

## RELIGIOUS FANATICISM AND GLOBAL PEACE

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### **Abstract**

The research examined religious fanaticism and its consequences on global peace. Fanaticism is the practice of religious beliefs to the extreme. It is an uncontrolled exercise of faith which goes beyond the limit set by a particular religion. Fanatics show excess enthusiasm in the implementation of the tenets of their religion at the detriment of peace and order in the world. They have also made the world restless which accounts for the incessant elusive search for peace across the globe. The work investigated on fanaticism in order to examine various ways fanaticism has been a responsible factor for global restiveness, with the aim of proffering solutions that will help to reduce global religious uprisings and usher in global peace. Phenomenological method was used and the work was descriptive and analytical. The study covered Christianity, Islam and Christianity. Fanaticism is born out of wrong doctrines, excess enthusiasm, superficiality of religious doctrines, ethnocentricism and superiority complex. These have been the remote causes of most of the global wars and restiveness. In conclusion, man is inherently fanatical. Although, fanaticism can be controlled by applying moderation in the practice of religious faith. It is only when this is done that peace can be restored which is a vital ingredient for co-existence, growth and development.

### **INTRODUCTION**

The writer researched on religious fanaticism and its negative effects on the global peace. Usually, every religion claims to be peaceful, perhaps owing to the necessity of peace in the society in particular and the world in general. Despite the fact that every religion claims to be peaceful and prays for peace, yet there are wars, conflicts, violence, insurgency all over the world. It seems that religions in the world have not realized that some of their doctrines are incompatible with the realization of peace in the world. Unfortunately, some of the adherents of these religions have capitalized on the weaknesses of these religious doctrines, particularly the ones that support violence to perpetrate grievous havoc to the society which has resulted to the

incessant wars in the world today. Therefore, there is the necessity to investigate on fanaticism and various ways it has contributed to the incessant wars that have tormented the world, so that religions concerned will checkmate the rate of fanaticism in their midst, for the world to experience peace and tranquility. Phenomenological approach was used to ensure that objectivity was maintained. The work was both descriptive and analytical.

### **The Concept of Religion**

Tillich (1965:2) stated that religion is “ultimate concern”. But the weakness of this definition is that it is not succinct and comprehensive. However, religion as ultimate concern means that religion deals with man’s relationship with the ultimate being. It must be stated that religion is concerned with the deity who is the object of worship. Therefore, adherents of religion draw their inspiration from the Supreme being. The ultimate goal of the adherents of religion begins and ends with the deity. Ugwu and Ugwueye (2004:3) insisted that religion is the relationship between a religious person and what he believes in as the sacred. In this case, religion is not limited to the conventional meaning of religion, rather anything can be regarded as the sacred no matter its secular or religious leaning. People worship a lot of things in the name of religion. Religion is whatever that claims the greater percentage of one’s love, devotion and relationship. Every relationship carries moral responsibility. The relationship between man and the Supreme being is not an abstract relationship, rather it is a living relationship in which rules and regulations that guide the relationship are carefully spelt out in clear terms. Madu (1996:19) asserted that religion consists of moral relations that exist between God and man in which man expresses a sense of guilt whenever he fails to keep the moral rules. Therefore, man does everything possible to abide by the rules that regulate his relationship with the Supreme being in order to avert the wrath of the supreme being. Iwuagwu (1998:18) posited that religion is “man’s quest for God, and of God’s revelation of himself to man”. Religion is an expression of man’s unquenchable desire to be in communion with God. The communion between God and man is strengthened by man’s fellowship with God through worship and rituals.

William James defined religion psychologically when he opined that religion is “the feelings, acts, and experiences of individual men in their solitude, so far as they apprehend themselves to stand in relation to whatever they may consider the divine”. Religion covers the psychological dimension of men by taking human feelings, acts and experiences into account. Talcott parsons sees religion as social accumulation of beliefs, practices and institutions that originated in the past. In this case, religion is viewed in its wholistic perspective. Herbert Spencer averred that religion is “the recognition that all things are manifestations of a power which transcends our

knowledge”( Hick 1997:2). Religion does not end only in recognizing the power that is beyond human understanding, but it also goes to the extent of worshipping the power that transcends human knowledge. There is no gainsaying that the adherents of religion in a bid to maintain the relationship between them and the supreme being may violate the principle of moderation that leads to recklessness, excesses, extremism, rascality and violence.

