

# **A Theological Reflection of the Phenomenon of Fetish Practices, Invocations, and use of Items in Modern African Church Services: Implications for the Present and Future.**

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## **Abstract**

*In recent times, there seem to be a rising trend in modern Christian churches especially in Africa concerning the use of items (amulets, totems), invocations and practices which for many years were considered the reserve of African indigenous religions. The question however is, what biblical, theological or religious teachings forms the basis for these practices especially during prayer services and how consistent are these practices with the general teaching of the bible. This article seeks to explore the phenomenon by analysing the facts and trends to decipher influences and implications for the present and future of Christianity in Africa and beyond.*

**Key Words:** *Church, Worship, Prayer, Fetish, Invocations, biblical, social, cultural, political, religious, Traditional.*

## **1. Introduction**

The church in Africa has for many years introduced a lot of important practices that have ensured the acceptance of the religion in Africa and made Christianity one of the three major religions of the Africa including the Traditional Religions of Africa and Islam. Amidst a lot of struggle to emerge as a religion that identifies with the social, cultural, political and religious challenges and needs of the African

peoples, the church has undergone many transformations. It has defined and redefined itself severally but have always found new and fresh issues confronting it every time.

This is the reason why recent developments of the incidences of the introduction of certain practices, use of items, and invocation that seem syncretic in modern African church services present yet another challenge to the whole enterprise of consolidation and growth of the church in Africa and its acceptance in other parts of the world. It might seem trivial and probably not capture the scholarly eye of elite researchers but the fragmentation of incidences is quite enlightening and demanding such that when they eventually explode it might present a catastrophic blow to the gaits made over the years by Christianity to make the church in Africa relevant and accepted.

## **2. The African cosmology and worldview**

RELIGION is a fundamental, perhaps the most important, influence in the life of most Africans. As said by Mbiti, the African is notoriously and incurably religious.<sup>2</sup> Religion pervades every aspect of the life and thinking of the Africans so much so that s/he cannot be understood in isolation to his association with the religious. That is what forms and inform his cosmology and worldview. Out of the many, the belief in impersonal (*mystical*) power(s), belief in spirit beings, belief in divinities/gods and belief in the Supreme Being forms the most basic and fundamental.<sup>3</sup> The whole of creation, nature and objects are consumed with this impersonal power.<sup>4</sup>

The source of this impersonal or (*mystical*) mysterious power although not always known, is usually attributed to the activities of higher “mysterious” powers, whether personal or impersonal that either generates or deposits such powers in things or objects. The

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<sup>2</sup> Mbiti, J. S. (1990). African religions & philosophy. Heinemann.

<sup>3</sup> Idowu, E. B. (1973). African traditional religion: A definition (p. 150). London: SCM Press.

<sup>4</sup> E. G. Parrinder, West African Religion (London: Epworth, 1969), 16ff

potency, and efficacy of such “inhabited” impersonal powers varies from one to another. Some are said to be inherently more powerfully induced or “imputed” than others, that is, they are more naturally endowed with powers than others are.

The manifestation and use of the impersonal powers are related to the practices of medicine men and women, diviners and seers who use natural objects, plants and animals for medicine, magic, charms and amulets. It is believed that some mysterious powers imbedded in things or objects can be extracted for specific uses and can be transmitted through certain object or media by spiritual means. They can be sent to specific destinations for an intended good or evil.<sup>5</sup> The life of a traditional African with this belief in the impersonal powers is at the mercy of the benevolent or wicked users of the mystical powers at their disposal.

The African wo(man) comes into Christianity with depth of these beliefs and inclinations, torn between the old and new. Thus, traditional African cosmologies and beliefs continue to exert significant influence on Africans today. When Christian categories such as the power of the blood of Christ, the power of the Holy Spirit, the power of God, the power of prayer in the name of Jesus are implored, how are they understood by the Christian in traditional Africa? They induce and remind in him/her a susceptibility when intuitively his religious beliefs and practices are structured within the framework of his indigenous religious worldview.

