

# **Prophetic Preaching in a Context of Corruption in Nigeria: A Practical Theological Investigation**

By  
Anthony Ishaya



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Supervisor: Prof. Johan Cilliers  
Co-supervisor: Dion Forster (PhD)

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## DECLARATION

I, Anthony Ishaya, hereby declare that the work contained in this Thesis is my own original work and that I have not previously in its entirety or in part submitted it at any university for a degree.

Signature.....

Date.....March 2017

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## ABSTRACT

Globally, the quest to create corrupt free societies which promote human dignity and the quality of life is greatly envisioned and desired. While highly critical, most efforts in the fight against corruption, especially in Nigeria, tend to get hindered and absorbed in inaccessible policies. This intensifies violence, injustice and pauperisation. Nevertheless, using the '*conflict paradigm*' within a *socio-ecclesiological* perspective, this study demonstrates that preaching, especially prophetic preaching, has the tenacity to foster appreciation and support for courageous collaboration and behavioral transformation of individuals and institutions that will strengthen the fight against corruption in Nigeria. Therefore, calls for prophetic pronouncement, prophetic exemplary life style, and prophetic imagination.

## OPSOMMING

Wêreldwyd word die soeke na korrupsie-vrye samelewings wat menswaardigheid en die kwaliteit van lewe bevorder, grootliks in die vooruitsig gestel en na gehunker. Krities gesproke, word die meeste pogings in die stryd teen korrupsie, veral in Nigerië, verhinder en in ontoeganklike beleide geabsorbeer. Dit vererger geweld, ongeregtigheid en armoede. Desnieteenstaande demonstreer hierdie studie, met behulp van die “konflik paradigma” binne ‘n sosio-geestelike perspektief, dat prediking, veral profetiese prediking, die neiging tot volharding het om waardering en ondersteuning te koester vir die moedige samewerking en gedragstransformasie van individue en instansies in hul stryd teen korrupsie in Nigerië. Derhalwe word ‘n beroep op profetiese uitspraak, profetiese lewenstyl en profetiese verbeelding gedoen

## **DEDICATION**

Through a lens of prophetic imagination, I envisaged and gladly dedicate this research to a corrupt free and attractive Nigeria. And to those who are courageously and tirelessly labouring towards its actualisation. To my young daughters, Elyon and El-Rinnah your births indicate this beautiful future.

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“The Lord bless you and keep you; The Lord make His face shine upon you, And be gracious to you; The Lord lift up His countenance upon you, And give you peace” Amen. (Numbers 6:24-26 NKJV).

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>DECLARATION .....</b>	<b>ii</b>
<b>ABSTRACT .....</b>	<b>iii</b>
<b>OPSOMMING .....</b>	<b>iv</b>
<b>DEDICATION.....</b>	<b>v</b>
<b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....</b>	<b>vi</b>
<b>TABLE OF CONTENTS.....</b>	<b>viii</b>
<b>LIST OF FIGURES.....</b>	<b>xiii</b>
<b>LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS.....</b>	<b>xiv</b>
<b>Chapter One: General Introduction .....</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1 Introduction .....	1
1.2 Preliminary Literature Review .....	5
1.3 Theoretical Framework/Perspectives on Corruption .....	11
1.4 Problem Statement .....	16
1.5 The Research Question and Sub-questions .....	16
1.6 Research Design and Methodology .....	17
1.7 Research Structure .....	18
1.8 Significance and Contribution of the Research .....	21



1.9	Limitation of Study.....	21
1.10	Conclusion .....	22
<b>Chapter Two: Contextual Analysis of Corruption in Nigeria .....</b>		<b>23</b>
2.1	Introduction .....	23
2.2	Some Historical and Contextual Background of Nigeria.....	25
2.3	Brief Historical overview of Corruption in Nigeria .....	29
2.3.1	Pre-independence .....	30
2.3.2	Post-Independence .....	35
2.4	Causes of Corruption in Nigeria .....	41
2.4.1	Poor Leadership Factor .....	43
2.4.2	Unethical factors.....	45
2.4.3	Religious factors.....	46
2.4.4	The Theory of the Two Publics' Factors .....	48
2.4.5	Socio-economic factors .....	50
2.5	Effects of Corruption in Nigeria .....	51
2.5.1	Political Institutions .....	52
2.5.2	Economic Institutions.....	54
2.5.3	Social Cohesion.....	57
2.6	Conclusion .....	59

<b>Chapter Three: A Homiletical Approach to Prophetic Preaching .....</b>	<b>60</b>
3.1 Introduction .....	60
3.2 Role of Biblical Prophets to Institutions .....	66
3.3 Description of Prophetic Preaching .....	71
3.4 Three Dimensions of Prophetic Preaching .....	75
3.4.1 Prophetic Envisioning .....	76
3.4.2 Prophetic Criticism .....	80
3.4.3 Prophetic Policy-Making .....	82
3.5 Conclusion .....	84
<b>Chapter Four: Prophetic Preaching in a Context of Corruption in Nigeria .....</b>	<b>86</b>
4.1 Introduction .....	86
4.2 Role of the Church in the fight against Corruption in Nigeria .....	86
4.3 Prophetic Preaching in a context of Corruption .....	93
4.3.1 Prophetic Preaching as a Biblical Hermeneutic Activity .....	95
4.3.2 Techniques for Prophetic Preaching as a Biblical Hermeneutic Activity ....	99
4.3.3 Towards a Biblical Hermeneutic for Prophetic Preaching in a Context of Corruption .....	103
4.4 Modes of Prophetic Preaching in a context of Corruption .....	106
4.5 Channels of Prophetic Preaching in a Context of Corruption .....	110

4.5.1	Social Media as Channel of Prophetic Preaching in a Context of Corruption	111
4.5.2	Letter Writing as Channel of Prophetic Preaching in a Context of Corruption	114
4.6	Conclusion .....	118
<b>Chapter Five: Summary, Recommendations and Conclusions .....</b>		<b>120</b>
5.1	Introduction .....	120
5.2	Summary and Conclusion .....	120
5.3	Recommendations .....	122
5.4	Suggestions for Further Research .....	125
<b>Bibliography .....</b>		<b>126</b>



## LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: Four perspectives on corruption for this research .....	15
Figure 2: Four tasks of practical theological interpretation .....	20
Figure 3: A map of Nigeria showing the 36 states and the Federal Capital Territory ....	26

## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

APNAC	African Parliamentarian Network Against Corruption
ATR	African Traditional Religion
BMPIU	Budget Monitoring Price Intelligence Unit
CBCN	Catholic Bishop's Conference of Nigeria
CPI	Corruption Perception Index
CBN	Central Bank of Nigeria
CGR	Colonial Government Report
EFCC	Economic and Financial Crime Commission
ESBM	Enterprise Survey of Business Managers
FBOs	Faith Based Organizations
GOAC	Global Organizations Against Corruption
ICPC	Independent Corrupt Practices Commission
IGAC	International Group for Anti-corruption Coordination
NOA	National Orientation Agency
NGOs	Non Governmental Organizations
NCNC	National Council of the Nigerians and the Cameroons
NYM	Northern Youth Movement
NPC	Northern People's Congress
UNIP	United National Independence Party
UN	United Nations
NAC	National African Company
PDP	People's Democratic Party
STAR	Stolen Assets Recovery Initiative
TI	Transparency International
WAI	War Against Indiscipline

## Chapter One: General Introduction

### 1.1 Introduction

Corruption is widely known as a global phenomenon that affects developments in any society at different levels and times. According to Achebe (1988, p.65); “corruption has permeated the African society, and anyone who can say that corruption in Africa has not yet become alarming, is either a fool, crook or else does not live on the continent”. Moreover, the 2014 Corruption Perceptions Index report<sup>1</sup> by Transparency International, ranked Nigeria among the most ‘highly corrupt’ nations in the world. This means that, this nation is currently experiencing a pandemic of corrupt practices in public, private and religious establishments.

This evil has reached the level of impunity which has become a culture for many Nigerians at all levels of society. Olusegun Obasanjo, former Nigerian President, affirmed the prevalent nature of corruption in the country, stating that “there was [is] corruption! Corruption! Corruption! And corruption! Everywhere and all the time! Corruption was not only rife, it has eaten so deeply into the marrow of our existence that looters and fraudsters had become our heroes, and it seems we could no longer place any faith in honesty, decency and hard work.” (cited in Njoku 2000).

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<sup>1</sup> Corruption Perceptions Index 2014. [www.transparencyinternational.org](http://www.transparencyinternational.org) Cf. 2014 World Bank Group Enterprise Survey of Business Managers, states that 44.8 percent of firms identified corruption as a major constraint in Nigeria. <http://www.enterprisesurveys.org/data/exploreeconomies/2014/nigeria#corruption> Accessed 29th June 2015.

In view of this, corruption has undermined good governance, sustainable development and national transformation. In other words: Nigeria is suffering from ‘democracy deficit’, which is referred to as “the incapacities of governmental institutions to reflect the real values and ideas of the citizens” (Tronto 2013, p.17). Buttressing this standpoint, former Secretary of State of the United States of America, Hillary Clinton posits that “the most immediate source of the disconnect between Nigeria’s wealth and its poverty, is the failure of governance at federal, state, and local levels...lack of transparency and accountability has eroded the legitimacy of the government and contributed to the rise of groups that embrace violence and reject the authority of the state” (Clinton 2009, p.1).

Nonetheless, Nigeria as a nation is very religious. As an illustration, Mbachirin (2006, pp.71–72), stated that the religiosity of Nigerians is reflected in many ways. The preamble of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria<sup>2</sup> states that it is “*one indivisible and indissoluble Sovereign Nation under God.*” This suggests that Nigeria as a nation is not an end in itself, but, stands under the transcendent ruler-ship of God. The Nigerian Coat of Arms carries the motto, “*Unity and Faith, Peace and Progress*”<sup>3</sup> demonstrating that we strive and desire in faith for social cohesion that fosters and builds a united, peaceful and progressive nation. “In this way we proclaim that we have faith in God that our nation is going to survive, faith in ourselves and faith in one another. It is a prayer that faith–religion-will unite us”.

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<sup>2</sup> [online] Available at; [www.nigeria-law.org/constitutionofthefederalrepublicofnigeria.htm](http://www.nigeria-law.org/constitutionofthefederalrepublicofnigeria.htm) [2016,January 10].

<sup>3</sup>[online]Available at; [www.naijapositive.myfastforum.org/archive/flag-motto-pledge-and-coat-of-arms](http://www.naijapositive.myfastforum.org/archive/flag-motto-pledge-and-coat-of-arms) [2016,January 10].



Similarly, the national anthem acknowledges God as the Supreme Being whom all of creation originated from. This anthem is also a prayer of dependence on God for direction in fulfilling one's responsibility to the betterment of the nation. The words of the second stanza below encapsulate these concepts:

*O God of creation, direct our noble cause, Guide our leaders right, Help our youth the truth to know, In love and honesty to grow, And living just and true, Grant lofty heights to attain, To build a nation where peace and justice shall reign<sup>4</sup>*

The National Pledge, the oaths of allegiance and oaths of offices are also concluded with a prayer “so help me God”. Interestingly, “there is a mosque and a Church in all government houses, schools and army and police barracks standing in strategic places, also built with public funds. Additionally, the architectural plans and designs for most national structures are Islamic. Religious writings are found everywhere including names of schools, hospitals, stores, and most of the inscriptions on Lorries are complete sermon.”

The three major religions are, Christianity, Islam, and African Traditional Religion (ATR) and followers of these religions are expected to exhibit some qualities and values that promote faithful stewardship, unity, human dignity, love for God and neighbor, and peace within the society. Unfortunately, some elements of corruption within these

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<sup>4</sup> [online] Available at; <http://www.metrolyrics.com/nigeria-anthem-text-lyrics-national-anthem.html> [2016, January 10].

religious institutions pose as barriers towards promoting good values and virtues in the practice of preaching in Nigeria<sup>5</sup>.

However, history reveals that preachers and their preaching often play key roles in people's personal lives, but even beyond that, in nation building and national transformation for example, Martin Luther King Jr, fought non-violently for black liberation in America. In South Africa, Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu (Anglican Church), Dr Beyers Naude (Dutch Reformed Church) and Dr Allan Boesak (Uniting Reformed Church) are distinguished prophetic preachers widely known for their tireless struggle against Apartheid. As prophets, "they proclaimed a message which challenged people to change their attitudes and the status quo of the community, dealt with controversial issues, and called for systematic reform" (Ronald J 1988). In other words, they preached prophetically.

In the same way, this research focuses on pulpit ministry, with special emphasis on prophetic preaching and how it can strengthen the drastic measures contrived against the growth of corruption in Nigeria. Very importantly, prophetic preaching as used in this study, goes beyond a preaching that criticizes social injustice and exhorts people to social action. Although it includes these elements, "it is the proclamation of the full gift

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<sup>5</sup> Corruption from the pulpit has encouraged corruption in the pews, and is manifesting in both the public and private sector. Some Church leaders teach and preach prosperity and materialism instead of the gospel of salvation, theology of work, justice and righteousness. They manipulate the gospel and the congregation for their self-gain. Cf. Olukayode, A. Faleye 2013 Religion Corruption: A dilemma of the Nigerian State. In Journal of Sustainable Development in Africa. Vol 15, No.1. "Many Islamic leaders are now manipulating the Qur'an by encouraging ethnic and religious conflict. This phenomenon has transform in to terrorism marked by the emergence of deadly terrorist group such as Boko-Haram.....[Similarly] the African Traditional Religion is not in any way immune to corruption, as Diviners of ATR now manipulate oracular divinations in some circumstances to suit their personal cravings " (Pg.171-172).

and demand of God's grace, as it is discerned in the historical pilgrimage of the covenant community" (Ward & Ward 1995, p.12). In other words, it is a preaching that witnesses to the presence of the living God in the midst of human conditions and life in general.

## **1.2 Preliminary Literature Review**

Religion plays an important role in shaping the society. Thus, Olukayode (2013, p.176), averred that religion functions as an object of either social cohesion or catalyst for the social-disorder. This study agrees that religion plays a dual role in the society; however, emphasis is directed on the positive aspect thereof. Thus, the focus of this research is to examine the Christian perspective of prophetic preaching and how it can support and promote the fight against corruption in Nigeria.

The Church in Nigeria has always made significant contributions in addressing societal ills in the country, but the worthiness of its efforts to the betterment of social, economic, and political conditions of the nation is not much documented. The reason for this according to Mbachirin (2006, p.22), is because "many Nigerians continue to believe that the Church should limit its activities to spiritual matters...And the hatred toward colonialism is transferred to Christianity so that scholars show no interest in its activities and believe it has no role in national development". However, most authors focus their attempt to address the Church's responses to religious, political and ethnic conflicts (Kukah 2007; Opeloye 1998; Aguwa 1997; Abdulrahman 2001; Mbachirin 2006).

The practice of religion in Nigeria, is affirmed by the 1999 Constitution, and states thus; “gives freedom to all citizens on the religion to practice and that no religion should be forced on any citizen and against his will”<sup>6</sup> . According to Koppleman (2009, p.1831), government’s neutrality towards religion is based on the importance of avoiding religious conflict, alienation of religious minorities, and the fear or concern that religious considerations could introduce a dangerous and absurd dogmatism into politics; therefore, this could make democratic compromises more difficult as time moves on.

The term corruption is derived from a Latin word; “corruptio which means moral decay, wicked behaviour, putridity or rottenness” (Collins English Dictionary 2009:383). An American academic source defined corruption as “impairment of integrity, virtue of moral principles”, and as “inducement to wrong by bribery or other unlawful or improper means” (Webster’s Seventh New Collegiate Dictionary, 1971:188). Similarly, the World Bank defined corruption as “the abuse of public office for private gains” (World Bank 1999).

From a Nigerian perspective, Osoba (1996, p.372), described corruption as a “form of anti-social behaviour by an individual or social group which confers unjust or fraudulent benefits on its perpetrators, is inconsistent with the established legal norms and prevailing moral ethos of the land and is likely to subvert or diminish the capacity of the legitimate authorities to provide fully for the material and spiritual wellbeing of all members of society in a just and equitable manner”. Very importantly, “when Nigerians

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<sup>6</sup> Chapter IV (38) of the nation’s Constitution [online]. Available at [www.nigeria-law.org/constitutionofthefederalrepublicofnigeria.htm](http://www.nigeria-law.org/constitutionofthefederalrepublicofnigeria.htm) [2016, January 2016].

talk about corruption, they do not only refer to the abuse of state offices for some kind of private gain, but also to a whole range of social behaviour in which various forms of morally questionable deceptions enable the achievement of wealth, power, or prestige as well mere mundane ambitions. The Nigerian notion of corruption encompasses everything from government, bribery and graft, rigged elections, and fraudulent business deals, to a diabolical abuse of occult powers, medical quackery, cheating in school, and even deceiving a lover” (Marquette 2010, p.25).

