

ABSTRACT

Contextual Preaching: a model for effective impact on the socio-cultural living of Christians in the Anglican Diocese of Ijebu South-West, Nigeria.

by

Babatunde Fadefoluwa Rotimi Ogunbanwo

The purpose of this project was to measure the changes in knowledge, attitude and behavior among clergy and lay pastors from the Anglican Diocese of Ijebu South West, Nigeria who participated in a twelve – week training event on contextual preaching.

The problem addressed by the research was the contradiction between faith commitment and lived experiences among Christians in the Anglican diocese of Ijebu South-West, Nigeria. The Diocese of Ijebu South-West is a Diocese within the Anglican Church in Nigeria, domiciled in the Ijebu cultural context of Yorubaland of South-West, Nigeria. The Diocese is to proclaim the gospel of Christ within the Ijebu cultural context which is very different from Christianity in their world-view, theology and spirituality.

Thus, it is important in this context for preachers to plan and prepare their sermons in a way that the Bible and its core doctrines will be taught in a contextual way and systematically. Hence for the Clergy and lay pastors in the Diocese of Ijebu South West to be relevant in the context of the Diocese, there is a need for a preacher in the local context of the people to be trained in contextual preaching. This project thus seeks to make a contribution toward a contextualized approach to preaching among the Yoruba of Nigeria with particular reference to the Ijebu Christians in the Diocese of Ijebu South-West. The purpose of this project was to measure the change in knowledge, attitude and

behavior among Clergy and lay pastor from the Anglican Diocese of Ijebu South-West, Nigeria who participated in twelve-week training event on contextual preaching.

The data gathered from this project produced significant findings on the matter of contextual preaching in the Yoruba cultural context of Ijebu South-West. The findings may be relevant to any Christian church which is open to the use of contextual preaching. Some of the findings includes: that a preaching that will be meaningful must engage with the cultural context of the people. Effective proclamation of the gospel will be achieved if the cultural experiences and identity of the Yorubas are accommodated. Contextual preaching is a very good tool in presenting the biblical message to the audience/listeners in the Yoruba cultural context of the Diocese of Ijebu South-West. The contextual preaching training done among clergy and lay pastors in the Diocese of Ijebu South-West has the capacity to increase the effectiveness of contextual preaching and produce changes in the attitude, knowledge and behaviour of participants.

Contextual Preaching: a model for effective impact on the socio-cultural living of
Christians in the Anglican Diocese of Ijebu South-West, Nigeria.

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Babatunde Fadefoluwa Rotimi Ogunbanwo.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
LIST OF TABLES	vi
LIST OF FIGURES	vii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	viii
CHAPTER 1 NATURE OF THE PROJECT	1
Overview of the Chapter	1
Personal Introduction	1
Statement of the Problem	3
Purpose of the Project.....	4
Research Questions	4
Research Question #1	4
Research Question #2	4
Research Question #3	4
Rationale for the Project	5
Definition of Key Terms	6
Delimitations	8
Review of Relevant Literature	9
Research Methodology	12
Type of Research	13
Participants	14
Instrumentation	14
Data Collection	14

Data Analysis	14
Generalizability	15
Project Overview	15
CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW FOR THE PROJECT	16
Overview of the Chapter	16
Contextualization	17
Biblical Foundations for Contextualization	29
Theological Foundations.....	29
Contextual Preaching	31
The Need for Contextual Preaching	34
Models for Contextualization of Preaching.....	39
Research Design Literature.....	53
Appropriate Model in Context of Ijebu People of Nigeria.....	53
Preaching and Cultural Context.....	54
Preaching in Yoruba Cultural Context	57
A Review of Preaching in Yoruba Land	58
Summary of Literature	64
CHAPTER 3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY FOR THE PROJECT	
Overview of the Chapter	65
Nature and Purpose of the Project	65
Research Questions	66
Research Question #1.....	66
Research Question #2.....	66

Research Question #3.....	66
Research Question #4.....	67
Ministry Context(s)	67
Participants	68
Criteria for Selection	68
Description of Participants	68
Ethical Considerations	68
Instrumentation	69
Reliability & Validity of Project Design	69
Data Collection	71
Data Analysis	71

CHAPTER 4 EVIDENCE FOR THE PROJECT

Overview of the Chapter	72
Participants	72
Research Question #1: Description of Evidence	74
Research Question #2: Description of Evidence	81
Research Question #3: Description of Evidence	85
Research Question #4: Description of Evidence	88
Focus Group Observations	89
Summary of Major Findings.....	94

CHAPTER 5 LEARNING REPORT FOR THE PROJECT

Overview of the Chapter	95
Major Findings.....	95

First Finding	95
Second Finding.....	98
Third Finding	102
Fourth Finding	104
Ministry Implications of the Findings.....	106
Limitations of the Study.....	108
Unexpected Observations	109
Recommendations.....	109
Postscript	110
APPENDIXES	
A.Diocese of Ijebu South- West Contextual Preaching Syllabus.....	111
B. Preacher’s Foundation.(Observation Schedule).....	111
C.Preachers’ Assessment Record (PAR): (Ministry Intervention).....	113
D. Diocese of Ijebu South – West Preachers’ Interview.....	118
E. Letter of Informed Consent.....	120
WORKS CITED	122
WORKS CONSULTED.....	132

LIST OF TABLES

	Page
Table 4.1. Demographic make up of Participants.....	111
Table 4.2. Responses to Pre – Test Knowledge and Attitude.....	111
Table 4.3. Pre Intervention Responses.....	113
Table 4.4. The Value attributed to the Elements of the Contextual Training.....	118
Table 4.5. Participants Journal Observation.....	119
Table 4.6. Focus Group Discussion.....	120

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“All the Glory must be to the Lord,
For He is Worthy of our Praise
No man on Earth should give Glory to Himself,
All the Glory must be to the Lord”

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Let me conclusively return all honour, glory and adoration to God Almighty. May His Name be praised forever more.

+Babatunde

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CHAPTER 1

NATURE OF THE PROJECT

Overview of the Chapter

This chapter gives a general overview of this project, starting with the person of the researcher and how the problem addressed in the work was conceived. It presents the purpose of the project, the research questions as well as the rationale for the work. The chapter gave an insight into the methodology to be adopted in the project and reviewed a few literature to situate the research within contemporary scholarship.

Personal Introduction

I was born about 50 years ago into a Christian family at Odogbolu-Ijebu, in the Ijebu Province of Nigeria. I was later ordained into the Anglican Church Ministry in 1993 and then began a preaching and pastoral ministry among the Ijebu people (Yoruba) of Nigeria.

One of the major challenge ministering in the Ijebu cultural context is the superficiality or shallowness of commitment to Christ and his sufficiency to issues of life. But then, this was caused by the initial failure of preachers to understand, consider and adapt some themes of the Yoruba world view in their ministration at the early life of Christianity. Many of the church members in Ijebuland lack existential apprehension of the gospel message preached in foreign symbols, hence leads to the reversion to traditional practices by the average Christians. Many claim Christianity as their religion, but they have not understood the sufficiency of Christ for the crises in their lives and so they supplement their faith in Christ with metaphysical objects and involvement in various cultic activities. The presentation of the gospel to the Africans and the Yoruba in particular, beginning in the nineteenth century, and unfortunately in many quarters today, is be clouded with elements which to them are foreign. John V. Taylor says “Christ has

been presented as the answer to questions a white man would ask, the solution to the needs that Western man would feel, the Saviour of the world of the European would view, the object of the adoration and prayer of historic Christendom. But if Christ were to appear as the answer to the questions that Africans are asking, what would he look like”? (John Taylor 16)

Osadolor Imasogie underscores Taylors statement when he opined that “the Word did not become flesh in the African context and consequently the Eternal Christ could not be existentially apprehended. And in that circumstance, Christianity came to be regarded as a foreign religion that had been transplanted in a foreign soil and did not take root. Consequently, many African Christians perceived the ‘God’ of Christianity as ‘Stranger God’ the god of the white man, who is unfamiliar with the local spiritual problems” (1986:69).

The Yoruba Christians are taught to worship God in European style and counseled to view life from the same perspective. Infact, in the recent past, traditional attires and dresses could not be worn to church services, nor traditional drums be used. Local style of singing, clapping and dancing was not allowed.

In the Ijebu division of Yoruba land, the majority of Christians come from a non-Christian religions background, with little knowledge of what Christianity entails and the Bible. The Yoruba traditional context is very different from Christianity in their world-view, theology and spirituality. Many have put their faith in Jesus Christ, but their understanding is still influenced by the old traditional religion. A Christian from such backgrounds requires a good amount of biblical teaching to make such to understand what it means to be a believer in Jesus Christ. Thus, it is important in this context for preachers to plan and prepare their sermons in a way that the Bible and its core doctrines will be taught systematically.

A contextual approach to preaching with the Yoruba (in particular Ijebu Christians) world-view in mind may clear many misconceptions about Christianity and make the Ijebu believers to be well rooted in faith. I believe that it is not possible to do a proper theology without paying attention to the local context. As Robert J. Schreiber says “there is now a realization that all theologies have contexts, interests, relationships of power, special concerns, and to pretend that this is not the case is to be blind (Schreiber 4)”.

In the Diocese of Ijebu South-West, in spite of this realization, the clergy and lay pastors have not been able to do much in the area of contextual preaching. Many seem to believe that contextual preaching is contrary to biblical or orthodox faith, others were also of the opinion that it is a way of compromising biblical values and scripture, thereby creating a tension between being contextual and being scriptural. John Stott writing about the situation of the Church said “One of the major tragedies in the Church today is that evangelicals are biblical but not contemporary, while liberals are contemporary but not biblical, and almost nobody is building bridges and relating the biblical text to the modern context” (Stott 44).

For the clergy and lay pastors in the Diocese of Ijebu South West to be relevant in the context of the Diocese, there is a need for a preaching model that will enhance the performance of the preachers in the local context of the people. This dissertation, thus, seek to make a contribution towards a contextualized approach to preaching among the Yoruba of Nigeria with particular reference to the Ijebu Christians in the Diocese of Ijebu South-West.

Statement of the Problem

The problem addressed by the research is the contradiction between faith commitment and lived experiences among Christians in the Anglican diocese of Ijebu South-West, Nigeria. The problem of cultural experiences reflecting and conflicting with the Christian living of the

members; suggestive of the limited influence of the Word of God on their understanding, practice and living.

Purpose of the Project

The purpose of this project was to measure the changes in knowledge, attitude and behavior among clergy and lay pastors from the Anglican Diocese of Ijebu South West, Nigeria who participated in a twelve – week training event on contextual preaching.

Research Questions

In pursuit of the above purpose statement, this study examined four fundamental questions.

Research Question #1

1. What were the levels of knowledge, attitude and behavior regarding contextual preaching among the clergy and lay pastors who participated in a twelve-week training event on contextual preaching prior to the training event?

Research Question #2

2. What were the levels of knowledge, attitude and behavior regarding contextual preaching among the clergy and lay pastors who participated in a twelve week training event on contextual preaching following the training event?

Research Question #3

3. What aspects of the training event had the greatest impact on the observed changes among the participants?

Research Questions #4:

4. Which elements of the model did the participants find out to be valuable and which ones were not practicable?

Rationale for the Project

The problem created by the gap that existed the faith commitment and the lived experiences among members of the Diocese of Ijebu South West, Nigeria, signal a vacuum and a serious ineffectiveness in the preaching and teaching ministry of the clergymen and lay pastors in the Diocese. It shows that the congregation of our churches are not deeply rooted in the knowledge of biblical practices and living. The members were not able differentiate the difference between Christian ethnics and traditional cultural practices.

Given the situation, the pressing need is a preaching and teaching method that systematically teaches the Bible and creatively relates the scriptures to the context of the people. Contextual preaching builds the body of Christ firmly rooted on the Word of God; and one of the needs of the congregation in the Diocese is to for believers into mature disciples of Jesus Christ having proper understanding of the Bible, Christian faith and essential doctrines of the church.

Also, since Leadership is a key factor for any organization to grow, the training of clergymen and Lay-Pastor in the art of contextual preaching is very urgent. One of the strengths of contextual preaching is that it presents closely the exposition of scriptures and relates intentionally to the lived experience of the listeners. Contextual preaching gives attention not also to the understanding of the members in terms of culture, tradition, economy, locality, socio and political expediencies of the context. In order words it is a way of deeply teaching the word of God within the local context of the congregation.

On the whole, the need for this research rests on the fact that majority of the members of the Diocese place more trust in ministers (Clergymen and Lay Pastors).

Definition of Key Terms

In this study, the following terms require specific definition:

1. **Contextualization:**

The key word in this study is “Contextualization” Its English root word “context”, according to Webster’s New International Dictionary (2nd edition) is defined as (a) “the weaving together of words in language, the discourse or writing so produced; (b) the part of or parts of a discourse preceding or following a ‘text’ or passage or a word, or so intimately associated with it as to throw light upon its meaning; and (c) associated surroundings whether material or mental”. In sum it is communication or writing that presents concept within its context.

According to Dean Gilliland, contextualization is a derivative of the word ‘context’, it has its root in context (Latin) meaning wearing together (Dean Gilliland 225) . It may also mean making concepts and methods relevant to a historical situation. Hiebert defines it “as the adaptation of the gospel to different cultures, knowledge and nature of human beings on the deepest level” (Hiebert 142). Kaiser says it is a term describing how the gospel message engages the culture, particularly as it relates to social issues. It is that programme by which missionaries should communicate the gospel and plant churches untainted by the missionary’s own culture” (Kaiser 83). Haleblan sees contextualization as “a discipline which deals with the essential nature of the gospel, its cross – cultural communication, the development and fostering of local theologies and indigenous church forms”(Haleblan (97).

Nicholls gave an Evangelical definition of contextualization as “a dynamic process of the church’s reflection on the interaction of the ‘Text’ as Word of God and the ‘Context’ as a specific human situation in obedience to Christ and His mission in the World (103).Nicholls

definition contains the main elements for contextualization; the church as the agent of contextualization, the text of scripture as the Word of God and location of the contextualization process within the parameters of obedience to Christ and His mission.

Grant Osborne has defined contextualization as “that dynamic process which interprets the significance of a religion or cultural norm for a group with a different (or developed) cultural heritage. He goes on to suggest that contextualization is what traditional Evangelical Theology has referred to as application of biblical truth” (119).

Contextualization does not allow the process to divorce itself from the meaning of scripture but will always remain within the scope of meaning prescribed by the biblical text. Osborne further opined that if we are to take contextualization seriously, we must “add to our exegesis of the Word an exegesis of our World”.

Reflecting on all the different definitions of contextualization, we shall in this dissertation review and evaluate the contextualization in terms of its bearing on the communication of the gospel, the expression of the Christian faith and its spread in various cultural settings. In all, it is a process of disciplined exegesis of the Word and the World which respects both the authority of scripture and the demands of culture.

2. Contextual Preaching:

The concept of contextual preaching is to structure the gospel message in language and communication forms appropriate and meaningful to the local ways and culture. It is a way of making the gospel message to speak the people’s language and address the immediate existential and cultural experience of the people (Bevans 12). Ukpong argues that the scripture is plurivalent because it has the capacity to address diverse situations and context across time and space, while maintaining its ancient roots. The Bible is a dynamic phenomenon, which

contains somewhat unrelated cultures and traditions, which addresses diverse human experiences and speaks multi-vocally (Ukpong 17).

Contextual preaching is designed to pay attention to the inevitable contextual nature of the gospel and the contextual particularities of the audience. Contextual preaching makes God speak in vernacular so that people will hear Him in their own language and experiences. Thomas Long puts it clearly as follows: “the preacher goes to the biblical text from the congregation and indeed with the congregation. The congregation’s struggle to be human and faithful to Christ in the contemporary world has been the context in which the interpretation of the text has taken place. Though the preacher bears responsibility for giving it voices, exegesis involves a conversation between the biblical text and the whole community of faith” (Thomas Long 79). Contextual preaching follows three essential steps: interpretation of the preaching context, interpretation of the text and the bridging of the world of the biblical text and the context of the congregation.

Delimitation

This project will center mainly on the Anglican Diocese of Ijebu South West, Nigeria and the Clergymen/Lay-Pastors that are working in the Diocese. It will concern itself solely with the socio-cultural context and experiences of the Ijebu people of Nigeria. While occasion may warrant reference to other areas of Yorubaland, the project is limited to Ijebuland of Nigeria; it should be noted from the onset that the project is suggestive/pre-intervention in that it is a working homiletic model among clergymen and lay pastors of the Anglican Diocese of Ijebu South West, Nigeria and not designed to reflect or measure responses of people to the preaching paradigm presented in the work.

Review of Relevant Literature

The few literatures reviewed on the issue and patterns of contextualization in relation to preaching occur in a particular cultural context in which the gospel of Christ and the listeners are interrelated. However, in the Ijebu cultural context of Nigeria especially in the Diocese of Ijebu South West, preaching has not always been attentive to the relationship between it and its context owing to the unnoticed cultural expediciencies of the people and the misunderstanding of the people as well as ignorance of the cultural difference. The need for this dissertation arose from the fact that preaching cannot be separated from its historical and cultural context, hence the need to evaluate preachers in the Diocese of Ijebu South West, Nigeria practically to explore their anthropological and theological understanding of contextualization. Did the preachers understand the concepts of contextual theology and the dialogical relationship between preaching and its cultural context?

Contextualization has been a persistent concern in theology and ministry practices since the beginning of Christianity and its dated back to the emergence of the same from its Jewish origin into the Grew Roman World (Costa 4).

Fred Craddock in his book “As one without Authority” emphasized the importance of the sermon’s audience, as well as the concrete life situations and the particular social and cultural contexts of the sermon’s audience. It is evident that the immediate and concrete experiences of the people are important parts in the formation of an effective sermon (Fred Craddock 1995).

In response to the modern-day situation in America, in which preaching was under attack both from within and outside the church, Fred Craddock responded to the relationship between preaching and its cultural context. He reflected that cultural context has a particular influence on preaching, hence he proposed an inductive method in preaching, emphasizing particularly the

listening community's social context. The intent of Craddock's inductive preaching however is not just responding to the cultural context, but to reveal the important relationship between preaching and its cultural context.

Craddock's work was mainly within American cultural context and in agreeing with all his proposals, this research work will be within the Ijebu cultural context of Nigeria and so his work is a good bedrock for the project. Another Important voice of American homiletics is Henry H. Mitchell who emphasized that the heart of black preaching and worship is described in terms of the preachers' identification with the listeners. He summed the preaching style to be a dialogue between the preacher and the congregation. The black preaching proposed by Mitchell is relevant to this research in the understanding of the social and cultural context in preaching (Henry H. Mitchell 1968).

Preaching is a particular form of communication which has always been significant in the life of the Christian church (Atkin,2-18). God wants to communicate through the preacher to a church which is historical situated in a particular and real cultural context. The revelation of God began not with abstract and ambiguous ideas or theory but with a historical and concrete persons who lived in a particular cultural context (Cooper and (McCline,2). Therefore preaching and contextualization of the same cannot be separated, the preacher and his listeners are always influenced by the historical and cultural context. The messages of the old Testament prophets and the apostles in the New Testament, were spoken to and influenced by a particular context of their audience (Gerhard Von Rad,68).

At the onset, scholars were concerned about the relationship between Christianity and culture. Niebuhr argues that Christianity has been in "the double wrestle with its lord and with the cultural society". He basically argued for how the Christian church has understood itself in

relation to both the living Lord as the object of faith and the cultural context in which the church resides. He opined that the struggle had been that between Christ and culture (Niebuhr 12) .

He examined the relevance of the gospel to diverse cultural situations that Christians live in. in Christ and culture Niebuhr provided different dynamic relations between the gospel and culture to show the numerous attitudes Christians have taken toward culture over time.

