



CHRISTIANITY & ACCOUNTABILITY



PRIESTS
PEACE & JUSTICE
INITIATIVE [PPJ]

The Social Arm of Palace of Priests Assembly PPA

SUPPORTED BY

THE JOHN D. AND CATHERINE T.
MACARTHUR
FOUNDATION



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Acknowledgement

A research work that is meant just for internal consumption is a product of intense work that demands a lot of rigour, hours of painstaking search for not just topical but relevant materials, time given to poring over countless pages of documents, attention to details and long and laborious and finally sifting and scrutinising the end product. Where the research is for external consumption it is doubly harder to undertake and where it involves matters of Christianity and corruption it becomes a task of enormous complexity with possibility for explosive verbal exchanges.

These are two topics for which anyone who has reached the age of knowledge believe he or she has an opinion. Both are known world over to be capable of generating intense passion during discussion. Although corruption is as old as mankind, there is hardly a definition that captures it rather there are acts that constitutes corruption and the debate is still on-going. That is one with a basis for endless argument. However, if corruption defies a readily acceptable definition, there is no doubting the consequences, for they have become part of our daily existence in the abysmal failure of service deliveries in governance, health care, education, housing and has contributed to the increase in poverty, unemployment, insecurity and underdevelopment.

On the other hand, Christianity across the world causes emotions to run high amongst the several adherents. The issues could be as mundane as the days of the week like Sabbath and Sunday, or the calendar for the celebration of Christmas. The doctrinal differences which should be a less divisive issues among people whose foundation is still setting groups against one another while at the deeper level of canons, as the denominations proliferate so the tension is escalating and the gulf between the children of Christ is getting wider.

Therefore, to navigate these sociological and theological mines to deliver this work to the applause of the men and women who validated the research is worthy of commendation. The researchers include Prof. Jibrin Ibrahim, Dr. Sam Amadi, Mr. Asuzu Echezona, Mr. Akubor Augustine, Pastor. Abraham Sam Aiyedogbon and Mr. Tive Denedo.

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CHRISTIANITY & ACCOUNTABILITY

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CHRISTIANITY & ACCOUNTABILITY

Foreward



Preface

There is an urgent call for the rescue of the Nigerian nation from the grip of corruption and the attendant malicious crisis spurned over the years. So much seems to have been done but much more requires to be done because the approaches hitherto used, including several declarations of wars on corruption by different administrations in the country to deal with the scourge of corruption have not created the expected impact. Scholars have written volumes on the causes, costs and consequences of corruption in the country while the anti-corruption war can boast of a few success stories, but victory is still largely a mirage. Those solutions have fallen dismally short in providing relief in the war against corruption.

Apparently, what is missing is the failure to mobilise the people through a language and a system that they can readily understand and relate to in their daily lives. For Christians especially, this language is that of faith and the authority of the Scriptures. Faith is the instrument with which a Christian can have a firm hold on the flow of life and provide an inspirational framework to act with conviction and courage while also acting as a check. This is the background to the publication of this pamphlet. The pamphlet is therefore a tool for mobilizing Christians across Nigeria through the Pentecostal perspective to join in the fight against corruption.

This pamphlet, along the others is a creation of an intensive and extensive research by a group of writers who were propelled by their passion to frontally tackle corruption through an evangelical-type approach that takes the content of the Bible and reproduces the instructions, promises, principles and sanctions in a simple manner to reflect God's position in dealing with the challenges of corruption. However, this pamphlet read together with others in the series is not just about corruption, but a bouquet of other related issues that will help to make the fight against corruption meaningful and effective. The other pamphlets are Christianity and the Fight against Corruption, Social Teachings of the Church, Christianity and the Struggle for Social Justice and Christianity and Political Leadership.

The researches were further validated by another group of Pentecostal Christians scholars and leaders who subjected the work and their content to a rigorous analysis session, vetted it and gave a stamp of approval as a body of literature ready and appropriate for use to mobilise the Pentecostal community in the fight against corruption.

As a result, its content is made simple and easy to read, understand & applied along with others in the series among which are the role of the Church in promoting accountability, the Church and the struggle for social justice, the Church and the Social Dimension of Christianity, the Church and political leadership of nations as well as the role of the



CHRISTIANITY & ACCOUNTABILITY

Church in elections in Nigeria. The pamphlets will serve as the literature for reading along with the Bible for training, instruction & edification on winning the war against corruption. It is good for pastors for whom it is originally intended but it is also a keepsake for those, who must be carried along in the fight against corruption. In this way the message will reach a very large segment of the nation and dwell richly in the heart of all those that will read it and use it for good works.

This pamphlet is conceptualized to be an enduring work for generations to come on the strategy to fight corruption by Pentecostals. Our prayer is that this pamphlet will both be spiritually and intellectually stimulating for everyone who will read it and be galvanized, energized & emboldened by the Spirit of God to be enlisted into the rank of those prepared to speak against & stand against any form of corruption wherever it may occur across the nation. In addition, we encourage anyone who will want to take this pamphlet just as we regularly use tracts to spread the message & become Anti-Corruption Champions in Nigeria.



Acknowledgement

Foreword

Preface

Part One: Introduction

Introduction ----- 1

Challenge of Accountability in Nigeria -----2

Impact of Dearth of Accountability in Nigeria ----- 3

Part Two: Literature Review

Accountability from the Bible -----4

The Bible as a Book of Accountability -----5

Accountability in the Trinity ----- 6

God, the Father, is Accountable to His Word ----- 7

Jesus Christ was Accountable -----8

The Holy Spirit is Accountable ----- 9

Case Study Consideration: other Biblical Accounts of Accountability ----- 10

Financial, Resource and Public Accountability – Bible Perspective -----11

The Law of Restitution – The Principle of Accountability ----- 12

Examples of Accountability in the Ministry of Jesus ----- 13

Accountability in the Acts of the Apostles and the Epistles ----- 14

Christian Accountability -----15

The Indispensability of Accountability -----16

Contemporary Literature Perspective on Accountability ----- 17

Accountability as the Cornerstone of Democratic Governance ----- 18

Part 3: Contextualizing Christianity and Accountability in Nigeria

Contextualizing Christianity and Accountability in Nigeria ----- -19

The Cost of breakdown in Accountability on Christians and Nigerians -----20

Rebuilding the walls of Accountability -----21

Building Righteousness in Christendom; the Cornerstone of Accountability in the Society -22

Documented Impact of Genuine Christian Accountability on Society ----- 23

The Prosperity Message -----24

Balancing the Argument on Prosperity Message ----- 25

Where is the Balance ----- 26



CHRISTIANITY & ACCOUNTABILITY

Impact of Prosperity Message on Accountability -----	27
The Misinterpretation of “Judge Not” -----	28
Promoting Stewardship and Discipleship as a core Christian Doctrine and Strategic Handle For Church and National Accountability -----	29
Part 4: Research Survey	
Report of Research Survey -----	30
Methods used in generating Data/Information -----	31
The Questionnaire Design and Demographics -----	32
Survey Results -----	33
Interpretation of the Survey Results -----	34
Excerpts from recorded Messages and Speeches from Political, Professional, and Church Leaders -----	35
Part Five: Recommendations	
Conclusion -----	37
References -----	38



CHRISTIANITY
AND
ACCOUNTABILITY



CHRISTIANITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Asuzu Echezona and Akubor Augustine (Givers Embassy)

Abstract

Part One: Introduction

1. *Broad and Contextualized Definition of 'Christianity' and 'Accountability' (Multiple Sources)*
2. *Challenge of Accountability in Nigeria*
3. *Impact of Dearth of Accountability in Nigeria*

Part Two: Literature Review

1. *Spiritual – The Bible as a Book of Accountability*
 - ✓ *Accountability in the Trinity – God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit*
 - ✓ *The Fall of Man*
 - ✓ *The Flood*
 - ✓ *God's covenant with Abraham*
 - ✓ *The ordeals of Jacob and his sons*
 - ✓ *The Law and travails of the children of Israel in the wilderness*
 - ✓ *The annals of Israel Kings culminating into captivity and prophetic warnings*
 - ✓ *The teachings of Christ and the Apostles on Accountability*
 - ✓ *Teachings on the Last Judgement*
 - ✓ *Christianity and Accountability*
 - *Indispensability of Accountability*
2. *Contemporary Literature Perspectives on Accountability: Conceptualization Challenges: Secular (Relevant Frameworks, Conventions and Observations on Accountability Around the World)*
3. *Accountability as a cornerstone of democratic governance, constitutionalism, jurisprudence, separation of powers, civic responsibilities, public institutions building, international conventions and civic engagement*

Part 3: Contextualizing Christianity and Accountability in Nigeria

- ✓ *The failure of accountability in Nigeria and the role of Christians*
- ✓ *The cost of breakdown in accountability to the Church and the Nation*
- ✓ *Rebuilding the Walls of Accountability:*
 - *The Role of the Church in Promoting Accountability*
 - *Building Righteousness as the Cornerstone in Christendom in Promoting Accountability*
- ✓ *Documented Impact of Genuine Christian Accountability on Society*
- ✓ *Church teachings, doctrines and traditions that erode, challenge and threaten the values of*



CHRISTIANITY & ACCOUNTABILITY

accountability – Prosperity Message, Christian Correction (Judge Not versus Name and Shame, Giving, Distortion and Abuse of the Concept of Honour)

- ✓ *Promoting Stewardship and Discipleship as a Core Christian Doctrine and Strategic Handle for Church and National Accountability*

Part 4: Research Survey

- *Direct Method*
 - *Questionnaire Method Administered through Random Sampling*
- *Indirect Method*
 - *Excerpts from recorded messages and speeches from Political, professional and Religious Leaders*

Survey Findings

Interpretation of Research Findings

Part 5: Recommendation

- *Acceptance of Accountability as a Divine Nature, Mandate and Expectation*
- *Recognition of the Cost of Corruption on Christians and Nigerians*
- *Appreciating the Role of Political Participation in Promoting Accountability*

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For the purpose of this research, the following resources; both online and offline were used

Bible Translations

- *The Amplified Bible*
- *Good News Bible*
- *King James Bible/Version*
- *The Jewish Orthodox Bible*
- *Contemporary English Version*
- *New American Standard Bible*
- *New International Version*
- *New Living Translation*
- *The Jubilee Bible*

Bible Study Helps

- *Bible Hub*
- *Bible Gateway*
- *Classic Comparative Side by Side Bible*
- *Hebrew and Greek Transliteration and Translation Websites*



Abstract

There is a growing call for accountability in Nigeria. The current government of President Muhammadu Buhari won the 2015 general elections on the strength of his promise to frontally deal with corruption and institutionalize accountability in Nigeria's public life. Nigerians believed him and gave him their votes. The result was an unprecedented victory of an opposition political party over an incumbent government at Nigeria's political centre – the Federal Government. Three years into the government of President Buhari, the fight against corruption has sojourned with mixed feelings.

A few cases of high-profile public office holders have been prosecuted for acts of corruption but there is a countervailing, albeit, dogged opinion that the anti-corruption fight of the current administration is selective and one-sided. Yet, one does not discountenance the fact that when corruption is fought, corruption throws back all the punches it can muster. It is either that Nigerians are too expectant from Buhari on the anti-corruption fight or that Nigeria is beyond redemption.

The Christian faith would not resign to the blackmail of “hopelessness in the face of corruption.” The Bible says that with God all things are possible! But are Christians accountable? Are Christians especially those of the Pentecostal persuasion ready to be accountable? Is accountability part of the Christian moral ethos? Can we prove it? Are there empirical statistical evidence that demonstrates the level of awareness and commitment by Christians, especially those of the Pentecostal genre, to the anti-corruption fight? Is it possible to mobilize Christians to be at the vanguard of the restoration of accountability as a directive principle of the national culture? This is the quest of this research enquiry.

Key Words: Christianity, Accountability, Democratic Governance



PART ONE



PART ONE

An honest man (a person of accountability) is the noblest work of God

– Robert Burns

Introduction:

1. Broad and Contextualized Definition of Christianity and Accountability (Multiple Sources)

Two key words are central to this research effort – 'Christianity' and 'Accountability'. It is important that we lay a proper foundation for this research by defining these two words. Christianity is derived from the root word 'Christian' which is broadly defined as 'Christ-like'. This suggests that Christianity is the religion of those who imitate Christ in their conduct and behaviour. Accountability on the other hand simply means to render account or provide detailed feedback on the state of whatever was kept in one's custody. Yet, as the study reveals, while the definition of Christianity appears universal, we cannot exactly say the same for accountability which takes various forms under varied contextual application.

It is important to underscore that the premise for this enquiry is to interrogate and establish patterns in the teaching, perception, understanding, adaptation and practice of accountability among Christians especially among those usually referred to as "Pentecostal Christians." While it is important to consider and reflect the thoughts of other scholars and experts on the matter, it is crucial to posit that this research, being primarily a spiritual enquiry, would resort to the Bible as compass and final authority in dealing with key research concepts. The Bible was originally translated from Hebrew and Greek texts. So, in examining key concepts, we will be relying on their Hebrew and Greek renderings.

According to the Oxford Advanced Learners Dictionary, "Christianity is the religion that is based on the teachings of Jesus Christ and the belief that He was the Son of God." Wikipedia describes Christianity as an Abrahamic monotheistic religion based on the life, teachings, and miracles of Jesus of Nazareth, known by Christians as the Christ, or 'Messiah', who is the focal point of the Christian faiths. Britannica summarizes the definition of Christianity as that major religion stemming from the life, teachings and death of Jesus of Nazareth (the Christ, the Anointed One of God) in the first century AD.

It might also be useful to contextualize this definition from a biblical perspective. What does the Bible say about Christianity? We need to examine the root word of "Christianity" which is "Christian". Who is a Christian? The first place the word "Christian" was mentioned in the Bible is in the book of Acts 11:26. The Jewish Orthodox Bible renders the passage thus

"And, having found him, he brought him to Antioch. And it came about that for an entire year, they met with Moshiah's Kehillah there, and taught a large multitude.



And it was in Antioch that the talmidim were first called Ma'aminim HaMeshichiyim (Messianic Believers)."

The Amplified Bible renders the passage thus.

"and when he found him, he brought him back to Antioch. For an entire year they met [with others] in the Church and instructed large numbers; and it was in Antioch that the disciples were first called Christians."

The Hebrew translation of Christians is "Ma'aminim HaMeshichiyim - Messianic Believers". This is instructive. This translation of the word 'Christian' appears to relate with the root of how Christianity is commonly defined - "Christ like". This is to say that Christians are not just those who imitate Christ, maybe by their own self will or personal effort. The Hebrew rendering of 'Christian' shows that it goes beyond that. Christians are Messianic believers. To believe means to apply faith and so we can say that Christians are those who through the application of faith have entered a spiritual union with Christ. This suggests that Christianity is a belief system where the adherents have through faith entered into a vital union with the Messiah who is Christ and that the evidence of that union is that those who have been so joined with Christ as members of one body embody the attributes of Christ.

So, we can say that Pentecostal Christians are those who by faith believe that they are in vital union with Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit (with the evidence of speaking in tongues) in order to bear fruits or show behavioural attitudes that are associated with Jesus. As earlier noted, this group of Christians are the primary target of this research enquiry.

There are different definitions of accountability. The Cambridge English Dictionary defines accountability as a situation in which someone is responsible for things that happen and can give a satisfactory reason for them. Merriam-Webster defines accountability as the quality or state of being *accountable*; especially an obligation or willingness to accept responsibility or to account for one's actions. The Business Dictionary defines accountability as the obligation of an individual to account for its activities, accept responsibility for them, and to disclose the results in a transparent manner. Accountability can be summed as stewardship or oversight and communication on money or property entrusted in one's care.

In the Hebrew language, there is hardly any specific word for 'accountability'. The closest words are the Greek words 'logon' and 'kpivo'. Kpivo which is transliterated as Krino which is the word "judge" means "to separate, to make a distinction between, to exercise judgement upon, to estimate, to assume a censorial power over, to call to account, to judge judiciously, to bring to trial, to be brought to account, to administer government over". In this definition of the word 'Krino', there appears to be two sides to it. One is the compulsive side that suggests a deliberate act to bring to judgement or force unwilling



persons to render account for what is kept under their watch. The other side is the self-voluntary side that suggests willingness by a person to administer government over a interest or jurisdiction and render account for such exercise of oversight.

In the New Testament, the part of the Bible with the most direct application to Christians, the word 'account' as a basic denominator of the relationship between God and man is transliterated in Greek as λόγον or 'logon' or 'logos'. Logos is the same transliteration for the Word of God – that is, the written word of God. It has other transliteration such as 'speech', 'talk', 'doctrine', 'teaching', and 'reason'. In all, the words 'logon' and 'logos' occur one hundred and thirty times in the Bible.

Another related word for 'account' in the Bible is 'stewardship'. The Oxford Advanced Learners English Dictionary defines stewardship as the act of taking care of or managing something for example property, an organization, money or valuable objects. The Merriam Webster Student dictionary defines stewardship as the careful and responsible management of something entrusted to one's care. Wikipedia defines stewardship as ethic that embodies the responsible planning and management of resources. The foregoing definitions of 'stewardship' bear striking correlation with the definition that was earlier established for 'accountability'. The recurring nexus between accountability and stewardship is the word 'responsibility'. Merriam Webster definition of 'responsibility' is the quality or state of being responsible such as moral or legal or mental accountability.

Professor Melvin J. Dubnick opined in “Salvation for Accountability” (2002), *“Accountability is regarded as an indicator of answerability, responsiveness, etc. But it is also indicative of the conditions it promises to create. Used in the appropriate context, accountability holds the promise of bringing someone to justice, of generating desired performance through control and oversight, of promoting democracy through institutional forms, and of facilitating ethical behaviour.”*

Richard Krejcir broadly defined Accountability as a check and balance system to protect us from harm from ourselves and others. We do this by being open to what we are thinking and doing so we can receive encouragement and reproof, when needed.

Professor Melvin went on to provide four conceptual contexts for contemporary application of accountability. First is within an institutional frame where accountability manifests as rules and roles through which authority is “controlled” in order to render it “appropriately” exercised. Second is within the context of social transactions. Here accountability emerges as a way for individuals to relate to one another – an on-going process of account-giving and account-taking that is fundamental to the development and maintenance of trust. Third is within an organizing/organizational frame where



accountability is the formation of informal and formal mechanisms for dealing with expectations and uncertainty. Fourth and last is within the context of complex environments of multiple, diverse and conflicting expectations where accountability is a means for managing an otherwise chaotic situation.

Day and Klein (1987:5) define accountability as a social relationship in which an actor feels an obligation to explain and to justify his or her conduct to some significant other. The actor here can be either an individual or an agency, while the significant other could mean an accountability forum, or a more virtual entity, such as God, in case of devout Christians, or the general public in the case of public officers. Simply put, public officers are put under a formal obligation to give account of their stewardship on a regular basis to specific forums, such as their superiors, supervisory agencies or the public at large. Accountability is one of those evocative political words that can be used to evoke an image of good governance.

If accountability is responsibility to provide satisfactory answers to the management of people or assets kept under one's custody or supervision, then we can say that we have a huge crisis of accountability in Nigeria. The sorry state of development in Nigeria is a direct reflection of how unaccountable those in whose custody and supervision public trust is kept.

Challenge of Accountability in Nigeria

In 2005, Mario Costa, a UNODC Chief Executive posited at an Anti-corruption event held in Abuja that over US\$400 billion has been stolen from public coffers in Nigeria. He went on to illustrate that if looted funds from Nigeria were tied end to end in dollar bills, they would stretch from the earth to the moon and back – not once – but seventy-five times! Well, what Mari Costa did not tell us is that less than 1% of Nigerians are in control of about 90% of the humungous resources stolen from our common patrimony.

