

**REFORMATION IN THE REDEEMED CHRISTIAN CHURCH OF GOD (RCCG):  
EXAMINING ADEBOYE’S REFORMS AND THE GROWTH OF RCCG**

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**Abstract**

The Redeemed Christian Church of God (RCCG) is a Pentecostal denomination with its international headquarters at Redemption City, Mowe, Ogun State, Nigeria. It has its presence in many countries and it is one of the fastest-growing denominations in the world. After the death of founder Pa Josiah Akindayomi in 1980, Pastor E.A. Adeboye became its General Overseer in 1981. Adeboye Erra has witnessed many reforms that have led to the massive growth of the church. This paper examined the similarities between Luther's Reformation and that of Adeboye in RCCG. It makes use of the historical method and interviews with some long-standing members of the church. Findings show that Adeboye brought in some reforms that led to the growth of the church. For instance, he changed the liturgy of the church from its original African indigenous model to a Pentecostal genre. He created model parishes and allowed the ordination of women. Adeboye's belief resonates with Luther's belief in the priesthood of all believers as against the Catholic stand on the theory of two estates. The work postulates that reformation should not be seen as an invent of the 16<sup>th</sup> century but an on-going process in many churches. The paper recommends that Christian denominations should not be dogmatic but receptive to changes that will make people amenable to the without compromising bible standards.

Key words: Reformation, Redeemed Christian church of God, Growth, Pentecostals

**Introduction**

The Protestant Reformation was a religious reform movement that swept through Europe in the 1500s, which led to the creation of a branch of Christianity called Protestantism, a name used collectively to refer to the many religious groups that separated from the Roman Catholic Church due to differences in doctrine<sup>1</sup>. The Reformation was the basis for Protestantism. It led to the reformation of basic tenets of Christian beliefs and divided Western Christendom between the Roman Catholic and the new Protestant tradition. The reformation's impact swept through the world with far-reaching

implications. Several factors converged to prepare the ground for the reformation; the humanist movement, the invention of printing press, growing tide of nationalism the renaissance amongst others.

John Turner, in one of his teachings with his congregation at the Lutheran Church Missouri in the year 2017, during the celebration of the 500th anniversary of the beginning of the Reformation, said that in October 31st, 1517 in Wittenberg, Germany, Martin Luther, a Dominican Friar, posted his thoughts about some theological topics and the practices of the church, and said, that simple action began the reformation - that is, a movement that changed the western society.

<sup>1</sup> [The Protestant Reformation - National Geographic Education, National Geographic Society](https://education.nationalgeographic.org/education/national-geographic-society)

<https://education.nationalgeographic.org/> , 22 Jan 2025

It is historically documented that in 2017, 500 years after the event, the anniversary of the event – Reformation was celebrated worldwide<sup>2</sup>, of which Nigeria was inclusive. From every indication, the Protestant movements in Nigeria benefited immensely from Luther’s reformation. Given this, however, the question one needs to ask now is – does the Lutheran Reformation affect Christianity and development in Nigeria? On this, Emeka affirmed that “there seems to be a huge gap between the Reformation which started in the late fourteen century and culminated in 1517 when Martin Luther nailed his 95 theses to the door of Wittenberg church, and the 19th and 20th-century Christian missionary movement that led to the planting of Christianity in Nigeria”. According to Adedibu, “the Redeemed Christian Church of God (RCCG), a wholly indigenous Nigerian Pentecostal Church, started in 1952. Though the founder was unlearned and unable to read or write in English, through the energetic, charismatic and visionary efforts of the Successor, Pastor E.A. Adeboye, the church is now a global missionary player, having a strong presence in over 140 countries of the world.<sup>3</sup>

However, the Reformation precipitated a chain of events that occasioned the missionary zeal of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. From the historical point of view, it may be adjudged that without the definitive change orchestrated by the Reformation in the fifteenth century, missionary endeavours might not occur. The influence of the Reformation over every subsequent movement in Christendom is definitive, formative, and fundamental. As a result, scholarly volumes and research on the Reformation and its attending implications have never been in short supply from the

fifteenth century till date. In the contemporary context, studies on Luther’s Reformation are burgeoning. However, in the African Christian context studies examining the implications of Luther’s Reformation on specific denominations with the thesis on the need for reforming the Christian faith are scant and hard to come by.