Niebuhr's work presents a critical framework for preaching in its surrounding culture, but his works deals with a Western interpretation of the history of the Western church and its response to cultural context; hence his works might not be directly related to the situation of Ijebu South West, Nigeria, nevertheless his position on the relationship between Christ and culture provides a helpful insight for research on the issue of Christ and culture throughout the history of the world (Niebur,xxi – xxxv).

Paul Tillich, addressed the effect of culture in Christian Theology and analyzed the modes of communicating the gospel and opined that the message of salvation is better conveyed through preachers' involvement in the contexts of the listeners. However, he failed to take note of individual experience and cultural particularities (Paul Tillich 2001-13), .

Many scholars (Bediako,1995, Tutu, 1987, Janvier,2002) of African descent have been involved in contextualization of theology since the 1950s. It was a conscious engagement of European Christian thinking and African religious thought in dialogue for the purpose of integrating Christianity into the life and culture of the Africans. Bolaji Idowu a religious scholar and Late Patriarch of the Methodist Church, Nigeria was a strong proponent for the Indigenization of Christian theology and Liturgy in Africa. He detests the importation of European 'Prefabricated liturgies to Africa and opined that the use of African history and oral

literatures such as phraseology, songs, proverbs, myths and symbols should be encouraged (Idowu,433-35).

John S. Pobee (1979) is another strong voice on contextualization of theology in Africa who posit that the task of “translating” Christianity into authentic Africa categories is a concern for preachers.

Following through the track of African theologies and religious scholars, many of them are beginning to explore the implications of contextualization in scholarship and mission. However, the significance has not been fully explored in the preaching context. Over major work in the area of contextualization and preaching in Yorubaland of Nigeria was that of Sunday Olasoji Onadipe (2005) which examined the subject in a broad sense for all Yorubas. His contextual approach seek to uncover and use codes, like that of Kurewa (9-11) paradigm, symbols, myths and discussions to reinforce the centrality of African ideals and values as valid frame for preaching.

This project following the tracks of Kurewa which focused primarily on the Shona people of Zimbabwe and Onadipe, which constructed a preaching paradigm that is rooted in a Yoruba religion cultural context, seeks to construct a contextual preaching model for Christians in the Diocese of Ijebu South – West, Nigeria.

Research Methodology

This project was primarily a mixed method qualitative study that utilized a researcher – designed pre-test and post text.for clergy and lay pastors. The pre-test survey assessed the participants level of knowledge, attitude and behavior regarding contextual preaching prior to the training event; while the post-test evaluated the changes after they had participated in the twelve weeks contextual preaching programme.

Semi-structured interview was also conducted with four smaller focus groups to gather overarching themes and observations that flows from their experiences of the training programme. The qualitative data collected from the interviews, the preaching sessions and the survey, served as the basis for analysis of the findings.

Type of Reserach

The ministry project in this study was an intervention designed to improve participants preaching in the context of the Yoruba Ijebu Christians in the Anglican Diocese of Ijebu South West, Nigeria. The training project was done among the clergy and lay pastors of the Diocese for twelve weeks from **1st April 1 to 21st June, 2019.**

The actual curriculum of the training was comprising of four major components: Foundation knowledge of contextualization and preaching, the Yoruba (Ijebu) cultural context an overview of preaching in Yorubaland and the methodology of contextual preaching. The sessions were divided into two parts: the teaching session and the practical sessions. The practical sessions examined contextual sermon samples which participants could apply to their daily cultural settings. The sermons do not by any means represent absolute forms to be emulated but exemplify how contextual preaching could integrate faith and culture among a people. Contextual issues such as the reality of evil in human community, atonement, social responsibility, economic problems, poverty, diseases and soon were discussed during the sessions. Participants were divided into smaller groups for contextual practical preaching and evaluation, so as to measure the personal understanding and application of the model.

A pre-intervention and post intervention questionnaire were distributed to and collected from the participants. These instruments were designed to measure the research questions.

Participants:

Participants were clergymen and lay-pastors of the Diocese of Ijebu South-West, Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) their ages ranged from 25 to 65 and were fifty in number.

Instrumentation

Three major instruments were used in this research:

1. The researcher – designed pre-test assessment survey collected data on participants level of knowledge, attitudes understanding and behavior regarding contextual preaching prior to the training programme.
2. The researcher – designed post – test assessment survey collected data that allowed comparison to the participants pre-test scores.
3. The research – conducted semi-structured interview protocol with the focus group allowed me to discover observations and patterns from participants experience of the training programme.

Data Collection:

The researcher administered the pre and post – text assessment survey to collect quantitative data. The pre – test was completed and collected during the first session of the training programme, while the post – test were administered at the last session to track the changes. The focus group interviews were done in smaller groups to collect qualitative data and to evaluate the programme.

Data Analysis

Comparative analysis using both descriptive statistics and inferential statistics was performed to ascertain changes in the study population. The impact of the intervention on the dependent variables was measured and the qualitative data was processed first using explorative analysis to identify the patterns and categories, then concluding with content analysis through coded descriptions.

Generalizability

This study focused mainly on the Diocese of Ijebu South-West, Nigeria. The participants were clergy and lay pastors of the Diocese; and the programme was specially designed to address them preaching method regarding contextualization of the same. Hence the result of the study may not apply in other cultural context but may be helpful for other ministers of the gospel in other denominations within the Ijebu cultural context of Yorubaland of Nigeria.

Project Overview.

- Chapter 2 - Literature Review and Theological Foundations.
- Chapter 3 - Research Methodology and Design of the Project
- Chapter 4 - Findings that Resulted from the Ministry Intervention
- Chapter 5 - Summary and Conclusion

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW FOR THE PROJECT

Overview of the Chapter

This chapter reviews relevant literature and research on the area of contextualization and contextual preaching. The chapter examined biblical and theological foundations for contextualization from both the Old and New Testament as well as traced the historical antecedents in Africa.

Biblical Foundations

The issue of contextualization is one of the most pressing in contemporary Christian living and practice today. Even though it is not a new question, but it is very important if Christianity will continue to be relevant in today's society and church. A church that is not relevant and not contextual to the daily life of its adherents may become alien and irrelevant. Contextualization is one of the most important issues in mission and preaching today. It is a perennial problem faced every time preachers need to communicate the gospel across language and cultural boundaries; it is mainly concerned with how the Gospel and culture relate to one another across geographic space and down through time.

Since the focal point of preaching is the sure and authoritative Word of God; there is bound to be agitation in the minds of preachers on how to engage culture in the preaching process and how to pass the gospel message within a particular cultural context. How will the Bible speak to people "within the deep cultural levels without the truth and authority of the Word of God being reduced and or compromised" (Scharf 168). This study is to present the relationship between preaching and the cultural context, which homilecticians and missiologists in the Ijebu area of Nigeria have largely left untouched. Preachers do not address "the cultural

ramifications of the preaching event, demonstrate an understanding of culture, provide instructions or suggestions regarding how to bring culture and preaching together, or conduct empirical studies to assess where and how culture can and should show up in the sermon”(Quicke 65-67). Preaching must bridge the biblical message with the contemporary audience in their cultural context.

Many believers in the past in an attempt to relate the gospel to the culture of their audience have adopted different terms to explain this way of relationship. Terms like accommodation, adaptation, indigenization, indiginity, and contextualization. Harrie Conn noted that there is a progression of terms and ideas starting with “indigenous church” proceeding to “Indigenization” and finally to “Contextualization”. He raises the question as to whether these new terms solve any of the old problems (Conn XVI). Hesselgrave and Rommen used the term contextualization in its expanded understanding of context and culture. It was their opinion that “a new word was needed to denote the ways in which we adjust messages to cultural contexts and go about the doing of theology itself” (Hesselgrave and Rommen 28).

Contextualization:

Contextualization is a derivative of the word ‘context’. It has its root in context Latin meaning weaving together. It may also mean making concepts and methods relevant to a historical situation (Gilliland 225). Dean Flemming, using the New Testament lens described contextualization “as the dynamic and comprehensive process by which the gospel is incarnated within a concrete historical or cultural situation. It seeks to enable the people of God to live out the gospel in obedience to Christ within their own cultures and circumstances” (Dean Flemming 31) . Paul Hiebert defines contextualization “as the adaptation of the gospel to different cultures, knowledge and nature of human beings on the deepest level” (Hiebert142) . Walter

Kaiser says “it is a term describing how the gospel message engages the culture, particularly as it relates to social issues. It is that programme by which missionaries should communicate the gospel and plant churches untainted by the missionary own culture.” (Kaiser Jr 83). Kriker Haleblan in his own opinion sees Contextualization as “a discipline which deals with the essential nature of the gospel, its cross cultural communication, the development and fostering of local theologies and indigenous church forms.” (Haleblan 97).

Shoki Coe was the first scholar to coin the word contextualization in 1972. He expressed the need for theological education to be linked in a more vital way to the “*Missio Dei*” within the context of the third world. He opined that the ‘*Missio Dei*’ could be known by discerning “the signs of the times, seeing where God is at work and calling us to participate in it. The process of contextualization is defined by Coe as a “double wrestle” between the text of scripture and the context in which the text is “re interpreted” as a “simultaneous response to the Gospel itself as well as to the urgent issues in the historic realities, particularly in the Third World”. For Coe contextualization goes beyond indigenization because it is supposed to respond to the gospel in terms of culture and not only in relation to static culture but the search for the new (Coe 236).

Many scholars of Evangelical persuasion stress a theological definition of contextualization, stressing the two theological poles of text (scripture) and context (culture). Bruce Nicholls defined contextualization “as a dynamic process of the church’s reflection on the interaction of the Text as Word of God and the context as a specific human situation in obedience to Christ and His mission in the World.” Nicholls’ definition of contextualization is ‘the translation of the unchanging contexts of the Gospel of the kingdom into verbal form meaningful to the people in their separate cultures and within their particular existential situation’ (Nicholls 103).

This definition points to the understanding that the church is the agent of contextualization, the text as the Word of God and the location of the process within the local context. It is in this understanding that Grant Osborne defined contextualization as “that dynamic process which interprets the significance of a religion or cultural norm for a group with a different (or developed) cultural heritage” (Osborne 318). Osborne goes on to suggest that contextualization is what traditional evangelical theology has referred to as “application” of biblical truth. He insists that ‘a plenary verbal, inerrantist approach to contextualization attempts to balance its belief that “God’s revealed word is the final arbiter of all truth”, and that biblical truth is “Supracultural” and “unchanging” with an awareness that the “current reception context” is “transformational” and in constant change. In sum, he cushions the tension, by saying that “While the content of biblical revelation is unchanging, the form in which it is presented (preaching) is ever changing” (Ibid 318 -320).

Also in line with the proper balance between the two theological poles, Hesselgrave and Rommen defined contextualization as “the attempt to communicate the message of the person, works, word, and will of God in a way that is faithful to God’s revelation, especially as it is put forth in the teachings of Holy Scripture, and that is meaningful to respondents in their respective cultural and existential contexts” (Hesselgrave and Rommen 200). From the definition, two major concepts can be established in explaining contextualization in preaching: ‘faithful’ to the word of God and ‘meaningful’ to cultural respondents. Emphasizing therefore two concerns which is both “scripturally sound and culturally visible. (Ibid 200).

Contextualization in the Evangelical tradition is an effort to express the never changing word of God in ever-changing mode for relevance, Bruce Fleming opined that “since the Gospel message is inspired but the mode of its expression is not; then the modes of expression is not

only right but necessary (Bruce 62). Von. Allmen alluded that the word contextualization “is a new terminology expanded to express the fact that the situation of theology in a process of self – adaptation to a new or changing context is the same in Europe as in Asia or in Africa, therefore the problem of the birth of theology in a new context remains unchanged” (Allmen 325-348).

In defining contextualization, some scholars relate the word to hermeneutical questions. Osborne’s reflection is that “hermeneutics” and “contextualization” are synonymous. He argues that “biblical interpretation demands a ‘spiral’ from text to context, from its original meaning to its contextual or significance for the church today. Osborne positions exegesis and contextualization as part of a continuing process when he argued that: “If the proper task of translation and exegesis is to ask how the original author would say it (that is, the truth presented in the passage) if he were speaking to my audience, the task of contextualization is to determine ‘how what was asked of the original audience (What the author asked them to do) can be relieved by my audience” He proposed that if we are to take contextualization seriously, we must “add to our exegesis of the word, an exegesis of our world”, claiming that a good contextualization is as important as good exegesis in hermeneutics (Osborne 333- 432).

Hesselgrave and Rommen also gave alternative definition in relation to semiotic aspect of hermeneutics that: “acceptable contextualization is a direct result of ascertaining the meaning of the biblical text, consciously submitting to its authority, and applying or appropriating that meaning to a given situation.” (Hesselgrave and Rommen 202). Lesslie Newbigin writing with regards to contextualization suggests that “the value of the word is the placing of the gospel in the total context of a culture at a particular moment, a moment that is shaped by the past and looks to the future”. His understanding deals not only with the setting of culture but also concerned with time. (Newbigin 346).

Stephen Bevans, a contextual theologian believes that “Theology that is contextual realizes that culture, history, contemporary thought forms, and so forth are to be considered, along with scripture and tradition, as valid sources for theological expression”. (Bevans 4). The comprehension of the gospel message, the reposit to it and how a man reverence God, are all controlled by his or her history, social location and culture. Our cultural and historical contexts according to Bevans plays a part in the construction of the reality in which we live, so our context influences the understanding of God and the expression of our faith (Bevans 4).

Looking at the different definitions of contextualization from the various angles expressed above, one can infer that the central point they all emphasized is how to present the Gospel message, which is above all cultures, in a new cultural context. It is the process that makes the message meaningful to the recipients and related to the cultural, linguistic and religious background of the audience.

According to Teresa Chai, the concept of contextualization raises three concerns for Missions:

1. That missionary tends to introduce their cultural heritage as an integral part of the Gospel, thus the need for us to decontextualize the message of the gospel from their own cultural background.
2. The second anxiety is the necessity of putting the Gospel into the new context so that the Gospel and the resulting church will not seem foreign in its own setting.
3. And the third apprehension is that converts may include elements of their culture, which modify or reshape some aspects of the Gospel, upon which the integrity of the Gospel depends. (Chai 3-19).

Biblical Foundations for Contextualization

In order to establish the biblical basis for contextualization we shall explore some incarnation passages, the Gospels, the Acts of the Apostle and other passages in the ministry of Apostle Paul. One of the earlier biblical theme used by theologians to discuss contextualization was the incarnation of Jesus. Walls in differentiating Christian Faith from Jewish and Islamic faith argues that while other faiths speaks to humanity through the prophetic Word, “at the heart of Christian faith is the incarnate, Word – God became man” (Walls 47). Jesus as the Word of God fully assumed the form of man and became a man in order to speak to humanity. Jesus’ cultural incarnation then made up a paradigm of contextualization in which the God-revealed elements of a culture are used as “signs of the times” to discern where God is at work and join Him in the process. Shoki Coe expanded this paradigm as he struggled with the issue of how the gospel could be contextualized regionally and yet maintains its ‘catholicity’, according to him: “Catholicity is both a gift and a task. As a gift we must see how it was given, this was in a very concrete way, by the Word which became flesh and dwelt among us at a particular time and place. I believe, infact that the incarnation is the divine form of contextualization, and if this is so, the way we receive the gift is also through our following His way. That is what I mean by contextualization. As the catholicity of the gospel is given through the Word becoming flesh, so our task should be through our responsive contextualization, taking our own concrete, local contexts seriously” (Coe 242). For him, “taking our own concrete local contexts seriously” is following Jesus’ incarnational model through contextualization. How Jesus elevated the context into which he was incarnated, not on His bringing God’s message to the culture.

Emefie Ikenga – Metuh aligned with the incarnation model for contextualization because according to him “African culture is no more seen as a product of demonic forces or even of

neutral forces”. They are produced by human genius but under the guidance of God who “did not leave himself without witness” (Acts 14:17). God has always been incarnate in human cultures. For “at various times in the past, and in various different ways, God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets, but in our own time, the last days he has spoken to us through his son” (Hebrews 1:1-2). Divine revelation reached its climax in Christ. Thus, historically, Christ the Word of God incarnated in the Judeo – Hellenic culture, and he illuminated, judged and elevated it. Hence, African incarnation theology seeks to incarnate the Word of God into the African culture... incarnating Christianity in African World –views therefore, is based on a solid theology of continuity between the general revelation as it is grasped and expressed in African traditional religions and the special revelation made by God in the bible which reached its climax in Christ the visible image of the invisible God... in the process of incarnation, the Good News should take full possession of African World views even as the Word took human flesh” (Ikenga- Metuh 5, 12-13). It follows therefore from the arguments above that the Gospel should fully participate in the world-views of cultures today as Jesus fully participated in flesh by his incarnation.

Bruce Nicholls is of the position that: “The incarnation is the ultimate paradigm of the translation of the text into context. Jesus Christ the Word of God incarnate as a Jew identified with a particular culture at a limited moment in history through transcending it. In his life and teaching he is the supreme model of contextualization. His every command was de-facto a command to contextualize whether to love one’s neighbour or to disciple the nations (Nicholls101). Nicholls makes out the adoption of the contextualizing principle of Jesus’ incarnation in the apostolic witness and the life of the New Testament Church. This view of

Nicholls emphasized what Jesus brought to culture rather than what culture gave to Jesus. It was Jesus bringing God's message to human culture through the incarnation.

At this juncture, let me reason that it is uncertain whether any biblical author expressly juxtaposed Jesus' incarnation and the communication of the Gospel to other contexts in any significant way, Jesus statement in John 20:21 "As the Father has sent me, I also send you" only comes close but refers to the disciples commission and not incarnation. Hence, we need to further explore other biblical passages that we could use as foundations for contextual preaching.

The Gospel: Matthew, Mark, Luke and John.

A cursory look at the Gospels reveals the story of Jesus presented by different writers in four different ways. The story of Jesus was contextualized for different audiences by the writers. Flemming opined that "the very plurality of the Gospels has sometimes been an embarrassment to Christians, both ancient and modern" (Flemming 234). Flemming writes that if modern Gospel studies have taught us anything it is that the four Evangelists have narrated the story of Jesus according to their own theological and literary concerns and in the light of how they perceived the needs of their readers. The four Gospels are four "contextualization" of the one story; they are an important piece of the total picture of how the Christian message is re-expressed for new audience in the New Testament (Ibid 235). Theologians and scholars have discerned the importance of having four accounts of the Jesus' life from four different positions, speaking to different communities. Richard Burridge compares the four Gospels with classical biographies and offers an interpretation of each Gospel with ancient symbols such as the human face, Lion, Ox and Eagle, which according to him represent each book's unique picture of Jesus (Burridge 187). Desmond Alexander argues that each of the four Gospels present Jesus in a different way: for Matthew, the son of David who establishes the kingdom of heaven; for Mark,

the son of God who suffers to ransom others; for Luke, the saviour of the World who seeks the lost; and for John, the lamb of God who brings eternal life through a new exodus (Alexander 213). The four Gospels personify four authors writing in the context of four contrasting audiences. The Evangelists were interested not only in communicating the message of the Gospel of Jesus, but also the context and culture of the people addressed. Mark Driscoll suggests that “each Gospel is written both to contend for the truth of the person and work of Jesus, and to contextualize the truth to varying cultural groups so that the gospel is most easily understood by people in that culture” (Driscoll 144). According to Flemming, it has become almost axiomatic in Gospel studies to talk about “communities” of Christians that gave rise to each of the gospels and to which the writings were addressed. Interpreters thus speak of a “Matthean community” or a “Lukan community” by which is usually meant a specific church or group of churches (Flemming 235). But then, Richard A. Burridge suggested that, rather than seeing the gospel written for specific communities, we ought to think of the Gospels being written for something more like the modern notion of a “target audience” (Burridge 143). Matthew’s target audience might be the Jewish Christians with a high regard for the Mosaic Law, whereas Luke may aim the Gentiles.

