

PENTECOSTALISM, DOCTRINE OF PROSPERITY AND THE CULTURE OF CORRUPTION IN NIGERIA.

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Abstract

Pentecostalism is a vibrant revival movement that broke out in the 20th century in the United States of America. The movement is quite unique in its operations and a departure from the orthodox Christianity as they emphasized on a personal relationship with Jesus Christ which is marked by the infilling of the Holy Spirit that comes with signs and wonders. This movement easily found its way into Christianity in Nigeria firstly through the protestants that later dovetailed into modern Pentecostalism. The paper focuses on Pentecostalism in Nigeria which was originally mirrored after the 20th century revival movement, and was identified with vibrant revivalists and evangelists known for prayers, fasting's with accompanying signs and wonders, while living a lifestyle of piety that was dedicated to the service of God devoid of worldly entanglements including teachings on prosperity. It also examines how Pentecostalism became alluring to Nigerian christians as a result of the assurances of life, health and peace it guarantees which the state could not provide, and also a more recent band that emerged about three decades ago which have redefined pentecostalism to come with wealth, suffice to say that the proliferation of the doctrine of prosperity has a correlation with the culture of corruption in Nigeria which is on the rise despite the large following of pentecostal movements in the country. This paper therefore gives a historical perspective on the introduction of religion into the country from which pentecostalism evolved from. It further appraises Pentecostalism in Nigeria from the lenses of the classical and the neo pentecostal school, and also how religiosity has affected the culture of corruption in the country. The paper concludes by drawing the nexus between pentecostalism and corruption as the acceptability of pentecostalism among christians in Nigeria is supposed to be an antidote to corruption first in christianity and also in the society based on the principles of the movement that emphasizes on piety and modesty in human conducts.

Keywords: prosperity, pentecostalism, corruption, religion, christianity.

Introduction

Christianity in Nigeria is made up of several denominations. The orthodox denominations have the earliest history of the religion from which it birthed

other denominations with the first being the protestants. The Protestants later became the home for the emergence of several other denominations within christianity with the most popular known as pentecostalism.

Christianity in Nigeria was as a result of the activities of the missionaries that came from Europe as far as the 12th century. The story of modern missions in Nigeria began with the freed slaves in the Americas and Great Britain. They became the pioneers and the instruments of spreading and building Christian missions on the West Coast of Africa, especially in Yourubaland, the Niger, and Cross. River. One of such freed slaves was Bishop Samuel Ajayi Crowther.¹

Pentecostalism is a charismatic protestant christian movement that emphasizes a personal encounter with Jesus Christ as savior and healer, with the potential for converts to be “born again” as Christians.² Since its emergence, pentecostalism has been a vibrant aspect of the christian religion in Nigeria and sometimes categorized as a global form of christianity. They are viewed by the orthodox denominations to be propagators of deviant doctrines and cultures that are repugnant to the classical christian religion.

Notable of these doctrines is the doctrine of prosperity. Neo classical pentecostalism believes that prosperity is the full proof of the calling of Christians which has been enacted in both the old and new testaments. 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.³ This was further enunciated in the new testament. For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich.⁴

Many christians and certainly most secularist see religion as one department or segment of life and culture alongside all others. There is an economic segment of life, a political one and then there is religion. Some people work in the economic segment of culture; others, in the religious segment and most of them are known as clergy.⁵ This isolation of religion from politics, culture and economy has

¹ B.Y Galadima and T Yusufu, “Christianity in Nigeria” Part 1 In African Journal of Evangelical Theology 20.1, 2001. P.92

² Pentecostalism in Nigeria. <https://rpl.hds.harvard.edu/faq/pentecostalism-nigeria> (Accessed 06/1/2022)

³ King James Version, Deuteronomy 8:18

⁴ KJV, 2 Corinthians 8:9

⁵ Jan H. Boer, *Christians and Muslims: Parameters for Living Together*. (Belleville, Ontario Canada: Essence Publishing 2009) P.90

imposed an enormous responsibility on religious leaders in the country. Hence, they have carved a niche for themselves with a large following while possessing a mien more vibrant than some of the leaders of the other departments of life.

Prosperity is an aspect of the christian teaching. Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth.⁶ Written by John an Apostle of Jesus Christ, the word ‘prosperity’ is generic. The word “prosper” in the context that was used by John in the scripture above means to excel. Consequently, a christian is to reign supreme and do well in the totality of the being – spirit, soul, and body.

