

## **Predictive Prophecy: A Catalyst for the Growth of Christ Apostolic Church in Nigeria**

**Peter Olanrewaju Awojobi, PhD**

Department of Religions, History and Heritage Studies, Kwara State University, Malete, Nigeria  
Email: paawojobi@yahoo.com

### **Abstract**

*From the study of biblical literature, prophecies are twofold: foretelling (predictive) and forth telling (exhortation). The most popular among these two in Nigeria is the foretelling (predictive) because of its futuristic nature. Most Nigerians, regardless of their religious affiliation, would like to know what the future holds for them. It is believed in some quarters that one of the fastest growing African Indigenous Churches in Nigeria is the Christ Apostolic Church (CAC). Some scholars have attributed the growth of this church to predictive prophecy. The thrust of this paper is to investigate the place of predictive prophecy in the growth of CAC in Nigeria. Having considered the study from the standpoints of historical, participants' observation, and interviews, it was discovered that predictive prophecy played a crucial role in the growth of the CAC. CAC, with the emphasis on predictive prophecy and prophets, brought growth to the church as Christian faithful and non-Christians who were previously consulting Ifa priest and Babalawo started coming to the church to seek solutions to their problems from the prophets. The prophets through prophetic oracles restored the church back to its evangelistic and missionary enterprise without adulteration. The paper concludes that prophecy has to do with the meditation and interpretation of the mind and the will of Yahweh or spiritual things in day-to-day human relationships. Predictive prophecy had been used and is still being used to influence socio-religious space in Nigeria. The CAC, Nigeria grew in lips and bounds through the instrumentality of predictive prophecy.*

**Keywords:** *Predictive prophecy, Catalyst, CAC, Church Growth and Nigeria*

### **Introduction**

Prophecy is a social phenomenon because it is an activity carried on among and between people within a specific society which conforms to the norms operative in such society. In the Old Testament, prophecy was one of the means Yahweh communicated his mind to Israel. Prophets in ancient Israel were men chosen by Yahweh to receive and pass divine oracles to the appropriate audience. Most of the remarkable events in the Old Testament came first as prophecies through the prophets before they eventually became realities. From the historic antecedent of the Israelites, people believed in the possibility of hearing from Yahweh through the human medium. Thus, the Bible recognizes the existence of prophets whose responsibilities were to receive and deliver divine messages to the nations in the form of rebuke, warnings, encouragement and restoration (Freeman, 1968, p. 101).

It should be noted that in indigenous churches in Africa, prophecy is a widely accepted phenomenon. However, it is pertinent to underscore that the understanding of prophecy in the indigenous society is to some extent different from the biblical perspective of prophecy. To a large extent, Africans consider prophecy as more of prediction than exhortation. Like in ancient Israel, Africans, especially Nigerians, consider the office of prophets as special. With their background in African Traditional Religion where native doctors are consulted in times of challenges, it appears the prophets have now taken the place of native doctors in modern-day Christianity in Nigeria. Christians or persons with diverse challenges in Nigeria consult prophets to know what the future holds for them. In the emergence of Christ Apostolic Church (CAC) in Nigeria, the recognition of the office of the prophets and the belief in prophecy encouraged growth in the church. This was due to the fact that most of the founding fathers of this church were men and women that possessed the gift of prophecy. This paper explores the place of prophecy in the growth of Christ Apostolic Church in Nigeria.