### **Fanaticism and Religious Beliefs**

Sutherland (1983:209) opined that fanaticism is derived from the Latin word **Fanaticus** which means something that is inspired by a deity. Fanaticism comes from a latin root word **Fanum** which means a temple. It connotes religious beliefs that are carried to the extreme in one’s practical life due to the conviction that they are inspired by the deity. Although, fanaticism is a religious term but it also covers every field of human endeavours. Fanaticism is not obtainable only in religious parlance, but it cuts across politics, Economy and Education. Okere (2005:1) intoned that fanaticism is “extreme, inordinate and often misguided enthusiasm for anything. It is an unmitigated, emotional or intellectual commitment to an idea or a value. It is a sort of maniacal and unbridled zealotry for a cause”. Unfortunately, fanaticism is enshrined in ambiguity which is demonstrated in various ways in which it applies to people of different socio-political and religious leaning. Political Fanatics constitute those who hold their political ideologies, manifestos, political interests and aspirations beyond limit. If these political excesses are not checked, they may degenerate to political skir-mish, pride, egocentricism, bickering, electoral malpractice, political assassinations and so on. Fanaticism in Educational sector takes place when Academics find it difficult to allow cross fertilization of ideas. It means projecting one’s ideas and risking one’s life to protect and preserve them without considering their falsity or truth. In fact, it means dying for one’s conviction irrespective of the fact that the conviction may not be worthwhile.

Among the various kinds of fanaticism, religious fanaticism holds sway owing to its prime position in people’s lives and priority. Okere (2005:1) argued that religious fanaticism is the most ferocious due to religion’s connection with the ultimate values of life. Mbiti (1975:195) averred that it is natural for people to die for their religious beliefs and many have died as a result of their religion. The saints who are celebrated today among Christians are those who lost their lives for the sake of their faith. It is a mark of fanaticism for people to die for their religion. Religion should not be seen as do or die affair, rather people should practice religion within the ambit of reason. The aftermath of religious fanaticism is common in the society. Nmah (2004:202) insisted that fanaticism “is a negative and vicious attitude to religion, characterized by exaggeration and immoderation, manipulation and

exploitation, excesses and violence”. Religious fanaticism is a deviation from the tenets of religious beliefs of which the adherents of the religion are expected to abide. Nmah (2004:201) stated that religious fanaticism has caused a great tragedy to the socio-political and economic sector. It has promoted social tensions and religious upheavals which have resulted to the destruction of human lives and property, burning of churches and mosques, destruction of sacred shrines, religious artifacts and symbols. Gwamna (2010:46) observed that fanaticism is made manifest among adherents of religion which is informed by their misplaced enthusiasm that is demonstrated in over zealotry which is devoid of self-control. Fanaticism is characterized by excessive and uncritical zeal to pursue an extreme religious course. For the sake of peaceful co-existence, all adherents of religions should apply moderation in the exercise of their religious beliefs.

### **The Correlation between Peace and War**

Peace manifests in a situation of tranquility and calmness, that is devoid of war, crisis, violence and hostility. Ibenwa (2011:56) noted that peace is maintained in the absence of war, fear, conflict, anxiety, suffering and violence. For peace to reign there must be peaceful co-existence in which the parties involved in conflict must be ready to surrender their weapons of war, compromise their positions and embrace one another as a sign of peace. In other words, peace is realized in an atmosphere of peaceful disposition in which members of the society are peaceful and work to promote peace. It has been discovered that war is an antithesis of peace and any society that is warlike hardly experience peace in the society. There is a necessity for people to promote peace considering the devastating nature of war to the society. It is based on this assertion that Stott (1984:80) pointed out that war is a global problem whether it is fought by sticks, stones, bows, arrows, swords, spears, muskets, rifles, bayonets and bombs. The countries who survived the holocaust of wars in the past will never wish to experience it for the second time. They do everything possible to embrace peace at all cost.

