

An Examination of Corruption in Nigeria and the Prospect of Pastoral Ministry

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Virtually every aspect of Nigeria's life is ethically unhealthy; this is a direct consequence of corruption and the inactive posture of today's Church. This situation had created moral anarchy in Nigeria. Seemingly, the Church in the 21st century Nigeria cannot fight corruption because it has placed prosperity above salvation of souls. Thus, this paper throws a challenge at the nation- Nigeria, the Church and her Ministers. It emphasized a total separation of the church from a morally corrupt Nigerian society, but recommends that the church must simultaneously act as a sanitizer of the same morally bankrupt and corrupt nation. Corruption in Nigeria is hereby examined viz a viz Durkheim's theory of anomie. In this study, findings were made and recommendations were based on discoveries before concluding remarks were documented.

Keywords: Corruption, Pastor, Minister, Prospect, Gospel Minister, Concept, Anomie

Introduction

Corruption is everywhere, it is highly unfortunate, the church is not even spared. Notably, bad governance, poor economy, erosion of ethical values, social and religious upheavals, bedevil Nigeria as a nation. Their cumulative effects had exposed several citizens to poverty, broken homes, mental disorderliness, promiscuity and sexually transmitted diseases like HIV and AIDS. Unfortunately,

insincerity and lack of boldness on the part of contemporary Nigerian denominational General Overseers and renown ministers of the gospel to unanimously cry against injustice, greed, exploitation and the profit motif, which are noticeable features of Nigerian societies today, had resulted in overpowering sledge-hammer blows on the nation's downtrodden masses. Hence, the poor is stretched almost to breaking-point.

This paper examined therefore, corruption in Nigeria, in the church, among ministers of the gospel and its effect on continued existence or otherwise of pastoral ministry in Nigeria, particularly, beyond the next fifteen years. It seems no single segment of Nigeria's society is corrupt-free. Unfortunately, the Church, which is supposed to be an agent of ethical revolution and puritanical movement, is well caught in the web of corruption. Hence, this study cannot overlook facts relating to corruption and the threats it poses to evangelism and pastoral ministry. This study attempted to predict the future of pastoral ministry in Nigeria if corruption continued unabated both in secular and in religious arena. This study discussed what pastoral ministry should mean and what it means to some modern day Nigerian ministers and the consequences of such conceptions on Christian integrity.

Theoretical Background: (Durkheim's Concept of Anomie)

The boundless search for wealth by the church and her ministers has led the society into despair. By this, Durkheim's anomie theory is proved right in that due to lack of moral standard in an individual or society, people are bound to behave immorally and the end- result is social anarchy, which separates people from societal peace and benefits. Durkheim advanced his theory of social transition when he argues that social order is maintained through social integration and regulations in a social equilibrium. According to him, all nations develop normative behavioral patterns and belief systems in the evolutionary change process. During the transitional period, such as the transition from a rural society to an urban society, the diffusion of

new norms and values disrupts the equilibrium of traditional societies, breaks down sacred religions institutions, traditional beliefs and its ascribed status relationships. The new organic social relationships enable individuals to challenge old cultural values and social rules thus resulting in the rapid increase of anomie³⁷⁶

Durkheim did not study the democratic or religious transition, but his theory can be readily applied to explain anomie during these situations. The word “anomie” derives from the Greek word anomia, meaning lawlessness or “without law”, and refers to societal instability resulting from a breakdown in broadly accepted values, as well as wide spread personal feelings of uncertainty and alienation. The first sociological use of the term “anomie” is usually attributed to the founder of modern sociology, Emily Durkheim. He was the first to develop the concept of anomie into a sociological theory: Indeed, anomie is a recurrent concept in many of Durkheim’s published works (as well as posthumously published letters). Durkheim’s most cited discussion of the concept appears in his book, *Suicide: A Study of Sociology*, first published in 1897.³⁷⁷

It was Durkheim who promulgated a theory of anomie and was later developed by Merton, Leo strole, College of Physicians and surgeons, Columbia University and many other sociologists.³⁷⁸ According to Merton’s theories of anomie, fraudulent practices become more likely when accepted avenues of attaining the culturally prescribed goals are unavailable (or perceived to be unavailable) or when great emphasis is placed on such goals without similar emphasis on the means of attaining them. Anomie, therefore, is a byproduct of rapid change (Durkheim 1897) and the adaptive response of an individual in an open stratification system (Merton 1938) Anomie has been expanded and described as a breakdown of social norms regulating individual

³⁷⁶Ruohui Zhao and Liqun cao (2010) *Social Change and Anomie: A cross National study* (social forces, vol 88, Nub 33, march 2010, pp1209-1229.