Accordingly, this is not just about money, riches and other material wealth and earthly possessions, but it is about total wellbeing. The Nigerian pentecostalism especially the contemporary congregations have eroded the contextual meaning of “prosper” to suit a narrative of a church in affluence and wealth with a capacity to possess anything that money can buy. This ideology of pentecostalism by these new breeds has fueled avarice firstly in the leadership of such organizations.

In other words, the contemporary Nigerian church is engulfed by the quest for materialism. Rather than find solace in the Christian hope of eternal life, signs of total submission to capitalistic tendencies, especially in insatiable material acquisition, looms large in Nigerian churches.⁷

This doctrine of prosperity is therefore a major deviation from the ethos of pentecostalism that emphasizes on the need for a personal relationship with God based on an encounter with Jesus Christ as Lord and savior. This doctrine has helped in the eroding of the basic emphasis of pentecostalism as members are excessively pumped up with the need to get wealth. This therefore has fed into the culture of corruption in the Nigerian state.

Pentecostalism: The Classical And Neo Pentecostal School

Pentecostalism incorporates several of the recurring features of nineteenth century American Protestantism – perfectionism, premillennialism, fundamentalism, dispensationalism – and also draws down, through its African-

⁶ *KJV*, 3 John 1:2

⁷ N. N Iheanacho, A Critical Look at Contemporary Nigerian Christianity. In *International Journal of Theology & Reformed Tradition* Vol 1. 2009. Pp 104 – 117. P.106

American origins, a strong current of African religious sensibility (which would of course reconnect potently with local cultural demand when it got to Africa).⁸ Traditional African religions are less of faith traditions and more of lived traditions which made it to be more concerned with doctrines and much more so with rituals, ceremonies, and lived practices.

African traditional religion over the centuries has failed in meeting some of the yearnings of its followers. This has therefore created an avenue for the easy penetration of western religion into the country, more especially pentecostalism due to its uniqueness especially in doctrines and practices. Perhaps what most set it apart from earlier (and largely European) expressions of evangelical religiosity was the emphasis placed on the physical tokens of divine favor, notably speaking with tongues as the mark par excellence of baptism of the Holy Ghost, and miracles of healing.⁹

Pentecostals take their name from the biblical feast of Pentecost (in Judaism, the harvest festival of Shavuot), which took place 50 days after Passover. Early followers of Jesus who had gathered for the festival, as described in the New Testament Book of Acts, were said to be “filled with the Holy Spirit” and able to “speak in other tongues.”¹⁰

The roots of the modern Pentecostal movement are in the American Midwest. In 1901, Charles Parham, the leader of a Bible school in Topeka, Kan., came to believe that the speaking in tongues that he observed there occurred as the direct result of the working of the Holy Spirit. He then spread that theological message during travels through Kansas, Missouri, Oklahoma and Texas. In 1905, William Seymore, an African-American preacher who heard him speak, was soon himself preaching about the baptism of the Spirit and the gift of tongues at a revival meeting on Los Angeles’ Azusa Street.¹¹

Following the peculiarities of the African society, most especially the Nigerian state that is demand oriented, religion seems to be a gate way to the realization of some of these expectations. This also has been fueled by the inability of the

⁸ J.D.Y Peel, *Christianity, Islam, and Orisa Religion: Three Traditions In Comparison and Interaction*. (USA: University of California Press, 2016) Pp 84-85

⁹ J.D.Y Peel, P. 85

¹⁰ Spirit And Power. A 10 – Country Survey of Pentecostals. . (Washington D.C: Pew Research Center, October 2006) P1

¹¹ Spirit And Power. P2

government to meet some of these basic expectations has made the alternative created through the penetration of pentecostalism into the Nigerian society alluring as it comes with some renewed assurances.

