into the world, but as a process of softening people up, which is known as peace building through humanitarian

services (Llamazares, 2005). This is because there is a connection between salvation/peace and physical and mental health and political and social liberation. Based on the above affirmations, religious leaders as peace brokers need to profess the practice of salvation/peace in all aspect of human endeavours, because human beings need salvation/peace in all aspects of their lives.

The exclusivists view human beings as being involved in conflict and, if left on their own, doomed to eternal punishment and damnation. Therefore, it is through Christ's peace and satisfactory, redeeming work that one cannot be involved in conflict, and so one is able to ensure salvation (Bevans & Schroeder, 2004:80). This indicates that salvation is personal, but has to be accompanied by reconciliation between humankind and with God through social action by liberating human beings in all aspects of their lives. Therefore, religious leaders should not be engaged only in the issues of truth of the model of salvation in religions, but also embark upon the inclusion of human sufferings.

2.3.1.3 Anthropology

Exclusivism's understanding of human beings is as God's creation, not only created by but created in God's image (Gen. 1:26-27). Therefore, the missiological approach to human beings will provide a better understanding of Christ, seeing that the second person of the Trinity took upon human flesh. It will also give access to the necessity, significance and model of and for salvation. Anthropology is significant, because biblical revelation and human concerns converge in the philosophical assumptions, activities and influences of other intellectual disciplines in modern times (Pannenberg, 1985:82). A missiological understanding of anthropology is significant because of the modern crisis in human self-understanding, and the impact it has upon mission. It is certain that human beings never achieve a clear knowledge of themselves unless they have first looked upon God's face, and then descend from planning themselves to scrutinising themselves. Looking at the creation of mankind, the constants in mission view human beings as fallen creatures, even though human beings are created in the image and likeness of God. But they lost that image and likeness, along with certain powers that are known as supernatural gifts, when Adam and Eve were in conflict with God. As a result, fallen humanity by itself is helpless to achieve any peaceful relation with humankind, as well as with God. God takes a first step through Christ by bringing healing, freedom and pardon, and God offers free salvation to individuals who

respond personally. Therefore, religious leaders as peace brokers should link and reconcile the separated relationship between humankind and God through interreligious dialogue, which might lead to openings and responses to human beings.

2.3.1.4 Culture

The understanding of culture in exclusivism is that there are a diversity of cultural identities. The cultural perspectives of inclusivists is that human beings' cultural practices of salvation/peace never encounter religions in a vacuum. Even though, religions is a social and cultural systems that work out and express the meaning of cultural beliefs and practices of peace. Therefore, culture can be seen as human beliefs and practices that provide a framework in which religions can be interpreted and in accordance with which life can be lived (Bevans & Schroeder, 2004). Such beliefs and practices of cultural framework include values and codes of conduct through a basic religious view. In essence, the model of and for religious culture is a ritual performance to which the adherents are bound.

Looking at the above affirmation of the model of and for religious culture, exclusivist religious leaders adopts a more counter-cultural stance, because any cultural beliefs and practices are of no value, as the beliefs and practices of exclusivism are meant to confront, counterbalance and judge others. If it is not in conformity with the exclusivists, anything less or beyond is a mistake (Rahner, 1968:418). The above condemnation of interreligious dialogue will not prevail without considering or respecting other cultural beliefs and practices. Therefore, faith-to-faith encounterology of religious cultural beliefs and practices of peace should be developed around the insight that the true practices of peace for humanity are achieved in submission to order, and that is beyond human making but accessible to humanity through God's revelation in religious cultures (Bevans & Schroeder, 2004:47). Therefore, other religious cultural understandings of peace should be perceived as an effort to gear interreligious dialogue, because religious cultures cannot avail themselves of the means of peace without relating it to the transformation and enhancement of human valuing. In terms of exclusivism's understanding of other religious cultures of peace, these are considered as having no regard significance, although other religious cultures of peace can be used to make it clearer, to communicate better and to help express it for interreligious dialogue. This means that the missiological approach of other beliefs and practices of

religious culture can be banished or eliminated if they are not in conformity with Christ's peace, so that the missiological approach might establish a new creation found in other religions.

2.3.2 Inclusivism

Inclusivism's faith-to-faith encounterology for interreligious dialogue is both an acceptance and rejection of other religions. On the one hand, it accepts the spiritual inclusion and manifestation of beliefs and practices of peace in other religions so that they can properly be called God's implicit presence of peace that is already in the heart of human beings through God's spirit. On the other hand, it rejects them as not having sufficient beliefs and practices relating to peace (Knitter, 2002). This is in contrast with some of the Protestant fundamentalists, who showed that the beliefs and practices of peace ultimately belong to their community, something which interreligious dialogue could hardly attain. Inclusivism in faith-to-faith encounterology for interreligious dialogue is a holistic, flexible approach because it seeks to define the peace by which other religions might be integrated into their theological reflection, so that it brings about and makes a comparison with the identity of religions for interreligious dialogue (Abu-Nimer, 1996:22). Therefore, the missiological approach for interreligious dialogue is to integrate the religious culture of peace with the operation and revelation of God in all religions. This shows that, if exclusivism excludes other religious beliefs and practices in working towards peace explicitly, inclusivism includes other religions as working toward peace through their religions, but indirectly or implicitly (Knitter, 2011:117). Inclusivism's missiological approach to interreligious dialogue has moved from being intolerant of exclusivism's encounterology to loving and being benevolent of the identity of other religions. However, the tolerance of other religions with regard to inclusivism rests upon the claim of exclusivism as the final truth, because they do not believe in the existence of peace in other religions that might call for interreligious dialogue.

Exclusivism should understand that the beliefs and practices of peace are found in other religions, but because of their ignorance of the reality of the practice they behave the way they do. Therefore, ignorance of the true practice is not ignorance unless it is voluntary; the more voluntary it is, the more it will lack the right practice of interreligious dialogue. Exclusivism's missiological approach is open to interreligious dialogue with other religions in which there are beliefs and practices of peace that God has revealed but are veiled.

Therefore, exclusivism's encounterology should embrace the beliefs and practices of peace that are veiled in other religions by accepting the fact that peace is found in other religions for interreligious dialogue, and that this peace is a door to interreligious dialogue. However, the beliefs and practices of peace in other religions that are unknown to them are known by exclusivism, which is God's peace instrument in making known what is unknown for interreligious dialogue (Haynes, 2009: 52). Therefore, religious leaders should be open to other religions for interreligious dialogue. The mission of exclusivists' religious leaders in relation to interreligious dialogue is to show how peace is "hidden" in other religions, as well as to show how the word of God's peace has enlightened humankind from the beginning of history (Abu-Nimer, 2001a:685).

This is seen in the Vatican II Council, which undoubtedly gave the greatest motivation to inclusivism's idea of peace within other religions. Even though these perceptions of encounterology vary in their understanding of other religions, all are united in their mission that the peace of God can be found in other religions, despite differences in practices, which are due to their involuntary ignorance of Christ's peace (Rasch, 2009:109). The inclusion of religious identities in faith-to-faith encounterology for interreligious dialogue is a sign of a future for the theology of religions to be compared in this time of religious diversities. The missiological approach to interreligious dialogue has to bring unity to humankind, and to witness the future of humanity's reconciliation, also with God (Lederach, 1997). Therefore, a flexible, holistic approach to encounterology for interreligious dialogue is essential, as it is meant to establish a relationship with other religions through a dialogical approach (Kritzinger, 2008). As a result, the model of and for religious leaders as peace brokers needs to be related to other religions instead of opposing and condemning them.

Yet the question remains: If other religions have elements of peace in them, if peace is present in other religions, if their practices of peace are seen as authentic in their own religions, if their social meanings and art of peace reflect certain values (i.e. there is goodness above all), why do religious leaders need faith-to-faith encounterology for interreligious dialogue? One may answer that some religions do not have as clear practices of peace as others. One may also say that unidentified practices of peace are present in other religions (Knitter, 2002). Whether identified or unidentified, there are beliefs and practices of peace in other religions. Even though the beliefs and practices vary due to the need to seek the revelation of God's peace, they have different socio-cultural practices of peace. The above

statement shows that every religion has its own ways of practising peace; as all religions have beliefs, hope and love for God and humankind, the presence of peace in other religions is not a channel for not engaging in faith-to-faith encounterology for interreligious dialogue (Knitter, 2002). This is because some of the religious beliefs and practices of peace are exclusivist. Some religions only has an element of peace, because peace is loving God and humankind.

Inclusivism's encounterology for interreligious dialogue has to be borrowed in order to view other religions in a positive light, even though they are outside the boundary. This is in order to cross religious borders for interreligious dialogue, by recognising the presence and working creation of God's peace in other religions (Knitter, 2007). Therefore, religious leaders in the theology of religions for interreligious dialogue have to proclaim and understand the fullness of peace in other religions. The reason is that it is the responsibility of religious leaders to bring light by making clear the beliefs and practices of peace found in other religions for interreligious dialogue. Therefore, the exclusivists' approach is to recognise the presence of peace in other religions for interreligious dialogue. The encounterology for interreligious dialogue of inclusivism is to see all religions as affected by the beliefs and practices of God's peace through Christ (Bevans & Schroeder, 2004). This means that faith-to-faith encounterology is going beyond other religious theological identities by comparing the theology of other religions in order to allow the members to experience God's loving peace through Christ. Therefore, religious leaders are to proclaim God's peace in Christ, which is a reality and is not restricted to a particular religion.

2.3.2.1 Christology

Inclusivism's Christological constant in the mission approach to interreligious dialogue is through human reasoning on God's revelation of peace through Christ in other religions. The missiological approach to interreligious dialogue is based on the understanding of the beliefs and practices of Christ's peace as an ideal human being in relation to moral principles for authentic human life in the light of religious diversity. This encounterology approach to interreligious dialogue embraces the exclusivists' position that other religions have a partial truth of Christ's missiological beliefs and practices of peace, because these have been revealed by God in their traditions through conscience (Kritzinger, 2008). This is because Christ's missiological approach was peaceable with all religions (Bevans & Schroeder,

2004). Therefore, the missiological approach of religious leaders to interreligious dialogue is to engage in human reasoning concerning the beliefs and practices of Christ's peace found in other religions in order to polish and strengthen what is found in them. The human reasoning for interreligious dialogue, however, should be in accordance with respecting and valuing human lives in other religious understandings of the theology of religions.

2.3.2.2 Salvation

The inclusivists' understanding of salvation as peace in saving the human soul from suffering is a flexible and holistic approach for interreligious dialogue. This is because salvation as peace is a form of human liberation from the identity of religious misconceptions of human welfare and of the moral improvement of humanity, which are supposed to be the primary beliefs and practices of religions (Bosch, 1991). Therefore, seeing the above understanding of inclusivism's concept of salvation in human lives, religious leaders need to inform and enlighten other religions on what they have in mind with regard to their own interest. This concept of salvation as peace is more balanced for interreligious dialogue with regard to enhancing people's welfare, while at the same time sharing the gospel, just like the Western religious leaders did during the colonial period. They served as peace brokers, as they were engaged in their holistic mission of salvation by improving people's welfare (once human needs are met they have peace), and also were engaged in spreading the gospel (Knitter, 1995:222). Salvation through human flourishing as an encounterology for interreligious dialogue is another means of propagating the gospel in pluralistic religious identities, because if any religion does not have God's love and humankind then something is wrong with that religious understanding of salvation.

2.3.2.3 Anthropology

The inclusivists' understanding of human beings in relation to peaceful coexistence relates to confidence and trust in human reason or human experience to find truth about peace for interreligious dialogue, because they can distinguish between what is good and evil as a result of their consciences. This is because human beings are created to have dominion over the earth, to plant and uproot. The reason for this is that human beings are essentially educated on moral principles that God has already planted in their hearts, not because human minds are empty vessels that need to be filled with peaceful coexistence. Even though human beings know little about the beliefs and practices of peace, there is a need for faith-to-faith

encounterology to build upon the beliefs and practices of peace that are already known by human beings through theological reflections, so that others might be enriched by the news of God's revelations in others (Bevans & Schroeder, 2004:40).

2.3.2.4 Culture

Inclusivism's understanding of the culture of salvation/peace might serve as a tool for interreligious dialogue. The missiological approach to interreligious dialogue can take the material of other religions and fashion it for interreligious dialogue (Knitter, 2012:139). It will try to discover the veiled treasure of peace in other religious cultural patterns and values with the aim and objective of calling other religious cultures to its identity through illumination and purification for interreligious dialogue (Bevans & Schroeder, 2004). Therefore, religious leaders as peace brokers should listens attentively to the religious socio-cultural beliefs and practices of peace in an attempt to discern and understand the presence of peace that was in other religious cultures before the advent of their religion.

Faith-to-faith encounterology for interreligious dialogue is a form of carrying out a search for peace that is hidden within religious cultural contexts. It is also a call to other religions to fulfil their potentialities for interreligious dialogue. Therefore, the model of and for religious leaders as peace brokers should be an invitation to discover the truth about the religious cultural beliefs and practices of peace.

2.3.3 Pluralism

According to Silk (2007:64), pluralism is a condition or a system in which two or more states, groups or principles coexist with a diversity of identities. In the typology of theology of religions, it is a recognition of more than one identity of religions. But Meister's (2010:32) understanding of pluralism as typologies in the theology of religions is based on the historical commitment in the theology of religion to liberation and the transformation of human lives. Religious pluralism is an attitude or policy regarding the diversity of religious beliefs systems existing in society (Knitter, 2007). Meister (2010:62) continues that pluralisms is the understanding that one's religion is not the sole and exclusive source of truth, and thus the acknowledgement that at least some truths and true values exist in other religions. In the words of Knitter, in *Theology of religions*, pluralism is a mediation of ultimate truths of religious identities due to variations within the traditions for interreligious dialogue. This is

because pluralism does not refer to a particular identity that has differences and competing claims in the theology of religions (Knitter, 2007). It thus is an acceptance of the concept that two or more religions with mutually exclusive truth claims are equally valid. This may be considered a form of tolerating another identity (a concept that arose as a result of the moral relativism for interreligious dialogue). This is because the identities of religions have comprised different and variant conceptions, perceptions and responses. This is seen in most scholars' understandings of religious identities. As a result, pluralism issues a radical contradiction of its own basic premise by asserting that all religious identities are valid in the eyes of the owner. This is a missiological approach because it is an opening to understanding the history of religious identities in relation to human liberation and wellbeing.

Looking at the missiological approach to pluralism in a pluralistic context, it is clear that the history of peace does not possess any particular identity of religions, because it does not yield to any identity, since it is legitimate in all theology of religions (Silk, 2007:64). This shows that pluralism does not put forward any single concrete identity of religious beliefs and practices of peace as the ultimate, since it is unable to argue convincingly for any particular identity. Through faith-to-faith encounterology for interreligious dialogue, one should not necessarily proclaim one's own identity as full or conclusive, but must announce all religious theological identities as universal, decisive and necessary manifestations in all theology of religions (Knitter, 2007) in order to transform various religious identities in a pluralistic world for interreligious dialogue. Therefore, religious encounterology should be inclusive without negating other identities, no matter how a missionary one may try to act differently, because holistic and flexible encounterology for interreligious dialogue entails viewing, learning and understanding the other identity from its own perspective in relation to another's (Knitter, 2002:111).

This process will help religious leaders to be engaged in a more authentic dialogue with other religions. It also will avoid anything that threatens the mutuality of dialogue with a focus on creating a level playing field for a comparative theology of religions relating to human suffering. Therefore, there is a need for the model of and for religious leaders as peace brokers in the theology of religions to create a gradual movement, through a comparative theology of religions, to show how other religious theological identities can come to a clearer understanding of peace that will lead to or sustain interreligious dialogue. This will foster mutuality and acceptance amongst the theologies of religions and raise the need for each

participant to stand ready to learn as much as possible from other religions (Knitter, 2011:117). As noted above, faith-to-faith encounterology should entail mutual trust by acknowledging the universal presence of peace in the theology of religions. Even if it leads to moral relativism because moral relativism in this aspect does not mean that the model for peace in all theologies of religions is valid and ultimately true. This is because other theologies of religions have a veiled revelation of God's peace that is not clear, and that which has been veiled in other theology of religions needs to be unveiled through the approach of faith-to-faith encounterology. In a nutshell, the missiological approach of other theology of religions can be referred to as having the form of peace that needs clarification for interreligious dialogue in relation to moral issues (Bevans & Schroeder, 2004).

The questions are thus: What about the theology of religions and missiology? Can religious leaders as peace brokers in the theology of religions for the sake of interreligious dialogue avoid the missiological proclamation of one's own identity in order to avoid relativism? The early religious leaders as peace brokers in the theology of religions were exclusive in their missiological approaches to Christ and peace. They were successful in their missiological approach due to the fact that most theologies of religions were traditionalist by then, not as in this 21st century of multi-religious theological diversities (Knitter, 2002). Religious leaders of this century have to be considerate and moderate in their theological approach to interreligious dialogue. The missiological approach in the theology of religions is a form of shared dialogue that will open doors and lead the way to a more effective dialogue if done in relation to human suffering (Hick, 1988).

Therefore, if religious leaders can spend time acting from a missiological approach in a pluralistic context by learning from the theology of religions how to relieve eco-human suffering, there will be a move towards more successful dialogue with other religious theologies. The missiological approach of the theology of religions in a pluralistic context makes a better model of and for religious leaders as peace brokers. Therefore, in order to practically live peaceably through the principle of religious theological dialogue, there is a need for scholars and religious leaders to harness the theology of religions through faith-to-faith encounterology by listening to and learning from other theologies of religious identities for interreligious dialogue, as interreligious dialogue must descend through missiology from the level of the expert to that of the ordinary people – the poor who are struggling together for liberation and fulfilment of the true religious beliefs and practices of peace (Hick, 1988;

Knitter, 2007). The practical missiological dialogue leads, naturally and perhaps necessarily, to an explicit identity of religions that will give birth not to a new religious identity, but a new golden rule on moral issues. The new ethical bridge to moral principles is one across which to share human concerns and co-operation, which could lead to deeper religious understanding and learning, as the dialogue in a pluralistic context is not concerned about whether any religious theological identity is superior to another theology of religion or not (Knitter, 2002).

2.3.3.1 Christology

The revelation of God has three perspectives – nature, conscience and history. God revealed himself as human being through Christ. The historical manifestation of God through Christ is what the pluralists based their understanding of Christ upon. As most of Christ's historical lifestyle practices of peace are found in other religious traditions, either within themselves – as all religions love God – or in their adherents – which is one of Christ's teachings and practices. This constant in mission in relation to the pluralistic missiological approach in interreligious dialogue is from the historical proclamation of Christ's peace through a life of liberation and witnessing to other religions. It is seen in the life of Christ, who lived within other religions with the freedom to witness to life in other religions. Faith-to-faith encounterology for interreligious dialogue need not proclaim the uniqueness of Christ in the pluralistic context, but should be engaged in the historical lifestyle of Christ's moral activities in relation to the liberation and transformation of human beings.

2.3.3.2 Salvation

This approach of constants in mission in pluralistic contexts is that the understanding of salvation as peace is to be both human and cosmic, just as it was in the historical practices of Christ's encounterology of salvation for human kind, which sees the issue of salvation as a material and spiritual dimension because the issue of salvation is something that undertakes missiology for dialogue with God and humankind (Bosch, 1991). These constants in mission have classified salvation as peace into four categories: by reconciliation with God, humanity and nature; being acquainted with the good news of liberation; forgiveness of one another; and by new relationships with one another. The missiological approach in the history of salvation in a pluralistic context for interreligious dialogue should be about inviting human beings out of their loneliness to commune with one another and the ministry of mercy, by

which religious identities extend help and assistance to the poor and the suffering of the world, serve and witness to the poor, and address the structures that keep people poor by salvaging the situation (Bevans & Schroeder, 2004:66-69). The missiological approach mentioned above is necessary for a theological reflection, as it explores the relationship between the commonalities of religious beliefs and practices. Above all, it must be firmly established that missiology for interreligious dialogue is an earthly pilgrimage and therefore is necessary for the theology of religions.

2.3.3.3 Anthropology

This is one of the constants in mission based on the understanding of the historical aspects of human beings for peaceful coexistence in a pluralistic context, namely that human beings are created in the image of God and are to grow in God's likeness. The likeness of God is through the word that became flesh, which is a process that did not degrade God, but showed God's power and love for human beings. Therefore, human beings are created good in the image of God, but not as complete as God, and perfectible in the image of God, although not yet as perfect as God (Bosch, 1991). As a result of the incompetence of human beings, God is calling human beings to constant growth in this world and beyond, so that God should forever teach human beings and human beings should forever learn from God through missiology, amongst other means. This affirms that human beings need constant growth due to their imperfection. Therefore, faith-to-faith encounterology for interreligious dialogue should be about reflecting on humans' moral growth to fullness of humanity through interreligious dialogue, and on human development, which is the primary concern of human beings and is also not deniable in the identities of religions.

2.3.3.4 Culture

These constants in mission in a pluralistic context for interreligious dialogue comprise the history of religious identities, beliefs and practices of equal rights and equalities of gender in relation to "You shall not commit sexual immorality, and doing unto others what you want others to do unto you", which is human respect and love for one another. Therefore, faith-to-faith encounterology in a pluralistic context for interreligious dialogue should be a religious, historical and cultural reflection on human values by condemning all forms of cultural exploitation and sexual discrimination, patriarchal domination and degradation, which are also expressions of violence (Bosch, 1991). According to Farley (1993), the religious

theological cultural salvation/peace should value human beings by giving support to husbands, wives and children by ensuring the security and rights of all family members. As a result of the above factors, there is a need for an ethical bridge between religious theologies for successful interreligious dialogue. This is despite the fact that religious leaders who prefer an ethical practical bridge in relation to moral issues when crossing to a mutuality of theologies of religions certainly do not agree with those who walk the bridges. They too would admit the limitation of all historical religions, as well as a mystical centre to all theology of religions that constantly overflows with a diversity of identities (Bosch, 1991). As a result, the ethical bridge across moral issues comprises the pillars that will sustain missiology for interreligious dialogue (Knitter, 2007). The above statements show that faith-to-faith encounterology in a pluralistic context is a means for social change, and also a call for humanity to interact with religious cultures by recognising the identity of religion in relation to human flourishing (Iacovino, 2015:29). Therefore, the missiological approach in a pluralistic context for interreligious dialogue is the unity of theology of religions due to the fact that there is one religious theological fact that grounds the unity of theology of religion, because if there is any unity within the theology of religions it is surrounded and protected by a wall of religious theological diversity, since there is no unity without religious theological diversity (Bosch, 1991).

