

**GOOD**

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# GOD AND GOVERNANCE: A CHRISTIAN APPRAISAL OF CONTEMPORARY NIGERIAN POLITICAL SITUATION

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## Introduction

Wherever man may stand, whatever he may do, to whatever he may apply his hand: in agriculture, commerce, (government) or industry, or his mind in the world of art and science, he is in whatsoever it may be, constantly standing before the face of his God.<sup>1</sup>

The foregoing reveals that God is the ground norm of every assignment. Thus, this responsibility does not exist outside God's behest; it is call of God which is *de jure* exercised in His earthly kingdom. Undoubtedly, man is enthroned into leadership position of various capacities so as to carry out fulfil an avowed assignment on God's behalf. However, governance does not depend on person's mastery or his skill or people's acclaim, it is divinely ordained. Therefore, human governance as quasi-autonomy is exercised with a high sense of commitment, humility, and sincerity in the communal life of God's creature. In a nutshell, sovereignty resides with the *Civitas* a society of citizens.

Also, this God-given mandate from Christian perspective is the inherent dignity and irrefragible worth of the essence of individual human commonwealth. This political commonwealth is not something foreign to individuals. Despite these Christians tenets, governance in Nigeria is particularly inexpedient with stringent and dehumanizing rules undermining the inviolable right of the *civitas*. Meanwhile, the commonwealth of Christian governance comprises of justice, peace and fairness among others. God specially wants this commonwealth of Christian governance realized on the earthly governance, coupled with

its eschatological implications. This eschatological implication transforms the present order and the future realization. No doubt, these Christian precepts dignify and defanaticize claims and are bereft of ultimate truth. It is the intention of this paper to look at God and governance. The ethical synthesis of politico-Christian governance would be explored. An appraisal of Christian governance in Nigeria would be tersely examined; with a view to suggesting ways towards resolving the problems of governance in contemporary Nigerian political situation.

## God

Without doubt, our understanding of what God looks like varies from tradition to traditions, but the fact remains that God is generally considered as an invisible, spiritual, supreme, and immortal Being higher than man with great preponderance and corresponding indisputable attributes. God is the living, and eternal Being in whose presence all creatures live and move, and have their being.<sup>2</sup> He has revealed himself in various ways, and human beings *per se* have always felt His presence and subsequently responded to Him in worship.<sup>3</sup> This relationship between the creator and the creatures is the pivot of all religions.

God Himself pre-existed before the foundation of the world; He is not begotten. In which case, He is the oldest, unchanging, insearchable, inscrutable, unlimited, wisest, omnipotent, omnipresent omniscient Being who is beyond human description in all His fullness. There is no gainsaying the fact that people have diverse ideas about Him. Writing the word "God" helps us to know that God is a special word which depicts the Eternal creator whom nobody can ever fully understand or correctly speak about holistically and carelessly.<sup>4</sup>

Not only that, God is equally described as transcendent and immanent Being. He is transcendent because this is beyond what is natural and normal, and different from it.<sup>5</sup> By and large, God is not confined to a place. He is not static. He is not restricted to particular places and times as human beings are. God does not abide in the physical world which human beings live. His thoughts are indescribable. "God is always there first; He is the creator of all things and the initiator of all events."<sup>6</sup> In point of fact, human beings see the

presence of God within the natural milieu through what happens to them with awe. People verifiably express this belief by saying that God is "dwelling within."<sup>7</sup>

Describing Him, al Ghazzali, the great Muslim theologian wrote as cited by David A. Brown:

His is the power and the kingdom and the glory and the majesty and to Him belongs creation and the rule over what He has created. He alone is the Giver of life, He is omniscient, for His knowledge encompasseth all things from the deepest depths of the earth to the highest heights of the heaven. The smallest atom in the earth or the heaven is known unto Him.<sup>8</sup>

In the same vein, the Hindu Gita while expressing a similar belief about the relationship between God and the universe describes God as also cited by David A. Brown.

