

An Examination of Theology's Influence on Societal, Political, and Economic Realities

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Abstract

This paper explores the transformative role of biblical theology in addressing the pressing social, political, and economic challenges facing African society today. The central thesis posits that a genuine conversion to Jesus Christ and the application of sound theological principles can bring about moral regeneration and societal transformation. Drawing insights from African scholars the paper critically examines the current state of Africa—marked by identity crises, moral decay, political corruption, and economic inequality. Despite post-independence optimism, much of the continent continues to grapple with poverty, poor governance, social disorder, and moral decline. The paper argues that the root cause of these problems is a disconnection from God's intended moral order, as revealed in Scripture and lived out through a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. It proposes that biblical theology should guide our ethics, social relationships, political engagement, and economic practices. The family, being the foundational unit of society, must reflect God's design of love, harmony, and responsibility, as modeled in the Triune relationship. Political leadership must embody integrity, justice, and servant leadership, while economic systems should ensure equity, stewardship, and the common good. The study underscores the importance of discipleship, godly parenting, and theological education in shaping a new generation of leaders committed to transforming society from within. Through this theological lens, the paper presents a holistic model for societal healing, anchored in divine principles of justice, love, and righteousness.

Keywords: *Biblical Theology, Social Transformation, Political Leadership, Economic Justice, Africa, Christian Ethics, Family, Governance, Discipleship, Moral Renewal*

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Introduction

God's ordained social institutions (family and state) continue to suffer major setbacks of untold magnitude. The social, political, and economic fabric in the said institutions has become a thorn in the flesh of the livelihood of the people.

God's original intention for man in the book of Genesis 1:27-28 was perfectly good for a life worth living;

So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them. God blessed them and said to them, “Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky and over every living creature that moves on the ground.”¹

The scripture above demonstrates God’s good plan for the social, political, and economic life of mankind. However, the tragic accident in Genesis chapter 3 concerning the fall of man put the social, political, and economic life of man into disarray. Greed caused by the natural inclination towards inbred sin has become the order that characterizes our social, political, and economic life in society.

We crave for things to satisfy our own ego without caring for others. Many often, we don’t see sacrificial life laid down to serve others but, in contrast, we yearn to be served and treated well. The golden rule of doing unto others what we expect them to do unto us outside the confines of the true authentic theological faith is an exercise in futility for many people.

It is for this reason therefore, that the authors of this paper are writing about the effects of theology on social, political, and economic life in our society by highlighting the social, political, and economic state we are in while at the same time trying to offer Biblical as well as theological remedy to make life worth living. A genuine conversion of our souls to Jesus Christ can have a far-reaching positive influence on social, political, and economic life in our society. Jesus Christ can transform us in order to transform the society we are living in for the better.

The State of Our Society

Yusufu Turaki in his honest submission about the state of African society, said that Africa seems to have lost a sense of direction. He says the following;

Which way Africa? Africa seems to have lost a sense of direction, identity and is also at a loss of what to do and how to solve her multitude of problems and challenges. Africa has too many advisers that seems to mislead her. Since independence in the late 1950’s and the early 1960’s. Africa seems not to have a concrete vision of a good society, or a sustainable and participatory society, but one that is plagued with a multitude of problems and challenges. These problems and challenges are as a result of a lack of a good vision of society that can lead to a better development and transformation of humanity and society.²

Yusufu Turaki’s quote reflects a deep concern about Africa’s lack of clear direction and identity since gaining independence. He emphasizes that without a concrete vision for a just and participatory society, the continent remains trapped in recurring problems. His insight calls for a return to foundational values and the development of a vision that can truly transform African societies.

The state of human affairs in Africa is wanting. The continent is bleeding for having lost direction and focus. There is a tremendous lack of vision for our blessed cradle continent to solve problems and challenges. The author of this paper agrees with Turaki when he says that

¹Bible, (New International Version)

²Yusufu Turaki. A Christian Vision for Africa. Towards a Conception of Development and Transformation. (un-published article, 2011).

“Africa seems not to have a concrete vision of a good society, or a sustainable and participatory society, but one that is plagued with a multitude of problems and challenges.”³

The Bible says that where there is no vision, people perish (Proverbs 29:18 paraphrased). George Kinoti while quoted by Turaki says the following about the state of Africa.

