



## THE PLACE OF PRAYER AND WORKS IN THE POLITICAL RECOVERY OF NIGERIA

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### Abstract

The political degradation in Nigerian society has led to a breakdown of law and order in Nigeria. In a context marked by deep political socio-economic instability, many Nigerians turn to prayer as a source of hope. No human society exists without religion. Prayer functions not only as personal devotion but also as a communal practice that fosters resilience. However, reliance on prayer alone without actions risks passivity and undermines structural reform. This paper examines the intertwined roles of prayer and works in the political recovery of Nigeria. This paper also delineates “works” as the spectrum of civic engagement, policy implementation, institutional accountability, and public service that concretize aspirations for democratic governance. This paper adopted a Historical Method with Descriptive Approach, and also involved a thorough review of literature, discussion with masses, Church organizations, and religious leaders, as well as data from Journals, and Textbooks. This paper discovered the power and potency of prayer in social transformations that some Nigeria leaders have failed to use. It has also established a link between prayer and social transformations. This paper concludes that a synergistic approach where prayer informs ethical motivations and works enact structural change offers a more holistic framework for Nigeria’s political recovery.

**Keywords:** Nigeria, Politics, Prayer, Recovery, Works

### Introduction

Political degradation in Nigeria is taking a dimension that draws the attention of scholars. The place of prayer and works in the political recovery of Nigeria has become a subject for scholarly research. Political degradation has attracted the attention of policy makers and stakeholders in Nigeria especially the Church. For example, the word prayer has been explained by Stamps and Adams as the multifaceted communication of believers with the Lord God (Stamps, 1992, p.540). This means that prayer has many faces and dimensions and it is a means of communication between God and man. Ekwunife described prayer as a religious spiritual outreach of the temporal religious man to the transcendent being and his agents (Ekwunife, 2007, p.7). This means that prayer is a spiritual mission of men to cause a positive change in the society. Ekwunife asserts that prayer “is spiritual means through which the religious man interiorly and externally communicates with God and all supra-sensible beings of His invisible world” (Ekwunife, 2007, p.7). This implies that prayer has interior and exterior means of approach to the invisible world.

Myles Munroe opined that prayer is a result of God’s established authority structure between heaven and earth as well as a product of his faithfulness to his



word. Munroe went further to say that prayer remains a very important aspect of religion. It has become one common ritual and practice in all religions of the world. It is mysterious and sometimes misunderstood amongst men. Also prayer is a result of God's established authority structure between heaven and earth as well as a product of his faithfulness to his word. Prayer is as simple as respecting God's authority. Prayer is man giving God the legal right and permission to interfere on earth's affairs. Prayer is man giving heaven earthly license to influence earth. Prayer is a terrestrial license for celestial interference. Prayer is man exercising his legal authority on earth to invoke heaven's influence on the planet (Munroe, 2011, p.11). This implies that prayer was instituted by God as a link of authority between heaven and earth.

Spurgeon defined prayer as the Christians life line to God and with it lives are changed for eternity (Spurgeon, 1998, p.4). This implies that prayer is a Christian life and obligation to God which has power to transform lives. Jaja saw prayer as a ritual copied by Christian from Jesus Christ who taught his disciple how to pray. It is a Christian weapon of defense and encouragement in life (Jaja, 2009, 34). This means that prayer is a ritual Christians copied from Christ.

Prayer is an essential element of every religion. It is a means of having conversation with the Supreme Being. In Nigeria, three main religions are practiced; namely, African traditional, Christian and Islamic religions. Nigeria is a heterogeneous society, blessed, with abundant human and natural resources but is seriously marred by corruption. This means that prayer is vital aspect of religion and a way of communicating with the Supreme Reality.

According to Ifesieh, Prayer is one of the acts of virtues of religion. "Prayer is the most practical demonstration of man's relation with his source of existence" (Ifesieh, 1989, p.100). This means that prayer is one of the acts of religion and the most practical means man relates with his creator.

