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Religious violence has broken out again in the Northern Nigerian City of Kaduna.



More than a hundred have died and the authorities have imposed a curfew.

President Obasanjo's year in power has been bedevilled by both ethnic and religious violence and whole communities have been forced to flee for their lives back to their home areas.

Why is it that Christians and Muslims find it so hard to live in peace together? Tell us what you think.

I read with mixed feelings the views expressed or attributed to the quarrel between Christians and Muslims. For any phenomenon, when we move from normal to fundamentalism, then problems inevitably arise. Christians and Muslims in Nigeria have co-existed without war. It is the introduction of shariah which is, in my personal opinion, equal to fundamentalism, that is driving Christians to craziness.

Grace Akello, Uganda

The high religious incidence in Nigeria is never going to come to an end as long as the country has its Muslim masses as the least educated and the most poverty stricken, perpetuated and held down by their own Islamic clergy and rulers.

E-man Ochieke, Nigeria

The only way in which Christians and Muslims can live together without harm is to have a constitution that separates Church and State. This is an unfortunate disaster in Africa. It is supposed to be the time in

“ This is yet another example of many why religion has plagued us for many centuries ”
Carlos Morales, USA

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which Africans need to fight against poverty and disease, but they turn on each other. Let us work together and care for each so we can make a difference.

Sharif, Somalian, in USA

This is yet another example of many why religion has plagued us for many centuries.

Carlos Morales, USA

I think the cause of the fighting is a lack of understanding that religion is secondary to peaceful coexistence. The common people live together regardless of their religious background, but some leaders sow the seed of hostility among the people and stir them for the endless war. In short, religion is a cover for the war; the underlying truth is personal ambition of leaders.

Kumsa Fida, Ethiopia

Africans are very tribalistic, and suspicious of anyone who is not of their tribe. If you closely examine Nigerian politics, you have the Christian / Muslim divide, the North / South divide, the language divide, the tribal divide, the village divide, right down to the compound divide. Until individuals learn to live peacefully with one another, respect each other and think for themselves, they will always find reasons to fight and kill.

Margaret Nelson, UK

I do not believe Christians are telling Muslims how to live their lives. If you research Sharia law as it is practised in some other Islamic countries, you will find that it affects everyone living within that particular area, be they Christian or Muslim. Christians are concerned that they will be forced into a lifestyle which is not of their choosing or belief. Some common ground has to be reached between the two religious groups, or there will never be peace.

Funmi, USA

I feel there is a lot of clamour for redressing of past injustices meted out to the ordinary people. Outright poverty, lack of basic human needs is driving people to the brink of not really caring what happens to them afterwards. The people have lost hope completely that something good will come to them under any kind of government. Hence, the passive attitude.

Ibrahim Mai-Bornu, Nigeria

Jesus Christ is love. Mohammed preached submission to the will of God. Those fiends slitting one another's throats in Nigeria neither love nor submit their will to God.

Charles Okeke, Japan

It is demoralising to see another nation such as Nigeria caught up in sectarian violence. I agree with you all regarding your comments. Selam and Peace - they mean the same thing.

“
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Ibrahim Mai-Bornu,
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Yohannes Tadesse, USA

In Nigeria people count their group affiliations from the bottom up: family first, then 'tribe', then religion and then maybe Nigerian citizenship. Incidentally, religion tends to be divided along ethnic lines, which doesn't help. There isn't one Nigerian culture and there is no strong sense of national identity which could gloss over internal differences.

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Yohannes Tadesse, USA

Paaskynen, Finland

The simple truth is that like in other parts of the world, these senseless killings are the work of selfish and evil-minded individuals, who have become sophisticated in exploiting all kinds of petty differences among our long-suffering people.
Ubong Effe, UK

Muslims preach violence and hatred against other religious groups. I went to Islamic school and all the teacher taught us was how bad other religions are. He used to say that Islam was the only true religion. I stopped going and went to church instead where I found peace. Until Nigerians wake up and preach peace and mean it from their hearts, the killing will continue.

Miss Jummai Shute, England

If you think education is expensive, witness the harm that ignorance can cause. Christianity or Islam is not the cause or the issue. In Nigeria, when people who claim to be respectable and noble suddenly become thieves and are caught, they invoke religion and ethnic marginalization to cloud the fact that they committed a criminal offence. And naive minds will always fall for it.