Among the nations of the world, Africa has become synonymous with poverty, political chaos, social disorder, and general backwardness. But I believe that we can overcome our problems and bring peace, prosperity, and dignity to this continent. To do so we first need to understand the severity and the causes of the crises facing the African people. Then we need to catch the vision for a better Africa and Act to bring about its material, social, moral, and spiritual well-being.⁴

The description of Africa above speaks reality of what is happening on the ground. According to Turaki, he blames colonialists, missionaries, nationalists, rulers, and politicians for failing to create a viable and sustainable Africa.

Further, the state of our society can be described as having lost its identity. Africa seems to be at a crossroads and in a quagmire state. Her legs seem walking towards her roots of traditions and values while her head is bent towards the West for technological advancement. We have become the photocopies of our colonial masters instead of being original and behaving as God intended us to be. George in his book *Africa in Chaos* says that;

Yet, paradoxically, a continent with such abundance and potential is inexorably mired in steaming squalor, misery, deprivation, and chaos. It is in the throes of a seemingly incurable crisis. Eating has become a luxury for many Africans, and hunger stares them squarely in the face. “We cannot afford even a meal a day..... “we try to keep at least the children fed.”⁵

George Kinoti’s quote paints a grim yet honest picture of Africa’s current reality—a continent rich in resources but trapped in poverty, disorder, and human suffering. He highlights the painful irony of abundance coexisting with extreme deprivation, where even basic needs like food remain a luxury for many. This serves as a sobering reminder of the urgent need for visionary, ethical leadership and a return to values that prioritize the dignity and well-being of all people.

Education is the engine that transforms a society. The power of knowledge transforms both the person and the way he/she runs daily life affairs. The statement below explains this fact;

Education is very important in a world that keeps on revolving, it has then become a necessity, even for individuals, education makes you see clearly in making the judgement, it also enlightens and civilized so therefore, as a leader, education becomes paramount for ruling but sadly of the 54 nations of Africa, just a few leaders are known to be well educated⁶

Some presidents in Africa with PhD include William Samoe Ruto Kenya, King Mohammed VI (Morocco), Peter Mutharika (Malawi), Alassane Ouattara (Ivory Coast), Mulatu Teshome

³Yusufu, Turaki

⁴Ibid,

⁵George B. N. Ayittey. *Africa in Chaos*. (USA: MackMillan Press, 1999), 6

⁶<https://www.afterschoolafrica.com/47624/top-10-most-educated-african-presidents-ever/> (Accessed on 6th/December/2020)

(Ethiopia), Ibrahim Boubacar Keita (Mali), Faure Essozimma Gnassingbe (Togo), George Weah (Liberian) and Jorge Carlos de Almeida Fonseca (Cape Verde).

One could imagine that the stated leaders are doing an excellent job in their respective countries to bring social, political, and economic transformation based on the high level of education they have. However, things continue to be different on the ground as the following statement alludes to;

In countries where there are educated presidents in juxtaposition to their performances is an irony, which then makes the educational credentials of African presidents in comparison to good leadership, not a criterion. Although, Africa has the most educated leaders in the world, the continent continues to experience plodding progress. Many critics have also attributed this to the high level of corruption evident within African governments.⁷

This quote highlights the irony that, despite having highly educated leaders, many African nations still struggle with poor governance and slow development. It suggests that education alone does not guarantee effective leadership, especially when corruption undermines integrity and accountability in government.

There was joy and ululation at independence among many African States when we became self-governing from colonial rule. Many promises were given by our independent heroes and founding fathers. Kenya for example was promised to fight ignorance, disease, and poverty. It is sad to note that almost six decades since independence, the three negative vices are still with us. The promise has become like a mirage that is too slippery to get on hands. George says and the authors of this paper agree with him that;

The nationalists who won freedom for their respective countries were hailed as heroes, swept into office with huge parliamentary majorities, and deified. Currencies bore their portraits and statues were built to honour them. African nationalists transmogrified into a melodramatic nightmare. In many countries, these nationalist leaders soon turned out to be crocodile liberators.....After independence, true freedom never came to much of Africa. Nor did development.⁸

The quote above shows clearly that many countries in Africa continue to wallow in the miasma of poverty, starvation, unemployment, corruption, civil unrest and wars, illiteracy, social striving, negative ethnicity and balkanization, abuse of human rights and press freedom, election malpractices and police brutality.