Moreover, despite the historical gap between the Reformation, the emergence and evolution of Protestant movements, especially Pentecostalism, the lessons and implications of the Reformation and its ideas are germane and crucial for the continual sustainability and relevance of the Pentecostal movement, especially in Nigeria. In Nigeria, the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries have witnessed a remarkable resurgence of religious movements and spirituality characterised by the globalisation of Pentecostalism. One of the Pentecostal movements that have transcended national boundaries and cultural barriers is The Redeemed Christian Church of God (RCCG).

The Bible then made it clear that studying the scripture and our genuine worship before God are the main components of the Reformation. True reformation, and then arise when believers worship God according to the dictates of the Bible. Theologically, according to researchers, reformation therefore means that when believers return to their former position of worship that is based on the scripture; it gives the assurance that they are in line with God. The Bible further explained that ‘reform comes not by the instigation of great doers or thinkers or by the grace of God. It is not for the glory of

<sup>2</sup> Reformation 2017, Lutheran Federation, 500years anniversary miami

<sup>3</sup> B.A., Adedibu, The changing faces of African Independent Churches as development actors, across

borders’, *HTS Teologiese Studies/Theological Studies* 74(1), 2018, ‘4740. <https://doi.org/10.4102/hts.v74i1.4740>

man, but for the glory of God’s holy name that he causes reformation <sup>4</sup>

This paper is anchored on the theory of Christendom as the earthly kingdom of God and the theory of scripture alone in opposition to tradition. Both theories stemmed from the underlying ideologies of the Reformation. The first theory can be understood against the background of the idea of “two estates,” which was very prominent during the medieval period. Weaver explains that this theory was developed in the medieval era by the Roman Catholic Church.<sup>5</sup> The theory states that of the two estates, the clergy belonged to the spiritual estate while the laity belonged to the temporal estate. This theory further shows that though the spiritual estate, in most cases, does interfere with the temporal estate to achieve a certain divine goal but in no way and under no circumstance should the temporal estate interfere in the affairs of the spiritual estate. This became a cardinal point of departure between the Roman Catholic Church and the Reformation preachers.

McGrath argues that Martin Luther opposed and strongly rejected this theory stressing that the Bible teaches the priesthood of all believers instead of a select few who are clergy.<sup>6</sup> This is the theory that makes the pope the only one who could interpret the Bible and call a church council. This tradition was highly condemned by the reformers. In his own words, Luther argues thus: “all Christians are truly of the spiritual estate, and that there is no difference between them except that of office”.<sup>7</sup> By this statement, Luther debunked the age-long traditional dichotomy that existed in the church between the clergy and laity and introduced

the Old Testament doctrine into the New Testament. This theory became the cornerstone on which the Reformation rested.

As soon as Luther was firmly established in this theory of the priesthood of all believers, he went on to establish a new theory of the sphere of authority of believers based on the two kingdoms and the distinctions thereof. Pasichiel sees Luther’s theory of two kingdoms as based on his scriptural exegesis of the book of Mathew chapters 5-7, popularly called Sermon on the Mount and Romans 13. Luther’s view is that there are two kingdoms on earth. One is the kingdom of God ruled by the gospel and occupied by Christians while the other is the worldly kingdom occupied by the unregenerate ones where evil dwell and rule by laws. He further opines that God is the ultimate ruler of the two kingdoms.<sup>8</sup>