Flemming in his book examined each of the four gospel particularly and expressed the following inference: The Gospel of Mark has an intercultural character, having its roots thoroughly Jewish, with familiarity with Jewish customs and religious sects and traditional Jewish title for Jesus, like Messiah, son of Man; but at the same time there are indications that Mark was writing primarily to Gentiles of the Greco-Roman world. The striking emphasis on suffering, persecution and the cost of discipleship etc implies that Mark was writing to people who are facing times of testing for their allegiance to Christ and their mission to proclaim the

good news. Matthew on the other hand is a Jew who contextualizes his story about Jesus primarily for fellow Jews. The Gospel of Matthew actually presented Jesus as the Messiah for the Jews. Unlike Matthew – a Jew writing to Jews, Luke was likely a Gentile who targeted his Gospel to a predominantly Gentile-Christian audience. The Gospel of Luke reflects a Gentile orientation; it was directed to a socially diverse audience and good news to the marginalized. According to Flemming, ‘John sings the gospel story in a new key.’ The fourth gospel inhabits a quite different symbolic world from that of the synoptic. John’s basic concern is to re-preach the gospel events and message for the church of his time. Hence he uses images and categories that are anchored in Judaism but that also speak to an audience with a broader cultural and religious background (Flemming 240-264).

A reflection on Flemming’s analysis shows that the four Gospels are contextual documents that relates the Jesus story for distinct “target audiences” within their times, drawing from the literary and rhetorical conventions of that world in a bid to present the Goodnews of Jesus and make impact on their audiences. The church today has much to learn from the Gospel writers’ audience-sensitive way of doing theology (Ibid 265).

The Acts of the Apostles:

The book of Acts is a documentation of how the gospel of Jesus Christ moved from Jerusalem to the ends of the Earth, a trend that is still pursued till today. Flemming says: “Contextualizing the gospel is inherent to the mission of the church and that the book of Acts tells the story of a church whose very identity involved expressing the goodnews about Jesus in multiple settings and among new groups of people” (Ibid 25). Hence, drawing an inference from the experience of the early church, as recorded in the Acts of the Apostles may serve as a model for the process of contextualization (Dumais 103-24). The examples of contextual preaching

given in the book of Acts established the foundations for contextualization in the scriptures. On the day of Pentecost, the Holy Spirit's dedication to linguistic contextualization as He fills the believers, and they all began "to speak with other tongues" Acts 2:4 (Stackhouse 67). The outcome is that among the multi-cultured Jews who were in Jerusalem, each heard them "speak in his own language" (2:6). The Writer of the book of Acts seems to take cognizance of the different nationalities that heard their own language. The coming of the Holy Spirit which symbolized the beginning of the church was a multi-cultured, linguistically contextualized experience.

The book of Acts recorded different instances and events that points to contextualization in the early church for this study, let us examine the fifteenth chapter of Acts, where an excellent example of how the church in Jerusalem came to the decision to contextualize the gospel spreads beyond the Jewish culture. It is noteworthy that as the gospel moved to the ends of the earth it encountered cultures that were different and alien to the Jewish culture. In Antioch for example, many non-Jews became Christians and a multi-ethnic church was established among the Greeks by the Hellenist Jews (Acts 11:19-26). This multi-cultured church experienced a crisis that led to the council at Jerusalem church discussed in Acts 15. The decision of the council of Jerusalem, freeing the non-Jews from the regulation of Mosaic laws and circumcision can be taken to be instructive contextualization of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Flemming says the decision of the council "described a decisive moment in the encounter between faith in Christ and culture within the life of the early church, which helps to give the task of incarnating the gospel a historical and theological basis" (Flemming 43). There would have been a big and continuous problem in the early church as the gospel crossed cultural and national boundaries, if not for the decision of the

council in Jerusalem. J. Scott stated that “A framework was needed to permit Jewish Christians to accept and associate with Gentile believers, while at the same time maintaining the regulations which would make possible their continued participation in at least part of Jewish culture and their association with non-Christians, practicing Jews” (Scott 47). Many sermons in Acts were contextual sermons preached in different cultural settings; Stephen’s sermon in Acts 7 is a good example of contextual preaching. The account of Phillip’s encounter with the Ethiopian eunuch (Acts 8:26-29) also shows how the gospel can bridge boundaries. The conversion of Cornelius in Acts 10, and the preaching of Peter all points to contextualization. The book of Acts according to Flemming presents the church in the early days of Christianity as a significant resource for the task of contextualization and contextual preaching. The book depicts a bridging of cultural boundaries by the Gospel message. The writer engaged his world and beckons his readers to be transformed by the story of Gods activity in the life of the church. The early church allows diversity in theological understanding and mission praxis yet is united in its enriched understanding of the gospel of Christ and in its commitment to a boundary-free mission (Flemming 53).

Since this study is mainly concerned about contextual preaching, it is of special interest for our study to examine the way in which Paul contextualized his presentation of the Gospel to his hearers. Paul’s dedication to contextualization can be seen in I Corinthians 9:19-23:

“For though I am free with respect to all, I have made myself a slave to all, so that I might win more of them. To the Jews I became as a Jew, in order to win Jews. To those under the law I became as one under the law (though I myself am not under the law) so that I might win those under the law. To those outside the law I became as one outside the law (though I am not free from God’ law but am under Christ’s law) so that I

might win those outside the law. To the weak I became weak, so that I might win the weak. I have become all things to all people that I might by all means save some. I do it all for the sake of the gospel, that I may share in its blessings” (I Cor. 9:10-23, NRSV).

Paul in these verses opined clearly that the most unique concern for him is the gospel of Christ. Under any circumstance, Paul was willing to contextualize the gospel to achieve the purpose of soul winning. For the sake of the gospel and its mission he becomes all things to all people. All the preaching of Paul is a model of contextual preaching: sermon for the synagogue (Acts 13:13-52) Preaching to pagans at Lystra (Acts 14:8-20). The message in Athens (Acts 17:16-34).

In the analysis of the three sermons of Apostle Paul by Flemming, he affirmed that the preaching of Paul reveals the extent to which the proclamation of the gospel is tailored to each audience and context. Paul communicates the gospel across cultural and religious barriers (Ibid 84). The co-workers of Paul and all those he related with in his missionary enterprise clearly show his model of contextualizing the gospel. On the whole, the church in contemporary world has much to learn from the biblical models of contextualization and contextual preaching. The Bible records stories of contextualizing the gospel in different settings, hence all these points to biblical foundations for contextualization.

Theological Foundations

Contextual Preaching:

Contextual preaching happens when a preacher takes into consideration the text and the context of the same, and interprets it in the light of the people and their context, so that the message of the particular text becomes meaningful and relevant in the contemporary situation (Hesselgrave and Rommen 28). According to Justin Ukpong, “given the diversity in the African

Cultural, religious, political, social and economic terrain, and the strategy of linking the biblical text to the Africa context, the contribution of modern Africa to biblical interpretation (preaching) promises to be significant.” (Ukpong 25). The importance of the ordinary readers of the Bible as well as church audience will gradually come to the fore, because academic reading and preaching of the Bible can no longer afford to ignore the concerns and perspectives of the listeners. The questions from the contexts of the hearers are now being put to the Bible and African resources are being used in answering them. No longer then shall we have from the Bible answers to questions not asked by Africans. (Tutu 336). Albert Pero, Jr. discussing contextualization for Ministry and the Lutheran Heritage claimed that “there is no universality apart from the particularity of the gospel. The proclamation is always directed not toward humankind in general but toward humankind wrapped in all of its cultural diversity”. (Pero 382). The law must be related to the context of the people so that the gospel can free them to live God’s life in that context. Douglas John Hall clearly explains the issue of contextual preaching saying:

“What has achieved the reputation of Theology in the church and society is not only non-contextual, it is anti-contextual. Most Christians do not regard Christian theology as a mode of engaging this historical, cultural, socio-economic milieu. On the contrary, where they consider the subject at all, lay persons tend to think of theology as a more or less fixed set of beliefs, contained in embryo in the Bible; codified in various historical creeds, confessions and faith statements, refined in forbidding volumes of doctrine, and relayed to congregations in simplified form through sermon, catechetical instruction, and (for a few) college classes in religious knowledge” (Hall 69).

Therefore, for the Christian, true contextual preaching means initiating and nurturing dialogue with one's culture, a partnership in discovery and investigation of the truths of the gospel. But quite unfortunately, when preaching is not contextualized or poorly done, then the audiences are culturally offended, turned off and suspicious of the preacher as a misfit and alien. The garments of the Gospel of Christ gets stamped with the label "Made in strange land" and our message is easily dismissed as a "foreign religion" that is irrelevant to their culture.

Grant LeMargquand opined in this regard that 'It would seem to be true that the Old Testament is used in African preaching more frequently than it is used in the pulpits of North Atlantic Countries.' (LeMargquand 72). It is also true that many Old Testament ideas which seem quite foreign to Western minds appear to be readily comprehensible in African contexts. It is easier to understand the meaning of the concepts of "Covenant for example, if one's people practices covenant rituals (Arulefela 18). Sacrificial rituals found in Old Testament narratives and legal texts seem to be more easily appreciated by African people who have seen sacrifices performed. (Ukpong 21). Some Old Testament wisdom literature may be more easily grasped by African people who have rich proverbial traditions (Golka 50). The Old Testament Levirate marriage traditions are certainly understandable amongst a people (like the Luo of Kenya and Tanzania) who have similar traditions. (Kir 52).

However, this not to say that the New Testament is less important, on the contrary many of the ideas mentioned above are also important in the New Testament. To say that the world of Africa has many similarities to the world of the Old Testament is therefore to acknowledge that the African and New Testament worlds contain much continuity. Many African people notes the fact that there is in the New Testament something which is radically new, distinct from the Hebrew Bible, from African tradition and from the Western World, but this discontinuity, this

new thing is not a culture or tradition incomprehensible to Africa, but the person of Jesus Christ who seems at once at home in and alien to every culture (Le Marquand 73). The New Testament is new in many of its assertions; it demands new morality and new doctrinal teachings (Kinoti and Waliggo 121). But then many New Testament texts are highly valued by African preachers and congregations (Tummen 121).

According to Chris Ukachukwu Manus, a Roman Catholic New Testament scholar from Nigeria, "Luke's text has... a special appeal for the young churches of Africa. It presents us with a model worthy of emulation for mission in Africa where the inhabitants are still as much religious as the Athenians of antiquity." (Manus 212). This approach says Manus, is in contrast to the approach of early missionaries, who unlike Paul, did not see our forebears as deeply religious... rather they insisted on a total break from our past. The rupture from our past urged by Christian missionaries has not been successful; rather it tends to produce hostility... due partly to the disdain for our traditional belief system by early evangelists. (Ibid 214). Manus further enjoins the preacher to seek to forge links between the gospel message and African culture, which he says (using a phrase from the great African theologian element of Alexandria), is a 'preparation of the gospel'.

For contextual preaching to be relevant in the African context, preachers are confronted by the problems of African suffering, whenever they open the text; hence constantly challenged to demonstrate the relevance of the exegetical task. A case was displayed in 1993, when the country Kenya lived through a period of ethnic clashes, and Bishop David Gitari of the Anglican Church of Kenya preached a sermon on the Gospel of John chapter 10, reminding his people that Jesus was the Good Shepherd, and reminding the politicians that there are shepherd who are thieves and robbers. (Le Marquand 91)

On the whole, with the increasing emphasis on contextualization and contextual preaching an attempt to produce biblical hermeneutics for Africa or elsewhere must take into cognizance cultural and traditional issues. This is very cogent because most of the imagery of the Christian religion are foreign to and have little or no bearing on the traditional, cultural imagery and symbols of the recipients of the gospel message. Contextual preaching advocates context and calls on all theological and preachers to be committed to the context of their hearers. This fulcrum, Per Frostin identifies as “a necessary condition for theological reflection.” (Frostin 6). The study of scripture can never be complete until one has moved from text to context, the changeless nature of the original meaning of a text dare never be an end in itself but must at all times have as its goal the dynamic application of the text to one’s current needs and the sharing of the same with others through expository teaching and preaching (Osborne 318). This dynamic aspect of the Word of God is the business of contextualization and Homilectical analysis. It is impossible to separate exegesis from application, meaning from significance. The task of the preacher is to guarantee that the message of the Bible speaks as plainly today as it did in ancient times. Osborne noted that at the heart of contextual preaching it entails cross cultural communication and that the process characterizes not only Christianity but that ever religion that has appeared on earth as each relates its theories to the market place. (Ibid 318) Contextual preaching is conscious of the transformational nature of the present day context; while the context of the Bible is unchanging, hence the manner of preaching is ever changing. Are we really at liberty to interpret a biblical concept into its corresponding idiom in the recipient’s culture? Perhaps the best approach is to examine how the biblical writers contextualize their message to fit into the context of the time.

The Need for Contextual Preaching:

Bolaji Idowu defines culture “as a people’s or a nation’s total way of life which shows itself by various means in actions and expressions.” He continues to expand the definition by observing that culture is metaphysical or spiritual because it is closely inherent with being-corporate being or personality of the people, thus making for a bonafide distinctiveness and peculiarity (Idowu 75). The definitions confirms that culture covers areas like religion, art, agriculture, marriage, philosophy etc, which are sometimes displayed in Worship, music, stories, proverbs, myths and legends. It is also a fact that the richness of African culture, tradition, wisdom and various expressions lie in the language because if a man’s language is taken away, his cultural being is rendered ineffective (Oguntoyee 181). Religion and culture are common to every group of people and there is no religion that is not dressed in the culture of the people. Hence, preaching and teaching the Bible to the context of the Diocese of Ijebu South West which is predominantly Yoruba, must be based on an explicit appeal to indigenous categories of the religious life and language.

C.U. Manus proposed an “Inculturation hermeneutics” which reveals the action of Jesus as far as mission is concerned (Manus 252). For him, Jesus has set the standard for Christian action because Jesus presented himself as Lord of the African people and to cooperate with their leaders to centralized the social, political and economic doldrums into which most, if not all African nations have fallen; God in Jesus must be got out of the box the church had for long put him (Ibid 253). Flemming conjectured that “the incarnation of Jesus make contextualization not just a possibility but an obligation, that is, it is not possible to preach effectively without appropriate contextualization” (Flemming 21). The true goal of hermeneutics is not the commentary but the sermon, because the commentary brings out the original intended meanings

of the biblical passage, but contextualization is necessary for interpretation. Osborne is of the opinion that the sermon is the bridge-building mechanism that unites the ancient world of the biblical text with the modern world of the church congregation (Osborne 318).

Contextualization is the mortar that binds these two worlds together; as the preacher tries to bring the relevance of the text to the contemporary context. This process of preaching according to Rommen is a continual bridging scheme by which the preacher relieves the story and power of the text for the original hearers and understands the meaning and significance of the message to similar situations in the new context, and to is required at every stages of the sermon (Hesselgrave and Rommen 206). He describes three stages of the process as:

- a. Communicators first seek to understand the text (meaning-intended).
- b. “De Contextualize” or divest themselves of culturally conditioned understanding of the text (meaning perceived) and
- c. to contextualize the passage for the listeners context (meaning applied)

Contextual preaching involves an attempt to present the Gospel in a culturally relevant way; hence discussions about contextualization are connected to human nature and culture. It is presenting the unchanging truths of the gospel within the unique and changing contexts of culture and world views. The desire for contextual preaching is many of the times driven by the hope for a clear gospel communication to the people. And as such, we tussle with Christianity in different culture, Walls, explain:

“No one ever meets universal Christianity in itself, we can only ever meet Christianity in a local form and that means a historically, culturally conditioned form. We need not fear this; when God became man, he became historically, culturally conditioned man, in a particular place and time. What he became, we need not fear to be. There is nothing wrong in having local forms of

Christianity... provided that we remember that they are local.” (Walls 235). In agreement with his position Ed Stetzer suggested that preachers should return to first century thinking that to be biblical requires contextualization.(Stetzer24). Dean Fleming posits that “Scripture itself can offer us a more adequate approach to the challenge of re-appropriating the gospel, because each book of the New Testament represents an attempt by the author to present the Christian message in a way that is targeted for a particular audience within a socio cultural environment” (Flemming 31). He opined that we cannot know the gospel apart from culture, either in scripture or in our present world. Fleming concluded by saying that the Bible is “too pregnant with meaning to be confined to a single set of terms or linages or to one way of telling the story” (Ibid 32). For sermons to be relevant in their contexts, biblical texts were to be brought to bear on audiences in culturally specific ways.

In all, according to Paul Hiebert, there are different approaches to contextual preaching:

1. No Contextualization: “...we see the Gospel as acultural and ahistorical. It is unchanging and universal, can be codified in abstract, rational terms and communicated in all languages without loss of meaning. Neither the socio cultural contexts of the listeners nor the messenger need be taken into account”.
2. Minimal contextualization: “The more we live with and study the people we serve, the more we become aware of the depth and power of the peoples’ culture, and the need to contextualize both the messenger and the message for them to understand and live the gospel; but we are afraid that this can distort the gospel, so it must be done minimally. We realize that we must speak and translate the Bible into their language and that we must organize their services and churches in ways the people understand, but we equate Christianity with our beliefs and practices”.

3. Hiebert also spoke about “Uncritical Contextualization” but as an alternative points attention toward “Critical contextualization”, where? “The Bible is seen as a divine revelation, not simply as humanly constructed beliefs. In contextualization, the heart of the gospel must be kept as it is encoded in forms that are understood by the people, without making the gospel captive to the contexts. This is an ongoing process of embodying the gospel in an every-changing world. Here cultures are seen as both good and evil, not simply as neutral vehicles for understanding the world. No culture is absolute or privilege, we are all relativized by the Gospel” (Paul Hiebert 31). And without contextual considerations, we do not transmit the gospel but we transmit more of our cultural adaptation of that gospel. (Stetzer 97).

Leonora Tubbs Tisdale states some benefits of contextual preaching: (1) it helps preachers to remove “false stumbling blocks” (*The Word was based on Paul Tillich's work in Theology and Culture in Kimball*) as they proclaim the gospel. That is things that are occasioned by the humanness of the preaching event and inadequacies of communication on the part of the preachers. Examples of such according to her include, theological Jargons with empty meanings, complicated sermon structure, images or illustrations that draw impractical meanings from the Word of God. Secondly, contextual preaching reflects the ‘accommodating’ way in which God has dealt with humanity in Revelation. Tisdale from her reflection on John Calvin’s insights opined that the accommodation of God to humans should not be viewed with negative connotations, as it is not selling out to culture or false syncretism of the gospel; but it is all about being a part of God’s divine action that bridges the deep space between sinful human beings and the holy God (Tisdale 1-38). And thirdly, contextual preaching has the ability and potential to give a new meaning to gospel proclamation and a fresh hearing of it. “Contextual preaching

gives an opportunity for the biblical text and contemporary experience to be wedded in such a way that a new and fresh hearing of the gospel message is occasioned and new meaning is given birth” (Ibid 37), when an unchanging word of scripture encounters the changing context of a particular people (like the people of the Diocese of Ijebu South West, Nigeria, my context), a fresh and new meaning of scripture will spring forth. Listeners to the preaching event, expect the preacher to make clear how the Bible relates to life (Alice and Allen 35). Building this bridge leads preachers to engage modern day ideologies and experiences and even insert the audience into the biblical story, for them to understand the message. Preachers explain the Bible in the light of contemporary analogies, imagery and language; drawing from the culture of the people in order to establish the bridge for their audience in their context to resonate the text of scriptures. Del Tarr said “Culture should not dictate the full interpretation of scripture, but one’s cultural situation, at times, influences the ways in which scripture is discussed” (Tarr 2). Hiebert in buttressing this assertion contends that in contextualization the local congregation has a vital role to play in the establishment of local theology and the global Christian community should provide the hermeneutical integrity to the church because hearing scripture through the voices of people from all cultures is a means for accountability and deeper understanding of the Word (Hiebert 104-12).

