



WEBUIKE: An African Journal of Arts and Humanities

Vol. 12. No. 2, (2026)

ISSN: 2488- 9210 (Print) 2504-9038 (Online)

Journal of Philosophy and Religious Studies, Tansian University, Umuanya
Indexed by: Academic Journals Online, Google Scholar, Igwebuike Research Institute

PERSECUTION, INSECURITY, AND CHRISTIAN IDENTITY IN NIGERIA: A SOCIOLOGICAL STUDY IN CONVERSATION WITH NEW TESTAMENT NARRATIVES OF SUFFERING

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Abstract

This study examines persecution, insecurity, and Christian identity in Nigeria, exploring how contemporary experiences of suffering shape faith, communal life, and moral witness. The problem addressed arises from recurring attacks on Christians, abductions, destruction of worship spaces, and systemic marginalization, which threaten both personal security and communal cohesion. Such challenges create urgent questions regarding how Nigerian Christians interpret suffering and sustain identity amid persistent hostility. Adopting a qualitative sociological approach, the study employed document analysis of Nigerian scholarly works and New Testament narratives, complemented by oral interviews with clergy, lay leaders, and community members. This methodology enabled a nuanced understanding of both the social and theological dimensions of persecution. Findings indicate that persecution is patterned, socially mediated, and deeply impactful on Christian identity. It intensifies faith, strengthens communal bonds, and reshapes theological self-understanding, as believers interpret suffering as both a test and a form of participation in Christ's own trials. New Testament narratives of Jesus and the early church provide interpretive frameworks that guide meaning-making, encourage endurance, and promote ethical witness. The study concludes that persecution, while challenging, functions as both a crucible and a catalyst for resilience, communal solidarity, and moral witness among Nigerian Christians. Recommendations include strengthening institutional protection and advocacy to safeguard Christian communities, and promoting faith-based resilience programs that enhance communal support, ethical witness, and spiritual formation.

Keywords: Persecution, Insecurity, Christian Identity, Nigerian Christianity, New Testament Narratives, Resilience.



Introduction

Persecution and insecurity have become defining features of contemporary Nigerian society, with profound consequences for religious communities, particularly Christians. Across different regions of the country, recurring episodes of violence, displacement, abduction, destruction of worship spaces, and targeted killings have generated an atmosphere of fear and uncertainty. These realities are not merely political or security challenges; they are deeply social phenomena that shape how individuals and communities understand themselves, their faith, and their place within the wider society. For Nigerian Christians, persecution and insecurity are increasingly experienced as existential threats that test the meaning, resilience, and public expression of Christian identity. From a sociological perspective, persecution functions as a powerful force in identity formation. Situations of sustained hostility often redefine group boundaries, intensify solidarity, and reshape religious consciousness. In Nigeria's plural and fragile social context, Christian identity is being reconstructed under conditions of vulnerability, marginalization, and contestation. The experience of suffering therefore becomes more than a private spiritual struggle; it becomes a collective social reality that influences patterns of worship, theological interpretation, communal organization, and public engagement. Understanding persecution in Nigeria thus requires attention not only to violent events themselves, but also to the meanings Christians attach to suffering and how these meanings inform their responses. The New Testament offers a rich narrative tradition that interprets suffering as an integral dimension of Christian existence. From the life and ministry of Jesus to the experiences of the early Christian communities, persecution is presented as a normal consequence of faithfulness, rather than an anomaly. New Testament texts portray suffering as a context for identity formation, moral witness, and hope, emphasizing endurance, solidarity, and trust in God amid adversity. These narratives have historically provided interpretive frameworks through which Christians across cultures and eras have understood their experiences of hostility and marginalization. This study brings the Nigerian experience of persecution and insecurity into critical conversation with New Testament narratives of suffering. By adopting a sociological approach informed by biblical reflection, the study seeks to explore how contemporary Nigerian Christians interpret their suffering, how Christian identity is shaped under conditions of insecurity, and how New Testament perspectives continue to influence meaning-making processes. Rather than treating biblical texts as abstract theological resources, the study engages them as living narratives that interact with concrete social realities. By examining persecution as both a social phenomenon and a theological experience, this work aims to contribute to scholarly discussions on religion, violence, and identity in Nigeria. It also seeks to deepen understanding of how Christian communities negotiate faith, hope, and witness in contexts of persistent insecurity. In doing so, the study underscores the relevance of New Testament narratives for interpreting suffering and sustaining Christian identity in contemporary Nigerian society.