The evidence of poor public accountability abounds everywhere in Nigeria. The dilapidation of our roads and other physical infrastructure are eloquent testimonies that there is poor account for the resources that are budgeted yearly for the development and maintenance of public facilities. The near collapse of our social infrastructure is phenomenal. We appear to lead from behind in almost all sectors of human development. Nigeria has the highest number of out-of-school children. Nigeria has one of the highest global rates of infant and maternal mortality rates. The housing deficit in Nigeria currently stands at about 18 million. Many of our country women and men are forced to seek shelter in slums, open spaces and in recent times as refugees in internally displaced camps within and outside Nigeria.



The impact of poor public accountability is tragic for every Nigerian especially the poor. For true Christians, the impact is most profound. The Christian faith demands the highest level of piety, responsibility and public spiritedness from Christians. Schmidgall (1997) emphasized that a vivid study of the Bible reveals that God expects accountability on a regular basis. He pointed out that God confronted Adam and Eve with the fact that they had hidden themselves. He did not absolve them immediately but waited as they gave an explanation of their actions and followed it up with discipline (Genesis 3:1-24).

Jesus says in Matthew 5: 13 -16 that Christians are the salt of the earth, the light of the world and are like a city built upon a hill top. Christ went on to admonish His followers to shine as light so that men would see their good works and glorify God the Father. In the midst of the frail and fragile state of public accountability in Nigeria, we find very relevant the charge of Apostle Paul to Timothy in 1 Timothy 2:1-2

“1. I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; 2. For kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty...” (King James Bible)

Verse 2 of the Bible passage above provides further illumination to the divine expectations for a Christian. She or he should aspire to live a quiet, peaceable, godly and honest life. In fact, this expectation is stressed with the phrase “...in all godliness and honesty”.

The reason that Paul encouraged Christians everywhere to always pray for political leaders is found in his epistle to the Roman Christians. In Romans 13:1-7, Paul wrote

- 1. Obey the rulers who have authority over you. Only God can give authority to anyone, and he puts these rulers in their places of power. 2. People who oppose the authorities are opposing what God has done, and they will be punished. 3. Rulers are a threat to evil people, not to good people. There is no need to be afraid of the authorities. Just do right, and they will praise you for it. 4. After all, they are God's servants, and it is their duty to help you. If you do something wrong, you ought to be afraid, because these rulers have the right to punish you. They are God's servants who punish criminals to show how angry God is. 5. But you should obey the rulers because you know it is the right thing to do, and not just because of God's anger. 6. You must also pay your taxes. The authorities are God's servants, and it is their duty to take care of these matters. 7. Pay all that you owe, whether it is taxes and fees or respect and honor. (Contemporary English Version)**

The plan of God for delegating authority to earthly rulers or the government is for them to bear the burden of executing judgement or enforcing accountability in the general population. It is only when they can so discharge this function that Christians can find the



enabling environment for a quiet, peaceable, godly and honest life. The other word for an honest life is a life of dignity – a life that is protected from brutality, lawlessness and deprivation of necessities of life. Hopes for this kind of life become moribund when a society is ruled by people who lack commitment to public probity and accountability.

Geisler (1987:587-588) quoting Burke remarked that all that is necessary for evil to prevail is for good men to do nothing. If good people don't get involved in running the government, then evil people will and they will always have field day causing misery to many. According to him, it is not going to do us any good cursing the darkness, all that is necessary for light to prevail over darkness is to make certain efforts to light some candles. He therefore submitted that Christians have a moral obligation to be involved in the administration of their world. Geisler's opinion certainly opens a window of perspectives on the role of increased participation of Christians in politics to the fight to improve public accountability.

Impact of Dearth of Accountability in Nigeria

Nigeria is a resource-rich country. Unfortunately, most Nigerians have been turned into the proverbial fishermen who wash their nets with spittle. Nearly 70% of Nigeria's 180 million population live below \$1.90 a day. Nearly 25% of Nigerian youth are jobless. More than 130 million Nigerians lack access to sanitation. With about 10 million kids out of school, Nigeria tops the global chart of out-of-school children.

Inequality and poverty are major urgent challenge facing Nigeria today. Unfortunately, commitment by successive governments in Nigeria to deal with the causal pathogens for inequality – poor accountability – raises more questions than answers. A 2017 survey produced by Oxfam and Development Finance International ranks Nigeria as showing the least commitment to reducing inequality among 152 countries surveyed. The report indicted the Nigerian government for poor spending on health, education and social intervention.

Ironically, amidst the gory statistics of deprivation and poverty, Nigeria has produced some of the richest people in Africa. The five richest men in Nigeria have a combined fortune of about \$29.9 billion. This wealth has been estimated as enough to end poverty in Nigeria.

Inequality and corruption as occasioned by the dearth of accountability in Nigeria is very profound as the absence of public of probity means the presence of social tensions, crimes and wars on our streets. The truth is that the current of poor accountability is sweeping Nigeria swiftly on a head on collision with the rock of a “failed state”.



CHRISTIANITY & ACCOUNTABILITY

People whose faith, as the Christian faith, espouse love, righteousness, sound moral conduct and strong ethical behaviours suffer terribly when political leaders are not accountable and so lack the moral sinew to enforce accountability. It is hard to survive as a Christian in a society where corruption, bribery, graft and nepotism have become the order of the day. If you want to be a genuine Christian who insists that the right things are done, you would likely be stigmatized, isolated, punished or even killed. The truth is that in a society where corruption has become the norm, every genuine Christian is endangered species.

It is useful that this research enquiry is coming at this point in our national life when the government of the day flaunts the fight against corruption as its major governance agenda and has aroused significant consciousness in the public domain on the anti-corruption fight. It is important, therefore, to properly contextualize the issue of accountability as a crucial part of the Christian belief system with matching evidence from the Holy Bible and other relevant texts. The aim is that, perhaps, sufficient body of truth would be espoused that can be used to mobilize Christians especially those of the Pentecostal faith genre to genuinely accept that accountability should be a cornerstone of conduct – both private and public and therefrom demonstrate matching commitment to the fight against corruption and the building of a country where we can all live a quiet, peaceable, godly and dignified life.

In conducting the enquiry into the matter of “Christianity and Accountability”, we will examine the definition of key words and concepts. Furthermore, we will review existing literature on the subject matter. Our central and standard literature of authority would be the Holy Bible. We will consider the truth of the Word of God concerning accountability in the light of different Biblical versions and translations. Ultimately, we will present our research findings which are predicated on direct and indirect surveys. The direct research surveys include the administration of questionnaire through random sampling. The indirect method includes the use of recorded messages and speeches by key Pentecostal Church leaders, political and professional leaders who are Christians.



PART TWO



PART TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

Accountability from the Bible

In examining the words 'Christianity' and 'Accountability' together especially in the light of their foregoing definitions, it is important to look at the root essence of these words as established in the Bible. As earlier stated, this research enquiry being primarily a spiritual exercise, biblical examples of accountability would form our major literature text review.

At the root of the word 'Christianity' are Christ and His followers. As earlier established, the root of the word 'accountability' conveys a sense of responsibility to render account over management of people and or assets placed under one's care. The Bible phrase used in close relationship to accountability, especially in New Testament text, is 'stewardship'. There is hardly any doubt that the Bible is a book of accountability. Accountability is both a ground pillar of truth as well as a major denominator of key biblical teachings and precepts. A few examples from the Bible on the subject matter of accountability would help us establish 'accountability' as a core biblical truth and principle.

The Bible as a Book of Accountability:

In Greek transliteration of 'account' or 'accountability', the root word is 'λόγον' which is mostly transliterated as 'logon' or 'logos' which are primarily and commonly translated as **"the Word of God"**. Examples of such citations can be found in all the gospels, the Acts of the Apostles, the epistles and right down to the book of Revelation (Matthew 13:19, Mark 2:2, Luke 4:43, John 5:24, Acts 4:29, Philippians 1:12, I John 2:5, Revelation 20:4).

More so, in biblical passages where the word 'account' was used, the root word in Greek is 'λόγον' transliterated as 'logon' or 'logos' – the Word of God. Examples of such citations include Matthew 12:36, Matthew 18:23, Matthew 25:19, Luke 16:2, Acts: 1:1, Romans 14:12, Philippians 4:17, 1 Peter 3:15, I Peter 4:5. Bible instances of 'account' and 'word of God' sharing the same root word 'λόγον' establishes the Bible as a book of accountability.

The words 'logon' and 'logos' which are rendered in Greek as 'λόγον' occur 130 times in the New Testament. Other translations of the word include 'answer' or 'question' or 'statement' or 'saying' or 'message' – (Mark 7:29, Mark 11:29, John 8:52) 'reason' – (Acts 18:14, 19:40), or message – (Acts 4:4, Acts 20:7) or 'speech' (1 Cor. 4:19, 1 Cor. 14:9, Titus 2:8), or 'teaching', or 'doctrine', or 'talk' (Hebrews 6:1) or 'matter' (Mark 8:32, Philippians 4:15). The foregoing translations of the Greek word 'λόγον' are all related or contextualized in relation to 'account', 'accountability' and the **"Word of God"**. By further extrapolation of the meaning and essence of the word 'account', we can also establish the bearing of the word 'λόγον' to judgement.

Accountability in the Trinity

The trinity is God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Ghost. Each exists as a distinct God and yet acts as One God. The notion of trinity suggests the principle of 'co-



accountability'. The truth is that for the three God in One to exist as distinct identities and yet act as one, they must be accountable to one another. In this sense, accountability is contextualized as “cooperating in unity with one another” or “submitting to one another”.

In the account of creation in Genesis chapter one, God the Father took the initiative for creation. Yet, it was the Spirit of God – the Holy Ghost that hovered upon the face of the waters. The Son who is the Word of God was released to bring the desire of God in creation to manifestation. The trinity was accountable to one another!

Upon the making of man in the image of God, we also saw the contextualization of 'accountability'. In verse 26 of Genesis Chapter 1, the Bible says:

“Then God said, “Let Us (Father, Son, Holy Spirit) make man in Our image, according to Our likeness [not physical, but a spiritual personality and moral likeness]; and let them have complete authority over the fish of the sea, the birds of the air, the cattle, and over the entire earth, and over everything that creeps *and* crawls on the earth.” (The Amplified Bible)

What the Bible says in the subsequent verse is very instructive.

²⁷ So God created man in His own image, in the image *and* likeness of God He created him; male and female He created them.” (The Amplified Bible)

So, it was after the agreement by the Trinity in verse 26 of Genesis Chapter 1 that God went ahead in verse 27 to create man in His own image.

The account of the construction of the tower of Babel illustrates this principle of “co-accountability” in the context of working together in unity. The account says that as the people of Shinar progressed in building the city and tower of Babel. God was concerned that what they were doing would stand against His plan for mankind to take dominion over all the earth. God had to do something! Yet, in order for God to act, God had to subject Himself to account to the Trinity. The Bible says in Genesis 11

“1. Now the whole earth spoke one language and used the same words (vocabulary). 2. And as people journeyed eastward, they found a plain in the land of Shinar and they settled there. 3. They said one to another, “Come, let us make bricks and fire them thoroughly [in a kiln, to harden and strengthen them].” So they used brick for stone [as building material], and they used tar (bitumen, asphalt) for mortar. 4. They said, “Come, let us build a city for ourselves, and a tower whose top *will reach* into the heavens, and let us make a [famous] name for ourselves, so that we will not be scattered [into separate groups] *and* be dispersed over the surface of the entire earth [as the LORD instructed].” 5. Now the LORD came down to see the city and the tower which the sons of men had built. And the LORD said, “Behold, they are one [unified] people, and they all have the same language. This is only the beginning of what they will do [in rebellion against Me], and now no evil thing they imagine they can do will be



impossible for them. 7. Come, let Us (Father, Son, Holy Spirit) go down and there confuse *and* mix up their language, so that they will not understand one another's speech. 8. So the LORD scattered them abroad from there over the surface of the entire earth; and they stopped building the city. 9. Therefore the name of the city was Babel – because there the LORD confused the language of the entire earth; and from that place the LORD scattered *and* dispersed them over the surface of all the earth. (The Amplified Bible)

As a matter of truth, the entire account of the redemptive plan of God rests primarily on the principle of accountability. After Adam rebelled against God and became spiritually dead or cut off from God, there was need to redeem man from the grand consequence of the accountability demanded for his action. God had to set in motion the plan of redemption. The account of Isaiah in chapter 6 verse 8 is a typology of the acceptance of Christ to offer Himself as the substitute lamb for the redemption plan. After Christ finished the work of redemption by his life, death, and resurrection, He sent the Holy Spirit to continue from where He stopped as an abiding helper and comforter to those who believe on His name.

God, the Father, is Accountable to His Word

Accountability is not just a virtue that God expects us to have; it is a character that we are supposed to copy from God. God is accountable! God is accountable to His Word!! Hallelujah!!! This is why the Greek transliteration of the word 'account' or 'accountable' is the same with the transliteration for the 'Word of God' – 'logos'. Indeed, God has placed His Word above His name. The Psalmist renders it in this way:

“I will worship toward thy holy temple, and praise thy name for thy lovingkindness and for thy truth: for thou hast magnified thy word above all thy name. (King James Version)

Jesus emphasized this truth when He declared in the gospels of Matthew Chapter 5 verse 18

“For I assure you *and* most solemnly say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest letter or stroke [of the pen] will pass from the Law until all things [which it foreshadows] are accomplished.” (The Amplified Bible)

Jesus taught in the Bible that heaven and earth would pass away but not one iota of God's Law or Word will fail. God watches over His word to confirm it. God accounts for His Word. This is how serious the matter of accountability is.



Jesus Christ was Accountable:

Concerning Jesus Christ, it is important to underscore the fact that Jesus Christ is the central figure in all the scriptures. Jesus Christ is the essence of the Holy Bible or the scriptures. In fact, the entirety of the scriptures writes about Christ and points to Him. In every book of the Bible, we find the shadows and types of Christ. While confronting the prejudice, pride and presumptions of religious rulers of His day, Jesus in John's gospel chapter 5 verse 39 reprimanded them thus:

“You search the Scriptures because you think they give you eternal life. But the Scriptures point to me!” (New Living Translation)

In Genesis, Christ is a type of the lamb that was slaughtered to cover the nakedness of Adam and Eve after they rebelled against God. Christ is also a type of the substitute lamb at Mount Moriah when God asked Abraham to sacrifice his son Isaac. In Exodus, Christ is the type of the Passover lamb that signifies freedom from slavery and entrance into the promises of God. In Leviticus, Christ is the fulfilment of the ordinances of the Law. In Judges, Christ is a type of the Judges of Israel who is revealed to judge all the works of the devil and on whose account the deeds of men and women would be judged on the last day. In Psalms, Christ is a type of the good shepherd. In the prophets, Christ is the promised Messiah – the Lamb of God that takes away the sins of the earth. In the Gospels, Christ is the Son of Man who went about doing good for the Lord God was with Him. In the Acts of the Apostles, Christ is the head of the Church, the Christ in the 'Christian' who acts by the power of the Holy Ghost and through the witness of Christians to reconcile the world to God. In the epistles, Christ is the revealed Messiah who sits at the right hand of God to make intercession for Christians. In the book of Revelation, Christ is the Son of God who shall be revealed at the end of the ages as the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords.

So, when we talk of the character of Christ – which should be the character of the Christian – we are talking about the very essence of the Holy Bible. Christ was accountable. Christ taught about accountability in the parables of the unfaithful and shrewd stewards. (Matthew 18:23, Matthew 25: 14- 34). Stewardship is a word that is closely used with accountability. If Christ was accountable and also taught about 'accountability', it means that those who are in vital union with Him should also embody the attitude of accountability or stewardship.

Hebrews 3:5-6 has this to say about the stewardship of Christ;

“5. Now Moses was faithful in [the administration of] all God's house, [but only] as a *ministering* servant, [his ministry serving] as a testimony of the things which were to be spoken afterward [the revelation to come in Christ]; 6. but Christ is faithful as a Son over His [Father's] house. And we are His house if we hold fast our confidence and sense of triumph in our hope [in Christ].” (The Amplified Bible)

This passage above is rendered thus in the Orthodox Jewish Bible



2. He being ne'eman (faithful) to the One having given him s'michah as also Moshe Rabbeinu was ne'eman (faithful) in kol Beis Hashem. 3. Yet Rebbe, Melech HaMoshiach is considered worthy of more kavod than Moshe Rabbeinu, because more kavod has the Boneh (Builder) of the Beis than the Beis itself. 4. For every Beis is built by someone, but the One having built everything is Hashem. 5. Now Moshe Rabbeinu was ne'eman in kol Beis Hashem as an eved, for a solemn edut of the things which were to be spoken afterward [i.e., Moshiach's torah coming later]. 6. But Rebbe, Melech HaMoshiach was ne'eman as HaBen over the Beis Hashem, whose Beis we are, if indeed the bitachon and the tikvah in which we glory we keep hold of to HaKetz.

The Orthodox Jewish Bible transliterates 'faithful' as 'ne'eman'. The English translation for "Ne'eman" is 'faithful'. Ne'eman which appears many times in the Torah (Old Testament scripture texts) takes on different meanings in different contexts. Ne'eman can mean trustworthy, faithful, loyal, reliable, responsible and honest. Unfortunately, many modern languages including the Hebrew language do not have a direct substitute for the word 'accountability'. So, we make deductions from transliterations from root Greek words.

Yet, a cursory consideration of meanings and key words found in the translation of the word 'ne'eman' shows direct correlation to 'accountability'. The key words: 'responsible', 'trustworthy' used to describe 'accountability' are also used to describe 'ne'eman'.

Jesus Christ whose disciples we are as Christians was an embodiment of accountability. In the course of His ministry on the earth, Christ did not pretend over the fact that He was only a steward sent to be accountable to another, He said in the book of John 6:38:

"For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me." (King James Bible)

Jesus made the same statement at the Garden of Gethsemane when He submitted to the will of His Father with the following words:

"Abba, Father," he cried out, "everything is possible for you. Please take this cup of suffering away from me. Yet I want your will to be done, not mine." (The New Living Translation)

By affirming that He was sent by God the Father, Jesus adopted the position of a steward who was sent to manage, look after, cater, discharge the purpose and act upon the interest of Him who sent Him. The interest of God the Father was primarily the redemption of man from the captivity of the devil. This was in fulfilment of the promise in Genesis chapter 3 where God said that the seed of the woman would bruise the head of the serpent (devil).

Towards the end of His work on the earth, Jesus rendered a specific account of His stewardship to His Father in His last recorded prayer on the earth. His prayer in John chapter 17 verse 12 was captured in the following words:



“While I was with them, I protected them and kept them safe by that name you gave me. None has been lost except the one doomed to destruction so that Scripture would be fulfilled.” (New International Version)

Jesus also taught about accountability in the following parables.

In Matthew 25:14-30

14. Again, it will be like a man going on a journey, who called his servants and entrusted his wealth to them. **15.** To one he gave five bags of gold, to another two bags, and to another one bag, each according to his ability. Then he went on his journey. **16.** The man who had received five bags of gold went at once and put his money to work and gained five bags more. **17.** So also, the one with two bags of gold gained two more. **18.** But the man who had received one bag went off, dug a hole in the ground and hid his master's money.

19. “After a long time the master of those servants returned and settled accounts with them. **20.** The man who had received five bags of gold brought the other five. 'Master,' he said, 'you entrusted me with five bags of gold. See, I have gained five more.’

21. “His master replied, 'Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness!’

22. “The man with two bags of gold also came. 'Master,' he said, 'you entrusted me with two bags of gold; see, I have gained two more.’

23. “His master replied, 'Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness!’

24. “Then the man who had received one bag of gold came. 'Master,' he said, 'I knew that you are a hard man, harvesting where you have not sown and gathering where you have not scattered seed. **25.** So I was afraid and went out and hid your gold in the ground. See, here is what belongs to you.’