On the whole, contextualization in supporting the preaching process corroborates the biblical message and collaborates with scripture in critiquing fallen aspects of cultures (Priest 291-315). John Stott surmised that “biblical and theological studies are indispensable but in themselves they do not “make for good preaching” unless they are coupled with ‘contemporary studies” (John Stott 190), preachers are to understand the culture in order to uncover how the sermon topic shows up and is addressed discursively in everyday settings, media, novels, real-

life experiences and the community, in fact, a proper use of cultural sources close to the listeners exhibits that the preacher comprehend the cultural discourses, voices and everyday experiences of the context.

John Steinbeck once speculated that “If the story is not about the hearer (context), he will not listen and here I make a rule – a great and interesting story is about everyone, or it will not last” (Steinbeck 268). The Christian story is intended to be about everyone, but it is possible to preach it in such a way that people do not recognize that it is about them. Contextual preaching allows the preacher to present the gospel message in a way that it is not only a great and interesting story, but n that audience come to recognize is a great story and interesting story about them (Cathcart 222). Contextual preaching is a necessity if preachers are to become the bridge-builders who bring the incarnated Word into connection with contemporary cultures and human realities. There is the need to diligently engage and interact with the cultural context in the preaching process.

Models for Contextualization of Preaching:

Various missionaries and preachers have adopted different approaches towards the non-Christian societies in which they have preached. Also because contextual theology is not required to be theoretical, but a product of practical situations, models for doing contextual preaching may differ from culture to culture and from religion to religion. According to Avery Dulles, Model is a “relatively simple, artificial constructed case which is found to be useful and illuminating, for dealing with realities that are more complex and differentiated (Dulles 30). It follows therefore from this definition that models may not be adequate to give a complete picture of a ‘complex and differentiated’ realities. The realities in this context are biblical revelation, the bible texts & Context. However, models are instrumental for the understanding of such complex

realities. Since its of great importance to this thesis, the understanding of contextualization within the factors of biblical revelation and interpretation, cultural context of both the bible, the preacher and the recipient; and also the fact that it emphasizes cross-cultural preaching; it may be difficult for one model of contextualization to apprehend adequately the process of contextual preaching, thus the complementary nature of all the models are recognized. Scholars and missiologists have proposed a variety of models for contextualization (Moreall 22). Paul Hiebert utilizes in his writings a schema that simply described three primary approaches to contextualization (Hiebert 104-12), (a) Non-Contextualization, (b) Uncritical Contextualization (c) Critical Contextualization. Stephen Bevans presents six models for contextual theology namely, anthropological, translation, praxis, synthetic, transcendental models and countercultural model (Bevans 187). This study shall considered the models generally and then relative the models to Christian preaching in the contemporary church.

The Translation Model:

This is the most common and oldest model of all. The necessity of translating the message of the Gospel culminates from the commission of Christ for the church to evangelize the whole world. The model emphasized the need to transmit the core message of the gospel to other context, keeping the core message intact while the appearance may change: it is about the presentation of the Christian identity. There are two fundamental technique of this model: the rendering of the gospel message without the original cultural accretions and then translate it into other cultural context Charles Kraft opined that “a theological truth (that) must be re-created like a dynamic –equivalence translation or transculturation within the language and accompanying conceptual framework of the hearer if its true relevance is to be properly perceived by them” (Kraft 297). The core argument of dynamic equivalence is that biblical imagery needs to be

translated into local culture by looking for local equivalent concepts. The source of the gospel message remains absolute, while the receptor's culture is relative and changing. James O. Buswell sees the translation model as "Inculturation", the process that involves the ability of the preacher to disengage or extract the gospel message from one culture to another. He contextualizes the same gospel into socio-cultural forms of another people. The content continues to remain constant while the form and the expression of the gospel in different cultures continue to change and thus is relative (Buswell 90).

However, there are some weak points in this model, critique point out the culture may differ and there are no parallels available for the translation process. The model fails to consider the role of culture and so assumes that patterns in a culture are quickly decoded and understood by foreigners. For example a proper analysis of the Yoruba Bible shows that many ambiguities were removed as it relates to the Yoruba socio-cultural Milieu. Another weakness of the translation model is the danger of excessive concern for the original message of the gospel at the expense of cultural sensitivity. This has been the case with the Yoruba cultural values which is the reason for current outburst about contextualizing the gospel and the concern of this study. On the whole, the weakness of this model notwithstanding the translation mode takes the biblical text more seriously as the basis for contextual preaching.

The Anthropological Model:

The major concern of this model is the preservation of the cultural identity of the audience by the message of the gospel. The model revolves round the human personality and experiences, drawing from the insight of social anthropology. The weakness of this model is that it can easily fall prey to culture and loose the core message of the gospel.

The Praxis Model:

The term 'praxis' has to do with practice as distinguished from theory. The model focuses on the identity of Christians within a culture as that culture is understood in terms of social change. The model is to use the biblical teachings as a means to liberate people within a particular socio-political context. Hence it is otherwise called the liberation model. One of its major strength is the commitment to the analysis of the socio-political contexts, which is then used as a basis for theological reflection or contextualization. The model is out to make theological reflections relevant in practical terms. The models' weakness is majorly the fact that it places the realities of context above the biblical text. The message of salvation is relegated at the expense of liberation and freedom. The use of social theories rather than the biblical texts jeopardized the Christian message and tenets.

The Synthetic Model:

The synthetic approach to contextualization attempts to keep the core message of the gospel while acknowledging the importance of taking culture and social change seriously. Harrie Conn proposed an approach that takes both the scripture and the context seriously when he opined that "without either acculturating the bible through allegorizing it into models or biblicizing our culture through accommodation. It is not context with transforming political, economic, social and cultural spheres of life until those spheres and their presuppositional framework have been subjected to the judgment of the Word of God... it calls all Christians to the task of theology, of being involved in the ongoing 'dialect' between the answer of scripture and the questions implicit in one's situation' (Conn 104-5).

The model is synthetic as it simultaneously safeguard the gospel message, affirm the role of culture and gives sufficient space for the reflective and intelligent action. It allows for a

conversation between faith and culture. The model however may be too liberal and uncritical of anything as it puts on the garment of being all things for all men.

The Transcendental Model:

Drawing inference from the parable of Jesus in Mark 2:21ff about the old garment and the new wine in the old wine skins, the model focuses on a complete change to be able to do contextual preaching. The model is basically about personal religious experience determined by ones' context, culture and so on. The universality of the model was questioned as unworkable in practice. It is model that it is too abstract and individualistic, and it seems to fit more in the Western culture than in the Yoruba cultural context.

The Countercultural Model:

In the second edition of his book, Bevans added the countercultural model as a result of his reading the "Gospel and Our Culture" series, which gave him an understanding of the church as an alternative community within the World (Gelder and Zscheile 60) Quoting Leslie Newbigin, Bevan says, in order for the gospel to be adequately communicated, it has to be done "in the language of those to whom it is addressed and has to be clothed in symbols which are meaningful to them" (Newbigin 141). This model permits the gospel to take the lead in the process of contextualization so that the context is made by the reality of the gospel and not the other way round. And in the words of Lamin Sanneh quoted by Bevans "Context is to be given penultimate status, since it is both a natural ally as well as a natural foe to the gospel (Sanneh 4-5). The understanding of the model is that the gospel message is primary while the human cultures are vague and insufficient for theologizing. Quoting Newbigin, Bevans says "true contextualization accords the gospel its primacy, its power to penetrate every culture and to speak within each culture, in its own speech and symbol, the Word which is both No and Yes,

both judgment and grace” (Bevan 152). The model is implemented in two ways: on one hand, the church community sees itself as a “contrast community” where the gospel is lived out fully over and against the surrounding context. Living here includes reading the Bible, hospitality, communal prayer, baptism, Eucharist, Sabbath observance, as ways to provide meaning, orientation and purpose, within the community and the surrounding world. (Bevan 121). And on the other hand, the model formed and transformed Christians live and work in the world, testifying by their life style and choices that their life is lived according to the gospel and not according to the surrounding cultural atmosphere (Ibid 123). The critic of the model claims that it seems to demonize western culture, not minding that no culture is entirely corrupt or evil and also the danger of sectarianism is shown which may lead to monocultural setting.

The question – which model is the best? Naturally comes to mind. But then, each model has its own advantages and disadvantages and may be suited in different contexts. According to Bevans in his conclusion, “the question of the best model of contextual theology is an appropriate one, but within today’s world of radical plurality and ambiguity, the best answer to the question can only be: it depends on the context” (Bevan 112).

On the whole, in discussion the models for contextual preaching which is the main focus for this study, I like to adopt the five models proposed by Teresa Chai in an article in Year 2015 (Chai 3-19).

Model 1 – Authentic/Relevant Contextualization by David Hesselgrave and Edward Rommen :

Hesselgrave and Rommen defined Christian contextualization as the attempt to communicate the message of the person, works, Word and will of God in a way that is faithful to God’s revelation... and that is meaningful to respondents in their respective cultural and existential contexts. It is both verbal and nonverbal and has to do with theologizing. Bible

translation, interpretation and application, incarnational lifestyle, evangelism, Christian instruction, church planting and growth, church organization, worship style etc. The notion of authenticity deals with God's revelation. It means to be faithful to the authority and context of the will of God as revealed in creation, conscience and Scripture; authenticity itself does not assure us that the message will be meaningful and persuasive to our respondent. This refers to authenticity. Relevance also speaks of effectiveness. It is communication that grows out of understanding the respondents in their particular context and the work of the Holy Spirit in both messenger and recipients (Hesselgrave and Rommen 28-42).

The Hesselgrave-Rommen model of contextualization involves two major tasks:

Task 1: Interpretation and Decontextualization (Revelation, Interpretation, Application)

1. The first element is the process of interpretation and decontextualization which begins with God's revelation of His truth in language. The Spirit has used human authors who in turn have to use linguistic symbols to convey the meaning of that revelation and produce a text. From the interpreter's vantage point, it must be recognized that the range of possible interpretations, which legitimately can be ascribed to the text, is limited. Clues to that range of meaning are provided by the generally accepted use of the linguistic symbols at that time (latitude of correctness), by the author's particular use of linguistic conventions, and by the original audience's response, that is the publicly observable aspect of language of which the author was certainly aware. These factors do not themselves generate meaning. However, they do indicate and limit the specific meaning assigned to the text by the author.

2. The second element is the recipient's interpretation of the intended meaning. The perceived meaning is affected by the recipient's own culture and the culture of biblical times.
3. The third element involves two possible options. In the first choice, the recipient forms the possible implications of his or her understanding of the biblical text for the culture in which it is to be lived out. In the second choice, the recipient may decide whether or not to accept the validity of the text's implication, or to superimpose another meaning. "if he rejects the claims of the text, the continuity of meaning is broken, and he loses touch with the truth embodied in the text. An acceptable contextualization is rendered impossible. If the recipient accepts the claims of the text, he or she will apply its meaning or his or her own sociocultural environment. This does not mean the biblical content becomes true, but rather because it is true and, if properly understood, it can be applied to specific contexts in an ever changing, multicultural world. The recipient may now distinguish between culture-bound aspects of the Christian message that are open to modification from revelatory content that has non-negotiable Supracultural validity.

Task 2: Contextualize Message to Communicate Effectively to the Target Audience.

The Hesselgrave-Rommen model of contextualization shows seven dimensions used to effectively communicate with the target audience. This model involves taking the result of Task one, which are the Supracultural element of the message, and applying them to:

1. Worldviews-ways of viewing the world
2. Cognitive processes-ways of thinking
3. Linguistic forms-way of expressing ideas
4. Behavioral patterns-way of acting

5. Communication media-ways of channeling the message
6. Social structures-ways of interacting
7. Motivational sources-ways of deciding.

Model #2 Critical Contextualization by Paul Hiebert:

This model proposed by the late Paul Hiebert, professor at Fuller Seminary and Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, strikes a balance between a view of culture that is either too ethnocentric and one that is overtly pluralistic leading to a cultural relativity with no absolute truth. Hiebert recommends that people in one culture should seek to understand messages and ritual practices from another culture with little distortion (Hiebert 142-148).

Hiebert presents contextualization as an ongoing process that engages local Christians in these five steps:

1. Exegete the culture – uncritically gather information.
2. Exegete Scripture and build the hermeneutical bridge – this means to first find out what the biblical text meant to its original author and audience, then to translate the Biblical message into the cognitive, affective, and evaluate dimensions of another culture.

Without the bridge, people one culture can have a distorted view of the gospel because they are seeing it through local categories rather than grasping the message as originally intended.

3. Critical Response – evaluate local customs in light of the new biblical understanding and make a decision.
4. Develop new contextualized practices.

5. Guard against syncretism – the means that the church acts together, as a hermeneutical community, in order to come to understanding of what is faith to the gospel.

Model #3 Synthesis of Pluralism-Biblical Contradiction-Transformation by Sherwood

Lingenfelter.

Sherwood Longenfelder's book *Transforming Culture* written in 1992, is not offering a formal model of contextualization, but it acknowledges the value of contextualized indigenous churches, and defines contextualization as the framing of "the gospel message in language and communication forms appropriate and meaningful to the local culture, and to focus the message upon crucial issues in the lives of the people. He also gives warnings about some of the dangers and weaknesses of contextualized indigenous churches if they are so bound to their own culture and values, that they lose their spiritual vitality as a Christian witness. Lingenfelter says that there are forces that pressure the church to compromise which are rooted in cultural systems that contaminate. The Gospel liberates people from these cultural systems and transforms communities so people can live their lives a God's people within their social system. The Gospel plays a contradictory role, challenging the values, and power structures of the social system, and thus, can "become a significant powerful force in the continuous restructuring of any social environment and worldview (Lingenfelter 201-250).

Although not a formal system of contextualization, the synthesis that Lingenfelter offers contains values and practices that follow a logical progression that can help national Christian make the Gospel meaningful in their own setting. A summary of Lingenfelter's main ideas can be categorized as value and actual practices that stem from value commitments:

1. In value - a person with a pluralist perspective on the world with its distinctive social environments and worldviews should maintain a respectful stance, seeking to understand how others see and interpret their world. However, this person should also acknowledge that all sociocultural systems are tainted by sin. In practice – this person should seek to understand the local worldview as it relates to the social environment as well as how issues of economy and society create these faith communities.
2. In value – Biblical absolutism is a total commitment to the truth and authority of Scripture. In practice – it is discerning what the Scripture says about issues in the local culture.
3. In value – it deals with Biblical contradiction by asking the question: “How does the Gospel contradict what I think, what I believe and how I live?” it entails thinking theologically about the local worldview. In practice – it is bringing local issues to the light of Scripture to see how the Gospel challenges them.
4. In value – it is seeking transformation within cultural environments. In practice – it is finding ways the bible speaks into the local context building new lifestyle pattern that are informed by a biblical worldview.

Model 4: Transculturation by Charles Kraft:

Charles Kraft, a retired professor from Fuller Theological seminary, is one of leading thinkers and innovators in the area of contextualization. His books *Christianity in Culture and Appropriate Christianity* were groundbreaking in the field of missionary anthropology and stimulated controversy among Evangelicals who tried to work through the implications of his assumptions. Kraft’s work is a transculturation model that aims to communicate God’s word into

receptor cultures. Eugene Nida, the bible translator consultant who came up with the concept of dynamic equivalence, was one of his mentors. For Kraft, transculturation is similar to Bible translation but in the context of culture. The goal of transculturation is the same as Bible translation, that is, to find the dynamic equivalence.

Hesselgrave and Rommen show that Kraft's work flows from his assumptions that are quite complex. Kraft's key assumptions are:

1. Culture is neutral, a tool through which all reality is filtered. He believes that God made culture as a starting point for people.
2. Meaning is constructed in the minds of the receptors. It is dependent on the extent of shared symbols between sender and receiver.
3. Revelation is where divine truth is understood by general or specific revelation. When God is revealed, people respond.
4. Kraft does believe that the Bible is the inspired Word of God, but inspiration is attached to meanings and not words. The Bible contains a Supracultural messages.

Hesselgrave and Rommen as well as other Evangelicals find Kraft's core idea problematic because he does not seem to hold to an errorless Scripture. They think he is saying that words have no meanings outside of what the receptors give those words. However, his work is innovative and thought provoking, raising many issues of importance. Kraft's model should result in dynamic equivalence in areas such as "translations, transculturation, ethno-theologies, conversions, churches and the transformation of culture. (Kraft Chapter 4).

1. The forms of a culture are the observable parts of which it is made up. These are the customs, arranged in patterns, or the products of those customs. Many cultural forms are conceptualizations of material items; most are conceptualization of non-material items.

2. Each of the forms of culture is used by the people of that culture to serve particular functions. Certain of these functions are general universal functions, relating to basic human needs that every culture must meet. Others are more specifically related to non-universal, individual, and group concerns.
3. One of the most important functions served by every cultural form is to convey meaning to the participants of a culture. Not everyone understands the meaning of a cultural form in the same way. So its meaning within the social setting is the sum of all the subjective associations people make about it. One of Kraft's foundational assumptions is that forms are basically neutral in the sense that the forms and functions of culture act "as a kind of road may made up of various forms designed to get people where they need to go/ thus they are not inherently good or evil in themselves. Where sin comes in with Kraft's model is at the level of meaning; where meanings intended and received are always tainted by sin. Thus no aspect of human culture can be used with completely pure intent.
4. Closely interrelated to function and meaning is the matter of how a cultural from is use. This consideration, more than others, makes explicit the active part human beings take in the operation of culture. The forms of culture are relatively passive in and of themselves.

In terms of Kraft's point regarding dynamic equivalence transculturation, the goal is to find forms and functions that can express the same meanings and usages as in Scripture and the first-century church. Kraft has been misunderstood by Evangelicals who find him liberal in his stance about the Bible. His model of contextualization has validity in Christian mission application.

Model #5 Context-Indigenization by Bushwell and Fleming :

This model has three layers that build upon one another, and which reflect the situation of the gospel coming into a new cultural setting via missionaries. In the initial stages the missionaries make decisions, but later in the process local believers can modify these decisions.

1. The first layer is called Inculturation. On this level there is a disengaging of the Supracultural elements of the gospel from one culture to another, and the “contextualizing” of these elements within the cultural forms and social institutions of another. This includes translation, evangelism, apologetics and preaching. Judgment are made on what is good, bad and neutral in each culture.
2. The next layer is indigenization. This follows the lines established by Venn, Nevius, Anderson and Allen that emphasized the church and leadership. The inculturation becomes natural enculturation done by national Christians. The patterns, forms and institution of Christianity include church buildings, order of service, minister’s dress, songs, art and how to celebrate festivals. This aspect can be contextualized. Dynamic equivalence should be sought where the same meaning and function within the culture is the same as in the early church.
3. The third and final layer is ethno-theology. This is doing theology inside the new system. The absolute supracultural elements are applied to specific forms in the culture. In Kraft’s terms ethno-theology is a combination of systematic theology and anthropology. However for Bushwell and Fleming, ethno-theology is systematic theology developed within the culture. (Bushwell and Fleming 67).

Research Design Literature

(An Appropriate Model in the context of the Ijebu people of Nigeria).

Having discussed extensively on models for contextual preaching in the communication of the gospel message, there are three very important points to note as germane in any contextualization process: The scriptures must be established in its own context, ensuring that the Bible is not read using modern day settings to understand the text. Secondly is the need to understand local culture/context as a reality and accepting it as such. And thirdly to create a process to relate the Bible to issues in the local culture with the purpose of creating a conversation that is dynamic and impactful. In my opinion, the translation of Bevan's model and the critical contextualization of Hiebert will be useful in the Ijebu cultural context of our study. The translation model seems well suited to the context, since it seek faithfulness to the Bible as it attempts to contextualize the gospel message. The model further establishes the authority of scripture, the gospel and doctrinal formulations in agreement with our Diocesan evangelical orientation. The model while focusing on the biblical message also recognized the cultural context of the people; but scripture is given priority over the context. Angie Pears argued that the model puts so little emphasis on cultural and that "it almost defies the definition of contextual theology"(Pear 25). However, the model convey the gospel message in the context of the people without changing the core message of the gospel, people are allowed in their context to make sense of the message and respond to it.