The ethical explicit and religious nature of the above definitions are considered significant as seen in the key words; virtue, moral principles, wrong, subvert unjust, and spiritual wellbeing. In addition, they characterized corruption into three categories, namely; incidentally (individual), institution (example; the police service) and systemic (societal) (Robinson 1998, p.3).

Olukayode (2013, pp.173–174) states different perspectives on corruption in Nigeria, namely; political corruption, economic corruption and religious corruption. Although these are not the only forms of corruption<sup>7</sup>, this classification is considered vital towards a crystallized understanding of the situations leading to corrupt environments. All these types of corruption manifest in bribery, embezzlement, money-laundry, extortion, nepotism, injustice, abuse of office, etc.

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<sup>7</sup> There are other forms of corruption like; Military corruption, Para-military corruption, Judicial corruption, Electoral corruption, Educational corruption, Bureaucratic corruption, and Grand corruption. Indeed, there are at least as many forms of corruption as there are human institutions that might become corrupted. Cf, Miller. S. 2009. Corruption. Stanford Encyclopaedia of Philosophy.

In an effort to understand the reasons for the precarious situation of corruption, Prozesky (2013, p.14), posited that “at the heart of the moral evil of corruption...is [the] lack of concern for the common good in the form of dishonesty, this lack of concern is manifested in greed, unprincipled and selfish desires”. Ayodeji et al. (2014), identified the causes of corruption in Nigeria as; ineffective institutions, weak protection of civil liberties, low popular participation in politics, closed economic and political systems, poor remuneration of public servants, and many more.

The alarming rate at which corrupt practices had permeated every fabric of Nigeria is aptly explained by Shehu (2006, p.36), “corruption and fraud as acts of criminal betrayal of trust in all their forms and manifestations, have not only been perfected in Nigeria, but have also become the order of the day; that is, a means to earn a living. Although not legally institutionalized, fraud and corruption have certainly been approved and conventionally legitimized. Fraudsters and corrupt public figures have become celebrities and are hailed as heroes in our society today. The society is far from being upright, normal and balanced, because all sectors of our national life have been penetrated and simultaneously influenced by fraud and corruption”.

With a simplified understanding, there is a general consensus among the Nigerians that corruption has affected human dignity, national development, and transformation. Despite the nation’s wealth in minerals and natural resources, many Nigerians continue to languish in abject poverty. (Bond & Sharife 2009; Adebaniwi & Obadare 2011; Shehu 2005; Dike 2005)

Nonetheless, the government has dedicated itself to combating corruption in all spheres of national life. Moreover, this commitment was demonstrated by the past and current presidents<sup>8</sup>, Faith Based Organizations, and Non-Governmental Organization. In spite of the commitment exercised by these offices and organizations towards combating the growth of corruption in the Nigerian society, a huge number of national out-cry are still seeking for a new approach in this fight. In response to this clarion call, prophetic preaching can play a vital role in this specific context.

According to Mulle, “prophetic preaching is a kind of preaching in which a summoned witness becomes a mouthpiece of a living, acting God; a witness who acts in a given crisis-charged context with a critical, creative word in which past and present, tradition and crisis are evangelically reinterpreted in terms of new premises with the intention of offering new, imaginative and existential possibilities and alternatives. The prophetic content calls for a prophetic style and rhetoric; a style of boldness and pastoral compassion, and closeness within the circle of creative communities of faith”(translated and cited in Pieterse 2013:4).

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<sup>8</sup> Nigerian Presidents like; Gen Muhammadu Buhari (1983-1985) who introduced ethical revolution that led to anti-corruption campaign, Known as War Against Indiscipline (WAI). For the first time in the history of Nigeria, through this agency, past corrupt leaders were being trailed and convicted for corruption and embezzlement. This agency also reoriented Nigerians on how to behave in public places. And renewed vigour for nationalism and patriotism. Olusegun Obasanjo in 1999 formed the Economic Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC). The commission is empowered to prevent, investigate, prosecute, and penalize economic crime such as Advance Fee Fraud (419) and money laundry. On 29th September 2002, Obasanjo also inaugurated ‘Independent Corrupt Practices (and other related offences) Commission (ICPC)’. Its vision is “to fight corruption to a standstill and restore Nigeria to the enviable standard of responsibility and dignity within the comity of nations” The National Orientation Agency through the helped of president Goodluck Jonathan launched (17th May 2012) ‘Do the right thing: Transform Nigeria campaign’ Its focus is to imbibe the culture and attitude of doing the right thing, to fight and win the war against corruption in Nigeria. It is however our observation that prophetic preaching from a Christian tradition has a vital role in this anti-corruption crusade.

Similarly,(Ottoni-Wilhem 2003, pp.84–91), posited that, “prophetic preaching proclaims God’s Word from within the Christian tradition against all that threatens God’s reconciling intention for humanity, and for all that creates and sustains vital and necessary ministry of compassion to neighbours near and far. Basically, prophetic preaching proclaims the promises of God and practically points a way to new possibilities. Using the language of imagination, it invites us to envision the new day God intends and also to discern how God would creatively use us to help bring that day to completion”.

Derived from these definitions; prophetic preaching witnesses in God’s Word and God’s Name from a historical and contextual perspective to a concrete situation. This tradition, according to the Kairos Document is “grounded in the Bible; reads the signs of the times; it calls the Church to action on behalf of the poor and the oppressed; it is confrontational to injustice and the evil political systems; it has a message of hope; it is deeply spiritual; it is practical and pastoral” (cited in Pietere 1995:29). It is shouldered with dialectical responsibilities to ‘criticize and energize’, and with the task to nurture, nourish and evoke a consciousness and perception alternative to the consciousness and perception of the dominant culture around us (Brueggemann 2001, p.23).

This kind of preaching is very dangerous and can get ministers and their congregations into trouble, because it often goes against societal norms, pronouncing not only grace but also God’s judgment on human actions or inactions<sup>9</sup>. Significantly, prophetic



preachers stand on God's grace to minister in their context with indignation, solidarity compassion and imaginative interpretation.

Practically, we also partake in the problem; in that respect, a positive change is requested from our part to strengthen the dignity of imploring the people and the society to desist from the act of corruption and fraud.

### 1.3 Theoretical Framework/Perspectives on Corruption

Four perspectives on corruption, as diagrammatically illustrated, generate the theoretical framework for this study: A brief comment on each will also be given.

- i. Political perspective: A group of scholars namely; Gatti, Paternostro, and Rigolini (2003) stated that “since the seminal contributions of Becker & Stigler (1974) and Rose-Ackerman (1978), corruption has often been studied in a principal-agent framework where the government (the principal) tries to motivate its government official (the agent) to be honest”. This model is ineffective in curbing corruption, especially in Nigeria, because both the principal and the agent are perceived to be very corrupt. According to a statement by the Wash Post; “in Nigeria, corruption is not part of the government, it is the object of the government” (Wash Post, June 9th, 1998). Demonstrating how corruption can be the result of a bad equilibrium,

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<sup>9</sup>Cf. Leonora Tubbs Tisdale, 2010. *Prophetic Preaching: A Pastoral Approach*. Westminster John Knox Press: Louisville, Kentucky. (p.3). Tisdale mentioned some prophetic voices like Martin Luther King Jr, Allan Boesak, and Desmond Tutu whose lives were in danger because of their beliefs and preaching. Cf. Allan Boesak, ‘...And Even His own Life’ In *Walking on Thorns: The Call to Christian Obedience*. (South Africa: The Risk Book Series 1983) p 45. States that “when I open a newspaper and came across .....,the trail of Africans Weerstandsbeging (Afrikaner Resistance Movement) men in which, among other things, details of the plan to assassinate Bishop Desmond Tutu and myself was revealed... [Similarly] My seven year old daughter came home from school with tears and said ‘Daddy, the children at school say that the white people are going to kill you’...” In addition, so many prophetic voices during the apartheid regime in South Africa were killed, people like Steve Biko, Rick Turner, and James Gawe

Andvig & Karl (1990, p.68), argued that “the equilibrium corruption level depends on both supply and demand effects. Explicitly, “demand effects arise because the higher the proportion of corrupted government officials, the easier it is for an agent to find a corruptible official. On the supply side, they introduce an exogenous probability of getting caught by another official, but if the supervisor is also corrupt, the official can bribe the latter in order to keep his or her job. Hence, the higher the number of corrupted officials, the stronger is the incentives for an official to be corrupt” (Gatti & Rigolini 2003, pp.4–5). However, scholars such as; (Leff 1964; Author et al. 2014; Huntington 1968; Lien 1986) argued that a minimal amount of corruption might be efficient, because it removes government rigidities. On the contrary, it is the responsibility of the members of the society to decide for themselves what they want, whether to subscribe to the idea that forms of corruption justified in some circumstances (Ayodeji et al. 2014, p.522).

- ii. Sociological and cultural perspective: This approach looks at the difference in traditions including their morals and values. The main focus is on “the so-called moral cost, which reflects internalized beliefs, such as esprit de corps, the “public spiritedness” of public officers, political culture and public attitude towards illegality” (Della Porta and Alberto 1999:18). Ackerman (1976), considered moral cost as a kind of fixed cost derived from breaking the law. Nonetheless, Della Porta & Alberto (1999), defined moral cost as “the utility lost because of the illegality of an action”. The two scholars agreed that variations in moral cost, consequently, can explain the different responses of individuals to similar

occasions for corruption: “people in a given society face the same institutions but have different values” (Elster 1989:39). Della Porta and Alberto (1999:19) expanded on this perspective with a game theoretical framework. In this approach, “the choice between corruption and non-corruption depends not only upon individual preferences and the institutional context, but also on the strategic interaction with the choices of other individuals. In fact, the more widespread corruption is, the lower the risks of being denounced for those who decide to engage in illegal practices, and the higher the price to be paid by those trying to remain honest and thereby getting marginalized”.

- iii. Economic and legal perspectives based on the rational choice. In this approach; an individual rationally prefers to act corruptly when the official system of motivations and opportunity makes corrupt practice subjectively rewarding. According to Becker (1968:172); “A person can commit an offense if the expected utility to him exceeds the utility he could get by using time and other resources on other activities. Some persons become ‘criminals’, therefore, not because their basic motivation differs from that of other persons, but because their benefits and cost differ”.
- iv. Reformed theology holds that human corruption is totally pervasive (Folarin 2010, p.312). This doctrine<sup>10</sup> of total depravity states that every part of human

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<sup>10</sup> This doctrine is based on scriptural passages as; John 5:42; Romans 7:18, 32; 8:7; Ephesians 4:18; II Timothy 3:2-3; Titus 1:15; and Hebrews 3:12. According to Ryrie (1960), the doctrine teaches that before sin corrupted humans, “they were not able to sin, but after they became corrupt, they were able to sin”. However, (Louis Berkhof 1958), observed that “the doctrine does not mean that every man is as thoroughly depraved as he can possibly become, or that the sinner has no innate knowledge of the will of God, or conscience that discriminates between good and evil, or

nature including all of his or her faculties are corrupt (Ryrie 1960, p.164). However, Berkhof (1958), averred that, "the doctrine does not mean that every man is as thoroughly depraved as he can possibly become, or that the sinner has no innate knowledge of the will of God, or a conscience that discriminates between good and evil, or that a sinful human being does not often admire virtuous character and actions in others, or that he or she is incapable of disinterested affections and actions in his or her relations with his fellow human beings, or that every unregenerate human being will, in virtue of his or her inherent sinfulness, indulge in every form of sin". The above statements, serve as point of entry for preachers to humbly relate the Bible to contemporary situations like corruption. It also serves as a common point of departure in the field of homiletics, "that the Word of God as ministered through preaching has the power to change people's lives" (de Wet & Kruger 2013).

With this understanding, some Nigerian scholars like Umachi (2007:68-69); and Nwaomah (2007: 77-80), described the corruption situation in Nigeria as similar to corrupt practices in the Bible, while some bowed to corruption in biblical times, others withstood it.

From this perspective, Folarin (2010), advocated for a biblical and theological approach to the fight against corruption in Nigeria. Thus, this approach speaks of preaching God's

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a sinful human being does not often admire virtuous character and actions in others, or that he or she is incapable of disinterested affections and actions in his or her relations with his fellow human beings, or that every unregenerate human being will, in virtue of his or her inherent sinfulness indulge in every form of sin"

Word in faith, because it reforms, transforms and prescribes God's will and expectation for human beings.



Figure 1: Four perspectives on corruption for this research

By and large, these four perspectives illustrate that understanding corruption globally, especially in Nigeria, is a complex and varied reality. Nonetheless, the knowledge acquired from these perspectives indicates a gap in the study of corruption in Nigeria from the field of homiletics, particularly prophetic preaching. Therefore, this research is an attempt to bridge this gap, by auguring that preaching prophetically can contribute to the fight against corruption in Nigeria.

## 1.4 Problem Statement

In spite of Nigeria's wealth in natural and human resources, corruption has eaten deep into the nation. Consequently, the most vulnerable citizens, the unemployed, single-parent-households and the poor, pay bribes as a condition or means to access basic social services like; healthcare, education, employment, water, and electricity, etc. In light of this, corruption has made Nigeria a fertile ground for injustice, tribalism and religious violence. These aforementioned factors and so many others, are challenging preachers today to preach prophetically in this corrupt context. Therefore, this research as a homiletical task, seek to understand, articulate and search for a mode of prophetic preaching that can support and promote the fight against corruption in Nigeria.

## 1.5 The Research Question and Sub-questions

The main question developed for this research is: "Does the current corrupt context of Nigeria challenge preachers to preach prophetically to support the fight against corruption?"

- i. How does the context of corruption challenge preachers to take prophetic stance in Nigeria?
- ii. What is prophetic preaching, and what are the modes of this kind of preaching?
- iii. Can this mode of preaching be useful in the effort to combat corruption in Nigeria?
- iv. What are the causes and effects of corruption in Nigeria?

## 1.6 Research Design and Methodology

According to Mouton (1996, p.36), research methodology depends on the nature of the research problem and objectives. In addition, Sweeney and Watkins (2014, pp.777–778), argued that theological research must examine actions and activities, and not just the belief system. Therefore, this research is approached from a *macro-theory* perspective within a frame of reference called ‘*conflict paradigm*’. This paradigm “views human behaviour as attempts to dominate others or avoid being dominated. It is interested in the relationship between individuals and society- particularly in the amount of freedom individuals had to surrender for society to function” (Babbie 2010, p.36).

From the paradigm perspective, corruption as a social behaviour in the society could also be seen as a process of conflict. This is so because corrupt practices tend to dominate, but there is resistance from those who are calling for a corruption free society. Similarly, prophetic preaching is also in conflict with dominating cultures that promote societal ills<sup>11</sup>.

The method for this research is within the domain of *content analysis*. According to Babbie; “content analysis is the study of human recorded communications, such as books, websites, newspapers, speeches, poems, laws and constitutions as well as any

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<sup>11</sup> James M Reese in his book, titled ‘Preaching God’s Burning Word’ identified two degrees of tension which prophetic preaching is against, these are; secular vision of reality, and fluctuating imperfect religious vision. (p.26) To apply this in the context of corruption, both the secular and religious imperfect vision may accept corruption as a total reality or norm. ‘This is the way life is; people are not going to change’ But prophetic preaching challenges this vision of reality because it is unreal, and is not a total reality. Reality says James Reese “Is what the grace of God is doing for men and for the universe in the ongoing healing service of those who are in Christ” (p.26). Uniquely, prophetic preaching eases this tension by its optimistic effort to build up a believing community that would proclaim God’s healing, grace, and reconciliation. In view of these, the secular and fluctuating imperfect religious vision gradually gave way for a future-looking hope of a corrupt-free nation.

components or collections thereof” (2010). This method is based on secondary data, which might not be an adequate representation and interpretation of the reality of corruption in Nigeria.