26. “His master replied, 'You wicked, lazy servant! So, you knew that I harvest where I have not sown and gather where I have not scattered seed? **27.** Well then, you should have put my money on deposit with the bankers, so that when I returned I would have received it back with interest.

28. “‘So take the bag of gold from him and give it to the one who has ten bags. **29.** For whoever has will be given more, and they will have an abundance. Whoever does not have, even what they have will be taken from them. **30.** And throw that worthless servant outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”

In the parable of the shrewd steward, Jesus laid down a number of practical principles of money management in the account of Luke Chapter 16 verses 1 to 13



1. And he said also unto his disciples, There was a certain rich man, which had a steward; and the same was accused unto him that he had wasted his goods. [2](#). And he called him, and said unto him, How is it that I hear this of thee? give an account of thy stewardship; for thou mayest be no longer steward. [3](#). Then the steward said within himself, What shall I do? for my lord taketh away from me the stewardship: I cannot dig; to beg I am ashamed. [4](#). I am resolved what to do, that, when I am put out of the stewardship, they may receive me into their houses. [5](#). So he called every one of his lord's debtors *unto him*, and said unto the first, How much owest thou unto my lord? [6](#). And he said, An hundred measures of oil. And he said unto him, Take thy bill, and sit down quickly, and write fifty. [7](#). Then said he to another, And how much owest thou? And he said, An hundred measures of wheat. And he said unto him, Take thy bill, and write fourscore. [8](#). And the lord commended the unjust steward, because he had done wisely: for the children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light. [9](#). And I say unto you, Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness; that, when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations. [10](#). He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much. [11](#). If therefore ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true *riches*? [12](#). And if ye have not been faithful in that which is another man's, who shall give you that which is your own? [13](#). No servant can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.

Furthermore, Jesus spoke about accountability in the context of judgement. In the book of Matthew 12: 36, Jesus warned his audience

“But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment.” (King James Version)

Speaking further on the issue of judgement which contextually occurs as accountability, Jesus warned people about the choices they make in life. In John 3:19, Jesus says:

“This is the judgment: The Light has come into the world and the children of men loved the darkness more than The Light, because their works were evil”. (Aramaic Bible in Plain English)

In the parables of the lost sheep, the missing coin and the prodigal son in Luke 15 1-32, Jesus taught about accountability. The Shepherd did not rest until he was able to account for one out of the hundred sheep kept under his custody that was lost. The poor woman did not rest until she could give account of one out of the ten silver coins that was lost. The



Father of the prodigal son did not rest until he accounted for his son that went away.

The Holy Spirit is Accountable:

Reinforcing the principle of co-accountability in the Trinity and in the context of agreement or working in unity, the Holy Spirit is also accountable to Christ. In this context, we should be careful not to misinterpret this as inferiority to Christ. Just as Christ is not inferior to the Father, though submits to the will of the Father. In the same manner is the Holy Spirit equal in divinity to Christ even though Jesus speaks of the Holy Spirit in the following light;

John 16: 5-15

“5. But now I go my way to him that sent me; and none of you asketh me, Whither goest thou? 6. But because I have said these things unto you, sorrow hath filled your heart. 7. Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you. 8. And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: 9. Of sin, because they believe not on me; 10. Of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more; 11. Of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged.” 12. I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. 13. Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, *that* shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come. 14. He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew *it* unto you. 15. All things that the Father hath are mine: therefore said I, that he shall take of mine, and shall shew *it* unto you. (King James Version)

The Holy Spirit is the God who is perfecting the plan of redemption by His work in the heart of every Christian who abides in fellowship with Him. He is the Comforter, the Guardian, the Advocate, the Helper, the Intercessor and the Indwelling Stand-by Power of God in the life of a believer. He brings not the revelation of Himself but the revelation of the person and work of Jesus in the life of a Christian. Jesus says that He would not glorify Himself but He would bring glory to Christ by taking from what is Christ's and making it available to the believer. So, in this light, it is not out of place to say that the Holy Spirit is God - the abiding Steward - in the heart of the Christian whose work is to cater for the duty of reconciling the believer into the image of Christ. (2 Cor. 3:18) Interestingly, in verse 8 of the foregoing Bible passage (John 16:8); the Bible says that the Holy Spirit would convict the world of sin, righteousness and of judgement. That is to say that judgement (accountability) is one of the divine mandates of the Holy Spirit.

Given the importance of the work of the Holy Spirit in equipping and supporting every believer in Christ in the job of fulfilling the purpose of God on the earth, Jesus charged His disciples to tarry in Jerusalem till they were endued with the power of the Holy Spirit.



That was the experience at Pentecost. Acts 2: 1- 4 says that as the believers were in the upper room praying that there was a sudden sound like that of a might rushing wind. This shook the place where they were gathered and before you knew it, all had on top of their heads what looked like tongues of fire and they spoke in new tongues. Those who believe in this experience, manifestation and work of the Holy Spirit are called the Pentecostal Christians.

Case Study Considerations: Other Biblical Accounts of Accountability

The Fall of Man (Genesis 1: 26-30)

“26. And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. 27. So God created man in his *own* image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. 28. And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth. 29. And God said, Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed, which *is* upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in the which *is* the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for meat. 30. And to every beast of the earth, and to every fowl of the air, and to everything that creepeth upon the earth, wherein *there is* life, I have given every green herb for meat: and it was so.”

Man was the last creation of God. Yet, God put man in charge of all that He created. In fact, it was divine wisdom that God created man last. The plan of God was to make adequate provision for the only creature that was created in His own image. God did not just provide man with all the comfort of creation; God also gave him dominion over every other created thing. That is to say that God made man a steward and therefore accountable for all His creation. So, the creation of man comes with the responsibility of accountability.

There is no accountability in the absence of rules or law or commandments or directives or instructions. Apart from charging man to take dominion, another evidence of the concept of accountability from the very beginning was the introduction of rules to man. After placing man in the Garden of Eden, God instructed man not to eat from a particular tree in the Garden of Eden – the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

When Adam and his wife sinned against God by eating the forbidden fruit, they fell short of the sense of accountability. When God came in the evening, in what could be considered an 'accountability session', the man and his wife fled as they did not want to be held accountable for their action. But God still held them accountable. Genesis 3: 14-19 renders the account of how God held Adam, Eve and the serpent accountable for their actions.



14. And the LORD God said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this, thou *art* cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life: [15](#). And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel. [16](#). Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire *shall be* to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee. [17](#). And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed *is* the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; [18](#). Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; [19](#). In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou *art*, and unto dust shalt thou return”.

Cain and Abel

Man continued in sin. Cain, the first child of Adam, killed his brother Abel. God did not allow his action to go unpunished. Even when that was the first time that murder was committed in the Bible, yet God held Cain to account. Genesis 4: 9-12 captures the judgement of God:

“And the LORD said unto Cain, Where *is* Abel thy brother? And he said, I know not: *Am* I my brother's keeper? [10](#). And he said, What hast thou done? the voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground. [11](#). And now *art* thou cursed from the earth, which hath opened her mouth to receive thy brother's blood from thy hand; [12](#). When thou tillest the ground, it shall not henceforth yield unto thee her strength; a fugitive and a vagabond shalt thou be in the earth.” (King James Bible)

The Flood

After the fall of man in the Garden of Eden, man continued to sin against God and perpetrate wickedness against His fellow man. God brought judgement. God held the human race accountable. God wiped out the entire human race and started a new human race with Noah who found favour in the eyes of God. In Genesis 6: 5-8, the Bible says

“5. And GOD saw that the wickedness of man *was* great in the earth, and *that* every imagination of the thoughts of his heart *was* only evil continually. 6. And it repented the LORD that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart. 7. And the LORD said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth; both man, and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air; for it repenteth me that I have made them. 8. But Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD”.

 (King James Bible)

God's covenant with Abraham

God promised Abraham that He would establish His everlasting covenant with him. The



nation of Israel is the living evidence of that covenant. The travails of Israel in history and the ability of the Jewish nation to survive the worst form of persecution, pogrom and genocide is an indication of how accountable God is to His word and promises. The basis for this trust was because God felt that Abraham would be accountable. Genesis 18: 17-19 says:

“17. And the LORD said, Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do; 18. Seeing that Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him? 19. **For I know him**, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the LORD, to do justice and judgment; that the LORD may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him. ...”
(King James Bible)

The Law and travails of the children of Israel in the wilderness

God fulfilled *His* promise to Abraham. He used Moses to deliver the Jews from the hands of Pharaoh and the armies of Egypt. The Bible records that at different times in their journey to the Promised Land, the Jews failed the accountability test as contained in the Law of God. The law contained standards for accountability between God and man and man to his fellow man. The Israelites broke the very first commandment that God gave them even before the cast on the tablet of Ten Commandments could dry out. God held them to account. A number of them were killed. When Mariam and Aaron murmured against Moses, God allowed Mariam to suffer leprosy. When the families of Korah, Abiram and Dathan rebelled against the leadership of Moses, God held them to account. The earth opened its mouth and swallowed them all. When the children of Israel adopted the 'faithless' counsel of the ten spies against the promise of God to give them the Promise Land, God held that whole generation to account. Those of them above twenty years perished in the wilderness. When Moses and Aaron dishonoured God by striking the rock instead of speaking to it, God held them to account. Both Moses and Aaron were barred from entering into the Promise Land.

Possession of the Promise Land and Account of Judges, Kings and Prophets of Israel

In the days of Joshua as the leader of the nation of Israel, God showed that He was unrelenting concerning the matter of holding people to account. Achan was the first to test His sovereign will. He paid dearly for it. God had instructed Joshua to tell the people of Israel not to take anything for themselves following the conquest of Jericho. Achan thought he was smart. He stole silver, gold and costly garment from the offering meant for God. God allowed a small nation called Ai to defeat Israel because He wanted to hold Achan to account. Joshua's words echoed in his ears as he and his family were stoned to death

“Why have you brought such trouble upon us? The Lord will now bring trouble upon you”. (Good News Bible)



Just as Moses did upon Mount Gerizim and Mouth Ebal, Joshua also held the nation of Israel to account over the keeping of the laws of God. Upon Mount Gerizim, blessings were released upon obedience to the laws of God while upon Mount Ebal curses were released.

In the days of Judges and Kings of Israel, God used his prophets to pronounce judgement when the nation of Israel sinned against God by following other gods. When Saul, the first King of Israel, disobeyed God by failing to kill all the Amalekites, God held him to account and removed the kingship from his family. When his successor David sinned by killing Uriah in order to marry his wife, God held David to account. The fact that God described David as a man after his heart did not stop God from pronouncing judgement on King David through the mouth of Prophet Nathan.

Ultimately, God allowed the nation of Israel to be carried into captivity by the Syrians and the Babylonians when they refused several warnings to desist from idolatry and wickedness. God allowed the foreign armies to tear down the glorious temple built for His worship by King Solomon. God allowed His chosen ones to suffer very terrible ordeals in the hands of their captors because God would always hold man accountable for disobedience to His commandments. The cries of the sons and daughters of Israel by the rivers of Babylon did not make God relent in His judgement over the iniquity of Zion. The children of Israel remained in captivity for seventy years according to the understanding given to Daniel.

Financial, Resource and Public Accountability - Bible Perspectives:

One of the first lessons in financial accountability could be found in the story of Cain and Abel. The Bible tells us that Cain and Abel offered sacrifices unto God from the increase of their enterprise. Their parents, Adam and Eve, must have told them that they were only stewards of God's earth and its resources and so they decided to give back to God out of the increase of their labour. In the same way, Abraham refused to take the spoils gathered from pursuing the four Kings that overthrew Sodom and Gomorra. Since the spoils were taken from Sodom and Gomorra, he returned it there. This lesson we would later see in the lives of Abraham's grand and great grand-children, Jacob and his sons. After one of Jacob's children, Joseph, who was sold off as a slave to Egypt, became the Prime Minister, he had an encounter with his brothers who conspired to sell him. In order to trick his brothers into bringing to him Benjamin; his younger brother, Joseph concealed the money they used to buy grains in their sacks. When the sons of Jacob discovered this, they were alarmed. Their father: Jacob, was alarmed too. They returned all the money to Joseph in Egypt. That was honesty and accountability. Earlier, Joseph had manifested the trait of accountability when he served as the manager over Potiphar's estate. The Bible records that Joseph was so trustworthy that Potiphar handed him over everything he had except the food that he ate.



This culture of accountability was to become successfully transmitted down generations and institutionalized among the children of Israel as some form of national culture. In Exodus Chapter 36: 2-7, the Good News Bible renders the records concerning the management of the offerings rendered by the children of Israel to Bezalel and Oholiab and all the skilled men in charge of the work of the tabernacle of the Lord

“2. Moses called Bezalel, Oholiab, and all the other skilled men to whom the LORD had given ability and who were willing to help, and Moses told them to start working. 3. They received from him all the offerings which the Israelites had brought for constructing the sacred Tent. But the people of Israel continued to bring Moses their offerings every morning. 4. Then the skilled men who were doing the work went 5. and told Moses, “The people are bringing more than is needed for the work which the LORD commanded to be done. 6. So Moses sent a command throughout the camp that no one was to make any further contribution for the sacred Tent; so the people did not bring any more. 7. What had already been brought was more than enough to finish all the work.”

The lessons from the foregoing story are that before the construction of the Tabernacle of the Lord, there was already a budget and there were accountability structures to ensure judicious application of resources to the task at hand. There was also scheduling of responsibilities. Moses received the design of the tabernacle from God. Bezalel and Oholiab were to implement the design as Chief Engineers and draftsmen. There were also other skilled men. In contemporary terms, we would categorize this skilled workforce to include inventory managers, quantity surveyors, accountants and auditors. How do we know? In verse four, we were told that the skilled men accounted to Moses on the use of resources used for the tabernacle. Pertinently, Moses absolved himself from direct management of the Tabernacle project. He allowed skilled men to take responsibilities in line with their training. Hebrews 3:5 confirmed Moses to be a man of accountability. Joshua also demonstrated accountability when he divided the Promised Land to the children of Israel. He did that with utmost sense of accountability such that no tribe complained of being short-changed.

The Law of Restitution – The Principle of Accountability

In the Law of Moses, God gave the children of Israel a specific law known as the law of restitution. This rests on the principle of Accountability. In this body of laws, God demanded that restitution should be made for infractions on the rules of accountability. In the book of Exodus chapter 22: verses 1 to 17

“1. If a man shall steal an ox, or a sheep, and kill it, or sell it; he shall restore five oxen for an ox, and four sheep for a sheep. 2. If a thief be found breaking up, and be smitten that he die, *there shall no blood be shed* for him. 3. If the sun be risen upon him, *there shall be blood shed* for him; *for he should make full restitution*; if he have nothing, then he shall be sold for his theft. 4. If the theft be certainly



found in his hand alive, whether it be ox, or ass, or sheep; he shall restore double. 5. If a man shall cause a field or vineyard to be eaten, and shall put in his beast, and shall feed in another man's field; of the best of his own field, and of the best of his own vineyard, shall he make restitution. 6. If fire break out, and catch in thorns, so that the stacks of corn, or the standing corn, or the field, be consumed *therewith*; he that kindled the fire shall surely make restitution. 7. If a man shall deliver unto his neighbour money or stuff to keep, and it be stolen out of the man's house; if the thief be found, let him pay double. 8. If the thief be not found, then the master of the house shall be brought unto the judges, *to see* whether he have put his hand unto his neighbour's goods. 9. For all manner of trespass, *whether it be* for ox, for ass, for sheep, for raiment, *or* for any manner of lost thing, which *another* challengeth to be his, the cause of both parties shall come before the judges; *and* whom the judges shall condemn, he shall pay double unto his neighbour. 10. If a man deliver unto his neighbour an ass, or an ox, or a sheep, or any beast, to keep; and it die, or be hurt, or driven away, no man seeing *it*. 11. *Then* shall an oath of the LORD be between them both, that he hath not put his hand unto his neighbour's goods; and the owner of it shall accept *thereof*, and he shall not make *it* good. 12. And if it be stolen from him, he shall make restitution unto the owner thereof. 13. If it be torn in pieces, *then* let him bring it *for* witness, *and* he shall not make good that which was torn. 14. And if a man borrow *ought* of his neighbour, and it be hurt, or die, the owner thereof *being* not with it, he shall surely make *it* good. 15. *But* if the owner thereof *be* with it, he shall not make *it* good: if it *be* an hired *thing*, it came for his hire. 16. And if a man entice a maid that is not betrothed, and lie with her, he shall surely endow her to be his wife. 17. If her father utterly refuse to give her unto him, he shall pay money according to the dowry of virgins. (King James Bible)

The laws of restitution are also mentioned in Leviticus 24:21, 22:14, 6:5 and also in Numbers chapter 5 verses 7 to 8. As it was mentioned in Exodus 22, the law of accountability was not only in relation to moral conduct but also in financial dealings and management of other people's assets and property. Heavy penalties were prescribed as deterrence and punishment for violations or infractions against abuse of both public and private stewardship.

As earlier mentioned, the prophets, priests and kings of Israel were held to high standards of accountability. God pronounced and executed judgements against the two sons of Eli; Hophni and Phinehas who demonstrated utter disregard for accountability for the articles of worship and sacrifice kept under their custody.



The prophet Samuel who delivered God's judgement against the sons of Eli was very careful how he discharged his assignment as God's prophet to Israel. At Prophet Samuel's old age, he gathered the children of Israel at Gilgal. There he rendered to the children of Israel what could be considered as the first accountability address recorded in the Bible.

"1. Samuel told the Israelites: I have given you a king, just as you asked. 2. You have seen how I have led you ever since I was a young man. I'm already old. My hair is gray, and my own sons are grown. Now you must see how well your king will lead you. 3. Let me ask this. Have I ever taken anyone's ox or donkey or forced you to give me anything? Have I ever hurt anyone or taken a bribe to give an unfair decision? Answer me so the LORD and his chosen king can hear you. And if I have done any of these things, I will give it all back.4. "No," the Israelites answered. "You've never cheated us in any way!" (Contemporary English Version)

Ironically, the Bible says that the sons of Samuel just like the sons of Eli did not follow the footsteps of their father. The only sin listed against them was that they were not accountable – they accepted bribes and behaved dishonestly. When it was time to appoint a King over Israel, the people of Israel rejected them with these words:

"1. When Samuel grew old, he made his sons judges in Israel. 2. The older son was named Joel and the younger one Abijah; they were judges in Beersheba. 3. But they did not follow their father's example; they were interested only in making money, so they accepted bribes and did not decide cases honestly. 4. Then all the leaders of Israel met together, went to Samuel in Ramah, 5. and said to him, "Look, you are getting old and your sons don't follow your example. So then, appoint a king to rule over us, so that we will have a king, as other countries have."

Daniel was a man of Accountability

There were other countries in Bible days where accountability was observed as fundamental principle of state directive. The New American Standard Bible records Daniel 6:1-4 thus:

1.It seemed good to Darius to appoint 120 satraps over the kingdom, that they would be in charge of the whole kingdom, 2. and over them three commissioners (of whom Daniel was one), that these satraps might be accountable to them, and that the king might not suffer loss. 3. Then this Daniel began distinguishing himself among the commissioners and satraps because he possessed an extraordinary spirit, and the king planned to appoint him over the entire kingdom. 4. Then the commissioners and satraps began trying to find a ground of accusation against Daniel in regard to government affairs; but they could find no ground of accusation or *evidence of*



corruption, inasmuch as he was faithful, and no negligence or corruption was *to be found in him*.

Darius who was the King of Medes and Persia appointed 120 Governors to rule over his kingdom. He was quite methodical about the organization of the administration of his kingdom. Above the 120 princes, King Darius appointed three Presidents or Prime Ministers to whom the rest of the Governors would be accountable to. The purpose, we were told in verse 2, is that the King's business would not suffer any loss. In other words: **"in order for the King's business to be fully accounted for!"**

Daniel was appointed as one of the three Presidents. The basis for his appointment was the fact that Daniel was a man of accountability. The Bible says that Daniel was beyond corruption. Even when the other Governors set traps to ensnare him, they could not find any form of corruption to nail him. Daniel lived above board.

