

THE HISTORICAL ORIGIN OF RHEMA CITY INTERNATIONAL
RECONCILIATION CHURCH, IMPACTS AND CHALLENGES IN
DELTA STATE, NIGERIA.

BY

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DELTA STATE, NIGERIA.

BY

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DTS/BS/2023/2024/03

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APPROVED PAGE

This research work has been read and approved by Dynamic Theological Seminary Kwale, Delta State, Nigeria. Affiliated to Harvest Bible University, Los Angeles, California, the United States in fulfillment for the award of a Bachelor of Arts in Biblical Studies.

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CERTIFICATION

We certify that this project was written by Norbeth Chioma Imala, with the registration number DTS/BS/2023/2024/03, of the Department of Biblical Studies, for the award of Bachelor of Arts in Biblical Studies of Dynamic Theological Seminary, Kwale, Delta State, Nigeria, Affiliated to Harvest Bible University, Los Angeles, California, United States.

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my lovely wife and Children. Despite the stress and my online midnight classes, as a Servant in God's vineyard, they never complained or saw my attitude as disturbing.

ABSTRACT

Rhema City Int'l Reconciliation Church (RCRC) has grown over the past decade into a faith community centered on preaching, discipleship, and leadership formation in Asaba. Under the ministry of Apostle Norbeth C. Imala, the church's evolution is marked by consistent worship gatherings, teaching series, and public services, alongside the creation of training arms such as the Rhema School of the Prophetic and the Rhema City Int'l School of Ministry & Theological Studies. These platforms have institutionalized clergy/minister ordinations and impartation services, signaling a shift from a single local assembly to a networked teaching-and-equipping hub. RCRC's programs—including women-focused meetings (e.g., "Favoured Woman") and media-facing outreach (e.g., features on NTA Asaba)—reflect a strategy that blends spiritual formation with community presence. Situated in Asaba/Okpanam axis, the church's impact on residents includes (i) capacity-building for young ministers and lay leaders through structured trainings, (ii) social cohesion via regular public worship and seasonal events, and (iii) empowerment initiatives for women and families that encourage moral guidance and practical support. Collectively, these efforts contribute to Asaba's religious life by cultivating local leadership pipelines, expanding faith-based social networks, and offering continuous spiritual and psychosocial support to the city's inhabitants.

TABLE OF ABBREVIATION

RCRC : Rhema City Reconciliation Church.

CBCN : Catholic Bishop's Conference of Nigeria.

CRM : Catholic Renaissance Movement

APST: Apostle

PST: Pastor

PROF: Professor

REV: Reverend

TABLE OF CONTENTS.

TITLE PAGE	ii
APPROVAL PAGE	ii
CERTIFICATION	iv
DEDICATION	v
ABSTRACT	vi
CHAPTER ONE (INTRODUCTION)	1
BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY	1
Statement Of The Problem	4
Aims And Objectives Of The Study	5
Significance Of The Study	6
Scope Of The Study	7
CHAPTER TWO	10
DEFINITION AND HISTORICAL EVOLUTION	10
Operational Definition Of Terms	10
Historical Origin Of Church Evolution Of The Pentecostal Church ...	11

CHAPTER THREE	13
RHEMA CITY AND ITS EVOLUTION	13
Historical Origin Of Rhema City International Church	14
Administrative Structure	17
 CHAPTER FOUR	 20
THE IMPACT OF RHEMA CITY INTERNATIONAL RECONCILIATION CHURCH	22
The Challenges Of Rhema City International Church	24
 CHAPTER FIVE	 28
SUMMARY	28
Conclusions And Recommendations	29
 REFERENCES	 41

CHAPTER ONE

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

Rhema City International Reconciliation Church (RCRC), is a word based church, founded by Apostle Norbeth Imala through the leadership and guidance of the Holy spirit in the year 2018, Sunday 2nd of December. The Church is focused on building the society through the knowledge of God's word and sound biblical doctrine which includes, evangelism that is soul winning, water baptism by immersion, baptism of the holy spirit with the evidence of speaking in tongue and the Trinity of God the father, son and the holy spirit (RCRC CAC 2018 No;6881947).

The history of the church in Nigeria is a rich tapestry that has been woven over centuries, with its roots dating back to the 15th century when Portuguese missionaries first introduced Christianity to the region. The church has since evolved, with various denominations such as the Roman Catholic Church, Anglican Communion, and numerous Protestant and Pentecostal churches making significant contributions to its development (Ayandele, 1966). The church's growth has been marked by periods of expansion and contraction,

influenced by factors such as colonialism, political instability, and socio-economic changes.

