

SOURCE A

Background

This source is an extract from the personal account of Reverend Walter Ringwald, a Basel missionary who served in the Gold Coast (modern-day Ghana) during the mid-20th century. His work "Stafette in Afrika" (Relay in Africa) provides firsthand observations of missionary activities and African responses to Christianity. The account is particularly valuable for understanding the complex motivations behind religious conversion in colonial Africa.

Source: Extract from Ringwald's Personal Account

From "Stafette in Afrika" (1957)

In all my years of missionary work in the Gold Coast, I have observed something quite remarkable about those who come forward for baptism. Despite our earnest preaching of the Gospel, I cannot recall a single instance where someone approached me citing a specific Biblical passage or divine revelation as their reason for seeking baptism. This stands in stark contrast to what we initially expected.

After our open-air sermons, many would indeed come forward, but their expressions of interest were often couched in broader, more general terms. A common refrain I heard was simply, "I am searching for something. I want life." Whether this meant a literal desire for improved circumstances or represented some deeper, undefined spiritual yearning, I could not always be certain.

This pattern has made me reflect deeply on the nature of conversion in this land. While we came to preach the Gospel, those who heard us often approached the Christian message through the lens of their own needs and understanding. The journey to true spiritual conviction, I have observed, follows paths we missionaries had not always anticipated.

SOURCE B:

Extract from: Boahen, A. A. (1975). *Ghana: Evolution and change in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries*. Longman.

It was not until the 1730s that a really serious attempt was made by a missionary society to plant Christianity in Ghana. In 1737 the Moravian United Brethren Mission sent out two missionaries, Chretien Protten and Henrich Huckuff. Protten was in fact born in 1715 in Christiansborg of a Danish father and a Ghanaian mother and was educated first in the Castle School in Accra and then in Denmark from 1727 to 1737 before being sent out to Ghana. Protten worked first in Elmina and then, periodically, in Christiansborg till his death in 1769. He did not win many converts to his cause. In 1742 the Moravians in Holland also sent out to Elmina another mulatto, Jacobus Elisa Johannes Capitein. He hailed from the Ivory Coast and was brought to Holland as a young slave boy. Educated at the University of Leyden, he was the first African to be ordained since the Reformation. He started two schools in one for mulattos and one for Africans, but both his death in 1747.