The fact is that *missio Dei* is found in the Triune God, therefore the divine has mystic explanations for religious theological diversity relating to the divine shining through the different theology of religions. The divine will not allow the theology of religions to remain in their splendid isolation and ignorance of each other, but the differences in religious missiological reflection are enriching and will enable them to grow more deeply into what they are by relating to each other, so that all will discover and expand their own identities. As noted above, a religious theological unity will lead to relativism. Therefore, to avoid relativism there is a need for religious theological moral challenges relating to alleviating the needs and sufferings of the poor and the oppressed. This is also seen as a global responsibility that gives missiology an opportunity to understand the identity of religions for interreligious dialogue in a pluralistic context (Knitter, 2007). The moral responsibility relates to human suffering, and is common to all theology of religions, as recognised by the World Parliament of Religions in 1993 and 1999.

The World Parliament of Religions affirmed that the true concept of religious theological cultural salvation/peace is the goodness of the theology of religions, if it is done in order to promote peace, justice and unity, since these are the basic needs for human liberation. It also creates an opportunity to understand each other's religious beliefs and practices for interreligious dialogue. This is because the global moral issues for interreligious dialogue do not relate to ideologies or a single, unified cultural salvation/peace amongst a theology of religions beyond all existing theology of religions, and also not to the domination of one identity over all others. The various religious theological reflections often offer very different bases of what is helpful for humankind, what is right and what is wrong, what is good and what is evil (Tracy, 1981:281). Despites the goodness in the theology of religions, there are differences among religious cultures. However, these should not hinder faith-to-faith encounterology for interreligious dialogue to join things that hindered and deprived the theology of religions from interacting with other theology of religions for human wellbeing (Küng & Kuschel, 1993:24).

The above is so because a missiological approach to interreligious dialogue is an activity of God himself (Bosch, 1991:392), even though it was during the colonial expansion of the world that the term mission was adopted. In essence, the term presupposes someone who is sent (a person who is sent for the purpose of accomplishing an assignment or duty, and the person is answerable to the sender) by a sender (a person who sends and controls the one sent). The founding of mission obviously originated in the Bible, where it states in the Old Testament that God himself was a sender, and the New Testament affirms the foundation of mission in Mathew 2:18-20. The aims and objectives of Christian mission differ from others because of its absoluteness, superiority, acceptability and adaptability to all people's lives and conditions, which causes mission to be ambiguous (Bosch, 1991). This confirms that, despite the different concepts of the Christian terms of mission that are at odds with one another, they are in reconciliation with one another as mission was sent by God to humankind. Therefore, the Christian theology of religions for missiological purposes for interreligious dialogue is a paradigm shift towards a new approach through a comparative theology of religion in relation to ethical and moral issues (Bosch, 1991).

As noted above, the missiological approach to interreligious dialogue in the pluralistic context of the understanding of peace, especially between the Christian and Muslim religions, relates to issues that are not limited to one religion, as they find expression in both.

Therefore, there is a need for the missiological approach to interreligious dialogue not only to seek the truth about peace, but to seek how to apply the truth practices of peace found in other theology of religions. This calls for 'moral' principles that govern the conduct of humankind, because the ethical issues and ethical responsibility will sustain the missiology for interreligious dialogue (Knitter, 2002:125). The ethical bridging on moral issues between the Christian and Muslim religions in peace building is seen in Knitter, who affirms that the ethical bridge on moral issues is not to either agree or disagree with one another, but to have an alternative for interreligious dialogue, as interreligious dialogue is not about the truth of identity.

Therefore, the ethical bridge for moral issues will help the adherents of religions not to fall into relativism (McGrath, 1996:167). This affirms that the ethical bridge on moral issues is a new platform of opportunities for understanding one's missiological approach and for interreligious dialogue. Therefore, the ethical bridge should relate to moral issues that will govern religious adherents for peaceful coexistence. This is seen in the importance of the words ethical bridge and morality, because the words morality and ethical are related. The word ethical comes from the Greek 'ethos', meaning what is related to character. The word morality comes from the Latin word 'moralis', which means custom or habit (Knitter, 2007:134; McGrath, 1996:167). This affirms that an etymological understanding of right and wrong, good and bad and morality is the practical aspect of the ethical issues in the theology of religions.

This further affirms that the ethical bridge is the realm of scholars, while morality refers to the practices of what is real, useful and true in life situations. However, if the ethical issues change, the morality also changes. Therefore the beliefs and practices of religious leaders needs to be harnessed by changing the ethical and moral issues of their religious identities for interreligious dialogue, as the music of religious theological diversities changes, and so also the dance of religious theological diversities changes (McGrath, 1996). As a result of religious theological pluralism, there is a need for religious leaders to change their religious theological understanding of ethical principles relating to human dignity, because if religious theological identities are harnessed on ethical issues that deal with human dignity, the theological moral identities will be changed for interreligious dialogue.

2.4 Dialogue

The question then is what does the ethical bridge across moral issues for interreligious dialogue affirm? The ethical bridge for interreligious dialogue should be based on the fundamental or essential demand for humans to be treated humanely based on human rights. The ethical bridge should also affirm the reason and conscience of human beings, as every human is obliged to behave in a genuinely human fashion, and to do good by avoiding evil, as well as to obey the positive and negative forms of the golden rule (Knitter, 2007). This affirms that there are some ethical bridges of human conscience and reasoning that are found and have persisted in religious theological traditions for many years, such as 'what you do not wish done to yourself, do not do it to others and also what you wish done to yourself do to others', these should be the irrevocable and binding norms for all religious leaders if they are to serve as peace brokers in harnessing their religious model of and for peace (Harpviken & Røislien, 2005:351).

The above factors serve as the commonality of the plural playground for interreligious dialogue, as they will help in understanding the perspectives of each other's religious frameworks. The identity of religions cannot deny the notion of justice and human suffering. Therefore, the understanding of human challenges on the issues of peaceful coexistence should be the responsibility of religious leaders for interreligious dialogue. As a result of the above factors, there is a need for religious leaders to embark upon the acceptance of the model of and for peace among religions in the postmodern era, where differences relating to peace in the theology of religions are real and their exclusivism provides opportunities for reciprocal enrichment and growth. The acceptance and conviction is that different models for peace amongst the theology of religions can be interrelated, connected and brought into a unifying relationships if done in relation to ethical issues, but 'the many' cannot be melted down into 'the one'; this shows that the plurality can still give rise to unity. The reason for the ethical bridge to moral issues is that peace cannot be a measured system of another, because of their differences in meaning (Knitter, 2007).

Therefore, there is a need for religious leaders as peace brokers to embark on a theology of religions despite the radical differences in the pluralistic world. Religious leaders need to accept differences through respecting, listening to and learning in a dialogical approach. As peace building involves inclusivism in pluralism, interreligious dialogue is a playground that

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focuses on alleviating human suffering and respecting human dignity, and means that the identity of religions can be known by their fruit (Harpviken & Røislien, 2008:351). The above affirmation shows clearly that, if the model of and for peace in the theology of other religions does not foster a true love of other religions, then something is deeply dysfunctional with that theology – no matter how religious it seems to be. This means that, when trying to work out their missiological approach towards other religions, religious leaders as peace brokers for interreligious dialogue have to be guided not just by what their religions says or by what past councils have declared, but by what kind of particular actions result from particular attitudes toward other religions (Knitter, 2012:139).

The ethical bridge on moral issues is trying to find what the religions of the world might have in common in terms of the alleviation of poverty, victimisation, violence and patriarchy. If a religion denies this experience and refuses the challenges posed by widespread human suffering, then, according to these advocates of a practical moral approach to dialogue, such religion has lost its relevance, validity and identity. The need for an interreligious dialogue toward an interreligious formulation of global ethics was recognised and responded to at the World Parliament of Religion in 1993 and 1999, which led to the construction of an ethical bridge to dialogue for advancing peaceful coexistence (Knitter, 2002). Religious leaders need to be committed to interreligious dialogue in missiology because of the plurality of the identity of religions. Therefore, there is a need for religious leaders to embrace a pluralistic missiological approach in interreligious dialogue, because this will help other theology of religions to understand one another (Knitter, 2011:117). This is because the true missiological approach in a pluralistic context for interreligious dialogue excludes 'deduction' – the desire to deduce the truth exclusively from one's own tradition. Faith-to-faith encounterology for interreligious dialogue also excludes 'reduction' – the desire to reduce the plurality of other theology of religions to a meaningless common denominator. Instead, the missiological approach should be inductive/inclusive so that the identity of religions is critically and authentically learned and reinterpreted as an exchange with other theology of religions for interreligious dialogue (Clooney, 2010:89). Therefore, the missiological approach to religious diversities in a pluralistic context for interreligious dialogue involves sharing religious theological reflections in relation to human suffering. The missiological approach in interreligious dialogue will help religious leaders share their life experiences, and doing so

will indicate an openness and flexibility of mind that will enhance relationships with other religions.

Therefore, it is necessary for faith-to-faith encounterology for interreligious dialogue to share in the lives of those who believe in it. This becomes necessary due to the religious theological diversity within and outside of religions, and more so as a result of a globalisation of awareness that is taking place among all theology of religions because of the access to media, and because socio-economic and political human transactions call for faith-to-faith encounterology through a reflection on the identities of religions for interreligious dialogue (Clooney, 2010). Religious leaders' faith-to-faith encounterology for interreligious dialogue should not aim at converting one another's theology of religion; the aim is to exchange knowledge and ideas that will contribute to a better knowledge of the history of each other's identity in relation to human suffering. The above statement show clearly that, for religious leaders' peace brokerage to be fruitful in the theology of religions for interreligious dialogue, freedom of theology of religion is required, both in practice and in sharing in each other's theology of religions. Furthermore, religious leaders' identity of religions for interreligious dialogue should have a clear religious theological identity, should be convinced of the value of religious theological dialogue, and be open towards others, because all theology of religions require love, esteem and respect for religious theological identity (Arinze, 1998). The question here is how can religious leaders as peace brokers go about a theology of religion for interreligious dialogue? The above statements on the importance of the ethical bridge on moral issues for interreligious dialogue shows how religious leaders can be engaged in interreligious dialogue. The ethical bridge on moral issues refers to interreligious acting or living by tolerating one another through safeguarding the freedom of other religious theological reflections on the basis of respect and preserving the moral and spiritual values of other theology of religions, as well as holding the dignity of human persons in esteem (Clooney, 2010). The above missiological reflection for interreligious dialogue can be done at religious temples and schools, which are further important aspects in instilling salvation/peace, as preaching and teaching have been means of communicating religious theological faiths. Primarily, religious leaders become aware of religions through reflection on religious theology, and this shows that there is a need for the inclusion and tolerance of other theology of religions (Knitter, 2007).

Therefore, missiological reflection, either through preaching or teaching for interreligious dialogue, has to be done by removing prejudices about other theology of religions; the teaching and preaching have to be done in a positive relationship, as that of God's relationship with human beings, and in the form of inclusion (not exclusion), so that the theologies of religions are included in the universal religious theological concept of cultural salvation/peace. Therefore, religious, academic, spiritual and social centres are very important for understanding the theology of religions for interreligious dialogue, because global attention is being paid to academic, spiritual and social considerations in contemporary society (Kalu *et al*., 2010). This affirms that the missiological reflection on the identity of religions belongs to the intellectual field. However, looking at the practices, this is a common concern for religious leaders in their identities of religions. The above understanding of missiological reflection for interreligious dialogue shows that Christian and Muslim understandings of peace through intellectual means are in a vacuum of deep learning that will have a significant bearing on and understanding of other theology of religions (Clooney, 2010; Knitter, 2007). This shows that the missiological approach to religious theological reflection encompasses both academics and action, as the term action refers to liberation and total commitment to the services of humankind and all forms of activity for social development, as well as the struggle against poverty (Knitter, 2007). The importance of the missiological approach in integral development, social justice and human liberation needs to be addressed in order to stand up for human rights, proclaim the demands of justice, and denounce injustice.

Therefore, every religious leader who wishes to engage in faith-to-faith encounterology for interreligious dialogue in a pluralistic context should view religious theological understandings as a call to critically understand the identity of religions by focusing on the liberation of people without discrimination on the basis of status, belief or religion. The fact is that one's own theology of religion is not the sole theology of religion, because there are also many other theology of religions working for peace, justice and helping poor people in their struggle against poverty (Knitter, 2002). There is a need for religious leaders, in religious theological reflection for interreligious dialogue, to join hands in salvaging the unjust situation of the world that is lacking in peace. Therefore, the major call is upon Christian religious leaders, especially the Protestant-fundamentalist religious leaders, as this is stated explicitly in the scriptures, even though the missiological understanding of peace and

justice might vary from one theology of religion to the other. Therefore, the Christian religious leaders' missiological approach needs to rise up against injustice and conflict, and to call for justice and peace among religions. There is a need for religious leaders, in their theological reflection as peace brokers for interreligious dialogue, to embark upon ethical bridge-building in relation to moral issues, because such an ethical bridge will recognise the dignity of human beings (Knitter, 2002).

The sharing, insofar as religious leaders have a deep love for the lord Jesus, will be motivated not merely by obedience to the Lord's command, but by their love for Christ. It could be that the theology of other religions is animated or made alive by a similar desire to share their own theological faith: all religious theological dialogue implies reciprocity and aims at banishing fear and aggression. Therefore, Christian religious theology for interreligious dialogue should be prepared to follow in God's providence and design as the spirit leads and guides the theology of religion for interreligious dialogue (Twiss & Bruce, 2000). Christian religious theological dialogical encounterology needs to be attentive and obedient to the spirit's promptings, whether or not the proclamation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ is possible during theological dialogical encounterology; and when the religious leaders pursue their theological missional dialogue in sharing and witnessing on the gospel for interreligious dialogue, they should also value other theology of religions.

The ethical bridge of moral values in the theology of religion for interreligious dialogue should be based on solidarity and a just economic order or growth relating to "You shall not steal", as this will ensure dealing honestly and fairly with human beings in society. No one should have the right to rob or dispossess in any way whatsoever the belongings of any other person (Knitter, 2007). Therefore, wherever right might be oppressed, religious theology has the obligation to resist violence for interreligious dialogue to be possible. With respect to cultural salvation/peace in relation to human life, the emphasis should be on "You shall not kill" – having respect for life. This directive enjoins behaviour that respects the human rights to life, safety and free development of personality, declaring that conflict should be resolved without violence within the framework of justice. Christian theology of religion for interreligious dialogue should strive for peaceful coexistence with the aim of protecting and defending against perpetrators of violence. This is necessary because humanity will not survive in a society without peace (Knitter, 2011:117). The abovementioned ethical values of non-violence and respect for human life are not limited to human beings alone, but should

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also be extended to the protection of the entirety of the cosmos. There should be tolerance and the focus of a life of truthfulness should be on "You shall not lie" – that is speaking and acting truthfully. Christian religious theology for interreligious dialogue should advocate truthfulness and truthful acts to one another, despite differences in theology of religions. The truthfulness should not be restricted to religious theology, but also to those who work for the mass media, to artists, writers and scientists, to leaders of countries, and to politicians (Harpviken & Røislien, 2008). The question now is how can Christian religious leaders as peace brokers be committed to interreligious dialogue? The Christian religious leaders as peace brokers can be committed to interreligious dialogue through a missiological approach to the identity of religions. This can be done through the following perspectives:

2.4.1 God-given dignity

Christians and Muslims in the theology of religions should express respect for the God-given dignity of human beings. This was seen in Vatican II, which is hinged on and built around one central conviction: the profound awareness of the God-given dignity of the human person. For example, after scrutinising the needs of the time, the dignity of the human person was deliberated on as a result of the introductory statement on the situation of humankind in the modern world, and a declaration of religious freedom was deliberated (Cohen, 2004:190) This was singled out because of the peculiar characteristics of modern humankind, which focuses increasingly on the deeper consciousness of humankind. This affirms that, in the commitment of Christian religious leaders as peace brokers for inter-religious dialogue, God-given dignity should come first on a human level in daily encounters of dialogue. This respect for human dignity as God's precious gift is a must for every human, and a basic need for human relationships (Knitter, 2012:139).

As for Christian religious leaders serving as peace brokers for interreligious dialogue, the above affirmations serve as a means for missiology and Christianisation; and the Christianisation of other religions means humanisation, because without the latter there will be no Christianisation. The Christian and Muslim theology of religions for interreligious dialogue should express concern about what it is to be human by expressing it in activity through celebrating, rejoicing and reflecting, as well as mourning or being present with other religions in an inclusive form at different times of life. The concern is a heartfelt desire for humanity to be truly and fully human by showing passion for all people to live in the fullness

of potential humanity (Lartey, 1997). The Christian and Muslim theology of religion for interreligious dialogue should express a model of and for peace in relation to the prevention of conflict and for fostering cultural salvation/peace, because religious theology should not only be needed after conflict, but also before. Theologies of religions are needed for fostering peace and preventing conflict. Once religious theology is harnessed through a comparative theology of religions for fostering peace, religious leaders who serve as peace brokers will become ambulance brokers of peace whether there is religious conflict or not. But, in most cases, and especially in Nigeria, Christian and Muslim religious leaders are needed after devastating events due to the lack of harnessing of religious theology in relation to ethical and moral issues (Lartey, 1997). Christian and Muslim religious leaders as peace brokers should be committed to harnessing their religious theology for interreligious dialogue because, in the present religious diversity, there is a need for Christian religious leaders as peace brokers to view the theology of religions as a field for missiology, as stated above.

Conclusion

This chapter dealt with the conceptualisation of the typologies involved in the theology of religions, which are pluralism, exclusivism and inclusivism, and which were used in understanding religious theological relations with other theology of religions for interreligious dialogue. The concept of the truth about cultural salvation/peace was explored in relation to the typologies of the theology of religion for interreligious dialogical encounterology. The emphasis was on Christian theology of religion for interreligious dialogue to portray the universal practices of peace for missiological purpose. They should proclaim the beliefs and practices of peace in a pluralistic context with the understanding that Christ's peace is found everywhere through goodness, value and love for humankind. This is contrary to the approach of exclusivists, who do not agree with the universal presence of the salvation/peace of God in other theologies of religions. A Christian theology of religion has to employ the pluralist model for peace in other theology of religions to search for the goodness of the model of peace in other theologies of religions for interreligious dialogue, so that the other theologies of religions will see the loving God among human beings, which is a more positive approach to the other theology of religions.

Therefore, religious dialogical encounterology should be a way of learning and understanding other religious theological beliefs and practices of salvation/peace in the context of golden rule, which is reciprocity on moral issues. It has been established herein that pluralists view all religious theological concepts of peace as equal, even though there are various religious theological models for peace that lead to peace through their God. Furthermore, the different models believe that all theologies of religions require justice and righteousness, that they have rights to their views on religious theological cultural salvation/peace, and that all theologies of religions have their beliefs and practices of peace based on the identity of their religions. However, the understanding of the pluralist approach from a phenomenological perspective does not simply underestimate the real value of the concept of cultural salvation/peace of each particular theology of religion; it undervalues other basic elements of the exclusivists' concept of cultural salvation/peace in order to give equal status to all theologies of religions, in their relationship with human beings and God, for interreligious dialogical encounterology.

CHAPTER THREE

COMPARATIVE THEOLOGY OF RELIGIONS IN A CHRISTIAN AND MUSLIM CONTEXT

3. Introduction to Understanding the Concept of Peace

This chapter is based on a missiological perspective in relation to da'wa that seeks to compare the features of peace in the Christian and Muslim theology of religions. The question is why do Christian and Muslim comparative theology of religions need to be based on the practices of peace in relation to human beings? This question confronts faith-to-faith encounterology by dealing with question such as: Are the beliefs and practices of peace of Christian and Muslim religious leaders equal? Does the etymological understandings of peace in the religious groups supersede one another? Is there some way to state clearly how missiology should relate to other religions for interreligious dialogue? Kritzinger (2008:764) says that comparative theology of religions is an academic faith-to-faith encounterology because it deals with the truth claims of religious identity. In the words of Clooney (2010), comparative theology of religion is a branch of Christian theology of religion that studies and compares religious diversity through theological reflection that can be done through self-critique, even though being self-critical does not mean being apologetic in a way that denies other religious theological content, or undermines their identities. This indicates that a comparative theology of religion is about deep learning of religious identity for interreligious dialogue. This is because, in the words of Twiss and Bruce (2000), the world is anxious to know how Christian and Muslim will treat each other's theology of religions, which, although they have diverse identities, each claims to have the ideal and ultimate truth. The best way for missiology is to enter interreligious encounterology, because the missiological approach should explore comparative theology for an interreligious encounter. The approach requires a mutual witness with a follower of another faith (Kritzinger, 1997:47). There is a fine line between theology of religion that is arrogant and triumphalist in its concept, and a theology of religion that seeks to bring insight for interreligious dialogue. This section therefore previews how the Christian and Muslim religions have engaged in several typologies of comparative theology of religions that has led to either a negative or positive result.

\3.1 Identities

This section is based on the different concepts of the claim of the truth of identity in the reflection on the typology of theology of religions as discussed in Chapter two. Therefore, Christians must be prepared to follow wherever the spirit is leading in God's providence and design, because it is the spirit that is guiding the faith-to-faith encounterology of the church; for us as Christians it is important to be attentive and obedient to the spirit's promptings. Therefore, the Christian comparative theology of religions calls for a critical conceptual understanding of the identity of religious theological typologies in relation to the model of and for the religious identity of peace, and as an identity of religion (Harpviken & Røislien, 2008).

According to Kalu *et al*. (2010:120), the identity of religion and religious issues for interreligious dialogue still forms part of the fabric of modern societies. The model of and for religion seems to be associated with fundamentalists due to the diversity of identity that needs to be harnessed through comparative theology of religion for interreligious dialogue. Harpviken & Røislien (2008) says that the identity of religious diversity has two levels, namely intra- and interreligious diversity. Intra-religious diversity encompasses diversity within a world religion, while interreligious diversity is the diversity of all distinct religions (Clooney, 2010). Religious identity in the theology of religions claims the ultimate reality of identity without inclusion but excluding other theology of religions. This is despite the fact that pluralists affirm that all identities are valid in the eyes of the owner of the identity, based on the understanding of the theological meaning, social and cultural model of and for peace. The reality is that others cannot be condemned because there are some values that missiology can learn from, despite the fact that the exclusivist identity disputes such affirmations by saying that its own identity is the only valid one than the other that cannot be incorporated which is self-righteousness (Knitter, 2012:139).