Nigeria presently is the home of pentecostalism in Africa and a destination for religious tourism. Many dignitaries have in recent time found Nigeria the essential balm to many of their spiritual problems, with many heads of government visiting Nigeria to seek solution.¹² The Synagogue Church of All Nations boasts of having the largest number of religious tourists into Nigeria. Figures released by the Nigerian Immigration Service (NIS) indicate that six out of every 10 foreign travelers coming into Nigeria are bound for SCOAN. Over two million local and inbound tourists visit the church, which runs Emmanuel TV television station from Lagos, annually.¹³

Pentecostal churches inundate every nook and crannies of the country as a result of the acclaimed exploits. A few of them have permeated all states of the federation and local government areas with large following amounting into millions while reaching out to other nations of the world through missions and satellite televisions. These successes have been alluded to the Holy Spirit which they believe is present among their midst. And it shall come to pass afterward, *that* I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions:¹⁴

It is therefore routine to see a number of pentecostal assemblies in Nigeria having annual gatherings with millions in attendance from all continents of the world. While some of the classical pentecostal assemblies like the Deeper Christian Life Ministry, Redeemed Christian Church of God and Watchman Catholic Charismatic Renewal Movement have been able to reach out to their followers across the world using their own resource, the new pentecostal breed prefers seeking for partnership especially from western pentecostal assemblies that are focused on the teachings of prosperity.

¹² O.O Emmanuel, Socio Economic Assessment of Religious Tourism in Nigeria In International Journal of Islamic Business and Management Vol.2 No1:2018. P.2

¹³ Synagouge Church receives highest number of tourists annually into Nigeria <https://guardian.ng/features/synagogue-church-receives-highest-number-of-tourists-annually-in-nigeria/> Assessed 20/01/2022

¹⁴ KJV, Joel 2:28

This partnership has made the country a hub for the importation of western pentecostal pastors that come at the behest of their Nigerian counterpart who strive to mirror their ministries after the western model that is geared towards the doctrine of prosperity that comes with opulence especially in the lifestyle of the leadership.

The classical pentecostalism can be said to have seemingly maintained the original basis of pentecostalism that focuses on revival while maintaining a lifestyle modeled after Jesus Christ that emphasizes on holiness and modesty in lifestyle amidst the profligacy of the doctrine of prosperity in Nigeria by the neo Pentecostal movements.

However, some others while still having a form of Pentecostalism have deviated into neo - Pentecostalism which prioritizes prosperity as the basis for the new tribe. Neo-Pentecostalism is a global movement in Christianity, with much circulation of people and media between West Africa, its epicenters in the American South and West, and even such places as Brazil or Korea.¹⁵

It is not easy to generalize about the direction of change within African Christianity as whole over the last three decades, but if there is a single dominant trend, it is the rise of neo-Pentecostal or (as it is colloquially known in Nigeria) born-again Christianity.¹⁶ This new tribe of pentecostals seems to be overshadowing the classical pentecostal movements because of the radicalization on the preaching of wealth over all other virtues of Christianity.

The Culture Of Corruption, Religiosity And The Nigerian State

The Nigerian state practiced the traditional system of religion before the importation of Islam and Christianity which are the two dominant religions in the country. Both religions promote a strong belief system that emphasizes on piety while shunning all forms of entanglements that is capable of constraining the feeling of religiosity.

The teaching of Islam is founded on 5 pillars. The Qur'an is the main source for the Five Pillars, which are Shahada (faith), Salat (prayer), Zakat (charity), Sawm (fasting), and Hajj (pilgrimage).¹⁷ This underscores the fact that Islam is a religion

¹⁵ J.D.Y Peel, P81

¹⁶ J.D.Y Peel, P81

¹⁷ Edgar, Scott. "The Five Pillars of Islam in the Hadith." *Studia Antiqua* 2, no. 1 (2002). .P.73 <https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/studiaantiqua/vol2/iss1/9>

that demands dedication. A devoted Muslim is expected to pray five (5) starting from the early morning prayers at around 5am to the night prayer.

Christianity on the other hand is sold out to a life of dedication given to prayer, fasting, and evangelism as was exemplified in the life of their master while on earth. Jesus was going through all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every kind of disease and every kind of sickness.¹⁸ As such followers of Christ here on earth should be occupied with the business of the master as exemplified by Jesus Christ while on earth.

Both religions are based on strict monotheism. Islam teaches that all people are responsible for their own actions. Each individual will stand before God on the final judgment day and, depending on his/her actions, face either eternal bliss in paradise or eternal punishment in hell. Christianity also believes in the doctrine of only one God, but three divine versions of the same God referred to as the Holy Trinity.

The fear of a future judgement where everyone will give account of his actions while on earth has instilled a form of religiosity amongst adherence of the both religions. This is supposed to influence the lifestyle and actions of adherents of the both religion which ideally should reflect in the Nigerian society.