From Luther’s point of view the two kingdoms originated from God and are ordained by him. The civil authority according to Luther was totally limited to the sphere of secularity or worldly kingdom. This worldly kingdom is not concerned with doctrinal issues but is only concerned with the things of Caesar-worldly affairs, instead of the things of God. In his words as recorded by Pasichiel,<sup>9</sup> Luther explains that “God’s kingdom is a kingdom of grace and mercy, not of wrath and judgement. In it there is only forgiveness, consideration for one another, love, service, the doing of good, peace, joy, etc. But the kingdom of the world is a kingdom of wrath and severity. In it there is only punishment, repression, judgement and condemnation to restrain the wicked and protect the good” This means that as

<sup>4</sup> The Meaning and History of Reformation’ Clarion 2001, 3

<sup>5</sup> Weaver (2007), Luther's Reformation pp. 2-3.

<sup>6</sup> McGrath, Reformation thoughts, John Wiley & Sons, p.223, March 2012

<sup>7</sup> Luther Reformed Orthodoxy and Philosophy, 1625–1750: Gisbertus , p.142-145, 1999:

<sup>8</sup> [Godsword Godswill Onu](#), the laws of God’s kingdom, 2015

<sup>9</sup> [Godsword Godswill Onu](#), the laws of God’s kingdom, 2015

God rules his kingdom-the church through the instrumentality of the gospel, he uses the instrumentality of human authority in ruling the worldly kingdom. This shows that his kingdom is governed by the power of the Holy Spirit governing the conscience of the believers. This theory became an invaluable instrument for the liberty and freedom of conscience which became the driving force in Europe and American societies.

The growth and expansion of the Redeemed Christian Church of God has been attributed to the innovations of the incumbent leader, Pastor E.A. Adebayo who placed emphasis on the use of the laity coupled with a broad spectrum evangelistic drive of the organisation. For once, the changes occasioned in the administration, theology, and ecclesiology of the organisation under the leadership of Pastor E.A. Adebayo heralded a new epoch in the annals of the Redeemed Christian Church of God.<sup>10</sup>

RCCG has drawn lessons from Luther’s Reformation, particularly in adapting to contextual realities while maintaining doctrinal integrity. The movement emphasizes accessible worship, extensive evangelism, and theological education, mirroring Luther’s commitment to vernacular preaching and lay empowerment. However, RCCG’s approach integrates African traditional religious elements, distinguishing it from Reformation-era.

Elder Olajide Kehinde, a longtime member of the church, reflects on the tradition of gender-segregated seating, which was historically implemented to uphold purity, modesty, and focus during worship services.

“In many traditional church settings, particularly in Africa and among older Christian denominations, men and women sat separately to prevent distractions and encourage reverence during religious gatherings. This practice was rooted in cultural and biblical interpretations that emphasized gender roles and the preservation of moral conduct”.<sup>11</sup>

However, as Olajide Kehinde notes, the modern church is evolving, adapting to contemporary societal norms and perspectives on gender interaction. Today, many churches, including RCCG, are embracing a more inclusive approach, where families can sit together, and congregants are not separated by gender. This shift is largely influenced by changing cultural dynamics, increased gender equality, and the practical aspects of worship in a modern, globalized society. Elder Olajide’s perspective reflects a balanced view—acknowledging the historical intent of the practice while recognizing the church’s need for continuous reformation. His statement aligns with the broader theme of church adaptation, where traditions are re-examined to determine their relevance in the evolving religious landscape. Ultimately, his viewpoint supports the idea that church reform should prioritize spiritual growth over rigid traditions that may no longer align with contemporary Christian life.

Elder Akeem Bakare, reflects on the historical practice of "crying culture" in Christian worship, particularly in Pentecostal and revivalist traditions. He acknowledges that this practice was once a powerful spiritual expression that deeply resonated with believers, symbolizing true

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<sup>10</sup> Daniel Akhazemea, and Babatunde Adedibu, *The Redeemed Christian Church Of God, A Missionary Global Player: What Is Her*

*Message Regarding Human Development?* 53-54.