### **Prophecy in Biblical Literature**

Prophecy can be defined as the pronouncement of God's ideals or mind by a vessel of God. It can be described as prophetic utterance as spoken from God's perspective, that is, unfolding the mind of God as it relates to the audience. In other words, prophecy is a divine oracle or message received by a prophet for an individual or nation. God uses the prophets to reveal, mediate, transmit, or disclose his attitudes, intensions, or expectations to man. Prophets are the mouthpiece of Yahweh. They speak to their audience on behalf of Yahweh (Wright, 2006, p. 62). The Prophets of Israel had direct links with Yahweh and as such they always had something to share with the people (Gangi, 1984, p. 4). In other words, the prophets came in direct contact with the divine when possessed by the Spirit. The Old Testament prophets were surrounded by an aura of mystery (Wilson, 1998, p. 8). Prophets are individuals inspired by Yahweh and compelled to declare oracle while still under the influence of the Spirit. Prophets were humans that have been empowered by the Holy Spirit to proclaim the message of Yahweh to the people. Prophets in ancient Israel spoke of the coming judgment if the people failed to respond in repentance to Yahweh (Von Rad, 1962, p. 12). In ancient Israel, prophets were great leaders and men that carried divine authority and power. The influences of the prophets in ancient Israel were felt in the lives of the people around them and the surrounding nations (Hinson, 1990). Yahweh discloses His will and intentions to Israel through the prophets (Akintola, 2008). The Hebrew word for prophet is *nabi*. The Greek word for prophet is *prophetes*, meaning 'one who speaks out'. A prophet was understood to be a medium that proclaimed words coming from Yahweh. Abraham was called a prophet as he stood before Yahweh (Gen. 18: 2; 20: 7). Hosea speaks of Moses as a prophet (Hos. 12: 13). Yahweh promised to raise a prophet like Moses (Deut. 18: 15-18; Exod. 20: 18-20; Num. 11: 10-30).

Predictive prophecy is also known as foretelling. A true prophet of Yahweh is expected to forth tell before he foretell. The focus of the prophets was not on the past or the future; it was on the present. From their communion with Yahweh, they come to inspired insights into what was to be done if the people were to be open to the blessings from Yahweh. Divine oracles by the Prophets were directed to people's present situation. It sometimes contained warnings about the future consequences of people's behavior and sometimes held out a promise of wellbeing in the future. Such future predictions were generally couched in very general terms. When they are

precise in their content they refer to the future of those to whom the words were addressed, and are conditional on their response to divine revelation. In most cases, it is the response of the people to the oracle that determines predictive prophecy. Also, predictive prophecy is futuristic in nature because it gives guidance on individual and communal social issues. It should be noted that predictions based on what was considered magical were forbidden in ancient Israel (Lev. 19: 26; Deut. 18: 10-12; Isa. 44: 24-26; 47: 13-14; Jer. 10: 2).

## **Predictive Prophecy: A Catalyst for the Growth of Christ Apostolic Church (CAC), Nigeria**

### ***A Brief History***

Before discussing predictive prophecy as a catalyst in the growth of CAC Nigeria, it is crucial to consider a brief history of the church and the place of prophecy in the life and ministry of CAC.

The Christ Apostolic Church is one of the African Indigenous Churches (AIC). Members of this church believe that the formation of the church was traceable to two main factors. First, the relentless efforts of Faith Tabernacle faithful leaders such as Olubanjo, Esinsinade, Akinyele and Orekoya and their followers dating back to 1917 led to the second, the great revival movement of 1930 led by Joseph Ayodele Babalola and assisted by J. A. Medayese, J. B. Orogan, A. O. Omotosho, D. O. Babajide and others (Alokan, 1991, p. 318). It was believed in some quarters that the Christ Apostolic Church is a direct fusion between the Precious Stone Society (P.S.S), under Sadere (late Pastor Esinsinade), the Nigeria Faith Tabernacle (N.F.T), under Odubanjo, and the 1930 revival of Babalola, which served as an impetus towards unification (Oshun, 1985, p. 105).

This Faith Tabernacle Movement played a vital role in the formation of Christ Apostolic Church. It was started by spirit-filled and devout Christians at Saint Saviour's Anglican Church, Ijebu-Ode in 1918. It started as a prayer or intercessory group called "Egbe Okutu Iyebiye", which was interpreted as the Precious Stone or Diamond Society. The aim of the group was purification of themselves and the church. It was their desire that the church in their time would practice Christianity like that of the apostolic era. They made holiness and total dedication to God their lifestyle and watchword (Olusheye, 2000, p. 1). Members of this group included Pastor D. O. Odubanjo, Oba/Pastor I. B. Akinyele, Pastor S. B. Odusona, Pastor A. A. Hanson and others (Alokan, 1991, p. 320). The members of the movement had a total reliance on prayers for solving all their problems in life.