³⁷⁷Durkheim E 1897. *Suicide: A Study in Sociology*, Gleuco: II Free Press, pg 405

³⁷⁸Merton R.K 1949. *Social Theory and Social Structure*, New York: Free Press, 702.

behavior and social interaction. However, call it westernization, modernization or anomie, there is a rapid change, a moral breakdown and an unethical violation of sacred religious institutions, values and beliefs in ministry today, particularly in Nigeria.

Nigeria as a Nation

According to Webster's New College Dictionary, "a nation is a historically stable and developed community of people with a territory, economic life, distinctive culture and a language in common"³⁷⁹. The Thesaurus sees a nation as a "people of the same ethnicity; a community of people who share a common ethnic origin, culture, historical tradition and language, whether or not they live together in the same territory or have their own government.

If the meaning of the term, nation, as put forward by the two definitions is assessed, obviously, Nigeria is not qualified to be called a nation with its over 250 ethnic groups and different languages. The Nigerian people cannot be said to be of a distinctive culture, a common language, same ethnicity or common ethnic origin as spelt out by these definitions. However, the Thesaurus Dictionary, again, defines a nation as "people in a land under a single government; a community of people or people living in a defined territory and organized under a single government". Nodasan also opined that "a nation is not simply an ethnic group, neither is a nation simply an economic togetherness. It is a political togetherness, concerned both, with the structure and exercise of power. It is a togetherness, which gives expression to the shared aspirations for equality and freedom to establish, nurture and maintain the institutions necessary for that purpose"³⁸⁰

With this latter definition, Nigeria can safely be called a nation. It exemplifies political unity as reflected in the shared aspirations of the

³⁷⁹ (Webster's New World College Dictionary, <http://w.w.w.yourdictionary.com/Nation>).

³⁸⁰. answers.com.<http://www.answers.com/topic/nation>

people for “equality and freedom”. Unfortunately, although Nigeria can rightly be called a nation in this sense, yet it appears to have fallen short of certain qualities that characterize a nation, such as, accelerated development, peaceful co-existence, unity of purpose, which have all eluded Nigeria. No doubt, the Nigerian constitution recognizes the fact that Nigeria is a multi-ethnic and multi-religious nation, the constitution consequently permits peaceful co-existence and disapproves or considers inappropriate the dominance of any religion over others in national affairs. This is evident in section 10 of the 1999 constitution which states that “every person shall be entitled to freedom of thought, conscience and religion or belief in worship, practice and observance”³⁸¹

Despite constitutional provisions, the nation is unfortunately and incessantly on the path of war. Apart from militancy and ethnic rivalries, religion has become an instrument of devastation, brutality, divide and rule in the hands of few unscrupulous and wealthy politicians. This is done through aiding and abetting religious rampage. Here and there in Nigeria are ignoble manifestations like embezzlement, arson nepotism, tribalism, greed, indolence, murder, robbery, kidnappings, banditry, drug addictions, incessant closure of citadels of learning, political violence, thuggery, electoral frauds, religious violence, bribery and corruption. Former Nigeria’s president, Chief Olusegun Obasanjo, at the 49th convention of the Foursquare Gospel Church in Lagos, Nigeria, November 2004, lamented thus:

It has become apparent that we must do more than praying, we must give up corruption. While I commend your prayer for the nation, the challenge before the church today is to make Christians and none – Christians give up corruption from one end of the country to the other; we are unanimous in our condemnation of corruptive tendencies, nevertheless, corruptive tendencies continued unabated in

S.Nwabuzor, “Civil Strike; Swan Song and MayDay”
<http://nigeriawold.com/Columnist/nwabuzor.0526500.html>.

our Country. I appeal to you to reject offerings from those whose incomes have come under justifiable suspicion. It is condemnable that today, some of our churches give place to those who are corrupt minded. You must be more involved in becoming all things to all people as Apostle Paul did in order to win souls. The church will never be able to exonerate itself if our country remains corrupt³⁸².