Furthermore, Hiebert's critical contextualization has provided some principles and guidelines in his method to make the process a smooth sailing one. Thus, I believe their appropriateness for contextual preaching in the Ijebu cultural context. And since the primary

focus of this dissertation is contextual preaching by Pastors in the Diocese of Ijebu South West, Nigeria the models will be very appropriate for the experience.

PREACHING AND CULTURAL CONTEXT:

The question one may ask is “What is the relationship between preaching and culture?” to be able to shed light on this question, there is the need to revisit the Bible which is the source of preaching and the standard for all theological considerations. The fact that the Bible itself is bound by culture and time, paves the way for the reliability of the Bible in the contemporary communities (Jonker 7). Fahner observed that preaching should proceed from the standpoint that the Biblical message is enveloped in a time bound cultural context. This may lead to parts in which a specific culture is clearly present, being deemed less important for preaching. He added that another approach may be to distinguish between form and content; hence the cultural packaging could be discarded and the message retained (Farhan and Van 5-6).

Preaching is not about extracting the biblical message from its cultural cloak; preaching is the challenge to retain the dynamic contents of the message to grow in a new cultural seedbed Malina declared that “all language derives its meanings from the societal system and cultural context in which the language communication originally takes place” (Malina X1). The method postulated by Malina he calls “Incarnative approach” which envisage enabling readers to reconcile themselves to the fundamental values and perspectives of the Mediterranean world of antiquity, since these values and perspectives are the foundation of the whole New Testament (Ibid XII). It follows therefore that the good news of the Bible is shrouded in a cultural cloak and this “cloak” cannot be shaken off without further ado in preaching (Dreyer 800), and that only a pure message can be conveyed to the congregation. Preaching the message a such will always be

shoulder in the cultural cloak in every cultural context, including the Yoruba cultural context of the Diocese of Ijebu South West.

Venter points out the hermeneutical problem that may occur if it is accepted that there is a linear analogy between the social – political systems of the Old Testament and those of today's world. This means that the authority of the Bible operates in the social structures that the scripture describe (Venter 110-122). Preaching is linked with the process of proclaiming, declaring or announcing a message by a person to another person(s). David Martyn Lloyd – Jones used the word 'communication' to convey his definition of preaching; saying "It is an act of communicating a message" (Lloyd-Jones 53-57). The act of communication involves a sender, a message, a messenger and a listener. The originator of the message is the sender, who encodes the message in a particular context, the messenger is the mediator through which the word is decoded and passed to the listeners. The recipient of the message on the other hand is able to understand the message and relate the same in his own cultural context (Ogunlana 2). God is the sender who has encoded his message in the scripture in contexts different from today's. The preacher must first decode the message from the biblical contexts before translating the same into the context of the audience. Therefore, the preacher serves as the mediator between the biblical context/world and the contemporary context.

David Buttrick remarked that the preacher is an "in-between" who stands "in-between" two worlds the biblical world and the contemporary world (Buttrick 251). There exists a cultural gap between the biblical world and today's world. The preacher must be able to relate with the two contexts and make his listeners participate together with him in understanding the meaning of the text in their contemporary context (Robinson and Craig 27). Mary Lorensen express the opinion that preaching is a dialogical monologue; arguing that it is an interactive

communication; that is communication in which both sides are involved and are influenced by the words from all the parties (Lorenson 28-45)..

In discussing, cultural context, H.M. Vroom, holds the view that culture concerns traditional insights and learned/not only to receive insights and attitudes from the tradition to which people belong, but also to undertake in turn to pass them on deliberately to others. What is passed on is a pattern of meanings, for example what a table is and the purpose for which it is used, (Vroom 797). Culture is the entire spiritual property of a people in every field, it is never the product of one person, and it is the sign that man is a creature who belongs to a community. Culture is a process encompassing man and his world, the inner and the outer (Aidan 10).

Drawing Insights from Dreyer, culture for our study is the entire process of and interaction between inner values, thoughts and emotions which crystalizes in human conduct, acts and structures in all fields of life. Having a corporate dimension because it emerges in a community whose members share values and pass them on to the next generation. The corporate dimension is usually closely related to the concept of people which is a community that shares values. Culture is not a static given but a dynamic process (Dreyer 798).

Preaching cannot ignore the reality of cultural processes because the message of the scriptures cannot be communicated in a vacuum. It must be within a particular context. Starkloff speaks of “religion as a cultural system which is both a model for and a model of reality. The preacher has to understand the prevailing questions assumptions and institutions to which his preaching relates. The factors in society, culture, philosophy and politics of the cultural context all relates and influence his preaching” (Starkloff 409-431). According to Long, “the task of preaching is precisely to articulate the identity of the community of the faithful within the reality

in which its members live (Long 180). Hence it is necessary to take the current context into account in every theologizing process.

Preaching in the Yoruba Cultural context

Preaching in the Yoruba context cannot be removed from the larger question of Jesus Christ and culture. Richard Niebuhr analyzed the perennial question, how does Christ relate to culture? Some see Christ as one who belongs to culture, or a Christ who is against culture. Others view Christ as the transformer of culture. Niebuhr concluded that “the problem of Christ and culture can and must come to an end only in a realm beyond all study in the free decisions of individual believers and responsible communities” (Niebuhr 233). The attitude of individuals and communities to Christ culturally is a matter of free choice rather than an act of arbitrary decision making. Laurent Magesa asked the pertinent question which could also be said in the Yoruba cultural context “How would Christ have given His message, had he been born, grown up and taught in the heart of Africa?”(Or Yorubaland of Nigeria) (Magesa 211). What necessitates the demand for contextualization of preaching today is the increasing foreignness of Christianity to which the Yoruba people are exposed. This is coupled with the phenomenon of multiculturalism and diversity prevalent in communities. The church no longer preaches in a homogenous cultural group as contemporary congregations have people of different ethnic language and cultural backgrounds.

The foregoing raises a lot of concern for preaching in the Yoruba cultural context, which this study is all about. Many of the preachers in the Yoruba context have not really received in – depth training in biblical studies. Aylward Shorter observed that “African congregations prefer a substantial homily spaced with stories, proverbs and aphorisms, but the lengthy homily is often the least well organized and the most doctrinally superficial (Shorter 273). The church must

invest in training preachers in biblical studies as well as in culture so as to express the message in contextual ways. Infact it is burdensome that students in theological institutions in the Yoruba context preach their practice sermons in English, French or other European language, when indeed after seminary they have to preach to people in their indigenous languages. The call for contextual preaching demands a change in the training of Yoruba preachers. The use of the modes of communication that is relevant to the Yoruba cultural setting. This is the main focus of this study.

A Review of Preaching in Yorubaland:

The concept of contextualization will be meaningless without a context and the whole effort becomes an abstract. The context of this study is the Diocese of Ijebu South - West, which is domicile within the Yoruba speaking ethnic group of Nigeria. Ethnographically, the name 'Yoruba' is a designation commonly used to cover a large ethnic group in Nigeria numbering several millions of people. It is somehow difficult to arrive at a generally acceptable estimate of population in Nigeria owing to the political and administrative difficulties which are always involved in the course of conducting successive censuses. However, by the findings of Census 93, the estimated population of the Yoruba occupying the South Western region of Nigeria is 15,495,900 (Provisional Population 4). The Yoruba are united more by a common language (Yoruba) and culture, rather than by any political inclinations. The Yoruba people have never constituted a single political party or formed a unitary nation-state, but instead their ethnic solidarity can be traced to the traditions of a common origin in the town of Ile-Ife in Osun State. Hence, the unity of Yorubaland is due to a common historical experience facilitated by social and geographical mobility which is evident in the increased degree of cultural and linguistic uniformity.

The Yoruba homeland is in the South Western region of Nigeria, which includes present-day Lagos, Ogun, Osun, Oyo, Ondo, Ekiti, and part of Kogi and Kwara States. The Yoruba are composed of several sub-divisions or groups, such as the Egba, Ijebu, Ondo, Ibadan, Oyo, Ijesa, Ekiti, Ketu, Ife and Akure. All the groups are bound together by the common language of Yoruba and by a shared culture even though each group has its own local dialects and customs. Most of the other Yoruba's are found in Dahomey (Benin Republic) and in Togo. The Yoruba-speaking groups in Benin and Togo republic refer to themselves as Ife rather than as Yoruba. The Itshekiri in the modern Delta State of Nigeria and the old 'WarriProvince' are Yoruba-speaking offshoots who have been strongly influenced by the Benin of the Edo State. Descendants of Yoruba slaves, some of whom can still speak the Yoruba language are found in Sierra Leone where they are known as Aku, in Cuba where they are known as Lucumi, and in Brazil where they are known as Nago . They all lay claim to Ile-Ife in the present-day Osun State of Nigeria as the cradle of all Yoruba people. The Yoruba constitute one of the largest ethnic groups in sub-Saharan Africa; one of the largest three and most important ethnic groups in Nigeria; and conceivably the biggest homogenous black nation in the world whose life was guided by traditional laws and customs before the advent of Christianity and Islam. The Yoruba are perhaps the most urban of all African people and their traditional urban way of life dates back to long before the Europeans' arrival on their soil.

Historically, Yorubaland has been central to the growth of Christianity in Nigeria. By 1843 the Yoruba language had been reduced to writing with the production of the first Yoruba Dictionary by Bishop Samuel Ajayi Crowther, a freed Yoruba slave who later became the first African Anglican Bishop. Later, in 1850, portions of the Bible had been published in the Yoruba language, while in 1862, the New Testament was published and in 1884, the whole Bible. It was

among the Yoruba that the first Independent African Church (the United Native African Church) was founded in 1891, as a protest against the imperialist and paternalistic dispositions of the white missionaries of the Anglican Church. Yorubaland occupies such an important position in the history of Christianity in Nigeria, that the history of the Anglican Church in Yorubaland is almost equivalent to the history of Anglicanism in Nigeria. A study conducted in 2005 provides a working chart of the Yoruba people, dividing the culture into twelve parts of a “living organism”, whose features are intertwining, interrelated and interdependent. The twelve features in the chart of the Yoruba culture are as follows: language, governance, myths, fine-art, religion, oral literature, law, defence, technology, trade, agriculture, and economics. The language of the Yoruba is the nucleus of their existence and it is the vehicle by which other cultural disciplines are expressed. The Yoruba language is thus a mark of Yoruba culture, uniting all groups who speak the language under one banner, with these groups sharing many things in common and pursuing the same cultural goals. The Yoruba language forms the basis for its folktales, proverbs, songs, religious expressions, cultural rituals and festivals etc. The Yoruba community has an intricate hierarchical mode of government with ‘Oba’ and Chiefs at the top of administration.

Yoruba myths serve as the legitimizing factor by giving stability to the political and religious life. Myth solves problems in *radices* (from the root) by making supernatural contentions which are not subject to any empirical data: thus only myths can provide an explanation of how every being and structure originated. Religion moulds the conscience of the people much more than law or any other moral instruction can do and the Yoruba people are described as ‘incurably religious’ (Idowu 18). The Yoruba ethnic groups of Nigeria are a people of involute religious thought and complex socio-political structure. The influence of foreign

ideology and philosophy notwithstanding, the cultural values and thoughts of the Yoruba are irrepressible in the minds of the people, as it continues to shape social life and religious outlook among them. How effective is the Christian preaching in this engaging cultural context?

Looking at the Pre-Christian era, it could be observed that the Yoruba people have always been involved in religious proclamation (Peel 187). Yoruba people worshipped God and communicated religious messages in ways that suits their socio-cultural milieu. Bolaji Idowu sees the Yoruba people as radically religious human beings, since religion is a phenomenon that forms an integral part of their life and social institution (Idowu 108). Preaching was essential to the process of socialization; it serves as a channel for character formation and induction of the young ones into the wisdom, love and values of society. Traditional religious leaders such as Ifa priests, Obas, Chiefs, family heads, dinners etc pass their messages through preaching during religious festivals, family meetings, social engagements and other ceremonies. These leaders mediated between worshippers and object of worship, presided over religious ceremonies, performed ritual rites and communicated divine messages to the people (Idowu 130).

Yoruba preaching before Christianity were done orally and conversationally, they employ African oral literature such as songs, sayings, proverbs, verses, idioms, sacred tales, riddles, legend, plays, folklores, prayer, and stories (Healey and Sybertzs 34-43). The central point of this preaching is family and community values, religious beliefs, moral ethnics and social behavior. From the above, one can infer that within the pre-Christian preaching method of the Yoruba people there are features that are capable of enriching the quality of preaching in the contemporary world if adequately perused.

The next stage of preaching in Yorubaland was the missionary preaching by the Europeans or foreigners who brought Christianity in the mid-nineteenth century. The objectives

and theological content of the missionary preaching was rooted in their marching order “to send the glorious Gospel of the blessed God to the Heathen” (Niles 65). This informed their mission and preaching style. Many of the missionaries regarded Yorubaland a dark nation of “untutored” ignoble savages” and “unregenerate human race. And as such in an attempt to convert the people they denigrate the Yoruba socio cultural milieu (Peel 152-86). The missionaries preached sermons that were characterized by literal interpretation of the Bible with no attention to the context of the audience. Many archival documents showed that the missionary employed biblical and preaching patterns without any article analysis of their mission context. All these generated cross – cultural misunderstanding and hostility between the missionaries and the Yoruba people and the preaching was unable to touch the deepest concerns of the people (Schuylev 200-23). Emmanuel Ayandele opined that missionary enterprise of the early days of Christianity in Nigeria overturned the traditional society and culture:

“Missionary activity was a disruptive force, rocking traditional society to its very foundations, denouncing ordered polygamy in favour of disordered monogamy, producing disrespectful, presumptuous and detribalized children through the mission schools, destroying the high moral principles and orderliness of indigenous society through denunciation of traditional religion without an adequate substitute, and transforming the mental outlook of Nigerians in a way that made them imitate European values slavishly whilst holding in irrational contempt valuable features of traditional” (Ayandele 325).

The gospel message came on the tidal wave of Western cultural expansion. J.F. Ade Ajayi contends that the missionaries were not merely bearers of protestant evangelism but important facilitators of the ideological thrust of Western hegemony and civilization (Ajayi 14).

The Era of missionary preaching was followed by the preaching of mainline churches established by them in the nineteenth century. These preachers were missionary tutelage assigned to mission stations to replace the European missionaries. The pattern of preaching of this preachers followed the “puritan plain style” of their teachers. They also treat Biblical texts without much attention to the contexts, since the aim is only to help the audience ‘encounter the gospel as directly as possible” (Allen 7). The era epitomized Scholasticism, Politics, Education, and Westernization, hence unable to connect biblical text to Yoruba context. The preaching fostered spiritual elitism that attracted scholars and repelled common folks! (Omoyajowo 97). Indigenous preaching came into focus after the rise of indigenous churches in the second decade of the twentieth century. These churches were sociologically and theologically native, established, funded and managed by Nigerians (Ibid 96). Indigenous churches take the contemporary context as the locus of divine activity and the starting point of the preaching process. Sunday Komolafe submits that “Aladura Christianity brought Christ into the heart of Yoruba culture, so that the Christ they preach is the Saviour who gives hope to the future while meeting present needs (Komolafe 118). Indigenous preaching styles was evangelical in nature and engender authentic Christian self-expression in the Yoruba cultural milieu.

Later years of Christianity in the Yoruba cultural context, opened to different styles of preaching. Today, we also have what we call Charismatic or Pentecostal preaching and the like. This style of preaching came out of a new wave of missionary activity that sparked a revival movement, and the Pentecostal missionary activities of the 1950’s. Evangelical preaching involves the proclamation of the gospel message without much regard to the context of the audience, since the mandate of the preaching is essentially salvation. It also emphasis piety, rapture, millennium reign and second coming. This style of preaching is mainly for Evangelistic

purposes. Other styles in the Pentecostal preaching cohort include Doctrinal sermons, prosperity gospel, expositional messages and teachings. The problems of all these preaching styles are obvious and enormous. Akin Omoyajowo explains:

“To separate Yoruba converts into Christian village, in order to preserve them from contamination by their kith and kin is to alienate them from their communal life, which meant, in effect, cultural and social death for such individuals. Religious devotion on the part of a Christian is not enough to lead to loosening of the traditional kinship ties of a society”

(Omoyajowo 46). Infact, when Christians over accentuate their distinction from the culture surrounding them, they wind up demonizing the world and prideful thinking that they are not part of the sinful fallenness (Dawn 68). Bevans says such preaching approach is nothing but spiritual hubris, which often renders the Christians alien and irrelevant to the culture they intend to reach (Bevans 125).

Summary of Literature

On the whole, having analyzed the preaching approaches in Yorubaland from the pre-Christian era to the present day, we can infer that some of the preaching styles embodied Yoruba religiocultural elements while others are not. Michael Duggan argued that what they are yet to understand is that “each one of us thinks about God within the framework of the worldview provided by our culture. In order for faith to become foundational in our lives, it has to enter into dialogue with our culture. Otherwise, faith apart from culture is reduced to a set of rituals and principles of a bygone era to which we adhere through habit or religious nostalgia (Duggan 527). The focus of this study is training and teaching preachers about contextual preaching and developing a theoretical framework for authentic and effective preaching among the people of God in the Diocese of Ijebu South West, Nigeria.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY FOR THE PROJECT

Overview of the Chapter

This chapter gives details of the research methodology employed in this project. After a short analysis of the nature and purpose of the project, the research questions are discussed with the instruments used to analyze them, the cultural context of the project is given and then the unambiguous information on the participants, instrumentation and the process of data analysis will follow.

Nature and Purpose of the Project

The topic of this dissertation projects is “Developing a contextual preaching model for the Diocese of Ijebu South-West, Nigeria”. The Diocese of Ijebu South-West is a Diocese within the Anglican Church in Nigeria, domiciled in the Ijebu cultural context of Yorubaland of South-West, Nigeria. The Diocese is to proclaim the gospel of Christ within the Ijebu cultural context which is very different from Christianity in their world-view, theology and spirituality.

Thus, it is important in this context for preachers to plan and prepare their sermons in a way that the Bible and its core doctrines will be taught in a contextual way and systematically. Hence for the Clergy and lay pastors in the Diocese of Ijebu South West to be relevant in the context of the Diocese, there is a need for a preacher in the local context of the people to be adequately trained. This project thus seeks to make a contribution toward a contextualized approach to preaching among the Yoruba of Nigeria with particular reference to the Ijebu Christians in the Diocese of Ijebu South-West.

The purpose of this project was to measure the change in knowledge, attitude and behavior among Clergy and lay pastor from the Anglican Diocese of Ijebu South-West, Nigeria who participated in twelve-week training event on contextual preaching.

Research Questions

RQ#1. What were the levels of knowledge, attitude and behavior regarding contextual preaching among the clergy and lay pastors who participated in a twelve-week training event on contextual preaching prior to the training event?

The purpose of this question is to establish the background knowledge, attitude and behavior of the participants before the training. To collect data for this question a researcher designed pre-test instrument named “Preacher’s Foundations” was conducted with the participants.

RQ#2. What were the level of knowledge, attitude and behavior regarding contextual preaching among the Clergy and lay pastors who participated in a twelve-week training event on contextual preaching following the training event?

The researcher designed post-test instrument named “Preacher’s Assessment Record” (PAR) evaluated the changes after they had participated in the training. Also, a semi-structured interview entitled Diocese of Ijebu South West Preachers interview” (DISWPI) was conducted with five focus groups to gather data about their experiences. The questions concentrated on the changes that occurred in the participants after the training.

RQ#3. What aspect of the training event had the greatest impact on the observed changes among the participants?

To answer this question, a researcher designed focus group named DISWPI was conducted with the preachers. both quantitative and qualitative questions on the pre-test and post-tests assessments survey were used to examine the impact of the preaching model on the

participants. It seeks to determine the ways in which the training exercise had assisted the participants to become better Preachers in their context.