It was in the revival of 1930, led by Joseph Ayodele Babalola, that the name Faith Tabernacle Movement was dropped and Christ Apostolic Church was adopted. Okegwuech declared:

It was the extra-ordinary revival of inestimable conversion, exorcism, salvation, healings, miracles and divine power that led to the astronomical increase in the membership of these Tabernacle dwellers. From one name to the other by circumstances and divine orders, the mustard seed of the Precious Stone of 1918 has now metamorphosed into the Oak which is firmly rooted in heaven by the name Christ Apostolic Church (world-wide), the first and the king of Pentecostalism in the entire black race. (Okegwuemeh, 2003, p. 18)

The name “Christ Apostolic Church” was embraced and registered later by the Corporate Affairs Commission in May, 1943.

From the foregoing, it is evident that the Christ Apostolic Church is prophetic in outlook as seen in the activities of various individuals that contributed in one way or the other to its growth. Apart from this, the ministry of the prophet was accorded a significant place in the life of the church.

### **Prophetic Ministry in Christ Apostolic Church (CAC)**

The Christ Apostolic Church is one of the African Indigenous Churches or *Aladura* (owner of prayer) in Nigeria. The prophetic Christianity of the Aladura movement rose from the initiatives of Nigerians who found reasons to separate from older mission churches (Komolafe, 2013, p. 100). The prophetic Christianity of the *Aladura* churches represents a demonstration model of a contextualized ecclesiology. Their emphasis on the efficacy of prayers in matters of spiritual healing, and on the significance of dreams and visions for prophetic guidance, offered a special appeal to the priorities of many Nigerian people (Komolafe, 2013, p. 101). These churches were founded by Africans with the aim of presenting the gospel of Christ in a way that it will be relevant or meaningful to the mind. While members of these churches subscribe to the canonicity of scripture, they equally believe in the reality and authenticity of prophecies as divine revelations given by God to direct human lives (1 Cor. 12:28) (Oshun, 2016, p. 31). One of the main features of the African Indigenous Churches is the prophetic ministry. Unlike in the mainline churches, prophecy is one of the key elements in worship service in the African Indigenous Churches. They believe that through the prophets, God speaks to His people. The prophets are the mouthpiece of Yahweh. The message from God takes different forms. It depends largely on the situation being addressed. For instance, it may take the form of rebuke, exhortation, warning, guidance, comfort and edification. According to Komolafe, prophets play important roles in Christ Apostolic Church (CAC). He submitted that a prophet or prophetess is a Charismatic person endowed with spiritual power. To him, prophecy is a gift from God. He, however, said that it is not every one who prophesies that is a prophet. He cited the example of Saul, the first king of Israel, who prophesied when he got to the company of prophets in fulfillment of the prophecy of Samuel to him. He submitted that when a person is in the gathering of prophets, he or she may prophesy, but this does not make him a prophet (Komolafe, 2012). Komolafe also opined that like the prophets in ancient Israel, the Christ Apostolic Church believes that before a person starts to parade himself as a prophet, he must have received a divine call into the office. He said that a person can be called a prophet from birth. The church believes that a person may be called into the prophetic office in the context of audition, trance, vision and dreams (Komolafe, 2012) Like the ancient Israelite prophets, Babalola was called by God into the prophetic office. He became the mouthpiece of God before his audience. Babalola’s call experience was believed to have started on the night of 25<sup>th</sup> September, 1928 when he suddenly became restless and could not sleep. Like the ancient Israelite prophets, Babalola struggled with God but later yielded to him after he had received assurance of divine guidance (Olayiwole, 1995, pp. 158-139).