<sup>11</sup> Olajide Kehinde interview, November 2024

remorse, brokenness, and an emotional connection to repentance.

“In past revival meetings, it was common for congregants to openly weep, wail, or even roll on the floor as a sign of deep conviction of sin and an urgent desire for forgiveness. This public demonstration was often encouraged as evidence of genuine repentance and transformation, rooted in biblical passages like Joel 2:12-13, where God calls His people to "return to me with all your heart, with fasting, and weeping, and mourning." The crying culture was also influenced by revivalist movements such as those led by John Wesley, Charles Finney, and later Pentecostal awakenings, where emotional displays were seen as marks of spiritual renewal.”<sup>12</sup>

However, as elder Bakare points out, the modern church has shifted toward a more personal and reflective approach to repentance. Many contemporary worshippers now believe that true repentance is more about a heart transformation rather than an outward emotional display. The emphasis has moved toward self-examination, confession, and a sustained change in behaviour, aligning with scriptures like Romans 12:2, which calls for renewal of the mind.

Healthy churches, in the context of this thesis, are those churches that are experiencing qualitative and quantitative growth. The former refers to all-round

spiritual growth in the assembly of those who follow Christ and the latter refers to the numerical growth. In the book, *The Healthy Church*, Peter Wagner, examined nine spiritual “diseases” that can attack any church and cause it to become stagnant or unhealthy<sup>13</sup>

This shift may also be attributed to changing social dynamics and generational differences. Younger believers, especially in urban settings, may feel uncomfortable with extreme emotional expressions, preferring quiet prayer, meditative worship, or counselling sessions to process their repentance journey. Additionally, with the rise of mental health awareness, churches now encourage a balanced approach to spirituality. Bakare’s statement reflects the broader evolution of worship and spiritual disciplines in the modern church. While the crying culture was effective in its time, church leaders now recognize that true repentance must go beyond outward expression and lead to a lasting, inward transformation. This perspective aligns with the broader theme of reformation in the church honoring past traditions while adapting to new, effective ways of fostering spiritual growth. The congregations of the church in its early years were very small and were located at the back streets of Lagos and its environs. Services were conducted in Yoruba (with translations into English in some parishes) and electronic instruments and bands as well as local drums were forbidden. Virtually all ‘worshippers [were] wrapped... in tears, groaning in prayer’<sup>14</sup> The weekly crying service sessions earned the classical parishes the nickname of *Ijo elekun*, meaning, *the weeping church*.

David Kuo, reflects on the strict disciplinary measures that once defined church governance, emphasizing both their

<sup>12</sup> Akeem Bakare Interview, November 2024

<sup>13</sup> C. P. Wagner, *The healthy church* (Ada, MI: Baker Publishing Group 1996), 15.

<sup>14</sup> Asonzeh F.K Ukah, *Globalisation of Pentecostalism in Africa: evidence from the Redeemed Christian church of God (Rccg)*, Nigeria, pg 93-112

role in character building and the need for a more humane, legally compliant approach in modern times.

“In earlier church settings, particularly in conservative and Pentecostal traditions, discipline was often rigid and public, aimed at preserving holiness and deterring sinful behavior. Congregants who violated moral or doctrinal codes—such as engaging in premarital relationships, dressing “immodestly,” or failing in leadership responsibilities—could face public rebuke, suspension from service, or even temporary exclusion from fellowship. These measures were rooted in scriptures like Hebrews 12:6 (“For the Lord disciplines those He loves”) and 1 Corinthians 5:12-13, which emphasizes removing sin from the congregation. The goal was to build strong Christian character, accountability, and spiritual maturity”.<sup>15</sup>

However, David acknowledges that while these methods had value in shaping behavior, modern disciplinary approaches have evolved to be more compassionate, restorative, and legally sound. Today, churches recognize that public shaming or excessively punitive measures may do more harm than good, sometimes leading to emotional distress, loss of faith, or legal consequences. Instead, contemporary church discipline now includes counseling, mentorship, mediation, and private correction, aligning with Christ’s model of grace and restoration (John 8:11, “Go and sin no more”). Additionally, with legal frameworks protecting individual rights,

churches must ensure that their disciplinary measures comply with human rights laws, labor laws for church staff, and child protection policies. This shift reflects the broader reformation of church leadership, balancing biblical discipline with love, wisdom, and respect for individual dignity. David’s statement encapsulates the church’s ongoing transformation, ensuring that while discipline remains essential, it must promote healing, growth, and Christ-like compassion rather than fear or exclusion.