The church's influence on Nigerian society has been profound, shaping the country's cultural, social, and political landscapes. The church has played a pivotal role in education, health, and social services, often stepping in where the government has failed to provide (Falola, 1999). However, this influence has not been without its challenges. The church teachings often conflict with traditional African religious practices, leading to tensions and conflicts within communities. This has been particularly evident in areas such as marriage, burial rites, and the role of women in society.

The conflicts between the church and traditional religious practices have had significant effects on Nigerian society. These conflicts have often resulted in social unrest, with clashes between Christian and traditional religious groups leading to violence and loss of life (Ukah, 2008). The church's stance on issues such as polygamy, ancestral worship, and traditional healing practices has also led to divisions within communities, with some members choosing to adhere to church teachings while others continue to follow traditional practices.

However, it is on this backdrop that Rhema City International Church has been a force for reconciliation and peace-building in Asaba, Delta State of Nigeria. In the face of religious conflicts, many churches have initiated interfaith dialogues and peace-building initiatives aimed at fostering understanding and tolerance among different religious groups (Ilo, 2015). These efforts have been instrumental in mitigating some of the conflicts and tensions that have arisen due to the clash between church teachings and traditional practices.

Despite these efforts, the church's role in Nigerian society remains a contentious issue. Critics argue that the church's influence has been overly dominant, stiffening the development of indigenous religious practices and contributing to social divisions (Omenka, 1989). Others, however, contend that the church has been a positive force, providing essential services and promoting social cohesion in the face of adversity.

The history of Rhema City Church International in Asaba, Delta State of Nigeria, and its impact and Challenges is a complex and multifaceted issue.

While the church has undoubtedly played a significant role in shaping Asaba society, its influence has also been a source of communal unity and impact.

As Nigeria continues to grapple with these issues, the church's role in society will undoubtedly continue to evolve. RCRC CAC 2018, NO:6881947 / SCUML: RN: SC 101404855

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The history of Rhema City International Church in Asaba, Delta State, and its influence on the community is both significant and complex. Since its establishment in 2018 by Apostle Norbeth Chioma Imala, the church has played a vital role in shaping the social and spiritual lives of people in Asaba and beyond. Its impact, however, is not limited to Asaba or even Delta State, but has extended across Nigeria and into other parts of Africa.

While the church has fostered unity, brought together individuals from diverse ethnic backgrounds, and created a sense of community, its growth has also given rise to certain challenges. One of these challenges is the tension between traditional African religious practices and Christian teachings. This has led to conflicts within families and communities as individuals struggle to balance cultural traditions with the doctrines of the church.

Another area of concern is the church's involvement in political and social matters. Some see its role as providing moral guidance and speaking up for the oppressed, while others argue that the church has gone beyond its spiritual mandate and become overly entangled in politics. In addition, though the church has made attempts to address issues such as poverty and

inequality, many critics believe its emphasis on spiritual activities often overshadows its social responsibilities.

These issues highlight the complex role of Rhema City International Church in the development of Nigerian society. The balance between its positive contributions and the controversies it generates requires careful study, as understanding these dynamics is key to addressing the conflicts and tensions linked to religion and culture in Nigeria today.

1.3 Aim and Objectives of the Study

The study aims to examine an appraisal of the history of Rhema City International church in Nigeria, and its impact and challenges.

The specific objectives are:

1. To trace the historical development of Rhema City Church in Asaba, Delta State of Nigeria, identifying key periods and events that have shaped its evolution.
2. To analyze the influence of the church on societal norms, values, and practices in Asaba with a focus on potential areas of impact.
3. To evaluate the role of the church in mediating or exacerbating challenges within the Asaba society.

1.5 Significance of the Study

The significance of the study of the history of the Rhema City international church in Nigeria and its impact and challenges is too numerous to mention.

Firstly, it provides a comprehensive understanding of the historical development of Rhema City International church, which is one of the fastest growing church in Asaba, Delta State of Nigeria. The church has played a significant role in shaping the sociology-political and cultural landscape of the people around her. Understanding this history can provide insights into the current state of religious affairs in Nigeria and the role of the church in society. Secondly, this study can shed light on how Rhema City started in Asaba Delta State of Nigeria. The date of inception, the members that were there and their various roles and administrative function of the Church and her scope of influence in and outside Nigeria and her dedication in the development of people's lives.