Why should they not revere you?... You are first creator, infinite, Lord of the gods, home of the universe. You are the imperishable. You are the last pro-and-resting place of this universe. You are the knower and what is to be known... You spun the whole universe... Your strength is infinite, your power limitless. You bring all things to their fulfillment; hence You are All... You are the father of the world of moving and unmoving things.<sup>9</sup>

Some portions in the Bible also assert the close nexus between God and the world. Here is a passage from one of the minor prophets.

He it is who forgets the thunder and creates the wind, who showers abundant rain on the earth, who darkens the dawn with thick clouds and marches over the heights of the earth: his name is the Lord the God of Hosts. (Amos 4:13)<sup>10</sup>

Sequel to the above, it is clearly evident that God is in control of everything that consists the world. Human beings owe their existence



to Him. Hence we are the expressed image of God *imago Dei*. Favoured by His existence, human beings always look towards improving their relationship with the world around them with the anticipation that their existence is enabled by God's prerogative.

Undoubtedly, the relationship between God and the universe is frequently expressed and strengthened by select people who are called the Ministers of God; Ministers in both the secular and spiritual world. They may be ministers of the sacred things and spiritual and the leaders of community. Often times, they have an overall established position within the community as ministers or leaders or guardians. In some cases, however as leaders, individuals are associated with God almost against their will.<sup>11</sup> People stoutly believe that such ministers both the secular and the spiritual are compelled to act, lead, and speak on God's behalf. As we have earlier noted that human beings owe their existence to God, these ministers of God exercise quasi-autonomy on behalf of God in the theocratic government of the world. They are saddled with the responsibility of various ministerial functions in their immediate environment, such that God's purpose must be clearly dispensed and entrenched. Thus, these ministers are mirrors in the lives of their followers. Succinctly, God not only created the world but also revealed the basic fundamentals of public and private principles. The purpose of public policies is to seek justice. "A justice measured in quite concrete terms by how the most vulnerable and the weakest members of society are dealt with."<sup>12</sup>

## Governance

The growing global recognition and awareness of the essence of good governance is almost being generally perceived as a catalyst for economic, social and political development in all nations.<sup>13</sup> Therefore, "governance is generally defined as the manner in which power is exercised in the management of a country's economic and social development."<sup>14</sup> As a matter of fact, not every governance of a country is good. To assess, therefore, the tenability of good and bad governance in a country, one must compare and consider the vitality of political and economic plurality which enhances choices made by the masses, but also the level of transparency and accountability.<sup>15</sup> By extension, justice equitable allocation of scarce resources, organizational goals, all-

encompassing and all-embracing conditions of political harmony are the condiments that flavour governance. In the same development, bad governance has been described as the poor management and low level of development in the developing world, and the literature on poverty and development has been enhanced globally on what good governance entails and the ethical problems encountered by administration in many countries enthroning it.<sup>16</sup>

Governance is the attainment of any worthwhile governmental objectives which can only be possible in an environment devoid of rancour, ill-will, strife, struggle and disdain.<sup>17</sup> Thus, good governance is a *sine qua non* for achieving a functional and result-oriented goals, with the resultant overriding need, extending the frontier of welfarism of the government to the governed.<sup>18</sup>

Governance in human expression is God-ordained, that is divinely directed and dispatched. The political scientists refer to this Godly governance in earthly kingdom as Divine theory. The Divine theory depicts that the state and governance are designed by God to meet the purpose, yearnings and aspirations of the *civitas*. So, the rulers are regarded as ordained and chosen by God to serve as representatives here on earth. Sovereignty remains with the people. God only needs total submission from the rulers. As such governance by God is regarded as expressed in the collective will of the people. So the King himself is seen as a part of God's governance expressed in the collective will of people.<sup>19</sup> Thus, this collective will of the people does not in any way contradict God's purpose for the state. It is only God who can protect not only the state but also the entire humanity. Those who will rule must rule in consonance with God's principles and ordinances. In return, the state enjoys God's favour and protection. This informs human development in earthly kingdom for when "the righteous rules the people rejoice" (Prov. 29:2)