Nonetheless, it is suitable for the study of preaching as a form of communication, because it provides answers “to the classical question of communications research: Who says what?, to whom?, why?, how? and with what effect?” (2010, p.333). Equally important; it puts the research in conversation with the work of other scholars in the literature review [see chapter 2], which will tremendously help in answering the research questions.

## 1.7 Research Structure

This study followed the structure of (Osmer 2008, pp.4–12) four tasks of practical theology interpretation, as diagrammatically illustrated in figure two<sup>12</sup>. A brief explanation of each will be given from a social-ecclesial perspective, and how it fits into this research.

The *descriptive task* focuses on “what is going on?” Answers to this question helps us discern patterns and dynamics in particular situations, or context (2008, p.4). This task will be used in Chapter Two to gain insight on the practice of corruption in Nigeria. It will be approached from a historical research perspective (Lundy 2008), to investigate the historical development and impart of corruption.

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<sup>12</sup> The diagram illustrated in the figure 2 is adapted and modified from Osmer (2008, pp.4, 11).



The *interpretive task's* main focus is; “why is this going on? To answer this question, theories from the arts and sciences are implored to better understand and explain why this patterns and dynamics are occurring. Chapter Two will use this task to investigate and identify some of the causes of corruption in Nigeria.

According to Osmer, the main focus of *normative task* is to apply the “theological concepts to interpret particular situations or context, constructing ethical norms to guide our response and learning” (2008, p.4). Therefore, this task, constructively reflects on the question; what ought to be going on? In light of this, the discernment and application of God’s Word for the current realities are of paramount importance to this task. Considerably, this approach is based on some significant attributes of prophetic preaching such as; prophetic envisioning, prophetic criticism, and prophetic policy-making. The objective of the normative aspect of this research is designed to gain broader understanding of prophetic preaching in contemporary times, especially in the context of corruption.

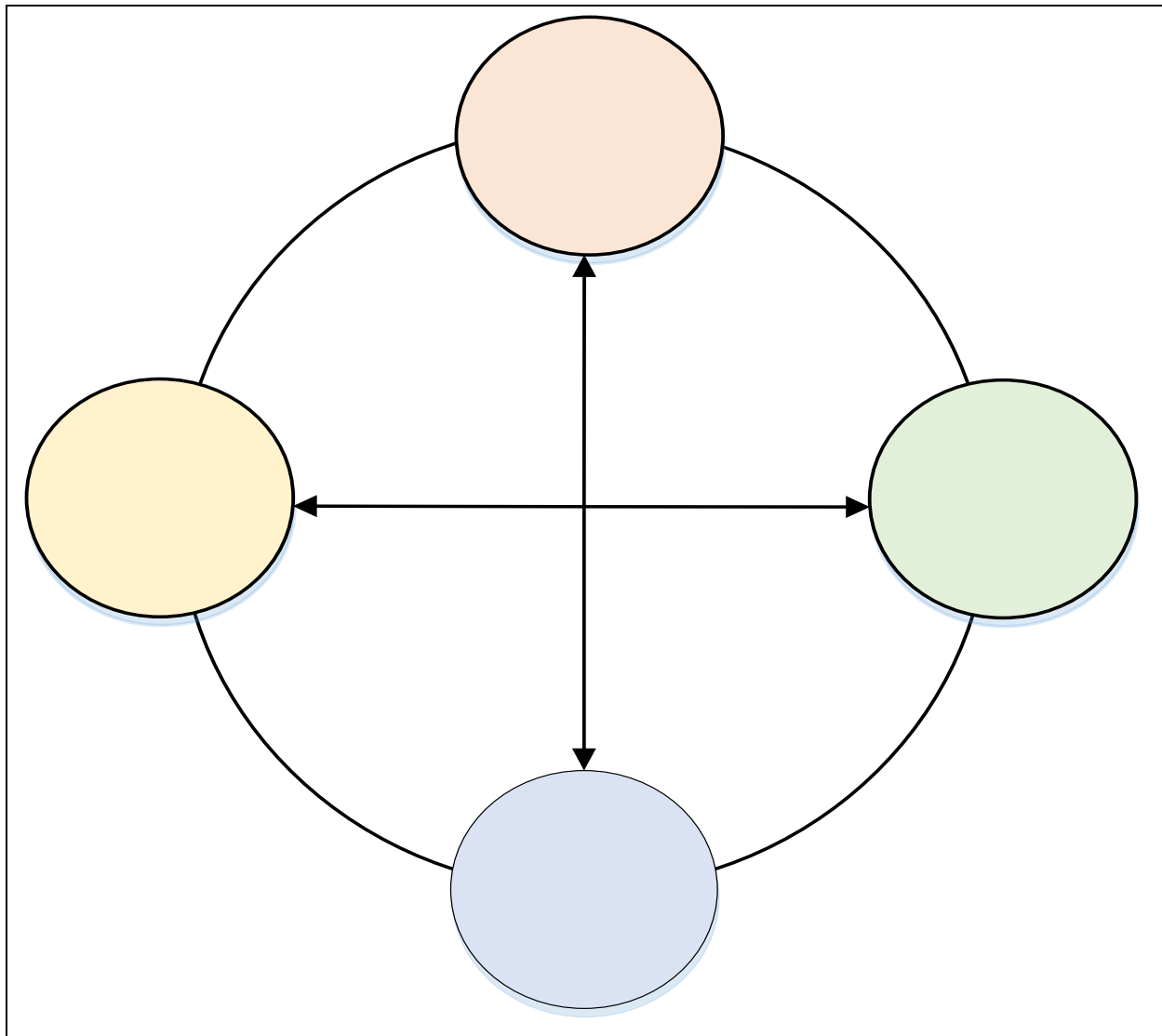


Figure 2: Four tasks of practical theological interpretation

Finally, the *pragmatic task* is designed to determine the strategies of actions that will influence situations in ways that are desirable. It is about translating words into action. Its objective for this study is designed to offer practical homiletic suggestions on the mode of prophetic preaching to support and promote the fight against corruption in Nigeria.

## **1.8 Significance and Contribution of the Research**

This study follows the momentous contributions of several scholars in the field of homiletics to bridge the gap between prophetic preaching and practice within a social-ecclesia perspective. In the context of corruption in Nigeria, this gap is very wide and the research therefore, is a significant homiletical contribution to the fight against corruption, considering the point that some teachers of homiletics called for more studies in the field of prophetic preaching on the continent of Africa (Pieterse 2013; De Klerk 2013; Cilliers 2013, 2014). Finally, it also demonstrates academic concern taking place in the society, especially the distressing questions about corruption in Nigeria.

## **1.9 Limitation of Study**

This study is a practical theological investigation that presents prophetic preaching as a viable medium to support and promote the fight against corruption within the Nigerian context in general. It does not centre on any particular region, because existing literature on the study of corruption are mostly focused on Nigeria at large. Thus the existence of corruption will be much easier to proof with reference.

Furthermore, the research does not focus on any form of corruption; it rather seeks to investigate the phenomenon of corruption in a conceptual manner because corrupt practices in all ramification are manifested in churches since its membership are from all walks of life.

The study does also not focus on any specific Christian denomination or church affiliation in Nigeria, because the call to speak prophetically on contemporary issues is

directed to all Christian denominations and Churches. Finally, this study is not an exegetical interpretation of prophetic literature (books of the Bible) because it is not a biblical study, although, some biblical and contemporary examples of prophetic preaching are used as communicative acts and events that could bring about the fear of God, good governance, promote and uphold the culture of human dignity to create a corrupt free society.

In spite of its limitations, this research hopes to be considered useful and to be used by researchers, especially in the field of homiletics in Africa to continue the conversation.

## **1.10 Conclusion**

This Introductory Chapter gives a general background to the research, the research questions, design, methodology and structure. It also augured on the limitations and significance of the study. To show that the research questions are achievable, the following chapter will seek to understand the historical development, causes and effect of corruption in Nigeria.

## Chapter Two: Contextual Analysis of Corruption in Nigeria

### 2.1 Introduction

In preaching, Pieterse (2013, p.5), affirmed that “the dynamics of the work of the Holy Spirit becomes operative when we read the text and our context in prayerful meditation with open minds, and in a deeper space of covenantal contact with God in the homiletic process. Similarly, “it is important that prophetic preachers understand the structural injustices...moral fibre of the people...and the social analysis of the context in which they minister” (Nell 2010).

This understanding in preaching, especially prophetic preaching, embraces the past, present and future. It also shows that prophetic preaching should be understood in relation to the threefold aspects of God’s activity – “concerned with what God has done, with what God is doing, and with what God will do” (Huh 2005, p.42). Therefore, preachers need to be extensively informed of the historical, social, economic and political situation of their listeners (Pieterse 2001). This approach positions the preacher not only to be an interpreter of scripture, but a commentator on the dilemmas and puzzle of contemporary life (Bartlett 1995, pp.22–23).

Based on the above insights, this Chapter, attempts to give some historical and contextual background of Nigeria, and to examine the historical development, causes and effects of corruption in. This approach is necessary and significant because it provides the critical contextual link of the past to the present and it projects the future.

According to Lundy (2008, p.395), using the historical approach “is of particular relevance to research about contemporary, social and cultural issues, as it enhances an understanding of the present. Any contemporary issue is bound intrinsically with the social and historical milieu of the past”. Uniquely, the historical approach paves the way for prophetic preaching to attain its goal; “that is to stir up in us the courage to care and empower us to change our lives and our historical circumstances” (West 2004). Thus, understanding the historical background, causes and effects of corruption in Nigeria is very important in this Thesis, and it shows how this context challenges preachers to take a prophetic stance.

Nevertheless, the extent at which corrupt practices devoured Nigeria before and after independence is difficult to determine. Buttressing this point, Varda (1981, p.178), posited that “revelations on corruption...are frequently suppressed before publication or soon thereafter, unless they serve a political purpose. Of the important cases that escape concealment, many are either dismissed and/or buried in investigatory committees. They eventually fade away”. Similarly, *Tell*, a weekly magazine in Nigeria, observes in an editorial that: “an unusual and disturbing trend is emerging in which behaviour openly suggestive of large-scale corruption in the polity are not out rightly condemned, but treated with utmost cynicism and defended with self-serving arguments, even by very senior citizens often considered as the fathers of the nation” (cited in Omotola 2006, p.216).

From the statement quoted above, an in-depth understanding of corrupt practices in Nigeria, largely depends on the orientation and political affiliation of the analysts.

Despite this approach, corruption continued to thrive in the nation. In view of this, the pulpit ministry, especially prophetic preaching which seeks to humbly proclaim the Word of God to contemporary issues like corruption, should uniquely attempt to gain a historical knowledge of the situation and context.

## **2.2 Some Historical and Contextual Background of Nigeria**

Nigeria as a political nation, was created in 1914 by the British government during the European partition of Africa that began in the last quarter of the nineteenth century (Falola 1999). However, the remains of ancient civilization were spread across the country and excavated in different locations. For example, brass and copperheads in Ile-Ife and Benin, terracotta animals in Borno, and Nok Terracotta heads. These and many other archaeological discoveries show that Nigeria has a long history with human habitation in places dating back to about 500 B.C. (Falola 1999; Crowder 1976; Coleman 1962; Burns 1929). In other words, the story of Nigeria as it is known today, goes back to more than two thousand years.

The country gained independence from Britain on the 1<sup>st</sup> of October 1960, and was divided into three regions, namely; North, West, and East. But currently, Nigeria has 36 administrative states with Abuja as the federal capital territory <sup>13</sup>.

Geographically, Nigeria has a total land area of about 923.768 sq. km (Olukayode 2013, p.171). The country stretches about 700 miles from east to west, and 650 miles from

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<sup>13</sup>The below diagram was extracted from the GoogleMap ([www.googlemap.com](http://www.googlemap.com))

south to north. It lies roughly between 3° and 15° E longitude and between 4° and 14° N latitude (Falola 1999). The country's coastline on the Gulf of Guinea stretches to about 774km, and its shared international borders with Benin and Togo to the west, Cameroon in the east, and Niger and Chad to the north (Falola 1999; Ikelegbe 2005; Olukayode 2013).



Figure 3: A map of Nigeria showing the 36 states and the Federal Capital Territory. [online] Available at [www.nigerianmapshowing36states.com](http://www.nigerianmapshowing36states.com) [2016, March 13].

Geologically, Nigeria is endowed natural and mineral resources, for example, the third longest river in Africa; the river Niger runs for 730 miles within the country. Notably, this



river, according to Coleman (1962, p.19), is the most prominent physical feature of Nigeria. Significantly, a host of minerals; coal, iron, zinc, salt, and copper are naturally spread across the country. With the discovery of crude oil in the 1950's, Nigeria has become one of the largest oil producing countries in the world. Agricultural products such as palm oil, kernel oil, cotton, rubber, groundnut, cocoa, yam, and beans etc, are also cultivated and exported. In light of these, stories of abundant mineral resources, generated European interests. (Falola 1999).

According to the latest United Nations estimates, Nigeria is the most populated nation in Africa with an approximate of 186 million people. This population includes a high proportion of young people with an average age of seventeen and eighteen<sup>14</sup> (Melorose et al. 2015). Furthermore, Nigeria is a multi-ethnic nation with about 485 tribes (Blench 2008). Although English is the official language, Hausa, Igbo, and Yoruba are the indigenous languages predominantly used.

Religiously, Islam, African Traditional Religion (ATR) and Christianity, are the dominant religions in Nigeria [as previously mentioned in section 1.1]. Followers of these religions believe in the supremacy of God, that God is the basis of their individual and corporate lives. In view of this, Falola (1999, p.7), states that; "The role of religion in politics (governance) has become visible, leading to controversy over whether the country should be secular or not". Nevertheless, religion played a significant role in Nigerian

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<sup>14</sup> The current population of **Nigeria** is **186,654,170** as of Thursday, June 9, 2016, based on the latest United Nations estimates. Nigeria population is equivalent to **2.48%** of the total world population. The **median age** in Nigeria is **18 years**. Cf <http://www.worldometers.info/world-population/nigeria-population/> Accessed 9<sup>TH</sup> June 2016.

cultural, social, economic and political life. Presumably, having authority in all ramifications is regarded as a gift from God.

Nigeria celebrates itself as “the giant of Africa” because of its richness in human and natural resources. This ‘giant’ has gone through, and is continually going through a lot of internal crises such as; the civil war (1967-1970), military coup and counter coup (1966, 1983, 1985, and 1991), the annulled 1993 democratic election, religious and ethnic violence, cases of corrupt practices, and environmental degradation<sup>15</sup>. Despite its wealth in human and natural resources, Nigeria is noted for its inability to utilize these resources to develop and transform the nation. Consequently, almost half of all Nigerians live in abject poverty and unemployment (Ucha 2010; Anon 2011; United Nations 2009; Maier 2000). In anticipation to improve the standard of living, the majority of Nigerians now seek succour in religion. However, these religious institutions have not escaped corruption.

Notably, corruption is a major problem confronting Nigeria in all ramifications. Falola (1999), described the situation of the country saying; “as Nigeria enters the next millennium, it does so as a weakened nation with its economy in shamble.... Its external image badly soiled, its people in great despair and agony, and violent protest and civil strife as routine occurrences, ‘the giant of Africa’ is now listed by the World Bank as one of the poorest countries in the world”. More so, the nation is ranked as one of the most corrupt nations in the world by Transparency International.

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<sup>15</sup> For Further reading on the Nigeria civil war:(Salamone 1997; Stremmler J 1977; Aguolu 1973). Military Coup and counter coup (Luckham 1971; Feit 1968). The annulled 1993 democratic elections, (Nwokedi 1994).

### 2.3 Brief Historical overview of Corruption in Nigeria

In an attempt to understand the dynamics of corruption in Nigeria, though relatively brief, one can begin to reflect on the colonial era, which was of crucial importance in terms of its impact on the institutions and ethos of governance that would guide Nigeria after independence<sup>16</sup>. Thus, before the Europeans came in contact with the interior of Nigeria in the nineteenth century, the society has been inhabited by Negroid and Berber (Burns 1929). Much of the earlier history of its people is contained in oral tradition, myth and legend, except in the north where the Kanuri and Hausa came in to contact with the Arabs are there any documented record before the nineteenth century (Crowder 1976).