Thirdly, the study can reveal the influence of Rhema City church on societal norms and values in Asaba. The church has been a significant moral and ethical compass for many Asaba's, influencing attitudes towards issues such as marriage, family, and social justice. Understanding this influence can provide a deeper understanding of Nigerian society and the role of religion in shaping societal norms and values.

Fourthly, the study can highlight the role of Rhema City church in social development in Nigeria and beyond. The church has been involved in various social development initiatives, including education, healthcare, and poverty alleviation. Understanding the history of these initiatives can provide insights into the role of the church in social development and the challenges and opportunities it faces in this area.

Lastly, the study can contribute to the broader field of religious studies by providing a case study of the role of the church in a multi-religious society. This can provide valuable insights for scholars and practitioners interested in the role of religion in society, particularly in contexts characterized by religious diversity and conflict.

1.6 Scope of the Study

The study examines the historical origin of Rhema City international church, its impact, and challenges.

Chapter one tends to explain the background of the study which gives a brief introduction of the subject matter of which is the origin of Rhema City Reconciliation Church, its impact and challenges in Delta State of Nigeria, the statement of the problem, aims and objectives of the study which includes;

- to trace the historical development of Rhema City Reconciliation Church in

Asaba, Delta State by identifying key periods and events that have shaped its evolution

- to analyse the influence of the church on societal norms, values and practices in Asaba with a focus on potential areas of impact
- to evaluate the role of the church in mediating or exacerbating challenges within the Asaba society.

We also looked at the significance of the study which gives an insight into the role of the church in social development and the challenges and opportunities it faces in this area.

Chapter two deals with the literature review and the definition of terms used in the work such as;

- History,
- Church,
- Impact,
- Challenges,
- Rhema,
- City
- Pentecostalism etc

Chapter three talks about the Evolution of Rhema City Reconciliation Church

and its administrative structure.

Chapter Four deals with the impact of Rhema City Reconciliation Church International and its challenges.

Chapter Five summarizes the work by briefing a conclusion and recommendation respectively.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

For this project, I reviewed a material from Rhema City International Church which focused on the church's vision and mission. The document explains the foundation of the church in 2018 by Apostle Norbeth Chioma Imala and outlines its main purpose of spreading the gospel, promoting unity, and empowering people both spiritually and socially.

From my review, I learned that the mission statement places strong emphasis on community building and the development of young people. I was particularly impressed by how the church encourages members to grow in faith, pursue education, and contribute to society in meaningful ways. This showed me that the church is not only concerned with spiritual matters but also with the overall well-being of individuals.

The material also presented the church's vision of expanding its impact beyond Asaba to other parts of Nigeria and Africa. I found this inspiring because it shows a desire to influence lives on a larger scale. However, I also noticed that the material did not provide enough details on how the church intends to tackle challenges like poverty, inequality, or cultural conflicts. To me, this made it

clear that while the vision is strong, there is still more work to be done in balancing spiritual goals with social responsibilities.

In conclusion, I found the material very educative and motivating. It gave me a better understanding of what Rhema City International Church stands for and the values it upholds. At the same time, it made me reflect on the importance of churches turning their visions into practical actions that directly improve the lives of people in their communities.

History: History is the study of past events, particularly how they relate to humans. It involves the discovery, collection, organization, and presentation of information about these events.

Church: In a broad sense, a church is a Christian place of worship. However, it can also refer to the collective body of Christians or a particular Christian organization with its clergy, buildings, and distinctive doctrines.

Impact: have a strong effect on someone or something. a marked effect or influence. to have an influence on someone or something, or to cause a change in someone or something.

Challenges: a call to someone to participate in a competitive situation or fight to decide who is superior in terms of ability or strength. to have to deal with something that needs great mental or physical effort in order to be done

successfully and therefore tests a person's ability:

Rhema: The Greek word *rhá*,—ma simply means "any spoken word. The use of the term *rhema* has special significance in some Christian groups, especially those advocating the Five-Fold Ministry that God gave of five gifts

City: A city is a human settlement of a substantial size. The term "city" has different meanings around the world and in some places the settlement can be very small.

Pentecostalism:

Pentecostalism is a charismatic Christian movement emphasizing a direct personal experience with God through the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Key beliefs include the expectation of a post-conversion experience marked by speaking in tongues, known as glossolalia or xenoglossy, which is considered evidence of the Holy Spirit's presence. Pentecostals also believe in the continuation of spiritual gifts such as prophecy, healing, and miracles, reflecting practices from the early Christian church. The movement values conversion, moral rigor, and a literal interpretation of the Bible, drawing from Baptist and Methodist-Holiness traditions. Faith healing is a significant practice within Pentecostalism.