Though Nigeria is a multinational state that ensures the freedom of religion as enshrined in the constitution, it can tacitly be referred to as a religious state. Some northern states in Nigeria with a high concentration of Muslims have been able to feed religion into the system of governance. On October 27, 1999, Ahmed Sani Yerima, the then governor of Zamfara state, introduced the Sharia law and established relevant sharia courts vested with both civil and criminal jurisdiction.¹⁹

The introduction of Sharia underscores the extent of religiosity in the Nigerian state. Sharia law as a religious law lays down governing principles for spiritual, mental, and physical behavior that must be followed by Muslims. Regarded as God's command for Muslims, Sharia law is essentially Islam's legal system. Based on the principles governing sharia law which is anchored primarily on the

¹⁸ *KJV*, Matthew 9:35

¹⁹ N. Agapus et al, How Has Political Sharia Fared in Nigeria? In *Peace Review: A Journal of Social Justice*, 33, 2021. P. 153

Quran, states in Nigeria that have adopted the Sharia law should be a reflection of how Allah wants an ideal society to be both in principle and practice.

Based on the popular support accorded to the Sharia law as introduced in Zamfara state by Muslims, eleven other northern states followed suit.²⁰ Though this was met with strong opposition initially in some northern states like Kaduna where they have a mix of Christians and Muslims even though the later dominates the state, these northern states have been implementing varying degrees of the Sharia system.

The southern Nigeria that is predominantly dominated by the christians has still maintained the constitution as the ground norm for states administration as the concept of institutionalizing religious believes system into states affairs is absolutely zilch. More recently, some states in southern Nigeria have tried to propagate the idea of their states being a Christian state. "..., Anytime I have the opportunity, I repeat the declaration with authority and I owe nobody an apology. I am standing on a solid authority. Rivers is a Christian state."²¹

Akwa Ibom state has institutionalized christian practices like the christmas carol to be a state's religious affair. This is always celebrated opulently with international music artistes gracing the occasion with songs of praise not only geared towards the birth of Jesus Christ but also that of thanksgiving for another end of year. Therefore, there is a fusion between religiosity and the Nigerian state.

Historically, religion has always been a cover up for the advancement of varying degree of interests. Islam was brought into Hausaland by traders and scholars. About forty Wangarawa traders are thought to be responsible for introducing Islam to Kano during the reign of Ali Yaji (1349-1385). Al-Maghili, a famous scholar of his era, brought Islam to Katsina in the fifteenth century, similarly, a number of scholars from Sankore University; Timbuktu visited Katsina, bringing with them books on divinity and etymology.

The christian missionaries also used the same strategy in advancing christianity in southern Nigeria. The religion was brought into Nigeria through the voyages

²⁰ N. Agapus et al, P. 153

²¹ Ann Godwin, I owe nobody apology declaring Rivers Christian State. <https://guardian.ng/news/i-owe-nobody-apology-declaring-rivers-christian-state-wike-insists/>. Accessed 26/01/2022

that were done by the Portuguese around the 15th century who came trading in slaves but masqueraded under religion.

In spite of the correlation between religion and the Nigerian state, corruption tends to thrive in all facets of the society. Where the level of spirituality is high, all things being equal, the level of corruption should decline. The situation in Nigeria is such that not only has religion failed to reduce corruption, but religion itself has become a channel of corruption, providing support for corruption in the society.²²

This may not be unconnected with the nature through which the both religions were propagated in the country as it was shrouded under the guise of trade. This have in no small measure contributed to the reasons why believers in the religion merely confess piety without a translation in the outcomes of behaviors amongst citizens.

Though Nigeria is a religious state, the culture of corruption has permeated the entire state system. Corruption is a common word in the vocabulary of every Nigerian citizen, corruption is popular in the home, street, associations, groups, public and private bureaucratic organizations, traditional institutions and even the Church.²³

The Nexus Between The Doctrine Of Prosperity And The Culture Of Corruption In Nigeria

Having established that the origin of religion in Nigeria was fundamentally marred in corruption as it was merely used as a vehicle for trade, it is not surprising to witness that those that have adopted either Islam or Christianity as a way of religion use it as a mere identification rather than upholding the tenants of the faith. This is the reason for the spate of corruption in the country which holds sway both in the public and private sector.