### **3. Historical overview of Christianity in Africa**

Christianity in Africa before the 15<sup>th</sup> century was basically confined to North Africa - Egypt, Nubia, and Ethiopia. Churches in these areas maintained close ties to eastern Christendom and made many

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<sup>5</sup> John S. Mbiti Introduction to African Religion 2nd Ed., (Published by East African Publishers 1992) p. 68,

important contributions.<sup>6</sup> The tradition produced such spiritual giants as Origen, Antony, and Augustine. It also produced some variations deemed heretical by early councils, including Arianism, Monophysitism, Nestorianism, and Donatism.<sup>7</sup>

According to an ancient tradition, Mark was the first missionary to Africa. Early Christian writers Clement and Eusebius both report that Mark preached in Alexandria, Egypt; Eusebius notes that he was martyred there. The tradition is difficult to corroborate further. However, Christianity came to Alexandria, it quickly grew strong. Alexandria became one of the three most important "sees," or church centres, in the ancient world, along with Rome and Antioch.

While the history of African Christianity is multifaceted in its regional development, it is, nevertheless, possible to discern three general phases in the planting and growth of the African Church.

### ***3.1. The Ancient Church in Egypt and Ethiopia***

During the first three centuries after Christ, Africa was a major centre of Christian thought and activity. Origen was from Alexandria in Egypt, while Tertullian and Augustine were from North Africa. By the end of the third century, Christians in the eastern Maghrib were in the majority. Sadly, Christianity in much of North Africa virtually disappeared as Islam advanced in the following centuries. In Egypt and in Ethiopia, however, it had taken deep root, and was thus able to survive the Islamic juggernaut and continues to this day.

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<sup>6</sup> Hastings, A. (1979). *A history of African Christianity 1950-1975*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press; Agha, A.U. (1997) *Early European Missions to West Africa*, Enugu: Calvaryside Printing 7 Publishing Co. 56.

<sup>7</sup> Elizabeth Isichei, *A History of Christianity in Africa* by (SPCK/Eerdmans, 1995); Hastings, Adrian, (1994) *A History of Christianity in Africa, 1450-1950*. Oxford: Clarendon Press,

### ***3.2. The Continuation of the Sub-Saharan Church; the European Contribution***

While the Portuguese introduced a Catholic form of Christianity to the Kongo Kingdom (central Africa) between the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries, there were few, if any, lasting results. Only at the end of the eighteenth century did the Evangelical Revival begin to bring to Africa an influx of missionaries whose labours would produce the first fruits of an enduring Christian presence in Sub-Saharan Africa. With Western civilization came not only the good intentions of Christianity, but also the appallingly devastating transatlantic slave trade and the inevitable excesses of commercial greed manifest in the white foreigners' insatiable appetite for Africa's natural resources.

### ***3.3. Passing the Mantle; The First African Leadership***

For the next two hundred years, African Christians had to struggle against racism and Western spiritual imperialism. But, as Venn had written, if the African church were to mature and establish itself, missionaries had to move on once the seed was sown, leaving indigenous leaders to build the church.<sup>8</sup> Samuel Ajayi Crowther was the first African to be appointed Bishop by the Anglican Church. The seeds of the Sub-Saharan church had been planted by Western missionaries. Now, as the Gospel spread throughout the nooks and crannies of the continent, African Christianity began to define itself on its own cultural terms.<sup>9</sup>

Reformers within the missionary churches as well as independent church leaders called for change in the institutionalized church. This

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<sup>8</sup> Sanneh, L. (2015). *West African Christianity: the religious impact*. Orbis Books; Reed, C. (1997). *Pastors, partners, and paternalists: African church leaders and western missionaries in the Anglican Church in Kenya, 1850-1900* (Vol. 17). Brill.

<sup>9</sup> Guthrie, S. (2014). *Missions in the Third Millennium: 21 Key Trends for the 21st Century, Revised and Expanded*. Wipf and Stock Publishers.

led to both reform, on the one hand, and to the birth of thousands of "African Initiated Churches" (AICs) on the other.<sup>10</sup> In the twentieth century, Christianity in Africa exploded from an estimated population of eight or nine million in 1900 (8 to 9%) to some 335 million in 2000 (45%), marking a shift in the "centre of gravity of Christianity" from the West to Latin America, parts of Asia and Africa.<sup>11</sup>

#### **4. The African Church in search of Relevance**

The church since its inroads into the African soil has undergone various reforms because of continual effort to remain relevant to the social, economic, political and religious challenges facing its peoples.<sup>12</sup> Some of these reforms have been very important in ensuring the survival and thrive of the church in Africa, others have been very dangerous to the church's life and survival.<sup>13</sup> The problem however is that in recent time there is a worrying development regarding growing practices, especially in the Pentecostal and neo-Pentecostal churches (popularly known as one-man-churches) in the name of reform to remain relevant to the challenges facing its members.