The inference could be drawn therefore that the church in Nigeria has not been able to control the minds of its citizenry effectively. Why has the church in Nigeria failed to influence and inculcate enviable moral values and virtues into the socio-political life of Nigerians? Could the church have been bought over by wealthy political elites? Is the church merely complacent with numerical upsurge, material and financial blessings at the expense of trumpeting what is morally just? What then is the church afraid of? Is there any prospect for pastoral ministry in Nigeria beyond the 21st century?

In this era of global technological advancement, Nigeria is sadly always in the dark because of power failure; lack of pipe-borne water and provision of good roads remain in the realm of illusion. Although Nigeria is one of the richest oil countries in the world, however, poverty in its various dimensions remains a stark reality. These had culminated in disillusionment, dissatisfaction, hatred, acrimony and unpatriotic activities.³⁸³

More worrisome is the gullible manner with which Nigerians have swallowed hook, line and sinker foreign cultural influences against the invaluable Nigerian cultural values. Currently, the enviable value of love for community life, unity among the people, respect for human dignity, have given way to such foreign philosophies as individualism, materialism, and atheistic humanism.

³⁸² The Guardian Newspaper, Tuesday, Nov.6,2004

³⁸³. Celestina, Isiramen, 2010. *Religion and the Nigerian Nation* Ibadan: En-Joy Press and Books, Pgx.

Today, Nigeria is presumed to be Africa's most populous nation and the giant of Africa. Her three largest ethnic groups are the Hausas, who live primarily in the Northern Nigeria; the Yoruba's of the southwestern Nigeria; and the Igbo people of the southeast. Other leading ethnic groups in Nigeria include the Nupe and the Tiv of Central Nigeria; the Edo, Urhobo, Itshekiri and the Ijaw of the Niger Delta. Nevertheless, the continued co-existence of these ethnic groups is not without tribal or ethnic clashes, a result of socio-political and religions differences.³⁸⁴

As a pluralistic society, there are three major faiths in the land; Christian faith, Islamic faith and the Traditional religion. There is a great concentration of Muslims in the Northern states while the South parades a large number of Christians. The nation is divided apparently between Christianity and Islam; also between the south and the North. Nigeria is blessed with a large expanse of arable land for agricultural purposes, vast coastal water resources and equatorial forests. According to Agboluaje, several million Nigerians obtain a living from agricultural production. At a point in time, Nigeria was the world's largest-exporter of palm oil and groundnuts. Unfortunately today, Nigeria is incurably dependent on financial proceeds from crude oil inspite her several billions of untapped, standard cubic of natural gas buried in her soil and vast areas of under-utilized arable land.

Nigeria operates three tiers of government namely: Federal, State and Local Government. There are a total number of thirty-six states in the country and Abuja is made the Federal capital Territory [FCT].

In the words of Ibukun:

Nigeria as a nation is faced with a multiplicity of challenges among other current issues that attract attention. These include ineffective leadership,

³⁸⁴ Timothy Agboluaje 2010. *Prophet Amos and National Rebranding: lessons for Nigeria @50*, Ilorin: Modern Impressions Pg81-83

lack of accountability in governance, absence of security, growing poverty, inequalities and sliding socio-cultural values. A multi-dimensional approach advanced by apologists of rapid economic transformation and development as a platform for stable polity and peace appears to be largely exclusive and inadequate in addressing the myriad of problems faced by Nigeria as a nation.³⁸⁵

It needs be mentioned at this juncture that the political class cannot exonerate itself from the present predicament of Nigeria; they are divided along contending ideological presentations of their party manifestos and a lot of energy is diverted to frivolous issues rather than articulating legal defence of the liberty of Nigerians to live under a secular , democratic Nigerian State³⁸⁶.