CHAPTER THREE

3.0 RHEMA CITY AND ITS EVOLUTION

3.1 THE EVOLUTION

The Rhema City Reconciliation Church is a word based church that is focused on building the society through the knowledge of God's word and sound biblical doctrine which includes, evangelism that is soul winning, water baptism by immersion, baptism of the holy spirit with the evidence of speaking in tongues and trinity of God the father, son and the holy spirit. (RCRC CAC 2018 No: 6881947)

Rhema City international and Reconciliation Church was founded by Apostle Norbeth Chioma Imala, a former banker with Union Bank of Nigeria PLC. 2015, who worked in the banking sector for over seven (7) years, with a wealth of experience. He is a financial analyst and banker with the fear of God. He has been a dedicated member of the Redeem Christian Church of God, serving under pastors and ministers of the gospel alike who were part of his development. As a vibrant and dedicated believer, he served without holding back. (Ibid 2018.)

On the 1st of the August 2018 while he was serving the word of the lord came to him, that his time of service is over in the local assembly where he was serving. This happened before the name of the ministry was revealed and we started the work of reconciliation through service and the word. We started as a fellowship and continued as same for about few weeks before transiting into full church services.

The first time the Church held an official service was in the year 2018 with over twenty (20) individuals present, namely, Mr. Ejike Chinedu, now Pastor Ejike Chinedu, Mrs. Beatrice Ejike, Mr. Gabriel O, just to mention a few. The service lasted for just about four (4) hours, and many gave their lives to Jesus, emphasizing the mandate of the Church as a place to reconcile the world to the word with love. The handbill and picture except for the first service, will be attached here to this project work. (Rhema City Church Records booklet. From 2018 – 2019)

Vision Statement: to fill the earth with the knowledge of the glory of the lord as the waters cover the sea. Habakkuk 2:14

Mission Statement: Going, Groaning, Giving.

In accomplishing our vision, the 3G strategies are to be employed by the church and anyone who joins RCGC; which are: **Going:** go ye into all the world.

Matthew 10:5-23.

These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying, Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not:

But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand.

Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils: freely ye have received, freely give.

Provide neither gold, nor silver, nor brass in your purses,

Nor scrip for your journey, neither two coats, neither shoes, nor yet staves: for the workman is worthy of his meat.

And into whatsoever city or town ye shall enter, enquire who in it is worthy; and there abide till ye go thence.

And when ye come into an house, salute it.

And if the house be worthy, let your peace come upon it: but if it be not worthy, let your peace return to you.

And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear your words, when ye depart out of that house or city, shake off the dust of your feet.

Verily I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrha in the day of judgment, than for that city.

Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves.

But beware of men: for they will deliver you up to the councils, and they will scourge you in their synagogues;

And ye shall be brought before governors and kings for my sake, for a testimony against them and the Gentiles.

But when they deliver you up, take no thought how or what ye shall speak: for it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak.

For it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you.

And the brother shall deliver up the brother to death, and the father the child: and the children shall rise up against their parents, and cause them to be put to death.

And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake: but he that endureth to the end shall be saved. the earth cannot be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the lord without a Goer.

Secondly, it will make us free from the blood of all men. Acts 20:26. Ezekiel 3:18 below are some of the mediums;

- establishing home cell fellowship centers. Acts 2:46
- involvements in outreaches/crusades Mathew 28:18
- tapes and publications. Psalms 68:11
- church planting (this includes foreign missions) Mathew 10:5 -23

- training and re training through RCGC; School of Ministry & Bible School.
- The use of social media / internet.

Giving: the earth can't be filled with knowledge of the glory of the lord without our resources Zachariah 1:17. this includes human resources, financial resources, material and so on.

Groaning: for the earth to be fill with the knowledge of the glory of the lord, we must all labour in prayer, first; for the unsaved to come to christ and secondly; by bringing the saved into a more mature status in the spirit. Collosian 4:12, 1:7...galatians 4:19, acts 12:5, 1 timothy 2:1, Philemon 1:4, 22;23

Administrative Structure

Rhema city church just like every other organization has a modus oparandi that govern the activities of the church. This mode of operation is what is incorporated in the administrative structure of the church. Everyone in the ministry function based on their place of assignment as the lord instructs his servant through diligent and prayerful confirmation through the holy spirit.

Administration as the name implies deals with the executive part of government; the persons collectively who are entrusted with the execution of

laws and the superintendence of public affairs. In Rhema city the administration talks about the individuals vested with the sole responsibility to enforce laws and enforce the compliance of doctrines of the church.