For some scholars like Adamo (1997:103), peace is not enjoyed only in a situation of cessation of war but it is also seen in an environment of absence of strife or strained relationship. Peace is ushered in when an environment is peace friendly which is characterized by security, order and harmony. Adamo (1997:99) regretted when he posited that following the absence of the indices of peace in most countries, it seems that there is no peace in the world owing to the constant wars that have devastated the world, particularly in Israel, Europe, America, Asia, Russia and African Nations. In these countries, there is no peace given the presence of wars, crisis, violence, hostilities, fear, conflict, anxieties and sufferings that mark them out as war torn countries. Nwaike (2000:14) described the state of lack of peace in the

world when he argued that the world has been facing perennial lost of peace owing to the presence of weapons of mass destruction which include atomic and hydrogen bombs, radio-active gases, nerve gases and bacteriological warfare that threaten global peace. Many countries that have manufactured nuclear weapons today support their positions by saying that the nuclear weapons are meant for self defence. The irony of their claim is that they manufactured these weapons in order to belong to the comity of world powers that intimidate and harass the less privileged and disadvantaged countries.

Peace is not an abstract entity, rather it is made visible in human relationships. Human beings are regarded as gregarious beings who live in groups. Therefore, peace is a vital ingredient in human relationships. Nwaike (2000:14) averred that peace issues from harmonious friendship with one another which gives no room for agitation. It can be regarded as non violent approach to life in which people live in co-operative and constructive social relations. The co-operative and constructive social relations which are hallmarks of peace are often characterized by respect, justice and goodwill. It is pertinent to note that peace is not determined by tranquility, absence of war, disorder, conflict, quarrels, hostility and hatred, since there is no society that exists without these features of war. Therefore, peace is a relative absence of war, disorder, conflict, quarrels, hostility in a given society.

### **Causes of Religious Fanaticism**

1. **Religious Intolerance** – There is no doubt that various religious groups find it difficult to tolerate one another. Gwamna (2010:46) posited that fanaticism is a by product of religious intolerance. Religious intolerance manifests in a situation where different religious groups are unable to respect one another's right to express their experiences, particularly when the religious experience and expression are contrary to their religious point of view. There is always religious intolerance in a pluralistic society that has varied religious beliefs and practices. Embeay (nd:54) opined that religious intolerance occurs when adherents of religion find it difficult to accommodate the things they do not like in another religion. It can degenerate to the extent of seeing nothing good in other religions by vehemently refusing to see or accept other religions' views.

Religious fanaticism with its attendant religious intolerance has caused religious conflicts, crisis and riots. Religious intolerance which is a responsible factor for fanaticism caused Bauchi riot in 1990. Nwanaju (2008:63) made it clear that Bauchi riot started at the girls science secondary school in the state following the complaint of Christian school girls against their Muslim school colleagues for wasting water during ablution before Muslim prayers. Little did the Christian school girls know that what they thought was an ordinary complaint will later lead to Bauchi massacre that engulfed the whole state.

2. **Ethnicity** – Ethnicity plays a significant role in encouraging fanaticism among

religious groups. Almost every religion wears ethnic garb for it to be accepted among the ethnic group. Any religion that has no ethnic affiliation and predisposition for inculturation with the culture of the society it comes in contact with is sooner than later regarded as **religio illicita** among the people. Nyimi (2009:96) made this point clearer when he stated that religion in Africa is an embodiment of the history of communities. Therefore, religion cannot be divorced from ethnic prejudice, bias and sentiments. It must be stated that religious fanaticism is a spill over of ethnic sentiments, bias and prejudice held by the ethnic group.