Furthermore, governance in all transcends individual religion. It covers all those who win God's favour. "The commonwealth will actually facilitate justice".<sup>21</sup> Commonwealth with Christian approach ushers in peace and justice in the earthly governance when individuals agree on this code of conduct, that is the scriptural command of "Love the Lord with all your heart and your might and your neighbours" (Matt. 23:37-39); and follow peace with all men... without which no man shall see the Lord (Heb. 12:14). Once individuals strictly adhere to



these codes i.e. the rulers and ruled, justice and peaceful co-existence will be realized. All citizens as members of the God's heavenly kingdom actually can realize this when both seek earthly peace and advance earthly peace. Christian and members of heavenly and God's kingdom on earth ought to obey the state. While the government ought to seek peace and justice.<sup>22</sup> Succinctly therefore, governance does not anchor on other people's rating and accounting, neither is it an impression built on people's acclaim. God has chosen and prepared for it.<sup>23</sup> To this end, good governance is delegated responsibilities exercised freely on behalf of God. Thus, good governance comes into full action when the ruler understands his assignment and carries it out as divinely directed.

### **Politico-Christian Governance: An Ethical Symbiosis**

The relationship of Christianity with the political structures and the issues of social and economic justice is not simply of theoretical interest, but of considerable practical importance. In fact, Christianity has considerably shaped public norms and policies by which governance becomes a twilight of life and a bridge-builder society. At personal level, the Christian arrive at an understanding of the implications of individual belief for involvement in political realities.<sup>24</sup> At the corporal level also, ecclesiastical institutions attempt to decide how far they are to be involved in specifically political institutions and in detailed political decision-making and implementation.<sup>25</sup>

It must however be acknowledged that some political structures seldom adopt unsullied Christian ideas and vice versa. Be that as it may, this appears relatively unproblematic because the church can identify fully with such political programmes.

For many, total obedience to the individual Christian to specific political regimes, ideals, or programmes would also be thereby precluded. But to some... it would still be required, on the grounds that political regimes are always divinely appointed, even when they conflict with Christian ideals and principles.<sup>26</sup>

In similar, John Calvin argued in his exegesis of Romans 13 that:

The reason why we ought to be subject to magistrates is because they are constituted by God's ordination. For since it pleases God thus to govern the world, he who attempts to invert the orders of God, and thus to resist God himself, despises his power; since to despise the providence of him who is the founder of civil power is to carry on war with him.<sup>27</sup>

Like John Calvin, Luther and Karl Barth, in relation to this political question affirm that individual Christian should be obedient to the state and not the state that should be obedient to the individual Christian.<sup>28</sup> Luther further buttressed "that obedience to the appointed ruler was crucial, even if the latter was a tyrant and thoroughly Christian".<sup>29</sup> Flowing from the foregoing, it is apparent that obedience of the individual Christian is always required by the virtue of their existence in earthly kingdom. However, Thomas Aquinas like Calvin disagrees with those who assert that their kingdom is not of this world rather they are only in the world polluted with pagan practices. He writes that:

Some fanatics who are pleased with nothing but liberty, or rather licentiousness without any restraint, do indeed boast and vociferate, that since we are dead with Christ to the elements of this world and being translated into the kingdom of God, sit among the celestials, it is a degradation to us and far beneath our dignity to be occupied with those secular and pure cares which relate to things altogether uninteresting to a Christian man.<sup>30</sup>

He was sharply critical to this form of Christian anarchism. It now becomes imperative to show that Christianity, the chief architect of western civilization, has any common cause with politics governance. This is thus easy to achieve for any searching mind.<sup>31</sup> Jesus Christ paid tax and commanded people to give to Caesar the things that are Caesar's. On this note, Christianity meant to concern itself with



politics and St. Paul confirmed this when he was exhorting the Romans. These are pointers to the fact that Christianity makes causes with governance. Consequently, by addition, all religions make case with politics and there should be no sense of anathema and estrangement between them.<sup>32</sup> The relevance of this is the fact that there are negative radical changes in the world all together, which gives room for the concern of human salvation and crusade against evils and injustices in all its forms. Christianity and politics converge on the same subject, man, man living, man acting, and interacting, man behaving in organic consensus. Any differentiation of them is basically that of aspect and emphasis. Thus, Christianity and politics in one man will never experience a physical separation of distinct and autonomous realities. Therefore, man is the greatest benefactor of the state if perfected.

