This study is an attempt to understand the possible causes of how Rwandan Christians came to be involved in the genocide. The review of the history of Christian missions in Rwanda suggests that many people joined the church without experiencing deep Biblical conversion.

The first missionaries to Rwanda sometime used the colonial power to pressure the leaders of the people to accept the new religion. They also pursued a theory of the racial superiority of Tutsis over the rest of Rwandans. Later on the Hutu majority idea was used and this contributed to the ethnic hatred and tensions in the country.

In addition, the traditional institutions which were the foundations of Rwanda worldview and social cohesions were systematically done away with. The authority of the divine king was undermined and the traditional religion supplanted with the new one. Without deep conviction, Rwandans were forced to part with their traditions, their religion and their king and become Christians in name only.

Until 1994, most Rwandans were born into the church. Their spiritual life had not been nurtured by the word of God and as a result, there had been no really turning to God. The average church member did not practice in many of the spiritual disciplines. Field research confirms that during the 1994 genocide, churches had done little to nurture the disciple-making
process. This was mostly due to the immature leadership who were often chosen on the basis of their ethnicity rather than biblical factors.

Competition among the denominations to get as many followers as possible was high and this often lowered the expectation for membership. In some cases, the standards of the Christian life were not made clear. Some preached Christ in the context of cheap grace while others depended on rituals apart from Christ. The respondents indicated that this resulted in high degree of nominality without commitment neither to Christ nor to the church.

Politicians in Rwanda took advantage of this nominal state of the church and for political interests, awakened the dormant ethnic hatred through the media. One of the important means that they used to motivate the poor people to participate in the genocide was through the offering of material rewards. Without the strong experience of a deep conversion, many nominal Christians in Rwanda became involved in the genocide.