Prophecy is held in high esteem in CAC. The church became more proactive and practical as they imbibed the culture of prophecy: “thus says the Lord” (*Bayi ni Oluwa wi*). The

CAC is believed to be administered by the Holy Spirit through the instrumentality of the Apostles, Prophets, Pastors, Teachers and the Elders (Alokan, 1991, p. 450). True to this assertion, the CAC authority respect and honour prophecy. For example, whenever there is vacancy in any leadership office, church prophets are consulted to inquire from God on who should fill the vacant position. Sometimes, names of some persons are given to these prophets to pray upon with the view of knowing the one that has been chosen by God. In the church business meetings of all sorts, whenever a major decision is to be taken, prayers would be offered on the floor of the meeting for divine directives, and suddenly a prophet in the house would rise and say, “thus says the Lord...” (Bayi ni Oluwa wi) and that settles the matter (Abayomi, 2018, p. 12).

Joseph Ayodele Babalola was believed to champion the prophetic ministry in CAC. The prophetic movement in CAC started when Babalola claimed that God instructed him to pray for a dead child in 1930 when the leaders of the movement were meeting to discuss issues affecting the group in Oke-Oye, Ilesa, Osun State, Nigeria. The dead child was being carried to the cemetery for burial when Babalola stopped them, prayed for the dead child and the young boy came back to life. This made Ilesa to become the epicenter of revival as sick persons from their homes, hospitals and the surrounding towns were brought to the revival ground for prayers and God healed them all. Many idolaters, unbelievers, wizards, witches, drunkards, magicians and juju priests surrendered their powers and books for destruction. Babalola continued to declare the mind of God to his audience as people from all walks of life came to ask from him what God had in store for them. Through this, Babalola’s prophetic ministry became more pronounced and other notable prophets like D.O. Orekoya, D.O. Babajide, Durojaiye, Fapounda, Marian, Akande, T.O. Obadare and a host of others were raised by him.

In CAC, leaders and members opined that the church is a product of prophecy. According to Agunloye, “*Emi Mimo ni Olorun fi da ijo... (CAC) sile. ‘Bayi ni Oluwa wi ni a fi se ipile ijo yi’*” (God established CAC through the Holy Spirit. “Thus says the Lord is its foundation”). The prophets in CAC receive messages from God through audible voices. The CAC prophets sometimes received oracles through dreams or visions. Commenting on the role of prophecy in the CAC, Olaiya said that the roles include warning sinners of judgment, encouraging those discouraged or embattled, and predicting what will happen if the word of God is ignored or jettisoned.

Many Nigerians who were initially consulting herbalists shifted their attention to God in Babalola, and as such their problems were being solved. Many prayer mountains were established by Babalola as platforms for people having challenges to meet with God for solution. The CAC became the household name for people and assemblies or local churches continued to multiply by reason of the prophetic ministry of Babalola and other prophets that followed him.

### **Predictive Prophecy: A Catalyst for the Growth of Christ Apostolic Church (CAC)**

Having earlier defined predictive prophecy, it is expedient at this point to define catalyst and church growth. A catalyst is “a substance that makes a chemical reaction happens faster without being changed itself” (Hornby, 2015, p. 230). A person or thing that causes a change is a catalyst. In other words, any person who brings changes to or in an organization is a catalyst, e.g., Jesus and His disciples (Mk. 16: 18-20; Acts 10: 38). Christians are expected to be change agents anywhere they are.

Church growth is increase in membership of the church. This increase is expected to reflect in every facet of the life and ministry of the Church. There are two types of church growth. They are: spiritual and physical. The spiritual growth and development of the believers is of utmost importance for a church to grow. This has to do with prayers, reading of the Bible and forming of a disciplined life. It is, in short, the nurturing of the saints to maturity. Every church also needs mature and competent leadership. It needs those who will be able to teach others also. It is the duty of the elders to teach other members how to live a life pleasing to God Almighty. They are to operate the affairs of the church under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