Power corrupts and absolute power corrupts has become a norm in many of our African States. This has brought to what is now called dynasty versus hustler nations in Kenya. The rich and the poor live in a paradoxical two worlds. The dynasty has the wealth and affluence while the poor live in shanties below a dollar per day. Who can become Africa's true liberator?

Social Life

God is the initiator and author of a family. A family is the core foundation of a society and nation. It is the bedrock of nation-building. When the family is not functioning well, it shakes the very foundation of social life. God intended to see a cohesive family living in harmony.

⁷Ibid

⁸George B. N. Ayittey. *Africa in Chaos*. (USA: MackMillan Press, 1999), 7

However, the story below in Bomet County that happened on 6th/December/ 2020 demonstrates a wrong picture of God's intention in the family;

There was drama in Kembu village in the Bomet East constituency after a 51-year-old man raped his mother. They had gone to an initiation ceremony that was held in neighbouring village of Koibeyon on Saturday night. Changaa was plenty and they drank until Sunday afternoon when they decided to go back home. The son of the man was among those who were circumcised. The man is married and has eleven children. His mother was too drunk to call for help and Joseph Kirui overpowered and raped her. Children who were coming back from the church found them in the act, prompting the minors to call the people. She was rescued and taken to local hospital for treatment. Area chiefs warn men against indulging in behaviours that will bring them everlasting curses. He tried to run but angry villagers were too fast for him. They beat him mercilessly before escorting him to police station. Bomet County has been hitting news headlines in recent months due to rape cases. Richard Sang, nyumba kumi chairman, says the man has brought shame to himself, his family, age mates, and entire community.⁹

The cruel act of the young man upon his mother is strongly condemned and should be apprehended in a court of law. The mother like -wise is to blame for the action done. It is taboo among the Kipsigis people for a parent to engage in drinking local brew with sons and daughters. The action demonstrates clearly that the mother failed in her duty to become a role model in her family. This goes against traditional cultural ethical behaviour acceptable in society.

The example highlighted above speaks of many other situations in society. The social fabric both in the family and the state is in jeopardy.

Adam and Eve's choice to sin broke multiple relationships – humanity with God, humanity with nature, humanity with each other, and human beings with themselves. This affects the family, society, and the nation negatively.

The Fall, sin, and the accompanying relational breakdown disconnects us from our Creator, so we enter into the world with a need to define our own identity, which we often do at the expense of another. After sin entered the world, Adam started blaming the woman and God, and the woman blamed the snake. Relationships were broken and inter-personal conflict was introduced.¹⁰

This quote illustrates how sin fractured humanity's relationship with God and others, leading to blame, broken identity, and the beginning of conflict in human relationships.

Further, according to class notes for Culture Ethnicity, and Diversity, it was noted that the Fall of man sets in motion the human tendency to establish our identity at the expense of another. This "identity at the expense of another" – is at the root of destructive ethnocentrism (and all other "isms" (racism, sexism, classism, etc)

⁹<https://ke.opera.news/ke/en/crime/a5de1047f82b9772ba76461e8ffab5bf> (Accessed on 8/12/2020)

¹⁰Class Notes, LEAD 662- Culture, Ethnicity and Diversity. Africa International University, Karen Campus, 2016.

A family can be a reflection of a state. Stable families can guarantee peace and tranquillity in the state. The broken family relationships can bring ruin to a community and the state as well. Marriage has many benefits as outlined below;

As a culture, we must face up to the fact that marriage does have a positive effect on the lives of those who commit themselves to it as well as for the larger society..... “The positive effect of marriage on well-being is strong and consistent, and selection of the psychologically healthy into marriage or the psychologically unhealthy out of marriage cannot explain the effect”. This means that marriage does something for its participants- and what it does is very good. Therefore, it is in our society’s best interest to do what it can to value and encourage marriage and have our community’s mediating structures work to strengthen marriage on a family-by-family basis. The benefit of marriage for children is even more pronounced.....A culture wise enough to favour marriage over the myriad “alternative” family structures will reap the benefits of citizens who enjoy healthy, strong, happy, sound, productive, and long-lived lives.¹¹

This quote emphasizes that strong marriages not only enhance individual well-being but also contribute significantly to the stability and prosperity of society as a whole.