Corruption in Nigeria

Numerous definitions of corruption abound. The oxford Advance learner's Dictionary defines corruptions as 'dishonest or illegal behavior, especially for people in authority.' It is further seen as allegations of bribery and corruption"³⁸⁷

Similarly, the World Bank defines corruption as the abuse of public Office through the instrumentality of private agents who actively offer bribes to circumvent public policies and processes for competitive advantages and profit. Beyond bribery, public office could be abused for personal benefits through patronage and nepotism, for example, the theft of state assets or diversion of state revenues.³⁸⁸ Concisely, 'corruption is a perversion of the good or a change from good to bad.

³⁸⁵ O. Ibukun (*forward to Religion & the Nigerian Nation*) (Pg.xvi)

³⁸⁶ J.N Shagaya *Governance in Nigeria: the IBB Era*, Jos: Viewpoint Communications Ltd, 17.

³⁸⁷ A.S.Hornby(ed) (2000) *Oxford Advanced Learners Dictionary of current English to the edition*, Oxford University press, (pg261)

³⁸⁸ Cited in Bello Imam, (2005) *The War Against Corruption in Nigeria; Problems and Prospects*. (Ibadan: College Press and Publisher Ltd. (pg 32-33.

It involves a purposeful violation of legality towards personal gains through patronage, favoritism, nepotism and other means. An example is stealing of funds and assets of the state or misappropriation of state revenue.’³⁸⁹ Sola Adeyeye once argued, “What we have in Nigeria is what I have described many times as ‘corruptocracy’, a government of the corrupt and for the corrupt. A situation where a political office-holder in an extremely poor country such as Nigeria earns much more than a neurosurgeon working in the United States.”³⁹⁰ Consequently, Agboluaje catalogued those damaging effects of corruption on Nigerian masses:

The rich continue to be richer while the poor continue to slide into an irredeemable abyss of abject poverty. Greedy politicians at the echelon of power systematically loot the national coffers. The corrupt, unscrupulous and selfish individuals have metaphorically become ‘fatted cows’ or ‘cows of bashan’ described in the days of prophet Amos. They do not care about how they get satisfied but rather go into extreme absurdity of unholy acts to acquire wealth. With this, they build palaces and mansions all over the country while the poor continue to be wretched. These same people could afford expensive education for their children, eat the best available food and receive the best medical services within and outside the country. All these at the expense of the masses³⁹¹

In Abogunrin’s opinion, contemporary discourse show that Nigeria is bedeviled by such acts or social crimes as nepotism, tribalism, embezzlement, armed and pen robbery, greed, indolence, negligence,

³⁸⁹ Celestma O. Isramen (2010) *Religion & the Nigeria Nation: Some Topical issues*. (Pg.70)

³⁹⁰ S. Adeyeye in Y Adekunle, “We Run a Corruptocracy”, *Tell*; Feb. 2,2009. Pg96.

³⁹¹ Agboluaje T,2010. *Prophet Amos and National Rebranding: Lessons for Nigeria at 50*. Ilorin: Modern Impression,

cheating, profiteering, and fraud³⁹². Isiramen observed that in addition to these are the existence of dupes or fraudsters (popularly known in Nigeria as 419), drug addicts, prostitutes and religious manipulators who engage in killing fellow citizens claiming to be working for God. This cankerworm has eaten deep into the entire fabric of Nigeria resulting in severe dereliction and decay within every facet. Various governments in Nigeria have set up one form of body or the other in the attempt to address the hydra-headed monster. Unfortunately, these efforts often end up leaving the nation more corrupt than it has been.³⁹³

Sad still, corruption is evident in Nigeria's academic environment, the recent (Year 2019 BBC, Nigeria) exposure of some University lecturers who harass and sexually violate female students particularly at the University of Lagos is an undeniable evidence. There is corruption in public institutions, in the armed forces, in the judiciary, in business arena, in political settings, in business outfits and even within religious establishments. Added to these are the problems of leading by bad example, consequently, unimaginable gap exists between the rich and the poor; most annoying is the problem of the untouchables (those who live above the law, the sacred cows). Also is the menace of false intention behind inauguration of programs, appreciation of false values and the abuse of power.