The inclusivists' understanding of Christ's universal peace amongst other theologies of religions is more open than that of the exclusivists. Exclusivists hold that there is no truth or divine revelation of the identity of Christ's universal peace in other religious theologies. This is regarded by others as self-righteous, because other religious theological identities are negated (Knitter, 2007). This understanding of the inclusivists' religious meaning, social and

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culture of peace in relation to human beings could lead to peaceful coexistence because there is accommodation and open-mindedness. The inclusivists' understanding of the model of and for peace in other theologies of religions is more open than that of the exclusivists, who hold that the model of and for peace in other religious theologies is invalid, which negates all other religious theological identity. This understanding of the inclusivists' religious meaning, social and cultural peace in relation to human beings could lead to peaceful coexistence because they are accommodating and open to each other. The exclusivists' theology of religion of Christ's peace needs to understand that the model of and for Christ's universal peace is also centred on other religious theological identities through the spirit (Knitter, 2002). Therefore, peace is not necessary to believe and belong to the exclusivists' construction of identity (Bosch, 1993). This is because of the exclusivists' claims that undermine the practices of other religious identity, and this does not foster peace. But inclusivists are more likely to be open to other religious theological identities, because they affirm that other religious theological identities possess some form of truth about the peace that might be found through God's revelation.

The pluralists' understating of the concept of peace indicates that all models of and for the theology of religions are valid. Also, the religious theological model of peace leads to the same model for human beings, but in different ways according to their understanding of religious theological meanings and social and cultural systems (Knitter, 2002). Therefore, this comparative theology of Christian and Muslim religions and the model of and for peace in relation to human beings for missional purposes cannot be understood as adherence to ethical lifestyles or rules, but rather in an evangelical sense of recognising Jesus Christ to be the ultimate truth of the universal model of and for peace (Harpviken & Røislien, 2008:351). As a result of the above factors, there is a need to understand the missiological approaches to such diversities. But, before discussing the missiological approaches to such diversities of identity, there is a need to discuss the discipline of missiology as theology.

3.2 Missiological Approach in Comparative Theology

Christianity and Islam are both missional religions and, in essence, the missiological approach used affects the typology of the comparative theology of religions. The question is: when is theology connected with missiology and when is it not? Bosch's (1991:290) understanding of missiology as missio Dei has become the defining paradigm of mission –

and has been accepted in the field of missiology as a science of religion because it involves the missiological use of all the social science disciplines that help in understanding the context in which God's mission takes place. Missio Dei is the Latin theological term that means mission of God. Such encounterology involves issues such as the missio Dei, the incarnation, and the kingdom of God (Richebacher, 2003:588). The definition of missio Dei has clearly explained the meaning of mission as proceeding from the Trinity rather than being located, as it has traditionally been, within ecclesiology and soteriology. The doctrinal understanding of missio Dei is God sending Jesus Christ, and Jesus Christ sending the Holy Spirit to the church, and the church sending into the world (Bosch, 1991:290). The above understanding of missio Dei clearly shows that it is the work of the church as being part of God's work. This implies that missiology is to engage with other religious theologies by seeking the theological approach to interreligious dialogue (Richebacher, 2003:588). This engagement also seeks a commitment to social justice and peaceful coexistence. Missiology as theology of religion grows out of pursuing the meaning, social and cultural truth of other religions as an identity that has not yet been achieved for interreligious dialogue, because mission is an invitation to believe and to talk about the meaning of life. Working for the liberation of humanity from the reality of suffering cannot be denied by religions. The mission is also to struggle against racism and economic exploitation, and work for reconciliation and justice (Bevans & Schroeder, 2004:160). This is clear because mission is to embrace the attitude, the thinking, behaviours and practices of other religions in order to reach others with the message of the gospel; mission can be referred to as someone who is accomplishing the tasks or purpose for which he/she was sent (Bosch, 1993). Therefore, mission can be seen as an ulterior motive of the beliefs carried to missional as practices, where the encounterology operates in a diversity of identities, from the exclusivist's traditional captivity to the state of the inclusion of love and values of identities (Richebacher, 2003:588).

Therefore, the idea of being missional is that the church has the mission of Jesus Christ because there is one missional directive and that is to accomplish God's mission. Therefore, missiology is to incarnate its model of missio Dei in other religious theological identities, because missiology has lost its heritage and the heritage has to come back to its fullness through interreligious dialogue for human wellbeing. Missiology can be seen as an invitation to believe in and talk about God and the meaning of life; this indicates a multi- and

interdisciplinary reflection on identities for dialogue (Bosch, 1993:175). Due to the nature of the application of missiology as a science of religion, it can be referred to as comprising the field of practical theology, because its reflection focuses specifically on a set of particular issues that have to do with missiology, drawing from the incarnational nature of the ministry of Jesus, which happens in a specific time and place. Therefore, the time has come for missiology as a discipline to rethink the way in which it engages with the comparative theologies of the Christian and Muslim religious understanding of the concept of peace; this needs to be done in the light of hermeneutical reflection for interreligious dialogue, as most theology of religions know very little about other theology of religions, which leads to misconceptions and stereotypes (Harpviken & Røislien, 2008: 351).

Missiology as the social science of religions needs to identify and engage in the need for better human understanding, particularly in matters of religious difference. In Nigeria, where people are socially diverse, multicultural and multi-religious, missiology has found itself to be stumbling in the dark when it comes to engaging in healthy and wholesome human dialogue, human relationships and interreligious dialogue, in spite of technological and scientific advancements (Knitter, 1995:222). This is because missiology as a discipline has not yet accomplished its purpose of how to cross the boundaries of differences to appreciate pluralism, and to affirm the diversity of social, ethnic, cultural, linguistic and religions as a natural state of global order (Clooney, 2010). If there are any resources for the interreligious dialogue of our time, missiological approaches might make it clear in harnessing religious identities. It could be that other theology of religions might have a similar desire to share their own missiology. Notwithstanding, missiology implies the golden rule of reciprocity and aims to banish fear and aggressiveness for interreligious dialogue to take place. The need and willingness to cross the boundary of religious differences and to enter into interreligious dialogue grows more crucial every day, because the model of encounterology for interreligious dialogue will lead to effective knowledge of human behaviour in the context of religious diversity. This is because missiology broadens the capacity to experience how to live together in our pluralistic society, by operating from that which gives life meaning and value. It also provides some alternatives for interreligious dialogue. In the past centuries, missiology was spoken more loudly, but now it is spoken softer for the sake of interreligious dialogue.

The reason for the above is because, in the 21st century, interreligious dialogue appears to be the playing field for missiology, even though there are others who wish to accord both dialogue and mission their rightful place, because the two are not compatible (Kritzinger, 1997:47) Therefore, the primary aspect of missiology for interreligious dialogue is that missiology cannot be silent regarding the message of Jesus Christ. The reality is that traditional expressions of Christian and Muslim theology for interreligious dialogue have caused encounterology some setbacks in relation to human values, because the translational encounterology is clear in the interreligious dialogical settings, whether Christian or Muslim. These religions emphasise capturing, maintaining, nurturing and promoting their religious identity, due to the fact that, when a mosque or congregation is struggling with key community issues, they do so with a keen desire to preserve the theological doctrines that have been passed down through a specific understanding of history. Therefore, comparative encounterology for interreligious dialogue must be a true witness to Jesus Christ. This can be done by proclaiming the uniqueness of Christ's peace, the universal peace of God through the incarnation of God in Jesus Christ, which qualifies Christ as the unique and universal revelation and executor of God's internal will of peace for all humankind (Clooney, 2010). The above statement shows that one of the aspects of missiology for interreligious dialogue is the possibility of peace with other religions through Jesus Christ, which is implicit but needs to be explicit.

Therefore, in undertaking Christian and Muslim encounterology on the concept of peace for interreligious dialogue, the Islamic concept of peace should be harnessed with care, because it provides the social and cultural meaning and understanding of Islam (Galtung, 1969:167). The question is why must Christian and Muslim comparative theology of religions be done in terms of the model of and for peace? This is because the world is anxious to know how the beliefs and practices of Christians and Muslims will treat each other's identities, as each theology of religion claims an ideal and ultimate truth, especially in relation to the meaning of social and cultural peace (Twiss & Bruce, 2000:35). But, whether missiology is possible or not during comparative theology of religions for interreligious dialogue, the missiology for interreligious dialogue is to witness and share the values of the Gospel with others (Clooney, 2010). This affirms that the task of missiology in doing comparative theology of religions is to seek an etymological hermeneutical understanding of the other religious theology that has a rich tradition for interreligious dialogue. The shows that a comparative theology of religions

is an encounterology of another religious identity in critical reflection, with the aim of shaping the diverse religious groups for interreligious dialogue (Clooney, 2010; Kritzinger, 1997:47). The above factors show that the purpose and task of missiology in doing comparative theology of religions is to distinguish the differences in beliefs and practices amongst religions with regard to the possibility of peace in other religions through an inclusive approach, because the concern is for interreligious dialogue. The purpose is not to invent a new doctrine of the ultimate truth about the reality of peace amongst other religious identities, but the focus of encounterology should be on mutual relationships for interreligious dialogue. Therefore, the approach of missiology in doing Christian and Muslim comparative theology of religions is to raise questions about what and how the etymological understanding of peace that God revealed in the Islamic religious identity is reflected in the Christian theology of religion for interreligious dialogue (Kritzinger, 1997:47). Christian comparative theology of religion for interreligious dialogue is a force that causes missiology to think, learn and understand other religious theological identities; therefore, understanding the beliefs and practices of peace in the Islamic religion should not be done as a form of exclusion that will create conflict, but as knowledge that will oppose conflict and serve as wisdom to light the beliefs and practices of religious adherents (Clooney, 2010). The above affirmation shows that the encounterology in doing a comparative theology of religion is meant to understand other religions for interreligious dialogue, therefore missiology as a science of religions is meant to harness the beliefs and practices of religions for interreligious dialogue.

This affirms that a credible encounterology of the concept of peace is one that will promote interreligious dialogue on moral issues – a missiology that truly respects all of humankind for peaceful coexistence. For this credible approach, encounterology must move from the exclusion to the inclusion of others, and towards a concept of humanity being equal despite religious differences. Therefore, the missiological approach in doing comparative theology of religion gives hope for interreligious dialogue, therefore the missio Dei should rejoice that the fundamental conviction is effective beyond the borders of the community of believers (Knitter, 2007). The question is whether Christian and Muslim religious meanings, and their social and cultural models of and for peace, can have an identity that is valid in God's and human's eyes and whether they are effective in allowing human beings to co-exist peacefully. Also, how should a comparative theology of religions between the Christian and Muslim

religions relate to each other on the concept of peace? These questions constitute the agenda for how missiology can understand the concept of peace itself and in relation to Muslims for interreligious dialogue ((Kritzinger, 1997:47). The question is how the model of and for religious leaders allows them to serve as peace brokers for interreligious dialogue. This calls for a missiological approach through a comparative theology of religion with its face turned towards the missio Dei for interreligious dialogue. The religious diversity has necessitated a comparative theology of religions, because without a comparative theology of religions the world would not be better if missiology did not concern itself with moral issues that will foster interreligious dialogue (To & Tulasiewicz, 1993). This is because a comparative theology of religion promotes the interests of missiology by drawing on the resources, insights and compassionate values involved in the beliefs and practices of religions for interreligious dialogue. I agree with the above statements, because a comparative theology of religions is a credible and trusted resource for missio Dei for interreligious dialogue that opposes injustice and promotes justice and reconciliation between conflicting parties. This is because, in most cases, people look at the beliefs and practices of religions in situations of conflict and begin to make comparisons as authorities on the protection or otherwise of conflicts.

Therefore, the aim of this study was to compare the model of and for peace in the Christian and Muslim religions. The reason for this is that the issue of peace as an identity has become an academic discourse between the Christian and Muslim religions due to claims to the truth of reality. The attempt to answer the above questions calls for a critical conceptual missiological approach through a comparative theology of religions with regard to the phenomenon, because encounterology is an attempt to position the identity of the theology of religions in relation to the concept of peace. Therefore, Christian and Muslim religious dialogical encounterology should be done in terms of character building; however, more research is needed on the appropriateness of the various models of theological inquiry utilised by Muslims and Christians in interreligious theological dialogue.

3.2.1 Character building in comparative theology of religion

In the comparative theology of religions, the centrality of character building cannot and must not be separated from missiology for interreligious dialogue through recognising the public character of the words "Islamic da'wa" (this will be discussed later) and Christian

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missiology, and the public nature of interreligious dialogue. This is because most of the complexity, interconnectedness and depth of many of the issues facing encounterology in religiously diversity arise from the lack of a missiological approach in theological reflection on interreligious dialogue to advance the morale and spirit of human beings for interfaith dialogue. Moral issues in theological reflection have emerged in missiology as a common method of engaging with the theology of religions for interreligious dialogue. Missiology is now engaged in academic discourse on the identity of the religious person within a culture, as that culture is understood socially. The encounterology is a process that gets its power from the recognition that God is present not only in the socio-cultural practices of religions, but that God acted in history, and it is informed by knowledge at the level of reflective action, and it also recognises that meaning and action are related to social change. Therefore, based on the above factors, it is clear that missiology is an academic practice for interreligious dialogue in order to see things from the perspective of the model of religious theological exclusion to inclusion. Missiology also is an attempt to include religious theological issues in constructive collaboration for interreligious dialogue because it offers persuasive rational critical tools and methods to interreligious dialogue that could enhance the model of and for religious theological meaning, and the social and cultural systems of peace, if handled as moral issues (Clooney, 2010). Therefore, encounterology is about the identity and comparison of religious diversities, as well as theological reflection that requires learning about other religious theological meanings, cultural and social systems of peace as an identity. The theological reflection on the identity of religious theology is about the benefits of missiology for interreligious dialogue, as well as for human lives. This affirms that the encounterology is done critically in academics and in praxis, therefore the critical conceptual theology of religion as the model of and for religious theological meaning, social and cultural systems of peace between Christian and Muslim involves a conceptual hermeneutical interpretation and patterns of reasoning for interreligious dialogue (Knitter, 2011:117). The above statement shows that the missiological approach to doing comparative theology of religions concerns acquiring and inquiring about knowledge on the religious theological claims to truth of identity for interreligious dialogue.

According to Kritzinger (2008), encounterology concerning religious identity is about the identity of a person and that of others because it is an issue of faith-to-faith affairs. Therefore, Christian and Muslim encounterology offers persuasive moral issues to the model of and for

religious theology for interreligious dialogue, and therefore missiology as a discipline has something to offer interreligious dialogue through a comparative theology of religions, if both could see their way clear to join hands in a mutually beneficial collaboration with other theology of religions on the basis of inclusion (Kritzinger, 2008:764). Therefore, regardless of how irritating it might be in encounterology, the fact that other religions also are convinced of the possibility of peace for everyone does not in principle disown missiology, because religious identity has become a symbol that cannot be ignored in interreligious dialogue. In essence, encounterology can create a sense of feeling at home, trust, faith, certainty, a strength of self, security and hope, as well as a model of spiritual community and allegiance.

This shows that, if there is an understanding of peace in encounterology through a comparative theology of the Christian and Muslim religions, there will be a model for interreligious dialogue; and if there is a model for interreligious dialogue, there will be a model of theology of religions, because the model for interreligious dialogue in religious theology cannot be achieved without a missiological approach due to the model of and for the religious theological diversity of identities (Clooney, 2010). In the words of Twiss and Bruce (2000:73), if there is a model of interreligious dialogue there is model of missiology, and if there is model of encounterology there will be a model of peace, and if there is a model of peace there will be a model of mission, and if there is a model of mission there will be a model of missional peace; therefore the aims and objectives of missiology are accomplished, as Jesus is the prince of peace and wants people to live in peace with one another. The missiological approach of a Christian and Muslim comparative theology of religions will lead to interreligious dialogue if a theology based on moral issues is embraced and is used to clarify and respond to the struggles of diverse religious identities. This shows that the missiological approach in doing comparative theology of religions on moral issues for interreligious dialogue will address the question of how the model for religious theology is to think about golden rules for moral problems in a pluralist world (Twiss & Bruce, 2000).

The question is how and to what extent the Christian comparative theology of religions becomes effective for missiology. This is because missiology is suffering from a cancer and is terminally ill, because the identity of the theology of religions is so ill that it also has affected interreligious dialogue (Smith, 2005). The fact that missiology is there mainly to protect and guard its boundaries against the world, or to fix its gaze on the world, means that it is to accomplish its mission through comparative theology for interreligious dialogue.

Bosch (1993) states clearly that for missiology to shift from one identity to the other requires a paradigm shift. This is because the identity of the religious model of peace does not bear the meaning, social and cultural model in relation to humankind, therefore all the identities have to be understood as one of the model of and for peace in a pluralistic context (Bosch, 1993). I agree with the above statement because Bosch's understanding of paradigm shifts in the theology of religion is in relation to encounterology in order to rationalise the understanding of the theology of religions on moral issues for interreligious dialogue (Bosch, 1993).

Missiology is all about theology of religions for interreligious dialogue, as interreligious dialogue involves the substantive golden rule on moral issues that deal with general concerns for human welfare. Such a missiological approach in the comparative theology of religions deals with moral issues such as intolerance and discrimination, war and peace, abuse of vulnerable populations, freedom of conscience and religious practice, human rights and environmental responsibility (Clooney, 2010). If these ethical bridges between moral issues are pursued and implemented as a model of theology of religions, it might help alleviate the human suffering and advance human well-being, especially in Nigeria.

Today, encounterology has taken a new turn in the theology of religions as an explicit involvement that makes efforts to frame and propagate a "global ethical bridge" which, it is hoped, can serve as a way through the rather minimal moral consensus on harnessing the model of theology of religions for interreligious dialogue, especially when it comes to the issue of peace between the Christian and Muslim religions in Nigeria. The need for encounterology in the model of theology of religions for interreligious dialogue has led the fields of practical theology and missiology to view the comparative theology of religions from a new perspective, because how missiology thinks about interreligious dialogue will shape how the model of theology of religions will act in interreligious dialogue. This is because the ideologies and meaning systems of the model of theology of religions are not socially and culturally tolerant due to the differences in the identities that require a missiological approach for interreligious dialogue. Therefore, the missiological approach in the comparative theology of religions also will serve as a means not only for interreligious dialogue, but also for etymological reflection on the beliefs and values that are practised by religions by sorting out the differences between facts and values/beliefs, because facts are much higher than beliefs or values (Bosch, 1993:350). The missiological reflection on religious beliefs and practices focuses on self-evidence, but often what is self-evident to one

person is not necessarily self-evident to another. This is very much the issue of the model of and for peace between the Christian and Muslim religions in Nigeria. Therefore, there is a need to explore the etymological understanding of peace with the aim to gain knowledge through conceptual perspectives.

3.3 Etymological Understanding of Peace

Most people think they know what peace means, but in fact different people often have different understandings of this seemingly simple word. According to the Oxford International Encyclopaedia of Peace, peace can be perceived as happiness, harmony, justice and freedom, because peace is something that is mostly recognised by its absence. This is seen in the origin of the word peace, from the word "pees". "Pax" (akin to the Latin "pacisci" – 'to agree') is the Latin feminine noun from which the English word "peace" is derived. The concept of peace varies, as it refers to reaching agreement between two parties; respect for others; equality of life; a peaceful time; civil safety and security; a peaceful mind, etc. I agree with the above concept of peace, because the word peace encompasses all aspects of human relations and has become one of the primary needs of humanity since the dawn of human history. In the words of Galtung (1985:141), there has never been a consensus on the concept of peace, much less a model to achieve it. To be candid, it is a reality that peace has not been achieved, and human beings have never even come close to it. As a result, there has been conflict amongst human beings in many countries. This is seen in to Galtung's (1969:167) statistical understanding of periodical peaceful coexistence and conflicts, in relation to which he shows that, from 1496 BC to 1861 AD to the present era, over a period of 3 357 years, there were 227 years of peace and 3 130 years of war – 13 years of war for every year of peace. Going on the history of lives struggling for peace in the contemporary world, it appears as a normal phenomenon of human life (Galtung, 1985:141). This is because peace is a mental or spiritual condition marked by freedom from disquieting or oppressive thoughts or emotions. Therefore, peace is personal peace of mind, as well as calmness of mind and heart, and a state of freedom from outside disturbances and harassment, because it implies harmony in human relations.

Galtung's (1985:141) understanding of peace is that there is positive and negative peace, based on the different understandings of the concept, because many philosophers, religions and cultural and social systems have referred to peace from different perspectives. One of the

concepts of peace is "freedom from civil 'clamour and confusion'", and it is described positively as "a state of public quiet" or order within a community relating to law, custom or public opinion. The above understanding of peace is in line with Abu-Nimer (2001b), who says that peace is a state of mutual concord between governments: the absence of hostilities or war. This meaning of peace is negative peace, caused it entails a period of freedom from war. Another concept of peace is as absence of activity or noise; deep stillness; quietness, or what may be called inner peace. Peace has an undesirable connotation because the Roman poet Tacitus spoke of making a desert and calling peace an unwanted place of sterility and emptiness. This affirms that peace is a state of tranquillity or quiet; freedom from civil disturbances; a state of security or order within a community provided by law or custom; specifically absence or cessation of war; a state of reconciliation after strife or enmity; etc. The above statements show that peace is the absence of war, which some consider as ideal, and others regard peace as the removal of all internal and external violence and conflict, and still others consider it to be certain conditions, such as stability, justice, human rights, equity, freedom, happiness among and within individuals, peoples and nations of the world (Galtung, 1969:167). Because of the influential identity of the concept of peace in religions and the world, Küng (2007) says that if there is no peace among religions there will be no peace in the nation, and without peace among the religions there will be no dialogue, and consequently, without dialogue between the religions there will be no comparative theology of religions. With this in mind, peace is portrayed as the greatest need in the world today, and according to the Christian and Muslim religions' comparative theology of religion, the concept of peace is the foundation of peace for the religions themselves, as well as for the nation. Peace can be obtained through religious dialogue by comparing the theological foundations and understandings of the religious model of and for peace that gives birth to peace in and amongst the religions and also in the nation at large (Küng, 2007). The above statement shows the importance of peace within and outside of religion, which opens up possibilities for society that cut across all social, economic and intellectual distinctions.

3.3.1 Negative and positive

The above concept portrays that there are two different dimensions of peace – as a negative and positive concept. Therefore there is a need to explore the two perspectives of the concept of peace in order to relate the conceptual understanding of the model of and for peace in Christian and Muslim religious theology through a comparative theology of religion, because

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it will foster more understanding on the model of and for peace between the two religious groups for interreligious dialogue (Galtung, 1969:191). Therefore, based on the above understanding of the model of and for peace there is a need to discuss the negative and positive identity of peace proposed by Galtung (1969) that was mentioned above.