A functional marriage matters in the upbringing of children. Children can be nurtured well by mom and dad who are married. A dysfunctional marriage can result in many ills witnessed in the family, state, and society at large. Many families are in crisis as illustrated below;

There is no current need more critical than this. Families are in crisis. Nearly as many babies are born to single moms as to mothers who are married. Divorce is rampant. There is great dysfunction in families that are intact. But, perhaps worst of all, Christian parents who are kind and caring and have the best of intentions for their kids are exceedingly unintentional in the raising of their children.¹²

Perhaps it is through the said family breakdown that the social fabric in the society has been marred by social evils such as rape, drug, and substance abuse, HIV/Aids and other sexually transmitted diseases, domestic violence, child trafficking, theft and burglary and other forms of crimes witnessed in day to day living.

Parents play a key and critical role in the lives of children. John Maxwell said (paraphrased), things rise and fall because of leadership. Children can rise or fall because of parenting. When parenting, dad and mum should know the power of authority over their children as stated below;

The authority of the parent(s) is the essential key to having a functional, healthy home. If the child is not raised with appropriate authority, every kind of chaos and disaster can easily be bred. How does a parent get and maintain the appropriate authority for the child’s first eighteen years? Each season in life seems to call for different kinds of authority. What are they? How can they be implemented so the child grows up not only healthy but holy and happy?¹³

¹¹Glent T. Stanton. *Why Marriage Matters. Reason to Belief in Marriage in Postmodern Society*. (USA: Pinon Press, 1997), 94-95

¹²Friedeman, Matt. *Discipleship in the Home: Teaching Children. Changing Lives*. (Kentucky: Francis Asbury Press. Kindle Edition, 2010), 9

¹³Perkins, Hal. *If Jesus were a Parent*. (Kindle Edition, 2006), 12

This quote highlights that effective parental authority, adapted to each stage of a child's growth, is crucial for raising children who are emotionally healthy, morally grounded, and well-adjusted.

The current state of the marriage institutions in society is characterized by;

Misconception of marriage, due to rampant societal forces of change and global information exchanges, marriage is today misconceived as a casual union of temporary union between mutually consenting adults. Secularization- increased ungodliness in society means less and less understanding of marriage as ordained and regulated by God. Implications- society defines marriage as it feels and desires from its often-selfish perspective. Separation- there are increasing cases of separation of married couples occasioned by mobility in careers or divorce. Increased singleness- There is an increased number of young adults opting not to get married today. Fear of the troubles and pain of marriage esdrives many away. Demographics- there are many more single women than there are young single men. Immorality- Increased cases of sexual immorality. Evidence, today the highest growth rate of HIV/Aids is among married couples. Many married couples engage in extramarital affairs. Dysfunctional Marriages- Many couples are reporting suffering in marriage to keep the status quo and because of the “shame and honour” value in African society.¹⁴

This quote reveals the deep crisis facing the institution of marriage today, where shifting cultural values, secularization, and moral decay have led to widespread misconceptions, instability, and dysfunction within marriages.

Political Life

Not only have social issues affecting society in at family setting. Politics has also ravaged it at the national and state levels.

The late second president of the republic of Kenya His Excellency Daniel Toroitich Arap Moi said in Kiswahili that “siasa mbaya maisha mbaya”, loosely translated to mean bad politics leads to bad life.

The public domain information about Kenyan post-election violence in 2007-2008 and Rwanda and Burundi genocide in 1994, for example, describes well Mzee Moi’s alluded statement. In Kenya, it is estimated that close to one thousand three hundred people were killed and the property of millions of shillings were destroyed during the dark days in Kenyan history. It is also estimated that one million people were killed in Rwanda and about two hundred thousand were annihilated in Burundi during the horrific episode.

The African colonial masters influenced political systems in our continent. “African leaders copied their mode of administration and governance structures and the style of exercising power and authority from the colonial administrators”¹⁵. This led to poor political leadership in many countries resulting in chaos. We have witnessed “constitutional reforms, end of single party and adoption of multiparty democracy and electoral reforms”¹⁶ done in many countries

¹⁴Emmanuel Chemengich. Lecture Notes for GE423: Marriage and Family, Africa Theological Seminary, Kitale Campus, September, 2011.