The Corrupt Church and the Prospect of Pastoral Ministry

Church is the body of members who have voluntarily submitted to the controlling headship of Jesus who is the Messiah and Son of God [Eph. 5:23, Cl.1:18]. The word 'Church' comes from the Greek word 'Ekklesia and the word means the "called out assembly" (Literally, it is ek-kaleo). Those called out of the world through obedience to the gospel message and were added to the family of God, the church. In

³⁹² . S.O Abogunrin (ed) 1986. "Religion and Ethics", *Religion and Ethics in Nigeria*, Ibadan, Daystar Press, pg 12.

³⁹³ Celestine O. Isiramen 2010. *Corruption in the Nigerian Society: Suggestion for Moral Rearmament*. (Pg. 67)

another vein, the church could mean, a collection of human societies, which is inspired by, and seeks to represent the significance of Jesus, hence, Paul's description of it as the body of Christ.³⁹⁴

At this point, one is tempted to agree with Familusi when he asserted that in Nigeria today, the fact cannot be denied that we live in a corrupt society, and without necessarily blaspheming, we worship in a corrupt Church, and to an extent, corrupt Shepherds pastor us. Consequently, the socio-religious implications of corruption in Nigeria becomes innumerable³⁹⁵ One may ask at this juncture, what is the fate of pastoral ministry, particularly in Nigeria, and beyond the 21st Century?

For the purpose of this paper, the writer adopts the word 'Pastor' to refer to all ministers called by God and those officially ordained and sworn in by a church to undertake some forms of spiritual assignments. Biblically, the qualification of a minister include divine calling (Acts 13:2); the reverse is the case today as divine calling is no longer seen as a prerequisite, hence, corruption is rampant everywhere and within the church. It is important to note that MC Tenney once argued that the gospel minister is originally a servant, although distinguished from a slave who may work against his will.³⁹⁶ Consequently, pastoral ministry is exclusively a call to absolute dedication, which involves counting the cost before embarking on it. This must have prompted Jesus to say that whoever lays his hand on the plough and looks back is unworthy of the kingdom of God. Pastoral ministry is divine as God does the calling and calls whoever He wants for His assignment, whether or not the fellow is ready or willing is no issue. It could be said that God is not a democrat on this matter. Nevertheless, a true minister must be a man of integrity.

³⁹⁴ David J Alkusion & Co1995. *New Dictionary of Christian Ethics and Pastoral Theology*, England: Intersivity Press, pg.229.

³⁹⁵ O. O. Familusi 2010, *Corruption and Pastoral ministry in the 21st century*

³⁹⁶ Merry Tenney, 1987. *New International Bible Dictionary Based on NIV* Grand Rapids, 659.

Ministers or Elders as Peter says are examples to people (I Pet. 5:3), therefore, they must represent what God wants than to be, in character and conduct; those inside as well as outside the church first look at those who stand as leaders. It is understandable, perhaps pardonable, if a new or struggling believer falls prey to sin, but when one who leads the congregation is found in reproach, the world blasphemes the teaching of the gospel, and saints within the church become disillusioned, some would even turn away from the church. For these reasons, the steward of Gods household must be above reproach.³⁹⁷

The rate at which the church is growing in Nigeria today is largely encouraging but alarmingly disappointing. What an oxymoron! The encouragement is borne out of simple obedience to the call to spread the gospel; one is disappointed because the rate of proliferation is not directly proportional to the degree of corruption escalation in the land. It is pathetic to remark that a major contemporary manifestation of corruption is schism, which has been taken to a ridiculous extent. One may ask, is it true that God purportedly keeps calling people to work in the vineyard not as followers or collaborators but as ‘founders’ and ‘general overseers’, with ministries registered as family ventures? Little surprise that the minister becomes the chairperson and his wife; the deputy while one of the children, no matter how young, becomes a council member. How would one describe the issue of commercialization of anointing by pastors to the extent that the already impoverished and unsuspecting church member is exploited. The claim is that salvation is free, but it is logical to conclude that miracle is monetarily expensive. As a result, things like anointing oil, holy mantle or handkerchiefs are sold at exorbitant rate. Besides, spiritual blessings and words of prophecies are released upon donors who financially support the ministry. No other name can be given to these than corruption.³⁹⁸

³⁹⁷Alexander Strunch, Biblical Eldership Wtp/w.w.w victorious.Org/cbook/chur34 (accessed on 9/6/2016).