Definition of Terms

Persecution: Persecution is the systematic harassment, oppression, or violence directed against individuals or groups because of their religious beliefs or identity. In the Nigerian context, it often involves attacks on Christians through physical, social, and economic means (Kukah, 2010; Orobator, 2018).

Insecurity: Insecurity refers to the condition in which individuals or communities experience threats to their safety, property, or social well-being, often due to weak governance, armed conflict, or societal instability (Alemika, 2013; Nwankwo, 2018).

Christian Identity: Christian identity is the sense of self and communal belonging rooted in adherence to the teachings of Jesus Christ, shaped by faith, practice, and communal affiliation, particularly under conditions of social challenge (Akinwale, 2011; Ejizu, 2008).

Nigeria: Nigeria is a West African country characterized by diverse ethnic, religious, and cultural groups, with a federal system of governance and a history of social and religious pluralism (Falola, 2016; Onwuejeogwu, 1997).

A Sociological Study: A sociological study is an investigation that examines human behavior, social structures, and group interactions to understand patterns, causes, and consequences of social phenomena (Imo, 2008; Obiefuna, 2014).

Conversation: In research, conversation refers to the structured or analytical dialogue between two or more perspectives, such as comparing contemporary social experiences with historical or textual narratives (Ezenwa, 2015; Onuoha, 2017).

New Testament Narratives: New Testament narratives are the written accounts of the life, teachings, suffering, and ministry of Jesus Christ and the early Christian community, providing theological and moral frameworks for understanding human experience (Uka, 2006; Okure, 2000).

Suffering: Suffering is the experience of pain, hardship, or adversity, whether physical, emotional, social, or spiritual, often interpreted within a moral, religious, or communal context (Onah, 2017; Iroanya, 2012).

Persecution and Insecurity in Contemporary Nigeria

This section examines persecution and insecurity as concrete social realities shaping contemporary Nigerian Christianity. It situates the experience of Christians within Nigeria's fragile security architecture, contested religious space, and politicized identity landscape. By focusing on forms of persecution, the climate of insecurity, and the social-political structures that sustain violence, the discussion highlights how persecution is not an



isolated event but a patterned social process with deep implications for Christian identity and communal survival.

Persecution against Christians in Nigeria occurs in identifiable forms and recurring patterns that reveal structural depth rather than random violence. According to Kukah (2010), persecution in Nigeria often manifests through targeted attacks on churches, clergy, and Christian settlements, particularly in regions where religious difference overlaps with ethnic and economic competition. Falola (2016) further explains that these attacks are frequently framed as communal clashes, yet they disproportionately affect Christian populations, suggesting an underlying religious dimension. Christians experience destruction of worship centers, forced displacement, abductions, and restrictions on public religious expression, all of which reinforce a sense of collective vulnerability. According to S. Gyang (personal communication, 3rd March, 2025) stated: “They burnt our church at night and warned us not to rebuild it. We now worship in fear because anytime we gather, we are not sure we will return alive.” This testimony illustrates how persecution disrupts not only physical structures but also communal rhythms of worship and identity. Sociologically, such repeated experiences deepen in-group solidarity while simultaneously reinforcing feelings of marginalization, confirming Nwoye’s (2011) assertion that suffering becomes a defining marker of religious self-understanding.