Examples of Accountability in the Ministry of Jesus

Jesus Paid His Taxes

Jesus was accountable in the discharge of his civic responsibilities. He paid His taxes. Matthew 17: 24-27 records Jesus accountability over His civic responsibilities thus: of **"1. When they came to Capernaum, those who collected the two-drachma *tax* came to Peter and said, "Does your teacher not pay the two-drachma *tax*?" 25. He said, "Yes." And when he came into the house, Jesus spoke to him first, saying, "What do you think, Simon? From whom do the kings of the earth collect customs or poll-tax, from their sons or from strangers?"26. When Peter said, "From strangers," Jesus said to him, "Then the sons are exempt. 27. "However, so that we do not offend them, go to the sea and throw in a hook, and take the first fish that comes up; and when you open its mouth, you will find a shekel. Take that and give it to them for you and Me." (New American Standard Bible)**

His Disciples and Converts were Accountable

Among the disciples of Christ were tax collectors. Matthew the son of Alpheus who was also known as Levi was a tax collector. In fact, Jesus called him from his duty post in the tax office. It is difficult to believe that such a man that was condemned by the people of his day as the chief of sinners could be so transformed by Jesus that he later rose to write the first synoptic gospel. Next in line was Zacchaeus. He had to climb a sycamore tree in order to see Jesus. After Jesus converted Zacchaeus as His disciple, he made the following public confession as recorded in the gospel of Luke chapter 19 and verse 8:

"... Look, Lord! Here and now I give half of my possessions to the poor, and if I have cheated anybody out of anything, I will pay back four times the amount." (New International Version)



The Bible says that immediately Zacchaeus made that declaration of restitution, Jesus declared to him in verse 9 of the foregoing chapter

“Today, salvation has come to this house...”

Accountability in the Acts of the Apostles and the Epistles

From the Acts of the Apostles where Ananias and his wife were held accountable for telling lies in the Church to Paul's letter to the Corinthian Church asking them to hold to account the man who slept with his step mother, the New Testament is replete with examples to show that Accountability is the bedrock of Christianity.

While Paul preached the gospel in Athens as recorded in Acts Chapter 17, he spoke about a day of accountability that God has set in which He would judge the human race

31. because He has fixed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness through a Man whom He has appointed, having furnished proof to all men by raising Him from the dead.” (New American Standard Bible)

Furthermore, in Paul's epistle to the Roman Christians, he reminded them of a set day of accountability between man and his maker. Romans 14:12 says

“So, then each one of us will give an account of himself to God.”

While writing to Philemon, Paul offered to be held accountable for the contractual failures of Onesimus. He said in Philemon verses 18 and 19

“But if he has wronged you in any way or owes you anything, charge that to my account; 19. I, Paul, am writing this with my own hand, I will repay it...”

In Paul's letter to the Ephesian Church (New American Standard Version), he charged on the need for accountability between masters and their slaves.

5. Slaves, be obedient to those who are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in the sincerity of your heart, as to Christ; ... 9. And masters, do the same things to them, and give up threatening, knowing that both their Master and yours is in heaven, and there is no partiality with Him.

Apostle Peter in his own epistle posited that Christians should not fold their arms and wait for the judgement day in order to give account of their stewardship to God. In 1Peter 3:15, Apostle Peter charges all Christians to a life of continuous accountability;

“but sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts, always *being* ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you, yet with gentleness and reverence;” (New American Standard Bible)

The Last Day of Accountability - The Judgement Day

Finally, in the book of Revelation, we see the account of the judgement day as a result of both moral failures and financial misdeeds. In the book of Revelation chapter 21 and verse 8, Apostle John the beloved wrote about the dire spiritual consequences of failure in accountability to God and man. Revelation 21:8 says this about the last judgement day



“But for the cowardly and unbelieving and abominable and murderers and immoral persons and sorcerers and idolaters and all liars, their part *will be* in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.” (New American Standard Bible)

CHRISTIAN ACCOUNTABILITY

Christian accountability is accounting for what we are up to. It is the realization that we are liable, responsible, and answerable for our actions in life to God (Matt. 12:36; Rom. 2:16; 1 Cor. 3:10-15; 4:5; 2 Cor. 5:10), as well as to key Christians in our life (John 13:34 Gal. 6:1-2; Philip. 2:4; Heb. 10:23-24; James 5:16). Thus, we need to hold to our beliefs and keep in line with what we believe so it does not distract us from God's path for us or discourage others from their path.

Accountability allows us to be answerable to one another, focusing on key relationships such as with our spouse, close friends, colleagues, co-workers, a boss, small group members, and pastor. It is sharing, in confidence, our heartfelt Christian sojourn in an atmosphere of trust. Then, we can give an answer for what we do and understand where we need help in areas where we are weak and struggling, where and how we are growing, what we are learning, and to be encouraged. These precepts help us to stay on track, and get prayer, care, and support when we fail. We can also model guideposts for one another in order to keep going.

Accountability enables us to share our lives with one another in a deep, introspective way. This helps us to get to know ourselves and others in a deeper manner. Even though most of our relationships in life tend to be casual and superficial, we need deep connections; that is what God has made us for (Eccl. 4:10-12; Rom. 12:5; 14: 13-23; Eph. 5:21; Col. 3:9-10; 1 Peter 3:15). In this, we can have a place to open up, share, and be challenged beyond sports, weather, fashion, or makeup. The goal is our *spiritual formation* which is Christian maturity, growth, and character derived from God working in us and our working out our faith with one another.

The Indispensability of Accountability

In his book, *The Disciple Making Pastor*, Bill Hull writes about the need of accountability in the disciple-making process. He says,

To believe you can make disciples or develop true maturity in others without some form of accountability is like believing that you can raise children without discipline, run a company without rules, or lead an army without authority. Accountability is to the Great Commission what tracks are to a train.

So, what are some of the reasons for establishing some form of accountability?



(1) Accountability is an essential part of a functional society. But even more importantly, the prototype for it is the Triune Godhead itself. Though the members of the Trinity, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, are co-eternal and co-equal, each being God of very God, Scripture gives evidence of an accountability that exists within the Godhead. From the standpoint of the Holy Spirit, this is seen in the truth of the procession of the Spirit who proceeds from the Father through the Son to believers (see John 14.26; 15.26; 16.7). The Spirit accepts His role as the Enabler or Comforter to come and indwell believers of the Church age. As to the Son, He accepts His role as the suffering Saviour of the world first by becoming true humanity that He might die for our sin and then as our Advocate sit at God's right hand, etc. (see Phil.2.5; Heb. 10.5-10; Rom. 8.34). But this accountability of the Son is also seen in Paul's statements in 1 Corinthians 3.23; 11.3, and 15:24-28.

“And when all things are subjected to Him, then the Son Himself also will be subjected to the One who subjected all things to Him, that God may be all in all” (1 Cor.15.28).

Like earlier stated, this in no way implies that the Son is inferior to the Father or the Holy Spirit to the Son. Rather, it shows that when death is conquered at the close of the Millennium, then all things will come under the administration of the triune Godhead. This concept is illustrated in a corporation in which there are three equal owners.

(2) Accountability helps to promote biblical controls or checks and balances. It provides the necessary *discipline and support* needed to see people reach godly goals. While we are all ultimately accountable to God, as stressed in Romans 14.7-12, God has established other levels of accountability to aid us in the matter of control, support, and growth.

God has given the Word and the Holy Spirit as His agents of control to help provide direction and controls on our lives, but accountability to other believers becomes another key instrument to aid in bringing about self-discipline and inner controls.

(3) Accountability is necessary because like sheep we tend to go our own way. We are all self-willed. We want to protect our comfort zones and avoid having to deal with certain issues that are important to becoming obedient Christians, which is one of the goals of the Great Commission (Matt. 28.19-20). Making disciples means teaching others to obey the Lord and this is very difficult without some measure of accountability. Accountability is part of the means God uses, as will be demonstrated below.

(4) Accountability promotes servant-like leadership in keeping with the pastoral mandate to watch over the flock (Eph.4.11, Heb.13.7, 1 Pet.5.1-4). One of the key



requirements of a servant leader is faithfulness to the things entrusted to him (1 Cor.4.1-2). So, in 1 Timothy 2.2, Paul told Timothy to entrust what he had learned to what kind of men? - To faithful men. The fact he was to selectively train only faithful men suggests accountability. Is it not a strange paradox that we generally accept accountability in most aspects of life as something which is necessary, but when it comes to the body of Christ, many fight accountability, especially, if it begins to affect their comfort zones or their self-willed agendas?

(5) Accountability is protective to both leaders and to the flock. The biblical model for Church leadership is a collective leadership of elders which provides a structure for genuine accountability. Shared, brotherly leadership provides needed restraint on pride, greed, and “playing to the gallery”. In the words of Earl D. Radmacher; “Human leaders, even Christian ones, are sinners and they only accomplish God's will imperfectly. Multiple leaders, therefore, will serve as a 'check and balance' on each other and serve as a safeguard against the very human tendency to play God over other people.”

Shared leadership provides close accountability, genuine partnership, and peer relationships – the very things imperial pastors shrink from at all costs.

As to the flock, Hebrews 13.7 tells the flock to submit to their leaders because they keep watch over the souls of God's people. People too often understand this primarily in a negative way, but keeping watch not only means correcting people when they fail to walk with the Lord but helping them to do so. As will show below, the goal of accountability is not riding herd over people like a task master – something completely contrary to Scripture. Rather, the goal is to help people grow in Christ and learn to find Him as the source and force and course of life.

Contemporary Literature Perspectives on Accountability:

Conceptualization Challenge:

Writing in his paper “Salvation for Accountability” (2002), Melvin Dubnick recognized that there are certain problems associated with conceptualizing accountability in contemporary times. First, the word's etymology does not encompass its conceptual history. A survey of the family of terms associated with “account” in the OED2 offers no references earlier than a comment circa 1260 related to giving an account of one's conduct. The first noted reference to accountability itself is noted as a history of Vermont published in 1794. Middle English terms related to accountability (e.g., *acompte*, *aconte*) can be traced to at least to the early 14th century, with references to the idea of “being accountable” (e.g., *acomptable*) finding more usage by the mid-15th century. There is little doubt these words were, in turn, derived from the Old French equivalents for “provide a count,” - “comptes a render”. Does evidence that accountability was not used



until relatively recent counter the fact that the concept itself was in effect several hundred years earlier? In contrast, the roots of accountability can be traced to ancient settings and biblical references, from Egypt.

According to Dubnick (2002), the roots of the contemporary concept of accountability can be traced to the reign of William 1, in the decades after the 1066 Norman conquest of England. In 1085, William required all the property holders in his domain to render account of their possession. These possessions were valued and listed by royal agents in the so-called Domesday Book. This arrangement apart from making taxation easier, also established the foundation of the royal governance. The Domesday Books listed what was in the king's domain. The king had the entire property owners swear to an oath, with the aim of securing their allegiance. In the early twelfth century this evolved into a highly centralized administration that was ruled through centralized auditing and semi-annual account-giving.

In the centuries that passed since the reign of William 1 of England, accountability has slowly struggled out of its etymological bondage with accounting. It has moved far beyond its book-keeping origins and has become a symbol for good governance, both in the public and private sector. Within contemporary political discourse therefore, 'accountability' no longer conveys an image of bookkeeping and financial administration but connotes an expression of responsible governance. The concept has come to be used synonymously with such terms as transparency, efficiency, integrity, trustworthiness, fidelity, justice and egalitarianism.

Moreover, today, the accounting relationship has almost completely reversed, for accountability no more simply refers to leaders holding their subjects to account, but it is the leaders themselves who are being held accountable by their citizens. Kelly (1997) emphasizes that accountability is essential for establishing and maintaining wholesome relationships. It is important at every level of society, hence there are such concepts as political, employment, social and business accountability. Everyone needs the values and benefits of accountability. It helps keep people honest and credible; preserves and protects their integrity; and prevents them from becoming complacent and negligent in personal relationships and professional responsibilities.

The second problem with conceptualizing accountability is its notorious ambiguity when treated as a word rather than a concept (Brooks 1995). Practical and scholarly applications of accountability have been appropriately called "expansive" (Mulgan 2000), and the term was nicely characterized by one analyst as "chameleon-like" (Sinclair 1995). This results from the synonymic nature of the terms, and has proven especially problematic to those attempting to operationalize the role of "accountability mechanisms" in social relationships; the typical response among those who require more preciseness has been to



adopt a narrower definition, one usually confined to the act of “answerability.”

A third problem is that of “incommensurability” – or the inherent lack of common “language” that permits easy translation of the word across contexts and cultures. Specifically derived from geometry by Thomas Kuhn and applied metaphorically to scientific theories (Kuhn 1982), the idea of “terminological incommensurability” is relevant here because accountability has proven extremely difficult to translate into other languages, and by extension to other political and administrative cultures. In the major romance languages (French, Spanish, Italian as well as Portuguese), for example, various forms of the term responsibility are used in lieu of the English accountability.

The result is that there exists little room in those languages for a possible distinction between the conceptualization of accountability and responsibility. Translating what is intended as the concept into the word “responsibility” neutralizes or subordinates some meaningful differences. In northern and eastern European languages, the idea of accountability translates into terms closely related to account-keeping or making of reports. The Japanese, who have at least seventeen distinct terms they use to communicate the word “responsibility,” have only one equivalent term to accountability (akauntabiritii). it is a transliteration of the English word adopted in light of the extensive contacts with Britons and Americans in the past 150 years ((Dubnick 1998).

Accountability as the Cornerstone of Democratic Governance

In a note on 'Accountability and Governance', Rick Stapenhurst and Mitchel O'Brien; World Bank experts, underscored the point that accountability is a cornerstone of governance. They went on to define accountability broadly as a relationship where an individual or body, and the performance of tasks or functions by that individual or body, are subject to another's oversight, direction or request that they provide information or justification for their actions. They went on to posit that accountability involves two distinct stages: answerability and enforcement. According to them, 'answerability' refers to the obligation of the government, its agencies and public officials to provide information about their decisions and actions and to justify them to the public and those institutions of accountability tasked with providing oversight. Enforcement suggests that the public or the institution responsible for accountability can sanction the offending party or remedy the contravening behaviour.

The two experts deposed that accountability is important for the evaluation of on-going effectiveness of public officials or public bodies and ensures that they are performing to their full potential, providing value for money in the provision of public services, instilling confidence in government and responsive to the community they are meant to be serving.



The note went on to identify two major streams of public accountability – vertical and horizontal accountability. In the horizontal stream of accountability, government institutions hold one another accountable. In the vertical stream of accountability, citizens, citizen groups and organized civil society hold the government and elected cum appointed public officials responsible for their actions and inactions in government. Rick and Mitchel identified that in horizontal accountability, the Parliament and the Judiciary acts as checks to the Executive branch of government. While the Parliament exerts political check on the Executive, the Judiciary exerts legal check on the Executive. Rick and Mitchel went on to list social accountability and diagonal accountability as contemporary approaches to public accountability.

They defined social accountability as an initiative of citizens and citizen groups to hold those in public positions to account. Diagonal accountability was described as a blend of vertical and horizontal accountability. In diagonal accountability, civic engagement is mainstreamed in horizontal frameworks through co-opting citizens and community advocates into public accountability spaces such as Parliamentary committees, access to official information, empowerment to summon state actors and apply sanction if need be.

The design of the modern democratic governance architecture is a labyrinth of interconnected structures that is built on accountability. Sometimes, these structures of accountability are cast around a Principal-Agency model and or mutual and or voluntary trajectories of accountability. From the social contract theory of Rousseau which is the basis for modern democracy, the ground norm and foundation for the democratic governance accountability structure is Sovereignty which is derived from the people. So, the people, as represented by the electorates, hold the privilege of holding public officials to account. They do this through social accountability vertical actions such as social audits, petitions, protests, citizens report cards and ultimately through the instrumentality of the power of the ballot.

Appadorai A. in his text on the Substance of Politics (1975) posits that in furtherance to Rousseau's social contract theory, the standard for accountability is the Law which can only be made by the assembly of the whole people. This promotes the Legislature or Parliament as the epicentre of accountability in the democratic governance architecture. By cutting off the government from the ownership of the social contract, Rousseau also situates the government as a vehicle or agency of delivering social goods to the people in whose account sovereignty is deposited. This establishes the principle that government being a popular vehicle must always be accountable to the people. This echoes the thoughts of Abraham Lincoln on democracy as the “government of the people by the people and for the people”.

According to Rick and Mitchel; “in terms of holding government officials to account, parliament is the principal and the official the agent. Parliament, as principal, requires the



government and its officials, as agents, to implement the laws, policies and programs it has approved – and holds the government and officials to account for their performance in this regard. Parliament is also an agent, in that the electorate (the principal) elects legislators to enact laws and oversee government actions on their behalf. The electorate then hold legislators to account at election time and, in a few jurisdictions, through recall, where dissatisfied voters can recall their elected representative and vote for an alternative.

International Frameworks and Observance of Public Accountability

There are a number of international conventions that buttress accountability as a domineering element of government. The United Nations Millennium Declaration highlights democratic and participatory governance as one of its six fundamental values. More recently, in 2012 the UN General Assembly adopted the resolution 66/102, The Rule of Law at the National and International Levels, reaffirming its commitment to the need for adherence to the principles of the rule of law at all levels.

Yet, despite years of well-phrased commitments, we live in a world where a large proportion of the global population lives outside the protection of the law, and in countries that lack sufficiently accountable and transparent political institutions. This reality is especially apparent for the 1.5 billion people living in conflict- and post-conflict countries.

In 2008, the International Commission on Legal Empowerment of the Poor estimated that as many as four billion people live outside the protection of the law or in other words are unaccounted for by the law; meaning that they lack protection of their physical security as well as their property - labor - and business rights. This translates into an environment of insecurity, vulnerability and fear under which no person so trapped can fully prosper. Lack of access to justice and the rule of law is a basic and essential problem, because without rule of law, the protection of all other rights and public accountability is gravely endangered.

When it comes to political accountability and transparency, the numbers are equally dire. More than every fourth person in the world lacks the ability to hold their government accountable for its performance, and the political institutions of their countries lack the transparency necessary to allow popular scrutiny of government performance.

For example, in its most recent Open Budget Index, the International Budget Partnership found that national budgets in 74 of the 94 countries surveyed failed to meet the most basic requirements of accountability and transparency. 40 of the studied countries “[...] release no meaningful budget information.” The same survey found that only 7 of the 94 countries included in the study release “extensive budget information”, a figure emphasizing the universal character of the problem. In countries where transparency is lacking, political institutions cannot be fully accountable toward each other or towards citizens.



CHRISTIANITY & ACCOUNTABILITY

Developing countries especially those of the global south, Nigeria inclusive, face the challenge cum tragedy of lockout of vast majority of its citizens from governance rooms and corridors that hold government and state actors to account for failure to deliver on the social contract. In many of these countries, the constitutional provisions and inherent frameworks for exacting accountability are flimsy, flirty and flippant.

In Nigeria, there are debates on the so-called justiciability of the directives principle of state policy which posits citizens' welfare and security as the primary purpose of government. While the constitution uses the word, 'shall' which in law undertones compulsory enforcement, Section 6(6)c of the same constitution bars citizens from seeking judicial redress from government over the delivery of goods articulated in Nigeria's Social Contract.



