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## Missionaries Are to Blame in Chinua Achebe's Things Fall Apart

The burden and calling to reach out and help others, enfold many people in society throughout the world. Rich or poor, young or old, black, red or white, the motive is helping those with a need. As Chinua Achebe points out in his book, Things Fall Apart, though there is the aspiration to lend a hand, it can sometimes become deadly, and even fatal to the lives of people. Although the missionaries try help convert the Ibo village of [Umuofia](#) to Christianity, their presence in Africa is harmful to the lives and culture of the Ibo.

The men that come to Umuofia destroy the cultural balance of faith and religion that encompasses the native people in Africa. People in Umuofia depend strongly on the ancestors and gods in their culture. It is their tradition and their beginning, from which they govern their lives. Even the priestess that serves the god Agbala, "...was full of the power of her god, and she was greatly feared" (16). Without the stronghold of customs and traditions, only chaos exists. Peace, trust, and knowledge are thrown off when the new religion of Christianity is introduced. When the missionary explains that:

"All the gods you have named are not gods at all. They are gods of deceit who tell you to kill your fellows and destroy innocent children. There is only one true God and He has the earth, the sky, you and me and all of us" (121).

Decisions, opinions, and beliefs become uncertain and doubt appears. Cultural values, that were held for generations, are pitted against the missionary's sermons. Although the missionaries come with the desire and intention to help the underdeveloped Ibo village reach its potential...

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...e senseless and heartless government, which ruthlessly destroys the peaceful atmosphere in the villages. Africa will only reach its potential when everybody realizes the importance of preserving the cultural traditions.

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