However, St. Augustine describing the *City of God*, posited the strained relationship between the earthly and the heavenly cities. This stemmed from his disillusionment about the immense transition in the social status of Christianity, to agonise over the position of Christianity in relation to political realities. Though he appears to oscillate the earthly city as a source of relative good and seeing it simply as a painful necessity while the heavenly city is by far and away the most important.<sup>34</sup> Meanwhile, he never stressed or advocated for disobedience to the civic authority, since Jesus as his mentor never permitted that. In a way, John Calvin argued that there were some situations when authorities should be resisted, especially when civil authorities' conduct is inimical to God's command.<sup>35</sup> In commenting on Daniel's civil disobedience, he wrote:

We must remember that passage of Peter, fear God, honour the King (I Peter 2:17). The two commands are connected together, and cannot be separated from one another. The fear of God ought to precede, that kings may obtain their authority. For if anyone begins his reverence of an earthly prince by rejecting that of God, he will act preposterously, since this is a complete perversion of the order of nature... For earthly Princes lay aside all their power when they rise up against God, and are unworthy of being reckoned in the number of mankind. We ought rather utterly to defy than to obey them whenever they are so restive

and wish to spoil God of his rights, and as it were to seize upon his throne and draw him from heaven.

Arising from the above, individual Christians must be obedient to the civil authorities except the feat of God is not paramount in their hearts. Without this fear, the individuals would suffer unjustly from these tyrant rulers; consequent upon their disobedience to God's purpose. But if the magistrates connive at the kings in their oppression of the masses, such forbearance involves the most nefarious perfidy because they fraudulently betray the liberty of the ordination of God.<sup>37</sup> This singularly negates justice from the rulers. This justice has eschatological implications of the present order and the future attainment which may be positive or otherwise. Despite this position, it has been accentuated oftentimes from the Jesus time through the Patristic era down to the period of the schoolmen that civic obedience to a constituted authority is per excellence and must be respected and not compromised ex cathedra. Thus, our study, has shown that the excise of Christianity from political life is as diametrically opposed in principle as it is impracticable in execution.

### **A Christian Appraisal of Governance in Nigeria**

In governance, religion cum Christianity is referred to as the fundamental rights: justice, fair play, equality, human dignity, equity, rule of law, even distribution of scarce resources respect of conventions and norms, transparency, accountability all wrapped in the total will of the people under God's guidance. The constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria possess this spirit when it says in its preamble:

We the people of the Federal Republic of Nigeria:  
Having firmly and solemnly resolved to live in unity  
and harmony as one indivisible and indissoluble  
sovereignty Nation under God."

The constitution is made only for a moral and religious people under God. It is thus insufficient for the government of any other. Nigerians as a people are uncompromisingly religious. Their religious allegiances are identifiably distinguishable in African Religion, Islam



and Christianity in the history of Nigeria. Put differently, the nation has from her inception been pluralistic, not only in its religions and political parties, but also in the philosophies that have informed her life. Christian values are regarded as a rich source of renewal and empowerment of the *Civitas*.<sup>39</sup> Christian governance at its best dignifies government, invests it with a certain weight and seriousness but it does not permit it to claim its own ultimacy.<sup>40</sup>

In Christian tradition, God not only created the universe but also revealed the foundations of public and private morality, not the specifics but the foundations.<sup>41</sup> Furthermore:

The God of... Christian traditions is believed to be involved in human history, not utterly beyond it, involved as one who vindicates the poor, the voiceless, the homeless, the oppressed.<sup>42</sup>

Based on the above, it is expedient to assert that Christians in governance especially in earthly endeavour ought to integrate development and advancement, fair play, neighbourliness, "we-feelings" collegueship, justice, candour, and contribution in the political and economic dimensions, and to be effectively present in the safeguarding of human dignity. For some, certainly, the most effective and appreciable way is to hold public office and work for policy decisions and implementation based on moral principles.