Some of these practices include invocations, the use of some strange items and other practices hitherto strictly considered the preserve of indigenous African religions and practices believed to be fetish and idolatry. The question is, what biblical, theological or religious

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<sup>10</sup> Van Klinken, A. (2015). African Christianity: Developments and Trends. Handbook of Global Contemporary Christianity: Themes and Developments in Culture, Politics, and Society, Leiden: Brill, 131-151.

<sup>11</sup> Leighton, L. A. (2017). Incarnational Reality as an approach to missional theological education and training (Doctoral dissertation, Middlesex University); Goodall, D. N. (1954). Survey of the Training of the Ministry in Africa... New-York, International missionary council. In-8°.

<sup>12</sup> Obinna, E. (2017). Identity Crises and Indigenous Religious Traditions: Exploring Nigerian-African Christian Societies. Routledge.; Bediako, K. (1995). Christianity in Africa: The renewal of a non-Western religion. Orbis Books., Bosch, 1992)

<sup>13</sup> Bediako, K. (1995). Christianity in Africa: The renewal of a non-Western religion. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press

teachings forms the basis for these practices especially during prayer services and how consistent are these practices with the general teaching of the bible? What implication does it have for the present and future of the church in Africa? 'Ecclesia reformata, sempe reformanda' is one of the enduring slogan that vocalized the whole agitation and struggle during the Protestant Reformation.<sup>14</sup>

Although the origin of the phrase is uncertain, the kernel of the idea is true enough: Until we are fully, finally and perfectly conformed to the exact likeness of Christ, we as saints individually, and the whole church collectively, must always be reforming.<sup>15</sup> Certainly, the import of the idea did not suggest that Christians stay abreast of every wind of change in the name of being relevant in the face of the rapid social, cultural, economic and political changes confronting its members. Neither, did the principle of ecclesia reformata, sempe reformanda require the church to rewrite its doctrinal statements in every generation in order to keep in step with it.

More importantly, it is not a mindless subscription to a set of unbiblical confessional statement and standards as if the pioneers of the reformation or their immediate successors reached a level of ecclesiastical and doctrinal perfection beyond which further reform is intolerable. In his institutes, John Calvin<sup>16</sup> was under no illusion in claiming that the Reformation had reached its goal in his lifetime or that it would get there in a generation or two when he wrote, 'Christ loved the church, and gave himself for it, that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish,' (Eph. 5: 25-27.)

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<sup>14</sup> Michael Bush, (2008) "Calvin and the Reformanda Sayings," in Herman J. Selderhuis, ed., *Calvinus sacrarum literarum interpres: Papers of the International Congress on Calvin Research* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht,) p. 286.

<sup>15</sup> Bush, 2008

<sup>16</sup> Institutes, 4.1.17

Nevertheless, it is true, that the Lord is daily smoothing its wrinkles and wiping away its spots. Hence it follows that its holiness is not yet perfect. Such, then, is the holiness of the Church: it makes daily progress but is not yet perfect; it's daily advances as yet has not reached the goal. Therefore, the only true and valid reformation occurs as we align our beliefs, behaviours and worship with the Word of God. In fact, the full version of the slogan that vocalized the whole struggle for reformation was '*ecclesia reformata et semper reformanda, secundum verbum Dei*' -the Church reformed and always reforming according to the Word of God.<sup>17</sup> This placed the idea of reformation within a perspective informed and guided by the very word of God.

This meant that any act of reform must necessarily be in accordance with the teaching and the spirit of the teaching of Jesus Christ as exemplifying the love and goodwill of God towards humanity in his word and not just an introduction of practices that are theologically baseless and inconsistent with general biblical teaching.

### **5. The Emergence of Newer Churches (Charismatic - Pentecostal and Pneo-pentecostal)**

The surge of revival in the old established (missionary) churches resulted in what became known in church history as the Pentecostal or pneo-pentecostal and charismatic movements.<sup>18</sup> The term Pentecostal is derived from Pentecost, the Greek name for the Jewish Feast of Weeks. For Christians, this event commemorates the descent of the

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<sup>17</sup> Case-Winters, A., (2006), 'Ecclesia reformata, semper reformanda: Reformed and always to be reformed', in R.H. Bullock jr. (ed.), *Presbyterians being reformed: Reflections on what the church needs today*, pp. xxix–xxxii, Geneva Press, Louisville, KY.