PART THREE



PART THREE

Contextualizing Christianity and Accountability in Nigeria

- The failure of Accountability in Nigeria and the Role of Christians

For about 38 years of Nigeria's independence, the military held sway. According to Ogo Alubo (2010) in "Transparency and Accountability in Nigeria's Extractive Industry: The Solid Minerals Sub Sector"; the period that Nigerian military held sway in power could be described as "catastrophic governance". Ogo went on to posit that within this period the principles of transparency and accountability were abused with impunity. The climate of corruption and impunity manifested through unwholesome and endemic practices, undermined the country's capacity to increase the supply of public goods. According to him, the absence of democratically legislative arm of government which would have served as a watchdog during military rule worsened the abuse of principles of due process, transparency and accountability. Absence of oversight institutions worsened the burden of corruption.

Writing in the book "Overcoming the Challenges of Transformation in Nigeria", Dr Otiye Igbuzor identifies corruption as a major bane of public accountability in Nigeria. According to the book, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) defines corruption as follows:

"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 can also be abused for personal benefit through patronage and nepotism, for example the theft of state assets and the diversion of state revenues"

Dr. Igbuzor went on to echo the opinion of a section of Eurocentric scholars on corruption in Africa. They argued as follows:

"What is regarded as corruption in Africa is a myth because it is expected that a beneficiary should show appreciation for a favour granted him/her. If a government official offers one a job or contract, the beneficiary would be obliged to show appreciation in kind or cash to the government official just as he would do to a village chief if granted a land to cultivate crops or build a house. Corruption is a myth because "one's culture's bribery is another's goodwill"

President Olusegun Obasanjo debunked the notion that categorizes 'corruption' in Africa as 'goodwill' or a show of 'appreciation'. In his own words:

"I shudder at how an integral part of our culture could be taken as the basis for rationalizing otherwise despicable behaviour. In the African concept of appreciation and hospitality, the gift is usually a token. It is not demanded. The value is usually in the spirit rather than in the material worth. It is usually done in the open, and never in secret. Where it is excessive, it becomes an embarrassment and it is returned. If



anything, corruption has perverted and destroyed this aspect of our culture.”

At the 4th National seminar on Economic Crimes organized by the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC), President Olusegun Obasanjo averred that extirpating corruption from the fabric of Nigeria's socio-economic life, including corruption within law enforcement agencies constitutes one of the thrusts of his administration's socio-economic blueprint – the National Economic and Development Strategy (NEEDS). In these words, President Obasanjo situated the place of accountability in Nigeria's democratic governance.

“The future of Nigeria and democracy in Nigeria depends on the commitment, dedication and personal sacrifice of all its citizens, especially those appointed to protect her integrity (public accountability)”.

The cost of breakdown in Accountability on Christians and Nigerians

Estimates from the World Economic Forum show that the cost of corruption equals 5 per cent of global GDP (\$2.6trn). The African Union, in 2002, revealed that 25 per cent of the GDP of African states, amounting to \$148billion, is lost to corruption each year. Countries, where corruption is rife are likely to have 5 per cent less in investment than countries with much less corruption, an IMF research says. In Nigeria, a Price Water Cooper (PwC) study shows that Nigeria would be losing 37% of GDP to corruption by the year 2030 if corruption is not stopped now. Corruption is the main issue behind the collapse of Nigeria's physical, social and moral infrastructure. The cost of corruption is simply too humungous and catastrophic to be ignored by any right-thinking people or society.

Unfortunately, corruption unleashes its most deadly fangs on Christians. Corruption is indeed the modern art of persecution against Christians. The explanation is not far-fetched. One is that corruption severely limits the capacity of government to provide the Christian a safe and conducive environment to practice his or her faith, raise a family and live a life of dignity. Tragically, while corruption robs the Christian of an enabling environment to live a dignified life according to the genuine labour of his hands, it rewards and exalts criminality. Corruption creates an environment that tempts the believer with ungodly and dishonest options in order to make ends meet. Unfortunately, many Christians are pressured to give up the values of their faith just to survive. It appears that the Nigerian ecosystem of corruption was deliberately designed with two options – **“cooperate or die”**. This explains my argument that corruption is a 21st century persecution against Christians.

If Christians understand corruption in this light, they would be better mobilized to fight for public accountability. Just as Paul warned in 2 Timothy 2:5, if we do not win this war, we should forget about living a life of complete dignity where peace flows like a mighty river. Unfortunately, the major challenge in arousing Christians to fighting for public accountability is facing its most strident opposition from many Church leaders. The fact



remains that the quality of sermons being dished out from many of our Church pulpits inflame rather than incinerate the passion and appetite for corruption. While many pastors are quick to condemn public officials who steal public funds, they have no qualms condoning their Church members who donate generously to the coffers of the Church above their legitimate income.

For the Church to perform its roles properly and adequately, it must firmly strengthen itself through the Scripture. First, God did not create a corrupt world. "God saw all that He had made, and it was very good". (Gen. 1:31) God created a perfect world which man with his depravity corrupted to the disappointment and dissatisfaction of God. "God saw how corrupt the earth had become, for all the people on earth had corrupted their ways" (Gen. 6:12). It was God's displeasure with corruption on earth that brought about Noah. "I am going to put an end to all people, for the earth is filled with violence because of them". (Gen. 6:13) And then the post-flood world of Noah was not corruption-free for any length of time. But there are examples and role models in both Old and New Testaments to guide the Church and the children of God on how to resist and fight corruption.

In the Old Testament, the word "bribery" is often used to refer to corruption. In the book of Exodus, Moses gives the following instruction:

"Do not accept a bribe, for a bribe blinds those who see and twist the words of the righteous" (Exo. 23:8).

There can never be true justice when corruption and bribery are involved because the eyes are closed to the truth. Taking a bribe is obviously an offence against God, the weak, the innocent and the community. It is a sin. Solomon puts it more graphically in Proverbs 17:23:

"A wicked man accepts a bribe in secret to pervert the course of justice"

Isaiah 5:23 says, "they take bribes to let the wicked go free and they punish the innocent".

The Church and Christians can learn from the example of Daniel who was a paragon of integrity. Here is the testimony concerning Daniel:

"The administrators and the satraps tried to find grounds for charges against Daniel in his conduct of government affairs, but they were unable to do so. They could find no corruption in him, because he was trustworthy and neither corrupt nor negligent" (Dan. 6:4).

These verses and many others (Ezek. 22 v 12, Ps. 15 verse 1–5) show us the negative effects of corruption, perversion of justice, shedding of blood, exploitation, mal-distribution of a nation's resources, etc. which in totality means the growth and development of the society is arrested or stunted. Jesus condemned, in strong terms, the corruption and malpractices



of the Pharisees and the shopkeepers within the Synagogue surroundings. Jesus was a victim of Judas Iscariot's corruption. He had to pursue money doublers, whip in hand, from the temple. He charged as they ran "You have turned my Father's house into a den of thieves!"

The Church needs to clear its Aegean stable. The temple of God must be very clean to restore the holiness of the Church. Our present-day 'money changers' and 'merchants' must be chased out of the Church and put to shame in the larger society.

Rebuilding the Walls of Accountability:

The Role of the Church in the Entrenchment of Accountability in Nigeria

There is no doubt that there are cracks, nay, craters, in the accountability walls of the Church and nation. Writing in "**Biblical Teachings on Accountability: A Challenge to Christian Politicians and Public Office-Holders**", Michael Adeleke Ogunewu and Abiodun Adesegun decried a situation where many Christian public office holders are being indicted for one form of corruption or another. Not long ago in the government of President Muhammadu Buhari, the highest-ranking political appointee of his government who happens to be a Christian was disgraced out of office on the account of allegations of corruption. In such circumstance, what then happens to the charge of Jesus that if our righteousness does not exceed that of Pharisees and Saducees, we should forget about the kingdom of heaven? Indeed, if the light in our body is darkness, what manner of darkness there is! The name of our Lord who lived a life of accountability must not be ridiculed by those who bear His holy name! It is time to repent and seek the face of the Lord!

The Bible describes the Church as the pillar and centre of the truth. Jesus Christ to whom every Christian is connected describes His followers as the salt of the earth, the light of the world and the city that is built on a hilltop. If our society that has lost its taste and flavour to corruption must be seasoned, the salt of Christian accountability must be applied by genuine believers in Christ in their different spheres of life calling. If our society must be rescued from the cold hands of accountability decay and death, the Church must get alive to its work as the salt of the earth and the light of the world. The matter of allowing our light to shine before others who are not of the Christian faith is so important – so that they might see our good works and glorify our Father in heaven. Essentially, this means that every Christian is a change agent whose conduct should leave an impact that brings transformation to the broader society and glory to God. The Bible and history beckons on us to rise and rebuild the walls of national accountability, transparency, honesty, peace, unity and dignity.



An exhortation by Hugh Whelchel (2012) might be useful in moderating the disposition of Christians on approaching and appropriating the issue of accountability. It exhorts that the approach to public and private stewardship should be premised on the following principles:

1. The principle of ownership.

The psalmist begins the [24th Psalm](#) with,

The earth is the LORD's, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it.

In the beginning of Genesis, God creates everything and puts Adam in the Garden to work it and to take care of it. It is clear that man was created to work, and that work is the stewardship of all the creation that God has given him.

This is the fundamental principle of biblical stewardship. God owns everything, we are simply managers or administrators acting on his behalf.

Therefore, stewardship expresses our obedience regarding the administration of everything God has placed under our control, which is all encompassing. Stewardship is the commitment of one's self and possessions to God's service, recognizing that we do not have the right of control over our property or ourselves.

Echoing [Deuteronomy 8:17](#), we might say: "My power and the strength of my hands have produced this wealth for me." But [Deuteronomy 8:18](#) counsels us to think otherwise:

"Remember the LORD your God, for it is he who gives you the ability to produce wealth."

2. The Principle of Responsibility.

In explaining responsibility, Bill Peel [writes in the High Calling](#),

Although God gives us "all things richly to enjoy," nothing is ours. Nothing really belongs to us. God owns everything; we're responsible for how we treat it and what we do with it. While we complain about our rights here on earth, the Bible constantly asks, What about your responsibilities? Owners have rights; stewards have responsibilities.

We are called as God's stewards to manage that which belongs to God. While God has graciously entrusted us with the care, development, and enjoyment of everything he owns as his stewards, we are responsible to manage his holdings well and according to his desires and purposes.

3. The Principle of Answerability

A steward is one who manages the possessions of another. We are all stewards of the resources, abilities and opportunities that God has entrusted to our care, and one day each one of us will be called to give an account or provide answers for how we have managed what the Master has given us.



This is the maxim taught by the Parable of the Talents. God has entrusted authority over the creation to us and we are not allowed to rule over it as we see fit. We are called to exercise our dominion under the watchful eye of the Creator managing his creation in accord with the principles he has established.

Like the servants in the Parable of the Talents, we will be called to give an account of how we have administered everything we have been given, including our time, money, abilities, information, wisdom, relationships, and authority.

We will all give account to the rightful owner as to how well we managed the things he has entrusted to us.

4. The principle of reward.

In [Colossians 3:23-24](#), Paul writes:

“Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men, since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving.”

The Bible shows us in the parables of the Kingdom that faithful stewards who do the master's will with the master's resources can expect to be rewarded incompletely in this life, but fully in the next.

We all should long to hear the master say what he exclaims in [Matthew 25:21](#):

“Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness!”

As Christians in the 21st century, we need to embrace this larger biblical view of stewardship, which goes beyond Church budgets or building projects, though important; it connects everything we do with what God is doing in the world.

We need to be faithful stewards of all God has given us within the opportunities presented through his providence to glorify him, serve the common good and further his Kingdom.

There is no doubt that all our institutions have been tarnished by the brush of corruption. If the Church, as an institution, does not take bribe or get involved in other obvious corrupt practices, the behaviours of some of our men of God leave much to be desired. They not only celebrate but venerate those whose sources of wealth are questionable. They accept offering and gifts from anybody without asking questions. This gives the impression that anything is acceptable God's house. But if Jesus can chase out those buying and selling from the temple with the charge, “My house shall be called the house of prayer, but ye have made it a den of thieves” (Mat. 21: 12-13), then it is time to stand up against corruption.

The Church must embrace an inclusive definition of evangelism. Evangelism must not only be limited to winning souls to increase the crowd in the Church but it must also embrace discipleship, which is the cleansing of the soul and heart towards righteous living. The Bible tells us,



“Righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people” (Pro. 14:34).

The pulpit must be used to teach and preach righteous and honest living. The message of prosperity must be preached with caution and moderation, bearing in mind the mission of Christ, “The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to set the oppressed free, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour.” (Luke 4: 18-19). While miracles, signs and wonders are the expectations of true believers, such must be based on righteousness. To preach that one can acquire wealth without labour is not only deceitful; it is a call to corruption. It is false preaching and it is sinful. We must be careful in believing and celebrating every testimony of miraculous blessing; hence we end up being hoodwinked into celebrating corruption. The power of faith must be developed as an instrument of social change. And genuine faith is about developing right values through trust in what God can provide through righteous, godly and dignified means.

The Church must use its power to teach the right values. One of our major problems is the breakdown of our values system. The Church, as an agent of socialisation, must be in the forefront of rebuilding our value system and making the individual to imbibe these values and moral principles. As part of its evangelical and spiritual mandate, the Church must boldly speak out against corruption in our society. The Church must take to the high moral ground and speak out against corrupt leadership and poor governance. The Church must embark on moral re-armament for the Church and the nation.

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As the saying goes, charity begins at home. The leaders in the Church must live by example. It must be a case of 'do as I do, not do as I say'. While we shun questionable characters and offerings, the administration of the Church must be open, and transparent. Accountability must be our watchword. The Church is not of this world, simply because it is expected to live by the highest standard as prescribed in the word of God. The Church is the light of the world. In our conduct behaviours, activities and programmes, we must let our light show forth in its full brightness for all and sundry to see and emulate. In actions and deeds, the Church must stand up against corruption.



Building Righteousness in Christendom as the Cornerstone of Accountability in the Society

Baptist ethicist, Louise Kretzschmar of South Africa, cited by Olusegun Obasanjo,, addressed the question of leadership in the Church and corruption on July 10, 2014 in a Joint Session of the Christian Ethics Commission and the Theological Education and Leadership Commission of the Baptist World Alliance, meeting in Izmir, Turkey. In a paper entitled, “Beyond Milk: The Moral Failure and On-going Formation of Lay Christian Leaders in the Church and Society,” He further highlighted that Kretzschmar noted that corruption among people in power on many levels is rampant. This reflects a need for greater moral formation in society, she said, and especially among leaders who are Christians.

“Spiritual formation is initiated by God's grace,” Kretzschmar said. It “requires a human response to the regular prompting of the Holy Spirit, and results in mature persons and communities of faith. For Christian leaders, it forms the foundation, motivation and principle means of moral formation, which is the development of moral virtue, character, behaviour and lifestyle.”

How is ethical character to be formed in leaders of business, education, politics, and charitable organisations? Even those who are Christians, she said, may belong to “Churches where they receive very little in the way of discipleship, support, intellectual input and spiritual formation. As a result, they may have developed a 'split' spirituality that separates their faith from their workplace activities.”

He also opined that “Christian leaders need to be rooted in the stability of a relationship with God and the simplicity of a life that is straightforward and open,” Kretzschmar said. “This rootedness in a God-centered life of righteousness can enable them to face the confusion and conflicts that arise as a result of morally-wrong motives, relationships and actions and to be peacemakers.”

In the foregoing, the Roman Catholic Church in Nigeria, has developed the following prayer against bribery and corruption in Nigeria:

“Father in Heaven, you always provide for all your creatures so that all may live as you have willed. You have blessed our country Nigeria with rich human and natural resources to be used to your honour and glory and for the well-being of every Nigeria. We are deeply sorry for the wrong use of these your gifts and blessing through act of injustice, bribery and corruption, as a result of which many of our people are hungry, sick ignorant and defenseless. Either, you alone can heal us and our nation of this sickness. We beg you, touch our lives and the lives of our leaders and people so that we may all realise the evil of bribery and corruption and work hard to eliminate it. Raise up for us God



CHRISTIANITY & ACCOUNTABILITY

fearing people and leaders who care for us and who will lead us in the part of peace, prosperity and progress. We ask these through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen."

The Church can help on this level by raising people to mentor or coach business and political leaders who are Christians and encourage them to continue to grow in their faith and Christian maturity.

According to Obasanjo, Christian leaders working on the "macro" level should be aware of national and international conflicts, the impact of industry on the environment, massive economic disparities, and other similar socio-economic issues. Consequently, it is very expedient for the Church and particularly the leaders, to speak truth to rulers and politicians. Business values such as maximising short-term profits at the expense of workers or the environment and the society at large are in conflict with a Christian norm of the stewardship of the earth and what is good for society as a whole and the Church should say so stoutly.

Similarly, the Church should long for children of God by saving grace in political leadership and those who are credible in the eyes of the broader electorate because they work to improve the lives of citizens and they neither hide their faith nor use it to pander to the interests of particular groups in order to gain votes. If politics is left for bad people, we will have bad politics and bad government. The Church should preach and publicise against cheating the marginalised and neglected, especially children and young people who are vulnerable to violence and exploitation.

However, while the role of Christianity in assuring Accountability is being stressed, it must be noted that the Church of Christ is "a microcosm of the entire society and hence there is the need for the general cleansing of the society. What is equally important is strengthening participatory democracy and transparency in government. This will lead to stronger institutions, which are then better placed to respond to the crisis of insurgencies. This is true for countries across Africa and in other parts of the world. All sectors must be involved in the transformation: the National Assembly, the executive, the judiciary, the private sector, the civil society, communities, all and sundry".

From his wealth of experience, a renowned National Leader, Obasanjo is the view that if appropriate steps and strategies are taken and leaders are transparent about the corruption challenges that they face; the trust of the public in the Nigerian government and security forces would be strengthened. These will help their ability to address the very real challenges and risks the country faces.



Documented Impact of Genuine Christian Accountability on Society

The Effect of the Wales Revival

As revival fire spread across Wales in late 1904 and early 1905, although no official records were kept of the actual number converted, 150,000 is considered a very conservative estimate, during the first six months! People's lives were transformed by the thousands. This was, indeed, a sovereign move of God's Holy Spirit!

Whole communities were turned upside down and were radically changed from depravity to glorious goodness. The crime rate dropped, often to nothing. The police force reported that they had little more to do than supervise the coming and going of the people to the chapel prayer meetings, while magistrates turned up at courts to discover no cases to try. The alcohol trade was decimated, as people were caught up more by what happened in the local chapels than the local public houses and bars. Families experienced amazing renewal, where the money earning husband and father, the bread winner, had wasted away the income and sowed discord, but now under the moving power of the Holy Spirit, following the conversion to be a follower of Jesus Christ, he not only provided correctly for family needs, but was now with the family, rather than wasting his time, and wages, in the public houses of the village or town. Souls were saved, individual lives were changed and Society itself was changed. Countless numbers were converted to Christ.

There are men and women still in Churches today whose parents or grandparents' testimonies were that they were converted in the Revival in 1904 or 1905. Not only were individual lives changed by the power of the Holy Spirit, but whole communities were changed, indeed society itself was changed. Wales again was a God-fearing nation! Public houses were now almost empty. Men and women who used to waste their money getting drunk were saving it, giving it to help their Churches, buying clothes and food for their families. And not only drunkenness, but stealing and other offences grew less and less, so that often a magistrate came to court, and found there were no cases for him.

Men whose language had been filthy before learnt to talk purely. It is related that not only did the colliers put in a better day's work, but also that the pit ponies were so used to being cursed and sworn at, that they just couldn't understand orders being given in kind, clean words! Yet, still the work output increased. The dark tunnels underground in the mines echoed with the sounds of prayer and hymns, instead of oaths and nasty jokes and gossip. People who had been careless about paying their bills, or paying back money they had borrowed, paid up all they owed. People who had fallen out became friends again. In Eley Towers and Douglas Potter book; "The 10 Greatest Revivals Ever", they corroborated the account of Douglas thus;

"The use of alcohol in Wales dropped by fifty percent resulting in the bankruptcy of many taverns. Crime was reduced to the point judges in many jurisdictions were



presented with white gloves indicating there were no crimes of violence to be tried that day. In various communities, police became unemployed when they were no longer needed. In the coal mines, mules refused to respond to converted miners who began treating the animals with respect and stopped using foul language."