Omoregbe (1979:xi) opined that fanaticism is born out of ethnocentricity and narrow-mindedness that becloud the fanatic's sense of reasoning to see difference between his religion and other religions. A religious fanatic is blinded by ethnocentricity, cultural bias, prejudice and superiority complex to hold erroneous belief that his religion is the only true religion. Idowu (1973:108) recalled how the missionaries damned African Traditional religion by calling it all kinds of derogatory names such as primitive, savage and native. Apart from the fact that these terminologies have been proved wrong, the missionaries planted seed of fanaticism in the minds of early Christian converts to despise African Traditional religion as idolatrous, superstitious and primitive. The missionaries placed a bar between Christianity and African Traditional religion in which the former is cherished while the later is abhorred as barbaric and uncivilized. Odoh (nd:137-138) asserted that Christianity is at the fore front in the attacks against African Traditional religion. The Christian fanatics hide under the cloak of born again to unleash all kinds of terror against African beliefs, customs, traditions and culture.

3. **Fundamentalism** – Fundamentalism is an offshoot of fanaticism. Gwamna (2010:48) stated that fundamentalism in Islam is used to refer to the explicit and implicit resistance among muslim believers to western cultural and political values. Christianity is the forerunner of civilization which has made Islam to be averse to civilization and modernism. Odoh (nd:140) collaborated with this view when he averred that muslims out of fundamentalism hate western culture due to the fact that it is the product of Christianity. Muslims hold that western culture and civilization are calculated strategies by Christians to undermine Islamic values and reduce Islam to a mere ideology. For instance, in Nigeria Maitatsine and Boko Haram were Islamic sects that stood against mixing Islamic values and civilization together.

Fundamentalism in Christianity is not a rejection of western culture and civilization, rather it is a preservation of fundamental and core beliefs of Christianity from adulteration. According to Nkwoka (2001:37), the manifestation of fundamentalism in the Orthodox Church, particularly

Anglican Church in Nigeria was when the church missionary society's minister introduced children's scripture union at Ibadan. The children's scripture union later spread to secondary schools. Nkwoka (2001:38) maintained that the members of scripture union then bastardised the faith given their fanatical position on Christian faith. Consequently, the Anglican Church showed fundamentalism in its counter-productive response to the fanaticism of the members of scripture union by resorting to persecution, assaulting and excommunicating members of the Anglican Church who held tenaciously to the fanatical position of scripture union. Of course, some of them who left the Anglican Church at that time founded Pentecostal churches.

It must be stated that Fanatics avail themselves of various avenues to spread their fanatical teaching. Achunike (2008:5) made it clear that Fanatics employ televangelism to attack the Orthodox Church, her teaching and practices. They openly show hatred and animosity to the Orthodox Church by calling it all sorts of derogatory names such as dead church. The Fanatics see members of Orthodox Church as unbelievers and people who are doomed to hell fire. Other means through which fanatical teaching is displayed include bill boards, handbills, posters, tracks, stickers, face book, internet, books and so on .

**4 Misinterpretation of holy book** – It has been observed that misinterpretation of holy book is common among the religions of the book such as Islam, Judaism and Christianity. Iwe (2003:5) attributed fanaticism in Islam to misinterpretation of Qur'an when he insisted that Islamic Fanatics and Fundamentalists interpreted Jihad to stand for physical combat against non Muslims instead of spiritual attack against evil and demons. He observed that these misguided Islamic Fanatics and Fundamentalists have caused terror to the people in the society. In Christianity, many Christians lack exegetical techniques which usually result to misinterpretation of the bible. Nkwoka (2001:41) posited that fanaticism is caused by misinterpretation of holy bible in which the Fanatic interprets the scriptural passage out of context to suit his selfish interest. In most cases, fanatical religious leaders misinterpret some scriptural passages to suit their recklessness. Okoro (2008) quoted Linda and Smoker as saying that: The religious fanatics or the Fundamentalists...are any religious group or sect, which adopts purely a literal as opposed to metaphorical or mythical interpretations of their holy scripture and who deny the validity of interpretations of other religious traditions and assume that religious truth resides with their own perspective (p.108)

There is no doubt that Church or sect that applies literary interpretation of the scripture particularly passages of the scriptures that were written metaphorically will end up being Fanatic on matters of faith. It can also lead to false doctrine. Uka (1999:137) intoned that "False doctrine could lead members to puffup with a sense of superiority in revelation, making the one in

error unteachable, and placing emphasis upon fleshly activities as a gateway to the spiritual, as in asceticism and vegetarianism”. The Fanatics live in deception which is orchestrated in Holier than thou attitude and zeal without knowledge.