The administration of the church have the following individuals as the administrative heads and overseers of their various units with responsibilities.

The Senior Pastor:

The Senior pastor, who is the founder or the wife is the administrative head of the church. (RCRC CAC No: 6881947)

He is the head as a representative of Christ. It is worthy of note, that the church is not a sole proprietorship venture where decisions are taken by the sole owner is the business. Decisions are reached and taken by collective responsibilities of every single leader as stipulated by the bylaws of the church. The decisions of the senior pastor who is the lead pastor is highly persuasive and has greater influence than other leaders but he is in no wise an autonomous decision maker.

The Deputy Senior Pastor:

The deputy senior pastor is the assistant administrative head of the church. He/she is the one expected to preside over meetings when it has to do with

decision and binding rules over all members in the absence of the Senior pastor.

(RCRC CAC No: 6881947)

Resident Pastor:

This is the head of the pastors unit. The other pastors gives report to the resident pastor. branch pastor, pastor in charge of instrument, pastor in charge of programs and events. The resident pastor also get reports and handle matters coming from the pastors in charge of men, pastors in charge of women, pastors in-charge of youth, pastors in-charge of children, and choir etc.

Secretary General of the Church

The secretary general of the church is the one who handles documentation and account details together with accounting unit. The secretary also handles matter from the marriage committee and ordained ministers. (Rhema City Reconciliation Church Bylaws and Document of Incorporation) also see Rhema City Constitution 2022.

CHAPTER FOUR

4.0 IMPACT AND CHALLENGES OF RHEMA CITY INTERNATIONAL RECONCILIATION CHURCH

In Nigeria, churches have a multifaceted impact, contributing to social development, economic activity, and cultural life, but also face challenges like religious extremism, corruption, and competition. In the light of the foregoing, I shall state the impact of Rhema City Church and elaborating on the challenges of the Church in general, with emphasis on Rhema City Church.

4.2 The Impact Of Rhema City Church

Rhema City Church, which started as a fellowship at Lady Place, Beside Okwe Primary School, Okwe Asaba, Delta State, before transforming its status into a church of God, has contributed immensely to the development of the society in which it dwells. This development has been seen in various areas of society, including; (Rhema City Reconciliation Church records book 2018 to 2019)

4.2.1 Social Development:

Rhema City Church plays a crucial role in community development, addressing social issues, and poverty alleviation within the Okpanam area of Asaba, Delta State, Nigeria. This act can be seen in the church activity of

community service, such as sweeping and keeping the church environment clean, giving alms to the needy within the community. (Oral interview with the following people; Sister Blessing Esien, Mrs. Odiaka Elvis and Mrs. Ebele Chisom.)

4.2.2 Education and Healthcare:

Historically, churches have been major providers of education and healthcare, and continue to play a significant role in these areas. Rhema City has not been deficient in this area. We have held series of free medical check ups and treatment for the members of the society not just for members of the church. We have also educated women and men in the areas of family health and financial management. (Ibid 2021.)

4.2.3 Economic Impact:

Rhema City provides employment opportunities, hosts events that stimulate the local economy, and supports local businesses. These was done through grants and loans giving to members and the less privileged within the church community. This is also seen by the establishment of the welfare department of the Rhema City by the Constitution of Rhema City Reconciliation Church (RCRC) 2022.

thus, Rhema City International Reconciliation Church has the following persons employed;

Mr. Kaine Kenedy (Sound engineer)

Mr. Emmanuel Obele (Keyboardist)

Mr. Kester Ofuya (Drummer)

Mr. Lucky Odebode (Security Personnel)

Spiritual and Moral Guidance:

Rhema City Church provide a space for spiritual growth, moral guidance, and community building. This is seen in the establishment of the school of ministry and school of the prophet. An online school that has empowered many ministers of the gospel locally and internationally. Between the period of 2020 and 2025, Rhema City has graduated an average of 150 students. (RCRC School of Ministry bulletin 2025.)

Moral and Ethical Foundation

The church teaches principles like honesty, love, integrity, and forgiveness, helping to shape the moral compass of individuals and communities.

These values promote peaceful coexistence, justice, respect for life, and social order. (RCRC Constitution 2018.)

Example: Laws against theft, murder, and fraud are often rooted in biblical ethics.

Social Support and Humanitarian Aid

Churches often run charitable programs to assist the poor, sick, elderly, homeless, and unemployed. This provides a safety net for vulnerable people, especially in communities lacking government support.