³⁹⁸ O. O. Familusi 2010. Corruption & Pastoral Ministry pg.93

The issue of honorarium is another problem, a situation where a minister of God is invited as guest speaker and his honoring the invitation is contingent on how much he will be paid. Worse still, people are surprisingly becoming allergic to truth. Therefore, an interesting sermon is one that suits the purpose of listeners and such speaker will be gladly encouraged to ride on. This is a dangerous trend in Nigeria's Christianity.

The Survival or Otherwise of Pastoral Ministry in Nigeria

Life is full of challenges from the cradle to the grave; man is surrounded by challenges of different kinds and dimensions. Most of these challenges need to be identified, confronted and dealt with. First among modern day threats to healthy pastoral ministry is corruption, others exist that threaten the moral strength, stability, efficiency and effectiveness of ministers and ministries. Such challenges technically invite today's ministers to bring out the best of their intellectual, moral, social and spiritual ammunitions and power to fight and save their ministries and families.

The contemporary minister faces several challenges as he plays multiple roles simultaneously. He is a teacher, a preacher, a counselor, a leader, an administrator, a pastor, a social worker, a manager, a disturbance handler, an evangelist, all at the same time. He needs to protect his integrity and terms of his callings in the midst of these challenges.

Unfortunately, the contemporary Church is different from olden day's church. Today's Church is lethargic, apathetic and syncretic. Apostle Paul predicted today's church in IITim.3:1-5. *"This know also, that in the last days, perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy etc"*. Sadly enough, contemporary ministers in their hundreds have become worldly, materialistic and and unholy. **There are cases being reported in the media of Alfas** and pastors' involvement in sales of human parts, so also are situations whereby armed robbers confessed Alfas and

Pastors as partners in business. The big question we need to ask now is, what would be the fate of pastoral ministry in Nigeria, especially, in the next ten years? Apparently, it seems the future is bleak as long as ‘the diffusion of new norms and values continue to disrupt the equilibrium of traditional societies or breaks down sacred religious institutions and beliefs as well as its ascribed status relationships and culminating in rapid increase of anomie in Nigeria³⁹⁹

Sadly, today, there is a spiritual coup against messages of repentance, which Jesus and the Apostles preached and handed over to followers. Unfortunately, contemporary sermon in Churches, in print and in electronic media centres on prosperity, materialism and grace in abundance. Consequently, Church members indulge in blind, thoughtless pursuit of wealth, over-ambitious desire for positions of authority and merciless prayer-points to destroy their enemies; all to the detriment of sinners’ salvation. What a dying Church and a dying nation!

Consequently, the 21st century Ministers and Church may face challenges never dreamt possible. It is imperative that today’s Ministers look ahead to better prepare for dangers to come. The following issues loom as greatest challenges in the next ten years. First, Pentecostal Churches will come under tremendous pressure. Attempts to curtail the use of the gifts of the spirit would be made considering the ignoble activities of contemporary, self-made prophets, miracle-makers and prosperity preachers whose anointing and callings have come under justifiable suspicion. Worse still, some churches have ridiculously adopted unscriptural tactics of the corporate business world into key areas of their structures. These all together affects the integrity of the Church.

Besides, as some ministers have lost respect in the community (especially, those who have relegated godly values and spiritual

³⁹⁹Ruohui Zhao and Liqun cao 2010. *Social change and Anomie: A cross National study* Social forces, vol 88, No. 33, March pp1209-1229

concepts to fables, myths and legends), City governments may become ill disposed to gospel ministers and consequently tries to discourage metropolitan church planting, and may not welcome Churches or easily approve their purchase of land. A pointer to this was Governor (of Plateau State, Nigeria) El Rufai's verdict in 2016 that gospel preachers in his state must be registered, licensed and obtained government permit before being allowed to preach in any part of the state. Today's ministers therefore need to be conscious of their mission, be consecrated, operate in wisdom and harmony while they remain obedient to the scripture.