Insecurity, violence, and religious tension provide the broader environment within which persecution thrives in Nigerian society. Alemika (2013) argues that insecurity in Nigeria is rooted in state failure, particularly the inability of security institutions to protect vulnerable communities. This failure creates a vacuum exploited by armed groups, whose actions intensify religious suspicion and fear. Ehusani (2005) observes that prolonged insecurity reshapes social relations, turning religious identity into a symbol of threat rather than coexistence. Christians living in volatile regions often interpret violence through both social and theological lenses, seeing insecurity as evidence of societal breakdown and spiritual trial. According to L. Audu (personal communication, 22nd March, 2025) she stated: “We sleep with one eye open. When there is noise at night, we think they have come again. Being a Christian here feels like living under a sentence you did not commit.” This statement reflects how insecurity normalizes fear and embeds trauma into everyday life. Briefly, such conditions sustain religious tension by forcing communities into defensive postures, thereby weakening interreligious trust and social cohesion.

Social and political factors play a decisive role in sustaining persecution against Christians in Nigeria. Akinwale (2011) links religious violence to moral failure in leadership, where injustice and corruption undermine the common good. Kukah (2010) similarly argues that political elites often manipulate religious identities for power, while avoiding accountability when violence erupts. The absence of justice emboldens perpetrators and communicates state indifference to victims. This structural neglect reinforces persecution as a recurring reality rather than a resolved crisis. According to D. Sadiq (personal communication, 8th April, 2025) stated: “After every attack, politicians come, make



promises, and disappear. No one is arrested. It is like our lives do not matter.” This comment highlights how political inaction and impunity sustain cycles of persecution. Analytically, when governance fails to protect all citizens equally, religious minorities are compelled to interpret their suffering through faith narratives, reinforcing endurance while simultaneously exposing deep fractures in Nigeria’s social contract.

Suffering in New Testament Narratives

This section examines suffering as a central theme within New Testament narratives and explores how these texts provide meaning, structure, and theological depth to the experience of persecution. Rather than treating suffering as accidental or merely tragic, the New Testament presents it as integral to Christian discipleship and identity. By engaging the suffering of Jesus, the early Christian community, and apostolic interpretations especially Pauline and Petrine this section establishes the biblical framework that continues to inform how contemporary Nigerian Christians understand and endure persecution.

In the New Testament, the life and ministry of Jesus present suffering as inseparable from obedience to God’s mission. Uka (2006) observes that Jesus’ suffering was not portrayed as defeat but as faithful submission to God’s will in a hostile world. The Gospels consistently show Jesus facing rejection, hostility, and eventual execution because of his message and identity. According to Nwoye (2011), Jesus’ teaching in passages such as the Beatitudes redefines suffering as a mark of blessedness rather than divine abandonment. This theological reversal challenges dominant cultural interpretations of success and power. According to M. Okorie (personal communication, 28th April, 2025) stated: “When we read the passion of Christ in our present Nigerian situation, it no longer sounds like history. Jesus suffered because he stood for truth, and today many Christians suffer for the same reason.” This reflection underscores how the suffering of Jesus functions as an interpretive lens for Nigerian Christians, enabling them to see their experiences as participation in Christ’s own journey rather than meaningless pain.

The experience of the early Christian community further reinforces suffering as a collective and identity-shaping reality. The Acts of the Apostles portrays persecution as a normal response to the proclamation of the gospel, often resulting in imprisonment, displacement, and martyrdom. Metuh (1999) argues that early Christianity developed under constant threat, which paradoxically strengthened communal bonds and commitment. The early church did not retreat from public witness despite suffering; instead, persecution became a catalyst for growth and deeper solidarity. According to G. Tanko (personal communication, 10th May, 2025) remarked: “When I hear how the apostles were beaten and still preached, I feel encouraged. It tells me that what we face today is not strange to Christianity.” This statement reflects how New Testament narratives normalize suffering, helping believers interpret persecution not as failure but as continuity with the faith of the early church.