RQ#4.

What elements of the model did the participants find out to be valuable and which ones were not practicable?

In addition to the post-test assessment survey, Participant's Journal were collected weekly to get feedback from the participants. The findings from all the instruments were then analyzed and compared.

Ministry Context

The project focused mainly on how to present the gospel message in the Ijebu Cultural Context where the Diocese of Ijebu South-West is domiciled. The ministry context was the Clergy and lay pastors of the Diocese of Ijebu South-West, trained and ordained to preach and administer the sacraments among the congregations of the Diocese. The Diocese of Ijebu South-West is a Diocese within the Anglican Church in Nigeria domiciled in the Ijebu cultural context of Yorubaland of South-West, Nigeria. The Diocese is to proclaim the gospel of Christ within the Ijebu cultural context which is very different from Christianity in their world-view, theology and spirituality. Thus, it is important in this context for preachers to plan and prepare their sermons in a way that the Bible and its core doctrines will be taught in a contextual way and systematically. In the words of Leonora Tubbs Tisdale "In preaching as local theology, exegesis of the congregation and its subculture is not peripheral to proclamation, but central to its concerns" Preaching as a local theology is not only proclaimed "to" but also "out of the midst" and "on behalf of" a local faith community. Hence, for the clergy and lay pastors in the Diocese

of Ijebu South-West to be relevant in the context of the land, there is the need for every preacher in the context to be able to form the local theologies relevant to the people.

Participants

Participants were Clergymen and Lay Pastor of the Diocese of Ijebu South-West Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion).

Criteria for Selection

The participants had formal theological training, a minimum of two years' experience as a church worker and preacher; within the Yoruba cultural context. The participants age ranged between the ages of 25-60years and the population of participant was 25. The participants were chosen through the process of purposeful homogenous sampling. William Wiersa says, "Homogeneous sampling is used when the purpose of the study is so focus on particular subgroup" (287). Purposeful sampling allows researcher to explore, uncover, understand, and gain insight from a subgroup "from which the most can be learned" (Merriam 61).

Description of Participants

As stated above the participants were all ordained pastors in the Diocese of Ijebu South-West, Nigeria; and trained in the two major seminaries of the Church of Nigeria. All the participants were men because the Church of Nigeria is yet to approve women ordination, but they were of a variety of ethnicities. The participants were in good mental and physical condition.

Ethical Considerations

Potential participants were informed of the nature of the study through an informed consent letter; which included an abstract of the project. To protect confidentiality, no names or individual identity or any other distinguishing characteristics of participants were recorded or reported in the project. Raw data including transcripts of the focus group will never be shared or disseminated.

Anonymity was ensured for the assessments (both pre and post) by only using the responses in the aggregate to form a composite of responses and did not refer to individual responses in the presentation of the study. And for the focus group, each participant was identified using coded letters and numbers.

Instrumentation

Three major instruments were used in this research. The first one is the researcher designer pre-test assessment survey that collected data on participants level of knowledge attitudes, understanding and behavior regarding contextual preaching prior to the training programme named “Preachers Foundations”. The second instrument is the researcher designed post-test assessment survey that collected data on the impact of the contextual training programme on the participants named “Preacher’s Assessment Record).

The third and final tool was the exit interview titled “Diocese of Ijebu South West Preacher Interview” (DIWSPI) conducted in form of a semi-structured interview protocol with five focus groups. Upon the completion of the twelve weeks training, each of the participants went through an exit interview within a particular Focus Group to ascertain their own reflection of the experience plus their observations on what was particularly effective and what was ineffective in their contextual preaching. Furthermore, the research also collected “participants Journal” via E-mails from all the participants every week during the training.

Reliability & Validity of Project Design: To pursue effectiveness and appropriateness in the research of this project the researcher followed a grounded theory design in pursuing the research. Creswell defines grounded theory as follows:

Grounded theory designs are systematic, qualitative procedures that researchers use to generate a general explanation (grounded in the views of participants, called a grounded theory) that explains a process, action or interaction among people. The procedures for

developing this theory include primarily collecting interview data, developing and relating categories (or themes) of information, and composing a figure or visual model that portrays the general explanation. In this way, the explanation is “grounded” in the data from participants (Creswel,23).

For this project, focused groups were employed to determine the impact of the contextual training on each of the participants. The framework for the focus groups was derived from the study of pertinent literature to give general structure for the questions. The data was then analyzed to find common grounds as the participants described their own experiences. The use of Focus groups in this study allowed for multiple perspectives on the contextual preaching experiences to produce more results. Sensing says that within focus groups:

Through group interaction, data and insights are generated that are related to a particular theme imposed by a researcher and enriched by the group’s interaction discussion. The synergy of the group will often provide richer data than if each person in the group had been interviewed separately (Sensing,Ch4).

The qualitative nature of the project validated the external questions for the study. This is because the participants were not too large in number and specifically selected, hence broad generalizations would be unwarranted. But then, the homogenous sampling group does have generalizability among the participants who fit the basic criteria set out in the data collection. The project was essentially a case study that examined a select group of participants to improve their effectiveness in contextual preaching within the Diocese of Ijebu South West. The results of this research are generalized only to those who participated. Even though, the research sought to indicate how people can be better equipped to preach contextually, but it was limited to those who participated. No claims are made about a wider population of preachers and their effectiveness or ineffectiveness.

On the whole, the synthesis of the data with contextual observations regarding the Anglican Diocese of Ijebu South West allowed for the creation of a preaching model within an

Anglican ethos and in ways that would be effective in the cultural setting and context of the Diocese.

Data Collection

The project design was a mixed-method, intervention, which used a qualitative assessment and the post-test assessment questionnaire with open-ended questions. The project also used focus group qualitative informal questions as well as the participants' journal to collect data. The pre-test assessment questions were administered on the first day of the training in Contextual Preaching to determine the levels of knowledge, attitude and behavior of participants regarding contextual preaching before the training. The post-test assessment questionnaire served as an exit measure of evaluating the changes in the participants after the training.

The participants' journals were collected weekly after each week training session to examine how they related with the weeks training. The participants journals were received through E-mails. Five focus-groups were formed, each group make up of five participants. Informal questions were raised and discussed in the groups to ascertain the level of impact made by the training and for the participants to share their personal experiences.

Data Analysis

As mentioned earlier in chapter one, comparative analysis using both descriptive statistics and inferential statistics were done to determine the changes in the study population. The impact of the intervention on the dependent variables were measured and the qualitative data was processed by using explorative analysis to identify the patterns and categories, then concluding with content analysis through coded descriptions.

CHAPTER 4

EVIDENCE FOR THE PROJECT

Overview of the Chapter

In the contemporary times, there has been many approaches to preaching in different contexts, but it appears to have had little influence on the church in some cultural context of some preachers. The preaching that will benefit the church of today must be theological, anthropological and dialogical. I think these elements could be united through biblical and contextual preaching.

A contextual approach to preaching among Christian in Ijebuland may change many misconceptions about Christianity and make the believers in the context to be well rooted in faith. The purpose of this research was to measure the changes in knowledge, attitude and behavior among clergy and lay pastors from the Anglican Diocese of Ijebu South West, Nigeria who participated in a twelve-week training event on contextual preaching.

This chapter describes the participants in the study. It explains the data collected from the pre and post-test surveys and the data collected from the focus-groups, the open-ended questions on the post-text survey and the field notes. The chapter also identifies the major findings from the research.

Participants

The participants in this study were 25 in number and it comprised of clergymen and lay pastors from the Anglican Diocese of Ijebu South West, Nigeria. The pre-test surveys were given to the participants during the first day of the training and the post-test survey were given at the end of the twelve weeks training. Participants were also allowed to give “participants journal” of

opinions and questions through E-mail. Also exit interview within particular Focus Group was conducted among the participants.

All the participants lived in Ijebu cultural context of the Diocese of Ijebu south-West; many of them reside in the church vicarages, while some (especially the lay pastors) reside in their personal/family houses. There were no problems of accessibility or mobility as all the participants have easy access to the venue of the training programme. Participants include twenty males and five females. All the participants understand and speak both English and Yoruba language; although a few of them also speak the local Ijebu dialect fluently. The demographic makeup of the participants is represented in figure 4:1 below.

Figure 4:1

Age	20 - 35	–	6
	36 - 45	–	10
	46 - 55	–	6
	55 - 60	–	2
	60 & above	–	1
Christian Experience (Year)	10 - 15	–	4
	20 - 30	–	16
	31 - 50	–	4
	50 & above	-	1
Preaching Experience (in Years)	5 - 10	–	2
	10 - 15	–	6
	20 - 15	–	14
	25 - 30	–	

	30 & above	-	3
preaching Frequency	Once a week		9
	Once a month		–
	Twice a Week		– 2
	Twice a Month		– 2
	Others – everyday		– 7
Educational Level	Graduate		– 17
	Diploma		– 5
	Licentiate		– 3
	Others		–

Research Question #1: Description of Evidence

RQ#1. What were the level of knowledge, attitude, and behavior regarding contextual preaching among the clergy and lay pastors who participated in a twelve-week training event on contextual preaching prior to the training events?

The tool used for collecting the answer to this research question was the pre-test assessment survey named “Preachers Foundations” (see Appendix 1)

Questions B:1-21 tested the participants’ knowledge of preaching, context of preaching as well as their known attitude & behavior to the audience.

Questions C: 1-6 tested the participants attitudes and behaviour to preaching as well as their disposition.

Question D: 1-3 were to test the participants understanding of preaching in their context. Each of these categories shall be discussed. The pre-test assessment survey produced observable data about the participants knowledge of preaching, context and the audiences' attitude.

Figure 4:2 and 4:3 presents the response to Questions B:1-21

Responses to Pre-test knowledge and Attitude Questions. -

	Data Gathering Questions	Correspondence to specific aspect of the Research questions.
a	Question B: 1-12	Levels of knowledge of the participants about preaching.
b	Question B: 13:21	Levels of knowledge of the participants about context of preaching and communicating the gospel message
c	Question C: 1-6	Attitudes and behavior of participants in the preaching context.
d	Question D: 1-3	Context of preaching of the participants and the attitudes and practice of preaching.

A. Pre-Intervention Levels of Knowledge of participants about preaching looking at question B: 1-12 in the pre-text assessment survey, the result is as follows –

Table 4:2

				Strongly	Neither	Strongly
1	Preaching is a calling in church ministry	19	5		1	
2	Preaching is to be recognized as a special gift in ministry	16	9			

3	Preaching is the presentation of the gospel of Jesus Christ and calling people to decision	19	6			
4	Preaching is the presentation of gospel to different audiences in different cultural settings.	15	10			
5	Communication is an essential tool in presenting the essential principles of the gospel to those we witness to in our ministries.	18	6	1		
6	Preaching is speaking the truth of the gospel through the preachers' personality.	14	7	2	2	
7	Sermon preparation is very simple task in my ministry experience.	1	12	6	5	1
8	Special training in sermon preparation and delivery is a very necessary tool in the preaching ministry.	20	5			
9	The Feedback from the audience show their understanding of the sermon and its message.	14	9	2		
10	Understanding the context of the hearers should be part of sermon preparation.	15	10			
11	Preaching a contextual sermon will impact the audience's	13	11	1		

	understanding of the biblical message.					
12	Seminary training in homiletics is an adequate tool for preaching in any cultural context, a preacher finds himself or herself.	8	11	4	2	

(B) Pre-intervention Levels of knowledge of participants about context of preaching and communicating the Gospel. The data collected from question 13-21 in the pre-test assessment survey is presented in Table 4:3.

Table 4:3

				<i>Strongly</i>	<i>Neither</i>	<i>Strongly</i>
13	There are many styles of preaching but the contextual method of preaching is best.	9	13	3		
14	The ministry of our Lord Jesus Christ and his Apostles was to different audiences and different cultures.	14	9	1	1	
15	Since there are different audiences with different cultural settings in the contemporary world, a method of preaching that will effectively communicate the gospel within any cultural setting is imperative.	6	15		1	3

16	Contextual Preaching model is very important and necessary to effectively communicate the gospel in the Yoruba context of the Diocese of Ijebu South-West.	13	12			
17	A good sermon should relate the text of the scripture to the context of the listeners to be more effective and impactful.	18	7			
18	Contextual preaching is not about teaching an old dog new tricks' but it is about acknowledging that we live in a changing world and that we need to take seriously the context of our time and place.	12	12	1		
19	Looking at the change in the global world of today, effective communication of the gospel message requires a special method of contextualization.	13	11	1		
20	Contextualization of the gospel message is an essential tool to global evangelization in the 21 st century.	13	11	1		
21	The eloquence of preaching is not the answer for the audience to understand the gospel message but the	9	11	2	3	

	contextual application to the gospel					
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C Pre-Intervention Levels of Attitude and Behaviour of participants regarding preaching context.

When the response to question C:1-6 about the context of preaching were analyzed, all the participants responded pointing out different attitudes and behaviour. The researcher identified the following with the frequency of occurrence in the response.

1. Lack of cultural intelligence – (22/25)
2. Indifference to cultural antecedents (25/25)
3. Adherence to traditional way of preaching (23/25)
4. Indifference to the context of the listeners (15/25)
5. Hostile communities (21/25)
6. Foreign theologies in Preaching (19/25)
7. Noticeable gap between the preachers and the listeners (20/25)
8. Misunderstanding of the Gospel Message (12/25)
9. Cultural conflict between the community and the context of the Bible (18/25)
10. Lack of Contextual preparation (24/25)
11. Disobedience to Biblical standards (20/25)
12. Syncretism among the congregation (22/25)
13. Confusion (19/25)
14. Little understanding of the Scripture (10/25)
15. Christianity is a foreign religion (20/25)
16. Misunderstanding of the nature of Christ (15/25)
17. Use of foreign example and cases (10/25)

D. Pre – Intervention Level of attitude and Behaviour of the participants in the context and practice of preaching.

When asked about what the participants understood as preaching within the Diocese of Ijebu South-West, the challenges and the weaknesses involved; the following were deduced from the responses.

1. Lack of understanding by the audience/listeners
2. Cultural antecedents placed over the scriptures.
3. Foreign theologies and language
4. Cultural crisis
5. Indifference to Gospel message
6. Indifference to culture by preachers.
7. Pessimistic attitude to culture by Christians
8. Influence of religion-cultural experiences of the people.

Research Question #2: Description of Evidence

RO#2 – What were the levels of knowledge, attitude and behaviour regarding Contextual Preaching among the Clergy and lay pastors who participated in a twelve-week training event on contextual preaching following the training event?

The evidence for answering research question 2, comes from the data collected from post-assessment questionnaire administered to the participants on the last days of the twelve-weeks training on Contextual Preaching.

The post-test demonstrated an increase in knowledge among the respondents. The several observations and anecdotal comments indicating positive change in the attitude and behaviour of the participants towards contextual preaching were evident in the weekly feedback on the

“participants journal” received on E-mail. Also, the responses to open-ended questions on the post-test survey. Participants wrote comments like:

- ❖ “I learnt so much from the local theology and contextualization of the Word of God”.
- ❖ “I really enjoyed this teaching, as it has opened my eyes to Contextual Preaching”
- ❖ My sermon after the first three weeks was very interesting and catching”
- ❖ The members of my church noticed and enjoyed my new style of preaching”

There were also comments about the impact of the model on the audiences/listeners to the contextual sermons preached after the training from the open-ended questions at the end of the survey.

- ❖ “I appreciate learning how to use contextual preaching in our cultural context.”
- ❖ “I love this training programme, I have been inspired to think differently about preaching in my cultural context.
- ❖ “Listeners to my sermon now understand the Word of God better than before, and people ask for more”

Furthermore, the open-ended questions in the post-test assessment survey also shed light on the changes in attitudes and behaviour in comparison with what was observed in the context and practice of preaching during the pre-test discussions.

1. **Cultural intelligence** – After the training, participants were able to see the need to be concerned about the culture of the context of preaching. They were no longer indifferent to the cultural antecedents of the people.
2. **Foreign theologies** were replaced with local theologies and applications in their sermons, local illustrations and examples boosted their sermons and made them simple and understandable. In the focus group discussion, one of the respondents said he has never

seen his members receptive of his message about the nature of Christ as they did when he applied the contextual preaching method. (FG 1.2)

3. **Contextual preparation** – participants change in attitude and behaviour in the area of preparation was also observed. During the focus group discussion as well as individual responses, participants now in their sermon preparation consider first the context of preaching and apply the contextual approach to the message. There were comments about attitudinal change such as:

- ❖ “I now understand that the message of my preaching must be made relevant to the listeners in their context”.
- ❖ The Listeners’ context must form the language and expression of preaching.”
- ❖ “I now understand that preaching involves the act of translating God’s message from the biblical contexts into contemporary context.”

Pre and Post Intervention Response to Questions C:1-6. Observed changes in Attitude and Behaviour.

Table 4:3

	Element Observed.	Pre-test Frequency	Post-test Frequency	Change
1	Lack of cultural intelligence	88%	50%	-38
2	Indifference to cultural antecedents	100%	55%	-45
3	Adherence to traditional way of preaching	92%	76%	-16
4	Indifference to the context of the listeners	60%	70%	+10

5	Hostile communities	84%	70%	-14
6	Foreign theologies in Preaching	76%	60%	-16
7	Noticeable gap between the preachers and the listeners	80%	50%	-30
8	Misunderstanding of the Gospel Message	48%	70%	+22
9	Cultural conflict between the community and the context of the Bible	72%	60%	-12
10	Lack of Contextual preparation	96%	70%	-26
11	Disobedience to Biblical standards	80%	60%	-20
12	Syncretism among the congregation	92%	80%	-10
13	Confusion	76%	50%	-26
14	Little understanding of the Scripture	40%	70%	+30
15	Christianity is a foreign religion	80%	50%	-30
16	Misunderstanding of the nature of Christ	60%	70%	+10
17	Use of foreign example and cases	40%	70%	+30

Research Question #3: Description of Evidence

RQ#3. What aspect of the training event had the greatest impact on the observed changes among the participant?

The first section of the post-test assessment questionnaire enjoined participants to look back at the twelve weeks contextual preaching training and place a value on it, in terms of their benefits and impact on their preaching ministry. The values were based on a five-point Likert scale with '1' as the "least valuable" and '5' as "most valuable" (Table 4:4)

Table 4:4 The value attributed to the elements of the Contextual Preaching Training

Va

Element of Training.		1	2	3	4	5
A	Content of training	3			2	20
B	Discussion / interaction				8	17
C	Application	2			3	20
D	Local theology of Preaching	1			1	23
E	Contextual Preaching methods	1			2	22
F	Understanding the Yoruba Context	2			2	21

G	How easy is it to apply sermons to context	7			7	12
H	How impactful is the training to your life	2			3	20
I	Presenting the gospel to different audience with different cultural settings.				5	20
J	Relating better to our context	3			2	20
K	Relating the text to the context of the listeners	2			2	21
L	Contextualization as a better tool to preaching the Yoruba Cultural Context of the Diocese of Ijebu South-West.	2			2	21
	Total	25	-	-	39	236

About 94% of the participants rated the elements of the training to be most valuable to them.

The responses from the Focus Group sessions and the participants weekly Journal also depicts the impact of the elements of the training programme. The responses ranged from the indifferent to the profoundly excited. One of the strongest responses came from a series of messages on the “local theology of preaching” as well as a comment about “relating the text to the context of the listeners”: The respondent said “the way you apply personal testimony to our daily life in the Yoruba cultural setting in conjunction with the scriptural message is very helpful to me and makes me identify with the contextual preaching method”. (FG:4).