Example: Food drives, free medical clinics, shelters, and clothing distribution organized by Rhema City International Reconciliation church. (ibid 2023)

Strengthening Family and Marriage

Churches teach about the importance of family, marriage, parenting, and healthy relationships. Strengthens family bonds, reduces divorce rates, and Encourages responsible parenting.

Example: Marriage counseling, parenting workshops, and youth mentorship programs. (ibid 2023)

Advocacy for Justice and Human Rights

Churches speak out against injustice, corruption, and discrimination.

They inspire social reforms and defend the rights of the oppressed and voiceless.

Promotion of Peace and Reconciliation

Churches often act as peacemakers in conflict zones or among divided communities.

They mediate disputes, promote forgiveness, and encourage non-violent resolutions.

Example: Interfaith peace building efforts or reconciliation after civil wars.

Cultural Preservation and Influence

Churches play a role in preserving language, music, arts, and traditions rooted in Christian heritage. This contributes to a community's identity and cultural continuity.

Example: Rhema City International Reconciliation Church host events such as; choirs concert, festivals, Christian literature, and architecture.

Challenges of Rhema City International Reconciliation Church.

1. Declining Church Attendance and Membership

Many churches, particularly in Africa, are experiencing a consistent drop in attendance. Younger generations, especially Millennial and Gen Z, are less likely to attend church regularly or identify with organized religion due to Secularism, disillusionment with institutional religion, moral failures of church leaders, and a perception that churches are out of touch. (ibid 2025.)

2. Relevance in a Changing Culture

Churches struggle to remain culturally relevant while staying true to biblical

doctrine. Balancing modern methods (e.g., technology, inclusive language) with traditional theology is difficult. Some churches risk becoming too progressive or too rigid, alienating different parts of the population.

3. Technological Disruption

The digital revolution has changed how people engage with content, including spiritual teachings.

Examples: Online churches, live-stream, apps, and social media have become essential, but many churches lack the expertise or resources to keep up. Losing connection with tech-savvy members or appearing outdated.

4. Leadership Failures and Scandals

High-profile moral, financial, or sexual misconduct by church leaders has damaged trust.

Scandals erode public confidence and lead to skepticism about church authority and integrity.

5. Financial Sustainability

With declining membership and giving patterns, many churches face budget shortfalls.

Economic downturns, fewer tithes from younger members, and increased operational costs. (ibid 2025.)

6. Political Polarization

Churches are often caught in the crossfire of political divisions. Debates over issues like abortion, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ+ rights), immigration, and social justice can divide congregations and make it difficult for churches to take clear stands without alienating segments of their community. (ibid 2025.)

7. Generational Gaps

Different generations have varying expectations, worship styles, and theological perspectives. Churches must find ways to unite Baby Boomers, Gen X, Millennial, and Gen Z in worship and community without losing anyone. (ibid 2025.)

8. Mental Health Crisis

Mental health issues are more prominent today, and people often look to the church for support. Many churches are not equipped or trained to provide adequate mental health care or pastoral counseling. (ibid 2025.)

9. Interfaith and Religious Pluralism

In a globalized and multicultural world, Christianity often exists alongside many other religions. Churches must engage respectfully with other faiths while maintaining the distinctiveness of Christian doctrine. (ibid 2025.)

10. Social Justice and Activism

Modern society increasingly expects institutions, including churches, to take a stand on social justice issues like racism, climate change, poverty, and inequality. Churches that speak out may face backlash; those that remain silent may be seen as complicit or indifferent. (ibid 2025.)

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Summary:

In today's rapidly evolving world, churches face a variety of significant challenges that test their relevance, influence, and sustainability. Shifting cultural values, declining attendance, generational divides, and the rise of digital technologies have all contributed to a changing religious landscape. Additionally, issues such as financial strain, public skepticism, and internal controversies have further complicated the role of the church in modern society. These challenges call for deep reflection, adaptation, and renewed engagement to ensure the church remains a vital part of contemporary life.

Despite the many challenges they face, churches continue to have a meaningful impact in today's society. They serve as centers of community support, offering spiritual guidance, humanitarian aid, and social services to

people in need. Churches also play a vital role in promoting moral values, advocating for social justice, and fostering unity across diverse groups. In a time of uncertainty and rapid change, the church remains a source of hope,

compassion, and purpose for many individuals and communities around the world

Conclusion:

In conclusion, while churches today face significant challenges—including cultural shifts, declining participation, and internal struggles—they continue to make a powerful and lasting impact in society. Through community outreach, spiritual guidance, and advocacy for justice and compassion, churches remain vital agents of hope and transformation. To sustain their relevance and influence, churches must embrace change, foster inclusivity, and actively engage with the evolving needs of the world around them. To remain effective in this generation, churches must adapt to changing social dynamics while staying rooted in their core beliefs. Embracing technology, promoting transparency, addressing social and mental health issues and engaging younger generations are critical steps toward a resilient and impact full future.