Physical growth has to do with the building of solid structures for church use, identifying the physical needs of the church and endeavouring to meet them, praying for supplies, and having faith in God to meet your needs. Church growth is therefore an increase in the number of those who have had a personal encounter with Jesus Christ and are living for Him on a daily basis. The primary purpose of the Church is to evangelize the world, and thereby produce mature, stable and holy Christians (John 13-16; Lk. 10: 1-20; Acts 1: 1-8). Other purposes of the Church are: fellowship (Heb. 10: 25), good works (Eph. 2: 10), praise and worship (Eph. 1: 12), spiritual warfare (Eph. 6: 10-18), and caring (James 1: 27). The mission of the Great Commission to which the Church is committed is to preach the total gospel of Christ and the unparalleled love of God. Finally, the Church exists to prepare people for heaven.

As mentioned earlier, predictive prophecy is all about the future. It is an oracle from God through the prophet, informing the person concerned about what God is about to do for an individual or a people. The understanding of many Christians and non-Christians of prophecy is in relation to the prediction of future events. Prophets and prophetesses are often consulted in order to know what the future has in stock for them. At the beginning of the year or whenever people are in serious or difficult conditions and situations, when prophets in Nigeria are consulted for solution, they often predict what will happen tomorrow on the issue brought before them (Dada, 2018, p. 188).

In CAC, predictive prophecy is very popular among their prophets. People in the corridors of power, business tycoons, and people from all walks of life consult prophets in this church to inquire about the future. CAC prophets like Babalola, Babajide, Obadare, Abiara, Hezekiah, Olowere, Olukosi and a host of others are engaged in predictive prophecies. Sometimes, predictive prophecy is used to influence government policies. A good example is that of prophet Obadare of CAC, who warned President Obasanjo of Nigeria in 2003 that God would remove him from office if he continued with the harsh policy of the deregulation of the downstream sector of the petroleum industry in Nigeria. This made Obasanjo to rescind or modify his earlier policies in order to make the populace happy and to avert being removed from office by God as predicted by the prophet (Obadare, 2003, p. 3).

The question is: How has predictive prophecy served as a catalyst in the growth of CAC in Nigeria. This will be discussed under the following headings:

### **1. Prayers**

The Christ Apostolic Church (CAC) is one of the *Aladura* churches (praying churches) in Nigeria. The word is a Yoruba word meaning owners of Prayer. This is because the church places great emphasis on prayers. The CAC emerged out of an informal prayer group during the worldwide influenza epidemic of 1918. The prayer group was a response to the urgent need for healing at the height of the influenza epidemic. This group was led by Joseph B. Shadare, a lay

leader at St. Saviour's Anglican Church, Ijebu-Ode, Ogun State, Nigeria and Sophia Odunlami, a teacher in a nearby Anglican school (Komolafe, 2013, pp. 102-103). This group resorted to prayers after all medical efforts considered to be the solution had failed. The group started praying in response to the dreams shared that human devastation caused by the epidemic could be cured only by prayer and holy water. The group prayed for the victims of the epidemic and applied sanctified water as directed through divine revelation. It was this prayer group that metamorphose into CAC (Komolafe, 2013, p. 103). There was emphasis on the efficacy of prayer, fasting, and divine healing. The name *Aladura* itself, etymologically analyzed, brings to light that a renewed emphasis on the power of prayer and introduction of new prayer mechanisms were the key motivating factors behind the origin of the name, *Aladura* movement. These people pray in an unusual way and manner (Fatokun, 2018, p. 95). Their prayers were prophetic in the sense that most of the times the prayer leaders (prophets) claimed to have received the prayer points from God. In most of their prayer meetings, prayer points were not written down but were divinely received and delivered to the congregation as received. It should be noted that before the emergence of the *Aladura* movement, prayers in the mainline churches were read from books imported by the white missionaries in a cold spiritual environment. However, the *Aladura* introduced a new dimension of prayer in African Christianity that gave the Church the spiritual flavour needed.

Besides, the CAC has prayer groups called praying warriors (Egbe afadura jagun) which comprises prophets and gifted individuals in the church. Their major responsibility in the church is to pray and fast for the needy, the sick and special programmes of the church.