The bases of the research problem are the political degradation and lack of spirituality in Nigerian society which has led to a breakdown of law and order in the Nigerian society. This Seminar Paper identified and resolved some of the background problems as reduced to the following research questions for focus and clarity purposes:

- a. What are the contributions of prayer to political recovery of Nigeria?
- b. Is prayer a tool in politics?
- c. Is prayer and good works panacea to Nigerian contemporary problems?
- d. How is prayer connected to social transformation?

The research adopted a Historical Method with Descriptive/Qualitative Approach, and also involved a thorough review of existing literature in the library and on the internet, oral interview of masses/general public, Church organizations, and religious leaders, as well as data from primary and secondary sources/materials such as Journals, and Textbooks.

### **Nigeria's Unjust Socio – Political and Economic System and the Need for Recovery**

Politics is about the management of the affairs of the State. In a democracy, politicians are charged with doing this. This includes the pursuit of visions for



maintaining and enhancing the commonwealth. This pursuit is often through policies and deployment of resources for the empowerment of the people through enhancing their capabilities (Amartya, 1999). In the Nigerian context, especially in the south-eastern part that is predominantly Christian, there is an increasing co-optation of religion and religious images and ideas in making sense of and engaging the socio-economic and political processes. One encounters such slogans as “Enugu State is in the Hand of God,” “Abia, God’s own State,” etc.

God promised King Solomon in a dream that “if my people who bear my name humble themselves and pray and seek my presence and turn from their wicked ways, then I will listen from heaven and forgive their sins and restore their country” (Jerusalem Bible). This has led some politicians to present themselves in the mold of priest-kings like King Solomon. They organize prayer rallies to cash in on the promise above and thus fulfill their duties of ensuring the well-being of their people. If people prayed enough and turned from their wicked ways, then God would restore the land. Restoration would imply general well-being for the people – peace, justice, prosperity, etc. Similarly, some religious figures, take it upon themselves to mobilize the divine power so that it blazes the trail for the flow of prosperity, peace and justice to the people.

Leaving prayer out of Nigeria’s transformation Agenda is tantamount to ignoring the latent functions of religion in human society. No human society exists without religion. To understand the social behavior that make them to continue as a group, community or society we need religion. The phenomenon is not a conservative force as some consider it to be in tackling social problems on the contrary, religion is a potential instrument that can produce dramatic social transformations in the country. The multi-religious nature of Nigeria does not give room for emphasis on the “other-worldly” religion which makes it a conservative force, thereby rendering radical social transformation. The aim of the paper is to show the power and potential of prayers in any social transformation in Nigeria.

A careful consideration of the socio-political, situation of Nigeria reveals that she is faced with the characteristic problems of injustice, corruption, inequality and other such like oppressive and exploitative vices. Whatever may be the peculiarities of the Nigerian experience, her condition reveals the same factors and dimensions of impoverishment and underdevelopment in Africa as a whole. At the first level, it is common knowledge that politically speaking, Nigeria has had and is still undergoing a painful experience of colonialism and neo-colonialism. The role of the external western colonialism in Nigerian political experience and its effect and impact on our contemporary political structure remain an indelible monumental experience in our political history. Nevertheless, it is common place knowledge that since independence in 1960, Nigeria suffers from “internal colonialism” worse than it had suffered from the external western colonialism many decades ago. Today, a small group of rich and powerful fellow Nigerians maintains its power and wealth at the expense of the misery of millions of the population (Uchegbue, 1989 p.206). The coming of political independence did not bring any effective transfer of power into the hands of the masses, but into those of small elite. The masses remain exceedingly poor, mostly illiterates, and probably even more remote from the mechanism of even local power than in colonial or pre-colonial times (Hastings, 1976, p.78).



This statement reveals how undemocratic and unpopular the Nigerian government has been. In fact, what we normally call elections in Nigeria are a mere travesty and rape of democracy and institutionalized robbery of the people's franchise. This truth is epitomized in the popular June 12 episode, when the incumbent military regime under General Babangida refused to install the winner of the presidential election, Chief M.K.O. Abiola, as the democratically elected president of the country. This situation is further exacerbated by the dominant presence of ethnicity, election rigging and thugs' actions, intermittent but frequent military interventions and perpetuation of totalitarianism, despotism and dictatorship in the Nigerian political scene. Let us briefly consider each of these factors.