<sup>18</sup> Asamoah-Gyadu, J. (2004). *African charismatics: Current developments within independent indigenous Pentecostalism in Ghana*. Brill; Omenyo, C. N. (2006). *Barrett, David B. (1968). Schism and Renewal in Africa: An Analysis of Six Thousand Contemporary Religious Movements*. Nairobi: Oxford University Press. OCLC 780456736; *Pentecost outside pentecostalism. A Study of the Development of Charismatic Renewal in the Mainline Churches in Ghana*, Zoetemeer: Boekencentrum Publishing House.



Holy Spirit upon the followers of Jesus Christ, as described in the second chapter of the Acts of the Apostles. Like other forms of evangelical Protestantism, Pentecostalism adheres to the inerrancy of the Bible and the necessity of accepting Jesus Christ as personal Lord and Saviour.

It is distinguished by belief in the baptism in the Holy Spirit that enables a Christian to live a Spirit-filled and empowered life. This empowerment includes the use of spiritual gifts such as speaking in tongues and divine healing. Pentecostalism emerged in the early 20th century among radical adherents of the Holiness movement who were energized by revivalism and expectation for the imminent Second Coming of Christ. Believing that they were living in the end times, they expected God to spiritually renew the Church thereby bringing to pass the restoration of spiritual gifts and the evangelization of the world.

## **6. The African Initiated Churches (AIC's)**

In Africa, the story was not different. This same search for a religiosity, theology and practice capable of providing answers to the existential needs and challenges of the African in the face of juju, witchcraft, black magic etc made certain individual to search for a type of religious practices that acknowledged reality of these treats and provided a kind of solution to them.<sup>19</sup> Known variously as African initiated churches, African independent churches, African indigenous churches, and African instituted churches, they were churches started by Africans for African as a variance to the missionary founded and led churches at the time<sup>20</sup>. Because it was founded with the search for relevance and meaning in the face of the

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<sup>19</sup> Harold W. Turner, *History of an African Independent Church Volumes 1&2* (London: Clarendon, 1967); C. G. Baëta, *Prophetism in Ghana* (London: SCM, 1961); among others.

<sup>20</sup> Pauw, C. M. (1995). "African Independent Churches as a 'People's Response' to the Christian Message". *Journal for the Study of Religion*. 8 (1): 3–25. ISSN 2413-3027. JSTOR 24764145. Turner, H. (1979). *Religious innovation in Africa*. London: Oxford University Press.

real-life challenges that faced the African Christian which he found unanswered in the missionary churches.

The African Initiated Churches became both vulnerable and susceptible in using certain metaphors and mediums that brought quick meaning and sense to the African person in search for an option to the African traditional religion and its practices. Eventually, certain expressions, and practices earlier on found in the African traditional religion and practices were adopted and given new meaning and used in these so called AIC's.<sup>21</sup> Although brought over to Christianity, and given new categorization and meaning, some of these adopted practices still carried with them the imagery and horror that was associated with it such that when it was used, it induced a certain kind of responds that captivated the attention, respect and admiration of the African Christian.

Some of the AIC's sooner or later became syncretic in the quest to sustain their relevance and monopolize the religious respect of their African followers. Eventually there was no limit to the extent they went in using metaphors and practices known to belong to the African traditional religion in their churches.<sup>22</sup>

## **7. The phenomenon of fetish practices, and invocations in modern African Church Services**

From the hindsight of the historical development of Christianity, one would argue that, Africa has seen all there is to see and gone through all there is to go through for the development and growth of Christianity. From being the first place to receive the baby Jesus, to having certain outstanding individuals spearhead the spread of the

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<sup>21</sup> Ositelu, Rufus Okikiola Olubiyi (2002). African Instituted Churches: Diversities, Growth, Gifts, Spirituality and Ecumenical Understanding of African Initiated Churches. Münster, Germany: LIT Verlag. ISBN 978-3-8258-6087-5; Maluleke, T.S. (1998). African traditional religions in Christian mission and Christian scholarship: Re-opening a debate that never started. *Religion and Theology*, 5(2): 121137.