¹⁵James, Nkansa, Obrempong. Lecture Note for TH 904 Theology, Social, Political and Economic life of Africa, Africa International University, Karen Campus, September, 2020.

¹⁶Ibid

in Africa and perhaps these changes haven't guaranteed peace and prosperity among the citizens. George says that "the anti-development environment that prevails in most African countries is characterized by political tyranny, instability, chaos, senseless civil wars, horrible carnage, corruption, and capital flight."¹⁷

Our problems in Africa cannot be stereotyped. Each country has unique challenges and should be treated in its own category. The following statement highlights this well;

The same can be said for understanding politics in Africa. While donor countries and international development agencies tend, in general, to focus on the "problems" such as deficiencies in governance, dictatorships, corruption, conflicts, and insecurity of multi-ethnic societies, the political realities of individual African nations, each of which has its own unique characteristics, does not allow us to generalize them with such a stereotypical view. The elimination of such single-sided, generalized evaluation can be said to be the mandate for African political science research.¹⁸

Some methodology employed in certain countries seems to bear fruits of success but in other places same methodology seems to cause more trouble and anarchy. Democratization process employed by some states eliminated military rule and one-party dictatorship and brought peaceful co-existence in certain countries. Some countries, however, experienced a state of insecurity in the process of democratization. Other countries experienced free and fair elections while others saw election malpractices. It is interesting to note that Rwanda and South Africa experienced peace after reconciliation after genocide and apartheid respectively. This seems not to have worked well for South Sudan after the peace accord agreement.

African politics is complex in nature. "Many scholars of African politics face the dilemma of not being able to simply apply accumulated political science theories to analyze African politics."¹⁹ it is further argued that;

In comparing the cases of individual African nations, we simultaneously develop regional theories and identify unique characteristics of individual countries. In other words, these investigations capitalize on the ongoing reformulation of regional research and contribute to the eventual unification with existing political science theory. "African politics" serves both a research approach as well as a forum for that discussion.²⁰

The explanation above cogently argues for the uniqueness and complexity of African politics, which often resists the straightforward application of conventional political science theories. Scholars must balance the need to understand individual national contexts while also identifying regional patterns and dynamics. As such, African politics not only informs localized governance but also challenges and enriches broader political theory through continuous re-evaluation and adaptation.

¹⁷George B. N. Ayittey. *Africa in Chaos*. (USA: MackMillan Press, 1999), 33

¹⁸<https://www.ide.go.jp/English/Research/Topics/Pol/African/overview.html> (Accessed on 8th/12/2020)

¹⁹Ibid.

²⁰Ibid.

Economic Life

Our society does not only suffer socially and politically; it is also suffering economically. The continent of Africa is endowed with natural resources. It is paradoxical to imagine that some countries rich in natural resources suffer economically. Africa is endowed with big land, wonderful nature, and abundant mineral resources.

While talking about Africa's prosperity, the late Tonkubo Adeyemo said,

“During his historic presidential visit to Africa, President Bill Clinton made a profound statement, “the rest of the world cannot do without you- the world needs Africa,” he said. Analysts and commentators have interpreted it to mean a reference to the enormous natural and energy resources that the continent is blessed with.”²¹

Adeyemo highlights the fact that God blessed Africa with abundant mineral resources such as gold, diamond, copper, bauxite, manganese, nickel, platinum, cobalt, radium, and phosphates. We are also endowed with deposits of coal, petroleum, and natural gas.

Africa is also blessed with rich agricultural soil. We grow cash crops such as tea, coffee, tobacco, cocoa, sugar cane, rice, wheat, barley, pyrethrum, sisal, marijuana, etc. Subsistence crops are in plenty- maize, beans, yams, potatoes, millet, sorghum, bananas, peas, pumpkins, vegetables, onions, pepper, tomatoes, and a variety of fruits.

The African ecosystem is wonderful. Our fauna and flora attract tourists from across the world. Our forests and wildlife are our heritage from God. Our wonderful mountains, valleys, oceans, lakes, rivers, swamps, and springs speak of the creative work of God of Africa. Our weather is compared to none across the world. Many countries of Africa experience warm climate.