Ethnicity, for instance, has played a central role in the political history of Nigeria even before independence in 1960. Hostility among the major ethnic groups in Nigeria has been exploited by the political elites and this has led to various political crises in the country since then. As P.C. Lloyd points out, most problems in Nigeria, in large measure, derive from the tensions arising between the large ethnic groups. According to him, it is not ethnic differences in themselves that are responsible for the hostility, but competition for wealth and power among the political elites from these ethnic groups (Lloy, 1972, p.1) (Adejumobi, 2001, p.37). This was the root of ethno-regional politics in Nigeria following the division of Nigeria into three regions by the colonial government before independence and the formation of regional political parties such as the Action Group (AG), the Northern People's Congress (NPC), and the National Council for Nigeria and the Cameroons (NCNC) to reflect the Western, Northern and Eastern regions, respectively (Olukoju, 1997, p.12). These regions and their corresponding political parties reflected the three major ethnic groups in the country: Yoruba, Hausa and Igbo, respectively, while the Mid-Western region later created in 1963 after independence reflected the Edo-speaking minority ethnic group. As Olukoju comments, "The foundation was thus laid for the future pattern of regionalist politicking that was to ground the ship of the Nigerian state" (Olukoju, 1997, p.12). Ethno-regional conflicts and the minority group politics in Nigeria were the major causes of the first military coup and the counter coup in 1966 and the aftermaths which culminated in the 1967-70 civil wars (Adejumobi, 2001, p.37).

Apart from ethnicity, Nigeria's politics has often been characterized by election rigging and thugs' action. It is quite unfortunate that in spite of the vast human and material wealth with which Nigeria is endowed and which could have given her a place of honor in Africa and the world, the country continues to face constant economic regression from boom to doom (Achebe, 1983, p.19). The root cause of this is not unconnected with the unabated open and shameful official corruption, which has been characteristic of the country's leadership since the Second Republic. Usually, it is the poor masses of the society who suffer the sad effects of the corrupt and unjust economic system of the times. Inadequacy of food at reasonable prices, poor health services, constant deterioration in the educational system, unemployment, et cetera, are among the deplorable conditions of the people which Late General Sani Abacha pointed out during his radio broadcast announcing the military takeover of the government on December 31, 1983 (Daily Times Publication, Return of the Military, January 1984, p.3). Ironically, these conditions became worse by many hundred percents during his regime and have even become worst today. It is reported that Sani Abacha's eight bank accounts totaling 600 million U.S. dollars were frozen by Officials of Luxembourg, a tiny European principality (Kofi, 2000,



p.1). We will then agree with Adegbola that Nigeria's "culture of underdevelopment" and "culture of poverty" is only a "culture of exploitation of the masses" and self-induced poverty (Adegbola, 1987, p.47).

### **The Place of Prayer and Works in the Recovery of the Nigerian Society**

Participation in the process of socio-political and economic liberation for the realization of justice is a task, even a 'sine qua non' for the Church as both a religious and viable social institution. Christians are to take positive actions to destroy all forms of oppression and injustice wherever they are found (Hastings, 1976, p.91). This does not mean, however, that the Church as a body should be expected to leave the Word of God to serve tables by getting herself involved in a violent revolutionary overthrowing of governments or even in partisan political activism. The liberating role of the Church should be such that will enhance her influence on the socio-political and economic order without jeopardizing her more spiritual and evangelistic vision and mission. This will involve her confronting and challenging every unjust, oppressive and exploitative structure with Christian values and ideals. This implies a prophetic and priestly role for the Church in Nigeria, just like Amos, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Micah and other prophets in the Bible. In this role, the Church can, along with her direct spiritual vocation, be committed to the process of justice, human liberation and social transformation by fulfilling the following five functions: prophetic denunciation of the oppressive mechanism; promoting programs of raising social consciousness among the masses; practical alleviation of the conditions of the oppressed masses; peace building through positive reconciliation of the oppressed and oppressive members; and personal conversion of the ordinary man.