The negative model of peace is referred to as the identification of peace by the absence of war or armed conflicts – when the model for ceasefire is enacted by ensuring that it will never happen again. This model of peace is a condition under which there is active, organised military violence taking place. This is seen as a condition of more or less lasting suspension of rivalry between political units. This affirms that negative cultural salvation/peace is when war or another direct form of organised state violence has stopped, and oppression is ended (Galtung, 1985:141). The negative model of peace fails to understand that peace is not only the absence of armed conflicts or a partial suspension of rivalry between political units, but also the absence model of and for human rights.

This is referred to as a sustainable model for peace that respects human rights without any coercive restoration of a religious or social relationship for the constructive restoration of conflict. It is also referred to as a social condition in which exploitation is minimised or eliminated, and in which there is a continuing presence of an equitable and social order as well as ecological harmony. This affirms that the model of peace is not the total absence of any conflict, but the absence of violence in all forms and the unfolding of conflict in different ways. Therefore, the model for peace exists where people are interacting non-violently and are managing their conflict positively, with respectful attention to the legitimate needs and interests of all concerned (Galtung, 1969:167). I agree with the above affirmation because the model of peace is primarily considered not as the lack of a model for war, but the lack of a model of and for human rights. This is because the model of and for is referred to as a sustainable model of peace that respects human rights without any coercive involvement in the restoration of a religious, social relationship for the constructive restoration of conflict. It is also referred to as a model for a social condition in which exploitation is minimised or eliminated, and in which there is a continuing presence of an equitable and social order as well as ecological harmony (Lederach, 1995). This affirms that peace is not the total absence of any conflict, but the absence of violence in all forms and the unfolding of conflict in different ways. Therefore, the model for peace exists where people are interacting non-

violently and are managing their conflict positively, with respectful attention being paid to the legitimate needs and interests of all concerned (Galtung, 1985:148).

The following questions now arise: Will it ever be possible for human beings to live peaceable with one another without encounterology? What are the models of da'wa and mission in relation to human beings in the Christian and Muslim religions? Can missiology agree with the above perspectives on peace and conflict as normal phenomena? Can the missiological understandings of peace in the Christian and Muslim religions play a role in establishing a model of peace in the theology of religions for interreligious dialogue? With the aim of finding answers to such questions, encounterology can be fruitful if done with truth and sincerity, and without monopoly, as it can be used as model for sharing the conviction of the value of interreligious dialogue, especially in the Nigerian context, where the two religions are contesting the ultimate truth of identity (Knitter, 2002:9). The encounterology needs to be done in an open manner and in love, esteem and respect for both theologies of religion in order to acquire knowledge about how human beings can use peace for dialogical purposes, as doing missiology through a comparative theology of religion is all about learning. Therefore, the missiological approach can communicate a specific depth dimension, an all-embracing horizon of meaning, even in the face of suffering, injustice, guilt and meaninglessness, and also a lasting meaning of life (Küng, 2007). As a result of the above missiological questions, there is a need to explore the understanding of peace in the Christian and Muslim religions, and to explore the model for 'as practices' in mission-da'wa and in human beings for interreligious dialogue.

3.4 Perspectives of Peace in the Christian and Muslim Religions

The question is whether both the Christian and Muslim religious theological, social and cultural models of and for peace as an identity are in accord with one another? Does the conceptual meaning, and the social and cultural model for peace as an identity, grant humans rights, regardless of their theology of religious meaning, social and cultural differences? Therefore, in order to answer the above questions in relation to the Christian and Muslim theology of religions, this chapter explores the critical, historical and conceptual understanding of Christian and Muslim comparative theology of religious meaning, and the social and cultural model of and for peace, by clarifying and responding to the diversities of identity for interreligious dialogue (Clooney, 2010).

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The urgency of the Christian and Muslim comparative theology of religions, with the aim and objective of interreligious dialogue, calls for the need to discuss the missional task of comparative theology of religions, and what the Christian and Muslim comparative theology of religions need to do in relation to peacebuilding. This is because, if there are any resources for encounterology for our time, the comparative theology of religions might make this clear for the transformation of our religious theological diversity of identities. It could be normal that the followers of other religions are animated by a similar desire to share their own faith: therefore, Christian comparative theology implies reciprocity and aims to banish fear and aggressiveness to enable interreligious dialogue. The question is how the two religions can respectfully share their missionary faith and yet live in peace? The Christian mission in the comparative theology of religions needs a new way to model thinking on the model for interreligious dialogue, which could be attained by radically changing their model of peace to a model of interreligious dialogue (Woodberry, 2009). Therefore, in order to understand the comparative model of and for peace between the Christian and Muslim religions, there is a need to explore some of the theological identities of missiology/da'wa. However, the question remains, what is the understanding of peace in the Christian and Muslim religions?

3.4.1 Islam

Islam is an old religion that is misunderstood religiously, socially and culturally in modern society because it is been degraded and associated with violence, war and karmas that are inhuman. This happened due the rise in terrorism, and some Islam fundamentalists have forged disconcerting images of Islam. As a result, most people, when asked what Islam is, answer that Islam is a violent religion because the religion hates non-Islam.

This is because most people do not understand what Islam means, as Islam has different sects. Islam is not a violent or inhumane religion, because it is a religion based upon peaceful principles and loving commandments (Diamond & McDonald, 1991). Mozaffari (2007:17) affirms that the words "Islam" and "salaam" were derived from the Arabic root "S-L-M", although words might derive from the same root without necessarily having the same or a similar meaning. This is seen in many instances where Muslims emphasise theological etymological concepts and who say that, where Islam is dominant, it brings peace. The Muslim greeting, "as-salaam alaykum" ('peace be with you'), is answered by "wa-alaykum as-salaam" ('and to you too peace'). What may be inferred here is that this Muslim greeting

can invoke the opinion that only Islam (and thus Muslims) can bring about world peace, and non-Muslims cannot be real peace-makers (Mozaffari, 2007:33). However, most scholars confirm that Jews and Christians were using this greeting in its Aramaic ("salaam") or Hebrew ("shalom") forms before the birth of Islam (Abu-Nimer, 2002). This confirms that the concept of 'peace' in Islam was borrowed from the Hebrew word, but that it had different interpretations because peace is viewed from an exclusive perspective, which might not lead to dialogue with other religions due to the difference in meaning and understanding. The encounterology of promoting peace-building in the Islamic context is to develop approaches and methods that capture and address the negative and destructive impact of traditional scholars on interreligious dialogue. This has to be done with the common issues among religious beliefs and practices focusing on the golden rule about doing unto others what you want them do unto you, as this will help to promote missiology among neighbourology (Abu-Nimer, 2002:16). The question is: how can the Islamic concept of peace engage with other religions? How can Muslim's concept of peace respond to humanity? There is a recognition of some worthy beliefs and practices attached to the above questions and the need to nurture them. The Islamic concept of peace in the world is perceived to be associated with many concepts and ideologies, both good and bad. Abu-Nimer (2002:16), scholars who do not render Islam as peace interpret the state of salvation, and a Muslim as a person entering the state the salvation, as not representing Islam. This shows that peace in Islam is gained through the interpretation of the concept of peace, as Islam is the entrance to salvation and Muslims are the persons of salvation. Therefore, salvation does not mean redemption from sins through the self-sacrifice of the Son of God, but entering the universe put in order by God and His almighty power. It means to be a partner of the almighty power. This shows a more disputed connection between the terms "Islam" and "salaam" as a covenant of peace, and "Islam" as a synonym for dedicating one's own life to Allah. The etymological concept of 'peace' in Islam, as attached to salvation in Arabic, means devotion or submission to the almighty God, which is what Mohammed demanded from his Arab contemporaries around 610 AD as He preached monotheism and the last judgment. The term "Muslim" designates a person who has accepted Islam and literally means "submitting or dedicating oneself to God" (Abu-Nimer & Amal, 2007; Ringgren, 1949:2-5). This clearly indicates that the real meaning of peace is not Islam, as the word "Islam" denotes submission to God, not peace. Islam connects the concept of 'peace' with the religion in order to gain salvation and, as such, the real meaning of peace is not spelt out.

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The Islamic model of peace is not limited to Muslims alone, but also to other religions, especially the Christians and Jews as the people of the book whom Mohammed encountered during his mission. This is seen in the recognition of the unity of all human beings, irrespective of religion, ethnicity, race and gender, by admonishing Muslims to establish mutual relationship with humankind (Gopin, 2002). This is because the Muslim concept of peace recognises the good and perfection and equality that deserve dignity even though human beings are naught, as they disagree with one another but should live as one peacefully by settling their discord (Galtung, 1969:161). One cannot describe the concepts that underlie peace and non-violence in Islamic methods and that determine their cultural, social and religious relationship to human beings, despite the fact that the Islamic religion and tradition have a multitude of concepts with which conflicts can be resolved peacefully and non-violently. This is because Islamic scriptures and religious teachings are rich resources of values, beliefs and strategies that promote the peaceful and non-violent resolution of conflict (Esposito, 1992). This is seen in an awareness of the Qur'an, the Prophetic tradition and the early Islamic period, which is indispensable in understanding Islam, because the scriptures and traditions have continued to provide a paradigm of peace through different conceptual ideologies of scholars. Most scholars are continuing to evaluate the conceptual understanding of peace in Islam in various ways based on historical perspectives, because the process of harnessing and reviewing the historical Islamic religious peace becomes necessary due to globalisation and modernisation (Burton, 1990). This is because the concept of peace in Islam is subject to diverse conceptual understandings that might be pursued legitimately by different scholars from different nations, religions, and social and cultural traditions. The question is, what is the concept of peace in Islam? Most scholars have argued that the Islamic religion has justified war and violence as a primary means of settling conflicts. Some have argued that Islam is a religion of war and that violence is an integral part of Islam. This is because most scholars rely on the concept of Jihad in Islam as war, based on different traditions and understandings of the concept of peace in the Qur'an and the Hadiths (Burton, 1990).

3.4.1.1 Jihad

Many argue for the reconciliation of peace and Jihad in Islam (Huda, 2006:187). The Islamic Jihad is derived from the Arabic word 'al-jihad', meaning a struggle or striving. This affirms that the word Jihad does not necessarily mean war or resorting to the use of the sword and

shedding of blood. The word 'Jihad' is also understood as undergoing hardship and forbearance under great difficulty, while standing firm against one's enemies (Filiu, 2009:226). The above statement shows that the word Jihad means to strive or to struggle, and further also the Divine cause or purpose . Although scholars vary in their concepts of Jihad or wars of personal interest, public interest and struggle, they strive for Allah's purposes in the following: that of the heart (faith); that of the tongue (good speech); and that of the hands (work). On the basis of this socio-political and cultural ideological understanding, that of the heart, tongue and hands could mean different practices in relation to human beings (Zawātī, 2001)

3.4.1.2 *Da'wa*

Another aspect of the Islamic understanding of human beings is in relation to *da'wa*, which is active proselytism with the intention of saving souls and increasing the number of believers (March, 2007:399). Therefore, there is a need to understand the Islamic missiological approach to human beings, because Islamic *da'wa* pertains to the human relationship with God and with fellow humankind (Hasan, 2012:42). The issue of Islamic *da'wa* is not an afterthought in the history of Islamic religion, because it was enjoined on Muslim believers and belonged from the beginning. According to March (2007:397), it is well known that the model of and for Islamic Law has provided the model for *da'wa's* missional responsibility to invite others to Allah, because everyone will be questioned by Allah whether the missional responsibility was carried out or not. This shows that *da'wa* (mission) from an Islamic perspective will be rewarded by Allah (March, 2007).

As a result of the above affirmation of Islamic *da'wa*, the latter does not only mean obtaining a reward from Allah, as *da'wa* is one of the prerequisites in the Islamic faith, because human beings both within and outside Muslim (*da'wa* is for the benefit of Muslims and non-Muslims) need *da'wa* because it is through *da'wa* that human beings can perceive the truthfulness of Islam and eventually obtain a model of peace by converting to Islam and observing its precepts (Altalib, 1993:15). In the words of Murad (1986), Islamic *da'wa* is not a profession, not a subsidiary occupation that one may or may not engage in, and not a part-time occupation; it is the lifestyle of being Muslim, because every Muslim is responsible for *da'wa* whatever the vocation of the person's life (Murad, 1986). Therefore, *da'wa* is considered as a command upon Muslims because, according to Hasan (2012:42), it is a sin

for Muslims not to be committed to *da'wa*, because hiding knowledge of Islam without extending it to non-Muslims is disobedience to Allah, which will cause Allah's curse to descend upon such people, as such sin leads to hellfire (March, 2007:393). If Islamic *da'wa* is implicit knowledge that is required to be manifested in practice by reaching out to non-Muslims, what is the relationship between *da'wa* and knowledge? This question is necessary because a person cannot engage in *da'wa* without adequate knowledge of Islam.

As stated above, *da'wa* is an obligation for every Muslim, both male and female, within the limits of their knowledge. The limit of knowledge is understood as expertise in matters of the model of Islamic religion. Therefore, the less the knowledge, the more limited the scope of *da'wa*. In essence, *da'wa* does not necessarily require human beings to be knowledgeable or to undergo special training, as it is an obligation on every Muslim from Allah (Mozaffari, 2007:33). The above statement is in line with Shanahan's (2004:944) understanding of da'wa, namely that *da'wa* is a basic performance by all Muslims, and that conveying the message of da'wa does not require a high level of scholarship because it is the responsibility of each and every Muslim. This is because Muslims must propagate Islam, no matter how limited or extensive their knowledge of the Quran or Sunnah. This position on Islamic *da'wa* is extreme, because it shows that even an uneducated Muslim must be engaged in *da'wa*. This is quite alarming, because it implies that there is no formal requirement for Muslim *da'wa* (Haddara, 1996). The question is, if there is no educational requirement for Islamic *da'wa*, and that one should be committed to *da'wa* simply because one believes in and belongs to the Islamic religion, with or without knowledge, does Islamic *da'wa* become whatever one puts into it? In contrast, Shanahan (2004:943) affirms that Islamic *da'wa* requires knowledge, because Allah is the source of knowledge, goodness and peace, as well as the source of creation and power. Allah alone knows what is good and bad for human beings, and human beings are responsible for finding and fulfilling the desire of Allah through acquiring good knowledge that will enhance human beings and Islam (Hasan, 2012:23). Therefore, in Islam it is not prohibited for human beings to acquire knowledge, nor is there a limit to the knowledge they may acquire, but above all, Islamic knowledge should be paramount in human beings' lives (March, 2007:313). For this they need to learn the teachings of the Quran and Hadith on what is right and what is wrong, just as people learn to become theologians, engineers, doctors, etc.

3.4.1.3 The "others" as human beings

The understanding of human nature and values from an Islamic perspective differs because some fundamentalists follow an ideological thrust that considered others who are not in their sects as "*Kufr*" infidels (Crane, 2008:82). Their proselytization is aimed at the segment of other human beings regarded in general as kufr (Esack, 2006:22). They prefer to either withdraw from *kufr* society or engage in active combat against those who are not in their sects (Esack, 2006:22). The fundamentalists fail to understand that God has created human beings for social relations and that human beings are naturally social because they have been created to interact with one another and to cement relationships with sincere love (Provost, 2004). Human love should be sincere by being at peace with Muslims and others. The existence of conflicts caused by some Muslim fundamentalist hinders interpersonal relationships, peace and harmony in society (Kadayifci-Orellana, 2009:19).

The fundamental nature of humans is one of moral innocence that is freed from sin, and living on earth in a state of harmony and peace with other living things, which is the ultimate responsibility of humankind. Human beings deserve absolute protection, regardless of the person's religious, social and cultural differences, because all human beings are related and have from the same origin – created by God (Esposito, 1992). Therefore, human beings are required to treat each other the way God treats them and the way they want God to treat them; they should not punish others for denying or going against God's will. This affirms that, in Islam, there is no justification of violence against human beings' right to existence and that they themselves are responsible for their decisions and deeds in their movement through different religious, social and cultural affiliations when they face God's judgment. This is because the purpose of humankind determined by God in Islam is to aspire to peace, and not war or violence, by living harmoniously with ecology and other living beings (Diamond & McDonald, 1991).

3.4.1.4 The Prophet Mohammed

The Prophet Mohammed is considered one of a galaxy of prophets, because there were other prophets such as Noah, Abraham, Moses and Jesus. The latter four are considered as "warners" who came with identical messages that were preached within the context of the different situations of their people (Parsa & Tohidi, 2015:251). The incorporation of the accounts of some of the predecessors of the Prophet Mohammed is perhaps a reflection of the

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unity of faith. Mozaffari (2007:33) notes that, in Mecca, Mohammed originally sought recognition and disciples among the Arab tribes and recognised Jews and Christians as possessing divine revelation, even if he did not share their convictions. For example, Mohammed says, "Say: You unbelievers; I do not worship what you used to worship. You have your religion, I have mine" (Surah 109:14). This shows that Mohammed did not threaten tribulation, but appealed to his followers to let Muslims and non-Muslims exist side by side, letting God be the ultimate judge (Parsa & Tohidi, 2015:251).

This recognition by the Prophet Mohammed of his predecessors indicates that they came to remind people about their ultimate accountability to God, and to establish justice. The predecessors of the Prophet Mohammed recognised religious diversity just as Mohammed mentioned that every individual has his or her religion. This is because, if God had so pleased, He would have made a single Muslim *ummah*, but God desired that there should be diverse religious communities because there are people of other faiths who sincerely recognise and serve God (Hasan, 2012:42). The question here is whether the word for "peace" in Islam is etymologically related to the Arabic word "*salaam*" ('peace'; in Hebrew "shalom") and lives up to its claim of bringing peace to human beings. According to Shanahan (2004:943), a person who accepts Islam is at peace with him- or herself and his/her environment, because Islam is the religion and lifestyle of peacemakers. The goal of Islam is peace in all areas of life, and human beings are to make their peace with God and to be at peace with themselves and God's creation (Abu-Nimer, 1996). Therefore, Islam means a life of peace in which the eternal grace of God is manifest.

3.4.2 The concept of peace in Christianity

Christianity, just like Islam, also embraces the concept of peace. A proper understanding of peace from the Christian perspective will enhance interreligious dialogue. The concept of peace from the Christian perspective is referred to as the good news, which is grasped in depth in the Hebrew word "shalom" and the Greek word "Eirene" (Pars & Tohidi, 2015:251). Shalom, which is from the Hebrew, means to be complete, and also refers to an ideal state of life untouched by violence or disorder and sustained by security, prosperity and the good of human beings (Hasan, 2012:42). This affirms that peace is a form of liberation by God, who abolished wars and violence by delivering his people from their enemies and establishing peace on earth (Keshishian, 1992:15). The word "*Eirene*" means shalom, a concept that has

many dimensions, such as love, loyalty, truth, grace, blessing, salvation, righteousness, a wish for good health and material well-being, reconciliation with God, victory over evil, the right harmonious relations among human beings and nations, and the removal of all injustice and discrimination between people. Shalom is a biblical vision in which all creation is one, therefore peace is the fullness of God's gift in Christ (Mozaffari, 2007:13).

Erich (1992:72) says that, in a society in which there is no war, where everything is conducted peacefully without conflict, there is still no shalom if people are starving or if disease reigns. Therefore, peace does not only imply a just human relationship, but also harmony with God's creation, because being in a good relationship with God implies being in a good relationship with God's creation (Yeatts, 2002:15-16). God is perceived as God of peace, and the coming God's kingdom in Christ's peace is the coming of peace because Christ's peaceful life, death and resurrection are God's gospel of peace for humanity and creation to accomplish the mission of peace. Whenever two or more people live together there is the potential for disagreement. Therefore, conflict or disagreement is not right or wrong, but how one responds to it may be right or wrong, as facing conflict entails listening to one other and mutually addressing and resolving the conflicting issues. Therefore, love and justice are to prevail through reconciliation when conflicts arise, because if conflicts are not resolved, then society cannot work together for love and justice (Esack, 2006:22). The above affirmation shows that Christians are to make peace with other people by transforming the lives of society through reconciling their broken relationships, because God has transformed the lives of Christians through Jesus Christ, therefore Christians are urged to transform others (McGrath, 1996:167). This is seen in God's peaceable love and justice for people, which was demonstrated through Jesus Christ, who also commanded Christians as peacemakers to relate to God and also to other people (Shaba, 2011).

This affirms that peace is not only an eschatological reality, but also a present reality here and now. It is given in Christ's peace. The incarnate God himself became the peace of the world, because whoever is in Christ's peace is in peace, and whoever participates in God's peace through Christ's peace is called to live out that peace and be its messenger. This is because God's peace has reconciled humanity with him due to the fact that the old nature of human beings has distorted its imago Dei; it was alienated from God and has become an enemy of God.

The concept of peace in the Christian religion encompasses a broad range of meanings, including political, social, cultural and religious dimensions. The dimension of the concept of peace in the Old Testament and New Testament Christian scripts means to embrace and practise the teaching of peace in society through compassion and non-violent resolution, unity in diversity, social justice and love for all. If these mutual concepts are manifested and practised in human lives, the end result will be peace (Appleby, 2000). This is in tune with the Christian perspective of the understanding of the concept of peace, and tallies well with the UN's declaration of human rights; these include the prevention of genocide, the protection of refugees, the elimination of racial, gender and religious discrimination, and the protection of children as well as indigenous peoples. This affirms that the concept of peace is present because it entails a reconciliation with and healing of those who are suffering, whether because of ill health or ethnicity, religion, gender or race (Shaba, 2011).

3.4.2.1 The "others" as human beings

The Christian understanding of Jesus Christ as a model of a nonviolent human being is related by Dear (2007:2), who says that Christians are commanded to practise nonviolence. Through the grace of God, the sin of humanity is the conscious choice not to act in the grace of nonviolence. Given our violence, we need to ask the God of nonviolence for the grace to become like God, to renounce our violence and to join faith communities of nonviolence to help us live lives of active love. Jesus is the model human being of nonviolence. Jesus loves enemies, serves people, tells the truth, builds communities, prays to the God of peace and risks his life in active nonviolence, even in the face of arrest, torture and execution. Because of this life of steadfast nonviolence, God raised Jesus from the dead to uphold his life for all humanity (Dear, 2007:2). This shows that Christians as peacemakers are empowered by Christ's peace to be bridge builders or brokers of peace, to relate the teaching of Jesus Christ's peace done on the mountain by assuring them that they will be called children of God if they relate peace to others. Knowing that the Christian identity of peace entails the consideration of individuals, being peacemakers centred on the relationship with God's peace through Jesus Christ's peace means that being peaceable with your neighbour is being peaceable with God. Therefore, there is a need to discuss the conceptual understanding of peace in Mathew 5:9. This will give more insight into the Christian social and cultural understanding of peace.