Historically, the society is made up of families, households, clans, villages, kingdoms and caliphates, such as; the Oyo kingdom, Benin kingdom, Kwararafa kingdom, and the Bornu empire. Significantly, many factors led to the rise and fall of these kingdoms, such as; inter tribal war, migrations, religions, the British invasion, the slave trade and the mere struggle for survival.

Generally speaking, the issue of corruption is connected to all these factors. In view of this, Falola (1999, p.36), affirmed that “the 1804 Uthman Dan Fodio<sup>17</sup> Jihad in the north, was not only to reform and propagate Islam, but to also address issues of corruption and economic exploitation of the poor”. Similarly, the fall of the old Oyo Empire is as a

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<sup>16</sup>Report of the Political Bureau (Abuja: Reproduced for Mass Distribution by the Directorate for Social Mobilisation MAMSER,” 1987), 26. (Cited in Mbachirin 2006).

<sup>17</sup>Uthman Dan Fodio 1754-1817 and became an Islamic preacher at the age of twenty. He created and established the Sokoto Caliphate, the biggest state in West Africa in the nineteenth century. This state is structured and ruled based on Islamic laws. Dan Fodio was a great leader who attracted thousands of followers, both scholars and warriors.

result of power struggles and the appointment of weak kings. In other words, people paid bribes to secure rulership. Such kings, shamelessly abused their positions and trampled on the liberties of the people (Burns 1929). In the same way, the decline and collapse of the old Benin Kingdom was brought about by intense competition for the throne, weak rulers, civil war, and slave raiding.

This signifies that many of the current societal problems in Nigeria can be traced back to the founding period of the nation and the activities of the British colonial administration. Tagbo Ugwu (2002, p.16) echoes this point, by tracing the root of corruption to the colonial era. He claimed that; “It has been argued that the major roots of corruption were sown during the colonial period when a lot of structures were created for the purpose of administration. The pro-colonial society knew little or nothing about corruption but, soon after Nigeria’s independence in 1960 and shortly afterwards in 1963 after the nation had become a republic, corruption grew in galloping proportions in every sphere of human life”. Although, this is not to imply that the colonial government is the only cause of every problem in the nation.

### **2.3.1 Pre-independence**

The extent on which corruption had existed in pre-colonial era in Nigeria, is difficult to ascertain. Thus, an indepth discuss would definitely require a historical, anthropological, and sociological knowledge, which cannot be adequately address within the scope of this project<sup>18</sup>. Moreover, it would require a great deal of space if due regard is to be

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<sup>18</sup> For further reading on these aspects of corruption in Nigeria; cf (Falola 1999; Osa et al. 2014; Awofeso & Odeyemi 2014; Torsello & Venard 2016; Salamone 1997; Osoba 1996).

given to the variety of social, religious, economic, and political structures which existed. With this in mind, this section attempts to briefly examine the deep historical root as well as the spread of corruption in Nigeria during the colonial period (18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century), and the period of decolonisation (1952-1960).

During the nineteenth century, there was a steady influx of Europeans in Nigeria. Dudley (1979), described their presence, saying; “these international bourgeoisie of usurpers of the Nigerian people’s sovereign power and authority, established a kind of praetorian or military rule. These “colonial authorities and their collaborators presided over a fraudulent and corrupt accumulation system which facilitated the appropriation of huge surpluses for shipment to the metropolis from Nigerian peasant farmers and other petty producers via unequal terms of trade” (Osoba 1996, p.373).

To elaborate this point, in 1851, Lagos signed a treaty surrendering its sovereignty after a British gunboat attack. The consul in Lagos interfered in trade and politics in ways that favoured his country<sup>19</sup>, and, the consul was involved in the selection of Akitoye’s (A traditional ruler) successor in 1853 (Falola 1999, pp.54–55). Similarly, Omotola (2006, p.217), affirmed that “by all standards, colonialism in Nigeria was built on corruption. Because of the colonialists, corrupt disposition to exploit the state for their exclusive

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<sup>19</sup>More examples of this kind of unequal trade relationship is demonstrated in the 1885 treaty between National African Company (Limited) and the Sultan of Sokoto. Article ii “We (the people of Sokoto) grant to the above mention company (National African Company) the sole right, among foreigners, to trade in our territories, and also the sole right, also among foreigners, to possess or work places from which are extracted articles such as lead and antimony ” In return to this kind gesture, Article v states “The European above named, the National African Company (Limited), agree to make Umoru, Sultan of Sokoto, a yearly present of goods to the value of 3,000 bags of cowries, in return to the above grants ” cf: Burns, Alan 1929. History of Nigeria. George Allen and Unwin Ltd: Ruskin House Museum Street: London. In the light of the, Europeans struggled to ensure that local economic and political decisions favored them

benefit, they liquidated social structures against corruption associated with pre-colonial Africa and replaced and/or transformed them to suit their own purpose.” Tignor, (1993:178), posited that “lower-level of political corruption helped to maintain the colonial system itself”.

Although this may be true, colonialism was eulogised for providing ‘good government’ in places of oppression and disorder. Therefore, the Europeans claimed to be people of law and order to justify their conquest of Nigeria. They believed that powerful chiefs and Emirs, were inherently oppressive and venal (Tignor, 1993; Burn, 1929; Miller, 1974). For example, Frederick Lugard<sup>20</sup> credited the Fulani of being “more capable of rule than the indigenous race...Yet capable as they are, it requires ceaseless vigilance of the British staff to maintain a high standard of integrity to prevent the oppression of the peasantry”<sup>21</sup>.

Considering the above illustrations; discussions on corruption in Nigeria became more public during the pre-colonial era. Reinforcing this, a speech presented by Sir Frederick Lugard, in March 30<sup>th</sup> 1903 at Sokoto (Northern Nigeria), declared that “the Fulani would not be removed from their offices under the British indirect rule; but bribes are forbidden, and mutilation and confinement of men in inhuman prisons are not lawful”. In a related view, among the Egba of the Yorubaland, there were abuses, extortionate

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<sup>20</sup>Lord Frederick Lugard (1858-1954) was a British soldier, explorer of Africa, and colonial administrator. He was governor general of Nigeria from 1914 to 1919, and was very instrumental in the amalgamation of Nigeria in to one colony.

<sup>21</sup> The Dual Mandate in Tropical Africa, a guide book on using traditional African rulers to produce efficient and honest administration. Cited in Robert L. Tignor 1993. Political Corruption in Nigeria before Independence. The Journal of Modern studies, Vol31 (2). 177-202. Accessed: 14<sup>th</sup> October, 2014.

demands from the peasantry, corruption and bribery in the courts, arbitrary imprisonment, and forced labour (cited in Tignor, 1993).

Significantly, the corrupt actions of the indigenous rulers did not surprise the colonial authorities who expect this kind of behaviour from their African collaborators. According to a Colonial Government Report (CGR) of 1947, “the African’s background and outlook on public morality is very different from that of the present Briton. The African in the public service seeks to further his own financial interest” (cited in Okonkwo 2007). Nonetheless, De Maria (2007:1) states that, “the belief that Africa is especially afflicted by it [Corruption], and the west interventions aimed at curbing it, is the latest and third wave of colonialism, which seriously misunderstands the nature of African cultures and imposes on Africa a spurious concept of corruption” (cited in Prozesky 2013).

It is worth mentioning here that there were and still are many features of the traditional way of life which contribute to the prevalence of corruption in the context of colonial and post-colonial Nigerian society. The custom of *gaisuwa*<sup>22</sup> in the north, which gradually became a medium of bribery, is but a simple example. The culture of corruption according to (Pierce 2006), “is the legacy of a long history of politics, state formation, and economic exploitation and of a complex interplay between indigenous and foreign understandings of appropriate governmental conduct”.

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<sup>22</sup> Gaisuwa, is a Hausa word, meaning ‘greeting’ it is synonymous with giving of present to appreciate, or to seek favour from a person. Cf: Smith M.G 1994. Historical and Cultural Condition of Political Corruption among the Hausa. Journal of Comparative studies in Society and History. Vol, 6 (2), p 177.

When Nigerians started making moves for decolonization in the early nineteenth centuries, the British became increasingly concerned about Nigeria's readiness for independence due to the increased nature of corrupt practices by nationalists (Tignor, 1993). In connection with the above statements, most of the political organisations<sup>23</sup> and their leaders were considered to be corrupt. The colonial authority regarded the local politicians as men of questionable character and integrity. For example, Ahmadu Bello, the Sardauana of Sokoto was portrayed as "vain and deplorable, susceptible to flattery and his private life is disreputable to an extent that one day someone may blackmail him"<sup>24</sup>. In the same manner, according to (Tignor 1993), Macaulay<sup>25</sup> "as a self-serving politician, a man of no fixed beliefs, interested only in personal gain".

Additionally, in 1947, George Padmore, a Nigerian and critic of the National Council of the Nigeria and the Cameroon (N.C.N.C) affirmed that, "there is a lot of fraud going on in the country, and many of us are exploiting the ignorance of the masses to line our pockets. Can't we try to be honest? A self-government founded on fraud, deceit and corruption, will not last" (cited in Tignor, 1993: 183).

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<sup>23</sup>Political organizations like; the Nigerian National Council (N.N.C) founded in 1944, National Council of Nigeria and the Cameroons (N.C.N.C), National Youth Movement (N.Y.M), Northern People's Congress (N.P.C) established in 1849, The Action Group (A.G) founded in 1951, United National Independence Party (U.I.D.P), and Lagos Town Council

<sup>24</sup> All these descriptions of Ahmadu Bello come from a document prepared in the Nigerian Secretariat in anticipation of the Colonial Secretary's visit in 1955. Cf Robert, Tignor 1993. *Political Corruption in Nigeria before Independence*. The Journal of Modern African Studies, Vol. 31 (2), 175-202. And Toyin, Falola, 1999.

<sup>25</sup>Olayinka Badmus Herbert Macaulay (Nov 14<sup>th</sup> 1846 – May 7<sup>th</sup> 1964), was a Nigerian nationalist, politician and journalist. He was the first president of N.C.N.C, and has been convicted four times of offences ranging from perjury to misappropriation of public funds. Furthermore, he was considered to be the most vociferous of the British critics. Cf. Robert, W 1968. *The Origins of the modern Africa Thought; its development in West Africa during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries*. London. Pp 374-379. Cited in Robert, L. Tignor 1993.



Furthermore, when the activities of the Lagos Town Council was investigated in the 1953 by Bernard Story<sup>26</sup>, his report shows that corruption in the form of bribery, nepotism and venality are the most pressing political ailment in Nigeria. Whether the British were articulating their point of view in official reports or confidential documents, or whether the Nigerian elites were being castigated or castigating each other, the consensus was that Nigeria was deeply compromised by political malfeasance. Corruption was thought to be widespread and served no useful function.

In view of this, Falola (1999, p.91) described the consequence of corrupt practices on the leadership of Nigeria by stating that, “emerging leaders began to call for greater regional autonomy.... They abandoned Pan-Nigeria issues and focused more and more on regional concerns. Nationalists became tribalists, interested in independence for narrow gain”. Given these points, the general consensus during this period is that corruption was thought to be widespread in Nigeria. As a result, the British officials heightened the concern over corrupt practices and allowed the burden to be a public issue.

### **2.3.2 Post-Independence**

Since the acquisition of independence from Britain in 1960, Nigeria, like so many other African nations is ‘under-developing’. Most of its citizens live in abject poverty without access to basic social amenities (Maier 2000, p.xxi). This predicament is as a result of

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<sup>26</sup>Was the town clerk of Norwich, he was appointed by the colonial government to conduct an enquiry on the activities of the Lagos Town Council. His 50-page report contained the first extended public discussion of widespread corrupt administrative practices in Nigeria, and helps to explain how the British moved this issue from their secret and confidential correspondence to formal exposure. (Cited in Tignor, 1993:186).

the striking feature of the politic of decolonisation, which was the “deftness with which the British colonialists arranged to perpetuate themselves in a dominant position over the wealth of Nigeria and its accumulation process by putting in place a spurious power-sharing arrangement between themselves and the fledgling Nigerian bourgeoisie on the other hand. For example, from the Richards Constitution of 1946 to the Independence Constitution of 1960, the British international bourgeoisie remained the senior partner and their Nigerian counterparts were no more than a junior or subordinate partner in this power-sharing arrangement” (Osoba 1996, p.373).

Most cynically put: the colonial government handed over to the inheriting Nigerian elites, the right to control machinery of government in return for the protection of its economy (Luckham 1971). In practice, this means that nationalists had the right to create and mobilize political and economic resources without hindrance, and to use the bureaucracy and means of intimidation to maintain themselves in office. In effect, the succession of the Nigerian political elite at independence to the sovereign political and economic authority, meant that they could now attempt to solve their central problem of dearth capital by broadening their accumulative base through exploiting maximally the public wealth of the state which was previously unavailable to them (Osoba 1996).

This was done through fraudulent award of unsecured government loans, produce buying and import licenses to their families and friends, the inflation of government contracts and sometimes straightforward looting of the treasury by its very custodians. This systematic plundering of the national wealth by the first republic, was a major factor in intensifying political contest along ethno-regional and religious lines. Due to this

effect, the spirit of patriotism and nationalism in Nigeria seems to have gone with the attainment of political independence. Ever since, leaders hardly pursued the goals of the state but their own personal and sectional interest (Ekeh 1975; Anazodo, Igbokwe & Nkah 2015). Consequently, all these resulted to a group of internal crisis<sup>27</sup> and corrupt practices in the nation, which eventually led to some military *coup d'état*<sup>28</sup>, among which was Major Nzeogwu's coup d'état in 1966, and the interference/ intervention of the Nigerian armed forces in to the political arena of the nation.

The above mentioned abortive military *coup d'état* was a futile attempt to end the misrule and corrupt practices preceding five years of independence. In a statement made by Major Nzeogwu on the objective of the *coup d'état* in a British television interview, he stated that: "we wanted to get rid of rotten and corrupt ministers, political parties, trade unions and the whole clumsy apparatus of the Federal system.... The aim of the Revolutionary Council is to establish a strong united and prosperous nation, free from corruption and internal strife" (Cited in Luckham, 1971:31-40). Simultaneously, the counter-coup of 29<sup>th</sup> July 1966, and the Nigeria civil war (June 1967- January 1970), "provided sensational opportunities for unlawful enrichment; for example, the misappropriation of salaries and allowances of soldiers killed in action for several months by their commanders; the gross inflation of military procurement contracts...The

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<sup>27</sup>For example, the 1962-63 census crisis, 1964 federal election crisis, 1964-65 Tiv tribe crisis, and 1965 Western Nigeria election crisis. Cf (Osoba 1996; Luckham, 1971). All these crises the civilian regime in certain respect imposed political choices on the military, in other words, the conditions for armed forces intervention in politics were provided by weakness in civilian institutions and their decline in legitimacy between Independence in 1960 and 1966.

<sup>28</sup>Between 1963 and 1993 Nigeria's had experienced seven military coups (1963,1966,1975,1983,1985,1987,1993).

looting of public and private properties. The classic case was the looting of millions of pounds sterling from the Central Bank of Benin in 1986, a crime which both armies blamed on each other” (Osoba 1996, p.376). In light of this, corrupt practises continued to threaten the existence of Nigeria as an independent nation.

In 1973 there was an increase in the international petroleum price which also led to financial increase in the national treasury. With regard to the ‘overabundance’ of cash in the national treasury, (Osoba 1996) stated that, “it was not surprising that there was dramatic escalation in the incidence of corruption and unlawful enrichment”. In the same way, Varda (1981, p.179), upheld the above statement by divulging that, “an accelerated growth rate of national wealth...so typical in Nigeria following the sharp increases in oil revenues...is strongly and positively associated with trends in corruption” Besides, Dudley (1979, p.116), noted the negative effect of the oil boom, he states: “with no constituents to conciliate and no electorate to be accountable to...the effect of the oil boom was to convert the military political decision-makers and their bureaucratic aides into a new property-owing, rentier class working in close and direct collaborations with foreign business interests with the sole aim of expropriating the surpluses derived from oil for their private and personal benefit”.