“Participants Journal” observation on the effect of the training in contextual preaching

Table 4:5

Area of observation	Summary of comments from journal
Series on local theology of preaching and contextualization.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I now understand that preaching involves the act of translating God’s message from the biblical contexts to contemporary context. • The focus of interpreting scriptures must be Christ centered but within the cultural context. • Biblical messages must be presented within the listeners culture • Preaching can be made biblical and contextualized through exegesis and contextualization. • When preaching vides of the communication devices of a local context the audience understands better.
Contextual preaching methods.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Have become more aware of the way to communicate the gospel effectively in my context principles of bridging the world of the congregation – Amazing! - As I learnt the essential of the biblical text and the context
Yoruba cultural context.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - My eyes were really opened to the cultural antecedents of the Yoruba Christians.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Living as a Christian in the Yoruba context made easy for me.
Presenting the gospel to different audiences with different cultural setting.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - I found this week's presentations awesome and exciting - A thought-provoking series. It makes me to think very deeply on how to communicate the gospel more contextually among my people. - I was inspired to think differently about evangelism in my context.
Contextualization is a better tool for preaching in the Yoruba cultural context of the Diocese of Ijebu South-West.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Considering our challenges in the past, I think it is a way forward. - Members of our congregations will be more exposed to the scriptures if the method is adopted. - It is very easy to comprehend. - It is very imperative. a shift in paradigm. - The method will surely improve the quality of the gospel message and facilitate listeners' understanding.

The responses above conveyed the important value placed on the training programme by the participants.

Research Question 4: Description of Evidence.

RQ#4 – What elements of the model did the participants find out to be valuable and which ones were not practicable?

When asked “What aspects of the contextual preaching training programme were most valuable and helpful to you? (Post-Intervention Interview), the researcher identified the following themes and responses from the focus group discussion:

Focus Group Observation on the Contextual Preaching Training.

The goal of the twelve weeks contextual preaching training programme was to increase participants effectiveness in communicating God's truth within the Yoruba cultural context of the Diocese of Ijebu South-West, Nigeria. To that end the training focused on.

- Gaining an understanding of the Yoruba cultural context
- Clarifying and understanding the audience/listeners within the context.
- Contextual preaching – the process, building the bridge between the text and the audience (contextualization)

The Focus group discussions were extract feedbacks on the basic points of the training.

This was summarized in Table 4:6

Table 4:6

Areas of Observation	Summary of Observation
from the Focus Group	
1 Contextualization Preaching.	of ➤ The biblical text is interpreted in the light of the realities of the context. ➤ Contextualization is a necessity because it makes sermons richer and effective. ➤ It incorporates the context into the sermon design, content and delivery. ➤ It is designed to accentuate elements of the cultural context into the preaching of the gospel message.
2. Understanding the context of the Listeners/Audience	➤ The teachings established the reality of the human community with different antecedents. ➤ The realities of the context are analyzed and presented. ➤ The context of the Listeners provides the template for the proclamation.

responsibility as Christian in a particular social setting.

- Preaching should bear on the sociocultural context of the people. The image of the church is rooted in the local context that is multi-cultural, multi ethnic and inter-generational

5. Focus of the training – Effective contextual preaching in the Yoruba cultural context of the Diocese of Ijebu South-West.

- The focus group commented that they were sure that the contextual method of preaching will be effective in the context of the Yoruba cultural setting of the Diocese of Ijebu South West, taking into consideration the cultural antecedents of the context.
- The methodology of preaching contextually will annex and deeply correspond to the peoples’ construction of reality and cultural expression.
- Contextual preaching will make Christianity to be relevant to the Yoruba context as well as address the immediate and existential needs of the people.
- Preaching will be more authentic when it relates to the immediate struggle of the Yoruba people.

However, in the second aspect of the research question about what were not practicable, participants observed that the process of contextual preaching is a creative and challenging process. There is the temptation of speaking on behalf of the context without listening to the community, we must together (if we are not to assume) create a hermeneutic which is not found in any academic commentary, to produce an interpretation which will be appropriate in the context of preaching.

Contextual preaching is always returning participants to the text of scriptures as well as its context as they attempt to understand the message. It demands digging into the text and context

all the time and the results from the experience made be positive and may involve some frustrations. Furthermore, the nature of the context also experience change. There is a general identity crisis that impacts on the issue of the theological relationship between the Bible and the community. Our societies also face a moral crisis because as a people we struggle daily to redefine who we are, particularly in this era of transition and technological developments. There is the risk of context change. There are also the implications that are brought about by economic globalization which impacts the community. It affects contextual theologies because it changes values and concepts, marginalizes ethnical discourse and frees the individual from the community. Infact, poverty in the African (Yoruba) context is being globalized. The question of what is God doing in a world where we will not only always have the poor with us, but where the system will also multiply them and socially dissociate from them. Therefore, doing contextual preaching in such a context may be a major challenge for the preacher in the Ijebu cultural context of the Diocese of Ijebu South-West, Nigeria.

As I conclude this section of the project report, let me add that there are elements of “hidden transcript” (Scott, 161-164) in the Yoruba cultural context. What is hidden from the public domain is for good reason and can only be openly spoken in a context of trust and accountability. Hence in the Yoruba cultural context the intersection of community resources and the critical resources of biblical scholarship enables the recognizing, the recovering and the arousing of what is inchoate and incipient in the interpretations.

Some pointers to the changes in levels of attitudes, knowledge and behaviour of participants in the contextual preaching training.

On the whole, the researcher observed some important clue from the researcher designed intervention training programme that contributed significantly to the changes observed in the participants.

1. **The Structure of the Contextual Preaching Training Programme** – Some of the participants in the post-intervention response commended the structure of the programme and the schedules of the programme. They however wished the training could be extended to one year, so that they would have more time to practice the act of contextual preaching under the supervision of the researcher before going to the field of practice.
2. **The Content of the Training** – The quality of the content of the training contributed significantly to the observed changes in the attitude, knowledge and behaviour of the participants. The detailed lecture notes and the practical applications as well as the experiences shared, the responses observed were quality and impacting for them. Furthermore, the participants value greatly the “think pieces” “the journal observations” and the practical short sermons aspect of the training; according to many of them the sections were most impactful for their changes.
3. **Cooperation and Involvement of the Participants** – From the observation of the researcher himself, another major factor that contributed to the changes were the cooperation and sincere involvement of the participants. They were all ready to learn and appropriate this method of preaching; it was clearly shown that the participants were thirsty and desirous of the change in their preaching context. The enthusiasm of the

participants could be seen both in the pre-test and post-test involvement as well as their openness and sincerity during the Focus Group discussions.

Summary of Major Findings.

The data gathered from this project produced significant findings on the matter of contextual preaching in the Yoruba cultural context of Ijebu South-West. The findings may be relevant to any Christian church which is open to the use of contextual preaching. Some of the findings includes:

1. A preaching that will be meaningful must engage with the cultural context of the people.
2. Effective proclamation of the gospel will be achieved if the cultural experiences and identity of the Yorubas are accommodated.
3. Contextual preaching is a very good tool in presenting the biblical message to the audience/listeners in the Yoruba cultural context of the Diocese of Ijebu South-West.
4. The contextual preaching training done among clergy and lay pastors in the Diocese of Ijebu South-West has the capacity to increase the effectiveness of contextual preaching and produce changes in the attitude, knowledge and behaviour of participants.

The implications of this findings to the contemporary preachers will be further discussed in chapter five.

CHAPTER 5

LEARNING REPORT FOR THE PROJECT

Overview of the chapter

Noticeably, traditional African context is not the same as contemporary Africa. The social, political, economic, philosophical, traditional and religious framework of African societies and communities had changed considerably because of the rise in secular education, post-modernism, western philosophies and ideologies.

The cultural context had issues that preaching had to deal with, if it has to be relevant in the context. It had to contest with altercations, addressing exigency and articulate beliefs of the people if Christianity would thrive and make disciples. Preachers in the 21st century African (and indeed Yoruba) context should be aware of the cultural context and take advantage of it.

The purpose of this research was to measure the changes in knowledge, attitude and behaviour among clergy and lay pastors from the Anglican Diocese of Ijebu South-West, Nigeria who participated in a twelve-week training event on contextual preaching.

This chapter will annex the previous chapters that laid out the research methodology, the details of the project, and the findings of the study. The chapter discusses the summary of the findings and observations.

Major Findings

1. Preaching and Cultural Context.

A preaching that will be meaningful must engage with the cultural context of the people. Kurewa (137-145) identified what has characterized preaching in Africa to include preaching as participatory, preaching with the Bible, preaching without notes, storytelling, and preaching that addresses the whole person with the whole gospel.

Leonora Tubbs paraphrasing Walter Brueggeman remarked that “a Biblical text and its meaning never simply exist; they are always being produced through the engagement by a community with that text, from the initial canonical formation of the text, to its interpretation by the preacher, to its recognition and hearing by the congregation, meaning is being created and recreated” (Tisdale Leonora Tubbs. 22). Preaching conveys the mind of God through the preacher to his people, but the people live within a particular context and culture. A preaching message that is not decoded within the cultural context of the people is as good as a message lost in the air. There is the need for an effective preaching to understand the characteristic features and antecedents of the people in form of language, worldview, antiquities, arts, literature, music and dance among others. What imageries metaphors, proverbs, idioms are of best use to pass across a message to them?

During the research, the majority of the participants agreed that the biblical text must be interpreted in the light of the realities of the context. Hence the sociological consideration of the context must be taken into serious thought if preaching is to be relevant to the people. In the Yoruba context, apart from the influence of urbanization, globalization, post-modernism and the likes; there are other factors that affects the social outlook of the context; such as poverty, terrorism, corruption, syncretism, diseases and epidemics (like HIV and AIDS, Ebola), ethnic crisis, etc. A preaching in the Ijebu cultural context that neglects the issue of poverty may not be considered as complete in its interpretation of the context. Poverty in the context and its effects on the people are not hidden and the evidences of its effects is a recurrent factor that the people grapples with on a daily basis. Hence, a proper understanding of the climate for preaching in the Ijebu cultural context must include the comprehension of poverty in Yorubaland and preachers in the context should be aware of it and include the same in their interpretation of the scriptures.

Also in understanding the Yoruba context of Nigeria, the preacher needs an understanding of the tribal, ethnic and religious antecedents of the context. Eventhough, many indigenous churches had attempt to bridge the gap but nothing substantial has been done to critically look at the preaching styles and how they logically present the biblical truth to the contemporary world of the people. Lack of knowledge of important hermeneutical principles makes this efforts shaky and imperfect. What should preaching look like in this context? What kind of preaching would adequately and effectively address the people in their current situation. A preaching that will be effective in the context must be the one that uses God's word to meet the needs of the Yoruba. Bediako said "Too often, preachers tend to pick a particular text and use it as a launch pad for presenting their own ideas, but apostolic preaching was not like that; it presented the meaning of scripture as a whole and applied that meaning to the concrete cultural and social situation of the hearers. That is what we have to do if scripture is to be the road map for getting us to our destination" (Bediako 3-4). Therefore, for preaching to be relevant in the Ijebu cultural context of this project, it must research further and further into the culture of the people and develop the best principles or method for communication through preaching. The preacher like our Lord Jesus Christ in Luke 4:18 must within the cultural context give healing to the broken-hearted, proclaim liberty to the captives, recovery of sight to the blind, set at liberty those who are oppressed and proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord. This in the words of Ezekiel Ajibade is what African Christian preaching must take care of. (Ajibade, 10). There is the need to continually situate the biblical message in its context, whether it's historical, sociological, literary and narrative context or its thematic and symbolic context (West 77). The preacher must situate himself in the context for a mutual dialogue to take place between him and the context.

2. Utilization of Yoruba (Ijebu) cultural Elements in preaching

Another major finding of this research was that if effective proclamation of the gospel will be achieved in the Ijebu cultural context, the cultural experiences and identity must be accommodated. There are several elements of the Yoruba cultural tradition and culture such as legend, sayings, proverbs and poems that are able to enrich the work of preaching in the context. This local elements in sermon making possess the ability of renewing the proclamation and hearing of the message of the preacher. Let me share two examples in my context about the use of local elements in sermon. The Bishop of Egba-West of the church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) is a doyen of Yoruba proverbs and legendary, and he is used to applying such in his sermons. One discovers that a lot of people love to listen to him preach and his sermons are well understood and interesting. Also in my preaching ministry, I discovered that members of the congregation are more excited and happy anytime I preach in the local language using the real Ijebu dialect. Much of preaching materials today is thought out in the context of Western culture and the theology arising from them very often does not have anything to say in the cultural context of the people, especially in its use of language, illustrations and examples which has no power to inspire. The proclamation of the Gospel could be more effective when it accommodates the ontology, metanarrative and thought forms of the Yoruba people. According to Tisdale “as the preacher becomes more aware of the congregational subcultures, he/she becomes more aware of the ways in which the theology and art of the sermon can prohibit a genuine hearing of the gospel message”. (Tisdale, 37). The utilization of local elements of the cultural context in preaching results in the harmonization of African (Yoruba) and biblical traditions (Mbiti, 28).

In the early mainline churches of Ijebu cultural context, one of the deficiency in their preaching at that time was their inability to harmonize biblical text to the Yoruba context. Consequently according to Akinyele Omoyajowo, their preaching fostered spiritual elitism that attracted scholars and repelled common folks (Omoyajowo 97). Moreover, the incorporation of the elements of the traditional cultural system into the preaching of the indigenous churches, was captured by Komolafe as follows:

“The Aladura read scripture in a certain way, so persistently, infact, that this indigenous reading has become the templates through which they view all of scriptures. Unlike the mission churches, the Aladura are not merely given to an intellectual systematization of scripture. Rather, their reading and interpretation of scripture are conditioned by presuppositions arising out of their cultural context and how it speaks into their life situation. While we can claim that the scripture is central to their beliefs and practices, it is nonetheless a theological reflection largely influenced by their local situation (Komolafe, 133).

According to Jonathan Drapper society depends on a world of meaning that has hegemonic force, precisely because it is not stated but assumed; then the common assumptions under which cultures operate when they are not challenged and metonymic referencing: the Word, concepts and phrases which stand for much wider common cultural systems, par, pro, toto, even when they are not fully understood by the user (Draper 49-50). The language of the context should be incorporated to give the sermon more understanding. When the preacher engages in translating and interpreting the scriptures in the vernacular, it opens the preaching the opportunity to engage with the context. In Yorubaland the earliest indigenous churches provided translations in the language of the people and never underrate the language of the locals in their

ministry. The use of the local language will give preaching direct access to all the people in the context both illiterate and literates in a more familiar way.

Other local resources if incorporated into the journey of preaching may also play significant roles in contextual interpretation. Yoruba wisdom tradition, legends and proverbs are key elements used in teaching and counseling. These proverbs may be recorded in variant forms with dynamic interpretations based on the message to be passed and the situation involved. Silvanus Udoidem (quoted in the Bible in Africa) gave a definition of the way in which proverb traditions work and how they are used as the basis for reflection:

“A proverb serves as an occasion for creative reflection; it is a framework for collaborative and contributive creativity both for the speaker (preacher) and listener. The former gains a new insight into the given situation that necessitates the application of a particular proverb. For the latter this provides a frame for reflection, creative insight and an awareness of a new reality” (cited in Paris 1995; 147, Shorter 1996, 87-94).

An additional element of the Yoruba (Ijebu) cultural context that may be used to enhance preaching in the context are songs and Hymns, poems and poetry as well as rhymes from local women. Songs and hymns are effective tools in passing across the gospel message in the Ijebu cultural context, as many of the people love to listen to music. It is note worthy that what is not read in books and or Newspapers are easily communicated and passed to the community through music. In the Yoruba (Ijebu) traditional system, kings and leaders diffuse information mostly through the use of town criers and public musicians. They are used in evangelism and revival programmes. Although most churches use the songs and hymns in written forms, they are oral forms of communication. A further element that is very unique for effective proclamation of the gospel in the Yoruba (Ijebu) cultural context is the vernacularisation of scripture and Yoruba

beliefs. The activities relating to the vernacularisation of scripture and its impact on Yoruba beliefs in Ijebuland. When the preacher decides to communicate the gospel through the use of vernacular, it will help to incarnate biblical portrayals of reality into the Yoruba (Ijebu) culture and impact on their perceptions about Christianity. According to Lamin Sanneh, “Vernacularisation will usher in a fundamental religious revolution, with new religious structures coming into being to preside over the changes” (Sanneh, 159).

When preaching involves the vernacular, one of the most noticeable changes will be mass participation of the Yorubas in the process, people will start to understand the message of the scriptures and in the words of Sanneh “the God of the ancestors will be assimilated accordingly into the Yahweh of ancient Israel and the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ (Sanneh 160). He further stressed that “as long as missionaries (preachers) were committed to translation, so long would vernacular concepts and usage combine to determine the assimilation of Christianity, including the understanding of God by more inclusive criteria” (Sanneh 166). The greatest challenge to the preacher in the Yoruba (Ijebu) cultural context is to be attentive to the deepest and profound concerns of the community; and to address these focal concerns by engaging the biblical message in a relevant manner and to be sensitive to the ‘times and seasons’ in the life of the community (Stulman 5). The problem in the contemporary preaching is that too often, preachers work in isolation from the context, neglecting what the listeners expect or comprehend in the scriptures. For preachers in the Ijebu cultural context of the Diocese of Ijebu South West, Nigeria to be able to bridge the gap between the audience of the congregation and the preachers, there is the need to adopt a simple but contextualized methodology. And one way of solving this problem or closing this gap is to incorporate the elements of the cultural context in the preaching process.

3. A New Preaching Matrix

The third observation that can be summarized from the research is the consideration of a new preaching model for the Diocese of Ijebu South-West, Nigeria. If biblical preaching is truly incarnational preaching, then preachers need to experience a living encounter with the Word of God and the context of the hearers. If biblical communicators are going to attain the level where God speaks into the darkness and gives light and life then; contextual preaching should be considered a resource for effective Preaching in the Diocese of Ijebu South – West, Nigeria.

Having examined the Yoruba (Ijebu) cultural context and the elements of the culture that could be incorporated into the preaching process, the research opined that contextual preaching could be a resource for effective preaching in the Diocese of Ijebu South-West, Nigeria.

Gerald West said “methodologically, “Contextual Bible Study” (in this case contextual preaching). Begins with, but admits to more than the contextual nature of all interpretation (West 596). David Tracy opined that “there is no innocent interpretation no innocent interpreter, no innocent text” (Tracy, 79). Contextual preaching embraces and advocates context. Commitment to, rather than cognizance of context is the real concern of contextual preaching.

It is a known fact that all humans take our contexts with us everywhere we go and into everything we do. we are most times formed and configured by our contexts. Preachers must recognize the fact that we are also influenced by our contexts in the way read and understand the gospel message. This had always been the case, but it had not always been accepted. Contextual preaching admits the fact that we are shaped by our race, culture, gender, class, and that these elements influence our interpretation of the Bible, our understanding and also influenced our responses to the gospel message. And like any context, Christians in the Diocese of Ijebu South-West, Nigeria have been affected by the Yoruba (Ijebu) cultural context and it has influenced

their attitude to the proclamation of the gospel. The state of preaching in the Diocese of Ijebu South-West gathered from the pre-test assessment survey of the participants clearly showed that many of the preachers came from the background of seminary preaching that is mostly Western and orthodox. A few though claimed to be involved in expository preaching (Evangelicals) others among the participants were theologically untrained, and so they preach sermons that were not relevant to the context, sermons about prosperity, morals and the like.

In the light of the findings, the research proposed to introduce contextual preaching as a resource/model for effective preaching in the Diocese. Contextual preaching will be able to give a balance between the scriptures and the context of the hearers. The goal according to Fred Craddock is not to get something said but to get something heard (Craddock 167). The preacher within the Ijebu cultural context should be concerned about the methodology to adopt for his audience to hear and understand his message, and also be able to relate to the message of the gospel in their context and adequately respond to the same.