Other Parts of Great Britain

In the rest of the Great Britain, the First World War probably robbed the 1904 Wales Revival and Spiritual Awakening from having as full an impact on society as might have otherwise been realized. Still, the revival was not without an impact. It began to shape the morality of a generation. The changed lives of converts resulted in reductions in crime, drunkenness, and gambling, along with increases in honesty, truthfulness and chastity throughout Great Britain.

In the United States of America

A wave of morality in America followed the awakening producing a revival of righteousness which culminated with the passing of the Eighteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution that prohibited the sale of alcoholic beverages. Throughout the nation, political reform was affected as corrupt district attorneys, mayors, governors, senators and assemblymen were replaced with those perceived as honest. Missionaries touched by the revival established schools and hospitals on their various fields.

The Azusa revival was the first major blow on the culture of racial segregation. Under the leadership of Joseph Seymour; a black illiterate preacher, daily services at 312 Azusa Street quickly filled with both blacks and whites seeking both salvation and "the baptism of the Holy Ghost." One white preacher in the South commented, "... the colour line was washed away by the blood".

The impact of the work of Seymour was so huge that it soon had a global impact. The Azusa Street revival soon spread to Canada, South Africa and Asian countries

In India, China and Africa

The number of pupils attending Christian schools in India doubled in the two decades following spiritual revival. 90% of nurses were Christians, most trained at mission hospitals. In China, missionaries laid the foundation of that nations education and medical systems.

The same was true in many nations throughout the African continent. In Nigeria, Mary Slessor is popular for her heroic work in putting to a stop the killing of twins in Calabar. Other missionaries in different parts of Africa and elsewhere in the world instituted society-wide reform such as the fight for the abolition of slave trade.

Church Teachings, Doctrines and Traditions that Erode, Challenge and Threaten the Preaching and Practice of Accountability in Nigeria



Two major issues erode the preaching and practice of accountability in Nigeria. They are:

- Prosperity Message (This will be dealt subsequently in details)
- The misinterpretation of "Judge Not"

The Prosperity Message:

In the United States, with the rise of Pentecostalism, evangelicalism and the Charismatic Christian movement especially at the aftermath of the Azusa Street Revival, several variants of teaching started emerging that majored on aspects of the Christian doctrine that were not emphasized or even preached by the more conservative legacy Church denominations.

The term Full Gospel is often used as a synonym for Pentecostalism, evangelicalism and the Charismatic Christian movements which originated in the 19th century. They anchored their denominational teachings on the baptism of the Holy Spirit, spiritual gifts and divine healing as their commitment to the doctrines and power of the Apostolic Age.

The Full Gospel designation was actually lifted from Roman 5: 18 -19, where Paul declared

"18. For I will not dare to speak of any of those things which Christ hath not wrought by me, to make the Gentiles obedient, by word and deed, 19. Through mighty signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God; so that from Jerusalem, and round about unto Illyricum, I have fully preached the gospel of Christ". (King James Bible)

In the 1940's, a branch of the Pentecostal movement began to include and lay a lot of emphasis on wealth and wellness messages as part of the Full Gospel. The Prosperity theology (sometimes referred to as the prosperity gospel, the health and wealth gospel, or the gospel of success) became entrenched as a religious belief among some Christians, who hold that financial blessings and physical wellbeing are always the will of God for them, and that faith, positive speech, and donations to religious causes will increase one's material wealth. Therefore, prosperity theology views the Bible as a contract between God and humans: if humans have faith in God, he will deliver security and prosperity.

The doctrine emphasizes the importance of personal empowerment, sometimes, in a way that conveys to the audience the sense of "do whatever but get prospered". The prosperity theology is based on interpretations of the Bible that are mainstream Judaism (with respect to the Old Testament Bible Texts) though less so in Christianity. Prosperity



message views the atonement to include alleviation of sickness and poverty, which are viewed as curses broken by faith. Most times, proponents of the prosperity message seduce their audience to make fat donations to their ministries in order to gain access to the blessings of prosperity.

According to historian Kate Bowler, the prosperity gospel was formed from the intersection of three different ideologies: [Pentecostalism](#), [New Thought](#), and "an American gospel of pragmatism, individualism, and upward mobility." This "American gospel" was best exemplified by [Andrew Carnegie's Gospel of Wealth](#) and [Russell Conwell's](#) famous sermon "Acres of Diamonds", in which Conwell equated poverty with [sin](#) and asserted that anyone could become rich through hard work. This gospel of wealth, however, was an expression of [Muscular Christianity](#) and understood success to be the result of personal effort rather than divine intervention.

The New Thought movement, which emerged in the 1880s, was responsible for popularizing belief in the power of the mind to achieve prosperity. While initially focused on achieving mental and physical health, New Thought teachers such as [Charles Fillmore](#) made material success a major emphasis of the movement. By the 20th century, New Thought concepts had saturated American popular culture, being common features of both [self-help](#) literature and [popular psychology](#).

[E. W. Kenyon](#), a [Baptist](#) minister and adherent of the [Higher Life movement](#), is credited with introducing mind-power teachings into early Pentecostalism. In the 1890s, Kenyon attended [Emerson College of Oratory](#) where he was exposed to the New Thought movement. Kenyon later became connected with well-known Pentecostal leaders and wrote about [supernatural revelation](#) and positive declarations. His writing influenced leaders of the nascent prosperity movement during the post-war American healing revival. Kenyon and later leaders in the prosperity movement have denied that he was influenced by the New Thought movement. Anthropologist [Simon Coleman](#) argues that there are "obvious parallels" between Kenyon's teachings and New Thought.

Some people believe that the prosperity message in the United States came to prominence during the Healing Revivals of the 1950s. Some other commentators have linked the origins of its theology to the New Thought movement which began in the 19th century. The prosperity teachings later featured prominently in the Word of Faith movement and 1980s' televangelism. In the 1900s and 2000s, prosperity message was adopted by influential leaders in the Pentecostal and Charismatic Movement in the United States and has spread around the world. Prominent American preachers who embraced and expounded on the prosperity message include E.W. Kenyon, Oral Roberts, A. A. Allen, Robert Tilton, T.L. Osborne, John Osteen, Creflo Dollar, Kenneth Copeland and Kenneth Hagin.



In Nigeria, Late Archbishop Benson Idahosa is believed to have pioneered the faith and prosperity genre of Pentecostalism. He later rose to become the founding President of the Pentecostal Fellowship of Nigeria (PFN). Some of his popular faith and prosperity quotes include the following:

“my God is not a poor God”, “your attitude determines your altitude”, “it is more risky, not to take a risk”, “I am a possibilitarian”, “A big head without a big brain is a big load to the neck”, “If your faith says yes, God cannot say no”.

Balancing the Argument on Prosperity Message:

Prosperity theology has been criticized by leaders from various Christian denominations, including within the Pentecostal and Charismatic movements, who maintain that it is irresponsible, promotes idolatry, and is contrary to scripture. Secular observers have also criticized prosperity theology as exploitative of the poor. Yet, there are those who believe that financial prosperity is part of the package of redemption and should be so emphasized.

A brief Bible discourse on the subject matter of prosperity reveals that caution is the best approach to dealing with the issue of prosperity message. There is no doubt that the gospel is a complete package that emphasizes redemption, regeneration cum salvation for the Spirit, renewal cum prosperity for the mind and healing cum wholeness for the body. All these were exemplified by Jesus Christ while He was on earth. As abundantly buttressed in His doctrine, Jesus came to establish the Kingdom of God among men and founded on the New Commandment of Love – “thou shall love the Lord thy God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength and with all your mind love your neighbour as yourself”.

So, the foundation of Christianity is love for God and for our fellow man. Just like Jesus deposed, Paul writing in Romans 13 says that Love is the fulfilment of the Law. It is in tandem with the love of God for man that the Apostle of Love, Saint John the beloved wrote in his third epistle

“Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth.” (3 John 2)

I believe Apostle John was referring to both spiritual and material prosperity. This is in line with God's word in Deuteronomy 8:18

“But thou shalt remember the LORD thy God: for it is he that giveth thee power to get wealth, that he may establish his covenant which he sware unto thy fathers, as it is this day.”

This predisposition of God to His children in the matter of financial prosperity takes root from the covenant that God established with Abraham as recorded in Genesis 22:17:



“That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies;”

The promise of prosperity to the people of God was further emphasized in Deuteronomy where God speaking through Moses in Deuteronomy 15:6 assured the children of Israel that as long as they kept His commandments, they would remain prosperous

“For the LORD thy God blesseth thee, as he promised thee: and thou shalt lend unto many nations, but thou shalt not borrow; and thou shalt reign over many nations, but they shall not reign over thee.”

Paul confirms these Old Testament promises by the Holy Spirit in in 2 Corinthians 1:20
“For all the promises of God in him are yea, and in him Amen, unto the glory of God by us.”

Since the plan of redemption is a total package for the regeneration and redemption of man's Spirit, the renewal of his mind and the healing and wholeness of his body, there is need for balance in the teaching and application of Bible doctrines especially the ones that has to do with the new birth in Christ.

“He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil.”

This is the Apostle of Love in 1 John 3:8! This is the full gospel! The full gospel ministers to the spirit, soul and body. Jesus came that he might destroy the works of the devil – sin, poverty, sickness and demon oppression. This was exemplified in the ministry of Jesus. Jesus forgave many of their sins and restored them to God. Jesus delivered many whose minds were twisted, obsessed, oppressed and possessed of the devil. Jesus healed so many who were sick in their bodies. He also provided material blessings in terms of bread and fish to His followers when they were hungry. This is the Full Gospel package.

Therefore, there is a balance in Jesus' approach to the needs of the spirit, the soul and the body. Thus, Jesus recognized that the first area of need in man is not in the mind or in the body but in the Spirit. Poverty, infections and affliction were as a result of sin. That is why they had to name Him Jesus – for He shall save His people from their sins. (Matthew 1:21)

Recognizing the place of spiritual regeneration in the redemption plan of God for man (giving the dominion back to man), Jesus provided a balance in dealing with the needs of the mind and body (including wealth and wellness). In the gospel of Matthew 6:31-33, Jesus said:



“31. So don't worry about these things, saying, 'What will we eat? What will we drink? What will we wear?' 32. These things dominate the thoughts of unbelievers, but your heavenly Father already knows all your needs. 33. Seek the Kingdom of God above all else, and live righteously, and he will give you everything you need.”

The phrase in Matthew 6:33 “live righteously” includes a charge to live an accountable life. So, as much as God wants us to prosper and be in health even as our soul prospers, it must be within the framework of righteousness and accountability as established upon the foundation of love. A righteous man or woman who loves his or her neighbour will not divert public resources meant for the common good to their private pockets. A righteous person who loves his or her country will not bribe or demand bribe in order to pervert the course of justice and bring suffering to many. A righteous person who loves humanity will not indulge in the importation of fake drugs so that he and his immediate family can live in stupendous luxury while others are dying. A righteous man or woman who is accountable cannot rig his or her way into public office because he would have robbed other people of their opportunity to justly decide political leadership. So, Matthew 6:33 makes it clear that while God is interested in prospering His people, they should not go about it at all costs in violations of laid down rules and at the detriment of their fellow human beings. Those who place financial gain above godly principles are described in Matthew 6:33 as idolaters. I do not think there is a better way to put the pursuit of material gain in ways that depict lack of accountability.

Where is the Balance?

So, there is nothing bad in the prosperity of the children of God as we have seen in foregoing Bible texts that material prosperity is part of God's original plan for man in the creation, Abrahamic covenant and the New Testament covenant of grace. The problem is in the over-emphasis of “financial prosperity” over and above other critical aspects of the plan of redemption or the gospel especially the regeneration of the human spirit from death and renewal of the mind from dead works.

So, while it is right for the people of God to prosper, it is inherently evil and idolatrous to teach prosperity in a way that presents the blessings of God as only manifest in financial blessings. It would be useful to balance teachings on prosperity in ways that instruct people that as much as God desires financial blessings for His children, these blessings are not by themselves proof of divine approval cum disapproval or evidence of spiritual blessings nor are financial blessings automatic. Financial blessings follow certain rules which include purpose, knowledge, diligence, integrity, resourcefulness, determination, good judgement and sometimes, sheer luck! Many people who do not know God or even



believe in Him but follow these rules also gain financial blessings! It is, therefore, important to denounce the selective emphasis on biblical verses, practices, and shadows that originate in the Old Testament but are fulfilled in new ways by Christ's atonement work in the New Testament and reinforced by the teachings of the Apostles and practices in the Early Church especially as recorded in Acts. Paul writing in Colossians 2:16-23 warned against such emphasis.

In fact, some biblical scholars and commentators have out rightly dismissed the concept of “prosperity message” as being misleading. The core of their argument is that the Gospel is one and should not be balkanized into “prosperity gospel” or “holiness gospel”. That is to say that at the heart of the true gospel is God reaching out to man to reconcile man to Himself. Professor David Jones echoes this position with the following submission.

“In light of Scripture, the prosperity gospel is fundamentally flawed. At bottom, it is a false gospel because of its faulty view of the relationship between God and man. Simply put, if the prosperity gospel is true, grace is obsolete, God is irrelevant, and man is the measure of all things. Whether they're talking about the Abrahamic covenant, the atonement, giving, faith, or prayer, prosperity teachers turn the relationship between God and man into a quid pro quo transaction. As James Goff noted in a 1990 Christianity Today article, God is “reduced to a kind of 'cosmic bellhop' attending to the needs and desires of his creation. This is a wholly inadequate and unbiblical view of the relationship between God and man.”

In his critique of prosperity message, Dr Ralph Wilson asserts that prosperity teaching isn't wholly false. He said that it has helped many people understand God's desire to bless his people and to prosper his people financially – and that's a good thing. Yet, he thinks that prosperity doctrine often includes distortions that tend to get people out of balance in their faith. He mentioned three distortions that imbalances the prosperity message:

1. The assertion that poverty is the curse Christ frees us from.
2. The danger of greed being a primary motivation for giving.
3. The related danger of pride when one flaunts one's wealth.

Impact of Prosperity Message on Accountability

Writing in “Prosperity Message and its Impact on the Sustainable Economic Development of African Nations”, Josephine Sobeyejo gave reasons why the advent of prosperity message has impacted negatively on the economic development of many African countries



CHRISTIANITY & ACCOUNTABILITY

1. It is mixed with occultism birthing cultic theology: Before Christianity came to Africa especially Nigeria, people visited witch doctors and sacrificed goats or cows to get prosperity. They poured libations on the ground so the gods would hear their prayers. Today similar practices continue because the prosperity preachers have replaced the IFA priests. There are stories of Church ministers who buried live animals under the floor of their Churches to win people's favour. The people who follow these prosperity preachers are reminded that their promised windfall won't materialize unless they give large donations of money or properties.
2. It drives greed by fuelling self-indulgence: The prosperity preacher teaches people to focus on getting, not giving. Church members are urged to sow financial seeds to reap bigger rewards. In Africa, Christian revivals are dedicated to collecting offerings in order to achieve wealth. Preachers tell their followers that spirituality is measured by physical prosperity. This greed from the pulpit spreads like plague in God's house.
3. It promotes conceit: The greedy atmosphere in prosperity Churches has produced arrogance and a warped style of leadership. A Kenyan, Gideon Thurania, editor of Christian Professional magazine, called these men "Churchpreneurs." They plant Churches not because they have a burden to reach lost souls but because they see different currencies of the world when they fill an auditorium with chairs. The most successful prosperity preacher is the most dangerous because he can convince a crowd that Jesus died to give you a Lexus, airplane or several mansions.
4. It works against the formation of Christian character: The prosperity gospel is a poor imitation of the true gospel. It leaves no room for brokenness, suffering, humility or delay. Prosperity preachers promise instant results and overnight success; if you don't get your breakthrough, it is because you are not giving enough offering. Jesus calls us to deny ourselves and follow Him; prosperity preaching calls us to deny Jesus and follow our materialistic lusts. Some Church ministers are so set on getting rich; they cannot go through the process of discipleship that requires self-denial. Spiritual formation has been jettisoned for materials' formation.
5. It keeps people in poverty: The government of Malawi was once under international scrutiny because of fraud carried out by top leaders. The so-called "Cashgate" scandal is that professing Christians in the administration of President Joyce Banda were implicated. One of these people stole millions of kwachas from the government and hid the cash in a teddy bear! Sadly, the prosperity gospel preached in Malawi has encouraged pastors and leaders to follow the same corrupt pattern. As a result, God's people have been financially exploited. The same thing



happened in Nigeria during the administration of Goodluck Jonathan when the president of Christian Association of Nigeria was implicated in the seized cash from his plane by South African government. Churches have been growing rapidly in many parts of Africa today, yet sub-Saharan Africa is the only region in the world where poverty has increased in the past 25 years. So according to the statistics, the prosperity gospel is not bringing prosperity! It makes their followers poorer, so it is a flawed message!

6.

- The misinterpretation of “Judge Not”

Accountability suffers among Christian and in the society because of misunderstanding and misapplication of biblical teachings on “Human and Righteous Judgement”. A study on the misapplication of this teaching by Bible scholar; Rick Calvert, is illuminating and instructive:

- *The word 'judge' is a common verb used approximately 114 times in the Greek New Testament. The term means literally, "to separate, distinguish, discriminate;" hence, "to judge." Meyer affirms: "'krinein' means nothing more than to judge." It is a general legal term and is used multiple ways in scripture. It is used in the sense of being brought before a court (Acts 26:6), to rendering legal decisions (John 18:31), and to condemning and punishing defendants on the basis of such decisions (John 7:51). It is often used to describe God's actions in judging humanity (John 5:30) and in describing judgments people customarily pass on others (Matthew 7:1,2). It is also found in reference to the mental process of a determination (Acts 15:19), estimation (Romans 14:5), or evaluation (1 Corinthians 10:15).*

Following the baptism of Jesus in the Jordan and immediately after His descent from the mount of temptation it is stated: "And Jesus went about in all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom" (Matthew 4:23). As the multitudes followed His every step, the context shows He immediately began to teach them the doctrine of the gospel of the kingdom in what is commonly referred to as the Sermon on the Mount. This begins at Matthew chapter five and continues till the end of chapter seven. At the conclusion of His sermon, it was declared that: "he taught them as one having authority, and not as their scribes" (Matthew 7:29). Thus, Jesus, as God in the flesh, was Himself the new lawgiver, while the scribes taught only as interpreters of law (Nehemiah 8:1-12).

Throughout this discourse the hypocrisy of the Pharisees had been the object of Christ's censure. The criticism of the fifth and sixth chapters of this sermon relate to the display of the Pharisees in the performance of their good works, whereas the seventh chapter deals with the judgments that these same Pharisees passed on others in comparison with their own self-righteous estimation of themselves. Our study will be from Jesus use of the term κρινω (Strong's #2919), when He warned against all forms of censoriousness while teaching the



multitudes the principles of God's kingdom. At the beginning of chapter seven the Lord proclaimed: "Judge not, that ye be not judged. For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured unto you. And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye? Or how wilt thou say to thy brother, Let me cast out the mote out of thine eye; and lo, the beam is in thine own eye? Thou hypocrite, cast out first the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye" (Matthew 7:1-5; cp. Luke 6:37-42).

In the passage before us, Jesus called the censorious Pharisees hypocrites, and said that they were worse than the people they criticized because they lacked a loving and forgiving spirit and falsely discriminated among themselves. The Pharisaical attitude was that judgment for sin with some would be forgiven while remaining with others. They believed the immunity from being judged depended not on the merits of judgment but on a basis of discrimination. But against this discriminatory mindset, Jesus taught that all are sinners before God, and none can pass a judicial sentence on others. The Pharisees were ignoring the fact that they were themselves the subjects of judgment by the same measuring stick. They were blind because they were judging the faults of their neighbours, but had no eyes for their own virtues, neither seeing nor desiring to see their own far greater imperfections. Thus, they possessed an officious and self-righteous behaviour, which is the opposite of the "spirit of gentleness" children of God, should have (Galatians 6:1-5).