Francis highlights the importance of traditional clothing in fostering identity and cultural pride within the church.

“In many African and multicultural congregations, dress codes have often been influenced by Western styles, particularly as modernization and globalization shape contemporary Christian worship. However, allowing members to wear traditional attire serves as a way to preserve cultural heritage while maintaining reverence in worship. For many believers, traditional clothing represents more than just fashion—it is a symbol of identity, history, and belonging. In cultures where attire carries deep meaning, wearing native fabrics, embroidered robes, or headwraps reflects a connection to one’s roots, values, and ancestry. This practice aligns with biblical teachings that encourage believers to honor their background while worshiping in spirit and truth (John 4:24). Furthermore,

<sup>15</sup> David Kuo interview November, 2024

embracing traditional clothing in the church promotes inclusivity and makes congregants feel welcomed. Many older members, for example, may feel more comfortable and dignified in native attire, rather than being pressured to conform to Western-style suits and dresses. However, churches today increasingly acknowledge that Christianity is not bound to a single culture, and that embracing traditional clothing enriches the diversity of the congregation. Allowing members to wear their native garments—such as agbada, iro and buba, kente, hanbok, or sarees—during worship and church events fosters a sense of pride and self-worth, particularly among younger generations. It reassures them that being a devoted Christian does not mean abandoning their cultural identity, but rather integrating faith into their authentic self-expression. This is in line with scriptures like Revelation 7:9, which describes a diverse multitude worshipping before God in their own uniqueness. Additionally, this practice strengthens intergenerational connections within the church. When elders see younger members embracing traditional attire, it fosters a sense of continuity and respect for cultural heritage, reinforcing that Christianity

transcends cultural barriers rather than erasing them”.<sup>16</sup>

Francis perspective aligns with the modern church’s inclusive and culturally affirming approach to worship, ensuring that faith remains deeply personal, relevant, and respectful of the diverse backgrounds of its members.

Taiwo Osoba, highlights the effectiveness of aggressive church planting in spreading the gospel while acknowledging the challenge of maintaining spiritual depth in rapidly growing parishes. His statement reflects a fundamental tension in modern evangelism: the balance between numerical growth and spiritual maturity.

“In many denominations, including RCCG, church planting has been a key strategy for evangelism, ensuring that more communities have access to Christian fellowship, teaching, and discipleship. This approach aligns with Matthew 28:19-20, where Jesus commands His followers to "go and make disciples of all nations." By rapidly establishing new parishes, churches are able to reach unreached populations, create local worship centers, and expand the kingdom of God.”<sup>17</sup>

However, Taiwo points out a critical concern:

“spiritual depth can sometimes be sacrificed in the process. The urgency to plant new churches may lead to

<sup>16</sup> Francis Okon interview November, 2024

<sup>17</sup> Taiwo Osoba interview November 2024

inadequate pastoral training, shallow doctrinal foundations, and leadership gaps, resulting in congregations that lack strong biblical teaching and spiritual discipline. Some new parishes may struggle with consistency in doctrine, discipleship programs, and accountability, making them vulnerable to misinterpretation of scripture, poor leadership, or lukewarm faith. To address this challenge, churches must ensure that rapid expansion is matched with structured discipleship programs, leadership training, and doctrinal integrity. This means equipping pastors and church workers, implementing follow-up mentorship for new converts, and fostering a culture of spiritual accountability rather than just focusing on numbers.”