#### **(i) Prophetic Denunciation of the Oppressive Mechanism**

The Church's prophetic stance obligates her to confront and challenge the systems of corruption and injustice which oppress, exploit and deprive the masses by criticizing and judging them by the Gospel standards. The Church in Nigeria, in the words of Archbishop Cyril Garbett, is to "fight the world by bearing against it militant and prophetic witness shown in open attacks on the sins of the world and expose the falseness of the values accepted by the world" (Ryan, 1987, p.140). By Means of official statements from ecumenical bodies like CAN, ecclesiastical councils, critical and corrective sermons, and so on, such unjust systems can be decried, denounced and called to order. Such prophetic calls can function to disturb the comfort and untouched conscience of the affluent society whose power and wealth are accumulated at the expense and to the detriment of the impoverished peasants.

As the proclaimer and interpreter of the Divine purpose and will for the nation, the Church can act as a moral check on the activities of the ruling class, rejecting, resisting and denouncing ungodly and unpopular policies which prevent the full realization of justice and equity in the society. She can provide an "alternative voice" through the establishment of a more reliable, intrepid and independent media for the dissemination of her prophetic messages to the nation. As a prophet the Church can function as the conscience of the nation, the voice of the voiceless, a critic of unjust institution and an iconoclast in the oppressive tradition. As S. I. Omoera points out, the Church is "to be aggressive in condemning sin" in demanding for justice, and in



fighting “the battle of the poor, the hungry” against a system that “too often turns deaf ear to their appeals” (Hastings, 1976, p.93).

### **(ii) Promoting Programmes of Raising Social Consciousness among the Masses**

This is a social educational program aimed at creating socio-political awareness among the people for an eventual peaceful elimination of the structures of oppression. It is a gradual but effective approach to structural change through a re-orientation of the group and individual’s consciousness. The sensitization of the masses involves, among other things, the provocation, stimulation, creation and building up of “a new awareness in them” to give them “a new consciousness” which encourages them “to see the possibility” and “accept responsibility for their own development.” It also involves the mobilization of the masses “to join hands together for positive action towards change” (Omoera, 1987, p.121). The goal of this mental liberation is to emancipate the Nigerian minds from such “fatalistic world view” which makes them to resign themselves to the culture of poverty and hopelessness. It enables them to be able to see their “capacity to create a better society for themselves” (Adegbola, 1987, p.47). This is the attitudinal aspect of liberation in which the marginalized, oppressed and down-trodden masses are able to face the future with meaningful and reasonable optimism. This is done by helping them to see themselves in the light of the biblical evaluation of themselves. Such function disabuses and emancipates their minds from the belief that God has destined their lot to be so.

This attitudinal aspect of liberation also involves the sensitization of the upper and middle class elite members of the Church to the real nature and extent of the plight of the oppressed, thereby soliciting their change of attitude, sympathy and commitment to the cause of the oppressed. It may be that some of them do not actually realize the full implications and effects of their activities on the masses. They may likely change for better and help to change their colleagues when their consciences are awakened.

### **(iii) Practical Alleviation of the Conditions of the Oppressed Masses**

The Church’s liberation work as the champion of the cause of the poor, weak and oppressed masses does not end with attacking the perpetrators of injustice and oppression (“afflicting the comfortable”), but also includes the alleviation of the miserable and painful condition of the victims of the system (“comforting the afflicted”). This will necessitate practical concern with economic program for the improvement of their conditions, since the callous bureaucratic system would only frustrate the hopes of the helpless masses for such projects if left in their hands. This goes beyond mere charity works for the provision of subsistence needs. The Churches can embark on practical socio-economic projects such as we see in some Latin American countries. This can include building of hospitals, establishing co-operative bodies for joint venture, scholarship funds for students from poor families, educational program for those who are disadvantaged by the government’s educational system, organizing training program in business and technological skills just like the Church Private Voluntary Organizations (PVOs) in some African countries, and the “Village Polytechnic” pioneered by the Churches in Kenya.