Therefore, the Christian social and cultural conceptual understanding of God's peace through Christ's peace is not a human-made reality. It is God's life-peace, justice-peace and liberation-peace for human beings. Christ's peace is the actualisation of God's peace. Christ's peace remains the peace of the world, because Christ's peace as demonstrated on the cross is the way of peace, and Christ's peaceful resurrection is the victory over conflict to achieve peaceful coexistence. However, most scholars have different perspectives of the concept of peace in relation to the above text, because some have referred to the content of the above text as disputes within the Christian community rather than actual wars. This affirms that, although disputes or disagreement or conflict inevitability was found in the Christian community, it was peacefully resolved.

Therefore, the peace of Christ is considered to be a form of exclusion of other communities, mainly for a particular community, that is a Christian community, to be peaceable within themselves without other communities (Bangura, 1997:92). This shows that the concept of peace is individualistic and that privatisation of it for a particular community without it being extended to another community is an exclusion perspective, even though the concept of peacemakers relates to those who do not fight, but who actually bring conflict to an end by reconciling with others. As a result, the Christian concept of peace is inclusive by embracing members from different societies (e.g. Gentiles, Jews, etc.), who are to be received equally without favouritism or partiality and to be treated justifiably and lovingly in the Christian community. This treatment is to be extended to their neighbours by living according to the covenant with the Bible through acts of compassion. If acts of compassion are left undone, then love and justice have no expression (Dear, 2007). This affirms that the concept of peace is inclusion despite diversity, which is viewed as essential for community health, as all people are equally valued in contributing to the other. Justice and love therefore are better viewed as spiritual gifts, as the two are central to all community life, because if there is no love and justice the use of these gifts can become a dry formality. That is why the followers of Jesus were called to love their enemies and to overcome conflict with Christ's peace (Knight III, 1992). This is because to fail to **love** one's neighbour indicates an inefficiency in our **love** for God (Hasan, 2012:42). Therefore, for the sake of religious relativism, a Christian comparative theology of the religious identity of peace for interreligious dialogue should focus on the ethical identity that deals with moral issues, as the Christian identity of *missio Dei* has respect for human dignity

3.5 Ethical Bridge and Moral Issues

Knitter's (2011:117) understanding of the identity of ethical and moral issues suits the Christian comparative theology of religions in order to address the spirit of unity self-critically and with sensitivity to other religious conceptual theological approaches, as well as in relation to the historical content in order to function for interreligious dialogue by encouraging and supporting ethical and moral issues. This can be done by developing policy recommendations for human beings' moral stewardship (Knitter, 2002:110). As a result of the diversity of truth claims by Christians and Muslims in a comparative theology of religions, there is a need for guidelines for an ethical bridge for encounterology that might lead to ethical and moral issues in relation to human wellbeing. This is because, in the words of Cumming (2008), one of the causes of tension, suspicion and conflict between the Christian and Muslim religions is the issue of mission-da'wa (the technical term for Islamic outreach, which literally means "invitation") and evangelism. Mission is seen in the daily missional of the two religious groups, as both Christianity and Islam are missionary religions. Large numbers of Christians convert to Islam on a regular basis, and large numbers of Muslims become followers of Jesus Christ on a regular basis (Cumming, 2008). The ethical identity is to proclaim Christian faith in love, not with the aim to convert other religions, as only God can do that. The identity of the ethical and moral issues in the Christian comparative theology should recognise that people's choice of faith is a matter between themselves and God. Therefore, no matter how the truth and goodness in the model of peace in the theology of religions lead to the model for human value, if they do not there is something wrong with that goodness (Knitter, 2012:137). There are many commonalities and differences in the Christian and Muslim religions on the identity of the concept of mission peace in relation to human beings that should be compared, but only a few are chosen and compared. The encounterology should not be done in a coercive manner, as everyone has the choice to accept or reject the ethical encounterology on the basis of their religious identity. As a result, Christians should be ready to accept people's choice in doing encounterology. The encounter is to be done concerning the Christian faith, without demeaning or ridiculing the faiths of others (Afsaruddin, 2009).

Even though the focus is on human rights, a Christian ethical missiological encounterology should not manipulate these situations in order to gain converts, as the Christian comparative theology of religions is not about conversions but about interreligious dialogue. Therefore, if

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there is no ethical encounterology on the identity of peace that fosters true love for humankind, then something is deeply dysfunctional in that ethical identity (Knitter, 2002). This shows that the ethical and moral issues between the Christian and Muslim comparative theology of religions provide a deeper understanding of how to implement peace for interreligious dialogue. The above statements show that the ethical and moral issues encountered should be approached in the form of moral issues that respect human beings due to the diversity of their religious ideologies, especially the fundamentalists.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this chapter has discussed a comparative theology of religions in a Christian and Muslim context based on challenges to the truth of the claims of peace in a comparative theology of religions in relation to human beings, which indicates that, for some, religious, social and cultural understandings of peace are ways of life, permeating every human activity. For others, religious, social and cultural understandings of peace represent the highest aspirations of human existence. And for even others, religious, social and cultural understandings of peace are institutions that claim to carry a message of exclusion of others instead of inclusion for peaceful coexistence. Despite differences in the concept of peace in the comparative theology of religion between the Christian and Muslim religions, there is a need for the leaders of the two religions to tolerate each other, as both religions have value (either to their adherents or not) for human lives and dignity, and more so in order to support the global need for peace and respect for anthropology and cosmology. Islamic *da'wa* seems to be very urgent by applying both faith and life, which are perceived to be living in darkness and ignorance of the true God's peaceful *da'wa* of being humanitarian upon human flourishing. The issue of who is allowed to engage in *da'wa* veers toward the notion that virtually every male or female, whether knowledgeable or illiterate, may do so, but any Muslim who engages in *da'wa* should not speak of things that he or she does not understand or know. This is an opening for the Christian comparative theology of religions to reach out to what is not clear in religious identities. This is because the Christian mission as praxis is about a concrete, transformative encounter between the living God and human beings. God has transformed Christian lives so that we may encounter other people. This is because a Christian and Muslim comparative theology of religion on the concept of peace differs in

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relation to *da'wa* and missiology, because both religions consider their concept as the ultimate truth in support of the anthropological exclusion of peace from an individualistic and privatisation perspective.

The above conceptual understanding of the Christian and Muslim understandings of peace-making shows that both religions have distinct concepts for how to relate to others, as Christians see unbelievers as spiritually and morally 'lost', in need of peace and redemption from conflict, and in need to be reconciled with God through Jesus Christ by faith. Christians have an exclusive concept of the salvation of Christ that indicates that there is no peace unless a person professes Christ as personal saviour, which devalues other religions, and therefore peace will not be attainable. As a result of the above factors, the Christian commitment to interreligious dialogue with Muslims must embrace all Muslim good. The Christian should understand that Muslims are imitating the faith of Abraham, which indicates that both Christians and Muslims are inclined to the one God of Abraham, but from different perspectives. Therefore, Christians should understand that this God of Abraham that the Muslims are imitating is the father of one family to which all belong. As such, this God wants us to bear witness to him through our respect for the values of the religious identities of each other's religions by working together for human progress and community development. From the Christian perspective, God has shown love for those who do not love Him by demonstrating His love for humankind through Jesus Christ, who died for all sinners. This demonstrates the unconditional love of Jesus Christ for enemies, and he calls for his followers to follow his model by loving enemies and praying for those who are persecuting them so that they can be called children of God. The above statement shows that the Muslim ways of peace are not clearly expressed due to the nature of the conflicting model of and for peace that condemns other religious concepts, because that peace belongs only to those who embraces Islam, which is an exclusionary perspective (Knitter, 2002). This is different from the Christian understanding of peace, as Christians are urged not to condemn, for they too will be condemned, and to forgive, as they will then be forgiven. Christians should forgive those who sinned against them, because if they do not forgive those who sinned against them, God will never forgive them.

CHAPTER FOUR

A MODEL OF AND FOR RELIGIOUS LEADERS AS PEACE BROKERS

4. Introduction

This chapter explores the following perspectives: peace brokering, and the relation between peace brokering and conflicts, the characteristics of peace brokers, the differences between religious leaders as peace brokers and the secular, religious and ethical bridge across moral issues, with emphasis on the practical ways of overcoming and practicing peace building amongst Christian and Muslim religions in Nigeria. The practical aspect is that Christian religious leaders if they can recognize other religious beliefs and practices by embracing them through inclusion on the fact that there are truths and values in other religions. These will give an openings for a dialogically learning from other religion with self-reflections concerning common goods, problems, and abiding with the principles of golden rule by doing unto what they want others to do unto them. The above practice cannot be possible if Christian religious do not unconditionally love other religions, the practice should be done in friendly approach by engaging in spiritual activities with other religions. Christian religious should also be carefully in their communications by not condemning or degrading other religions.

There also is further discussion on religious leaders, missiological approaches to a model of and for religious peace as peace brokers, and the practice of embrace, which includes issues of inclusivism, the common good, problems and golden rules, and the recognition of others. The chapter emphasises the golden rule on moral issues as common problems in religious theological beliefs and practices, which will serve as criterion for harnessing the model of and for religious leader's peace brokering. Furthermore, missiological features of interreligious dialogue are explored, as are features of embrace, in which the issues raised include spiritual activities and friendship. The following section discusses the issue of communication and missiology, and the directive and non-directive persuasion of conflicting parties.

As noted in Chapters one, two and three, the Christian and Muslim religions offer guidance for living a moral life. This guidance is woven into a fabric of beliefs and practices, because the principles of religion have a moral, authoritative meaning that provides religious

adherents with a guide for how to live and why they ought to live in that way (Migliore, 2004:20). The traditions give rise to a critical model of and for religious leaders' ideological meaning and socio-cultural principles of peaceful coexistence among human beings; this reflection on which practices rest is called morality. The above statement makes it clear that a model of and for religious leaders does not deal just with the spiritual needs of religious adherents, but also is engaged in peace brokering for interreligious dialogue. However, the reality of limited infrastructure and an increasing religious diversity make it critical for religious leaders to harness the identity of their religious beliefs and practices for interreligious dialogue and proselytism if they hope to gain more adherents (Twiss & Bruce, 2000). Therefore, for the sake of dialogue between the Christian and Muslim religions in Nigeria, the limited infrastructure and several different traditions of religious, cultural and socio-political identity values rooted in the religious beliefs and practices lead to competing claims about the ultimate truth of reality and call for the harnessing of religious traditions via the ethical bridge or golden rule on moral issues for human rights, as stated in Chapters two and three.

4.1 Peace Brokers

The challenging process of moving a society from war or conflict to peace is commonly referred to as "peace brokering" because it entails confidence-building measures for the prevention of wars and the institutionalisation of appropriate conflict-settlement mechanisms. Peace brokering is widely recognised as an effective instrument in conflict resolution, utilised by a variety of organisations and multifaceted actors and agencies at the local, national and international level. Maintaining international peace and security is one key area in which mediation is used frequently, with varying degrees of success. As one of the largest and most powerful political and economic actors in the world, the European Union (EU) is based on and promotes principles of conflict prevention and resolution, both internally as well as in its external relations. With a multitude of political, economic and military instruments at hand, it combines its knowledge of peace brokering and its worldwide presence to play a proactive role during, as well as in the aftermath of, persisting armed conflicts around the world (Troja, 2002:99). The practice of international peace brokering has been used to good effect in different conflict situations. However, little systematic learning has been drawn from these experiences to date, and EU approaches to and involvement in peace brokering appear ad hoc. The EU needs to strengthen its capacity and engagement, either through its direct

engagement with African Union (AU), or by supporting others' efforts with financial and technical assistance.

This means that both conflicts or disputes and peace brokering are continuous processes without limitations of time or period. As conflict is inevitable, so also is peace brokering inevitable. As a result, peace brokering can be seen as a continuation of conflict resolution or management (Galtung, 1969:191). According to Galtung (1985:158), peace brokerage is an act performed by someone who extends or elaborates on the negotiation process by intervening between the two parties with authoritative power for decision making. Peace brokering is an act performed by someone who has a method or strategy of conflict or dispute settlement. Therefore, peace brokering can be referred to as an act by someone who intercedes for reconciliation between two parties that are separated due to discord. It is clear that peace brokering exists because conflict or disputes also exist, and as a result they are of the same accords as they are commonly related (Parsa & Tohidi, 2015:251). Therefore, peace is one of the many human aspirations, even though there is no general agreement on the conceptual identity of peace brokers. This is because the effectiveness and success of any peace broker's effort depends on his/her model of and for religious meaning, and the social, cultural and educational background against which peace brokers can or are permitted to make their efforts to resolve conflict, and this depends on who the peace broker is (Bercovitch & Kadayifci-Orella, 2009:175). Therefore, peace brokerage can be seen as an intermediary activity undertaken by a third party with the primary intention of achieving some settlement of issues between the two parties in order to end conflict or dispute (Harpviken & Røislien, 2008:373). This is because a peace broker is someone who is trusted and credible, just as religious leaders who are credible are trusted by their adherents (Bass & Steidlmeir, 1999:217). This shows that a peace broker is someone who is effective, influential and trusted by the conflicting parties to help those involved to achieve a better outcome than they would be able to achieve by themselves. It depends on the character and influence of the peace broker whether peace brokering will lead to success in resolving conflict. Dear (2007) advocates that there are different scholarly discourses on the relationship between peace brokerage and conflict. However, it depends on the scholar's religious, social, geographical and educational background. Brokering peace and dialogue is often used in different ways by different actors, or in fact interchangeably – peace brokering models of "as practice" act in different ways.

The exploration of peace brokering in this study is based on the missiological approach, which can be understood as frameworks of encounterology for interreligious dialogue in relation to religious leaders who serve as peace brokers and are in a position to assist conflict parties to reach a mutually satisfactory solution. The peace brokerage encounterology provides a framework, but makes no substantial suggestions or decisions in the case (Vindelov, 2006:36). According to Abu-Nimer and Kadayifci-Orellana (2005), the brokerage of peace can be seen as institutions or organisations who served as peace brokers, such as St Egidion of Catholic Relief Services, Kisma Peace and Development in Somalia, and the Religious Society of Friends. Peace brokering has been undertaken since the late 1980s by a large number of international organisations, most importantly the UN, the EU, the International Donor Community (IDC), the African Union (UN), and national as well as international non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in many countries, including Nigeria. Some countries are often hailed as success stories, proving that peace brokering does work, while other countries, such as Nigeria, have not gained any success in the implementation of peace by the abovementioned organisations (Abu-Nimer & Kadayifci-Orellana, 2005). The question is what kind of peace brokerage is undertaken by religious leaders? Religious leaders who act as brokers use brokerage intervention efforts in which the model of and for religious meaning, social and cultural systems of creed, and objects such as symbols, texts, images, etc. are used for resolving conflict. This is because the beliefs and practices of religious meaning, and social and cultural objects used by the religious leaders as peace brokers, have a vital role to play in conflict resolution (Filiu, 2009:213). In the words of Abu-Nimer & Kadayifci-Orellana (2005), religious leaders acting as peace brokers is not a new development, because it was instituted by the Pope, who successfully served as a broker in the Beagle Channel conflict that erupted between Chile and Argentina. This has also been seen in different parts of the world, where religious leaders have played vital roles as peace brokers, such as the Quakers and Interfaith Brokerage, which acted as peace brokers in Nigeria (Bercovitch & Kadayifci-Orella, 2009). According to Dear (2007), there are other religious leaders who have served as peace brokers in Sierra Leone, where the model of and for religious meaning, social and cultural identity has played an important role, such as the Interreligious Council of Sierra Leone (IRCSL), which has played an active role in promoting peace building through the efforts of religious meaning, social and cultural systems and has been instrumental in the negotiation, agreement on and signing of the peace agreement.

This shows the model of and for religious leaders' formation of and involvement in the IRCSL, the Quakers and the Interfaith Brokerage, and that Muslim, Christian and traditional religious leaders were involved as peace brokers. This affirms that, when conflict broke out, the ordinary model of and for religious leaders was used to guide peace brokers in stopping the violence (Abu-Nimer & Kadayifci-Orellana, 2005). This shows the importance of the model of and for religious leaders as peace brokers. Looking at the history of the IRCSL and the Quakers, they were able to use their model of and for religious credibility and trust to influence and resolve conflict for peace building by pursuing dialogue between the conflicting parties. These leaders listened to the conflicting parties and were able to condemn violence (Onuoha, 2011:402). The IRCSL in particular was able to launch a campaign in order to negotiate and settle the dispute (Bercovitch & Kadayifci-Orellana, 2009:175).

Added to this is the IRCSL's active role in encouraging and promoting the negotiations that resulted in allocating the Council of Elders and Religious Leaders for peace. This Council sees to it that peace exists between the conflicting parties and attempts to stop reoccurrences of conflict (Bercovitch & Kadayifci-Orellana, 2009:175). Looking at the Quakers' involvement during the Nigerian Civil War in 1967, they were able to convene a secret meeting of lower level officials from both sides to search for possible areas of agreement. The Quaker involvement was considered successful, as both the rebels and the government were persuaded to convene a peace conference (Wanis-St. John & Kew, 2008:11). The Quakers were successful through their secret meetings for peace. Their success was based on a Biafran representative, who commended the Quakers' successful negotiation, as the Biafrans were headstrong when it comes to negotiations but the Quakers succeeded in persuading them to attend the peace conference and keep talking while war was going on (Bailey, 1985:205). This shows that the model of and for religious leaders as peace brokers can be successful in the midst of conflict, as it was with the Quakers. There are a number of characteristics that distinguish the model of and for religious leaders' interventions from secular ones. These include explicit emphasis on spirituality and/or religious identity, the use of religious textual meaning, religious cultural and social vocabulary values, and the utilisation of religious spiritual rituals, which led to the successful brokering of peace (Kleiboer, 1996:360).

4.1.1 Religious leaders

The beliefs and practices of religious leaders' brokering of peace have had an important influence on the conduct of human beings that cannot be excluded from the field of academic studies, because to exclude this is to ignore decisive factors in the religious, economic, political, social and cultural lives of human beings. This is because interreligious dialogue finds ways of uniting religions to live peaceable through the influence of the beliefs and practices of religious leaders that contribute to peaceful coexistence among human beings (Kleiboer, 1996:360). How can a model of and for religious leaders serve as peace brokering for interreligious dialogue? And to what extent can a model of and for religious leaders serve as a means of opposing conflicts without creating new conflicts and being turned into conflict itself? This is possible because the identity of religious leaders serves as prototype for peace amongst themselves, their communities and other religions. The above questions were prompted by the fact that a model of and for religious leaders as an identity is a means of creating and opposing conflict, because the typologies in the theology of religions show that there are different claims to the true identity. The comparative theology of religion in relation to the concepts of peace in the two religious groups confirms that the truth claims of a model of as belief and for as practices of religious leaders as peace brokers are the chief source of peaceful coexistence by including the other religion, and also a chief source of intolerance, hatred, conflict and violence within and outside religion through exclusion (Twiss & Bruce, 2000:40). Most understandings and misunderstandings of religions can be traced to the exclusion of the religious meaning, social and cultural systems that need to be harnessed for interreligious dialogue.

Therefore, religious leaders as peace brokers have an obligation through their model of and for interreligious dialogue. The question is what is the obligation of the model of and for religious leaders as peace brokers? According to Knitter (2007), the beliefs and practices of religious leaders have an ethical, constructive role in interreligious dialogue in society, and either positively or negatively are part of the problem of interreligious dialogue or part of the solution. In essence, religious leaders are supposed not to be part of the problem, but should be part of the solution (Twiss & Bruce, 2000:55). This is because religious leaders are those who are called, motivated and inspired by their spiritual and religious traditions, principles and values to undertake peace work. The obligation of their beliefs and practices as brokers of peace therefore differs in terms of principles and operations due to their spiritual values (Bailey, 1985:222). The identity of peace brokerage in religious diversity is based on the

issues of conflicting acts of exclusion. Exclusivism relates to groups of logical identity that see in the other an evil that must be excluded. What exclusivism should know is that one identity of evil can be another's identity of justice (Volf, 1996:11).

This understanding of identity becoming exclusive is the opposite of the now opposing group. Therefore, exclusion becomes the evil because of its unwillingness to accept the other identity due to its cultural affiliation. Religious leaders as peace brokers are in the position to reframe their beliefs and practices for interreligious dialogue (Caner & Ergun, 2003:233). Inclusion becomes necessary because exclusivism is related to the fact that an allegiance to exclusivism is to renounce all other typologies of religions. Christian religious leaders who hold strongly to this view in their brokering of peace are concerned that engaging other religious identities might be disloyal, which could lead to syncretism or conversion to other faiths. This is because of the contribution of the exclusivist understanding of Jesus Christ's peace is the only peace, and that peace belongs to exclusivism because one has to believe and belong to the identity of exclusivism as the only real peace. This understanding of exclusivism is based on the fact that God so loved the world that He sent Jesus Christ for humankind to believe in so that people would not die, but have eternal life (Hasan, 2012:42). The exclusivists fail to understand what God's peace really is about, as God's peace is universal. Therefore, Christian religious leaders' brokering of peace means to embrace the identity of other religions for interreligious dialogue.

Christian religious leaders as peace brokers in communities exist to spread the Gospel in the face of global realities. This is because God can reach out to draw people to himself through participation in God's reign to different degrees (Knitter, 2011:117). Therefore, we must seek to live the Gospel through peace building and reconciling our communities with the understanding of the New Testament term "Gospel" (*evangelion*), as good news or a good message, denoting the coming kingdom of God and the proclamation of God's saving activity, which was demonstrated in the life and work of Jesus of Nazareth.