But in Nigeria, the salient fact is that this unfeigned good intention at the very beginning later turned to canal ambition. Yet, today we see Christian politicians in legislatures, courts, executive offices and bureaucracies aborting their moral values when they discharge their official duties.<sup>43</sup> Akanni is apposite when he stresses this worldly ambition of some of these Christian leaders after finding themselves in public office, he says:

This seemingly good desire, most of the time, comes with a strand of canal ambition. The lust for power often gets mixed up with many of our cries for God's manifestation of power through us.<sup>44</sup>

This damages the core value of true governance and the future governance is in no small measure endangered. The obvious fact

regarding governance in Nigeria is that it plunges Nigerians unto the murky political unwholesomeness we are currently witnessing. In Nigeria, some Christian leaders talk about God with so much commitment before taking on an oath of office and in getting to office, the same "God" is sent on errand when brokering or exercising power as well as implementing decisions. Most Christian leaders today often suspend "God" *invacuo* before de-valuing human face. In Nigeria today as well, most of the Christian leaders deliver sermon about God, still justice, equity, candour, neighbourliness, human dignity among others, which are God's principles, are murdered and buried by them at the cathedral. Today, Nigeria showcases contorted transparency, accountability and justice. Today, rhetoric is being herald everywhere on "we-feelings", collegueship, fundamental human rights, but every action in government is precisely the opposite. Today's Nigeria speaks of peace and there is no peace. Even the peace that exists is a fragile one.

In fact, some Christians who found themselves in government today easily turn Czars preferring material rewards to men; matters of personal interest and group promotion hold sway at the expense of those they are representing.

In Nigeria, the game, style, method and attitude of politics have changed radically and the Christian politicians' purpose turns anti-people, unjust, inhuman codes, which pervade the polity. With this, there is the promotion of political rascality, social dislocation and hunger for raw power.<sup>45</sup> Justice, in all ramifications, coupled with fairness, human right, have all been sacrificed on the altar of political expediency. No doubt today, some Christian politicians suddenly become base plotters of the killing of leading champions of genuine humanism and relentless persecutors of all who seek liberation from slavery and poverty of monopoly capitalism. The superabundance of falsehood and hypocrisy is being displayed as a screen for men eating predators.<sup>46</sup> This is certainly obvious in the much talked about Nigerian Labour Congress which seemed to fight against anti-human programmes all in the toga of economic reform. The allegiance under "God" is at the same time bottled and "His" soul on break. These practices are obviously on course as immoralities, such as hypocrisy, insincerity and deception, close-door, policies corruption, among others are soaring daily. Political governance arising from these



distasteful problems becomes a poor imitation, callous characteristics, which have drawn Nigeria back to dark ages. It thus seems as if they are not aware of the inconsequential and deterrent measures they are employing and promoting without knowing their attendant eschatological implications; the sign post to Armageddon.

### Suggestions

Having discussed God and Governance with particular reference to some Christian leaders in Nigeria, we discovered that transparency, justice, accountability, reciprocity, righteousness mutual trust, rule of law neighbourliness, we-feelings among others, are conspicuously absent. Despite these, it becomes pertinent to assert that these Christian moral values become necessary in Nigerian governance. The Bible passage supports this. In II Samuel 23:3 that:

When one ruling over mankind is righteous, ruling in the fear of God, then it is as the light of the morning, when the sun shines forth, a morning without cloud.

We align ourselves with this foregoing by asserting that those in authority should govern well with their quasi-autonomy as derived from God. The hallmark of their message being that all should exercise good thoughts, good deeds, pursue justice, pursue living, maintain an equilibrium in the relationship between the rulers and the ruled, search for sanity in an insane world so that they might live worthy.<sup>47</sup>