5        **Solidarity** – Islam is a religion of solidarity which has inspired Islamic neighbouring countries to join hands with their Muslim brothers to fight their enemies, instead of mediating into the conflict with the aim of restoring peace. Omenka (2009:49) observed that during Biafran-Nigerian Civil War, Islamic countries who fought in Nigerian Army include Sudan, Niger, Chad and Egypt against Biafran Army that was predominantly Christians. For the Islamic countries that fought for Nigerian Army, defeat for Nigerian Army was defeat for Islam while defeat for Biafran Army was defeat for Christianity.

6        **Globalization** – Globalization has both negative and positive impact to the society. Iwuchukwu (2010:3-4) opined that globalization takes place when events that happen in the distant places produce divergent effects in another area. Globalization is a daily occurrence that cuts across National boundaries and produces reactions in another country. Iwuchukwu stressed that despite the fact that globalization has occasioned an uninhibited flow of capital, goods, migration and electronic information, yet it has caused problems for the whole world by creating an enabling environment for insecurities, uncertainties and anxieties to thrive unabated.

It has been discovered that globalization has contributed to religious Fanaticism that has been a disturbing phenomenon in the world. Gwamna (2010:59) posited that globalization that encourages free flow of information made it possible for a blasphemous cartoon of prophet Muhammad that was published in Netherlands by a Danish newspaper, *Tyllands posten* in September, 2005 which had nothing to do with other countries caused religious riots in Nigeria in February, 2006. Other countries where religious riots took place as a result of the cartoon include Afghanistan, Libya, Pakistan, Indonesia, Somalia, Syria, Lebanon and Iran. Nwanaju (2008:63) opined that the United States’ bombing of Afghanistan sequel to the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks in New York, caused religious violence in Nigeria in October 2001 by moslem radicals who saw United States’ bombardment of Afghanistan as a serious attack on Islam. But, the Muslims should realize that masterminding religious violence in an innocent country due to provocation that happens somewhere is a transfer of aggression and exhibition of psychological problem.

Nwanaju (2008:63) also noted that the sudden introduction of Shariah Law in some states in the North resulted to Kaduna crisis in 2000. The Kaduna crisis caused reprisal attacks by the Igbo against Muslims

residing in some parts of Igboland. It was a mismanagement of ethnocentric fanaticism that sought to protect the interest of Igbo people who were residing outside Igboland. Gukas (2009:17) observed that there is an influx of non Nigerians into the country due to globalization which poses a great threat to the security of Nigeria. He further maintained that most of the illegal immigrants came from Niger Republic and Chad. It is said that most of the Boko Haram people came from Chad.

### **Religion and Peaceful Co-existence**

The world religions have contributed to the mediation of peace at the global level. But their contributions are very insignificant considering the high rate of religious uprisings that have devastated the world and rendered it restless. Nwannekanma (2008:17) maintained that the world council of churches and All Africa conference of churches facilitated peace agreement in Sudan in 1972. Also, a lot of churches have been in the forefront fighting against apartheid in South Africa with the lofty aim of restoring peace in South Africa. According to Nwannekanma, the Rome based community of Sant' Egidio successfully mediated in the civil war and brought the war to an end, which restored lasting peace in Mozambique. The world religions and world council of churches should rise up to the challenge of restoring peace in the world that is passing through the trauma of perennial religious conflicts, riots and wars. This has become necessary given the belief of some political leaders who feel that religion is better equipped to restore peace in the countries that are suffering from wars and insurgences, since most of these wars are caused by religious related conflicts. Omonokhua (2012:1) stated that the former president of Nigeria, Goodluck Ebele Jonathan summoned a meeting for Nigeria Inter-Religious Council (NIREC) at Abuja on 20<sup>th</sup> October, 2011 to solicit religious leaders to use religion to restore peace and promote peaceful co-existence in Nigeria. Nevertheless, religion has contributed to the restiveness that is going on across the globe.