Therefore, to witness the Gospel is to tell the truth of the experience we have in Christ, and our witness ought to be authenticated by our lives (Knitter, 2007). It means we should enter into dialogue with our neighbours and with our enemies, and heal broken relationships, which can be done through respecting others as our friends. It involves living in our societies with our identities of transformation, in all aspects of our lives, and in accordance with the

teaching of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, by portraying our image as being just and peaceful in accordance with the character of Jesus (Katongole & Rice, 2008). Being a Gospel witness means submitting your whole life, your whole being to the Almighty God. It also means acknowledging God over your priorities, as when we acknowledge the God of the Bible; such acknowledgment requires everything else to be reordered because, in the midst of all religious diversity, there is a centre that is Jesus Christ. Tracy (1981:332) describes what has remained unaltered after 2000 years, namely that Jesus is still the centre of the community and of life. It is this foundation, and the need for dialogue, that enables us to engage in joint service and united witness in the world (Ada, 1987:520). Thus, we should be united in our mission through interreligious dialogue. As long as the Bible, which witnesses Christ, is open and read, proclamations for interreligious dialogue will be very fruitful (Migliore, 2008:330). Therefore, as we normally listen to God's word, we need to listen to other religions because we cannot do the first if we are not prepared to do the second. As stated above, the main objective of Christianity is a call to unite through love and reconciliation, not to impose, not to propose, and not to insist that the church is "driven by the Holy Spirit to do her part" for the full realisation of God's plan (Chong, 1998:286). Therefore, dialogue may not be exempt from Christian religious leaders, because dialogue includes religious, moral and political challenges.

These challenges require Christian religious leaders to rise up and help as representative Christians persons in order to enable healing, empowerment and growth to take place in individuals and their relationships. Ultimately, the hope in doing this is to rescue Nigeria from political catastrophe, as the Bible offers some criteria for beliefs and practices for peaceful coexistence (Greene, 1993:1611). Christian religious leaders, as agents of peace among people in general, should make space for interreligious dialogue into which others can enter. The question is how can Christian religious leaders' peace brokerage make such openings? This will happen through a holistic and reflexive approach.

4.2 The Practice of Embrace

Kritzinger (2008:790) says that, for successful and productive interreligious dialogue, faith-to-faith encounterology should establish mature religious identities who have direction and character, and who enjoy and celebrate their faith as a way of life as they worship God. These should be mature religious identities who are sent by God to live and fulfil the various tasks

in the world in which they live. Volf (2006) argues that faith-to-faith encounterology is done with the awareness of the common grace of the one God as a counterculture by working toward God's common good. Kritzinger (1997:61) believes in the importance of the missiological approach for interreligious dialogue, as it will lead to a working cohesion for the same goal, and the sharing of experiences, festivals and friendships will also take place. White (2003) says that missiology would only achieve this when it becomes social agency, but before this can take place the missiological approach to interreligious dialogue should embrace others.

As noted above, in any theology of religion it is inevitable that a religion will have some kind of bias for particular passages in the scriptures, which is why, in the words of Kritzinger (2008:764), the issue now is not salvation or truth of identity, but flexible, holistic encounterology on human sufferings. Twiss and Bruce (2000) make the same suggestions on the golden rule, as having to do with moral issues for interreligious dialogue. All their suggestion are good missiology, but there is a need for some facets of the missiological approach, in line with what Kritzinger (1997:61) stated earlier that the holistic missiological approach will be attained only if Christian religious leaders manifest some facets of the missiological approach. Therefore, Christian religious leaders as peace brokers should understand that, just as missio Dei is a sacrificial journey, so it is with brokering peace, because both involve all aspects of our lives for the journey of mission to be successful. The holistic facets of Christian religious leaders' missiological approach to interreligious dialogue imply love, compassion, human dignity and the preservation of justice for one another by considering the well-being of our future generations, as we are all responsible for the common good of one another. Responsibility for missiological facets requires setting perimeters to the perception that our faith is better than others, and that we have nothing to do with the other. We should reframe and redirect our intrinsic minds and extrinsic empirical efforts towards eliminating such concepts by improving the quality of our missiological approach to interreligious dialogue (Twiss & Bruce, 2000).

We should understand that the facets of religious diversity are a way of seeing our communities and living in them. God could have made all human beings become Muslims or Christians, but God wishes that diversity should be in our midst for missiological challenges. Therefore, the hope in diversity is to learn and tolerate the idiosyncrasies, defects and opinions of one another. The missiological identity of our religious, social and cultural

systems have contributed to peace in our communities, but they also have led to an attitude of us versus them, division, hatred and combat. Their identities' encounterology has too often betrayed the high ideals they themselves have preached. According to Kritzinger (2008:790), the issues at stake for the approach of encounterology are not about the possibility of salvation in other religions, but a missio Dei approach in a pluralistic context from self-valuing to esteeming others. Our approach of encounterology requires the following facets:

4.2.1 Inclusion

How can we share our faith with others, without condemning, criticising or creating religious conflict, but at the same time not losing our identity as Christians? Missiology as theology of embrace 'brokers peace' by creating an open space for the other identity as the ideal of the encounterology of peace building, because the identity of religions is prone to exclusion. Volf (1996:247) says a cause of exclusion is leaving interdependence and seeking a supreme independence, because when this takes place the other becomes an enemy that must be pushed away, and when the other no longer seems as critical to one's dependence, but has for all practical purposes become useless to the self, one then becomes judgmental. All such exclusion must be rejected, according to Volf. As Christian leaders, once we see a gap we must go out and fill that gap – this is the meaning of faithful peace brokerage. We need to be faithful and respond to the gap God puts before us in this broken world.

Therefore, Christian religious leaders are to be peace brokers in Nigeria, where peace is desperately needed. Based on our calling as Christ's representatives on earth, we need to give peace to the world. Christian religious leaders as peace brokers should know that interreligious dialogue entails the Christianisation of other religions; for other religions to be Christianised, we need to be humanised by opening a space not underneath other religions, because Christianisation does not occur without the humanisation of openings having taken place (Katongole & Rice, 2008). Therefore, we need to be humanised in order to Christianise other religions; our Christianisation has to be done with a positive attitude – as that of God's plan of salvation in relation to the sacrificial death and resurrection of Christ's mediations between God and humankind.

The question is: what, then, are the differences between religious leaders' brokering of peace and that of others? Although religious leaders undoubtedly will learn much from the other for interreligious dialogue, the ultimate outcome is to bring other religions to their completion and true identity for human relations. There are many religions, international organisations, government leaders and experts in the terrain of peace brokering, but not many leaders. This is because the involvement of the beliefs and practices of religious leaders in peace brokering is instrumental for conflict resolution and the cessation of hostilities, because these leaders offer techniques and skills (Bercovitch & Ayse, 2002:40). It is important to note that the struggle of peace brokering by other leaders of organisations is not their struggle, because once things no longer are going well they will withdraw. Religious leaders' peace brokering is inspired by a vision of God's future and is grounded in the thick stubbornness of the now, because these leaders have made peace with the struggle of their religious journey (Harpviken & Røislien, 2005). They know that the journey will be costly, but they believe that victory ultimately belongs to God. Good religious leaders' peace brokering radiates very differently with regard to the presence of peace in a broken world (Rice & Katongole, 2008:2031). Peaceful coexistence in the lives of people is the responsibility of religious leaders, who must deconstruct and reconstruct their beliefs and practices for interreligious dialogue for the common good of humankind in relation to the moral issues that are fundamental to religions (Bercovitch & Ayse, 2002:21).

4.2.2 Common good, problems and golden rules

Ipgave (2008:1-2) proposes some questions in relation to the contribution of the model of and for religious leaders as peace brokers on the issues of the common good, namely how can Christian and Muslim religious leaders approach the civic sphere of mixed societies, and how can religious and secular leaders relate to one another? What is it in the model of theology of religions that seeks the common good, and how can religious leaders pass on the challenges of peace and justice conveyed by the scriptures? These are questions whose importance is only exceeded by their immensity and complexity; the record that follows does not, of course, claim to provide definitive answers, but it does include insights and reflections that should be of benefit to Christians, Muslims and everyone committed to seeking the common good for interreligious dialogue. The identity of religious groups cannot deny some common goods and problems that have becomes catalysts among them, like that of the suffering of human beings. Therefore, any religious ideology that is not concerned with the suffering of human

beings has something wrong with it, and by their fruits we shall know them. The identity of religions is not just about the question of belonging to a community; it is also a force that seeks to contribute to the transformation of society. Muslims and Christians alike know themselves to be mandated by divine imperative, and informed by divine values, which must guide them to the common good of humankind in reshaping the world (Lattely, 2002:219). Knitter (2007:140) notes a tremendous amount of human suffering in the world today, such as poverty – those who do not have food or shelter to care for themselves and their families, people who are dehumanised; victimisation – people being made poor and kept poor, excluded by others, overpowered by others, deprived of their rights because they are poor; violence – poverty in itself is violence, people are killed anyhow, human lives are mistreated without respect for God's creations; patriarchy – male dominion over women, women are regarded as not being human, they are deprived of religious, social, economic and political rights in society. These are just a few among many of the common problems that are affecting human beings in society. If there is common good in religious groups to salvage such human suffering, there will be dialogue (Twiss & Bruce, 2000).

As noted in Chapters two and three, the identity of the ethical practical bridge across moral issues will serve as a levelling of the playing fields for peace brokering from the identity of religions, because the ethical practical bridge will provide what the religions might have in common for interreligious dialogue, instead of looking within or underneath other religious traditions, as they all have common beliefs and practices (Knitter, 2002:137). The ethical bridge informs the golden rule that will determine the principles by which religious identities treat the other, namely as they would have them do unto them. This would serve as a basis for moral action and also a criterion for assessing the moral quality of and implications for religious identities. The ethical bridge of religious leaders' peace brokering does not mean projecting other religious values on beliefs and practices, as both religions have the right to their identity, but to come out with moral principles on what is common to all and that cannot be denied (Twiss & Bruce, 2000:70). This advocates for religious leaders' brokering of peace in that all religions cannot deny the reality of human beings. According to Twiss and Bruce (2000:100), the identity of religions in the universe has provided their adherents with a sense of reality and truth or authority, considered to be ultimate in some sense, that motivates not only behaviour important to personal and social integration with fellow human beings, but also behaviour that draws lines of exclusion, as noted in Chapters two and three. This is

because religions have ideal forms of love, justice, peace and brotherhood as paths to salvation and liberation. Nevertheless, the fact remains that these traditions also appear to be one factor of exclusion that leads to violence and the abuse of human rights (Twiss, 1998:175).

The question is how this deceptive contradiction can exist? This calls for universal religious moral principles or norms that describe certain standards of human behaviour and are protected as a legal right, regardless of religious, social and cultural background. The identity of religions will serve for interreligious dialogue between the Christian and Muslim religions if academic discourse will gather the beliefs and practices of peaceful religious coexistence into moral principles, because moral issues are products of the successive recognition of the diverse identities of religious traditions (Twiss & Bruce, 2000:150). The reason to embark upon moral issues is because the identity of the Christian and Muslim religions in Nigeria in relation to moral issues is in crisis, as they are not able to acknowledge mutual respect as the basis of human values. Therefore, moral issues could serve as a process of harnessing the model of and for religious leaders as peace brokers for interreligious dialogue, because common issues among religions in relation to human suffering are moral and legal claims, with high priorities for goods that are sociocultural guarantees for both religions. The above make it clear that abusing human morality is also abusing human rights, because once someone is denied morality he/she is also denied his/her rights. This is seen in the Nigerian Constitutional Law (NCL, 1999), which does not prevent adherents from changing their religious traditions. Nevertheless, there are legal barriers for those wishing to leave Islam. Some prominent Muslim leaders says that Muslims are allowed to leave Islam, but that they should not attack this religion once they have left; others believe departing is a violation in Islam and should be punished. Despite such restrictions, interaction on a daily basis among people of different faiths in this kind of society is inevitable (March, 2007:399). The above restriction is an abuse of human rights, based on Twiss and Bruce's (2000:178) understanding of human rights that is found in the 1948 UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and in the two related covenants adopted in 1966, jointly known as the international Bill of Human Rights and supplemented by subsequent treaties and conventions. The Convention on Civil and Political Rights guarantees rights such as freedom of thought and expression, freedom from arbitrary arrest and torture, freedom of movement and peaceful assembly, and the right of political participation in one's society. The Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural

Rights provides for rights such as the right to employment and fair wages; to protection of one's own family; to an adequate standard of living; to health care; to peoples' self-determination regarding their political systems and economic, social and cultural development; and to ethnic and religious minorities' enjoyments of their own culture, religion and language. The international human rights have been expanded by treaties on the prevention of genocide (1948), the status and protection of refugees (1951-1966), the elimination of racial discrimination (1965), the elimination of discrimination against women (1979), the elimination of discrimination based on religion (1981), the rights of children (1989), and the rights of indigenous peoples (1993).

The beliefs and practices of religious leaders as peace brokers are to be in concord with the common good of human beings by deconstructing and reconstructing their beliefs and practices for interreligious dialogue. Based on the abovementioned common good, it is clear that human rights embrace all aspects of crucial socio-cultural conditions for the sustenance and flourishing of human lives and environs. This is why the language of rights, entitlement and priority claims is used (Ibrahim, 1991:136). The golden rule will serve as an identity for harnessing the beliefs and practices of peace brokering amongst Christian and Muslim religious leaders in Nigeria, and as a catalyst in the relationship between peace and conflict. Both religions adhere to the same common values, such as honour and a strong desire to protect their own traditional ideology as an identity. This is confirmed by Stark (2007:379), who sees the common human values in the Christian and Muslim religions as thus: When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit on his glorious throne. All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate the people from one another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. He will put the sheep on his right and the goats on his left. Then the King will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me. Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?' The King will reply, 'Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers

and sisters of mine, you did for me.' Then he will say to those on his left, 'Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. For I was hungry and you gave me nothing to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, I was a stranger and you did not invite me in, I needed clothes and you did not clothe me, I was sick and in prison and you did not look after me. They also will answer, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or needing clothes or sick or in prison, and did not help you? He will reply, 'Truly I tell you, whatever you did not do for one of the least of these, you did not do for me.' Then they will go away to eternal punishment, but the righteous to eternal life (Mathew 25:31-46 NIV).

The above observation is also found in Muslim scripture on moral issues, as follows:

> Allah will say on the Day of judgement, 'O son of Adam, I was sick and you did not visit me." He will say, 'Did you not know that my servant so-and-so was sick and you did not visit him? Did you not know that if you had visited him, you would have found me there?" Allah will say, 'O son of Adam, I asked you for food and you fed me not." He shall say, "O my lord, how could I feed you…? And Allah will say, "Did you know that my servant so-and-so was in need of food and you did not give feed him…? 'O son of Adam, I asked you for water and you did not give me to drink." The man shall say, 'O my lord, how could I give you water…? Allah will say, 'My servant so-and-so asked you for water and you did not give him to drink water. Did not know that if you had given him to drink, you would have found that to have been for me' (Sahih Muslim 32:6232).

Based on the above factors, it is evident that the potential for conflict is insurmountable, and to shift from violence to peace requires a transformation of the problem using creative and constructive solutions. If there are common moral issues in the Christian and Muslim religions, then there also will be such issues for the two religions to recognise one another's faith.

4.2.3 Recognition of others

Kritzinger (2008:764) says that the need for Christian religious leaders as peace brokers has to do with encounterology, by providing a model of theology of religions that recognises and embraces other religions for interreligious dialogue through theological reflection, because

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the issue of the interpretation of theological traditions has becomes one of the causes of conflicts. The problem is how to partner one's own theological reflection and that of other faiths, how to reflect on one's spirituality with the other, and to use such reflection honestly to learn from the other. Such missiology requires the careful inclusion of other faiths' traditions in one's own theological interpretation by not distorting your own theological interpretation or the other for any reason (Twiss & Bruce, 2000:57). To recognise other faiths is to show empathy and esteem for each other's common humanity for fruitful interaction, which is the model of tolerance and mutual acceptance (Abramovich, 2005:313).

To recognise is to tolerate other religious identities, which could be a step forward to healing past pains and an opening for interreligious dialogue (Van der Ven, 2006:441). Reisacher (2009:157) quotes the Qur'an (29:46; 2:56; 16:125) on Muslims' recognition and tolerance and how they refer to Jews and Christians as "People of the Book", which means that Muslims should not argue with Jews and Christians, because they believed in what was revealed to them and what was revealed to the people of the book, because God is one, and there is compulsion is religion. Volf (2010:218) says that, if there is recognition and tolerance among Christian and Muslim religious leaders, there will be an alleviation of human suffering, as both religions provide moral guidance for politics, economics, and environmental stewardship, peace-making and alleviating poverty. Ott and Aoki (2002:483) says that, in terms of recognition and tolerance, people should not be murdered, burned or horribly put to death. Everyone should be allowed to believe what he/she likes, because he/she will be punished enough by hellfire. Ott and Aoki (2002:483) understanding of punishing people in hellfire is that religious leaders as peace brokers should punish other faiths by bringing them into their faith through tolerance. The missiological approach should be in love, because without loving God and humankind, interreligious dialogue will be impossible, as it will affect proselytization, and proselytization requires loving the other (Reynolds, 2015:54)

4.3 Features of Embrace

The need to love other faiths is stipulated in the Vatican II Council, because if there is love there will be understanding of one another's faith for interreligious dialogue (Arinze, 1998). Therefore, the purpose of da'wa's proselytization is an invitation to all other parties in their faith, but the invitation should be done with the motive of loving God and humanity (Osman,

1997:20). In the words of Smock (2002:132), without love there will be no embrace or proselytization, because God's kingdom involves loving and restoring people to their humanity. The above understanding of the model of and for common good amongst Christian and Muslim religious leaders shows that human beings are to love God and neighbourology together (Smock, 2002). Jesus was able to illustrate the role of the neighbour with the parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:27). I agree with the above statement on encounterology, because the feature of missiology is to embrace the love of neighbouring. This is seen in the lives of the disciples of Jesus Christ who, through love, joy, peace, tolerance, kindness, generosity, loyalty, simplicity and self-control, experienced their encounterology as the kind of privileges in which there were no differences of race, nationality, social class or sex, because all barriers were broken in Christ and all hostility had vanished, because Jesus had made peace (Bosch, 1991:392).

Stark (2007:211) says that the Christian and Muslim religions are growing rapidly in most societies, and especially in Nigeria, but asks whether the present and future of the two religious groups will be able to practise their da'wa and missiological model of as beliefs freely in love while also allowing other religious and non-religious groups to do so?

In the words of Starkey (1985:463), love between the two religions can be viable, because both have love of God and neighbours as the model of and for da'wa that should be done because of love for God and humanity. From the Christian perspective, the model of and for missiology is as much to love one's neighbourology as it is participation in the missio Dei movement of love toward people, with the church being the central channel through which such love continues to be manifested to the world, because no one truly believes until he/she wishes for others what he/she wishes for him/herself (Esack, 2006:22). Bosch's (1991:392) understanding of missiology as love is that "Mission has its origins in the heart of God … there is mission because God loves people". Thus it is clear that to love is to love one's neighbourology as one loves oneself. This shows that mission is not seen as originating from the church or from any human agency, but as an attribute of the Triune God. It is clear that mission has its origin in the heart of God. Therefore, there is mission because God loves people. Based on the importance of mission for Christians, the mission of Christian comparative theology is to provide a clear and comprehensive understanding of other religious theology for interreligious dialogue by translating, reframing and creating the beliefs and practices of religious leaders. Others consider the mission of Christian

comparative religion as studying other religious traditions in reflecting on human moral issues (Migliore, 2004:5). Therefore, the mission of Christian comparative theology in relation to the model of and for peace is for the sake of interreligious dialogue because of the conflicting understandings of religious theological identity.

This is because missio Dei involves being sent with love into the world, to serve, preach, heal, save and liberate. For peace to reign, Christian religious leaders' peace brokering should include love of the other religions, because the word 'agape' speaks of unconditional love, which is an attribute of God's own heart, a kingdom value. Agape speaks of a love that exceeds passion, friendship and benevolence, love that goes beyond self, an unselfish feeling, love that acts, love that loves the unlovable (Hasan, 2012:23). Love does not just impel us into a relationship with others, it also enables us to recognise injustice and gives us the desire to do something about it through reconciliation by building peaceable relationships in our communities (Lartey, 1997). I agree with the above affirmation, because agape is described as indiscriminate love beyond discrimination; it suspends social and ecclesiastical traditional norms that promote barricades that hold people in prisons and hospitals. Our teaching of incarnation seeks to convey an 'enfleshing' of agape in a historic person – Jesus Christ – who becomes the icon and enabler of such love and who liberated those who were imprisoned and healed those who were hospitalised

Christian religious leaders' brokering of peace is more about relationships than religion, because relationships prepare communities for dialogue. Therefore, Christian religious leaders must be concerned about people beyond the limits of the Christian community, and let other religions experience God's compassionate love in their lives (Sampson, 1997:273). This is because human beings are created in the image of God, therefore human beings are equal, and thus there should be love among one another. Without loving one another, dialogue will never be attained, as dialogue is to love the fellow person, just as loving the fellow person is dialogue. Dialogue of love is when human beings of different religions are open to one another, when they share their projects and hopes, concerns and sorrows, not necessarily by discussing religion, but by drawing on the values of their different beliefs and traditions. Furthermore, this kind of dialogue implies concern, respect and hospitality towards the other. It leaves room for the other person's identity, modes of expression and values (Bevans & Schroeder, 2004:76). Doing this will promote unity of love towards one another

despite diversity, because human beings do it to learn from one another as well as to establish a relationship with one another, which is supposed to be the character of religious leaders.

Such giving of love should be in our hearts, as it is the impelling force behind our action – without a monopoly on or exclusivism in loving action. Our loving action without exclusivism might be a way of refocusing and calling people to the true heart, soul and potential motivating force of their practice. Therefore, religious leaders are urged to love their neighbours as they love themselves, despite differences in religious traditions. Since Christ, whom we encounter in the Bible, is a person of love and compassion, and the whole picture of Jesus in the Bible is nothing but God's love in the flesh, loving other religious beliefs and practices opens doors to propagate interreligious dialogue in a missional manner. God allows differences with purpose and we are to intercede in terms of reconciling the world. Looking at love as the centre of the heart of Christian religious leaders in reconciling the community, there is a need to point to the role/place of Christian religious leaders in reconciling the community. For reconciliation to take place there should be a spirit of love, therefore love should be our motivation and the motive force. In our approach to peace brokering in reconciliation, we, as Christian religious leaders, should place ourselves within this love by becoming agents and conduits of it. The key is the realisation that the love of God is for the whole world, and as such, all that we should do is that we must respect and uphold our differences (Lartey, 1997). Christian religious leaders as peace brokers should always be prepared to foster peace with love and to prevent any dispute or conflict between individuals and communities.