The doctrine of prosperity is a trending teaching among the neo pentecostal christian community in Nigeria which tends to be a driving force behind the formation of churches in the country. Over the past few decades, the influence of

²² A.A Adenugba and S.A Omolawal, Religious Values and Corruption in Nigeria – A Dislocated Relationship. In Journal of Educational and Social Research. MCSER Publishing, Rome – Italy. Vol 4, No.3 2014. P.527

²³ A.O Bassey et al, Corruption as a Social Problem and its Implication on Nigerian Society: A Review of Anti corrupt Policies. In Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences. Vol.4 (1) January 2013. P.423

Pentecostal Christianity has inundated the political and cultural landscape of the society.

It is not in doubt the sphere of influence this brand of christianity has attained in Nigeria. The neo pentecostals have further made the brand more alluring to a vast majority of Nigerians by emphasizing on prosperity which comes with a wide range of promises from sudden financial breakthroughs to the transfer and accumulation of wealth which is not worked just by mere believing. Also, members allude to the practicability in what in pentecostal parlance is known as testimonies. This has given more impetus to the doctrines of prosperity being held by these assemblies.

Furthermore, in a bid to advance the prosperity message, biblical references are often misconstrued which aligns to their message of sudden breakthroughs. Then you shall see and become radiant, And your heart shall swell with joy; Because the abundance of the sea shall be turned to you, The wealth of the Gentiles shall come to you.²⁴

Some of the neo pentecostal movements have adopted catch phrases that associates the church with prosperity. The Commonwealth of Zion Assembly (COZA) a vibrant neo Pentecostal assembly is also known as The Wealthy Place. Birthed over Twenty-Two years ago in the city of Ilorin, Kwara State, Nigeria, The Commonwealth of Zion Assembly has touched countless lives across the nations of the world.²⁵

The neo pentecostal leadership has vociferously made this belief system so strong among her vibrant followers to the extent of making some followers look unto God as if being prosperous all depends on God. Some others have decided to take the bull by the horn by maximizing every given opportunity to make wealth even when it made through corrupt practices.

The implication on the emphasis of prosperity is that it is has developed avarice among members. This has contributed to a spike in the corruption cases in the society by those that are supposed to be possessed by the fruit of the spirit which is part of the high calling of the pentecostals. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy,

²⁴ KJV, Isaiah 60:5

²⁵ <https://coza.org.ng/about-us/>. Accessed 28/01/2022

peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.²⁶

The fruit of the spirit is enabled by the Holy Ghost which is the fulcrum of pentecostalism. It is what distinguishes a believer from the unbeliever. These virtues have since taken a flight among these self-confessing pentecostals because they have been pumped up with the message of prosperity. As such, virtues like honesty, patience and truthfulness are hardly seen in the lifestyle of self-acclaimed pentecostal movements.

These social movements largely lack the understanding of the Christian call to a high level of sacrifice, discipline, honesty, truth and justice. There is no doubt that authentic religion will checkmate corruption because individual and social morality of the people is predicated on their religious beliefs and values.²⁷

This is the reason why in the face of a thriving pentecostal christianity, the Nigerian society is riddled with wide range of corruption that transverses embezzlement, bribery, cronyism parochialism and nepotism. Sadly, these forms of corruption have also been found in the pentecostal assemblies especially among those with the penchant of pushing the prosperity gospel.

The prosperity gospel and her messengers most times have fueled controversies as a result of their inability to explain the sources of their wealth and also their flamboyancy. In a bid to cover up corrupt practices within their fold, financial records are altered as they hide the mystery behind their prosperity under the guise of being blessed by God.

The corruption in christian pentecostalism affects the pulpit and the pew. Out of the 300 randomly selected Neo Pentecostal Churches, only 37 (12.33%) has Financial secretary as a non-family member of the Church founders. Significant respondents of 263 (87.67%) either has financial secretary as founder's relative or the G.O. serves as the Treasurer of the Church. Only 9 (3%) out of the 37 (12.33%) perform End-of-the-Year Audit.²⁸

²⁶ *KJV*, Galatians 5:22-23

²⁷ A.A Adenugba and S.A Omolawal, Religious Values and Corruption in Nigeria – A Dislocated Relationship. In Journal of Educational and Social Research. MCSER Publishing, Rome – Italy. Vol 4, No.3 2014. P.527

²⁸ AO Dairo, Sacred Corruption in sacred places: the case of some selected Neo Pentecostal Churches in Nigeria. In Arts and Humanities Open Access Journal. Volume 4 Issue 6, 2020. P.244

This opaqueness in financial management is as a result of the mindless pursuit of prosperity amongs Nigerian pentecostal movements. It is now a commonplace for Nigerian pentecostal leaders and also members that are celebrated in church to be accused both in the law court and that of public opinion for cases of corruption.