By the beginning of the 1980s, corruption had become so rife and intertwined with the private and public sector of the country which some scholars described as “the political economy of state robbery” (Madunagu, 1983, Agbibo, 2011). Uniquely, these problems

attained its apex during General I.B. Babangida's government<sup>29</sup> and Sani Abacha's<sup>30</sup> government. For example, under General Babangida's administration, structural changes in the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN)<sup>31</sup> presented in the 1996 budget, "the bank was transferred to the office of the President, and the CBN Governor was obliged to report directly to the President. Furthermore, by the CBN Decree of 1991, the President's control of the CBN became complete". Commenting on this decree, Enuenwosu, (1994) quoted a formal top government official, "in practical terms, the 1991 CBN Decree made the President the sole authority for deciding the nation's monetary and banking policy, and for issuing directives for its implementation. The Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) had become the 'Central Bank of the President' (CBP), a unit or department in the office of the President carrying out the President's binding directive on monetary and banking policy" (Osoba 1996:382).

By the same token, General Abacha had been hanging authoritatively in the presidential office "running Nigeria not so much as a country but as his personal fiefdom. Billions of dollars were siphoned off into overseas bank accounts controlled by Abacha, his family or his cronies, while the masses simmered in anger at their deepening poverty" (Maier 2000, p.3). In an assessment of the military's role in perpetuating corruption in the

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<sup>29</sup>General Ibrahim B. Babangida overthrew Major General Muhamendu Buhari in a coup, and became the military president of Nigeria from August 27<sup>th</sup> 1985 – August 27<sup>th</sup> 1993. He annulled the Nigerian democratic presidential election held on June 12<sup>th</sup> 1993. IBB was a key player in most of the military coup in Nigeria since independence.

<sup>30</sup> General Sani Abacha preceded by an interim president of Chief Ernest Shonekan in November 17<sup>th</sup> 1994. He died mysteriously on June 8<sup>th</sup> 1998 in attempt to transform himself in to a civilian president.

<sup>31</sup>The Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) is the country apex bank with a legally guaranteed intendent boards of directors, and has the power to issue the country's legal tender currency, and to monitor and regulate Nigerian banking system.

country, Olusegun Obasanjo<sup>32</sup>, posits that, “one of the greatest tragedies of military rule in recent times is that corruption was allowed to grow unchallenged and unchecked even when it was glaring for everyone to see” (BBC News World Media Watch, May 29<sup>th</sup>, 1999. Cited: Agbiboa, 2011).

In May 1999, after a sixteen-year stretch of military rule, Nigeria democratically elected a civilian government headed by a former Military Head of State, retired General Olusegun Obasanjo, under the platform of the People’s Democratic Party (PDP). In his inaugural speech<sup>33</sup>, Obasanjo affirmed that, “corruption, the greatest bane of society today, will be tackled head-on at all levels...No society can achieve anything near its full potential if it allows corruption to become full blown cancer as it has become in Nigeria” From 1999 up till date, Nigeria is still a democratic nation.

However, the current corrupt situation daily reveals one form of corruption or the other, perpetrated especially by those placed in authority to provide good governance. Buttressing this, Achebe (1983, p.1), stated that; “Nigerians are corrupt because the system under which they live today makes corruption easy and profitable; they will cease to be corrupt when corruption is made difficult and inconvenient...The trouble with Nigeria is simply and squarely a failure of leadership...the unwillingness or inability of its leaders to rise to the responsibility, to the challenge personal example which are the hallmark of true leadership... Nigeria can change today if she discovers leaders who have the will, the ability and the vision”.

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<sup>32</sup>General Olusegun Obasanjo, was a military head of state from 1976 – 1979. He emerged from prison on a fifteen years sentence on charges of treason. In 1999, he became a democratic elected president up to the period of

<sup>33</sup>President Obasanjo’s inaugural speech; The Punch Newspaper: 30<sup>th</sup> May 1999.

By and large, in a meticulous analysis of the political and military leadership in Nigeria since 1960, Michael (2012:10), argued that; “Leadership and corruption are positively correlated. This argument is based on the fact that virtually all the leaders came to power with the sole purpose of enriching themselves and their cronies rather than offering selfless service to the nation and its people”. On the other hand, there are manifestations of corruption involving private individuals, religious organizations, institutions of learning, business organizations, etc. Almost everybody, in one way or the other, is involved in these negative practices.

## **2.4 Causes of Corruption in Nigeria**

“Prophetic witness calls and or begs attention to the causes of unjustified suffering and unnecessary social misery. It highlights personal and institutional evil, including the evil of being indifferent to personal and institutional evil (West 2004). Therefore, identifying the causes of corruption in Nigeria is very crucial for resolving the impasse. In consideration of this, Olowe (1993:227) augured that, “one of the reasons...corruption has grown to be pervasive in Africa today, is primarily because much effort has been spent to remedy the problem rather than to understand it”. In other words, “without a proper diagnosis of the causes of corruption, trying to fight it is akin to treating symptoms rather than rooting out the disease itself. This unfortunately appears to be the strategy adopted so far in fighting corruption in Nigeria” (Okoye 2004). From a similar perspective; for prophetic preaching to contribute effectively in the fight against

corruption, an attempt to gain insight on the multiplicity of factors that causes corruption in Nigeria, is crucial.

Most scholarly literature studied the causes of corruption in an attempt to identify effective ways to combat it. For example; Holmes (1993 p.157) identified and classified the causes of corruption into three categories, namely; cultural, psychological and system-related. Dollar et al., (2001) and Swamy et al, (2002), argued from a gender perspective that, the lower the participation of women in the public life of a nation, the higher the degree of corruption. Knack and Keefer (1997) sees the lack of trust among citizens and lack of respect for civic norms, as one of the causes of corruption. Kyambalesa (2006) confirmed that s“poor governance, political instability, government reshuffles, weak legislative system, a weak judicial system, bureaucratic red tape, inadequate compensation, greed and moral deficiency, as well as the lack of professional counsel are the major determinants of corruption in Africa”. Furthermore, (Shehu 2004) described corruption as a product of rational choice, that is, corrupt individuals are motivated based on the availability of a target, the absence of capable guardian as well as the means or resources. Aidt (2011:17), explained that the lack of press freedom can cause corruption.

In Nigeria, Ayobami (2011) upholds that low wages in civil service, trade restriction and government subsidies, are some of the causes of corruption. Additionally, religion as stated by Adenugba & Omolawal 2014; Olukayode 2013. Likewise, the theory of two publics that emerged during the colonial era (Ekeh 1975; Anazodo, Igbokwe & Nkah 2015) are considered as part of the causes of corruption in Nigeria.



From the above insights, this research attempts to systematically classify and briefly discuss the determinants of corruption in Nigeria from the following factors; socio-economic, leadership, ethics, religion and the theory of two public factors. Despite these classifications, it is preferable to consider these factors in correlation to corruption and to also acknowledge that there are still insufficient knowledge on the determinants of corruption in Nigeria.

#### **2.4.1 Poor Leadership Factor**

History has shown that no nation of the world grew and relished steady development in virtually all spheres of its national life without experiencing good and selfless leadership (Ogbeidi 2012). Apparently, leadership is a vital element in the social relationships of groups whether in government or at work. Groups need leaders and leaders need followers (Imhonopi & Urim 2013). Nevertheless, poor leadership produces poor followership resulting in weak systems which give birth to poor nations.

The term 'poor leadership' or 'poor governance' in this study, refers to any institutional leadership, like; political, religious, legislative, judicial and also business organizations which are not sufficiently guided by the principle of accountability, transparency, the rule of law and genuine citizen participation in the affairs of its institution (Kyambalesa 2006; Robinson 1998). In other words, any leadership that is not a "process of social influence by which a person influences others to accomplish an objective and directs the organization in a way that makes it more cohesive and coherent" (Ogbeidi, 2012:4) is considered as a weak and poor leadership.

Unavoidably, poor governance, as Wolf and Gurgun distinctly stated in the article published by Kyambalesa (2006: 108), can create “opportunity and incentives for corruption” by engendering a state of affairs in public or private institutions where there is no stringent benchmark for curbing, exposing, and/or penalizing malfeasance. To expatiate further, Olutola (2014: 84), cited the former Economic and Financial Crime Commission (EFCC) chairman Malam Nuhu Ribadu saying that, “the cost of corruption in Nigeria within the period of ten years was estimated to be \$35 billion due to inefficiency in governance”. By direct implication it means that weak leadership or poor governance breeds corruption.

Some of the major causes of poor leadership or poor governance in the history of Nigeria, are; greed, lack of wise counsel, political instability, weak legislative and judicial systems etc. For this reason, Ogbeyi (2012: 21), writes, “the problem with Nigeria is not just corruption but leadership failure”. Huntington (1968:59), offered a substantiated understanding into the effect of a poor political system on the public officials. He declared that, the absence of effective political institutionalization made public officials to integrate their private lives with political offices, thereby, abusing the public trust. Correspondingly, the lack of competent and responsible leaders with integrity, vision and high moral values, has been the bane of the country and the major cause of corruption in the land.

## 2.4.2 Unethical factors

Admittedly, for every society to function well, there are acceptable standards or moral principles that should be adhered to. For example; selflessness, integrity, truthfulness, responsibility, accountability, justice, respect for life and human dignity are core principles that should be protected and implemented for a peaceful and stable society. Any moral principles that do not conform to these accepted standards of behaviours; are what this study identified as '*unethical factors*' attributed to the causes of corruption in Nigeria.

To illustrate this point, many Nigerians have developed ghoulish passion for easy wealth and luxury goods and, simultaneously losing their ethical appetite for hard work and commitment to duties as well as the knack to generate resources and accumulate capital. According to Kyambalesa (2006), greed, the lack of contentment, the lack of law enforcement, high cost of living and the low level of monthly wages are among the reasons that contribute to unethical behaviours in Africa.

In 2007, a research was conducted by the African Capacity Building Foundation survey team on the causes of anti corruption ineffectiveness in Nigeria. During the course of this study, it was discovered that low public sector salary and lack of effective incentives to public officials, were the major contributing factors to corruption. In view of these, even the most ethical public servants in Nigeria readily mortgaged their consciences and yielded to the temptation to do whatever it takes to avoid the almost certain life of misery. Significantly, Agbiboa (2012), argued that national values embolden corrupt

behaviour, as those who acquire affluence and buy influence through corrupt enrichment, also command national and local respect and honour. From this perspective, eradicating corruption has become a laudable ethical objective in Nigeria.

### **2.4.3 Religious factors**

Christianity, Islam and African Traditional Religion, are the three major religious institutions in Nigeria. The teachings of these religions acknowledged the fall of man (*sin*) as the major cause of suffering and evil in the world. In addition, Olukayode (2013:173-174) argues that; “the misuse of a position of authority for a person or group benefit, involving a deliberate breach of legal norms by religious leaders”. This appears to be one of the major causes of corruption in Nigeria. Kukah (2007:37-38), puts it differently, by stating that, these leaders are “scavenging for the fortunes in the name of leading souls to God through the organization of endless spiritual trade fairs called revivals aimed at indoctrinating ordinary citizens away from the culture of hard work and the need to develop a truly Christian ethic to wealth”.

Similarly, Olukayode (2013:176), argued that; “the get rich quick sermons in some Nigerian churches are pushing members into corrupt practices. Churches now judge the commitment of their members by equating their contribution to project at par with their employment status or business standing. This approach is pushing many Church members to commit financial crimes in order to meet their church expectations.

Ogunbumi (2012), exemplified the above situation by citing the case of ex-boss Bank PHB; Francis Atuche, who paid the sum of 45 million naira to a Church as tithe from

stolen money. This money was paid to two Roman Catholic Churches in Delta State through a bank transfer from Bank PHB Mortgage Limited account". Rasheed (2003:30) posits a pastoral assistant with Christ Embassy, Lawrence Agada, who was also a staff member of Sheraton Hotels and Towers, Ikeja [Lagos state] was held over the fraud totalling 39 million Naira. When he was interrogated by the police, Agada confessed that he used the large amount of money in helping the gospel in Christ Embassy" (cited in Olukayode 2013). Corruption is also bred by some religious institutions today through money laundering (Olukayode 2013).

Furthermore, corrupt religious indoctrination has resulted in conflicts at different times and places in Nigeria. Starting from 1980 *Maitatsine*<sup>34</sup> crisis in the north, which led to the massacre of approximately 4,177 people (Adebayo 2010; Falola 2001), to the current *Boko Haram* crisis, with a similar ideology in the north but more sophisticated and tactical of operations similar to that of *al-Qaeda*. Another determining factor of the corrupt religious indoctrination in Nigeria is the introduction of *shari'a law* in some Northern parts of the nation. After its enactment, this particular kind of religious law is believed to be to the advantage of the elite and wealthy groups of people, but sadly, to

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<sup>34</sup> Maitatsine is a word in Hausa which means 'one who curses'. It is an Islamic religious sects founded by late Malam Muhammadu Marwa alias Maitatsine. Falola (2001:143) writes about the leader of this sects when she asserts that, "He was a Qur'anic teacher and preacher. Forceful, persuasive and charismatic, he rebelled against many popular opinions among Kano Islamic circles, denouncing certain parts of the Holy Qur'an and even criticizing Prophet Muhammad...he revealed himself to be an *annabi*; a prophet with divine power and mission to save the world...He was allege to have replaced the name of Prophet Muhammad [peace be upon him] with his own in personal copies of the Qur'an...He was opposed to most aspects of modernization and to all western influence".

the disadvantage of the most vulnerable citizens; the women, the children as well as the less privileged people<sup>35</sup>.

In African Traditional Religion (ATR), there are instances where African deities and ancestral spirits are manipulated to perpetuate injustice (Olukayode 2013:180). For example, the rampant murders for ritual purposes, the use of ATR to aid Advance Fee Fraud (*419/Yahooplus*<sup>36</sup>) and armed-robbery are some ways in each religion causing corruption in Nigeria. In the same way, drug dealers, human traffickers and sex workers also perform religious rituals as a means of protection in their corrupt practises (Personal communication with some of the victims: Lagos, Jos, Abuja, South Africa, and Dubai 2012-2015).

#### **2.4.4 The Theory of the Two Publics' Factors**

In his theory of the Two Publics in Africa<sup>37</sup>, Ekeh (1975), states that “most...Africans are citizens of two publics in the same society. On the one hand, they belong to a civic public from which they gain materially, but to which they give grudgingly. On the other

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<sup>35</sup> This assertion is based on the researcher's knowledge that since the implementation of the shari'a law in northern Nigeria, I have not heard nor seen any muslim politician or elite brought and charged before this court.

<sup>36</sup>Yahoo-plus or yahoo-yahoo is an elevated form of cyber-crime in Nigeria. It involves performing various rituals to brighten the swindler's chances of getting his/her victims hypnotized to keep remitting money from any location in the world (Olukayode 2013:180). As an illustration, a parishioner at St Mary's Anglican Church on the Braak, Stellenbosch South Africa, was a victim of this fraud, she was hypnotized to the point where she DHL her digital camera to a yahoo-yahoo guy in Nigeria who promised to buy it, but after receiving the camera, she never got her money nor heard from him again.

<sup>37</sup>The emergence of two public realms in Africa, namely; 'primordial public and the civic public'. The former is “moral and operates on the same moral imperatives as the private realm... [While the latter] is amoral and lacks the generalized moral imperatives operatives in the private realm and in the primordial public” (Peter, P. Ekeh 1975. *Colonialism and the Two Public in Africa: A Theoretical Statement*. Journal of Comparative Studies in Society and History, Vol.17, No. 1. Pp. 91-112). This theory can also be seen from a cultural norm perspective. Cf; Daniel, E. Agbibo 2012. Between Corruption and Development: The Political Economy of State Robbery in Nigeria. Journal of Business Ethics. 325-345.

hand, they belong to a primordial public from which they derive little or no material benefits, but which they are expected to give generously and do give materially". Furthermore, he augured that "the unwritten law of the dialectics is that it is legitimate to rob the civic public in order to strengthen the primordial public". Unfortunately, this kind of relationship, creates the 'soft state' phenomenon. "In such a state, citizens are said to have a weak or diffused sense of national interest" and do not have "a commitment to public service"(Agbibo 2012; Gould & Amaro-Reyes 1983; Gould, Dj., & Mukendi 1989).

Similarly, Banfield (1958), argued that the primordial public can also be in form of extreme devotion to one's family. This he termed 'a society of amoral familists'. In this kind of society, "no one will further the interests of the group or community except as it is to his private advantage to do so...the claim of any person or institution to be inspired by zeal for the public rather than private advantage will be regarded as fraud...And it will be assumed that whatever group is in power is self-serving and corrupt. Hardly will an election be over before the voters will conclude that the new officials are enriching themselves at their expense". These theories as a determinant of corruption show the tension and dislocation in relationships between the civic public and the primordial public.