There is no doubt that religions have accepted the truth that they have failed to restore peace in a world that has been ravaged by wars. Roche (2003:162) insisted that in the world parliament of Religions held in Chicago which had 6,500 participants from various religious groups in the world in attendance, admitted that the world was in agony as a result of incessant wars that have destroyed global peace. Unfortunately, the world religions that suppose to restore peace in the world have relegated this responsibility to the backgrounds. In collaboration with this view, Roche (2003: 163) asserted that “the world parliament of world Religions held in Chicago accepted the reality that the world religions had not achieved desired peace expected of them”. The world Religions should realize that it is not enough to preach peace and at the end they will allow Fanatics in their midst to cause problems to the world,

rather these religions should expedite action in punishing their erring members who practice religion to the extreme if they want to restore peace in the world.

### **The Consequences of Fanaticism on Global Peace**

1. **Suicide/deaths** – Fanaticism can lead to the death of innocent citizens. According to Ugorie (2009:78), Muslims killed Uchenna Ochukpue on December 10<sup>th</sup>, 2001 on the allegation that he desecrated the Qu’ran. The Christian lorry driver, Uchenna Ochukpue offloaded goods at Yalemu, Kano. As he wanted to move, foam from his exhaust pipe blew off pieces of Qu’ran arranged on a nearby table. The Muslims did not consider that Uchenna Ochukpue did not do the act deliberately, they pounced on Uchenna Ochukpue and beheaded him. Not only that, they paraded his head on major streets of Kano. There are incessant suicide bombings that take place in many countries of the world. Anyacho (2009:119) insisted that “ugly enough some people or sects of a particular religion now celebrate the martyrdom of a husband, son, daughter, friend who died as a suicide bomber”. For the Muslims, it is a heroic act for one to make a final submission of his life to Allah according to his will, particularly through suicide bombing.

It must be stated that suicide bombers draw their inspiration from the Islamic teaching. Richter (2011:119) collaborated with this view when he declared that holy warriors (mujahidin) are rewarded in this life with victory and spoils of war, while those who lost their lives in battle including the suicide bombers receive the reward of eternal life as martyrs (Shahid, witness). For the Muslims war is not intended to destroy human lives and property rather it is meant to advance the course of Islam. Therefore, Muslims believe that the destruction of lives and property mean nothing as far as it will advance Islamic interests.

2. **Jihad** – Among the Muslims, Jihad is regarded as a holy war. Murk (2006:141) opined that **Jihad** has divided the world into two spheres, **Dar al Harb** which means house of war and **Dar al Islam** that signifies the house of submission. The implication of this Islamic belief is that the non Muslim territory (house of war) must be conquered until they submit to Allah (Dar al Islam). The world has known no peace as a result of the die hard Islamic belief. Igbo and Anugwom (2002: 105) asserted that the Muslims’ strategy of converting the world in order to restore the caliphate is not through persuasive words rather it is achieved through violence. Murk (2006:209) maintained that for the Muslims, caliphate occurs when the whole world is subjected under one community that is led by a **caliph** who is a representative of Muhammad and is committed in the implementation of Islamic law (Sharia Law) to the whole world.