Alabi’s insight calls for a more balanced approach to evangelism, where church planting remains a powerful tool for outreach, but spiritual maturity is prioritized to sustain true, lasting Christian growth.

Akinwunmi, highlights the critical role of structured training programs in enhancing theological understanding and leadership quality within the church. This observation reflects the transformational impact of Pastor Enoch Adeboye’s vision and mission statement, which emphasizes

soul-winning, church expansion, and strong leadership development.

“Under Pastor Adeboye’s leadership, the Redeemed Christian Church of God (RCCG) has experienced unprecedented global growth, largely due to his commitment to strategic evangelism, structured leadership training, and doctrinal soundness. His vision is rooted in Mark 16:15, where Jesus commands His followers to "Go into all the world and preach the gospel." This vision has led to an aggressive church-planting strategy, ensuring that RCCG parishes are present in cities, towns, and rural areas across the world. However, Adeboye has also recognized that numerical growth must be accompanied by spiritual depth—hence, the emphasis on structured training programs.”<sup>18</sup>

Adewunmi points out that these Bible colleges, theological schools, and leadership training programs have significantly improved the quality of church leadership. Previously, many church leaders operated solely based on charisma and spiritual zeal, but structured training ensures that they also possess doctrinal accuracy, sound biblical interpretation, and effective pastoral skills. This has minimized misinterpretation of scripture, improved church governance, and strengthened discipleship efforts.

Additionally, these programs equip evangelists and church planters with strategies for effective soul-winning, helping them navigate cultural barriers,

<sup>18</sup> Akinwunmi Akindolie November 2024

modern evangelism challenges, and pastoral responsibilities. This holistic approach ensures that RCCG's expansion is not just about numbers, but about raising spiritually mature believers who can disciple others and sustain long-term church growth. Akinwunmi insight underscores how Adeboye's vision has balanced church expansion with theological depth, ensuring that RCCG remains both spiritually impactful and structurally sound.

“We understand that in the Redeemed Christian Church of God (RCCG), no pastor can become a Pastor-in-Charge of a Province (PICP) or attain a higher leadership position without having at least a first degree. This policy is part of RCCG's commitment to excellence in leadership and sound doctrine. As the church has expanded globally, there has been a greater need for well-educated, theologically sound, and administratively competent leaders. A first degree ensures that provincial pastors have critical thinking skills, the ability to manage church affairs, and a solid foundation for theological training. Although, RCCG fully recognizes that spiritual calling is paramount. However, calling must be complemented with knowledge and wisdom (Hosea 4:6 – “My people perish for lack of knowledge”). The modern church requires leaders who are spiritually grounded and intellectually equipped to handle complex administrative, theological, and pastoral issues. A degree enhances their ability to interpret scripture accurately, manage resources, and provide effective leadership. While

long-serving pastors are respected for their dedication, RCCG encourages continuous learning. There are theological training programs and opportunities for further education available. Many pastors have gone back to school to obtain degrees so they can qualify for higher leadership roles”.<sup>19</sup>

Pastors are now more equipped to handle diverse congregations, engage in intellectual discourse, and align church policies with global best practices.

RCCG has undergone significant transformations under Pastor Enoch Adeboye's leadership.

“Pastor Adeboye has implemented several practical and doctrinal reforms that have helped modernize RCCG while preserving its core values. Some of the most notable changes include introducing musical instruments, structured offerings, elite-friendly model parishes, and an expanded church hierarchy. These adjustments have significantly contributed to the church's global reach and inclusivity”. Initially, there was resistance. During the time of the founder, Pa Josiah Akindayomi, worship was very conservative—no drums, trumpets, or dancing. However, Pastor Adeboye saw the need for more vibrant worship, which resonated with the

<sup>19</sup> Akinwunmi Akindolie November 2024

younger generation. Today, music and expressive worship are key aspects of RCCG services.”