To love is to reconcile broken relationships, because the passion we should have for reconciliation lies in the heart of God. As Christian religious leaders we reconcile because God first reconciled us, therefore reconciliation is also one of the beliefs and practices of religious leaders that begins with a humble process, a road to be travelled together and one step at a time by those seeking to be reconciled, as the mission of reconciliation projects itself into the future by opening up and concentrating on possibilities (Bevans & Schroeder, 2004:76). The meaning of reconciliation is "to change, or exchange; to effect a change", because when we are reconciled, we change places and are in solidarity with the other, rather than being against the other (Neufeldt, 2011:344). Reconciliation is a process that causes Christian religious leaders as peace brokers to overcome alienation through identification and solidarity with the other religion in order to make peace and restore relationships (Doxtader,

2003:344). This can be done by setting aside attitudes, grievances, positions, deeds, distances, and/or results in order to induce or bring about a change for the better

Therefore, reconciliation begins in our homes and our local assemblies, as we cannot reach out to the world, where division and oppression are rampant, without working toward our relational health with those to whom we are closest. Christian religious leaders as peace brokers are to promote reconciliation in the community, as reconciliation is not only to speak the word, but to live lives that communicate the message of reconciliation without ever being spoken. Our personal integrity and character must develop to exhibit a spirituality of reconciliation, as reconciliation is our role that we are to embrace and promote in God's script. Katongole and Rice (2008:24), in their book *Reconciling All Things: A Christian Vision for Justice, Peace and Healing*, suggest ten theses for understanding reconciliation:

> Reconciliation is God's gift to the world. Healing of the world's deep brokenness does not begin with us and our actions, but with God and God's gift of new creation. Reconciliation is not a theory, achievement, technique, or an event − it is a journey. The end of the journey of reconciliation is the shalom of God's new creation − a future not yet fully realized, but holistic in its transformation of the personal, social, and structural dimensions of life. The journey of reconciliation requires the discipline of lament. In a broken world, God is always planting seeds of hope, though often not in the places we expect or even desire them. There is no reconciliation without memory because there is no hope for a peaceful tomorrow which does not seriously engage both the pain of the past and the call to forgive.

Therefore, reconciliation needs Christian religious leaders, but not as just another social agency or NGO. The missio Dei of reconciliation requires a specific leadership that is able to unite a deep vision with the concrete skills, virtues and habits necessary for the long and often lonesome journey of reconciliation. There is no reconciliation without conversation on the constant journey with God into a future of new people and new loyal sites. Imagination and conversion are the very heart and soul of reconciliation.

When a new disposition is exhibited, a new stance is assumed; when a new framework is established, resulting in togetherness, where enmity and distance previously were the order of the day, then reconciliation has exchanged places with the other by overcoming alienation

through identification, solidarity, restoring relationships, positive change, new frameworks and togetherness, all of which are spiritual and political (Katongole & Rice, 2008).

In view of this, reconciliation can be seen as the restoration of relationships where brokenness, dehumanisation and polarisation previously existed. Therefore, the model of and for Christian religious leaders in reconciliation can be attained by the use of verbal or non-verbal, direct or indirect, literal or symbolic modes of communication, with the aim of preventing, mitigating, relieving conflict or healing traumatised people or our communities by seeking to foster people's growth as full human beings for peaceful coexistence (Hasan, 2012:23-42). The second Vatican Council was the first ecumenical council in the history of Christian religious leaders to give serious consideration to the need for Christian religious leaders to love the followers of other religions and to advocate interreligious dialogue as an integral dimension of their mission. The features of missiology as love will lead to the practice of praying together with other religions, which might serve as the opening of a space of mutual trust.

4.3.1 Spiritual activities

Abu-Nimer (2001a:685) says that the prayer and spiritual activities of religious leaders as peace brokers can bring social and moral resources to peacebuilding. This is because the transformative approach to peace holds that personal transformation through prayers and spiritual activities radiates outward and affects peace on every level, from the intrapersonal to society (Brian & Daniel, 2003:31). It also allows peacebuilders to facilitate the processes of peace and reconciliation in areas of conflict. The above affirmation is true, since Culbertson and Pouligny (2007:277) says that prayer and spiritual activities as an identity of peacebuilding are seen in an understanding of Islam that connotes the attainment of peace through submission to Allah or through conformity to Allah's will. One of the important thing is that Allah is referred to as merciful and compassionate, and the Quran teaches order, orderliness, morality and betterment. This can be achieved through the guidance of Allah the merciful and compassionate, who has power to lead people on the straight path. The power for people to reconcile comes from Allah and so can be achieved. Muslims should keep and promote peace and justice with all, including their enemies, keep the greeting peace unto you, and exercise tolerance.

According to Abu-Nimer (2001a:685), the Christian understanding of prayer and spiritual activities in relation to peace is that, in Christianity, peace is an act of God and is from God through the death of Jesus Christ. The peace of God was brought through the reconciliation of human beings Himself. All Christians are children of God. God has written the law in their hearts and they are commanded to take the initiative to reach out to the offender and sort out their differences. If no agreement is reached, the next step is to involve a third party, and if this does not work, to seek support from the whole community. Christians are not to keep anger for an entire day; instead, they should seek to live peaceably with one another through reconciliation. The offended party therefore is commanded to forgive an indefinite number of times. Christians should love God and their neighbour as God loved them by saving them through Jesus Christ.

Fernando and Jackson (2006:33) affirms that Christian and Muslim religious leaders can pray with one another only if there is an agreement on who or what God is and if there is a basic agreement on which prayer, as shared prayer presumes an understanding of the addressee and thus of inner action. Prayer is a form of dialogue on unity, peace and agreement, and once there is an agreement, there is love and respect for, as well as tolerance of, human dignity (Abu-Nimer *et al*., 2007). Today, however, the moral and spiritual values are being ignored due to human commitments. Interreligious encounters can rightly enter into this moral and spiritual value to be safeguarded. Thus, coming together to pray is an interreligious moral and spiritual value and encounter that will certainly promote human dignity. Gopin (2002)

4.3.2 Friendship

According to Saeed (2003), friendship amongst Christian and other religions can be done through interactions of friendship and mutual support and mutual knowledge and understanding; thus, by making friendly opportunities to share reflective prayer. While some centrally or regionally organised events may be arranged and advertised through communities, the programme chiefly will be realised through a predominantly grassroots approach to building friendships (Evans, 2007). At different times and in mutually appropriate ways, this may include activities embracing the four kinds of friendship: the friendship of life – where Christians and Muslims meet and interact at the level of everyday life; the friendship of deeds – where Christians and Muslims collaborate in responding to the social concerns of our society; the friendship of discourse – where scholars, theologians and

other experts seek to clarify ideas, dispel misunderstanding and prejudice, and seek new understandings; the friendship of religious experience – where Christians and Muslims may share their spirituality and their contemplative prayer experience (Keith, 2007).

Mutual friendship amongst the two religions' leaders is very important because their friendship can serve as an example of practices among their respective adherents. As noted above, friendship is one of the ways of mitigating religious conflicts, especially between the Christian and Muslim religions in Nigeria. Due to fear, some religious leaders might not agree with some of the facets of peace brokering, such as opening spaces for interreligious dialogue. But, as noted in Chapters two and three, it is also because of accusations of relativism and syncretism that they may not like to interact with other religions. But, as Christian religious leaders it is our task to reconcile the world by participating with other religions in interreligious dialogue so that they will know the truth.

4.4 Communication and Missiology

Fagbemi (2013:221) says that communication and missiology are one of the movements of God's love towards humankind, because this is how God communicated His will to humanity – by speaking in a language that was understood by his people because he wanted people to understand him so that they did not have an excuse (Hanciles, 2014:121). It is clear that the intention of God's communication is to lead people to him (Brown, 2004:26). According to Shaw and Van Engen (2003:90), communication is a process of sending and receiving a message by both a sender and a receiver, with the sender having the original message. Missiology is a sender to communicate with religions for interreligious dialogue. Therefore, missiology must learn the hermeneutics of other religions in order to enter into dialogue with them (Nida, 1960:47,222).

For missiology to be successful for interreligious dialogue through communication, we have to understand how people think, what contexts they choose, and the past and present experiences that form their religious identities in order to be able to communicate effectively with them. This is seen in God's involvement in the lives of human beings through Christ.

Nida (1960) refers to God's communication with humankind as accommodation. It is vividly clear that God accommodated human beings' identity so that he could communicate. Shaw and Van Engen (2003:13) state that, whenever God decides to connect with human beings, He does so in their particularity, on human terms. Religious leaders as peace brokers must do the same with the people to whom they go. If they do not accommodate the people's religious traditions, the Gospel message will not be accepted, because it will not be seen as relevant. Shaw and Van Engen (2003) add that missiological communication is intercultural; the message did not originate with us, and the process must pass through the universal level. The concept of the "universal level" is based on the following: all humans share a basic commonality of experience which they express in different ways through their cultures. "Humans were created to be creative and express that creativity in a multiplicity of religious perspectives" (Shaw & Van Engen, 2003:13). This is because religions communicate in different languages and styles. All humans organise themselves into societies, but the societies are very different. All religions distinguish "right" from "wrong", but what is acceptable in one religion may not be acceptable in another due to the diversity of religious identities and truth claims. Here the task of the missiological approach for interreligious dialogue is to accommodate the message in terms of the worldviews of religions. But this should not be done by the missionary "converting" his or her identity to that of others. In missiology, an attempt must be made to understand the other religious identity and how they express their beliefs and practices in relation to God and humankind. Only then can faith-to-faith encounterology begin to communicate God's message to them. Missiological communication for interreligious dialogue entails understanding the contexts of one's own identity and then reflecting it to other religions, and choosing which of their contexts is appropriate for communicating God's message. So the missionary does not "translate" his or her culture into another. The missionary tries to understand how to accommodate God's message in other religious traditions (Shaw & Van Engen, 2003:18). As noted in Chapter two and Chapter three, the antagonist in the model of theological interpretation of one's self and the other has implications for one's self and the other for peaceful coexistence. It is stated that religious leaders' peace brokering should take care not to distort their own theological reflection or that of the other. Therefore, the communication of the beliefs and practices of religious leaders as peace brokers is very important, because communication could be good or bad when relaying issues. The communication of religious leaders as peace brokers could yield fruits because of their holistic approach to the scriptures when it is done for the

promotion of peace or mediating between conflicting parties. This is seen practically in the holistic communication of religious leaders such as the Quakers, IRCSL and AACC, among others, who provided good information and communication between the parties.

As noted above, one of the examples is that of the Quakers, who served as peace brokers in Nigeria. The Quakers' mission of peace brokering played a critical role by opening the lines of communication, as they specifically requested to serve as peace brokers between the conflicting parties (Sampson, 1997:273). The communication by religious leaders as peace brokers is not passive, as simply conveying messages; it involves removing obstacles to negotiations, such as suspicion, misperceptions and fears, through listening empathetically to the fears and concerns of the parties (Sampson, 1997). Therefore, religious leaders' communication is not only mechanical but also spiritual, as it leads to hearing and understanding, as well as finding the right religious words to say.

Religious leaders' forms of conversation on peace building are highly important. This is due to the importance attached to communication as being a way in which information is conveyed and received. Therefore, Christian religious leaders as peace brokers for interreligious dialogue should be careful about the forms of communication present in any religion, because we need to ascertain their values within the religion in order for caring interaction to take place. Some of the meaningful languages in creating new relationships through reconciliation are compensation and compassion.

Although these are important, there is a need to come to a place where we let go of our desire for retribution or revenge. Until we come to that place, we will be carrying the anger and resentment that drive us into our communication with others. Our anger might be justified because of our human nature; indeed, we should be resentful against those who hurt us, but if we harbour these feelings indefinitely we will pay a heavy price. As Christian religious leaders we should bear in mind that these feelings of revenge are carried from one generation to the next, so that the hate is not just our hate, but is someone else's that has been transferred to us (McCullough *et al*., 1997). One of the major beliefs and practices of religious leaders to be effective in peace brokering is that of healing past trauma, which is forgiveness. This is because there is no price that will ever be adequate to pay the people who have been physically and/or mentally hurt or traumatised. What is necessary, therefore, is finding a new, meaningful language that will bring together the language of forgiveness.

This aspect of listening was recognised as an effective tool for encounterology by the Quakers during the Biafran war in Nigeria, because they listened to the conflicting parties. According to Sampson (1997) says that one of the Quakers' encounterology with the Biafran leader is that Ojukwu saw them as highly objective, and then, being a church organization they never lacked in sympathy, which again helps in such a situation. Don't ever say to me, "Oh, 50 people were killed, oh, well that happens," and tell you let's go on. No, when you say to the Quakers, "this is what happened," there is a silence for a bit. There is a fellow human feeling for the tragedy, which is fully understood, and they then take that into consideration in their responses (Klieman, 2012:155). Therefore, religious leaders as peace brokers are to listen to the views of other religions' beliefs on human suffering, because it allows them to be with another person and to be completely silent with them – silence not only with one's lips, but also in one's inner response, neither agreeing nor disagreeing, in order to permit the other person to be who they are, freely, without controlling, coercing or censuring what they say (Lartey, 1997). This transpires when the listener listens with interest and is ready to inquire with open questions, and understands what is heard and neutralises his/her feelings. Religious leaders as peace brokers are also to listen to the conflicting parties during their brokerage in order to understand them, even if they do not agree with them. Listening should be done without judgment, as the purpose of dialogue is not to determine whether people or issues are good, bad, right or wrong. The person who listens actively, however, does not remain in silence throughout the process of peace brokering; there comes a time when the listener reflects with the conflicting parties, seeking to clarify what has been heard (Lartey, 1997). The Quakers also had a more direct impact on the encounterology, as they advocated for negotiation in settling the conflicting parties by employing more active listening. Their listening missiology was recognised by both the Biafran rebels and the Nigerian government (Bailey, 1985:205). Listening can be seen as an effort to understand another person at a deeper level by trying to see what is shared in common with them in an effort to resolve the conflict. The communication encounterology of religious leaders as peace brokers includes directive and non-directive communication (Kritzinger, 2008:764). The directive and non-directive communication is aimed at creating favourable and conducive places and times where and during which other religions or conflicting parties can negotiate and understand each other (McCullough & Willough, 2009:69). The directive and non-directive models of communication have advantages and disadvantages, as discussed below.

4.4.1 Directive and non-directive communication

Directive communication refers to persuading the conflicting parties to agree on decisions taken to resolve the conflict. Directive communication should come from the religious scriptures and might be coercive, because the disputants' will is not observed by the broker. Therefore, directive communication will not resolve the conflict, as the one party might not agree because the other party might be considered as not being in favour. On the other hand, directive communication will be useful if both parties insist on being right and no one is willing to accept a resolution (Galtung, 1969:171). Another model of and for religious leaders as peace brokers in communication is non-directive, which is an alternative given by the broker to the parties in conflict to go ahead and make decisions.

Silbey and Merry (1986:7-32) point out that non-directive communication refers to allowing the disputants or other religions to decide on their own will or decision, and that this non-directive communication will likely yield fruit, as the parties might or can make decisions between themselves, understand each other and reach an agreement. However, non-directive communication will not resolve the conflict if both parties are not willing to understand their problem(s) and reach an agreement to resolve their conflict (Galtung, 1985:158). This shows that directive and non-directive communication have advantages and shortcomings. This is seen in the use of directive communication to control conflicting parties, which will help the parties to resolve their conflict before the broker gives the directive. But if the directive is given by the religious leaders' peace brokerage, the other parties may reject it, since the broker of peace is merely a mediator, and if the conflicting parties differ in terms of the broker's directive communication model of and for religious leaders' brokerage, the process of resolving the conflict might lengthen (Sillars & Wilmot, 1994:163)

However, others respond to this argument by stating that, since brokerage is a voluntary process, the parties can reject a broker's proposal or even brokerage itself when the brokers put too much pressure on the disputants (Sampson, 2012, 103).

This shows that, when disputants' perspectives differ from those of the broker of peace, the duration of the mediation process will lengthen to allow the model of and for religious leaders' brokering to convince the conflicting parties. Therefore, religious leaders' communication is a complex process that depends on the conditions and stages of conflict;

the effectiveness of the process of conflict resolution also depends on the credibility and trustworthiness of the religious leader's communication (Sampson, 1997:273).

Despites the differences involved in directive communication, it seems that directive communication could be successful in conflict resolution when the broker of peace is trusted and viewed as credible by the conflicting parties, as trusting will help his/her directive communication to be accepted easily. However, when communication is either directive or non-directive or not trusted or viewed as credible by the conflicting parties, this brokering will not be supported by the conflicting parties

Lederach and Appleby (2010:19) say that the neutrality and supportive communication model of and for religious leaders as peace brokers that was employed by IRCSL during the conflict in Sierra Leone differed from the model of and for peace brokerage used by the Quakers in Nigeria. Due to the recognition by the regional foreign ministers of the peace brokerage process, the IRCSL's neutrality and support became important peace brokerage elements, as they remained neutral and supportive of the peace brokerage process

However, during the actual brokerage, the IRCSL was able to employ a more directive communication model of and for peace, as they had gained the trust of the parties. This is because, through the IRCSL model, the peace brokers were able to convince the parties to return to the table by adopting a communication model of and for peace. They also addressed critical issues amongst the parties by encouraging them to co-operate and work towards finding common ground as an ethical bridge. During the peace brokering, among the critical issues was when the parties failed to even look at each other, but they were able to calm the parties by resorting to joint prayers.

The above scholars' understanding of tolerance is an opening for individual liberty in the right to speak freely without fear and to maintain the principles of his/her beliefs, and worshipping God according to his/her understanding of faith, either through monotheism, polytheism, atheism or theism. Therefore, what you do not want others to do unto you, you do not do unto others, and what you want others to do unto you, you do unto others. Therefore, the golden rule of reciprocity should be applied as a common field in the model of religious leaders' peace brokering.

Conclusion

Religious leaders as peace brokers in Nigeria have several advantages in interreligious dialogue if they can harness their model of and for peace through a comparative theology of religions. This is because of the prototypes in their communities, which are seen in their service and involvement in community affairs, which indicates their commitment to the communities, thereby contributing to their credibility and legitimacy, which are central to any mediation effort (Abu-Nimer & Kadayifci-Orellana, 2008:549).

As such, religious leaders as peace brokers should remain involved with the conflicting parties, even though an agreement might be signed, and help the parties to heal, build social institutions, and seek justice. The service of the religious leaders as peace brokers is a long-term commitment that requires time (Bercovitch & Kadyifci-Orellana, 2009:175). Therefore, they should be able to afford to invest in long-term involvement in the communities, as they have the scriptures as well as the motivation derived from their religious or spiritual belief systems. They need to capitalise on their beliefs and practices in relation to the issues of increased human suffering, and a space is needed for popular participation to promote peace programmes in order to help spread the culture of peace. This is because religious leaders have a role to play by serving faithfully as peace brokers, since the religious beliefs, values and practices held by the mainstream in a society are an expression of a basic worldview and are a manifestation of assumptions about what exists outside the narrow confines of everyday experience. In most societies, religious leaders provide guidance for interpreting these beliefs and traditions and articulate the appropriate values and correct moral behaviour for living in alignment with these beliefs.

Christian religious leaders in Nigeria are to serve as peace brokers for interreligious dialogue by learning and understanding other religions through inclusion of beliefs and practices of other religious identity because there are values and goodness in other religions that needs not to be degraded. Even it may lead to religious relativism that all religions are equally true, as the intention is not to propose one universal religion (the universal religion proposed here is a religion that has respect for human dignity, i.e. an ethical bridge across moral issues) for the whole of humankind, as the need at this time is not for one religion, but for mutual love, tolerance and respect, learning from and listening to one another in a friendly manner (Abu-Nimer & Kadayifci-Orellana, 2008:581).

There a need for Muslim theologians to re-examine their interpretations of the scripts on dealing with conflict, and both the Christian and Muslims religious leaders should educate their adherents on the issues of non-violence. Peace brokering in Nigeria should not be imposed by external religious leaders, but by internal religious leaders. As stated earlier, the ethical bridge on moral issues for interreligious dialogue is seen in the Baha'i faith, which requires religious leaders to avoid prejudice in life, and to mutually love, tolerate, respect, learn and listen, and be friendly with people of all religions, social statuses, nationalities and various cultural traditions. At the nation's level, Baha'i calls for negotiation and dialogue between heads of state and country leaders to promote the process of world peace (Hellwig, 1990). Therefore, in order to engage in dialogue with a person, you must know who you are, and because that encounter makes it possible for you to answer new questions about yourself, it enables you develop your own identity, because dialogue requires identity, just as identity requires dialogue (Kritzinger, 1997:61). Interreligious dialogue has become a necessity in the world of today due to religious plurality, which is increasing and is resulting in a world with many religions. This is because religion is considered to be a way of life for human beings, who are the living expression of the soul for vast groups of people. Religion has taught generations of people how to pray, how to live, how to die and how to look after their deceased (Knitter, 2002). This is because, in many other religions, there are many paths to salvation, many ways of naming and worshipping the same ultimate, transcendent reality, many languages and rituals by which people search for communion with the divine and respond to the outreach of the divine in creation. If there are many such ways, then it is of great interest to know more about them to see what we as Christian religious leaders can learn from them, and to offer them the respectful, holistic, flexible encounterology that makes up our faith tradition and theirs (Kritzinger, 2008:790).

Therefore, there is a need to know other religions, as it will be unrealistic for Christian religious leaders in Nigeria to ignore all of this and live with an exclusive opinion that there is only one religion in the world. We all desire interaction with other religions, as worldwide travel opportunities and easy access to media have brought about awareness that the world is a strange one, but one that can be reached easily and with which one can interact easily. The economic and political interaction between countries has also affected religious interaction. It is a fact that no one today can live in isolation: the missio Dei happens in many ways, it is pluralistic (Sundermeier, 2003:560).

Therefore, it will be meaningless if Christian religious leaders in Nigeria do not engage in dialogue between themselves, as interreligious dialogue is necessary for mutual enrichment (McGrath, 1996:167) notes that, through interreligious contacts, for example, missiology can contribute to other religions' elevation, inspiration and universality. He adds that the encounterology can receive from the cultural patterns of other religions their languages, philosophical categories and ritual expressions, amongst others, and can enrich the expression and practice of missiology with these gifts (Arinze, 1998). This affirms that dialogue is necessary between Christian and Muslim religions in Nigeria for harmony and peace in the world.