### **(iv) Peace-Building through Positive Reconciliation of the Oppressed and Oppressing Members**



The priestly role of reconciliation is another major social function of the Church in the process of socio-political and economic liberation. Unlike the Marxist approach to justice, which implies the elimination of the oppressive rich for the liberation of the oppressed poor, the Christian approach to justice seeks to create a community of reconciled people – the rich and the poor, the oppressor and the oppressed. It is “a peace-creating justice which binds together in a new transformed community” (Hellwig, 1974, p.169). The Church’s liberation ministry is, therefore, a ministry of positive reconciliation of both parties and not that of violent revolution. The Church is to show concern both for the deplorable conditions of the victims of injustice and oppression and also for the ultimate judgment on the vices of the oppressors. Thus, its prophetic indictments of the oppressive status quo should not be mere arbitrary, malicious and vindictive criticisms of the system, but rather constructive and corrective criticisms which ultimately aim at the eventual liberation of both the oppressors from their vices and the oppressed from their victimization, thereby reconciling them. This fact is aptly captured in the statement cited by Uchegbue that “God does not seek the destruction of members of the ruling classes who are willing to change their ways in order to create a new system” (Uchegbue, 1985, p.99).

#### **(v) Personal Conversion of the Ordinary Man**

The Church’s liberating mission in Nigeria goes beyond commitment to mere philanthropic activism or welfare system, protesting against social injustices and motivating and mobilizing people for active participation in social transformation. Religion essentially sets a transcendental goal by helping us to realize that life is more than the satisfaction of immediate material needs of hunger and poverty. As Douglas Webster is cited by Norman Autton to have rightly pointed out, the human tragedy is sin and not hunger while the worst privation is ignorance of God rather than social inequality. Therefore, though poverty, exploitation, oppression, and so on seems to be the prevailing problems of our day which provide the Church with “the context for mission”, the “contents” of her mission are not determined by them. In the final analysis, the Church’s mission is ultimately and supremely concerned with God (Autton, 1972, p.226). According to him, though “Man does need bread”, he needs God above all (Autton, 1972, p.227).

Thus while the Church seeks for socio-political and economic liberation to provide a more just system in Nigeria, it must relentlessly and without distraction seek for the spiritual liberation of the people, a change in the personal man himself. If social changes are to bear lasting fruits, a deep-seated conversion and fundamental spiritual transformation of the individual members of society, the oppressed, the oppressors and the liberators are of indispensable necessity. The reason is that the ordinary, normal, usual or average man is inherently corrupt. History has proved that the revolutionary of today may become the reactionary of tomorrow and the progressive of today may become the conservative of tomorrow unless they are inwardly transformed themselves. How can one under the iron shackles of evil and wickedness change an evil and wicked system? This reflects the picture of the hypocritical liberators presented by the Apostle Peter in his Second Epistle where he writes, “While they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption: For of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage”.



### **Prayer as Tool in Politics**

We have seen how prayer has been co-opted as a tool in politics. Christians spend time storming heaven in the hope of securing God's immediate intervention in their affairs. A re-reading of 2 Chr. 7:14, however, has shown that by default, God acts immediately. God used David to prepare for the building of the first temple of Jerusalem and to reform the cult. Later, God intervened through Cyrus of Syria to resettle the Israelites and to rebuild the temple. In history, both ancient and recent, the fortunes of groups have been transformed for good by purposeful leadership. The case of Singapore under President Lee Kuan Yew comes to mind (Yew, 2000). The creativity and commitment of individuals to the common good also contribute to social transformation. These among others are what God requires from people – the leaders and the led – in order to effect the restoration of the land promised. Conversion of heart and moral reform are involved in the equation not because God punishes people by stalling their well-being to get them to repent. Rather, moral rectitude reconfigures the civic public space. In all, prayer, properly engaged in, can be a channel of grace. It can sharpen the vision, provide the incentive to commit and strengthen the resolve to carry through amidst difficulties because one action or inaction has implication for the coming of God's kingdom.