Nigeria, in its Geography, is not expted from the contribution the church has made to society. Yet in all this, there are challenges posed before the church. These challenges are all-encompassing as they relates to every church in Nigeria, but with emphasis on Rhema City International Reconciliation

Church, I humbly submit the following recommendations.

Recommendation:

1. Prioritize Community Development and Social Impact.

In the present generation, one of the greatest challenges facing churches is the perception that they are inward-looking, disconnected from real-world problems, and out of touch with the everyday struggles of people—especially those outside the church walls. To address this, churches must intentionally reorient themselves to become active, visible agents of love, compassion, and change within their communi

Rather than simply focusing on internal programs or Sunday services, churches must prioritize community engagement and social impact as a vital expression of their faith and mission.

Key Areas of Focus:

1. Identify Local Needs

Churches should assess the specific needs of their communities—whether it's poverty, unemployment, homelessness, substance abuse, domestic violence, youth disengagement, or access to education and healthcare. Understanding

these needs helps churches design relevant and impactful outreach.

2. Launch or Support Community Programs

Churches can either start or partner with existing efforts to:

- Operate food pantries or soup kitchens.
- Offer free tutoring or after-school programs.
- Provide counseling, job training, or addiction recovery support.
- Open their facilities for community meetings or emergency shelters.

3. Build Strategic Partnerships

By collaborating with local schools, health centers, nonprofits, and government agencies, churches can extend their reach and share resources more effectively. These partnerships show unity and allow the church to serve without duplicating efforts.

4. Promote Advocacy and Social Justice

Churches must not remain silent on issues like racial injustice, inequality, corruption, and violence. When the church becomes a moral voice that speaks for the voiceless and acts on behalf of the oppressed, it regains public trust and relevance.

5. Empower Members to Serve

Encouraging church members to volunteer in community programs, serve on neighborhood boards, or initiate local projects helps build a culture of service. Discipleship should include action—faith lived out in service to others.

To this end, this brings about the following;

- **Restores Trust and Credibility:** When people see churches meeting tangible needs, it challenges negative stereotypes and rebuilds credibility.
- **Fulfills Christ's Mission:** Jesus ministered to both the spiritual and physical needs of people. Following His model keeps the church mission-centered.
- **Attracts Seekers:** Many are more willing to explore faith when they experience love and support from the church in practical ways.
- **Bridges the Gap:** Community engagement helps break down barriers between the church and those who feel excluded or overlooked.

Prioritizing community engagement and social impact shifts the church from being a passive institution to an active force for good. In a generation

searching for authenticity and compassion, a church that serves before it speaks will not only overcome many of its current challenges but also rediscover its true purpose and power.

2. Train members in Digital Evangelism:

In an age dominated by digital technology and social media, the church must embrace digital evangelism as a vital tool for outreach and spiritual engagement. Traditional methods of evangelism—such as street preaching, door-to-door visits, or large physical gatherings—are no longer as effective or accessible, particularly to the younger generation who spend much of their time online. To meet people where they are, the church must equip its members to share the gospel creatively and effectively through digital platform.

Key Areas of Focus in Digital Evangelism Training:

- **Understanding Digital Platforms**

Members should be trained in how to use platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, WhatsApp, TikTok, and podcasts to share Christian content, testimonies, devotionals, and live discussions. Each platform requires a unique approach and tone, so proper

is crucial.

- **Content Creation Skills**

Equip members with basic skills in video production, graphic design, blogging, and social media storytelling. High-quality, engaging content is essential to attract and maintain the interest of online audiences.

- **Digital Discipleship**

Beyond sharing messages, members should learn how to build online relationships, engage in faith-based conversations, answer questions, and provide spiritual support to people who may never walk into a church building.

- **Online Etiquette and Ethics**

Training should include how to communicate respectfully and truthfully in online spaces, avoiding judgmental language and focusing on Christ-centered love and grace.

- **Cybersecurity and Privacy**

Members should also be aware of how to protect themselves and others online, handle sensitive information responsibly, and avoid potential digital threats or misinformation.

- **Use of Church Media Teams**

Churches should consider forming or strengthening media ministries where trained members can manage church websites, livestreams, newsletters, and social media campaigns. This team can serve as the digital voice of the church.