Dogmatically, the term corruption should not be mingled with Christianity because it typifies defilement and anything that is defile is unholy in line with the teachings of Christ. While this assertion rest in the place of dogma, the reality says otherwise amongs pentecostal leadership and her members. And nothing that defiles or profanes or is unwashed will ever enter it, nor anyone who practices abominations [detestable, morally repugnant things] and lying, but only those [will be admitted] whose names have been written in the Lamb's Book of Life.²⁹

The Pentecostal Fellowship of Nigeria (PFN) as a body has not been categorical in addressing issues of corruption within its fold by having resolutions to punish erring members that are guilty of cases of corruption. However, they are always quick to condemn corruption in the public sector, ignoring the fact that members of the PFN are also active players in the sector.

A former president of the body, Pastor Ayo Oritsejafor has asked pentecostal pastors to scrutinize the wealth in a bid to tackle corruption. "We must be ready to give an account for ourselves and therefore we will no longer tolerate criminals in the Church of God. Men of God, you must be ready to question the source of member's wealth."³⁰

Despite the proliferation of pentecostalism in Nigeria, corruption still thrives because of the quietness in the leadership of the pentecostal assemblies to emphasize on the tenants of pentecostalism but rather on prosperity. An open condemnation of corrupt practices therefore may see a drop in the income of the churches, and not all church leaders are ready for the shock.

Pastor David Ibiyeomie who runs a neo pentecostal assembly in Rivers state seemed to have followed an unpopular path by placing a curse on internet

²⁹ *Amplified Bible*, Revelation 21:27

³⁰ Sam Eyoboka, Question the source of your members wealth – Oritsejafor urges PFN Pastors.

<https://www.vanguardngr.com/2013/02/question-the-source-of-your-members-wealth-oritsejafor-urges-pfn-pastors/> Accessed 27/01/2022

fraudsters. "It is a demonic, satanic way of getting money. Which kind of money is that? You are a thief. No matter how you colorize it, you are a thief. You love stealing! I curse the root of it. Do you know how many people you have killed?"³¹ Though the pastor used strong words against fraudsters, it is not enough to fight corruption that have pervaded pentecostal membership especially when other neo pentecostals are indifferent about cases of corruption and the sources of the wealth of her members.

The doctrine of prosperity being upheld especially by the neo pentecostals is a clear departure from the original conception of the 20th century pentecostal movement which is only being upheld by a few denominations.

It is noteworthy to state that some of these classical denominations like the Redeemed Christian Church of God (RCCG) still accounts for the wealthiest churches in the country with prime assets in major cities of the country in spite of not being known for the propagation of the gospel of prosperity. This underscores the fact that true pentecostalism can generate wealth without the emphasis on the teaching of prosperity that has led to covetousness and corruption in the country.

Conclusion

Prosperity is good. The bible affirmed its relevance 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 swore unto thy fathers, as it is this day.³² By this, there is a covenant of wealth in store for Christians and the conditionality attached is only to remember God in the wealth.

In a desperate bid to circumvent the biblical guidelines of attaining sustainable wealth which is anchored on dutifulness, Nigerian pentecostalism has adopted the doctrine of prosperity. This teaching asides the fact that it has been conjured to fit into the self-serving purpose of the leaders of such pentecostal assemblies, it goes against the ethos of the pentecostal movement ab initio which is anchored on a personal encounter with God marked with the Baptism of the Holy spirit and the working of miracles.

³¹ <https://www.reubenabati.com.ng/index.php/component/k2/you-ll-get-accident-with-that-car-pastor-david-ibiyeomie-curses-yahoo-boys-policemen-video>. Accessed 28/01/2022

³² *KJV*, Deuteronomy 8:18

The pentecostal christian therefore should firstly be marked by their fruits. Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit.³³

The Bible makes no mistake in saying that Love, joy, peace, patience, meekness, kindness, gentleness of the spirit and brokenness are the fruit of the Spirit and not wealth which the Nigerian pentecostalism is propagating. Hence, there is a school of thought within the Nigerian pentecostal circle that prosperity is the mark of the calling of a pentecostal.

The implication of this skewed doctrine of prosperity is seen in the rising cases of corruption first within the pentecostal movements by her leadership and also by members of these movements which is being reflected in every stratum of the Nigerian society.

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