3. **Terrorism** – The onslaught of Jihad on non Muslims and against every obstacle that inhibits the realization of the caliphate has metamorphosed into Islamic fanatical sects that terrorize the whole world. Chiaramonte (2014:1) asserted that the Jihad has spread from middle East to Russia, Africa and Asia. The Jihad groups pose serious terror to the world as they fight against governments for power and property. According to Chiaramonte, the Jihad group that is taking upper hand in inflicting terror to the world is the Islamic states of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) Chiaramonte (2014) further opined that;

ISIS, which shares the goal of toppling Iraq's government with Sunni fighters, has reportedly alienated its brothers in arms with its sheer viciousness. Decapitating government soldiers, shooting Christians point blank and implementing strict shariah law in conquered territory, the group seeks to establish an Islamic caliphate in the historic region known as the Levant. They have taken over the major Iraqi cities of Mosul and Tikrit, and are bent on capturing the Shiite holy cities of Karbala and Najaf and the Iraqi capital, Baghdad (p.1)

It is not overstatement to state that since the emergence of Islamic states of Iraq and Syria, the world has passed through terror, crisis and suicide bombings which have taken place in various countries such as Syria, Lebanon, Mali, Iraq, Iran, Libya and so on. There is a terrorist group in China known as Uighurs which has consistently engaged in stabbing the masses. In Kenya, a terrorist group, al-Shabaab killed 48 people. The terrorist group, Boko Haram has been a source of concern to Nigerians. It must be noted that despite the efforts made by both the past and present Federal Governments to wipe out the menace of Boko Haram, yet Boko Haram has lingered till this present time. Chiaramonte (2014:2) averred that Boko Haram kidnap young boys and girls. Members of Boko Haram have been forcing girls under their custody to convert to Islam. The former president of Nigeria, Goodluck Jonathan disclosed that Boko Haram has killed about 12,000 and inflicted injuries on about 8,000 people. Recently, the world has recorded an unprecedented high rate of immigrants mostly from Iraq, Syria, Afghanistan who have migrated to Europe, Germany and so on at the risk of their lives.

4. **Religious conflicts** – That these religions have caused religious conflicts and crisis cannot be over-emphasized. The religious conflicts range from inter-religious conflicts which are conflicts that take place between different religions and intra-religious conflicts which are conflicts that occur among the adherents of the same religion (Iwara 2006:154). Inter-religious conflicts have led to the destruction of lives and property. It has turned Nigeria into the land of bloodshed where innocent citizens are massacred and people are rendered homeless as a result of religious crisis. Kunhiyop

(2008:109) opined that religious tensions are potent to the extent that they can override ethnic origin which was showcased in Northern Ireland, where members of Catholic Church fought Protestants. It also took place in India when Muslims clashed with Hindus which resulted to the splitting of the nation into two states of India and Pakistan. According to Kunhiyop, “ethnic tensions in Rwanda culminated in a genocide in which church groups and religious leaders participated in the killing of Christian brothers and sisters”. The ethno-religious conflicts have resulted to violence, crisis, wars that led to loss of peace in the world.

### **Recommendations**

1. The adherents of religions in the world should practice their faiths with moderation.
2. There should be tolerance among the religions of the world, particularly religious leaders should not use media to insult other religions.
3. Religious leaders should organize seminars, theological training, symposia and workshops for their members so that it will enable them to understand their holy books and tenets of their religions.
4. The Government should checkmate illegal migration of Foreigners into the country so that citizens of other countries will not be used to disturb the peace of the country.
5. Religious adherents should respect territorial integrity of every Nation so that they will not allow religious uprisings in other Nations to cause religious crisis in another country.
6. People should desist from imposing their religion on other people, especially people who do not share their belief.
7. The Government should live up to their responsibility of maintaining peace and order in the society.
8. It has become a necessity for Nations to bring the perpetrators of religious violence to book.
9. Religious leaders should call Fanatics in their midst to order and monitor their adherents so that they will not practice their religion to the extreme.

### **Conclusion**

Peace has eluded the world due to fanaticism in which adherents of many religions practice their faiths beyond their limits. There are religious conflicts, wars, violence and crisis which have rendered the world restless. It has led to the incessant search for peace in the world. Despite the efforts made to restore peace in the world peace has remained elusive given the fact that religions that claim to be custodians of peace are unconsciously disturbing the peace of the world through fanaticism that stifles tolerance, dialogue, and peaceful co-existence. The religions will restore peace in the globe by encouraging their adherents to practice their faith with moderation.

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