Benefits of Digital Evangelism Training:

- Extends the church's reach globally, far beyond physical boundaries.
- Engages tech-savvy youth and young adults in meaningful ministry
- Provides continuity of ministry during times of crisis or lockdowns.
- Builds a stronger online presence, helping seekers connect with the church more easily.
- Encourages every member to be a digital missionary, fulfilling the Great Commission in a modern context.

By investing in digital evangelism training, churches empower their members to become relevant, impactful witnesses in today's connected world ensuring that the gospel continues to reach hearts across both physical and digital landscapes.

•**Monetary Challenge:**

One of the pressing challenges facing churches today is financial instability. As attendance declines and traditional giving patterns change—particularly among younger generations—many churches are struggling to maintain their facilities, support clergy and staff, fund outreach programs, and invest in new initiatives. This monetary challenge, if left unaddressed, threatens the operational viability and long-term impact of the church.

To overcome this, churches must adopt **sustainable and strategic financial practices**, including the following:

- **Diversify Income Streams**

Relying solely on weekly offerings is increasingly unsustainable.

Churches should explore additional revenue sources such as renting out space for community events, operating faith-based businesses (e.g., bookstores or cafés), offering paid seminars, or launching nonprofit ventures that align with their mission.

- **Promote Digital and Recurring Giving**

As society moves toward cashless transactions, churches should invest in secure and user-friendly digital giving platforms (e.g., mobile apps, websites, QR codes). Encouraging recurring monthly donations can

help create more stable income.

- **Cultivate a Culture of Stewardship**

Teaching biblical principles of generosity and responsible stewardship—not just for the church’s benefit, but as a lifestyle—can inspire members to support ministry efforts faithfully and joyfully. Transparency in how funds are used builds trust and accountability.

- **Engage Younger Generations in Giving**

Many younger Christians are willing to give, but they want to know

- that their contributions are making a tangible difference. Churches
- should clearly communicate the impact of donations through stories, visuals, and real-time updates on missions and projects.

- **Optimize Budgeting and Spending**

Churches must review their budgets critically and prioritize essential ministries while eliminating waste. Investing in financial training for church leaders and administrators can improve management and planning.

- **Seek Grants and Partnerships**

Many faith-based and nonprofit grants are available for churches involved in community work, education, or humanitarian aid.

Partnering with local businesses, organizations, and government programs can also bring financial support and shared resources.

By embracing these strategies, churches can navigate financial challenges more effectively, ensuring they not only survive but thrive in their mission to serve their congregations and communities.

5. Dynamic Changes in Societal Norms

One of the most significant recommendations for churches today is the need to **recognize, understand, and engage with the dynamic changes in societal norms**. Modern society is experiencing rapid transformations in cultural values, beliefs, and behaviors, especially concerning issues like gender identity, sexuality, racial justice, mental health, technological advancement, and personal freedom. These shifts have altered how individuals view truth, morality, and the role of organized religion.

For churches to remain relevant and impactful, they must avoid rigid traditionalism that alienates emerging generations. Instead, they should:

- **Promote Open Dialogue**

Create safe, respectful spaces for conversations about complex and sensitive social issues. Rather than avoiding or condemning differing views, churches should listen with empathy and foster mutual understanding.

- **Practice Contextual Theology**

Interpret and apply biblical teachings in ways that speak meaningfully to contemporary life. This does not mean compromising core doctrines, but rather making faith practical and relatable in today's context.

- **Invest in Education and Awareness**

Equip leaders and members with the knowledge to navigate social changes with wisdom and compassion. This includes training in cultural intelligence, mental health awareness, and digital literacy.

- **Be a Voice for Justice and Inclusion**

Churches can model Christ-like love by advocating for marginalized groups, promoting equality, and actively working against discrimination. This reinforces the church's role as a moral and ethical leader in society.

- **Leverage Technology and Innovation**

Adapt to the digital age by using social media, live-streaming, podcasts, and apps to engage with people where they are. This helps the church stay connected to both younger generations and global audiences.

by adapting to these societal changes while staying rooted in biblical truth, churches can rebuild trust, renew engagement, and more effectively fulfill their mission in a complex and changing world.

5. Dynamic Changes in Societal Norms:

As society becomes more liberal and permissive, many core Christian values are being questioned or outright rejected. To address this, churches must remain firm in their biblical teachings while finding innovative ways to communicate these truths. Organizing seminars, Bible study sessions, and open forums that discuss current moral issues through the lens of scripture will help believers navigate modern life without compromising their faith.

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