Apostolic interpretations of suffering, particularly in Pauline and Petrine writings, provide theological depth to the experience of persecution. Paul consistently links suffering with participation in Christ and the formation of Christian character. According to Akinwale (2011), Paul's theology reframes suffering as a process through which faith matures and hope is refined. Similarly, Peter addresses persecuted Christians by affirming that suffering for righteousness confirms their identity as God's people. Ehusani (2005) notes that these texts emphasize endurance, moral integrity, and hope rather than retaliation. According to J. Danjuma (personal communication, 15th May, 2025) stated: "Paul says suffering produces endurance. When I teach this, people understand that our pain is shaping us, not destroying us." Such apostolic perspectives enable Nigerian Christians to construct meaning from suffering, reinforcing resilience and sustaining Christian identity amid persistent persecution.

Christian Identity Formation under Persecution

This section explores how persecution actively shapes Christian identity in contemporary Nigeria, especially in contexts marked by hostility, fear, and social exclusion. Rather than viewing identity as static, the discussion approaches it as a dynamic process formed through lived experience. By engaging Nigerian sociological and theological reflections alongside oral narratives, the section demonstrates how faith, self-understanding, and communal life are reconstructed under pressure.

In hostile contexts, Christian identity becomes closely tied to faith and belonging as believers navigate exclusion and threat. Orobator (2018) argues that when religious identity is challenged, it becomes a primary source of meaning and social location. In Nigeria, Christians facing persecution often experience alienation from wider society, which strengthens attachment to faith communities. As Ukpong (2014) explains, belonging in Christianity under pressure is not merely doctrinal but relational, grounded in shared suffering and hope. According to A. Madu (personal communication, 25th May, 2025) illustrates this reality. He stated: "When you are mocked or attacked because you are a Christian, you naturally run to those who share your faith. Church becomes your family." This testimony confirms that persecution intensifies faith-based belonging, transforming Christian identity into a lived refuge rather than a nominal affiliation.

Persecution also reshapes Christian self-understanding, particularly in how believers interpret God's presence amid suffering. Onah (2017) notes that Nigerian Christians increasingly reinterpret discipleship through the lens of endurance rather than prosperity. This shift reflects a movement away from triumphalist Christianity toward a theology of faithful perseverance. According to Okure (2000), suffering challenges believers to redefine success as faithfulness to God rather than material security. According to R. Pam (personal communication, 7th June, 2025) stated: "I used to ask why God allowed this, but now I see that being a Christian is not about comfort. It is about standing with God no matter what." This statement illustrates how persecution forces a deeper theological self-



examination, aligning Christian identity more closely with New Testament notions of costly discipleship.

Communal faith emerges as a vital resource for survival and continuity under persecution. African religious scholars emphasize that identity is sustained collectively rather than individually. Mbiti (as cited by Nigerian scholars such as Ejizu, 2008) highlights the communal nature of African religious life, a reality reflected in Nigerian Christianity. Ejizu (2008) explains that shared rituals, narratives, and moral obligations reinforce group identity in times of crisis. According to T. Nwabueze (personal communication, 17th June, 2025) captures this communal dynamic. He stated: “When one family is attacked, the church gathers food, money, and prayers. We survive because we survive together.” Analytically, this communal response demonstrates that persecution strengthens internal cohesion, enabling Christian communities to function as networks of care, resilience, and identity preservation.

Sociological Interpretation of Religious Suffering

This section interprets religious suffering from a sociological perspective, emphasizing how persecution functions as a social process rather than merely a personal or spiritual experience. By examining suffering as symbolic, relational, and structurally conditioned, the discussion explains how religious pain acquires meaning within social contexts. Using Nigerian sociological reflections and oral narratives, the section demonstrates how persecution shapes power relations, reinforces group boundaries, and produces both marginalization and solidarity among Christians.

- **Suffering as a social and symbolic experience**

Religious suffering operates as a social and symbolic experience through which meaning is constructed and communicated. Imo (2008) explains that suffering in religious communities is often interpreted symbolically, serving as a marker of faithfulness and moral legitimacy. In Nigeria, Christians under persecution frequently frame their suffering as purposeful rather than accidental, drawing meaning from shared narratives of endurance. According to Obiefuna (2014), such symbolic interpretation helps communities cope with trauma by transforming pain into testimony. According to N. Abutu (personal communication, 24th June, 2025) illustrates this dynamic. He stated: “What we are passing through is painful, but it reminds us that our faith is real. If it had no value, nobody would fight us over it.” This statement shows how suffering becomes symbolically reinterpreted as validation of belief, reinforcing identity and resilience rather than despair.