In the past, only born-again members could drop their offerings in a box placed at the entrance of the church. Pastor Adeboye introduced structured giving offerings, tithes, and first fruits during services. This has helped church expansion, welfare programs, and missionary work. RCCG also established model parishes to attract the elite. It was a bold and strategic move. The first model parish, pastored by Pst. Tunde Bakare, marked a shift in RCCG’s outreach. Previously, the church mainly attracted the lower class, but model parishes welcomed professionals, intellectuals, and business leaders, making RCCG a more socially diverse church.

Pastor Adeboye reorganized RCCG’s administrative structure. Instead of the old Parish-State model, he introduced Parish-Area-Zone-Province-Region-Continent. This made leadership more effective and scalable, allowing the church to expand globally while maintaining order.

“Pastor Adeboye’s doctrinal reforms, especially the introduction of women ordination, was a significant doctrinal shift. Under Pa Akindayomi, women were not ordained, but Pastor Adeboye recognized that women play a vital role in ministry. Today, RCCG ordains women pastors, deaconesses, and ministers, though all other core doctrines remain unchanged. RCCG has divided the world into nine continents and appointed Intercontinental

Pastors. It shows RCCG’s global ambition. The world is now divided into nine administrative regions, making governance more effective. Intercontinental pastors provide leadership at a broader level, ensuring uniformity in doctrine and administration. But there’s some concern that discipline has weakened compared to Akindayomi’s era. Stealing and adultery lead to expulsion, but if a pastor confesses voluntarily, the punishment is milder. Some members feel disciplinary measures are no longer as strict.”<sup>20</sup>

Despite these concerns, RCCG continues to grow. RCCG’s astronomical growth is undeniable. Its ability to evolve while retaining core beliefs is commendable. The church has become a global force in evangelism, church planting, and leadership training. While some reforms need fine-tuning, Adeboye’s leadership has positioned RCCG as one of the most influential Christian movements worldwide. Wariboko<sup>21</sup> asserts that under the leadership of Adeboye, RCCG has developed a camp (Redemption camp) near Lagos that operates as a town with modern facilities such as schools, electricity, hospitals, markets, pipe-borne water, and is a major employer of labour in Nigeria.

RCCG is practically involved in the theological training of Pastors and church leaders to foster growth and development within its fold. Adeboye had constantly mentioned that the training arm of the church must buckle up in promoting and instilling sound doctrine to trainees. He believed that the future of RCCG hung on ensuring that the future generation upholds

<sup>20</sup> Daniel Balogun November 2024

<sup>21</sup> Nimi Wariboko, *Nigerian Pentecostalism: Origin and Spirituality of Nigerian Pentecostal*, Vol 62, 2014

the sound doctrine of the church while they are open to the dynamics of change in propagating the gospel. The Redeemed Christian Bible College is the first training institution for Pastors and church leaders within its fold. Today there is the school of disciples, the College of missions, Ede, and some basic Christian education platforms to become a member and worker: Believers class, Baptismal class and workers in training

Recently, on 1<sup>st</sup> November 2024, RCCG sent a memo to all parishes announcing a major policy shift in baptism. The church now allows children aged eight years to be baptised by immersion, provided they have been led to Christ. This is tending towards infant baptism in the mainline churches. The memo also said the children can be given holy communion as against the former practices of exempting the children from the solemn special communion bread and wine.

### Conclusion

The Pentecostals are not exempt from reformation. Practices in churches must be subjected to the authority of the scripture, and denominations must not be fixated or dogmatic on their beliefs and practices. Adeboye's leadership brought tremendous changes to RCCG, though not without opposition, but his insistence on some definite reforms has brought massive growth to the denomination. The establishment of the model parishes, introduction of musical equipment (including local drums), church planting, special programmes like the Holy Ghost services, congresses, and ordination of women have opened up the church to endless expansion. These achievements notwithstanding, many believe that the numerical growth of the church is not marched with the spiritual development of its members.

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