On the contrary, one wonders what is happening in our beautiful continent. Adeyemo said, is Africa cursed? Why would a continent blessed with a big mass of land and natural resources continue to languish in abject poverty? “Ravaged nations including Rwanda, Burundi, Democratic Republic of Congo, Somalia, Angola and Liberia....have difficulty in paying their civil servants and teachers.”²²

The African economy is pegged on “trade, industry, agriculture, tourism, mining and human resources of the continent”.²³ While this is what is happening on the ground in day-to-day living, our economic system was affected by colonialism when they introduced a “mono-cultural economy for the territories”.²⁴ As it is further noted, wealth is the backbone of families, communities, and the state. Wealth can place someone, a community, or the state on a higher cluster of economic affluence. “Modern economic theories focus on the principle of utility, profit-making, and efficient production of goods and services. This tends to lead to greed, exploitation, and extravagant lifestyles.”²⁵ This has contributed a lot to the non-equitable

²¹Tokunboh Adeyemo. *Africa's Enigma and Leadership Solutions*. (Nairobi: WordAlive Publishers, 2009), 4-5

²²Ibid, 10

²³James Nkansah Obrempong. Lecture Note for TH 904 Theology, Social, Political and Economic life of Africa, Africa International University, Karen Campus, September, 2020.

²⁴Ibid

²⁵Ibid

distribution of resources in our society thus we can see the wealthy people enjoying life while the poor continue to suffer in abject poverty.

African economy continues to suffer from exploitation and mismanagement of natural resources from our political elites. The world market continues to dictate the prices of our commodities. In many instances, the poor peasant hard-working Africans don't get value for their hard work.

Biblical and Theological Solution to Social, Political and Economic Life of our Society

Biblical theology is a discipline that helps Christians to understand truly who God is and how He relates to humanity. It also shapes our approach to life as we engage in the activities of men through our ethics of daily living. This should shape our behaviour as we deal with social, political, and economic life in our society. The object of studying theology is to re-direct our daily walk with God. We need to be where God is and at the same time, God should be where we are.

Our conduct and activities must bring honor and glory to God. Oden illustrates below the fundamental fact about the object of studying Christian theology.

The object of study in theology must be carefully stated. It is God as known in the faith of the worshipping Christian community. This study seeks to know an investigable reality and thus is not merely speculation. For there exists in history a community of persons who hold steadfastly to faith in God. Yet since God is not an object, it is inexact to assert that God is directly, flatly, or empirically viewable as an object of theology. God does not, for our convenience, become a direct object of scientific investigation, since God by definition is not finite.....Nonetheless, Christian theology has a definite subject matter to which it devotes disciplined and sustained reflective attention: that knowledge of God as understood in the faith of the community that lives out of Christ's resurrection (Cyril of Jerusalem, Catech. Lect. 4.1– 17). The basis for the study of God becomes confused if theology is presented strictly as a privatized, individual credo, or as a limited confessional statement of a particular faction that views itself as the arbiter of Christian truth for all other communions.²⁶

The study of Christian theology as conceptualized above, is rooted in the worshipping community's faith, and guides believers to reflect God's character in all areas of life. This understanding should shape our social, political, and economic actions to reflect justice, compassion, and integrity, bringing honor to God in public and private spheres.

A family that has its foundation in God reflects the relationship that exists in the Trinity. There exists a harmonious relationship between the husband, wife, and children as God the Father relates to the Son and the Holy Spirit. Denis Kinlaw put this in proper perspective when he argues that;

The relationship between the Father and Son is the prototype (original) of which all human familial relations are ectypes (copies). The relationship of which he is speaking is the original to which all human familial relationships are analogical..... The writer of Hebrews in 1:1–5

²⁶Oden Thomas C. *Classic Christianity: Systematic Theology*. (HarperOne. Kindle Edition), 4

tells us of the superiority of the new dispensation. In the former dispensation, God spoke to us through prophets. Now God has spoken to us “by his Son,” one who is the “exact representation of [God’s] being,” through whom all things were created and all things are sustained.²⁷

Kinlaw further states that Jesus has a unique role in the revelation of God. In John, he refers to himself as “the door” (10:7 KJV). Jesus thinks of himself not only as the door into salvation but also as the knowledge of the one true God. Logically this means we should begin our theological studies with Jesus, who, as John said, “has made him known” (John 1:18).