- **Religion, power, and marginalization**

Religious suffering is also closely linked to issues of power and marginalization within society. Nigerian sociologists argue that persecution often reflects unequal access to



political power and social protection. Danfulani (2012) maintains that religious violence in Nigeria is sustained by structural exclusion, where certain groups are rendered vulnerable due to weak institutional protection. Osaghae (2011) further observes that marginalized religious communities are more likely to experience violence because their grievances are ignored by dominant power structures. According to H. Joseph (personal communication, 8th July, 2025) stated: “When attacks happen here, nobody listens to us because we are seen as a minority. It is like suffering quietly is expected of us.” This testimony highlights how persecution is embedded within broader systems of marginalization, where suffering is normalized and rendered invisible by power imbalance.

- **Persecution and group solidarity**

Despite its marginalizing effects, persecution also generates strong group solidarity within Christian communities. Scholars note that shared suffering often strengthens internal cohesion and collective identity. Okwueze (2003) argues that religion under threat tends to produce tighter social bonds, as members rely on one another for emotional, material, and spiritual support. Similarly, Onwuejeogwu (1997) observes that adversity reinforces communal responsibility and shared destiny in African societies. According to P. Goshit (personal communication, 16th July, 2025) demonstrates this reality. He stated: “We have learned to depend on each other. When one person is attacked, the whole church feels it.” Analytically, this communal response shows that suffering functions sociologically as a unifying force, transforming persecution into a catalyst for solidarity and collective survival.

Dialogue between Nigerian Christian Experience and the New Testament

This section explores the interaction between the lived experiences of contemporary Nigerian Christians and New Testament narratives of suffering. It examines how biblical models of persecution, endurance, and identity inform contemporary understanding, while also highlighting the differences and continuities between early church experiences and modern Nigerian contexts. By engaging both sociological observations and theological insights, the section demonstrates how Scripture provides interpretive frameworks that shape meaning-making, resilience, and identity among persecuted Christians in Nigeria.

- **Parallels between the early church and Nigerian Christianity**

Parallels between the early church and Nigerian Christianity are striking, especially in the way persecution tests faith and forges communal bonds. Ezenwa (2015) notes that both contexts share a pattern of external hostility shaping internal cohesion; the early church thrived amid Roman oppression, just as Nigerian Christians navigate armed attacks, discrimination, and social marginalization. Okonkwo (2016) adds that the experience of shared suffering validates faith and strengthens the perception of divine accompaniment, making endurance a central marker of identity. According to P. Eze (personal



communication, 28th July, 2025) illustrates this continuity. He stated: “When I read about Paul and Silas singing in prison, I see our villages attacked and our people praying through the night. It teaches us that suffering does not destroy faith, it confirms it.” This reflection underscores how biblical narratives function as living models, offering both interpretation and encouragement.

- **Differences in context and expression of suffering**

Despite these parallels, differences in context are evident. The early church faced persecution from a centralized political authority, while Nigerian Christians contend with a fragmented landscape of insecurity that includes religiously motivated militias, communal conflicts, and weak state protection. As Nwankwo (2018) observes, modern Nigerian Christians interpret persecution not only spiritually but also in political and socio-economic terms, highlighting the intersection between religion, governance, and social justice. According to F. Okwu (personal communication, 2nd September, 2025) revealed this contextual complexity. She stated: “Our suffering is not only spiritual. It is political, economic, and social. We pray, but we also have to navigate checkpoints, threats, and daily fear.” This statement demonstrates that contemporary suffering in Nigeria is multidimensional, requiring both spiritual and practical responses.