They accepted the use of oil and water for anointing and healing purposes, but rejected indigenous and western orthodox medicine. This belief is very strong and was included in the Constitution of the Church: "Divine healing through obedience to the command of our Lord Jesus Christ; Faith in His Name and Merit of His Blood for all sickness, disease and infirmities" (CAC Magazine. Vol. 25: 1: 1992), 6. Due to strong emphasis on prayer, the church leadership (Babalola and others) established many prayer mountains all over the country for people to seek the face of God alone under the guidance of some prophets. Christians and non-Christians are seen patronizing the prophets on these mountains for solutions to their problems. During these prayer sessions, prophecies are released on the felt needs of the people. In this way, the problems of the people are solved. Most of the attendees of these prayer meetings of the church eventually became members and leaders in CAC today. This led to the growth of the church. The number of the C.A.C. assemblies founded by Prophet Babalola is innumerable. However, some leaders in the church claimed that Babalola pioneered more than six hundred local assemblies in Nigeria and abroad (Abayomi, 2016, pp.10-11). It should however be noted that Babalola was not the only founder of Christ Apostolic Church (C.A.C).

## **2. Evangelism**

Evangelism is engaging in sharing the goodness of the saving knowledge and power of Jesus Christ. The CAC, through her evangelical activities, laid the foundation for aggressive evangelism in a very significant way in African Pentecostalism. The church engaged in personal evangelism, house-to-house evangelism, street-to-street evangelism and the likes. They use every available medium and place for evangelism. History has it that Babalola was given a hand prayer bell as a symbol. He was informed that the evil spirits would leave at the sound of the bell. He was also given a bottle of water to heal all manner of sicknesses (Olayiwole, .1995, p. 139). Pastor John Bojuwade said that Babalola exhibited extra-ordinary powers in his ministry.

According to him, an angel always came to deliver divine messages to him (Bojuwade, 2012). Babalola adopted the ancient Israelite prophetic formula, "thus says the Lord." He was mightily used by God throughout Nigeria. It was through the evangelistic activities of Babalola and others that the Christ Apostolic Church was born.

The prophets in CAC would wake up early in the morning and move from street to street with a bell in their hands, preaching and jingling the bell as they go to anyone who cares to hear. They would preach repentance and give all sorts of prophecies in the form of foretelling and forth telling. Their messages on repentance and restoration brought many to the saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. Churches were always established for converts and they eventually became members of the CAC denomination.

### **3. Prophecies**

The CAC recognized visions, divine revelations and prophecies in their worship services. Christian faithful with these gifts were encouraged to express them. The emergency of CAC gave meaning to African Christianity. The ability of some of the leaders of CAC to see beyond the natural, predict the future and provide guidance in the midst of confusion encouraged many people to join the church. Prophets and prophetesses in this church are often consulted in order to find out what the future holds in store. According to Prophet Olukosi Samuel of CAC, those who wish to know what God is saying about their future consult prophets. He described a prophet as a man sent by God to His people. He is one who has received a message from God about a particular thing or person and he is expected to deliver same without fear or favour. Prophet Olukosi Samuel maintained that the expectation of God is that the addressee will comply with divine instructions (2012). It is common in Nigeria today to see prophets at the close of the year making predictions about the coming year. Each year, they predict what would happen within the next 12 months and sometimes a little beyond that. People gather at different times in a designated place to hear what the year holds for the world. The popularity of predictive prophecy in the Nigerian society can be hinged on the fact that Africans are often eager to find out what the future holds.

### **4. School of Prophets**

Due to the emphasis of the CAC on prophecy, tutelage was put in place to train the upcoming prophets or ministers of the church by the older prophets. The would-be prophets were practically exposed to prayer and fasting and time of waiting after prayers, including marathon and long dry fasting, particularly for the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. Through meditation, they received oracles from God for the people, the church and the nations. Babajide School of Prophets and Evangelists, Ilesa, Nigeria was established by the CAC authority to train those who feel called to the office of prophets and evangelists. Many prophets, both dead and alive, have been trained in this school.