Using the political scenario in Nigeria, (Ekeh 1975; Anazodo, Igbokwe & Nkah 2015) posited that democratic leaders (civic public) are imposed on the people (primordial public) by godfathers and political parties. Since these leaders are not accountable to the people, they engage in corrupt practice and bad governance with impunity at the

expense of the ordinary citizens. Buttressing this point, Osaghea (2011) writes "the use of political office to enrich one's self...is not seen however as corruption inasmuch as the person involved is seen as contributing such ill-gotten wealth to the welfare and development of his or her community". This toxic relationship between the two publics resulted in breeding corruption and other social ills, the trademark of the civic public (Osaghea 1988). Since it weakens to the point of annihilation, all other moral restraints, such as the integrity of office, the devotion to one's country, the good of the public and the dues to one's class or profession (Varda 1981, p.176).

Given these points, Ekeh (1975, p.110), identified two forms of corruption caused by these dialectics, namely; embezzlement of funds by civic public from the government, and the solicitation and acceptance of bribes from the individuals seeking services provided by the civic public by those who administer these services.

#### **2.4.5 Socio-economic factors**

The paltry level of wages and the regular delays in the payment of salaries in both the public and private sectors in Nigeria have contributed to the cause of corruption. Buttressing these points from an educational point of view, Agbibo (2012) posited that "in Nigeria it has become quite customary for public school teachers and university professors to wait for many months to get paid". In addition, the limited opportunity for engaging in lawful economic activities, the lack of easy access to markets and a dearth funding for entrepreneurship have also contributed economically to corruption.



Additional causes of corruption are; the lack of social security and the facilities needed to guarantee a decent way of life at old age, as well as poverty and unemployment.

## **2.5 Effects of Corruption in Nigeria**

Impacts of corruption is globally recognised as one of the most critical threats to the stability, transformation, peaceful cohesion, human capacity building and development of societies (Mauro, 1995; World Bank, 1997; Treisman, 2000; Kyambalesa, 2006; Ogbeyi, 2012). Although it is not possible to gauge with precision the extent at which corruption has affected Nigeria, Shehu (2004:74), nevertheless, posits that, “the deteriorating living standards in Nigeria today, with escalating poverty levels estimated at 80 per cent; the rise in crime rate leading to the development of the vicious cycle of poverty / corruption and insecurity; as well as the inefficient delivery of services, including criminal justice and law enforcement, are all indicators of the prevalence and pervasiveness of corruption”.

Viewed from a different angle; Dike (2003), states that “corruption diverts scarce public resources into private pockets, literally undermines effective governance, endangers democracy and erodes the social and moral fabric of the nation”. Moreover, it has tarnished Nigeria’s image at home and abroad.

Based on the above scholarly illustrations and ideas, this section attempts to briefly identify and describe imparts of corruption in Nigeria in three areas<sup>38</sup> namely, political institutions, economic institutions, and social cohesion (Aluko 2014).

### **2.5.1 Political Institutions**

The effects of corruption on the political institutions of any nation can be so devastating, and can also hinder any meaningful political development. Being that politics has the power and capacity to regulate and govern the society. Nye (1967), refers to political development, as the legitimate governmental structure and processes to social change. Similarly, political development is also considered as administrative, legal, and democratic development (Voskanyan 2000). According to Acemoglu and Robinson, it is the “political institutions of a nation that determine the ability of citizens to control politicians and influence how they behave. This in turn, determines whether politicians are agents of the citizens, albeit imperfect, or are able to abuse the power entrusted to them, or they have usurped, to amass their own fortunes and to pursue their own agendas, ones detrimental to those of the citizen” (2013, p.42).

In Nigeria, the excessive tolerance of corruption has serious negative effects on the structure and processes of political programs that enhance development, because the culture of corruption had become entrenched in the polity of the nation (Ogbeidi 2012)

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<sup>38</sup> An attempt to study the effect of corruption on these institutions are suitable for this research because; “institutions influence behaviour and incentives in real life, they forge the success or failure of nations”(Acemoglu & Robinson 2013, p.42). On the definition of institutions, (Hodgson 2001, p.295) stated that “institutions are durable systems of established and embedded social rules and conventions that structure social interaction”. Institutions can also be seen as constitutional, they set the rules by which the game is played. Therefore economic and political institutions, shape the incentives of business, individuals and politicians”(2013, pp.42–43). The impact of these institution is always visible on the social cohesion of a nation. Whenever there is abuse of responsibility by these institutions, the prophets were always clamouring for the reform (Mckane 1982, p.252).

Describing the havoc caused by corruption in Nigeria, Dike (2014) states that, corruption undermines democracy and good governance by subverting formal process. Additionally, “corruption in elections and in legislative bodies reduces accountability and fair representation in policy decision making; corruption in the judiciary undermines or suspends the rule of law; and corruption in public administration results in the unequal provision services”. Corruption erodes and corrodes the meaning, mechanisms and the very essence of democracy. It breaks the link and people’s power to influence collective decisions, contributes input into the system, affects voting patterns, generates general apathy for meaningful participation, and basically overheats the polity due to public disaffection and disenchantments (Erunke 2014).

Likewise, Dike (2003) posits that, corruption has led to “slow movement of files in offices, police extortion...port congestion, queues at passport offices and gas stations, ghost workers syndrome...,amongst others”. Similarly, it erodes the institutional capacity of government as procedures are disregarded, resource are siphoned off, and officials are hired and promoted without regard to performance. At the same time, corruption undermines the legitimacy of government and such democratic values as trust, transparency, accountability, and tolerance. It has also prevented the government from devising and implementing effective poverty alleviation programmes (Agbibo 2012).

In short; it is important to point out that the level of corruption has affected the cognitive perception of Nigerians. Firstly, about the ability of the state to organise a free and fair electoral contest. Secondly, the perception that political appointments are one sure way

to wealth and elevation of social status; and Thirdly, the perception that the political office holders cannot be responsive and accountable to the citizens (Ogundiya 2010). Hence corruption becomes a clog in the wheel of progress of any nation state if the menace is not controlled.

By and large, the effect of corruption on the political institutions of any nation, especially Nigeria, is overwhelming and should be controlled because it is the political process that determines the viability of the kind of economic institutions citizens live under, and it is the political institutions that determine how this process works (Acemoglu & Robinson 2013).

## **2.5.2 Economic Institutions**

An online source<sup>39</sup> defined economic institutions as “any establishment whose activities have a bearing on society, whether these institutions are businesses or not”. The aim of economic institutions is in essence, establishing and protecting property rights, facilitating transactions, permitting economic co-operation and organizations (Wiggins & Davis 2006, p.2). From the above statements, economic institutions function to foster economic growth.

Economic growth is often used synonymously with economic development (Jinghan 1997; Okereke & Tamunosiki 2015). According to Haller (2012), “economic growth is the process of increasing the sizes of national economies...,especially the GDP per capita, with positive effects on the economic-social sector, while development shows us

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<sup>39</sup>[www.whatiseconomics.org/what-is-economics/economic-institutions/](http://www.whatiseconomics.org/what-is-economics/economic-institutions/) Accessed 15 June 2016.

how growth impacts on the society by increasing the standard of life...Both processes involve the allotment and utilization of resources and the increase of efficiency; the finality of growth and development is the improvement of the standard and quality of life” like access to education and health care, employment opportunities, availability of clean air and safe drinking water, the threat of crime, and so on. Although a country may see higher GDP, but the benefit of growth may be siphoned into the bank accounts of some few individuals.

Moreover, the African Union reported that corruption drained the region of some \$140 billion a year which is about 25% of the continent’s official GDP (Ribadu 2006). Likewise, in 2006, the head of Nigeria’s Economic and Financial Crimes Commission Nuhu Ribadu, estimated that Nigeria lost some US\$380 billion to corruption between independence in 1960 and the end of military rule in 1999 (BBC, 2007). According to Tony Blair, the former Prime Minister of Britain, this amount is equivalent to all the western aid given to Africa in almost four decades and also equivalent to 300 years of British aid to the continent. It is also said to be six times the American aid given to post-war Europe under the Marshall plan (cited in Ogundiya 2010). Nigeria’s corruption epidemic has continued since then. Some western diplomats estimated that Nigeria lost a minimum average of \$4 billion to \$8 billion per year to corruption over the eight years of the Obasanjo administration (HRW, 2007). Thus, corruption draws off funds that would otherwise be available for economic growth.

Economic growth is obtained through effective and efficient use of the available resources (natural and human, technological) by economic institutions to increase the

capacity of production of a country. Therefore, the adequate functioning of the economic institutions of any nation will attract investment and encourage innovation. Sadly, due to corrupt practises in Nigeria, resources are not properly nor optimally utilized to promote economic growth. To this regard, Odi (2014) opines that these resources have not been judiciously used to meet the need of the population in terms of economic and human capital development because of the high level of corruption. In other words, corruption is the bane to economic growth and development in Nigeria. To that effect, Costa (2003), averred that, “Nigeria lost over five billion US dollars in the last few years to corrupt practices.” These public revenues according to Human Right Watch 2007, “are not only stolen and misused, but often pay for the services and weapons behind the political violence. Because violence and corruption make political competition a very expensive endeavour in Nigeria, many politicians are far more accountable to powerful and violent political godfathers who sponsor them than they are to their constituents”

Significantly, corruption reduces investment (Barro 2000) by discouraging genuine foreign investors from coming in to run businesses in the country (Osa et al. 2014) and also because investors see corruption as an unnecessary extra cost of doing business (Lipset & Lenz 2000). At the same time, the poor state of our electricity, transport sector, health sector, education sector and communications are affected by corruption, and cause a major problem of economic growth and it is a main handicap for doing business in the country (Shehu 2005; Odi 2014).

Furthermore, impart of corruption on Nigeria’s economy has resulted in high rates of poverty and unemployment. Almost 70% of Nigerians live on less than one dollar a day

and the average life expectancy is 48 years (John et al. 2016). The reality of this on the social life of the nation is visible in the lack of trust on the economic institutions in and has (Bowles 1998) affected social interactions among citizens.

### **2.5.3 Social Cohesion**

Social cohesion according to Larsen (2013), is the belief held by citizens of a given nation-state that they share a moral community, which enables them to trust each other. Social cohesion is a state of affairs in which a group of people (delineated by a geographical region, like a country) demonstrates an aptitude for collaboration that produces a climate for change (Ritzen et al. 2000). Presumably, The OECD Perspectives on Global Development 2012, describes a cohesive society as a society that “works towards the well-being of all its members, fights exclusion and marginalisation, creates a sense of belonging, promotes trust, and offers prospects of upward social mobility” (OECD 2012). As such, social cohesion is both a desirable end and a means to achieve inclusive development. It may differ in conception in various countries and regions, but it is equally important for every society.

From the above definitions, trust is the core virtue for social cohesion. Unfortunately, corruption has adversely affected trust in Nigeria, especially in the social system, like security, health care, education, politics, and countless others. One of the inescapable effects of corruption on social cohesion, is violence. To this regard Ogundiya (2010), writes; since 1999 when the country returned to democracy, it is estimated that more than ten thousand lives have been lost in politically motivated violence and properties

worth billions of naira have been destroyed. There is little doubt that there is an inextricable nexus between corruption and the crises in the Nigerian state. According to Human Rights Watch, for instance, “more than 15,700 people have been killed in inter-communal, political and sectarian violence between 1999 and 2011, especially in Plateau State, with a total of 3,800 deaths since 2001, at least 1,000 of them in 2010 alone”. Similarly, United States Commission on International Religious Freedom claims that —12,000 Nigerians have been killed in sectarian and communal attacks and reprisals between Muslims and Christians from 1999 up to 2009. That is an average of 1,090 deaths per year (June 2011:20).

Secondly, the lack of trust in the electoral system: The 1999, 2003 and 2007 general elections were adjudged to be worse than the previous general elections. A fraudulent election can produce nothing except a fraudulent government (Ogundiya 2010).

Thirdly, the effect of corruption on social cohesion has resulted in discrimination, marginalization and injustice This is epitomized by the Niger delta region, where one of the indigenous groups, the Ogoni people, have struggled to obtain basic social services and to resist the destruction of their local environment, (Ogundiya 2010). These communities are suffering from; oil pollution, extreme poverty, high levels of youth unemployment, pollution, perceived discriminatory employment practices against locals by oil companies, and, socio economic and political marginalisation and neglect by successive administrations constitute the main grievances against the oil companies and the government (Obi 2009).



## 2.6 Conclusion

Chapter One gives the general introduction to the research, in particular; the research questions, structure and methodology. While chapter two explicates the historical occurrence of corruption before and after independence in Nigeria, this approach provides the contextual link between the past and the present, and projects the future.

This Chapter also identifies some determinants of corruption in Nigeria, namely; poor leadership, religion, ethical, and the Theory of the Two public factors. Furthermore, the impact of corruption on the nation's political, economic and social institutions was also discussed. This Chapter also shows how the conflict paradigm is demonstrated within the descriptive and interpretive task of practical theological observations.

Given that this research has attempted to explain the concept of corruption in Nigeria, the following Chapter will seek to gain theological insight on prophetic preaching, and how prophets engaged institutions, afterwards, both chapters are brought into conversation in Chapter Four to suggest a mode of prophetic preaching in the context of corruption.

## Chapter Three: A Homiletical Approach to Prophetic Preaching

### 3.1 Introduction

In order to gain homiletical insight on prophetic preaching, part of the introduction to this chapter will focus on the understanding of preaching, the mandates of the Church and the role of prophets to institutions. This approach is necessary because it recognizes the contribution of preaching in general and specifically, prophetic preaching within a socio-ecclesia discourse of crucial issues. It also provides a point of departure, namely; that God's Word through preaching has the power to transform individuals who will be channels of transformation in the nation.

The theological foundation to these approaches is that God has a will that encompasses on every sphere of the society (Jonhson 2011, pp.22–59). Uniquely, Forster (2014, p.7), asserted that, Christians are present in every domain of society, even among those that cause a great deal of suffering and harm With this in mind, let us briefly look at the mandate of the Church<sup>40</sup>.

Discussing the concept and division in the understanding of the Church mandate, Missiologists and public theologians speak of the spiritual and social salvation mandates (August 2004; Bosch 2014; Smith 1993). The former is said to refer to the “commission to announce the good news of salvation through Jesus Christ; while the

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<sup>40</sup>The term ‘church’, as used in this research is adopted from Forster and Oosterbrink’s three description namely; the church as a local congregation of Christian member; the church as institution, denomination and ecumenical body; and the church as believers, salt and light in the world (2015, pp.12–16). This concepts is adopted in this research, because its gives a broader view on the description and role of the Church.

latter calls Christians to responsible participation in human society. In the same way, the idea of “*cultural mandate*” by the Calvinists speaks about Christian obligation to address and be involved in redeeming and improving the socio-economical, ecological, and political wellbeing of God’s creation. In other words, humanity represents God in the world and is expected to develop it. To buttress this, Paul Murphy, a renowned reformed preacher eulogised that; “the Church is the only institution that exists for its non-members” (Cited in Mbachirin 2006, p.9).

This means that the Church enters the public arena because it is mandated to do so by the holy and blessed Trinity (Mt 28:19-20). In the same fashion, the Church’s responsibility to speak and act against societal ills comes from a biblical mandate. To illustrate; the prophets felt compelled to speak against the religious, societal and leadership problems in their time and context.

Similarly, a committee of the Christian Council of Nigeria affirms that; “The social message of the Old Testament Prophets is an incisive mandate to the Nigerian Church and to us as Christians to accept a standard of social justices which is, at the absolute minimum, no lower than the highest standards of the Old Testament. It is a mandate to tackle the problem..., of honesty and efficiency in government, of the need for improved standards of sanitation and health, and the lack of a proper social and recreational opportunities in the urban areas, to list only a few hindrances to abundant life”

<sup>41</sup>Therefore, the Church has a mandate to be an agent of social change and

transformation, to be salt and light, to preserve morality, to season human behaviour and enlighten on the evils of corrupt practices and other societal ills (Nwaomah 2007). Thus, the refractory malaise of corruption in Nigeria poses a serious challenge to the Church's mandate and calls for a drastic action of faith.