### Transparency

The masses have a right in the *polis* to know how public institutions apply the power and manage the scarce resources entrusted to them. Public scripting should be facilitated by transparent and democratic processes. Thus, this transparency should further be strengthened by measures such as disclosure system with recognition of the role of an active and independent media.<sup>48</sup> Transparency in Nigeria governance will therefore rekindle the interest of the people in public affairs, the quality of which can only be greatly improved

through openness in and unhindered flow of information on the activities of the governance and its agencies. Indeed, it is transparency, in the opinion of the commonwealth, that enhances public participation in public affairs, promotes the accountability of public agencies and officials and provides a powerful aid in the fight against corruption.<sup>49</sup>

### Accountability

Accountability as a responsibility for man's actions and inaction on behalf of God and man demands that everything must be done in the public. The rule governing the conduct of business, government activities, practices and procedures in all transactions must be known to all and sundry and recognized and all their implementation should not be hindered by bureaucratic bottleneck.<sup>50</sup> Thus, in Nigeria, all government activities should be made available and accounted for appropriately for public consumption. In other words, accountability in governance makes those who deliver services answerable to the people who finance such services through their taxes, and who use the services. This accountability ensures that elected and appointed government officials render account of their stewardship and justify their persistent stay in the office. Through accountability, the citizens, the legislative, executive and judicial arms of government exercise God given mandate over public officers and the justification to seek further support for their actions. It is to be stressed that the same accountability will be rendered to God in the hereafter, a sovereign nation under God.

### Justice

Justice is pivotal to all organizations not only government of the state. The ultimate will of the state is to ensure that justice is enjoyed rhapsodically by all. This is indispensable for good governance and national development. This is also needed for individuals to develop their potentials to the fullest and the much needed happiness of all.<sup>51</sup> Justice permeates the perceptions of personal or collective desires, pleasure, love to fellow men, sacrifice, truth and peace. These collective desires were displayed in practice by Jesus Christ the foundation of Christianity. The enjoyment entails, political freedom, right to duties and obligation, franchise, freedom from injustice,



imperialism, exploitation, starvation, dehumanization, social vices, oppression and insecurity among others. These fundamental human rights are those entitlements or rights which are universally identified as given to man by his creator which nobody can take away from him. When any man is violated, the violator has reduced the sufferer to a level below human dignity.<sup>53</sup> As a matter of fact, these rights are needed by men to have peace, to develop their potentials and to enjoy self-actualisation. These are indispensable in a civilized society. Likewise, these rights are enshrined in the UNO charter and in the Nigerian constitution.<sup>54</sup> Succinctly, what provides human rights for a person is not the constitution *per se*, but the fact that he is a human being who should enjoy natural privileges which are God given mandates. The constitution only guarantees these God given rights.

With this justice at hand the masses can adequately be active to checkmate the political class, the military among others that possess power in the state. Ikelegbe is apposite when he aptly observes that

Civil society has often tended towards popular struggles, civil action resistance and constellation in respect of freedom, justice, fairness, good governance and redress.<sup>55</sup>

A. V. Dicey asserts that every body is equal before the law. Equality before the law means that all people irrespective of gender, race, occupation, language, ethnicity, status, etc are equal before the law. The law does not discriminate among people.<sup>56</sup> It surpasses every individual. Therefore, the people in governance and the governed, the powerful and the weak, the rich and the poor etc are all equal before the law. There should be no different laws for different people. The scripture stresses the selfsame. Christians should continually uphold the integrity of equality, egalitarianism and impartiality.

### Christianity and Governance

The role of Christians in the maintenance of peace, paying of tax promptly as when due, obeying civil authority as divinely ordained as God's representatives on earth should be extended to the government. The Christians are enjoined to regular pray and fast for the stability of the government especially when they are fully convinced that such

government has good intentions for the masses. As Obafemi Awolowo (of blessed memory) had earlier observed as cited by C. O. Ayodele,

It is very good indeed for the churches to pray for the success of the government of the day... and futile for them to pray for the success of a manifestly satanic administration.<sup>57</sup>

Prayer should be offered for Nigeria because the peace of Zion is the peace of the people. In like manner, clergymen as apostles of welfarism and impartiality, also as challengers of oppression and injustice should be main development partners of the government. They should wage war against fraudulent intrigues, disintegrative loyalties and the numerable machinations of reprehensible, predator and anti-Nigerian politicians.<sup>58</sup>

The Christians should preach full-fledged democracy to everyone. Clergymen should be made to participate actively in each plenary session of the three arms of government. This will persistently allow the fear of God to be their watchword vis-à-vis conscience. This Christians should commit themselves to these and other avowed programmes of the Nigerian government. Pope John Paul has this to say in this regard.