Babajide School of Prophets and Evangelists has produced great prophets and evangelists, who have touched lives and are still touching lives globally with sound gospel messages. Notable among them are: Samson Akande (Baba Abiye Ede), P.A.A. Egabor, T.O. Iyanda (WOSEM), J.O. Alokun (3<sup>rd</sup> C.A.C. General Evangelist), Sadela, Adediran (President of United Apostolic Church), D.K. Olukoya (General Overseer of Mountain of Fire and Miracles Ministry), Hezekiah Oladeji (Current General Evangelist of C.A.C.), S.K. Abiara (immediate past General Evangelist, C.A. C.), Prophet T.O. Obadare, to mention a few. Products of the school are found in nearly all the continents of the world and in many denominations, making great impacts in evangelization.

There is high demand for full-time employment or revival programmes from different denominations for of this school (Abayomi. 2017:166).

Today, hundreds of prophets have been trained in this school, most of them serving in Christ Apostolic Church, while some are in other denominations. It is very rare in CAC today to see a prophet or an evangelist who has not gone through the four walls of this School of Prophets. This school remains one of the greatest prophetic contributions made to the development of the church. Babajide standardized the prophetic structure in Nigeria (Adedeji, 2017, p.103).

### **5. Revival meetings**

The CAC is historically recognized for engaging in open air revivals in Nigeria. The overwhelming effects of revival meetings, especially that of 1930 championed by Babalola at Oke-Ooye Ilesa, spread to other parts of Nigeria and the neighbouring West African countries (Fatokun, 2009, pp. 34-57). During revival meetings, statements like, “thus says the Lord...” (*Bayi ni Oluwa wi*) will always proceed from the prophet and the needs of the audience will be met. People are always eager to attend revival meetings because of the belief that their case or situation will be mentioned by the prophet and as such solutions will come. Prophet Babalola and his team of prophets were instrumental to the widespread of CAC because kings and chiefs of many towns and cities were coming to request him to come and stage revival programmes in their towns and cities after which CAC assemblies were established there. People were always ready to have him and his succeeding prophets in their domains to throw light and bring solution to their problems through their prophetic gifts. As a result, charm belts, magical powers and books were submitted to this group of prophets because people joining the new church were from the mainline churches like the Anglican, Methodist, Catholic, Baptist and etc (Adegboyega, 1978, pp. 23-24). The demonstration of the power of God with the prophetic message stirs and motivates people to identify fully with the CAC. Most CAC assemblies organise revival meetings on weekly, monthly and quarterly basis.

### **6. Special Programmes**

Unlike the mainline churches, the CAC is known for organizing many special programmes. These events are designed to meet the felt needs of the attendees. In most cases, the CAC organises three days of prayer, seven days of prayer, hour of mercy and the likes. These programmes attract Christians and non-Christians from all walks of life. This is one of the strategies designed by the leadership of the CAC to grow the church. The central and distinguishing element of the CAC is in how embedded it was into Yoruba cosmology and worldview. It addresses the questions that deal with unseen powers, and responded in concrete ways to indigenous needs and aspirations. The CAC brought Christ into the very heart of Yoruba culture so that Christ is presented as the only Saviour who gives hope to the future as well as meaning to the present needs of humans. The CAC, through special spiritual programmes, has always presented Jesus Christ as the Saviour of the soul and the body. This is the reason why special programmes that are capable of meeting felt needs of the people are organised from time to time, and this enhanced growth.

### **Conclusion**

From the foregoing, we observe that the CAC does not only recognise the office of the prophet as one of the ministerial offices of the church, it also believes in prophecy. Prophecy and prophets are the life wire of the CAC. Predictive prophecy is an essential ingredient in the growth of the church. Through the instrumentality of predictive prophecy, this church has been

able to attract membership. The CAC preach Christ the healer, the protector, and friend of all and sundry. The ministry of the CAC is a correlation between belief and practice, challenge and response, and proclamation and service. Jesus is able to save both eternally and mentally.

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