The application is that those who act the part of judges or arbiters in deeds and words of others will draw upon themselves the same judicial sentence that they obnoxiously judged upon others. Jesus revealed that the correct attitude is to possess a cherishing and forgiving spirit (verses 7-12; Matthew 6:14,15). We should remember that man cannot assess judgment which is inherent in the law that has been violated. The reason is because no matter the jurisdiction, the correct standard of appraisal must proceed from the laws of God, not from man. It is not within the realm of humanity to establish rules by which to justify ourselves or to condemn others. God's law was not setup by man, nor does man have the inherent power to condemn or pass judicial sentence because the law of God carries its own judgment!

The passage under study is frequently misapplied to insist that Christians are not to judge any action or conduct of others. However, Jesus was referring to hypocritical judgments (verses 3-5), the habit of censoriousness, and sharp, unjust criticism. A hypocritical judgment is a discriminatory judgment of others for something of which you are also guilty and that is what Jesus is cautioning against in our text. In fact, our English word "critic" comes from the Greek word 'krino' we are studying today. These statements of Jesus have no reference to judging in the sense of discerning wrongful teaching or actions by others, or to determining error in any form. Judgment as a serious and solemn act is not forbidden by Christ. Often Christian's must judge and severely condemn things which the world never thinks of judging (verse 2, Matthew 18:15; Luke 12:57; 17:3; 1 Corinthians 5:12; 2 Timothy



4:2).

An example of the correct type of judgment we should exercise is found in the context of John chapter seven. Jesus admonished the Jews to "judge righteous judgment." The Jews had misjudged Jesus according to the law of the Sabbath in an effort to convict Him of a violation of this law. Christ answered them saying: "Judge not according to appearance but judge righteous judgment" (John 7:24). In other words, render the judgment which the law of God itself dictates, not a judgment of their own decisions based on appearances, or what seemed right to them. There are many ways that seem right to man, but when he walks his own path, the end thereof is always the way of death (Proverbs 16:25). James warned that many appear religious but bridle not their tongue by God's word and therefore their religion is vain (James 1:26). Even Peter admonished: "If anyone speaks, let him speak as the oracles of God" (1 Peter 4:11). Human judging is based on what seems to be the proper standard, but "righteous judgment" is judging by what the word of God decrees and dictates. It is by this standard that the mouth of the righteous speak wisely and judge righteously (Psalms 37:30; Proverbs 31:9).

The Psalmist affirmed: "Let my tongue sing of thy word; For all thy commandments are righteousness" (Psalms 119:172). Thus, the judging we are to embrace is that which looks to the actions and conduct of others and compares them to the truth of God's law. If they are found in violation, then to speak out against such sin is not what Jesus condemned in Matthew chapter seven, for God has already judged such conduct through the righteous ordinances of His word (John 12:48). It is only by God's standard that "we know the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error" (1 John 4:6). And, it is only by so judging that the command to convict the gainsayers by sound doctrine can be obeyed (Titus 1:9). A "gainsayer" is one who conducts himself or speaks against the truth. Thus, to speak out and convict such a one is judging by the truth of the word of God itself, and therefore, the judgment is of God and not from man.

So, it is an error to overlook issues of accountability in the life of Christian simply because the Bible says that we should not judge. From Rick Calvert's exposition on Bible truths of human and righteous judgement clearly shows that the biblical charge not to judge can be summarized or anchored on the following premises:

1. Do not judge in order to take advantage of the person being judged. The Bible urges us to judge in love. The purpose of our judgement should be in tandem with the loving mission of Jesus Christ to a fallen world – to reconcile us back to the image of God. (John 3:17)
2. Do not judge another when the issue that you are judging has not been resolved in your own life. Jesus said “remove the log that is in your own eyes before you can go ahead and remove the speck that is your brother's eyes. (Matthew 7:1-5)



CHRISTIANITY & ACCOUNTABILITY

3. Do not judge from a haughty and proud disposition: Paul urged Christians that we should correct erring brothers and sisters in Christ with the attitude of meekness and humility. Paul said that the reason for such a disposition is the understanding that we too can be vulnerable to the errors we seek to correct in others. (Galatians 6:1, James verses 21-23)

4. Finally, the instruction not to judge is meant to direct our minds to defer to God as the ultimate judge. As Apostle Paul wrote in 1Cor. 13, we know in part and we prophesy in part but that which is part shall be done away with when the perfect comes. (1 Corinthians 13:9-10, 2 Corinthians 5:11-21)

Promoting Stewardship and Discipleship as a Core Christian Doctrine and Strategic Handle for Church and National Accountability

Jesus came to call disciples. Christianity is therefore a movement of disciples – those who follow the footsteps of Jesus and learn from Him in order to become like Him. In the last charge of Jesus to His disciples, as recorded in Matthew 28:18-20, in what is commonly referred to as the Great Commission, Jesus commanded His disciples:

“18. I have been given all authority in heaven and on earth. 19. Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. 20. Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you. And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”

Before this time, the Bible had established discipleship as the core objective of the Christian call and life. In the book of Mark 3:14, the Bible says:

“And he established twelve, that they should be with him, and that he might send them forth to preach” (Jubilee Bible 2000)

“And He appointed twelve [disciples], so that they would be with Him [for instruction] and so that He could send them out to preach [the gospel as apostles – that is, as His special messengers, personally chosen representatives],” (The Amplified Bible)

As we saw from foregoing biblical texts on the accountable nature of Jesus Christ, a dutiful and diligent return to teachings on discipleship is a major way to re-establish the culture of accountability among Christians and in the broader society. Jesus came to reconcile people to His image, that is, to make the character of His followers same as His – be like Christ (Christians). Therefore, accountability must be a key virtue for a Christian to pursue.

This is a call to repentance. Our guilt is before us! A lot of things have distracted many Christians from our primary pursuit of becoming like Christ. We behave as if we do not



CHRISTIANITY & ACCOUNTABILITY

understand the meaning of the name “Christian – to be like Christ”. Many who go by Christian names behave in the direct opposite of the name they bear. They cheat, swindle, defraud, extort, bribe, and engage in all manner of financial irregularities. There is no way we can influence our world as the light and salt of the earth if we continue to bring reproach to the name of Christ. Jesus was so accountable that He faced His disciples one day and asked them “Who do men say that I am”. The response came back positive. Who do men say that you are? What does your family, community, workplace, business space and political groups say that you are? “Who do men say that Nigerian Christians are?”

This matter of repentance from the dead works of poor accountability has nothing to do with the size of our Bibles or the spread of our Churches or the loudness of our hallelujah! It is about our vital union and fellowship with Jesus Christ and how it rubs off on us in transforming us into His very image – the image and character of accountability.



PART FOUR



PART FOUR

REPORT OF RESEARCH SURVEY

Questionnaire for PPJI Research

Purpose:

- To research and make inquiry into the level of knowledge, scope of understanding and shape of mind set on the issue of Christianity and Accountability

Please, tick the relevant options to the questions below

1. Are you a Christian? – Yes or No
2. Are you a born-again Christian? – Yes or No
3. For how long are you born again? – 50-70, 30-50, 10-30, 0.1-10 years
4. What denominational block do you belong to – Anglican, Baptist, Lutheran, Methodist, Pentecostal, Presbyterian, Roman Catholic, others
5. Are you filled with Holy Ghost as evidenced by speaking in tongues? – Yes or No
6. Do you view the Bible as the supreme authority for a Christian? – Yes or No
7. What do you understand by the word Accountability?
 - A financial term, a spiritual/ moral term, a field of study, I don't know
8. Do you think the Bible emphasizes Accountability as a way of life? – Yes or No
9. Do you consider the Bible as a book of accountability? – Yes or No
10. Do you believe accountability applies to both personal and public life? – Yes or No
11. Have you ever received or given bribe in your life? – Yes or No
12. Are Christians supposed to contest or occupy public positions? – Yes or No
13. Do you think majority of Nigerian Christians in public positions are demonstrating accountability? – Yes or No
14. Do you think Christians are more accountable than other religions in Nigeria? – Yes or No
15. Do you think that there is sufficient accountability in the Church? – Yes or No
16. Does your Church collect contributions from members? – Yes or No
17. Have you been privy to the audited account statement of your Church? – Yes or No
18. Have you witnessed where a Christian holding public position gave account of his stewardship? – Yes or No
19. Do you think that the crisis of poor public accountability contributes to our national failures? – Yes or No
20. Are you willing to demonstrate consciousness and commitment to accountability in order to change Nigeria's image of corruption? – Yes or No

Methods Used in Generating Data/Information

The research deployed both qualitative and quantitative research methods. The qualitative approach involved the use of extracts of documented opinion of Christian leaders on the issue of accountability and literature review of texts that are relevant to the focus of this research enquiry.



For the quantitative approach, questionnaires were administered randomly to respondents in Abuja Municipal Area Council and Bwari Area Council in Abuja, Federal Capital Territory. The questionnaires were also administered to respondents in Karu and Keffi Local Government Councils of Nasarawa State.

The Questionnaire Design and Demographics

The questionnaire was designed primarily to answer the research questions especially as raised in the abstract of this work and to achieve the following:

1. To evaluate and underscore the differences in perception between Pentecostal, born again, nominal Christians and even non-Christians on the issue of accountability, though with a general focus on Christians.
2. To establish the level of acceptance that accountability is part of the Christian and biblical moral ethos?
3. To assess the level of awareness and commitment by Christians, especially those of the Pentecostal genre, to the anti-corruption fight?
4. To enquire if Christians especially those of the Pentecostal persuasion are ready to be accountable?
5. To discover the level of readiness of Christians to be at the vanguard of the restoration of accountability as directive principle of national culture.

The number of respondents in all the locations where the quantitative survey was conducted was one hundred. The design of the questionnaire's administration was targeted at predominantly Christian communities. Therefore, the demographic of the respondents included males and females, students, workers, businesspeople, house wives, the unemployed who are predominantly Christians and those whose biological age spanned across a wide spectrum.

The administered questionnaire contained twenty questions. After the respondents returned the questionnaires, the results were collated, coded and analysed using frequency which was represented in percentages.

It is important to point out that a few respondents left some of the questions which they probably felt were not relevant to them or they had no answer to or were not comfortable answering therefore leaving them blank. This disposition was adequately reflected in the rendering of the findings.

Survey Results

1. On the question of religious affiliation, 98% said they were Christians
2. On the question of faith persuasions, 90% said they were born again Christians
3. On the question of how long the respondents have been born again the following responses were gotten –
 - 1% said they have been born again between 50 and 70 years
 - 8% said they have been born again between 30 and 50 years



CHRISTIANITY & ACCOUNTABILITY

- 30% said they have been born again between 10 and 30 years
- 56% said they have been born again between 01 and 10 years
- 4. On the question of denominational blocks, these were the responses
 - 8% said they are Anglicans
 - 4% said they are Baptists
 - 1% said they are Lutherans
 - 7% said they are Methodists
 - 48% said they are Pentecostals
 - 4% said they are Presbyterians
 - 20% said they are Roman Catholics
 - 6% said they belong to other denominational blocks

A further analysis of question 4 reveals the following dynamics

- 2% are non-Christians
- 1% said they are not born again and not denominated
- 1% said they are Pentecostals but not born again
- 18% said they are Roman Catholics and Born again
- 5% said they are not sure if they are born again
- 1% said they are born again but not denominated
- 5. On whether the respondents are filled with the Holy Ghost with tongue speaking as evidence
 - 63% said they are filled with the Holy Ghost with signs of speaking in tongues
 - 33% said that they are not filled with the Holy Spirit
 - 2% said they are not sure
- 6. On the question of whether respondents view the Bible as the supreme authority for a Christian?
 - 97% said they believe that the Bible is the supreme authority for Christians
 - 1% said they don't believe
 - 1% said they are not sure
- 7. On the question of what the respondents understand by the word accountability?
 - 15% said they understand accountability to be a financial term
 - 63% said they understand accountability to be a spiritual term
 - 10% said they believe accountability to be a field of study
 - 14% said they are not sure what accountability is
- 8. On the question of whether the respondents believe that the Bible emphasizes Accountability as a way of life?
 - 94% said they believe the Bible emphasizes accountability as a way of life
 - 1% is not sure
 - 4% said they disagree that the Bible emphasizes accountability as a way of life



CHRISTIANITY & ACCOUNTABILITY

9. On whether the respondents consider the Bible as a book of accountability?
 - 91% said they believe that the Bible is a book of accountability
 - 8% said that they don't believe that the Bible is a book of accountability
10. On whether respondents believe accountability applies to both personal and public life –
 - 96% said they believe that accountability applies to both personal and public life
 - 2% said they think otherwise
11. On whether respondents have ever received or given bribe in your life -
 - 50% said they have received or given bribe all their lives
 - 50% said they have never received or given bribe all their lives
12. On whether Christians are supposed to contest or occupy public positions
 - 91% said Christians should contest and occupy public positions
 - 8% said Christians are not supposed to contest and occupy public positions
13. Do you think majority of Christians in public positions demonstrate accountability –
 - 30% said they think majority of Christians in public positions demonstrate accountability
 - 70% said they don't think majority of Christians in public positions demonstrate accountability
14. Do you think Christians are more accountable than other religions in Nigeria –
 - 36% said they think Christians are more accountable than other religions in Nigeria
 - 63% said they don't think Christians are more accountable than other religions in Nigeria
15. On the question of whether respondents think that there is sufficient accountability in the Church –
 - 36% said they think that there is sufficient accountability in the Church
 - 63% said they don't think that there is sufficient accountability in the Church
16. On the question of whether respondents' Churches collect contributions from their members –
 - 60% said their Churches collect contributions from them
 - 38% said their Churches do not collect contributions from the
17. On the question of whether respondents have been privy to the audited account statement of your Church –
 - 31% said they have been privy to the audited account statement of your Church
 - 62% said they have been privy to the audited account statement of your Church
18. On whether respondents have witnessed where a Christian holding public position gave account of his/her stewardship –



CHRISTIANITY & ACCOUNTABILITY

- 46% said they have witnessed where a Christian holding public position gave account of his/her stewardship
 - 54% said they not witnessed where a Christian holding public position gave account of his/her stewardship.
19. On whether respondents think that the crisis of poor public accountability contributes to our national failures –
- 91% said they believe that the crisis of poor public accountability contributes to our national failures
 - 8% said they don't believe that the crisis of poor public accountability contributes to our national failures.
20. On whether respondents are willing to demonstrate consciousness and commitment to accountability in order to change Nigeria's image of corruption –
- 97% said they are willing to demonstrate consciousness and commitment to accountability in order to change Nigeria's image of corruption
 - 3% said they are not willing to demonstrate consciousness and commitment to accountability in order to change Nigeria's image of corruption

Interpretations of Survey Results

1. Majority of the respondents (about 90%) say they are born again Christians. This is likely because the survey was deliberately disseminated in Christian populated environments.
2. About 50% of the respondents accepted that they have either given or received bribe in their life time. This shows the permissiveness of corruption and poor accountability in our national culture.
3. 63% of the respondents relate with accountability as a spiritual term while the rest understands accountability as a financial or academic term. This shows that there is need for more public enlightenment and advocacy especially among Christians on the connection between spiritual accountability and public accountability. This can be achieved through systematic enquiry and truth documentation in order to develop a broadly accepted creed on public accountability for Christians.
4. Between 91% and 97% of respondents believe that the Bible is not only a book of accountability but that the Bible also emphasizes accountability as a way of life. This shows that there is high spiritual awareness on biblical demands on accountability.
5. Majority of the respondents believe that the Church and Christians have not demonstrated enough accountability. Majority of respondents about 62% say they have never seen the account statement of their Churches even when they are made to make financial contributions to their Churches. This only shows the scope of the accountability challenge within the Christians community and explains why there is a dearth of public accountability in Nigeria.



6. 91% of the respondents believe that lack of accountability is the reason for most of the socio-economic and political problems we have in Nigeria.
7. 97% of the respondents say that they are ready to join the fight for public accountability in Nigeria. This is quite interesting given the fact that almost half of the respondents agree that they have either accepted or received bribe in their lifetime. So, why is majority of them showing willingness to fight corruption? This positive feedback goes to show that most of the people caught in the corruption web detest the practice of corruption. So, this once again re-asserts the perspective that most Nigerians are actually victims and not drivers of corruption. That is to say that if there is enabling environment of the rule of law and socio-economic opportunities and level playing ground many Nigerians would never indulge in acts of corruption.
8. More than 90% of the respondents believe that Christians should aspire to elective political positions. This shows the need for political mentoring in the Church.

- Indirect Survey

EXCERPTS FROM RECORDED MESSAGES AND SPEECHES FROM POLITICAL, PROFESSIONAL AND CHURCH LEADERS IN NIGERIA.

Obasanjo's Views on Corruption and Accountability

President Olusegun Obasanjo had this to say during his Inaugural Speech on May 29, 1999:

“Corruption, the greatest single bane of our society will be tackled head-on at all levels. Corruption is incipient in all human societies and in most human activities. But it must not be condoned... No society can achieve anything near its full potential if it allows corruption to become the full-blown cancer it has become in Nigeria... There will be no sacred cows. Nobody, no matter who and where, will be allowed to get away with the breach of the law or the perpetration of corruption and evil”.

Obasanjo claimed that the fight against corruption was made a top priority by his administration. According to him, laws were enacted, while the appropriate institutions, the ICPC and EFCC, were created. He said that he never lacked the political will in supporting these institutions in the struggle and fight against corruption.

Despite all these efforts, corruption is still thriving in our country. In fact, from the revelations we are hearing, it seems the situation is worse than what I met on ground in 1999. The inference is that fighting corruption is not a one-off or one regime affair; it is an all-time and all-regime affair. If we relent, it bounces back with vengeance.

Recounting his experiences as a former democratically elected president of Nigeria, narrated the following question on the fight against corruption in Nigeria:

“In 1999, a bill was presented to the National Assembly on the prohibition of and



punishment for bribery and corruption and other related offences. I took that bold step then. However, how far has this helped in the eradication or, better still, in the reduction of corruption in the country? Unfortunately, the act has continued to spread like a wildfire, from the federal to the state, to the local government levels, and to other authorities, even within the educational sector in Nigeria, from the secondary to university levels. A student bribing a lecturer for higher grades is corruption. Lower clerics have been found to be bribing their way through to be promoted, even in the 'house' of God! Evidence also abound in which female staff enjoy unqualified rapid promotion in many offices and organisations, particularly among the Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs).

The fight against corruption in Nigeria is the fight for the soul and survival of Nigeria. Like cancer, corruption is gradually killing the country. Now is the time for all of us, as individuals and institutions, to be active participants in the fight... Our main problems are moral, ethical and attitudinal failure and disorientation. The Church is an institution that provides the moral and ethical standards for us as believers.

The government has tried to contain corruption through the enactment of laws and the enforcement of integrity systems, but success has been slow in coming. Legislations alone are not enough as they are often breached by those who make them and those who should implement them. In 2012, Nigeria was estimated to have lost over \$400 billion to corruption since independence.

Corruption is very pervasive and at times not too glaring to the public. It is a systematic problem in our society and thus should be addressed systematically right from the root, stem and branches. To curb it, children, youth and adults must be given the power to distinguish between the rights and the wrongs. Schools should return to the teaching of moral education to empower children with the spirit of stewardship and scholarship, while adults live exemplary lives, reflecting truth, kindness, healthy competition, dignity in labour and integrity. It must be all hands-on deck within the society."

