This study examines the impact of Christianity on the Abanyole indigenous belief sand rituals surrounding lifwa. The inquiry is guided by the theoretical framework of change and continuity whenever two or more cultures interact. Basically, the central contention of this thesis is that inspite of profound impact of Christianity on some of the Abanyole indigenous rituals, there are, however, most of the rituals that have resisted any recognizable Christian influence. Funeral rites are an immediate example of the latter case. Not only do they reflect the Abanyoles deep-seated belief in the reality of spirits but they also serve crucial social functions, for example, by inculcating morality among these people.

It is observed in this thesis that unlike the indigenous lifwa rituals, Christian death rituals have not adequately addressed aspects that are deeply entrenched in lifwa. Infact Christianity has often either ignored or out rightly condemned indigenous and rituals surrounding lifwa. In so doing it has created for Abanyole Christians a dichotomous kind of life. Such Christians would thus want to publicly observe Christian death rituals and yet at the same time secretly adhere to indigenous beliefs concerning lifwa.

This thesis has six chapters. Chapter has the background information. It introduces the problems being studied, spells out objectives, the hypothesis, justification for the study and limit. Included as well are the methodology used, the theoretical framework, review of related literature and the definition of terms. Chapter two addresses the Abanyole belief in God and in ancestral spirits to prepare us to understand beliefs surrounding lifwa. Chapter three examines the Abanyole indigenous rites with a view to pointing out their socio-religious significance. In chapter four a comparison is made between the Christian doctrines and rituals on the dying and death with the indigenous lifwa beliefs and rituals. Areas of convergence and divergence are examined in this section. Chapter five analyses change and continuity in lifwa rituals among Abanyole Christians. Factors leading to such change and continuity are visited as well. Chapter six gives the summary and conclusions of the study, makes policy recommendations and suggests areas for further research. Appendices and selected bibliography are included at the end of thesis.