The World Council of Churches (WCC) calls on religions to pursue peace with the motto, "religions for peace" (Sampson, 1997:273), which is ever-growing in the world today. It is because of the unity of human nature and the recognition that we all are children of the same God that we should strive to live in peace and love. Nigeria as a country has seen and is still experiencing violence and terrorism, with religious extremists trampling on the rights of others and violating the principles of religious freedom. As such, moral and spiritual values are also on the decline. The poor are ever knocking on the door of the rich countries for justice and peace. Nigerian Christian and Muslim religious leaders should not be blind to these realities. The WCC is concerned about the necessity for interreligious dialogue. Countries that appreciate human values such as human dignity, the equality of all human beings, the concern for justice and social welfare, and the rejection of any religion that imposes or legitimises unjust structures, do not promote social concern, and this leads to communal divisions (Sampson, 1997: 223). The values of rationality, sincerity and authenticity are opposed to naïve trust, suggestive tradition and religious hypocrisy, the separation of religion from life, ritualism, superstition and a self-centred religion.

This calls for Christian religious leaders in Nigeria to counter any religious beliefs and practices of peace that bases itself on false and inhuman values, as by their fruits we shall know them. Based on the above phenomenological factors, therefore, there is a need today for Christian and Muslim religious leaders in Nigeria to clearly show that they are pledged to the promotion of peace precisely because of their religious beliefs, as there is no doubt that there are good and holy people in other religions. The teachings of Vatican II also say that Christians should reject nothing of what is true and holy in other religions (Pachuau, 2000:555). This is a more inclusive approach; however, pluralists do employ the holy people

of other religions for a pluralistic approach. Christian and Muslim religious leaders should use the concept of inclusion by accepting that there are values and good in the peace in other religions, and there are values and meaning relating to peace in their religion (Arinze, 1998). Religious leaders as peace brokers ought not to see the concept of peace in other religions as totally strange, or as having no relationship with their beliefs and practices – in recognition of the truth, values and goodness in other religions. In Nigeria, where human values are being suppressed in many areas of life, it is indeed the duty of Christian and Muslim religious leaders to serve as peace brokers in order to fight against such distortions of the model of and for the promotion of peace, truth and values, such as respect for human persons and justice, and the freedom of humans and religions (Amaladoss, 1986). Therefore, the model of and for religious leaders should not and must not become a pretext for conflict, particularly when religious, cultural and ethnic identities coincide. Christian and Muslim religious leaders should harness their scriptural identities for the promotion of interreligious dialogue. With reference to Palestine and Israel, if the millions of Jewish, Christian and Muslim religious leaders are committed to harnessing their beliefs and practices for interreligious dialogue and actually take time and develop the skills of reconciliation, the sheer power of activism, the sheer strength of all their new relationships, would have overwhelmed the political and cultural milieu by now. However, this has not taken place, as these two parties lack the skills and the courage necessary to engage with the other, whom they view as the enemy (Kantongole & Rice, 2008). If Christian religious leaders in Nigeria are sincere about accomplishing missio Dei, sent by God for interreligious dialogue, they would have taken time to develop a flexible, holistic missiological approach to embracing other identities for interreligious dialogue.

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CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

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5. Introduction

This chapter summarises the research, recommends solutions and brings the research to a conclusion. This is done by focusing on reiterating the salient points of the research and relating these to the recommendations.

5.1 Summary

Looking at Knitter's understanding of the theology of religions for interreligious dialogue, it is clear that there is an openness to other religions because of his neutrality in judging or approving of other religious theological beliefs and practices of peace, due to the various religious theologies that claim the ultimate truth of reality. One way is to agree with Knitter's opinion that other religions are conditionally true in so far as they do not contradict the beliefs and practices of peace from the Christian perspective with regard to loving God and humankind. Another is to recognise that there are grace-filled elements of beliefs and practices of peace in other religions that lead people to act like Christians, worshipping the divine and loving their neighbours. Such religious beliefs and practices of peace are the manifestation of the revelation of God, and the direct influence of the Spirit of Christ. Therefore, they cannot be denied to have a form of beliefs and practices of peace for interreligious dialogue, and as such they can be reckoned as anonymous or secret Christians, even though they are not in Christian community. The world religions contain much more of God's revelation, which is already in the hearts of human beings as a result of searching for a means to commune with the unknown divine. To this end, human beings manufactured a means to meet and worship the divine, which God has revealed in their hearts and in the beliefs and practices of other traditions such as Christianity (Knitter, 2007).

As a result, Knitter proposes an ethical bridge across moral issues in order to harness the religious beliefs and practices of peace for interreligious dialogue. This is because any religion that does not have love of god and that does not recognise human sufferings, which is common amongst religions, has something dysfunctional about its religious model of and for peace. Knitter and Clooney propose an ethical bridge based on moral ethical issues for interreligious dialogue, without favouring any religious model of and for salvation.

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Therefore, in religious pluralism there is a strong desire to understand the identities of religions through a comparative theology of religions for interaction and mutual enrichment, and this can be done through mutual learning for the promotion of moral values in order to provide a solution to religious extremism, and for development, justice, peace and unity among human beings (Clooney, 2010). The aim of understanding theology of religions and comparative theology of religions is to enhance interreligious dialogue to achieve harmony between religious understandings of peace in relation to equality, respect and recognition of others.

This is why missiology as a science of religions has been formulated to address issues in the theology of religions and comparative theology of religions by understanding other religions, while maintaining the integrity of the Christian faith. What prompts faith-to-faith encounterology today is the need for interreligious dialogue, which has become a prominent issue amongst religions. Based on the factors discussed above, the field of missiology has become interested in studying the validity and invalidity of religious dialogue. Exclusivism holds that only it is eligible for peace. For exclusivists, other beliefs and practices of peace are considered as invalid because the reality of peace belongs to the exclusive identity, therefore other beliefs and practices of peace need to be visibly exclusive and convincing to the exclusive community before they can attain or have the right beliefs and practices of salvation/peace. The views of exclusivists show that there is no openness to other identities, and this may lead to fanaticism and result in violence with other traditions or lead to intolerance.

One of the typologies of religions is inclusivism. Those who take this approach emphasise that there are beliefs and practices of peace in all religions, even those that are outside, because of God's revelation in the hearts of human beings. This is found in God's love for all human beings through Christ, who loves everyone. The exclusivist's religious leaders believe that the beliefs and practices of peace are everywhere through goodness, values and love. Inclusivists, however, emphasise and take seriously the universal presence of peace in other traditions that is found through the experience of other religions, especially Christianity. What is implicit needs to be explicit, and this requires the missiological approach to search for the goodness in other traditions by embracing the beliefs and practices of other religions and seeing peace in other religions in order to unveil what is veiled. This is a positive faith-

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to-faith encounterology for interreligious dialogue, because other religions are not devalued, as occurs in the exclusivist approach.

Another typology is pluralism, which values all beliefs and practices of peace in religious groups. Pluralists view all religions as equal, and believe that all religious beliefs and practices of peace need to be justified righteously, that all beliefs and practices of peace are right in their own eyes, and all religions can live peaceably according to their cultural understandings. They believe that there are many beliefs and practices of peace that lead to the same peace, because they have a sense of validity within their communities (Knitter, 2007). The above understanding is found in the Catholic Church, which teaches that God is the father of peace, through his incarnation in Jesus Christ, who is in Holy Spirit and is universally present in all religions.

This shows openness to other identities of peace because others have moral and spiritual values of peace. This approach seems synonymous with the inclusivist approach. The aim of the Catholic Church is to look for dialogue on the identity of peace in other identities of peace, but it drifted from the teaching of the Bible because, even if God's spirit of peace through Jesus Christ's peace is found in other identities of peace, it does not guarantee salvation to those belonging to other identities, because the fruits of other identities are dysfunctional because they do not love God and humankind. This seems synonymous with the Christian perspective of someone having the conscience of God's peace without knowing the true identity of peace. Seeing the pros and cons of the above concepts, Chapter two was able to analyse the claims of the exclusivist, inclusivist and pluralist approaches to the practical field of mission as a dialogue by showing the difficulties involved in each approach, particularly in their practice. Their commonalities and the differences between the identities of peace were used for dialogical purposes.

As Christians we have a Christian model of and for peace, and so do other religions. The criterion is true that Jesus is the prince of peace. Therefore, in faith-to-faith encounterology, it is important to know how others understand the truth about Christ's peace, because the recognition of others is very important. Therefore, the missiological approach ought to remain faithful by loving, recognising and respecting other traditions through careful listening and learning. The missiological approach to interreligious dialogue must not be prejudicial by saying that it has the ultimate truth and that there is nothing to learn from

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others, because the diversity of religious experiences provides a richness and variety of understandings, because there is goodness in others. Therefore, the missiological approach should learn from others with openness by embracing other religious identities, and this will provide an opening for a successful execution of Christian comparative theology of religions. Faith-to-faith encounterology also needs to tolerate others in this age of conflicting identity of and differences in peace, by living and letting the other's identity of peace live, and by helping other religions to live with responsibility, love and service to each other's identity.

In comparative theology, just as in the theology of religions, the issue often raised involves the identity of religions in relation to their beliefs and practices of peace. Among many questions that arise, the most creative ones are: Who has the right beliefs and practices of salvation/peace and who does not? Which identity is right and which one is not? Who is right and who is wrong? Based on the above claims of the true identity of peace, all are ultimately true and all are also ultimately false, because all are claiming that they are right because none agree that their beliefs and practices of peace are false. As a Christian, when I say that my religion is the best for me and I have the most meaningful life of faith in Jesus Christ who is the model of peace, then that begins to work effectively (Knitter, 2002).

The above affirmations show that the juncture at which we begin to work on faith-to-faith encounterology for interreligious dialogue is not explicit in relation to that one is absolutely right and the other absolutely wrong. The holistic, flexible missiological approach to interreligious dialogue is not the contestation of the absolute truth of one religion and the falsity of another religion, but about living a missional life full in love of God and humankind, and living out missional faith in Jesus Christ with the aim to see a difference in the missiological approach to other religions, not in condemning or judging the truth of the other, but in practising the love and compassion of Jesus Christ by embracing others.

Therefore, faith-to-faith encounterology can be referred to as a divine human relationship with other religions, because it is a relationship of faith to faith without any delimitation. As discussed in Chapters two and three, the identity of religions is very important, but the identity ought to relate to and promote human goodness by respecting and recognising others, also through a mission of love and hospitality. Missiology needs to cherish interreligious dialogue by participating in God's love for humankind. This can be done by looking at goodness and the failure of dialogue with the continuous aim of peace and harmony, as the

missiological approach to interreligious dialogue brings reconciliation and unity. Reconciliation is a process through which good relationships between the individual believer and groups are restored, it is a grace, whereas history is a witness to the enmity between religions. This is clear to the Christian mission of reconciliation through dialogue. Our mission as Christians is one of listening and understanding other religions, and respecting and recognising them, as the aim of reconciliation is to foster unity and goodness in all religions through dialogue. Therefore, faith-to-faith encounterology for interreligious dialogue ought to be an approach based on the human relationship with the divine that respects and recognises the identity of religious truth, love, hospitality and service. It is the responsibility of missiology to understand these terms and to live with them in the spirit of mission and dialogue for which Jesus Christ was born, died and was resurrected. Missiology has the responsibility to carry out the great missio Dei in love and service.

In this study, the discussion focused on peace building by the Christian and Muslim religions: a model of and for religious leaders as peace brokers. The necessity for peace between Christians and Muslims becomes paramount due to the need for human dignity, hence the need for a study calling on Christians and Muslims to participate in mutual respect and understanding between their religions. The need for peace between the two religions, especially in Nigeria, becomes vital due to the fact that, if there is no peace between the religions, there will be no peace in the nation itself. Religion is the backbone of peace for a nation, especially Nigeria. The concept of peace in the two religions was conceptualised with regard to its compliance with the world ethical bridge on moral issues, which will foster interreligious dialogue, as religions cannot be understood unless their foundations are traceable. It was found that the concept of peace in the Islamic religion is conceptualised differently by various scholars; however, they all place their emphasis on etymology rather than on the theological axiom that Islam brings peace where it is dominant. The belief is that the word of Islam brings peace; however, if this is the case, why is there serious conflict in predominantly Muslim countries, such as Afghanistan, Libya and Tunisia? Why are there terrorists fighting in the name of Islam? The Muslim greeting found in Surah 6:54 is "as-salaam alay-kum" ('peace be with you'), which is answered with "wa-'alykum as-salaam" ('and to you peace too peace'). Most conservative Muslims limit this greeting on the grounds that only Islam can bring peace and peace can only be answered by Muslims alone. The word "as-salaam" came from Judaism and Christianity, before the advent of Islam, hence if the

word is derived from these two religions, it must have the same meaning and interpretation for Muslims.

The life of Jesus Christ is seen as one of a peacemaker, as he became human in order to reconcile and make peace between God and humankind; He also urged his followers to be peacemakers and to be at peace with all men (Colossians 1:20; Isaiah 52:7). This shows that Christians are to be at peace with God and all human beings, as a person cannot be at peace with God without being at peace with all people. Therefore, peace is demonstrated in the Christian religion not only in theory, but also in practice, and Christians should extend this peace to Muslims through interreligious dialogue so that they can understand Christ as the ultimate peacemaker. The Islamic religion contains the element of peace, but it was abused because they did not understand the author of peace, who is Jesus Christ.

As discussed, and based on the above factors, religious groups need an ethical bridge across moral issues, and for this to be successful there is a need to borrow from international practices of equity, such as affirmative action in the United States, which would entail that there is something dysfunctional in any religious identity of peace for interreligious dialogue that discriminates on the basis of race, colour, religion, gender, nationality or state of origin. In order to benefit underrepresented religious groups, especially in Northern Nigeria, where the Muslim majority is persecuting the Christian minority, it has been forgotten that there are Muslims minorities in other parts of the country, even though this does not mean that the minority cannot perpetrate conflict. In Nigeria, where political turmoil is rife, there is a need for Christian and Muslim religious leaders to tolerate each other through interreligious dialogue in order to salvage the religious conflict that has become pandemic in the country. This call on religious leaders is necessary due to the quality of the model of and for religious leaders, as they are leaders and interpreters of the religious scripts. They are highly respected and valued by, and command the authority of, their adherents. The need for respect for and reverencing one another's religions was discussed. Emphasis was placed on love, respect and tolerance, as there will be no dialogue between the religious groups if they do not love, respect and tolerate one another. The need for good communication and learning was also explored, because ignorance of other religions among the religious leaders has led to religious conflict in Nigeria. There is a need for religious leaders as peace brokers to learn from other religions for interreligious dialogue, because the two religions cannot be reconciled without learning what the other faith teaches about peaceful coexistence.

A model of and for religious leaders as peace brokers means to love one another, as without love no one will come together. Religious leaders must embrace one another by loving one another and respecting the diversity of beliefs and practices. The chapter also confirmed the need for the two religious groups to come together and to participate in spiritual activities together, without devaluing the other religion. The need for religious leaders to be harmonious amongst themselves and with other religions was discussed. Some prescriptions were given for a model of and for Christian religious leaders as peace brokers, due to the fact that there are different perceptions with regard to the concept of peace in the Islamic religion. The main teaching of Christianity is being at peace with God and all humankind by uniting and reconciling with all. Therefore, Christian religious leaders have the task of healing, as peace brokers are to heal both our world and individuals, as both are sick and in need of peace. We are to heal the world by serving as peace brokers; we should not sit with our hands folded and look at what is happening without coming up with a solution to the problem. Because, when we are sick in our sins, God descended Himself through Jesus Christ in order to reconcile us with Him by becoming human for our sake. In our daily activities we need to show our human concern. In John 10:10, Jesus says that He has come that we might have life and have it abundantly. Lives are perishing, and we need to give life to the lifeless. The world is dying, as many people are alive but are dying because they are poor. We need to participate in celebrating and mourning with other religions, and in doing so will open a space to share the good news of Jesus Christ.

According to Sampson (2012:103), the very nature of religious pluralism is built on relationships and not on symbols. Omar (2000) says further that religious plurality deals with statistical facts, whereas religious pluralism speaks of the relationships between different religions by engaging in dialogue with the identity of religions through hermeneutical reflections. Coffey (2001:4) says that a missiological approach in interreligious dialogue has flourished on pluralism, because living in a pluralistic context causes theological reflection and a sharpening of the diversity of religious identities (Smith, 1998:76). Berger (2005:3) says that modernity does not necessarily lead to the decline of religion. What it does lead to, more or less necessarily, is religious pluralism, because modern developments, mass migration and, most importantly, the new technology, have given rise to different religious traditions.

Holistic and flexible faith-to-faith encounterology for interreligious dialogue has become an opportunity to develop old or new involvement in God's love for humankind (Kritzinger, 2008). Woods (2006) says that there is an irresistible plurality, a persistent plurality that calls for a flexible, holistic approach in faith-to-faith encounterology, because no one can expect that their identities will be accepted by others due to the fact that there no longer is any religious tradition that lives in isolation (Kritzinger, 2008:764). The call for missiology in mutual relationships between religions is at its highest peak of demand. Knitter (2007:205) says that, when faith-to-faith encounterology engages in dialogue with others, it enhances understanding. This is because it will help provide an understanding of oneself to others, which will help one deconstruct and reconstruct one's identity. According to Bushman (2008), human beings are created as social beings that need interpersonal relations with one another in order to live and to develop and reach their potential with the understanding that God loves them. This is in line with the understanding of missiology, because missiology exists for others by proclaiming God's love of humankind in love, embrace and respect.

5.2 Recommendations

This research has uncovered that the implications of typologies in doing comparative theologies of religions based on various traditions of exclusivism, inclusivism or pluralism have not comprehended the Nigerian situation as it affects interreligious dialogue. Secondly, the concept of inclusivism, particularly as championed by Knitter (2010), indirectly suggests suppression, if not complete elimination, of one religion's domination over another, which may sow seeds of suspicion between Christians and Muslims and ultimately destabilise the country. Therefore, the approaches of pluralism, exclusivism and inclusivism all need to be reassessed in order to avoid privileging one religion over the other. As such, the following are suggested: Religious leaders need to create an ethical bridge based on moral issues in both the Christian and Muslim ways of life by transcending religious exclusivism and creating pluralism in the Nigerian cultural heritage of dialogue; there is a need to promote intercultural dialogue on conflict prevention, and a solution/transformation for post-conflict reconstruction; there is a need to promote tolerance in cultural and religious diversities; there is a need to create awareness of the role of religious leaders in conflict and peace building, with a sensitive approach to conflict prevention and peace building, taking into account the religious dimension of violence; there is a need for a careful approach to religious leaders as peace brokers, without resorting to violence, with the aim of promoting dialogue; there is a

need to promote and support inclusive peace-building policies, including youth, women and civil society organisations, and social and religious groups; there is a need to foster co-operation between political parties with regard to religious dialogue and to clarify the differences of each body; and there is need for hermeneutical comparative theology of the concept of peace in Islam and Christianity. For the Nigerian government, the only method and strategies for peace brokering in the middle of religious conflict is cohesive methods of deploying soldiers to intervene, as they do not have human sympathy. The military forces make use of weapons to kill the conflicting parties without discrimination, due to their lack of experience in peace brokering. Therefore, the problem in deploying security forces that are not backed by religious leaders' efforts as peace brokers is that this prolongs the time the forces have to stay for peacekeeping and hardly results in peace. Religious leaders should be incorporated in the process to facilitate peace building between the parties in the conflict. Therefore, there is a need for Christian and Muslim religious leaders in Nigeria to create a religious sector reform system that will respect human rights, along with democratic and societal accountability. The security of human lives and property will aid in the prevention of conflict and open a space for development. Despite the roles and contributions of Christianity and Islam in forging an ideology for a unified people under one government, there is a need for a second look at the traditional philosophy of life. Because of the religions' experiences from different backgrounds, this should be purposeful and guided by a body to determine the general nature of the two religions' actions in unifying society and the community; as such, the body should be taken into account at all times. The Christian and Muslim religions should not intrude unduly in political decision making, even though they potential are integrating forces because of the symbolic and integrative capacities of Nigerian religiosity and their potential roles in dealing with tension between the centralisation and diffusion of political authority. There is a need for the Nigerian government to harmonise religious identity in relation to moral values because of the diversity of the identities of peace in the various religions.

Therefore, Christian and Muslim religious beliefs and practices of peace have raised the need for inclusion in order to harness the theology of religions through a comparative theology of religions. This will enable religious leaders to be careful with their communications in interreligious dialogue. Therefore, the promotion of salvation/peace between the Christian and Muslim religions for interreligious dialogue should be done in relation to ethical issues

through a comparative theology of religions; if any religious identity does not promote love of God and humankind, then something is dysfunctional with the ideology of that religion.

5.3 Conclusion

Exclusivist faith-to-faith encounterology for interreligious dialogue should understand and study the Biblical evidence regarding God's revelation in the heart of human beings through nature and their conscience (Knitter, 2007). The Christian religions have the ultimate truth of God's salvation/peace through Christ, which is present in other religions through God's revelations in the hearts of human beings and through other traditions, even though they ultimately can be found only in Christ's peace, because they are practising salvation that needs to be known through encounterology for interreligious dialogue. This can done through a missiological approach in interreligious dialogue by understanding that the revelation of God is universal and that one does not need to have knowledge of Christ before one can have belief and practise peace

Despite the universality of God's revelation, some are perishing, as they do not have the knowledge of Christ. The need for inclusion in faith-to-faith encounterology is to make explicit what is implicit in other religions, as Christians believe that the beliefs and practices of peace are present and found in other religions. Understanding the theology of religions in order to harness a model of and for religious leaders for peace brokering in interreligious dialogue is a commitment of missiology by understanding and enhancing the level of acceptance of other religious identities. This would be a positive step towards the Vatican II Council II, which requires reconciliation for interreligious dialogue. The missiological approach for interreligious dialogue has no need to worry about the uniqueness of the truth of one's religious identity, because there is no compromise that is required in this process. The issue is that religious identities must not be used to promote hatred, or give birth to new conflicts. Rather, Christian and Muslim religious leaders' encounterology should come forward with aspirations to harness their model of and for religious identity of peace through a comparative theology of interreligious dialogue, because they will discover that there is goodness in others that has been revealed by God. These very common goods can be exploited for universal golden rules.

The government is influenced by international best practice and international human rights law, which is being incorporated into the Nigerian constitution, legislation and policies.

However, the government's efforts are being retarded by the parochial attitudes of the people, which often are supported and encouraged by the government. Without abandoning international best practice altogether, the government should find common ground for the two religious groups and for society. Religions will eventually become secular in their views on life by mitigating religious extremists. Above all, both Christianity and Islam have to learn to accommodate and tolerate each other, and comparative theology studies in this area should rather concentrate on developing and highlighting models that will harmonise religious groups for peaceful co-existence. Harnessing the model of and for religious leaders for peace brokering in interreligious dialogue is a commitment to a comparative theology of religion on the concept of peace by understanding and enhancing a level of accepting other religious traditions.

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