According to Femi Falana, the renowned Nigerian legal practitioner and activist:

"The level of poverty in Nigeria provides a fertile ground for the recruitment of the economically 'un-captured' to perpetuate wanton ethno-religious violence. The National Bureau for Statistics has stated that about 70 per cent of Nigerians are poor. The solution to this is to massively invest the material resources of the country on development and employment creation. This would mean that the economy is restructured and diversified, corruption is seriously engaged, and the commitment to development is true and central. Second, there will always be individuals that would benefit from divisions and national



discord or secession of the country. In this regard the security system of the State must be ready to arrest and punish this group of individuals”.

“There is also the need to empower institutions. The problem with Nigeria is not the lack of institutions but the challenge has always been that the existing institutions have underperformed or have been hijacked, domesticated and used for certain group interests. Such institutions include the electoral body, police, media, judiciary, religious and ethnic based bodies. The more these institutions are divorced from ethno-religious interests the more they champion the quest for nation building. Fourth, there is the need for rule of law. Ethnic tensions and resentments would reduce when it is collectively accepted that politics and governance would be guided by the rule of law. Some individuals should not be above the law while others are subjected to the law”.

Vice President Yemi Osinbajo on Greed, and Accountability

According to Professor Yemi Osinbajo, the Vice President of Nigeria,

“It is the greed that has landed us to where we are. Many say the reason why they are stealing is because they need to have an arsenal for future political experiment. It is a lie! It is greed.”

“And if the Church says you are not allowed to steal, and we will ostracise the thieves in our midst. If a man's resources, what a man has does not measure up to what he earns, if you found that a man has more money than he should have, if a man is earning a salary in a civil service or public service and he has houses everywhere, we have to hold him to account. He must first be held to account in the Church. He must first be told in the Church; we will not allow this.

“If the Church ostracise the thieves; if the Church says we will not accept thieves here or we will ensure that we expose you, you are stealing the resources of our nation, you are stealing the resources of a private company or other establishments, then we will not have the kind of problems that we have in this country. If only the Church can,” he said.

The acting president urged all fathers to follow the foot-steps of Abraham in the scripture whom, he said, God chose in order to “command his children and household in the way of the Lord, to do righteousness and justice.”

He called on fathers to love their wives and refrain from any form of domestic violence.

Speaker Yakubu Dogara on Family System and the Fight Against Corruption

The Speaker of the House of Representatives, Yakubu Dogara, warned against the collapse of family system in the country, urging the government to invest more in the family.



“We should invest more, really as a nation, in fatherhood or in family. And when children are properly brought up, you will see that most of the resources we channel towards the control of crime and so many other government programmes, there will be no need for them. Because we will have kinds of transformation that only take place at the family level.

“Certain things cannot be done by the government; like we cannot just outsource discipline in a home, the issue of imparting or instilling morality in the life of our citizens. Government certainly cannot do that; it is the role of the family.

“So, when we celebrate fathers like this, we celebrate fatherhood, we emphasise on the importance of the family as a unit in bringing up those components of society, performing its role and then turning citizens that are compliant. That therefore means that we won't be spending money in fighting crime.

“When fathers do their work, the nation will have less work to do. And when next we have people in leadership who fail, who are patently corrupt, the question shouldn't be 'who is this?' The question should be 'who is the father of that person?' I congratulate the fathers.”

He called on fathers to be exemplary in their conduct.

“If you wouldn't want your children to follow your example, then it means you are failing as a father. And once a father fails, family fails, certainly, the nation will fail because the family is the strength of a nation,” the speaker said.

The Views of The Prelate, Methodist Church of Nigeria, Bishop Samuel Uche

According to the Prelate of Methodist Church of Nigeria, Samuel Uche.

“God established the family as a foundation unit of a country. God has made fathers as the head and this assignment must be exercised in love, honesty, gentleness and unity. The responsibility of a father makes him to be accountable to God. A father must render a selfless service and he must be faithful to his wife,”

The prelate noted that in the past, children were taught to respect elders and to be upright, contrary to what is obtainable today where children are abandoned, and they constitute nuisance in the society.

Pastor W.F. Kumuyi, General Superintendent, Deeper Life Bible Church

The General Superintendent of the Deeper Life Bible Church, Pastor William Kumuyi, in his 2018 Easter message at the Deeper Life Easter Retreat Convention in Lagos urged Christians in leadership positions to shun corruption and act as exemplary leaders for others to follow.

The cleric said only righteousness would move the country forward, adding that the retreat was to teach Christians how to shine as light in whatever positions they found



themselves. In his words,

“We have had so much about corruption in Nigeria, but we know that true Christianity brings a difference and that is what this retreat is all about. It is about teaching believers to shine as light and be different from the unbelievers. Christians should not embezzle money in their offices but live according to the testimony of Christ. If we return to the Bible and basis and the truth that the Bible teaches, we won't be having these problems we have been having because therein lies all the solutions. The Word of God is the light of the nation and righteousness exalts the nation. So, if we return to the Word, the way it is, then, there will be less problems”.

Pastor Kumuyi went on to stress the need for Christians in leadership positions to lead with conscience in order to deliver a different path to the nation. He urged Christian leaders in Nigeria to return to the Bible.

Pastor E.A Adeboye, General Overseer, The Redeemed Christian Church of God, Worldwide

The General Overseer of the Redeemed Christian Church of God, RCCG, Pastor Enoch Adeboye at the Church's Jubilee celebration came down hard on corrupt Christians. He warned such that there was no way they can inherit the Kingdom of God unless they urgently change their ways. In his words.

“Except you retribute (sic) your way that which you did is waiting for you in your future! If you think that what you have done, the evil you have done, the monies you have stolen, things you got by wrong means because nobody saw you, is gone forever, thing again! If you love yourself, before the end of this week, retribute (sic) your ways, because if you did anything and you think nobody knows. If there is something that is not yours but is in your possession, for you to enjoy this year of Jubilee, you must retribute (sic) your ways”.

“Whatever you get that is not yours must be restored. Whatever you sow, you shall reap. If you sow the wind, you will reap the whirlwind. The year of Jubilee does not mean when you sow you won't reap. The only way to avoid the evil that you have planted is if you go to where you planted it and uproot it. If you think that the seed you sow is gone, then you don't even know the basic law of agriculture. That which you sow is waiting in the future unless you can retribute (sic) your way”.

Pastor Adeboye went on to illustrate his message with a real-life story of what happened some years ago in a village where he served as a teacher. The essence of the story was to warn his audience about the inevitability of consequences, judgement or being held accountable over our choices in life and our actions towards other people. From his own account of the incident.

“There was a man who was very tough. When you are passing in front of his house, you must be careful, and he had only one daughter. One day six boys raped his daughter till she fainted. When the strong man returned home, people told him what happened. They were waiting for him to act. He asked if his daughter alive. 'What will he do about it?' He



said nothing. He said that he was only reaping what he sowed, adding that when he was young, he raped a girl.

Pastor Adeboye rounded off his charge to the congregation in the following words:

“Do you have money you stole, or maneuverer; return it back otherwise it will destroy your good works. If you think because nobody sees you, the evil will be forgotten, you are deceiving yourself. If there is something that is not yours that is in your possession, go and retribute (sic) to enjoy the year of Jubilee. You took somebody's wife and brought her into your life, when you get home read Genesis 12: 11-20. Many of us think we can treat restitution as something trivial, it is not so. Read Malachi 3:3-10. The Almighty God is a merciful God. God is supreme and He will do what He said He would do, provided you follow His principle”.

Bishop David Oyedepo, General Overseer, Living Faith Church Worldwide

Founder and bishop of the Living Faith Church (Winners Chapel), David Oyedepo has thrown a challenge to the Christian community to spearhead the fight against corruption by their actions and not just by words. Speaking at a programme dubbed 'Empowerment Summit' at the Ohene Djan Sports Stadium in Accra, Bishop Oyedepo stated that Christians by virtue of their call, are not expected to be engaged in acts traceable to corruption in all their endeavours. This however is not the case.

“Unfortunately, the canker of corruption is now gaining grounds even in the Churches where people can no longer be trusted and this is denying God's children the access to his divine blessings and interventions”, laments Bishop Oyedepo.

He disclosed that unless Christians reconstruct and restore their dignity as children of God they can never have access to the already packaged blessings of God. “God has already blessed us but the ability to access such blessings is the challenge as it takes spirituality to draw divine blessings. It's not the offerings that guarantee the blessings but spirituality is the master key to kingdom's prosperity”, noted David Oyedepo.

Bishop David Oyedepo observed that if Christians, even those present at the Summit alone, decided to avail themselves to Godliness and reposition themselves spiritually and display honesty and integrity in all their endeavours, the testimony of such practice will transform the whole nation. It will speed up transformation in homes, communities, corporate organisations and eventually reflect on the national economy. This he noted is the most effective way Christians can play their roles as agents of change.

Reverend Felix Omobude – National President, Pentecostal Fellowship of Nigeria (PFN)

In an interview granted to Vanguard Newspapers and published on March 20, 2016, Reverend Felix Omobude, National President of the Pentecostal Fellowship of Nigeria



(PFN) shared the following thoughts on the menace of corruption in Nigeria:

“Anyone that wishes Nigeria well must support the anti-corruption drive of the present administration. Corruption has dealt so much deadly blow to our nation, and every attempt aimed at fighting this deadly disease must be commended. We have a President who has not been accused by anybody in the media or in government, of being corrupt. So, the President is in a good position to start this fight against corruption. On the way corruption is being fought, well those who are being accused have a right to deny or accept these allegations. That is why the Law is supreme. The fight against corruption should be within the ambit of the laws of our land; and that is the stand of PFN. We will give every logical, moral and spiritual support. The fight against corruption is a fight the Church must be involved in. It is high time we looked at ourselves to lead our people towards the right direction, towards making Nigeria better and better”.



PART FIVE



Part Five

Recommendations

Mobilizing Christians for Accountability – Strategies and Practical Tactics (Accountability Networks, Role of the Media, Pentecostal Peer Support)

As earlier established, Christians are at most risk in an environment of poor accountability. The truth is that genuine Christians who are committed to a life of godliness and honesty would not only be deprived of social goods and services that go with accountable governance but are also restrained by their faith to cut corners in order to cope with the harsh realities of the general breakdown in public accountability. In addition, is the fact that truly practicing Christians are forbidden by their faith in participating in certain kinds of businesses that are otherwise deemed legitimate in the eyes of the law. For example, it is considered unethical for a Christian, especially the Pentecostals, to engage in promoting or selling alcohol, cigarettes or gambling. Amidst the dire economic situations in our country, the limited socio-economic options leave the Christian in double jeopardy and greatly vulnerable. This reality check should spur Christians into the fight for accountability.

In the book, “Overcoming the Challenges of Transformation in Nigeria”, Dr Otiye Igbuzor articulated three strategies that are imperative in mobilizing public ownership on the fight against corruption.

1. Establishment of an all-inclusive steering committee to lead the entire process
2. Development of a strategy for public ownership which will define the principles of engagement, operational guidelines, institutional mechanisms and accountability systems
3. Development and implementation of an action plan that is specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, time bound and put at a cost.

A closer examination of the strategies above especially in the light of the results of the research survey informs the following action steps. These action steps are also based on the assumption that the focus of this research study is on Pentecostal Christians. The recommended strategies and actions steps would only work best if they are framed around institutional and organizational processes. The Pentecostal movement in Nigeria is organized under the umbrella of the Pentecostal Fellowship of Nigeria (PFN). It is therefore important to underscore the critical role of the PFN in mobilizing Pentecostal Christians to fight the anti-corruption and contribute to the restoration of public accountability in Nigeria.

Conservative estimates put the number of Pentecostal Christians in Nigeria at about 30 million. This is about one sixth of the entire Nigerian population. There are thousands of Pentecostal Churches in Nigeria with presence in every part of the country, predominantly in the South West, especially Lagos State, South east, and South-south geopolitical zones. The number of Pentecostal Christians is quite significant in the North



Central but grows increasingly smaller from the North East to the North West where the Muslim community and traditional or conservative Christian denominations hold sway. Given the preponderance of Pentecostal Christians in the South West, South East, South South and North Central, it makes strategic sense to anchor mobilization efforts in those geo-political zones of the country.

This number is big enough to cause a major stir in ethical re-orientation in Nigeria. Given this population of Pentecostal Christians, it would be helpful if mobilization strategies and action steps takes into cognizance the numerical appeal as well as the geographical spread of

Some of the recommended action steps, in addition to on-going initiatives including this research effort, and organized within the framework of possible remedies thrown up by documented evidence from this research should include:

1. Acceptance of Accountability as a Divine Nature, Mandate and Expectation
 - Research and Institution Building for Church Accountability
 - Inauguration of a Pentecostal Study Group to Deepen, Review and Validate Research Efforts on Corruption and Accountability. This Study Group should be empowered to develop from the product of research enquiry a common creed on anti-corruption and accountability to be adopted by the Pentecostal Fellowship of Nigeria
 - Commissioning of a Christian Contact Group on National Accountability. This contact group would have the responsibility of establishing and tapping relevant voices in the Christian community to be the faces of the mobilization for national accountability. This committee would also have the responsibility of mobilizing Pentecostal Churches for the fight against corruption.
 - Setting up of the National Pentecostal Strategy Committee/Situation Room on Accountability. The work of this committee would to monitor, review and therefrom model relevant strategic interventions in the anti-corruption fight. This Committee will also perform a coordinating role with the Study and Contact Group in order to engender focus in the anti-corruption fight

Recognition of the Cost of Corruption on Christians and Nigerians

- Social Advocacy on Accountability
- National Public Sensitization Campaign on Public Accountability
- National Pentecostal Day of Action for Public Accountability
- Peer Review Mechanism on Public Accountability for Pentecostal Churches
- Pentecostal Public Accountability Network
- Pentecostal Ministerial and Church Leaders Ambassadors for Public Accountability



CHRISTIANITY & ACCOUNTABILITY

- Pentecostal Youth Network for Public Accountability
- Community Partnerships for Public Accountability
- Schools Outreach on Public Accountability
- Ministerial Code of Conduct for Public Accountability
- Church Open Books Policy
- Name and Shame Initiatives
- Church Donors Whistle Blower Programme
- Development of a System of Financial Transparency in the Church
- Development of Discipleship Manual on Public Accountability
- Annual Pentecostal Churches Conference on Public Accountability

Appreciating the Role of Political Participation in Promoting Accountability

- Political Engagement for Accountability
- Periodic and Predictable Town Hall Engagement with Political Office Holders
- Political Coaching and Mentoring Programme for Young Christians to be spearheaded by Accountable and Established Christian Politicians
- Church Members Skills Acquisition and Empowerment Programmes
- Capacity Building for Pentecostal Churches Secretariat on Detecting and Tracking of Money Laundering schemes and questionable donations to Church treasury
- Sustainable Church and Evangelistic Financing
- Inter-Faith Cooperation and Partnership for Public Accountability
- Church led Community Social Responsibility Initiatives
- Church Media Advocacy on Political Financial Integrity
- Increased Involvement by Churches in Election Day Observation and Monitoring

The broad approach on these strategies should be anchored on the strengthening of accountability among Christians through deliberate economic empowerment programs and formalizing accountability spaces in the Church



Conclusion



Conclusion

The research enquiry was primarily focused on examining, analysing and critiquing literature texts on “Christianity and Accountability”. The aim was to build a body of literature that can be used as an advocacy material for sensitizing Nigerian Christians particularly those of the Pentecostal bend and indeed the entire population on the need to fight corruption by standing up to public accountability.

From the findings of the research, accountability was established as a divine nature, mandate, directive and expectation – the Accountability of the Trinity. Numerous Bible verses and other spiritual texts were provided as a basis for this. Furthermore, a number of Bible passages were also cited as evidence that accountability was taught, espoused, exemplified and demanded by numerous Bible personalities chiefly Jesus Christ, Old Testament Kings, Judges cum Prophets, the Patriarchs cum Matriarchs of the Christian Faith and the Apostles.

The study while examining the contemporary application and use of accountability established the dynamic nature of the term, yet, established that in most contexts' accountability serves the purpose of the general good. In this light, the study underscored the dearth of accountability in Nigeria. The research study also went on to identify the vulnerability of Christians as endangered species in an environment marked by gross dearth of accountability.

The study identified “unbridled and extreme slant of the posterity message and the misunderstanding cum misuse of the “judge not” Bible teaching as a major stumbling block against an effective mobilization of Christians to fight corruption and promote a favourable climate for public accountability in Nigeria.

The study identified that the incongruence of the “prosperity message” with the demands of private and public accountability is rooted in the following errors:

1. Its over-emphasis by preachers above fundamental truths of spiritual regeneration as the foundation of our relationship with God and attainment of eternal life. Lazarus was poor on the earth but gained heaven while the rich man perished in hell fire.
2. Its de-emphasis of love for God and fellow man. Most times, prosperity messages appeal to man's greed and primitive instincts for wealth accumulation.
3. Poor emphasis on the consequence of unaccountable acquisition of wealth.

Finally, the study looked at the roles of the Church and Christians in the fight to promote accountability. They were examined and recommendations were offered especially in the



CHRISTIANITY & ACCOUNTABILITY

light of the results of the questionnaire survey that was conducted in the FCT and Nasarawa State. It is our expectation that a diligent and conscientious consideration and perhaps implementation of the recommendations made in this study will go a long way in effectively mobilizing Nigerian Christians to truly be in the vanguard of the war against corruption.



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CHRISTIANITY & ACCOUNTABILITY

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About
Priests Peace &
Justice Initiative
(PPJ)



CHRISTIANITY & ACCOUNTABILITY

The Priests Peace Justice Initiative (PPJ) is a faith based organisation and social arm of the Palace of Priests Assembly. Palace of Priests Assembly is a duly registered and incorporated Church of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. Priests Peace Justice Initiative is set up to anchor the social dimension of the Church and to contribute to the building of a peaceful and orderly society.

It is hinged on the dignity of the human person as created by God and the need to create an enabling environment for evangelism and holistic prosperity. At Palace of Priests Assembly, we believe that the Church should play a significant role in ensuring democratic governance, peace and stability of nations.

We see it as a duty to bring Biblical perspectives to the challenges of democracy, development, insecurity, injustice, service delivery and humanitarian services.

Vision

Our vision is a world of prosperity and social justice.

Mission

Our mission is to act as catalysts to empower citizens to reign as Kings and Priests and work for peace and social justice.

Values

The Priests Peace and Justice Initiative will be guided by the following values:

1. Leadership: requiring us to build leaders because He made us in his own image and called us to lead. We build leaders that will impact this generation and the next generation.
2. Empowerment: requiring us to equip the saints in all aspects of life to live as Kings and Priests that bring honour to God and work for peace and social justice.
3. Royalty: requiring us to live as Kings and Priests in accordance with God's design as a chosen and peculiar people working for peace and social justice.
4. Integrity: requiring us to demonstrate faith and action as Children of the Most High. Our behavior will match our belief. We will trust God and work in integrity (Ps 26:1).
5. Discipleship: requiring us to make disciples in all nations with solid biblical foundations who are then able to disciple and empower others to live in peace and harmony.

Areas of Focus.

PPJ will work in the following five thematic areas:

1. Democracy: Elections, transparency and accountability and stewardship
2. Peace Building: Human Security and Conflict transformation.
3. Social Justice: Poverty, Inequality and Justice.
4. Emergency and Humanitarian services
5. Education and Health

PPJ Management and Governance

Priests Peace and Justice Initiative (PPJ) is managed by an Executive Committee made up of a Co-ordinator and five thematic heads. The secretariat is supported by Programme Officers and



CHRISTIANITY & ACCOUNTABILITY

Finance Officers. The governance and oversight is provided by the Board of Trustees of Palace of PRIESTS ASSEMBLY (PPA).

Strategic Approach

The approach to work revolves around four key strategies:

- Research
- Capacity Building
- Advocacy and Campaigns
- Services

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