It is therefore imperative to say that at a social level in our society, when we come into a personal encounter and relationship with Jesus Christ, our social interaction will be positive, and therefore, evil deeds emanating from sin will be dealt with. This argument from this great theologian carries more weight as we approach theology at the social level;

Jesus claims that he knows and sees God from the inside. What he sees is familial, and the familial character is not an attribute of God but his actual ontological nature. If there is life in God, it is a shared life between Father and Son. This is further proof that we should begin our theological studies with Jesus.²⁸

This quote emphasizes that a true relationship with Jesus Christ transforms individuals, fostering positive social interactions rooted in divine love. By recognizing the familial and relational nature of God through Jesus, society is called to reflect that same unity, compassion, and shared life. Thus, theological understanding centered on Jesus can lead to the moral and spiritual renewal of communities, reducing sin and promoting justice.

In the Trinity analogy, we see God who is self-giving in love to the Son and Holy Spirit. When this is biblically and theologically taken as a vertical relationship to a Triune God and a horizontal relationship to a fellow man, it transforms our social interaction for the better.

God is personal. He is not a force! Without revealing Himself to us we cannot know Him. He chose to reveal Himself to man through natural revelation. The universe declares His glory. The ontological, teleological, cosmological, human quest (for God in the heart) and uncaused cause as explained by Thomas Aquinas explain this fundamental reality.

In the Old Testament, He revealed Himself to Moses as ‘I am who I am’. He continued to reveal Himself in the historical books, Poetry, and prophets. However, in the New Testament, John 1 says that in the beginning the word (Jesus) was with God, and the word made flesh and dwell among us. This is God’s special and final revelation to us in the person of His Son – Jesus Christ.

The book of Hebrews talks of God speaking to the Jewish father’s long time ago (Old Testament) through the prophets but in the last days, (New Testament) He speaks to us in the person of Jesus Christ. He reveals Himself to us.

The truth is, Christianity is not a religion but a relationship in which God came down to reach out to the lost man in the person of Jesus’ incarnation, conception, ministry, passion,

²⁷Kinlaw Dennis F. *Let's Start with Jesus*. (Zondervan Academic. Kindle Edition), Location 281,

²⁸Ibid, Location 312

crucifixion, death, and resurrection to transform both vertical and horizontal relationships to the Triune God and fellow man beginning at the family social level.

In his book “Foundations of African Theological Ethics, James Nkansah said that our unique relationship with our God motivates our moral behaviour as we engage in our politics and governance. It is stated that;

The Triune God being the model and source of our moral life and we being his subjects or children of God, by creation and redemption respectively, are to reflect and imitate the behaviour and character of God. How God rules and uses power becomes the standard for our moral actions. Politics and governance reflect his being and character as a loving, compassionate, righteous and just God. Our views on politics and governance must therefore be shaped by our Christian convictions on the moral character as a loving, compassionate, righteous and just God.²⁹

This quote implies that Christian engagement in politics and governance should be guided by the moral character of God, reflecting His love, compassion, righteousness, and justice. Therefore, believers are called to model their use of power and leadership after God's own example, allowing their faith to shape their political ethics and decisions.

As we saw before, theology is a discipline that governs our moral behaviour as we relate to God and fellow human beings. James Nkansah further argues that the Triune God is our model for our ethical behaviour. This, therefore, implies that in the area of politics, we should emulate God on how we exercise power and govern the people. Our African politicians who profess to be Christians must model the character of God in doing politics and governing the people. Nkansah says “any other way of exercising political power and governance other than God's way will be morally bankrupt and destructive.”³⁰

For us to engage in healthy politics in society, we must define the root cause of our problems. Our problems lie in our sinful nature. That is why our politics and governance are defined by greed, nepotism, corruption, injustice, murder, and ethnic balkanization. Earlier on we say power corrupts and absolute power corrupts absolutely. Africa has been bleeding for many years without a political solution to her problems. We have always been persuaded by political elites that the constitution will guarantee our prosperity and peaceful co-existence. This has been a mirage never to be achieved.