<sup>22</sup> Bosch, D.J. (1992). *Transforming mission. Paradigm shifts in theology of mission.* Maryknoll:

religion and the deepening of its theological foundation. Important Africans such as Tertullian, Perpetua, Felicity, Clement of Alexandria, Origen of Alexandria, Cyprian, Athanasius and Augustine of Hippo are the least mentioned among the many unrecorded works of gallant men and women who have in one way or other influenced the early development of Christianity.

So Africa is not a new player to the game of Christian ontology and practices. But recently, there have been certain disturbing developments in modern African churches services concerning the use of certain items, invocations and practices that seems to discredit African's contributions towards the development and definition of Christian theology and practice over the years.

### **7.1. Invocation of Elemental Spirits**

In Colossians, Paul warns believers about elemental spirits. (*Col 2:8-10 RSV*), *'See to it that no one makes a prey of you by philosophy and empty deceit, according to human tradition, according to the elemental spirits of the universe, and not according to Christ.* This shows that these spiritual powers are in fact a part of a real kingdom (Colossians 1:13) 'the Kingdom of Darkness', and Satan is their ruler.

The basic elements of the world are said to be personified by powerful spirits. Some would say that this is God, or rather the manifestations of the universal cosmic 'god' force. Universally, an elemental is a type of magical entity who personifies a force of nature and control natural powers derived from their elements. Elementals and the Elemental Kingdom contain such creatures (often considered to be mythical) as fairies, goblins, gnomes and elves, leprechauns, tree people, mermaids and sylphs. They are known as 'Elementals' because they are made up of the 'ethers' and are 'ethereal'. They possess supernatural powers and are usually invisible to humans, living in trees, rivers, plants, swamps, and mountains.

Elemental spirits are by nature chaotic and destructive, but also capable of reasoning and clever actions. Not long ago, in a video that

was broadcast over the official TV channel of the International Godsway Church showing the leader and founder Prophet Daniel Obinim calling the names of ‘Nimokafrim’ and ‘Ayatafrim’ as being angels of God that he interact with. In reaction to this revelation, the founder and leader of the Alabaster International Ministries (Alabaster House Chapel) Prophet Kofi Oduro rebutted the assertion stating emphatically that those two supposed angels mentioned by the Prophet Daniel Obinim are not angels of God but elemental spirits worshipped in Benin and Togo in West Africa.

## **7.2. Conjuring physical money to appear**

The practices of conjure and hoodoo revolves around the natural power of the world around combined with the drawing of power from the spiritual-realms in order to effect change in persons, circumstances, and fate. This means that the conjure doctor relies on the innate spiritual power of natural elements like herbs, roots, minerals, and similar curios along with his or her power to call upon the assistance of otherworldly spirits like the dead in order to bring power to any situation and sway the flow of things into a manner of his or her liking.

These practices are seen in the use of magical products like incenses, powders, oils, teas, and other such mixtures combined with ritual actions like baths, candle magic, creation of talismanic objects, altar work and such. What results is an elegantly straight forward set of practices that is immensely potent. By combining the power of spirit with the power of nature the conjure doctor is able to move mountains. This ritual is particularly associated with the Prophet Richard Owusu aka Bohyeba Sika Bofour, the Founder and leader of Jesus Favour Chapel at Takoradi in the Western region & CEO of Bohye TV. He claims to have the key to ending poverty and can conjure money from ‘heaven’.

He goes about with a knapsack bag in his front out of which after many incantation (supposed prayer) he removes money from the bag and throw them on the floor during church service. This is similar to

what one priestess Patricia Asiedua, popularly known as Nana Agradaa (queen of thunder) and owner of Thunder TV whose shrine is located in Sowotuum in the Ga Central Municipality in the Greater Accra Region, directly opposite the Catholic Church Seminary does. She goes about with a wooden Box or Jute bag out of which after many incantations and sprinkling of powder and whistling conjure physical money to appear.

Elsewhere in South Africa (Prophet Shepherd Huxley Bushiri), Zimbabwe (Prophet Uber Angel and Emmanuel Makandiwa) founders and leaders of Enlightened Christian Gathering, Good News Church, and United Family International Church respectively have organised services where prayers are said and people receive instant moneys into their bank accounts or have their bank balances doubled.