Let Christians... be proud of the opportunity to carry out their earthly activity in such a way as to integrate human, domestic, professional, scientific and technical enterprises with religious values, under whose supreme direction all things are ordered to the glory of God.<sup>59</sup>

### A Sovereign Nation under God

Despite our secular state without state religion, God certainly allows secular governance. This secular promulgation in the constitution notwithstanding is still "under God". This makes us to know that both positive and negative rewards await any nation that frowns at God's purpose of the state. Internal sovereignty resides with the people while the overall sovereignty is God's prerogative.



Therefore, we are, as our pledge of allegiance asserts, a nation "under God" that means a nation under God's judgement, constantly reminded by the true position of ourselves comes from beyond ourselves. Not only that, the church and the state preserve the integrity of both the political process and the church.<sup>61</sup>

### Political Virtue

All stakeholders in governance must learn to appreciate and show understanding towards political tenets and objective will in governance. All these people must co-operate and work to strike a balance in political will and value thereby helping to secure a harmonious co-existence and conducive environment. This agenda internally affirms the positive continuity between the future of God's justice and its political embodiment in the present. In other words, the place of political virtue and order is to point ahead to the kingdom of God as a *sui generis* reality distinct from itself. This political virtue and order is built right into our nature, which is intrinsically disposed and oriented to a communal life. Ted Peters asserts that:

Political order... as the general human tendency towards the forming of community and the ordering of community life around principles of fairness and justice is the eschatological call ringing in the ears of everyone in organized society. Life in the temporal body politics can offer us a positive foretaste of what will be our final destiny in the everlasting polis of God.<sup>62</sup>

It can be tersely deduced from the above that justice, fairness, equity even distribution of scarce resources among others have eschatological implications. It is a truism that every stakeholder must account for his deeds if not now but in the hereafter. The internalisation of political virtue and natural governance in view of this eschatological vision must require transformation of the present order of things on behalf of what we see coming in the future. Thus, the rehearsal of the qualities of the eschatological kingdom—peace, love, joy, freedom,

Justice, unity, equality, etc, in the course of history's towards movement should be irreducibly emphasized. Similarly, the ordering of community life around principles of fairness, justice, unity and faith in the Nigerian nation can come by ensuring that only people with unquestionable integrity, requisite capability, vision, sincerity, track records of good performance, are duly elected into governance.

### Conclusion

This paper has revealed that governance is a department of God's earthly kingdom which affords the rulers and the ruled the privilege to freely express themselves in the *polis*. This is essential with a view to striking a balance, i.e., not to rise up against mankind and spoil God's purpose and rights. Governance should not be made a principle of mutual exploitation, the survival of the fittest and the triumph of the wrongdoers. Rather, it is a striving and collective responsibility of all stakeholders in governance to usher in conducive political climate. Thus, maintaining political security of lives and moral virtue indispensable for sustaining national and economic integration and development, peaceful co-existence, new political order, re-engineering and national rebirth should be pursued.

This responsibility is also extended to Christians and Christian politicians with the view to re-emphasizing God's tenets and the golden rules of "treat others as you would wish to be treated." This governance on the ground of civil responsibility is to be exercised as God's authority to establish and protect justice to the latter in the Nigerian nation. It is worthy to note that this justice is the virtue God wants, realized in the communal life of God's people, which must be treated and guided jealously towards attaining a sound religious validation of the present authority and its future as a "sovereign nation under God". Thus, citizens of the eschatological city or state must transform these natural rights towards enhancing human dignity which will consummate in the future as well locate the supreme good, the lure towards which all stakeholders are drawn; the ideal of the future being made actual in the present. To this end, dignity, liberty, virtue, justice, "we-feeling" among others supreme good are true purpose of governance in the *polis* of God.



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