- **Meaning-making and theological interpretation**

Meaning-making in Nigerian Christianity is deeply influenced by New Testament models of endurance, witness, and hope. Scholars such as Onuoha (2017) argue that the Bible provides interpretive categories that allow believers to frame persecution as purposeful rather than random, fostering resilience and communal cohesion. For example, Pauline letters that link suffering with participation in Christ serve as a theological lens for understanding loss, displacement, and societal marginalization in Nigeria. According to I. Amah (personal communication, 12th September, 2025) stated: “We read that suffering produces endurance. When our church is attacked, we remember this teaching, and it strengthens our faith.” This testimony reflects the direct influence of New Testament narratives on Nigerian Christians’ interpretations of their suffering, demonstrating an ongoing dialogue between Scripture and lived experience.

Implications for Christian Witness and Hope in Nigeria

This section examines the practical and theological implications of persecution and insecurity for Christian witness and hope in contemporary Nigeria. It focuses on how experiences of suffering and marginalization shape the church’s public engagement, moral responsibility, and resilience, while also highlighting strategies Christians adopt to maintain faith and communal cohesion. By combining sociological insights with theological reflection, this section illustrates how persecution both challenges and



strengthens Nigerian Christian identity, guiding responses that are faithful, hopeful, and socially aware.

- **Faith, resilience, and non-violent response**

Faith, resilience, and non-violent response constitute central elements of Christian witness under persecution. Nigerian scholars emphasize that enduring persecution without resorting to violence is a key marker of authentic discipleship. Iroanya (2012) notes that the church often acts as a moral compass, demonstrating that faithfulness involves patience, prayer, and reconciliation, even amid threats. Okeke (2015) adds that resilience in the face of insecurity strengthens communal identity and reinforces ethical witness to society. According to C. Nnadi (personal communication, 25th September, 2025) illustrates this perspective. He stated: “We could retaliate, but our faith teaches us to pray and continue our work. People notice that our strength comes from God, not force.” This testimony highlights how the church negotiates ethical witness while preserving identity and promoting hope under hostile conditions.

- **The role of the church in an insecure society**

The role of the church in an insecure society is multidimensional, encompassing spiritual, social, and humanitarian functions. Nwafor (2016) observes that Nigerian churches not only nurture faith but also provide material relief, education, and psychosocial support for communities affected by persecution. As Ugwu (2017) explains, such interventions transform the church into a locus of resilience and hope, offering a model of collective survival and moral leadership. According to A. Odoh (personal communication, 7th October, 2025) stated: “When attacks happen, the church feeds families, prays with them, and stands with them. People see that hope is alive because the church acts.” This statement demonstrates how the church’s active engagement reinforces hope, providing practical and spiritual sustenance for Christian identity in the midst of insecurity.

- **Hope, endurance, and the future of Christian identity**

Hope, endurance, and the future of Christian identity in Nigeria are closely tied to theological interpretation and communal solidarity. Scholars such as Eze (2018) argue that hope functions as both a spiritual and social resource, enabling believers to reinterpret suffering as temporary and purposeful. Okeke (2015) further emphasizes that endurance nurtures courage and ethical consistency, sustaining the church’s witness even under prolonged adversity. According to S. Onah (personal communication, 22nd October, 2025) illustrates this dynamic. He stated: “Our people learn that God is with us. Suffering strengthens faith, and our hope for the future keeps the church alive.” Analytically, this testimony confirms that persecution, while challenging, produces communities capable of sustaining Christian identity, ethical witness, and resilient hope, ensuring continuity across generations.