### **7.3. The use of effigies and dolls**

One of the recent developments so worrying is the introduction of the use of effigies and dolls as point of contact to send prayers against enemies or people who wish us bad or persons who are supposed to be behind the predicaments and afflictions of people. In one of his regular Tuesday prayer services the Bishop and general Overseer of Zion Home Chapel International, Prophet Bishop Lawrence Agyepong also known as Prophet Dito Dito due to the depth and detail nature of his prophecies provide the effigy or dolls himself and invited people to come and buy them for prayers. During prayer, members call the name of anybody who might be responsible for their predicament or afflictions and invite or summon their spirit into the effigies or doll.

After many hours of intensive imprecatory prayers the effigies or dolls are sometimes burned, buried underground, cut into pieces or. Ironically according some members of the church they have recorded many testimonies from such prayers. For the purpose of this paper an effigy is a quickly and roughly made figure, a portrait, statue, or the like, esp. of a person; likeness; often, a crude representation of a despised person. Figures, often caricature in style, that are damaged,

destroyed or paraded in order to harm the person represented by magical means, or merely to mock or insult them or their memory, are also called effigies.

#### 7.4. Summoning the spirit of the dead

One of the practices that the bible sternly warns against is the practice of summoning the dead or necromancy. In Deut 18:10-12 (AMP), the bible says, ‘There shall not be found among you anyone who makes his son or daughter pass through the fire, or who uses divination, or is a soothsayer, or an augur, or a sorcerer, Or a charmer, or a medium, or a wizard, or a necromancer. For all who do these things are an abomination to the Lord’. One would wonder why in recent times it would become accepted and in use in churches. Necromancy is a practice of magic involving communication with the dead – either by summoning their spirit as an apparition or raising them bodily – for the purpose of divination, imparting the means to foretell future events or discover hidden knowledge.<sup>23</sup>

The word "necromancy" is adapted from Late Latin *necromantia*, itself borrowed from post-classical Greek *νεκρομαντεία* (*nekromanteía*), a compound of Ancient Greek *νεκρός* (*nekrós*), "dead body", and *μαντεία* (*manteía*),<sup>24</sup> Because seekers have become desperate to find somebody to always blame for their predicament but themselves get exploited by certain so called persons who consider themselves called of God. These individuals are made to go through all kinds of ordeals in the name of finding solution to their problems to the extent of going to the cemetery to summon the spirit of dead people to either reconcile, appease, warn or ask one thing or the other from them.

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<sup>23</sup> Jones, Daniel (2003). Roach, Peter; Hartman, James; Setter, Jane, eds. Cambridge English Pronouncing Dictionary (16th ed.). Cambridge University Press.

<sup>24</sup> "necromancy, n.". Oxford English Dictionary (OED) (3rd ed.). Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press. September 2003.

Two such leaders of a church body “Pastor” Collins Agyei Yeboah, also known as Prophet Yopoo and Rev. Christian Kwabena Andrews also known as Osofo Kyiri Abosom founder of the Vision Charismatic Ministry, and General Overseer of Life Assembly Worship Centre.

## **8. Conclusion**

As we have intimated from the fore propositions, the contribution of Africa to the development and growth of Christianity and its theology is undeniable. This notwithstanding, the recent development of the introduction of what seem syncretic practices in modern African Christian church services is becoming a threat to authentic African Christian religious practice and discourse. The increasing incidence of the emergence of the use of certain items, invocations and practices hitherto considered the preserve of African traditional religious practice and prohibited by biblical injunctions is a very worrying matter.

One is quickly reminded of the challenges that Africa has to go through to claim its rightful place in the areas of Christian theology, discourse and practice. With these developments up surging, two things are a probability:

(1) it is a clear evidence of the failure of Christianity to transform the African culture and evolve itself in what seem important and necessary to the need and survival of the African man or woman so that when he became a Christian, he come with an entirely new sense of the world around him or her,

(2) that African Christians are beginning a revolution in the quest to redefine what practices really connect their African consciousness with their new-found faith and translate that same consciousness into reinterpreting and defining the importance of certain practices and invocations that is relevant to their cosmological worldviews.

Whichever of the two above is applicable, the emergence and increasing incidences of these religious practices particularly in African and black African churches leaves a lot to be discussed and decided. If this phenomenon is anything to hold on to then, there is the need to develop the right theological arguments and apologetics to support or disprove them. So the question still remains, how consistent are these practices with the general teaching of the bible or what biblical, theological or religious teachings forms the basis for them.

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