While predicting the fate of gospel ministers in Nigeria, especially in the next ten years, it is relevant to point out that stealthily in Nigeria today, hate speech for gospel message and gospel ministers who made one mistake or the other permeate the media. Reports of ministers who engaged in fake miracles and prophecies are on the increase. Hence, the Church must prepare for harassment; however, true ministers must not withdraw from ministry. There is the need to double efforts at winning souls for Christ in this end time.

There is the possibility that economic crisis in the world will worsen as the Bible predicted, ministers with low income may suffer, therefore the Church must model godly stewardship of her treasury and congregations. Communities will continue to fragment, and serve as havens for crime, violence, perversion and drugs. Contemporary ministers, therefore, must aggressively reach out with evangelism, counseling and genuine love to people, otherwise, the future may be full of contempt for the gospel message⁴⁰⁰ and ministers particularly in Nigeria. Today the nation's government seems to be unmindful of continued genocide against Nigerian Christians and priests in the Middle-belt of Nigeria.

⁴⁰⁰ [https://global Christian centre.com](https://globalchristiancentre.com)

Recommendations

No doubt, corruption has affected individuals directly or indirectly, so also public institutions, health sector, educational institutions, public and private industries as well as the church in Nigeria. It has plunged the nation into serious debts, ruined the economy, impoverished and humiliated law-abiding citizens. Consequently, fake prophets are on the increase and the continued existence of pastoral ministry is at stake. This paper therefore recommends that Nigerian ministers need to change their value systems. The Christian message must focus on moral and spiritual development of the human person. The Nigerian church needs to balance her healing and miracle programs, prosperity sermon, with messages of holiness, self-sacrifice, perseverance, communal and brotherly love messages.

In addition, the pastoral ministry is exclusively a call to absolute dedication, which involves counting the cost before embarking on it; the minister of the gospel must be a person of integrity in sexual, leadership, finance and moral matters, otherwise, pastoral ministry in Nigeria beyond **the 21st century** will be in jeopardy and its tomorrow may be hopeless. Spiritual and physical values of honesty, probity and hard work must be embraced as of old. The ministers' teaching and the lives of Pastors must be of good examples to church members and the society. The pastor must teach what the Bible says about corruption. All pastors must fight the spirit of 'red-tapism' (easy way of getting things done through bribery), and equally complement government efforts by supporting anti-corruption crusades. Therefore, to get rid of economic, political and social-religious evils that plague Nigeria as a nation, the church, the clergy and the nation's political class, must be involved in a deliberate and concerted actions against corruption.

In addition, moral re-orientation of the Nigerian society will never succeed in as much as there are people who live above the law. Men of influence and affluence are often the brains behind almost all atrocities in Nigeria, be it drug peddling, religious riots, assassinations, armed robbery, political maneuverings, embezzlement

etc. Unfortunately, the Nigerian high value for money has placed these people above the law. The Nigeria's government on its part must identify these individuals and prosecute them in the proper manner.⁴⁰¹

Conclusion

This paper examined corruption and the prospect of pastoral ministry in the 21st century Nigeria, the destruction of morality and the human value system of the Nigerian society, and the consequent glorification of questionable characters and individuals whose wealth have come under justifiable suspicion both in secular and religious arena. These are fundamental root causes of corruption in Nigeria. This sin calls for the regeneration of the human nature.

This paper however calls for a moral purge of the Nigerian church and her ministers. The church is expected to serve as an agent of moral revolution and help modern Nigeria to recover ancient socio-cultural values of fidelity, truth, honesty, justice, modesty and self-sacrifice in order to destroy the rapid increase of anomie, thus, the future of pastoral ministry would be secured.

⁴⁰¹ Celestial Osiramen 2010. Corruption in Nigerian Society: Suggestion for Moral Rearmament, 69.