We all share in our political failures in the society. We have always elected corrupt leaders to govern our resources. Paradoxically, hyenas can be hired to look after goats. We need both biblical and theological change from within and without so as to see our society prosper in the right direction. We should practice the doctrine of inclusivity by bringing everyone on board in the way we do politics and governance as illustrated here;

Give the vulnerable people to take part in society. This enhances their ability, opportunity and dignity. Identity is the key driver of social exclusion. Individual and groups are excluded or included based on their identity. Among the most common group identities resulting in

²⁹James Nkansah Obrempong. *Foundations for African Theological Ethics*. (Carlisle: Langham Monographs 2013), 137-138

³⁰Ibid, 138

exclusion are gender, race, caste, ethnicity, religion, age, occupational status, location and disability status.³¹

This quote powerfully highlights the irony of entrusting corrupt leaders with public welfare and calls for a transformative shift rooted in moral and inclusive values. True societal progress depends on recognizing and dismantling the identity-based barriers that exclude vulnerable groups from full participation in governance and public life.

In his submission to good politics and governance, James Nkansah affirms that;

If we follow these biblical values and principles which are love, justice, righteousness, Integrity, honesty and compassion and shun certain social vices like greed, dishonesty, evil, perverse ideas, and pride which destroy leaders, we will have a political system that will seek and promote the well-being of its citizens. We will have a political system that help its citizens to experience God's shalom.³²

This quote implies that embracing biblical values and rejecting destructive vices can lead to a just and compassionate political system that fosters the overall well-being and peace (shalom) of society.

When biblical theology shapes our social and political engagements in life, our economic life can be sustained.

Economy is the heartbeat of a family at social and state life at national level. It affects how we do politics. Proverbs 29:2 says "When the godly are in authority, the people rejoice. But when the wicked are in power, they groan."³³ (New Living Translation). Another version says when the righteous rule, people prosper. This prosperity perhaps relates to the economic well-being of the people.

We see inequality in sharing resources in our society. Many people cannot access basic services such as food, shelter, and clothing. Getting access to education and medical care is a nightmare for many people. We witness poor road networks in many areas of our society. On the contrary, the political elites continue to dine in the economic prosperity of a nation.

While offering an economic solution to our predicament Nkansah says;

Humanity is made in the image of God. They are free to make choices, as God is free. However, they are responsible for the choices they make. Human beings find their "fulfilment in serving God, not in going for their own way. Human choices require "a change of our values, our objectives, our preferences,". They must conform to purposes and will of

God.³⁴

³¹Class Notes, TH 904 Theology, Political and Economic Life of Africa, Africa International University, Karen Campus, September 2020.

³²James Nkansah Obrempong. *Foundations for African Theological Ethics*.(Carlisle: Langham Monographs 2013), 164

³³<https://biblehub.com/proverbs/29-2.htm> (Accessed on 15th/12/2020)

³⁴ James Nkansah Obrempong. *Foundations for African Theological Ethics*.(Carlisle: Langham Monographs 2013), 168

The implication of this quote is that true human fulfillment and responsible economic choices come from aligning our values and actions with God's will rather than pursuing self-centered goals.

Economic injustice is what colours our society. However, God gave us enough resources for all of us to enjoy here on earth. Our politicians and leaders have the mandate to protect our resources. Through legislation in parliament, they should ensure that equitable resources are shared to benefit all in the country. This reflects the very character of a just and loving God who makes rain, oxygen, and sunshine to reach everyone without pay. Leaders should be transformed from within themselves to reflect God's character in order to positively affect the outside world. This calls for just, moral, and servant leaders who put the interest of others above their own as was demonstrated by Jesus in the Kenosis theory of Philippians chapter 2:1-11.

Conclusion

For our society to be liberated from social, political, and economic turmoil, we need a generation that is transformed from within and without in order to affect society positively. A real encounter with Jesus will bring about change and transformation that reflects the very character of a loving, just, and caring God.

We need men and women with passion and vision for both biblical and theological liberation in our society in order to guarantee positive social, political, and economic life. For this to take place, proper seed of biblical theology through discipleship in our families and churches must take centre stage. This is the best way to produce God-fearing leaders who will lead our society reflecting the very nature of God. Proverbs 22:6 says "Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it."³⁵ (King James Version). This implies that when a child is properly grounded in the word of God at both family and church levels, he/she will have Godly values that lead him/her even when he/she aspires to be what God wants him/her to be in any leadership ladder.

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