### **Prayer and Good Works: Panacea to Nigeria's Contemporary Problems**

Corruption is a global phenomenon. It is found in every society but the magnitude of corruption differs from one nation to the other. The Nigerian society is bedeviled with corruption. Corruption has been identified as a very big problem retarding the socio-economic growth and entire development of the country. Many scholars have reflected on the issue of corruption in Nigeria and have identified corruption in its different forms and ramifications. In trying to check corruption, various bogus anticorruption programs were set up by certain Nigerian governments, which ironically included many of the governments manned by military dictators who ceased power by the barrels of the gun. These included the War against Indiscipline (WAI), Mass Mobilization for Social and Economic Recovery (M.A.M.S.E.R), the Code of Conduct Bureau, Independent Corrupt Practices Commission (I.C.P.C.), Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (E.F.C.C.) and so on, but so far they all seem to have failed to cure Nigeria of her malady.

In addition, the major religions and denominations at various times in the past instituted various prayers to heal and save the nation, including, Nigeria Prays (nondenominational), Prayer for Nigeria in trouble (non-denominational) and Prayer against corruption in Nigeria (the Catholic Church) to name but a few, but the problem remains persistent and rather worsens as evidenced in the activities of the 2003 and 2007 general elections in the country. Consequently, the million dollar question worth reflecting on is: Can prayer alone be a solution to Nigerian's contemporary problems? Sincere prayer is a necessity in the lives of every religious man. It is really relevant in the Nigerian situation. Nigeria notably is a country with large populations of Christians, Muslims and African traditional practitioners. In each of these religions, prayer is an essential feature of the mode of group worship and as well an essential feature in the everyday lives of all or most of the practitioners in the nation. For example, Christians are not only asked to pray but they are enjoined to pray constantly. In Islamic religion prayer is one of the five pillars of Islam. A Muslim is required to pray at least five times a day at stated hours between dawn and



the sunrise, after midday, about 4.00pm in the afternoon, after sunset and sometimes during the night (Ekwunife, 2007). African traditional practitioners also pray to God through their ancestors and divinities.

Faith and good work are therefore essentially concomitant to prayer as a mode of worship of God and can result in the healing of a nation. Thus faith without good works is dead. Christ also made it clear in John 4:24 that “God is spirit; and those who worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth”. The fruit of the spirit is love, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self control. In James 5:16 it was also stated thus: “The prayer of a righteous man has great power in its effect”. Therefore, this could mean that the prayer of unrighteous man is counterproductive. Sincerity is needed in prayer. Given that prayer cannot workout without the aforementioned concomitant factors, it will be germane to mention that prayer can still make waves in providing lasting solutions to human problems in the society.

### **Link between Prayer and Social Transformation**

The link between prayer and transformation in human society is inseparable. Transformation of any kind is initiated by God. When God intends to transform a society he involves man whom he has created in his image and likeness for that purpose. According to Hughes, God is not dictatorial or capricious. Whenever he wants to bring his purposes to pass here on earth he does not act arbitrarily or independently of the principle of prayer. God touches the hearts of praying people, placing a burden of transformation on their hearts and then ushers in his purposes across the bridge of prayer.

God will ever respect the principle of prayer in anything he does on earth because prayer was born out of God’s arrangements for man’s assignment on earth, it happened when the creator spoke two words during the creation process ‘let them’ these words are recorded in the first chapter of the first book of the Bible (Monroe, 2002). Then God said let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creature that move along the ground.

From this declaration God gave man the mandate to dominate the earth. Man became the legal steward of the earth domain. Although the authority given to man is a delegated type, nothing will happen in the earth realm without the active or passive permission of man who is its legal authority. John Wesley has put this truth in this way “God does nothing redeem in the world except through prayer”. The sovereignty of God and the responsibility of man have to be brought together in great harmony in prayer before and meaningful social transformation could take place.