Contextual preaching will be a good resource for effective preaching in the Diocese of Ijebu South-West as it will wipe out wrong beliefs and opinions about the culture of the Ijebus as well as remove wrong assumptions about Christian beliefs. Rick Ezell alleged that “many Christian public speakers (preachers) fail to connect with their audiences because they have a wrong notion of what their listeners need, these sincere but ineffective preachers have no idea what struggles and successes, joys and pains their listeners have” (Ezell 9). In the context of the Ijebu (Yoruba) which is a diverse society, it is very important for the preachers to understand the terrain and use contextual methods of preaching to sink down his message. The insistence on contextual preaching that puts into consideration the context of the audience and the listening community is not simply a bureaucratic ploy, it rests upon the basic understanding that there are no neutral or absolute meaning of a biblical text or for any human communication. Furthermore, the Apostles of old like Paul wrote his letters to particular communities at Rome, Corinth and so

on. There is the need to be informed about the way in which our common assumptions about society distort our ability to hear a message from another society (in the case the one spoken two thousand years ago). Thus, contextual preaching focuses specifically on the analysis and evaluation of the context of the audience or listeners of today; it is also open to many tools that can be helpful in opening us up to our context. On the whole, looking at the challenges around us in the Ijebu cultural context of the Diocese of Ijebu South-West, Nigeria; such as cultural revival, religious crisis and the challenge of Islam, there is as much need now for a truly biblical theology that can relate effectively with the context of the people, which will be both prophetic and transformative. I suggest context preaching model.

4. **Contextual Preaching and Attitudinal Change**

In the contemporary world, there has been a lot of revival in the discipline of preaching but despite all these, people are asking different questions about the message of the gospel each day. As people both in the church and outside the church face different situations and ask different questions, preachers in today's world must be knowledgeable and well informed about the changes in contexts and the emergence on a daily basis of new contexts. Preachers must be aware of the old scores and new notes; they must understand the where and what of contextual exegesis in the new world. Preachers cannot continue to deliver the same old message and keep using old illustrations and examples in the new generation. It is no exaggeration that one unique danger of preaching today is that of being irrelevant to the hearers and their context. The question then as opined by John Stott is not whether Christianity is true, but whether it is relevant (Stott, 138). In the Yoruba (Ijebu) context of this research the issue is not the truthfulness of the gospel message or Christianity but the relevance of the same to the people.

For the gospel message to affect the attitude of the people and be relevant to them, sermons to be preached must be sensitive to the context of the listeners. Thus, contextual preaching which is the focus of this dissertation is able to bring attitudinal change in the lives of the congregation of the Diocese of Ijebu South-West, Nigeria. It is a model that makes the preacher to be faithful to the scripture and also relevant to the hearers in their context. The question may be asked in general terms that “Why is a sermon effective and able to bring transformation in one cultural setting and fail in others? The answer is basically hinged on the fact that each hearer is different and possesses different experiences and value system. Sellnow said “everything the speaker says and does is filtered through the listener’s frame of reference, made up of his or her goals, knowledge, experiences, values and attitudes (Sellnow, 16).

The goals for an Yoruba (Ijebu) Christian preaching are that of an effective proclamation of the gospel and communicating in a language of the Yoruba context. It is in the words of John Stott “conveying of a God-given message to living people who need to hear it” (Stott, 137); in anticipation of a result of genuine Christianity and obtaining a transformative praxis.

On the whole as we conclude our conversation on the research findings, looking at preaching from the angle of the scriptures and with our eyes also focused on the social and cultural context of the Yoruba (Ijebu) Christians, it must be pointed out clearly that no biblical text is specially marked out for a particular subject matter as we have more than one meaning depending on the social location of the audience. Thus, contextual preaching is the interpretation of human experiences within their culture in the light of the re-interpretation of the gospel stories. It is to bring the bible into our place. The message of the scriptures (God’s Word) can provide potent resources for change, for reaction or for transformation, depending on how it is presented in the

course of preaching. There is as much need now for a truly biblical preaching related to the Yoruba (Ijebu) context of the research which is both prophetic and transformative.

Ministry Implications of the Findings

What are the implications of the findings of this research on the ministry of preaching in the Diocese of Ijebu South-West, Nigeria and indeed the entire Christian ministry? What should be the attitude of preachers in the 21st century Yoruba (Ijebu) context? The contemporary homiletic must think on both globalization and localization to be effective and the study was focused on the Yoruba (Ijebu) contextual preaching within the church using the Diocese of Ijebu South-West as a case study. It proposed a model of contextual preaching for the Diocese.

1. The first implication of the findings of this research is that of **identification**. Preachers need to identify and connect with their listeners; they must empathize with them in their context. The cultural gap should be closed entirely, such that the congregants will see the preachers as part of them and not strangers who had only come to preach about a foreign god to them. Preachers need to de-emphasize other cultural settings and promote the cultural values in the context of their listeners. Even though Christianity was brought to the Yoruba (Ijebu) cultural nation wearing the garments of Western Culture or using the words of Wesley Ariarajah that “the gospel had been brought to the nation as a plant, with the pot being western culture” (Ariarajah 1995:13); preachers must now transfer the same plant into the soil (context) of the people.

Preachers should seek to also identify the presence of Africans and African people in the Bible as well as examine their contributions in biblical history (Ukpong 16). Charles Taber puts it more clearly in his definition of contextualization:

“Contextualization... is the effort to understand and take seriously the specific context of each human group and person on its own terms and in all its dimensions, cultural, religious, social, political, economic – and to discern what the Gospel says to people in that context. This requires a profound empirical analysis of the context in place of flippant or a prior judgment... contextualization tries to discover what the scripture is saying to these people. In other words, contextualization takes very seriously the example of Jesus in the sensitive and careful way he offered each person a Gospel tailored to his/her own context (Taber, 146).

Apostle Paul in I Corinthians 9:19-23 said *“For though I be free from all men, yet have I made myself servant unto all, that I might gain the more. And unto the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews; to them that are under the law, as under the law, that I might gain them that are under the law; to them that are without law, as without law, (being not without law to God, but under the law to Christ), that I might gain them that are without law. To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak: I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some. And this I do for the gospel’s sake, that I might be partaker thereof with you”*. Paul’s ministry was a success because he was always identifying with his audience.

2. Another implication for ministry from the findings of this research had to do with **involvement**. People of the specific context must be included in the business of preaching, together with the cultural elements from the context such as songs, proverbs, liturgy, hymns, and so on. Local theologies of the context should also be intensified and applied. This will provide a way for the church within the context to voice its unique heritage and to revitalize preaching.
3. Drawing insight from Kehinde Olusanya a lecturer in the department of theology, Nigerian Baptist Theological seminary, Ogbomoso, Nigerian, the researcher will like to posit that preachers in the Yoruba 21st Century context must **disciple their audience**.

According to Dong Pagitt “the end of preaching is the transformation of communities to become the people of God (Pagitt, 18) the need for preachers in the Yoruba (Ijebu) cultural context to think about discipleship being part of the goal for preaching the word of God is very apt at this time.

4. For preachers who do not use contextual preaching model, they need to consider adding it to their preaching toolbox. The findings also indicate that there is going to be more contextual preachers in the Diocese of Ijebu South-West, Nigeria. The preachers will also promote contextual preaching in the whole of Ijebu land both as mentors and models.
5. Modeling the message is also a great tool of contextual preaching. Phillip Brooks’ definition of preaching as “the communication of truth through personality” readily comes to mind (Brooks, 5), the life of preachers should exemplify all that he/she preaches because in the Yoruba (Ijebu) cultural context, people learn by imitation and the impact and effectiveness of the message will be more if seen in the life style of the preacher.
6. The implication for ordination training in our Anglican seminaries in Nigeria creates the need to re-examine and analyze courses on homiletics to include contextual preaching. In the course of the research, I was invited to two of the colleges, Archbishop vining Theological College, Akure and Immanuel College, Ibadan to introduce the students to contextual preaching. I also teach the course at the Crowther graduate seminary, Abeokuta.

Limitations of the Study

The first noticeable limitation was time restraint. The training in contextual preaching was done over a period of twelve weeks, whereas most participants wanted an extension to be able to

do more practical classes of preaching. In addition, some of the participants opined that we could have extended the training to other Dioceses within the Ijebu Cultural context and not only Ijebu South-West Diocese.

But then, if I were to conduct this study again, more time will be allotted and the participation extended to other Dioceses, I believe this was indeed a test case. The instrumentation was adequate and provided us with quality data analysis.

Unexpected Observations

One unexpected observation was that the researcher doubles as the Bishop of the Diocese of Ijebu South-West, Nigeria. Even though, I tried to make participants free to express their opinions and ideas, a few were constrained by my person. Furthermore, in my context, people find it difficult to disobey the Bishop and so at the end I have the feelings that participants may be thinking that the Bishop is making them preach contextual sermons.

Recommendation

In future, the study could adopt the following for a better participation:

1. Extend the programme to six months or one solid year of training.
2. Introduce more practicals to the training, where in participants could practice what they have learnt.
3. The Bishop should use other trainers and then evaluate the programme personally.
4. In a future study the population of the participants could be increased to accommodate pastors from other Dioceses.

Postscript

I give all the Glory, honour and adoration to God Almighty for the grace to do this research. I have learn't a lot from my coach and the participants. It's been quite exciting and educative for me. I wish I could do more in future.

APPENDIXES

A. **Diocese of Ijebu South West Contextual Preaching Syllabus.**

Course Description: This course provides a contextual mode for preaching in the Ijebu Cultural context. It expands participants understanding of the practice of preaching.

Course Schedule (Outline of Sessions):

1. Foundations – Introduction, Course design, purpose and expectations.
2. Pre-test assessment survey.
3. Preaching – What is it and why preach.
4. (a) Preaching as a Divine Assignment and
(b) The Call of the Preacher
5. The Audience/Congregation and their socio-cultural context.
 - a. Cultural antecedents of the Ijebu people of Southern – Nigeria.
 - b. The traditions of the Christian people.
- 6 Our Context – Understanding the Audience.
- 7 Introduction to Contextualization.
- 8 Why contextualization in Preaching?
- 9 The role of congregational culture in sermonic theologizing.
- 10 Contextual Preaching: Understanding the process, building the bridge between the text and audience.
- 11 The preaching that is more intentionally contextual in nature (Tisdale) – process, bridge-building between Text and Context.
- 12 The Pastor as a Local Theologian:
 - (a) Models of contextual Preaching

(b) Ijebu cultural Context and models of contextual preaching

(c) Developing an effective model of contemporary preaching in the Ijebu cultural Context.

13. Contextual Preaching –Preaching Time. (Practical Sermons and Reflections).

14. Conclusion and Post class reflections.

B. Preacher's Foundation (PF)**Pre-Test Assessment Questionnaire.**

This assessment questionnaire is to test your understanding of the nature of preaching from your previous study of homiletics and your practice of preaching.

A. Demographic Data (Please Tick as appropriate)

1. Age -
20 - 35
36 - 45
46 - 55
55 - 60
60 and above
2. Christian Experience (Years)
10 - 15
20 - 30
31 - 50
50 and above
3. Preaching Experience (In Years)
5 - 10
10 - 15
20 - 25
25 - 30
30 and above

4. Preaching Frequency

Once a Week

Once a Month

Twice a Week

Twice Monthly

Others (specify) _____

5. Education Level

Graduate

Diploma

Licentiate

Others (specify) _____

B. Please circle the number that agrees with your opinion.

5 – Strongly Agree

4 – Agree

3 – Neither Agree nor disagree

2 – Disagree

1 – Strongly Disagree

1. Preaching is a calling in church ministry – 1 2 3 4 5

2. Preaching is to be recognized as a special gift in ministry 1 2 3 4 5

3. Preaching is the presentation of the gospel of Jesus Christ and calling people to decision.

1 2 3 4 5

4. Preaching is the presentation of the gospel to different audiences in different cultural

settings. 1 2 3 4 5

5. Communication is an essential tool in presenting the essential principles of the gospel to those we witness to in our ministries. 1 2 3 4 5
6. Preaching is speaking the truth of the gospel through the preachers' personality. 1 2 3 4 5
7. Sermon preparation is a very simple task in my ministry experience. 1 2 3 4 5
8. Special training in sermon preparation and delivery is a very necessary tool in the preaching ministry. 1 2 3 4 5
9. The Feedback from the audience shows their understanding of the sermon and its message. 1 2 3 4 5
10. Understanding the context of the hearers should be part of sermon preparation. 1 2 3 4 5
11. Preaching a contextual sermon will impact the audience's understanding of the biblical message. 1 2 3 4 5
12. Seminary training in homiletics is an adequate tool for preaching in any cultural context, a preacher finds himself or herself. 1 2 3 4 5
13. There are many styles of preaching, but the contextual method of preaching is best. 1 2 3 4 5
14. The ministry of our Lord Jesus Christ and his Apostles was to different audiences and different cultures. 1 2 3 4 5
15. Since there are different audiences with different cultural settings in the contemporary world, a method of preaching that will effectively communicate the gospel within any cultural setting is imperative. 1 2 3 4 5

16. Contextual Preaching model is very important and necessary to effectively communicate the gospel in the Yoruba Cultural Context of the Diocese of Ijebu South-West. 1 2 3 4 5
17. A good sermon should relate the text of the scripture to the context of the listeners to be more effective and impactful. 1 2 3 4 5
18. Contextual Preaching is not about teaching an old dog new tricks', but it is about acknowledging that we live in a changing world and that we need to take seriously the context of our time and place. 1 2 3 4 5
19. Looking at the changes in the global world of today, effective communication of the gospel message requires a special method of contextualization. 1 2 3 4 5
20. Contextualization of the gospel message is an essential tool to global evangelization in the 21st century. 1 2 3 4 5
21. The eloquence of preaching is not the answer for the audience to understand the gospel message but the contextual application of the gospel. 1 2 3 4 5

C. Please answer Yes / No to this question.

1. Do you feel confident in your ability to Preach?
2. Do you sometimes wish you had more training in preaching?
3. Does the feedback you get from your congregation show their understanding of your message?
4. Does the context motivate your choice of text when you preach?
5. Do you consider the context of the congregation when preparing your sermon?
6. Do you always relate the text of your sermon to the audience?

D.

1. What is your understanding of preaching within your context?

2. What challenges do you face in preaching in the Ijebu Cultural Context of the Diocese of Ijebu South-West?

3. What are your weaknesses when it comes to preaching?

C. Preachers' Assessment Record. (PAR)

Post – Test Assessment Questionnaire.

A. As you look back on the twelve weeks contextual preaching training, place a value on each of the following elements in terms of their benefit and impact on your preaching ministry.

(1 – Least valuable, 5 – most valuable)

- a. Content of training – 1 2 3 4 5
- b. Discussion / interaction – 1 2 3 4 5
- c. Application – 1 2 3 4 5
- d. Local Theology of Preaching – 1 2 3 4 5
- e. Contextual Preaching methods – 1 2 3 4 5
- f. Understanding the Yoruba Context – 1 2 3 4 5
- g. How easy is it to apply sermons to context – 1 2 3 4 5
- h. How impactful is the training to your life? – 1 2 3 4 5
- i. Presenting the gospel to different audience with different cultural settings. 1 2 3 4 5
- j. Relating better to our context – 1 2 3 4 5
- k. Relating the text to the context of the listeners. – 1 2 3 4 5
- l. Contextualization as a better tool to preaching in the Yoruba Cultural Context of the Diocese of Ijebu South-West. 1 2 3 4 5.

B.

- i. What particularly stood out for you as valuable in the contextual preaching programme?

- ii. What was the least valuable for you?

iii. What are you still uncertain about?

iv. How does this training change your perception about preaching?

v. What will you do differently after this training?

vi. In what areas of your ministry do you foresee an improvement after this training?

vii. Do you think this model of contextual preaching will impact the audiences understanding of the Biblical message?

viii. How has your preaching changed after the training?

D. Diocese of Ijebu South-West Preachers' Interview (DISWPI)
(Focus Group)

The Goal

The goal of this twelve weeks contextual preaching training programme was to increase our effectiveness in communication God's truth within the Yoruba Cultural Context of the Diocese of Ijebu South-West.

To that end we focused on...

- Gaining an understanding of our Yoruba Cultural Context.
- Clarifying and understanding the audience within our culture.
- A brief introduction to contextual preaching – understanding the process, building the bridge between the text and audience contextualization.
- Garnering feedback weekly from the participants' journal.

Questions:

Your evaluation and feedback is a valuable part of this project. It provides a critical understanding on what were most beneficial, effective, and/or weak. Please feel free to express your perspective; your comments will only help me better analyses the impactfulness or lack thereof, of the contextual preaching programme.

1. As you look back over the twelve weeks, what have been the two or three greatest learning points for you.
 - a. What stood out for you as particularly valuable?
 - b. What was the least valuable for you?
2. Given the focus of this training – effective – contextual preaching in the Yoruba cultural context of the Diocese of Ijebu South-West. What would you have liked to see more of?

3. Looking at contextualization, do you think you have an understanding of it and how it relates to the audience in your context? What are you still uncertain about?
4. Of the twelve sessions, what part(s) of it was more beneficial for you?
5. What part (s) of the sessions was the least beneficial? Explain.
6. What could be improved on in the sessions?
7. Do you feel that your own preaching has been affected and impacted gaining new insights by the training? Yes/No. In what ways.
8. As you look at the whole training programme the purpose and the sessions. What could be done to make it more effective? How could it be improved?

E.

Babatunde Ogunbanwo
Otunba Oduniyi Road,
Off Awolowo Avenue,
Odogbolu.
Ogun State, Nigeria.

Letter of informed consent

Dear Brother,

As you know I am working on my dissertation project as part of my studies at Asbury Seminary through the Beeson School of Practical Theology, Wilmore, Kentucky. The project is titled: *Contextual Preaching: a model for effective impact on the Socio-Cultural living of Christians in the Anglican Diocese of Ijebu South/West, Nigeria*. The first three chapters of the dissertation have been completed and approved by my dissertation committee. Now is the time to initiate the research dimension of my project that involves taking a group of clergies through a twelve weeks contextual preaching training programme. The purpose of this study is to develop, implement, and evaluate a contextual mentoring preaching program (CPP) that enables preachers to effectively communicate within the Yoruba cultural context of the Diocese of Ijebu South West.

As we discussed earlier, our mutual interest in this topic provides us with an opportunity to sharpen our skills and hopefully become more effective in our kingdom service. I am convinced that the challenge of preaching is as great as it has ever been. While we have been well served in our colleges and seminaries with the equipping of biblical exegesis skills, we often fall short in our ability to communicate effectively within this our cultural context. To that end the CPP will endeavor to take a group of like-minded participants like yourself through a twelve weeks course

that introduces them to contextual preaching. As part of the course, participants will be asked to apply what they are learning within their ministry context.

The CPP is a twelve-week program that involves a day seminar each week, April 2018 to July 2019. At each day seminar I will guide the learning toward the understanding and application of contextual preaching model.

The data collected for my project will come through by observations of the individuals dialogue, feedback from the various participants in regards to their participants journal, pre and posttest assessment, focus groups, the seminar discussions, and my overall impressions of the program. Upon completion of my dissertation, all the data and transcripts will be kept in confidentiality outside the purposes of the dissertation.

In choosing you to participate in this CPP, it is understood that it is solely on a volunteer basis. While your total commitment to the seminars, out-of-class readings, evaluations, and field applications are beneficial, you are welcome to step away from any or all of the program at your discretion. In addition, if you have any questions along the way, I would be happy to respond to them.

If you are willing to participate with me in this study, please sign and date this letter below to indicate your voluntary participation.

Sincerely,

Babatunde Ogunbanwo

I volunteer to participate in the study entitled contextual Preaching: a model for effective impact on the Socio-Cultural living of Christians in the Anglican Diocese of Ijebu South/West, Nigeria, with Babatunde Ogunbanwo as the facilitator and researcher. I herein commit myself to the best of my ability to the twelve weeks program outlined above, and give permission to be

quoted, in part or in whole, directly or indirectly, with the understanding that my anonymity will be maintained unless further permission is specifically obtained.

Print Name

Sign Name

Date

Researcher

Date

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