One of the greatest tools the Church utilizes to fulfil these social-ecclesia mandates is preaching. Because "Christ is present in the Church, with the Church, for the Church, in the world, with the world, and for the world through preaching" (Long 2005), biblical preaching plays a central role in combating corruption.

Therefore, what is preaching? it may sound like a simple question, but, the more we reflect on it, the more its depth and complexity increase (2005). Thinking on its complexity, Ian Pitt-Watson writes, "I don't understand preaching, but I believe in it deeply" (cited in Long 2005). This strong and deep conviction is the reason preachers kept preaching, and engaged in scholarly study to broaden the scope and understanding on preaching.

Preaching is a commission – a charge. As the Apostle Paul stated boldly in 2 Timothy 4:2 "preach the word...in season and out of season". Therefore, a theology of preaching begins with the humble acknowledgement that preaching is not a human invention, but a gracious creation of God and a central part of God's revealed will for the church (Mohler 1992).

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<sup>41</sup> Taken from a report prepared for the Christian Council of Nigeria, by a committee which comprises of renowned Church leaders, university academics, missionaries, and business guru. The report is tile: Christian Responsibility in an Independent Nigeria 1961 (14). (Cited inMbachirin 2006, pp.8–9).

According to Allan Boesak, “Preaching is the proclamation of the gospel in a language that can be understood in a specific situation” (cited in Cilliers 2013, p.6). In his homiletic theory Pieterse (2013), posited that, “Preaching seeks to communicate God’s Word to people in their particular context”. In other words, preaching is an act that interprets and constructs social reality (Christine 1995, p.134).

Cilliers, in his unique and artistic way of writing, averred that: “Preaching communicates more than mere information about God to others; it is the performance of God’s voice through historical distances, the mists of incomprehension and deafness of ears – it is, as the classic advertisement stated, all about “hearing his Master’s voice” (2013, p.77). Moreover, he affirmed that preaching as the performance of God’s voice, is also an event of God’s deed. “God’s voice is simultaneously God’s deed of revelation, God’s presence, and God’s face being turned towards us” (Cilliers 2015, p.370). Therefore, a sermon is much more than the transmission of religious information, more than mere words on a written manuscript. “It rather is a word event and a Word event, the sound of a voice, non-recurrent and unique. In fact, sermons cannot be repeated, nor be re-preached, because God’s voice is not static, not fixed in time and place, but historical, contingent, living and redeeming. Sermons are more than concepts or truths on paper, no matter how exegetical or dogmatically correct they may be. They are words that need to be re-grouped and re-tuned acoustically (i.e. in terms of hearing) by the Spirit to become a voice that articulates the Word of God” (2013, p.6).

This shows that preaching does not merely convey content, it also shapes relationships<sup>42</sup>. Wilfried, affirmed that, preaching “intervenes in the reality of the human world and creates new fact” (2011, p.320). This implies that, preaching should be understood as an event that can establish and foster new reality.

Describing the word event of preaching, Long (2005) submits that, “one person or more gets up in front of the congregation in order to preach the Gospel...These people come from the community but come forward in front of it and act in Christ’s name”. From the above description, four crucial elements<sup>43</sup> are present in this event; namely; the congregation or assembly, the Preacher (s), the sermon, and the presence of Christ. To preach therefore, is to join our human words with word that God in Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit is already speaking to the church and to the world, and to speak in Christ’s name is to claim Christ own permission, (“Whoever listen to you listen to me” Luke 10:16).

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<sup>42</sup>In preaching, the relationship between God and individual or congregation is expressed and shaped. It also expresses the relationship of the preacher to the congregation. Therefore preaching is an event that involves both information and participation (Wilfried 2011, pp.320–321).

<sup>43</sup> Cf (Long 2005), refers to elements as the crucial ingredients of preaching. (1) The congregation, or the assembly, are the people who will hear the preaching. The fact that the event of preaching involves a congregation, implies two other realities, namely; the *world* from which the congregation is called out, and to which they will eventually be sent, and worship, the reason for which the congregation is gathered. (2) The preacher (s) is in every way part of the congregation, but now stands before the community in some new role. This new position of the preacher is not so much a change in status but a change in place and function. (3) The sermon is the action; it is what the preacher speaks joined with what the rest of the congregation hears. In other words, the sermon is an event of speaking and hearing, performed by the preacher in the name of Christ. (4) The Presence of Christ means that the risen Christ is truly present here and now. God has chosen to meet us in the event of preaching, promised to be present there, and this is not because our sermons are good but because God is good.

Claiming Christ permission is the foundation of the authority<sup>44</sup> of preaching. Preaching has authority because it interprets scripture. According to Bartlett (1995, p.22); “To claim that the sermon’s authority is warranted by the authority of the Bible is not necessarily to affirm any particular doctrine of inspiration. It is to say that the Bible is God’s gift to illumine human lives, the human condition, the promise of redemption that can comfort and urge us on”.

Speaking on the forms<sup>45</sup> and prophetic nature of preaching, Tisdale (2010) and Pieterse (2013), posited that all preaching are prophetic in a broader sense. Although prophetic preaching is not the same kind of preaching as on a general Sunday according a lectionary or church calendar (Advent, Christmas, Lent, Pentecost), but preachers can preach prophetically from the lectionary and church calendar. Therefore, preachers have the responsibility to discern the content of prophetic preaching in their specific context.

Corruption is one of the contemporary issues that needs to be addressed globally, especially in Nigeria. Therefore, prophetic preaching, in the context of corruption

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<sup>44</sup>There is no single authoritative definition of the authority of preaching. Cf (Bartlett 1995) Every attempt to discuss this subject is shaped by the denomination, the experience, the theological biases of the author. Furthermore, He identified two types of authority in preaching, namely; *De Jure* and *De facto* authority. *De Jure* authority means that each preacher preaches out of a set of principles and presuppositions that convince the preacher it is possible to preach at all. *De facto* means each preacher will have just that amount of authority the listeners grant or acknowledge. Bartlett, speaks of six elements of the authority of preaching. (a) The sermon has authority because the sermon interprets scripture. (b) The sermon has authority because it represents a pastoral world suited to the real needs of the listeners. (c) The sermon has authority because of its place in the liturgy. (d) The sermon has authority because it is intellectually compelling. (e) The sermon has authority because of the integrity of the preacher. (f) The sermon has authority because of the rhetorical power of the preacher. This research also hold that the sermon has authority because it is emotionally compelling.

<sup>45</sup>There are different forms of preaching, for example: Expository preaching, Textual preaching, Topical preaching, Doctrinal Preaching, Narrative preaching Cf (Borden 1992; Timothy George 1992).

reaches over the borders of a single congregation – it has a message for the ecumenical Christian church, the broader society and the government. (Pieterse 2013).

To understand this message, it is important to gain homiletical insight on the scholarly description of prophetic preaching, before it, the following section will briefly look at the role of prophets to institutions.

### **3.2 Role of Biblical Prophets to Institutions**

In the midst of spiritual deterioration, economic and political injustice, and cultural upheaval, God raised up spokesmen / women to proclaim a needed, fresh and forceful message (Green 1984, p.57). These spokespersons are called prophets.

From a biblical Hebrew description, the word prophet carries a variety of meaning such as; “*nabi or nabhi, roeh, seer*” (Aune 1983, p.83). According to Enns “the Hebrew term *nabhi* means a “spokesman or a speaker” and denotes “one who has been called or been appointed to proclaim as a herald of the message of God”...A second Hebrew term describing the prophet is *roeh*, which means “to see” (I Samuel 9:9); it is the older word for prophet...A third term, *seer*, means “to see, or behold”, and it is also synonymous with *roeh*” (1989, p.65). Although these terms are used interchangeably ( I Chronicles 29:29; II Samuel 24:11; II kings 17:13; Isaiah 29:10; Amos7:12) (1983a, p.83), but, *nabi or nabhi* is frequently used, because of its etymological root, meaning; “one who is called”. The usage of this word in the Bible denotes a “speaker, spokes person of God, or Proclaimer” (Adeyanju 2014, p.13).



Therefore, prophets are regarded as proclaimers of God's plan both for the world and those in it, and to the extent that they, occasionally predict the future.

The biblical prophetic life, office, and message is unique and significant because it is deeply and radically God-centered. Despite this theocentric way of life, the prophets were not isolated individuals but participated fully in the religious and social life of Israel. In doing so, they addressed the crucial social and religious questions of their time. They did so with courage and condor (Ward & Ward 1995, p.14).

The prophets constantly reminded and called back the Hebrew people to their covenant relationship with God, humanity and creation. Hence, "prophetic ministry has to do not primarily with addressing specific public crises but with addressing, in season and out of season, the dominant crisis that is opted and domesticated" (Brueggemann 2001, p.3). In Nigerian context, corruption is one such dominant and lingering crisis.

By virtue of the prophetic office, a prophet is a spokesperson or mediator between God and God's people; he or she received revelation from God, and revealing God's will to God's people with a view to rebuke, exhort, and comfort. They played these roles in individual's personal life (Nathan and David II Samuel 12:1-14), and the nation at large. Put differently, "the basic form of prophetic speech was the announcement of judgement against the individual, but this form later underwent a number of structural changes and was transformed into announcement of judgement against the whole nation" (Wilson 1980, p.12)

Thus, this section will focus on the roles of prophets to institutions because, “there has been a realization that antitheses between individuality and institutionalism always teeter on the edge of over-simplification, and that the free and heroic individual should not too readily be called up as a model for Old Testament religion. The considerations which are brought into play here, have a general philosophical and sociological character. Individuality will thrive only when there are institutions which are congenial to its growth” (Mckane 1982, p.260). Therefore, institutions are powerful and organised structures with policy and process, and the destinies of individuals and their capacities for self-expression cannot be disengaged from them.

The role of the prophets to the religious, political and economic institutions in biblical Israel is highly dateable<sup>46</sup>, because the prophet addressed the community in a particular place and at a particular time. However, Jeremias identified and categorised functions of the prophets into two, namely; “*Inductive*” prophecy, in which contact with the deity is initiated by the prophet (inquiry and intercession), “*Intuitive*” prophecy, in which a prophet receives an unsolicited mandate from God. (2011, p.443).

Similarly, Wilson posits that the prophets stand between the human and divine worlds and have strong ties to both (1984, p.71). He employs the categories “*central intermediary*” and “*peripheral intermediary*”. The former is regarded as an official link to the supernatural world and functions as a means of bringing about social change and a

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<sup>46</sup> There are different approaches to the roles of the prophets in biblical times, suchlike; Cultic interpretations of prophecy and the prophets; prophetic Yahwism. It is also important to note that, the roles of the prophets are determined by the types of prophets in Ancient Israel, namely; the Shamanistic prophets, the cultic or Temple prophets, the court prophets, the free prophets. For further readings on this subject, see; (Mckane 1982; Jeremias 2011, pp.442–443; Adeyanju 2014, pp.34–38; James 1979; Crenshaw 1971; Green 1984; Aune 1983b, pp.15–16).

means of maintaining social stability, while the latter is primarily responsible for maintaining their societies and promoting community welfare (Wilson 1980, pp.66–86).

These activities are documented and reflected upon as sacred tradition. The Torah as one of these traditions, represents a special Yahwistic presence in the institution which differentiates itself from the institutions associated with other national gods. It does this by making moral demands in the name of Yahweh which regulates relationships between members of his community, and so determines the quality of life in it (2011, p.445). The majority of prophets engaged in both kinds of activity, hence, mediating between God and human beings.

Prophets arose especially in times of conflict and injustice. Their passionate cries for justice and their insistence that God care for the poor and weak can be considered, in some measure, homilies (Petersen 2009, p.630). In their prophetic homilies or preaching, they addressed Priests, judges, royal and ruling class (economically and politically), and the society generally. In other words, prophets were concerned with the matters of the states, and are confident of their status as God's messengers to challenge and condemn immoral situations of their society. With the aim to reform all aspects of human society.

Evidently, during the Neo-Assyrian period, Israelite prophets critiqued a style of life that stood in tension with concern for justice and righteousness. "It became increasingly difficult to prove for economic justice when large estates were being created. People's land were being taken away, high interest rates became a financial burden and debt

slavery was rampant. When identifying these issues, the prophets were indicting social structures and not just the ethical behaviour of individuals.(2009, p.647). To put it differently, the prophets were clamouring for the reform of the institutions, so that it might be the servants of Yahwism.

Nevertheless Mckane argued that, “the point of the prophetic critique is then not that these institutions must be reformed and reconstituted as servants of truth, but that they are in an advanced state of decay, that they are hastening towards disintegration and that Yahweh’s community is being ushered into a kind of eschaton (1982, p.252).

Prophets have often been viewed as individuals who stand on the edge of society, offering critical judgement about it, and exiting at a remove from its important institutions (Petersen 2009, p.633). Prophets are not amenable to corrupt institutionalization. Thus, an important part of their preaching is directed against injustices, denouncement of unwholesome socio-political and religious development, and against unethical attitudes which destroys nationhood and foster corruption and oppression in their context.

In other words, “the prophets are not lonely voices against the establishment but are in fact a representative voice that gives social expression to what may be important and engaged social constituencies” (Wilson 1980). Most importantly, they understood the distinctive power of language, the capacity to speak in ways that evoke newness (Brueggemann 2001, p.xxiii).

Generally speaking, according to Brueggemann (2001), the Old Testament prophets had to content with “*royal consciousness*” which represents the deeply entrenched

political, economic, social and religious forces in Israel. McMickle (2006), affirmed that this royal consciousness is the status quo, and that it only offers to the people a vision of the future that allows them to remain in power and requires that the masses of the people remain marginalized in society. The role of the prophet is to proclaim a message combating that single vision and to show that God can and will bring a future different from that envisioned by the ruling elite. This message juxtaposed warning and encouragement, judgment and hope. In view of this, it is very important to give a description of prophetic preaching.

### **3.3 Description of Prophetic Preaching**

Seasoned homiletic scholars approached prophetic preaching from different perspectives. For example; Chang-Hoon Kim (2006), understands prophetic preaching as *social preaching*. He argued that “prophetic preaching as social preaching in the contemporary homiletics should be understood in terms of social life and responsibility of God’s people”. Similarly, Kelly Millers Smith (1984), called it *social crisis preaching* which is based on biblical texts revealing God’s vision for justice, peace and equality in our world, and preaching that addresses public and social concerns. In addition, Desmond Tutu affirmed prophetic preaching as “one form of preaching pertaining to social comment and social-economic and political critique of a society and its body politic” (cited in Cilliers 2010). In other words, it can be described as; *social-justice preaching*.

Cilliers averred that, prophetic preaching can also be *'political and eschatological' preaching*. Hence stated that, "in most of our ecclesiological traditions, the notions of *"political"* and *"eschatological"* preaching would be combined and described as "prophetic preaching" (2015b, p.369). Unfortunately, most of the times, prophetic preachers are simply understood as those people who are addressing political issues from the pulpit, using, inter alia, eschatological (or apocalyptic) terms.

From a public theological approach, Byron speaks of prophetic public theology, which he describes as theology that is "concerned with how the Christian faith addresses matters in the society at large... [Or] that is concerned with the public relevance of Christian beliefs and doctrines, (2014, p.159)". This imply that prophetic preaching can also be described as *public- issues preaching*.

Prophetic preaching from a Liberation Theology<sup>47</sup> perspective is *Liberation preaching* (Gonzalez 1995, p.307; Justo & Gozalez 1980). This kind of preaching according to Michael, is a "lyric, and a prophetic cry of denunciation" (2012, p.252), against oppressive and unjust political and economic intuitions and is a preferential option for the poor. As Gustavo Gutiérrez recalls, it is a 'preferential' option because of the 'universality of God's love that excludes no one' (cited in von Sinner 2007). Significantly,

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<sup>47</sup> Liberation Theology sprang from a holy indignation at the appalling poverty to which millions of people in Latin America and beyond are subjected, in sharp contrast with the enormous wealth with which a tiny minority live. This theology was formulated mainly by Roman Catholic theologians in the late 1960s and in the 1970s, most prominently by Peruvian Gustavo Gutiérrez. It has provided an important theoretical foundation for social and political action (von Sinner 2007). Significantly, many theological approach have evolved from liberation theology, suchlike; black theology, feminist theology, Hispanic-American theology, and others(Gonzalez 1995, p.307; Cone 1986, p.18). Liberation theology, in form and content has become a permissive force in the Churches' desire to realize human rights and it calls for the Church to combine preaching and administering the sacraments with a deep commitment to social justice (Orji 2001, p.101).

liberation preaching is not about liberation, but preaching that approaches its hermeneutical and homiletical task from a perspective of liberation (Gonzalez 1995, p.307; Harris 1995, p.1). In other words, it is about the liberating power of the Gospel in the situation or context in which the preacher stands or represents.