“
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R. Atallah, USA

Onum A. Esonu, USA/ Nigeria

I suppose the problem really stemmed from the Crusades. Diplomacy at that time was nearly non-existence and most problems, even minor ones, were resolved through all-out wars. Problems which arose such a long time ago and spilled so much blood are not likely to be resolved through diplomacy. This is why we still see the classic rivalry between Christians and Muslims.

Ahmed, Zambia

It is important for both Christians and Muslims to learn how to live with each other in peace and accept each other's views. If one focused on God and His true word then there would not be room for anyone to focus on violence.

R. Atallah, USA

Religion, the oldest utopia of all, can be a source of chaos. Jesus said that he did not come to the world to bring peace. The Islamic religion was largely spread by conquests.

Peter R. Kaiza, Tanzania/England

Why should Christians in Nigeria try to tell Muslims how to live their lives? Is this democracy?

Mrs Mohammed, Nigeria

“ Why should Christians in Nigeria try to tell Muslims how to live their lives? Is this democracy? ”

Mrs Mohammed, Nigeria

In Africa, society has lost its culture and so its values. Due to high levels of poverty, people are so dissatisfied that they are willing to go to extreme religions hoping that this will help them get "spiritually" rich at least. With extreme religion comes hatred and fighting and even killing one another.

James, Kenya

These so-called fundamentalists who are fighting for God have forgotten the one principle that is universal and is found in every religion - to live in peace. Religion does not preach to anyone to seek complete dominance but to simply be in touch with our gentle side. Such a simple concept, yet many people cannot seem to follow or believe it.

Fernando Barba, Mexico

Christians and Muslims can live together in peace in Northern Nigeria as in Southern Nigeria. Those who won elections in Northern Nigeria are mainly those who do not believe that democracy is the government of the people, by the people to the people but rather a convenient environment for oppression. Most of those governors do not have the least idea of governing so they try to turn Nigeria into an Islamic state by the sword.

Engr. Obadiah Oghoerore Alegbe, Argentina

The root cause of the problem is when you impose your religious beliefs on someone who is not a member of your religious sect.

Isaac, USA

The "if you are not one of us, you are against us" ideology is an underlying factor behind this endless religious conflict. In Nigeria, belonging to the same ethnic or religious sect is a sign of common bond, communion or brotherhood. The person on the other side is always perceived as an enemy or a competitor. Nigerians should think and live beyond ethnic and religious realms then they will be able to respect each other's principles and beliefs.

Ignatius Nwaiwu, USA

“ Nigerians should think and live beyond ethnic and religious realms then they will be able to respect each other's principles and beliefs ”

Ignatius Nwaiwu, USA

When humans are born, we are born as an empty template; our beliefs and values become a function of our environment and life experience. If we are born into a Muslim society there is a very high probability that we will adopt almost all values and beliefs of that Muslim society, vice versa for Christians. There are countries where the conflict between Christians and Muslims never goes beyond the hot friendly debate among friends or scholars. People in those societies have traditionally never sought a violent solution to their differences; therefore their children learn and adopt this method of thinking. There is living proof around the world that it's possible for Muslims and Christians to live in harmony without violent conflict.

Victor Thomas, USA

I am a Christian from the city of Kaduna and I wish to say that this violence is being orchestrated by the people who have got nothing to lose, because most Christians and Muslims alike do not support the destruction of lives and property all in the name of religion [both] that preaches peace.

Baba Ibrahim, England

Black Africans have their religion but colonialism and Arab domination have made these Africans abandon the religion God prescribed for them. Since that time they could not and have not been able to think beyond their religions. Their sense of innovation is gone making them dependent on outsiders. As industrial revolution came about in Christendom coupled up with colonialism the followers of Christianity assumed that edge of superiority as they assumed the moral high ground over the Muslims. They became educated, occupied important positions in government etc to the amazement of the Muslims who are always in the majority and basically illiterate.

So, until the black African abandons both religions and settles for the one taken into the Americas by the slaves, something that has a common denominator for all black Africans, I am afraid there will never be peace between both groups and this will be a permanent cause of division among black Africans.

Sorian Kamara, Sierra Leone

The people who brought Christianity and Islam to Africa, imposed their religion in a way that it has made Africans lose their sense of direction.

Rukara Ntambara, Rwanda

It is the lack of knowledge of religion, political and traditional rivalries and poverty that allows religious, tribal or political violence to flourish.

We, the people of the world need to check our morality with the criterion of our religions. This will allow us to move mankind

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Leone

forward to God's truth.
Sadly, some people believe they
are benefiting from this mayhem;
either inside or outside of
Nigeria. In fact they are
contributing to the destruction of
mankind.

Barakat, USA

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