Conclusion

This study has examined the complex interplay between persecution, insecurity, and Christian identity in Nigeria, situating contemporary experiences of suffering within both sociological and theological frameworks. The analysis demonstrates that persecution is not merely a series of isolated incidents but a patterned social phenomenon with deep implications for the lives of Christians. Through targeted attacks, abductions, and systemic marginalization, insecurity has forced Nigerian Christians to negotiate faith, belonging, and communal life under conditions of vulnerability. By engaging New Testament narratives, the study has shown that the experiences of Jesus and the early church provide enduring interpretive frameworks, enabling believers to construct meaning from suffering, strengthen identity, and cultivate resilience. The investigation reveals that Christian identity in Nigeria is dynamically shaped under persecution. Faith, self-understanding, and communal bonds are continually redefined, as individuals and communities respond to external threats. Oral testimonies indicate that persecution intensifies religious belonging, reshapes theological perspectives, and fosters collective solidarity, highlighting the social as well as spiritual dimensions of suffering. Nigerian Christians interpret adversity not only as a challenge but also as a form of validation, a test of faith, and an opportunity to witness moral courage and resilience. The study further shows that sociological perspectives help explain how persecution functions symbolically, mediates power relations, and reinforces both marginalization and cohesion. Finally, the dialogue between the Nigerian experience and New Testament narratives underscores the continuing relevance of Scripture in contemporary contexts. The biblical models of endurance, hope, and communal solidarity provide guidance for interpreting suffering, sustaining faith, and affirming identity. The implications are significant for Christian witness, as believers learn to navigate insecurity without compromising ethical or theological principles, drawing strength from communal structures and spiritual resources. In conclusion, persecution, while deeply challenging, serves as both a crucible and a catalyst for Nigerian Christian identity, offering opportunities for resilience, hope, and faithful witness even in the most insecure contexts.

Recommendations

Strengthening Institutional Protection and Advocacy: The Nigerian government and relevant security agencies should prioritize the protection of religious minorities, particularly Christians in regions prone to attacks. Policies must be implemented to ensure rapid response to threats, accountability for perpetrators, and proactive measures to prevent violence. Additionally, religious and civil society organizations should engage in sustained advocacy to highlight persecution as a national concern, emphasizing that security, justice, and social cohesion are essential for the preservation of Christian identity and communal resilience.

Promoting Faith-Based Resilience and Community Solidarity: Churches and Christian organizations should continue to develop programs that strengthen communal support, spiritual formation, and ethical witness in the face of persecution. This includes creating



structures for psychosocial support, fostering intergenerational mentorship, and integrating biblical teachings on endurance, hope, and moral responsibility into practical strategies for survival. Such initiatives can empower Christians to respond to insecurity constructively, reinforce identity, and sustain communal cohesion without resorting to violence or compromising ethical principles.

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Name	Age	Gender	Location	Occupation	Date
Stephen Gyang	52	Male	Plateau State	Farmer and Church Elder	3/3/25
Lydia Audu	45	Female	Benue State	Teacher	22/3/25
Daniel Sadiq	29	Male	Jos	Civil Servant	8/4/25
Rev. Dr. Michael Okorie	48	Male	Awka	Priest/Lecturer	28/4/25
Grace Tanko	54	Female	Kaduna	Teacher and Lay-Leader	10/5/25
Joseph Danjuma	37	Male	Kaduna	Teacher and Lay-Leader	15/5/25
Andrew Madu	46	Male	Owerri	Transporter	25/5/25
Ruth Pam	53	Female	Plateau	Trader and Women Leader	7/6/25
Timothy Nwabueze	38	Male	Benue State	Trader	17/6/25
Nathaniel Abutu	44	Male	Benue State	Civil Engineer	24/6/25
Halima Joseph	39	Female	Nasarawa	NGO Officer	8/7/25
Peter Goshit	50	Male	Plateau	Trader	16/7/25
Rev. Paul Eze	52	Male	Nnewi	Priest	28/7/25
Felicia Okwu	47	Female	Jos	Principal	2/9/25
Innocent	36	Male	Benue State	Pastor	12/9/25



WEBUIKE: An African Journal of Arts and Humanities

Vol. 12. No. 2, (2026)

ISSN: 2488- 9210 (Print) 2504-9038 (Online)

Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies, Tansian University, Umuanya

Indexed by: Academic Journals Online, Google Scholar, Igwebuike Research Institute

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Agnes Odoh	48	Female	Benue State	Trader	7/10/25
Samuel Onah	35	Male	Jos	Pastor	22/10/25