The power and potency of prayer in social transformation are replete in history and the Bible. Before God could pardon the sin of rebellion of Israel and deliver them, Moses and Aaron Caleb and Joshua have the burden and prayed. Before the wall of Jerusalem was rebuilt and the city fortified, God involved Nehemiah and gave him the burden to pray. For four months Nehemiah fasted and prayed with many tears because of the trouble afflicting God’s people in Jerusalem and Judah. Before the sins of the world could be removed, Jesus Christ had to bear a burden and prayed.



Word of introduction on Hughes theme “Revive us again” reviewed the stories of the 1904 Welsh Revival, how miners being overcome with conviction, falling to their knees to rise with completely transformed lives, of alcoholics miraculously transformed; of people going to public meeting to laugh and heckle but staying to pray and leaving transformed (Mick, 2014). Max Weber in his argument against Karl Marx and some sociologists who felt that religion is a conservative force, explained how religiously inspired movements have often produced dramatic social transformations. Protestantism, particularly Puritanism, according to Weber was the source of the capitalistic outlook found in the Modern West. The early entrepreneurs were mostly Calvinists. Their drive to succeed which helped initiate Western economic development was originally promoted by a desire to serve God. Material success was a sign of divine favor (Giddens, 2003, p.4). Max Weber’s writings were on the connection between religion and social change.

### **Conclusion**

From the discussion, it is very glaring that Nigeria, like many countries of the world today, is in great of socio- political and economic liberation. It is also very obvious that the Church as a sacred institution with indispensable social significance and relevance can and should contribute significantly towards the realization of this lofty goal. It is indisputably conclusive, therefore, that a combination of the task of spiritual and social liberation enhances the Church, more than any other institution, to influence the socio-political and economic life of the Nigerian society positively. It is no exaggeration to maintain that an inspired, honest, faithful, dedicated, converted and courageous Church, through its clergy and laity, remains a powerful agent for social change and liberation of the citizens of a callous, corrupt, inept and exploitative Nigerian society. It has the mandate, message and method which can contribute greatly to the attempts to solve the socio-political and economic problems of the country.

The study has shown the power and potency of prayer in social transformations that some Nigeria leaders have failed to use. It has also established a link between prayer and social transformations. The missing link is that Nigerians over the decades have focused only on the responsibility of man in their social transformation program and have ended up minimizing the sovereignty of God. Social transformation which comes through men prayer within the Church and flow into the larger system or society, for example Nigeria, is complete, while the one that occur without prayer remains incomplete. When both God and man are involved in social transformation then it becomes complete. Complete social transformations are those religiously inspired through prayer; promoted by a desire to serve God. Western economic, (capitalist economic) which Nigeria emulates came from religiously inspired social transformation. People who are transformed through prayer are often times calm, placid, patience and with other ethical and moral values that serve as ingredients of meaningful social transformation. These people imbed such virtues from their leaders who were transformed through prayer as well. They were leaders who acknowledged God as their maker and source of power and yielded to God’s burden for prayer for transformation of their land.

This research work identified and resolved some of the background problems as reduced to the following research questions:

- a. What are the contributions of prayer to political recovery of Nigeria?



- b. Is prayer a tool in politics?
- c. Is prayer and good works panacea to Nigerian contemporary problems?
- d. How is prayer connected to social transformation?

The research problem was addressed thorough review of existing literature in the library and on internet, oral interviews of masses/general public, Church organizations, and religious leaders, as well as data from primary and secondary sources/materials such as journals, Bible, text books, etc.

The major cause of political degradation in Nigeria is identified as lack of acknowledgement of the supremacy of God. Church should be considered by Nigerians both the ruled and the rulers as God's agent in the society through which meaningful transformation could come. This is because God is deeply committed to working through the church to demonstrate and express his plans and purposes on earth.

Nigeria transformation program is going through a 'fermentation' period. A period of excitement, anxiety and confusion and it is only religion (Church) that can provide the men and women too patience, tolerance, sacrifice, calm and placid spirit required for meaningful social transformation.

Lastly, the Church and the state should remain inseparable. Both the God's sovereignty and man responsibility have to be brought together for complete social change in Nigeria.

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