Prophetic preaching is also *corrective preaching* (Huh 2005, p.40), because it bears “witness to the grace of God which seeks to correct some aspects of the community's understanding of God, of the vocation or the life of the community or its perception of the world” (Ronald J 1988, p.177).

Uniquely, prophetic preaching encompasses all the above descriptions, however, the diverse perspective among homiletical scholars shows that there is no unanimity regarding how to define it. Thus, from the definitions and insights of (Wogaman 1993; Ottoni-Wilhem 2003; Brueggemann 2001; West 2004; McMickle 2006; John McClure 2007)<sup>48</sup>, seven hallmarks that characterize this significant mode of biblical proclamation are outlined by Tisdale (2010, p.10) and adopted in this research, because it encapsulated all characteristics of prophetic preaching, namely:

- I. Prophetic preaching is rooted in the biblical witness; both in the testimony of the Hebrew prophets of old and in the words and deeds of the prophet Jesus of Nazareth.

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<sup>48</sup>Section 1.2 contained various definitions of prophetic preaching by some of these scholar. And each speaks to some aspect of this mode of preaching that is true – be its biblical grounding, its social concern, its criticizing and energizing nature, or its imaginative calling- each definition also leaves out aspects of prophetic preaching that are vitally important (Tisdale 2010).

- II. Prophetic preaching is countercultural and challenges the status quo.
- III. Prophetic preaching is with the evils and shortcomings of the present social order and is often more focused on corporate and public issues than on individual and personal concerns.
- IV. Prophetic preaching requires the preacher to name both what is not of God in the world (criticizing) and the new reality God will bring to pass in the future (energizing).
- V. Prophetic preaching offers hope of a new day to come and the promise of liberation to God's oppressed people.
- VI. Prophetic preaching incites courage in its listeners and empowers them to work to change the social order.
- VII. Prophetic proclamation requires of the preacher, a heart that breaks with the things that break God's heart; a passion for justice in the world; the imagination; conviction, and courage to speak the words from God; humility and honesty in the preaching moment; and a strong reliance on the presence and power of the Holy Spirit (2010, p.10).

The above outlined, buttressed that "the special aim of prophetic utterance is to shatter deliberate ignorance and wilful blindness to the suffering of others and to expose the clever forms of evasion and escape devise in order to hide and conceal social ills like



injustice and corruption. The prophetic goal is to stir up in us the courage to care and empower us to change our lives and our historical circumstances” (West 2004).

This courage, according to Bader-Saye (2007), “is the capacity to do what is right and good in the face of fear. We become courageous when we learn to live for something that is more important than our own safety”. Preaching prophetically in the context of corruption especially in Nigeria, needs courage to confront and act in the midst of fear. This courage paves the way for prophetic preachers to envision, criticize, and to influence policy making to support the fight against corruption. Having said this, we now look at the three dimensions of prophetic preaching.

### **3.4 Three Dimensions of Prophetic Preaching**

Engaging the scholarly work of a seasoned South African poet, artist, philosopher and theologian Adam Small, Koopman (2012, pp.132–140), identified three facets of prophetic preaching, namely; prophetic envisioning, prophetic criticism, and prophetic policy- making.

These dimensions are to be seen as an approach that might strengthen prophetic preaching and fund the would-be prophetic voice, to give wisdom and courage, but which then invites immense imagination to know how to apply them to actual circumstances. Since the dominant or royal consciousness lead people to despair about the power to move towards new life, it is the task of prophetic imagination and ministry to bring people to engage the promise of newness that is at work in our history with God (Brueggemann 2001, p.60). The following section attempts to describe each of these

interdependent aspects of prophetic proclamation within the context of corruption in Nigeria.

### 3.4.1 Prophetic Envisioning

After the struggle against Apartheid in South Africa, a quest to build a new and inclusive society of dignity, justice, freedom and compassion followed. However, current issues on corruption remain a hindrance to this quest. In view of this, Koopman, averred that, “amidst our struggle to build a new society, his (Adam Small) envisioning gives hope and inspiration” (2012, p.131). With this in mind, this section will look at prophetic envisioning, and how it can give hope and inspiration in the current corrupt Nigerian context.

According to Gustafson James (1988), the prophets have a twofold task, namely; *envisioning* and *criticising*. While Ward and Ward (1995, p.13), argued that, the cause that the prophets espouse is the *judging* and *redeeming* will of God for the covenant community and for all people. For Brueggemann, it is; *criticizing* and *energizing* (2001, p.3). He argues that, prophetic witness is inherently countercultural, and biblical prophets evoke such a countercultural consciousness by criticizing and energizing their context. Furthermore, “the prophets energized their hearers with vision of the new reign of God that was to come”. This means that prophetic envisioning energizes and moves us from indignation with the current suffering caused by corruption to aspiration for the future.

This energy / vision is linked to hope, which means that prophetic preaching must undertake with both humour (Cilliers 2015a, p.11), hope and humility (McMickle 2006, p.19). Hope that is theological and Trinitarian nature (Koopman 2012, p.133), which is shaped by speech (Brueggemann 2001, p.69). It rests upon what had happened in the past and at what is happening in the present, specifically in God's acts of creation and of recreation in Christ and renewal in the Spirit (Alves 1972, p.198).

This kind of hope in the context of corruption, is the refusal to accept that Nigeria will never be a corrupt free nation. Thus, this hope energized us not by that which we already possess, but by that which is promised and about to be given (Brueggemann 2001, p.14). Therefore, in our suffering, we live in fervent anticipation in the newness that God has promised and will surely give.

For this newness to take place, "suffering and hope cannot be separated. Suffering makes it impossible for us to forget that there is a political task still unfinished-still to be accomplished, and hope is the star that tells the direction to follow. The two, suffering and hope, live from each other. Suffering without hope produces resentment and despair. Hope without suffering creates illusions, naiveté and drunkenness" (Alves 1972, p.203).

Speaking of humour in prophetic envisioning, Cilliers, advanced for "*ethics of playfulness*". He posited that "this type of ethics is no whip or threat, but an invitation to step out of the sham and humbug of old patterns into the imaginative space of new possibilities". He continued that, "this playfulness needs imagination...Imaginative play

implies a radical critique of a society that opts only for productivity and success, often sacrificing the joy of imagination. Play stretches the imagination, opening up possibilities unsought and unthought of” (2015a, p.54).

As an illustration, he described Desmond Tutu as someone who “often relativizes serious situations by means of humour, acting as a type of clown or court jester or joker. In the process, he does not take himself too seriously”. In addition, “Tutu yearns for the future, but he does this not only through expressions of indignation and anger, but also in a playful manner. He laughs as much as he weeps – for a better future” (2015a, p.53).

Prophetic envisioning portrays an appealing vision of the future<sup>49</sup>. This vision may indict the contemporary broken reality, but its main function is to allure and attract people to act concretely and to attempt to approximate the vision (Koopman 2012, p.132). This vision provides a unique paradigm shift in the thoughts, words and actions of Nigerians towards corruption. In other words, it calls for a fresh proactive alternative approach to the current crisis. This alternative is not rooted in social theory or in righteous indignation or in altruism, but in the genuine alternative that God is, God makes possible and requires an alternative theology and an alternative sociology (Brueggemann 2001, p.9).

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<sup>49</sup>Prophetic proclamation is not only directed towards the future, but also directed to the present. Prophetic task by means of criticism and energizing regarding the future, called to present faithfulness. Cf;(Green 1984, pp.59–61), the prophets were calling for repentance today and for a present renewed faith in a God who actively controls the future. This approach, introduces the important distinction between prophecy as “*foretelling*” and “*forth telling*”. To foretell is to predict a future happening, while to forth-tell is announce or proclaims a message to a group or person. Significantly, both perspectives are necessary in the context of corruption.

To archive that, prophetic envisioning uses utopian language of amazement, hope, symbols, analogies, similes and metaphors (Koopman 2012, p.123; Brueggemann 2001, pp.59–79). They speak in the name of God from the Bible to the concrete reality faced by God's people. They energize us to bring the impacts and hurt of corruption to public expression as an important first step that permits new reality, theological and social to emerge (2001, p.20). Affirming this, Tisdale (2010, p.13), states that, "it is only as we recognize the necessity of the old order coming to an end – only as we lament and grieve its certain passing – that we can also be opened to God's energizing vision of a new order to come". In this new order, we behold a new Nigeria in which corruption currently experienced, will be drastically reduced, if not in the past. This kind of society is possible when preachers rise to their responsibility and begin to see the world, especially their context, through God's eyes.

Prophetic envisioning in the context of corruption keeps the dream of a corrupt free nation alive by not only focussing on the wrong, but also, speaking and preparing the hearts of citizens on the good that God brings in to being.

To envision is to be energized to preach and stand with the politics of justice, compassion, hope, trust, social cohesion and inclusion, economic development, obedient to rule of law and the respect of human dignity. In other words, it is to remind us of the vision for an alternative or new society. This vision according Koopman (2012, p.135), "should be proclaimed loud and clear", by so doing, we remember the thorn-impact of corruption, but we also (2012, p.135), remember our vision as a star that guides and lures us to a new Nigeria.

### 3.4.2 Prophetic Criticism

The second dimension of prophetic preaching is *criticism* (Gustafson James 1988; Brueggemann 2001; Koopman 2012), or *Indictment* (Koopman 2004), or *Judgment* (Ward & Ward 1995).

According to Gustafson, prophetic task is not only announcing the vision of a new society, but also performing the task of denouncing the reality that is in conflict with that vision (cited in Koopman 2012, p.136). Although “criticism is not carping and denouncing. It is asserting that false claims to authority and power cannot keep their promises.... [Thus] real criticism begins in the capacity to grieve because that is the most visceral announcement that things are not right.

To achieve this, prophetic criticism addresses societal challenges from the root. Koopman, affirmed that, “prophetic criticism gets to the root of the problems that pervades institutions and cultures, or that pervades the actions and behaviour of individual persons...The indictments of the prophet as critics construe the human condition in deep and broad proportions” (2012, p.136). Furthermore, he eulogized that, on the basis of statistical indicators and social analysis, they expose the causes and root of social and personal wrong. That is, that prophetic criticism gives a description of the present situation, and pronouncement of judgement (Green 1984, p.57), which leads to conviction of guilt, and constitutes a call for a fundamental repentance and a radical turn from unfaithfulness to faithfulness.

Based on this approach, records from Transparency International on corruption perception in Nigeria, there is clarion call for prophetic critics to arise. Because these data explicates how corruption is prevalent and virulent in almost all institutions in Nigeria. Implicitly, the visible impact of corruption in the nation can also be deduced from this data.

Thus, prophetic preaching as prophetic criticism must criticize and expose the corrupt practices in these institutions and address the problem from the root, which is not merely a matter of inadequate and wrong policies, but it is a matter of religious, moral and social waywardness (Koopman 2012).

Courageous prophetic criticism in the Nigerian corrupt context, must expose and criticize the foolishness, injustice, high level of unemployment, violence and the lack of basic social amenities, which create an alarming economic gap between the rich and poor.

Prophetic criticism should not only criticize the nation, it also requires self-criticism. In view of this, the former President of Nigeria, Olusegun Obasanjo, challenged churches “to fight corruption from within, because a corrupt church has no message for a corrupt nation” (Stuckelberger 2003, p.17). However, Koopman (2012, p.137), warns that self-criticism should not serve as an excuse for the church, nor the pulpit ministry to withdraw from public involvement, because we ourselves are imperfect. Instead, we required a constructive prophetic self-criticism that shows that we are aware of the sinfulness and fallibility of human nature. Thus, helping us to humbly acknowledge that

societal wrongs, especially corrupt practices, are evident in the church. Because we are imperfect sinful beings, even our best efforts as preachers might be contaminated without the help of the Holy Spirit. Therefore, this kind of criticism calls for self-reflection, an in-depth and honest introspection on the part of the Church; to examine and unmask the conflict between our message and actions.

Even with the imperfection of the Church, especially the pulpit ministry, we must not be silent (Cilliers 2015a, p.42) nor pretend that all is well with Nigeria with regard to the fight against corruption because “serious criticism and real grieving” (Brueggemann 2001, p.11) happens by recognizing the damage of corruption in the church, family and society

### **3.4.3 Prophetic Policy-Making**

To start with, it is significant to note that, prophetic policy-making is not to advocate for prophetic preaching as a platform where political programs in relation to the fight against corruption are framed. Instead, it is the humble acknowledgment that the pulpit ministry, directly or indirectly impacts public discourse, public opinion-formation, and policy-making.

Policy discourse according to Gustafson (1988, pp.43–46), is conducted by people who have the responsibility to make laws, and, to carry out the actions that are required by those laws. Laws are made to embody the vision of a good society and to address the criticisms against so many wrongs in the society (Koopman 2012, p.139).



This means that the policy-making process, policy-makers, and upholding the integrity of the policy are very important. In view of this, prophetic preaching functions as an external influence and active observer. Stott, rightly affirmed that “it is the preacher’s responsibility to open up the biblical principles which relate to the problems of contemporary society in such a way as to help everybody to develop a Christian judgment about them, and, to inspire and encourage the opinion-formers and policy-makers in the congregation who occupy influential positions in public life, to apply these biblical principles to their professional life” (1982, p.167). In other words, the Church in its proclamation must appeal to its members to apply the principles of the kingdom of God in the social and political sphere.

Prophetic policy-making critically poses questions about the effectiveness of laws, policies, and procedures of combating corruption. For instance, one of the major obstacles to the fight against corruption, is a section in the 1999 Nigerian Constitution called “*immunity clause*”<sup>50</sup>. This clause, protects public office holders, no matter how corrupt they are from prosecution while in office. For example, in 2005, a sitting Governor of Nigeria’s State of Bayelsa, Chief Diepreye Alamiesigha was alleged to

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<sup>50</sup> Section 308 of the 1999 Nigeria Constitution provides for the scope of executive immunity. Below is the section:

(1) Notwithstanding anything to the contrary in this constitution, but subject to Subsection (2) of this section-(a) no civil or criminal proceedings shall be instituted or continued against a person to whom this section applies during his period of office.

(b) a person to whom this section applies shall not be arrested or imprisoned during that period either in pursuance of the process of any court or otherwise; and (c) no person of any court requiring or compelling the appearance of a person to whom this section applies, shall be applied for or issued; Provided that in ascertaining whether a period of limitation has expired for the purpose of any proceedings against a person to whom this section applies, no account shall be taken of his period of office.(2)the provision of subsection (1) of this section shall not apply to civil proceedings against a person to whom this section in his official capacity or to civil or criminal proceedings in which such a person is only a nominal party. (3) this section applies to a person holding the office of president or vice president, governor or deputy governor; and the reference in this section to ‘period of office’ is a reference to the period during which the person holding such office is required to perform the functions of the office.

looting from his state treasury different sums of cash including US\$1,043,655.79, £173,365.41 and N556,455,893.34 through some of his family members but could not be tried for money laundering and corrupt practices in any of Nigeria's courts of law because he was covered by the Immunity Clause in Nigeria's Constitution (This Day, 16 October 2005 cited in Lawson 2014, p.130). This kind of situation suggests that the immunity clause is redundant, abused, misused and out of tune with the reality in Nigeria. Moreover, it is a tremendous hindrance for transparency and accountability in governance. Thus, prophetic policy-making must ask questions about the legitimacy, morality and ethical implications of such laws in the context of corruption.

By and large, prophetic envisioning and prophetic criticism should provide benchmarks for policy-makers in contemporary Nigeria, by bringing in to the pulpit discourse themes, namely, the relationship between civic law and theology, law and faith, divine justice and human justice, faithful stewardship and rewards.

### **3.5 Conclusion**

In conclusion, this Chapter briefly gave a homiletical understanding of prophetic preaching. It also discussed the mandate of the Church, description and dimensions of prophetic preaching, namely, prophetic envisioning, prophetic criticism and prophetic policy-making.

With the description of the context of corruption in chapter two and the insight gained on the homiletical understanding of prophetic preaching, the following Chapter will create a link between these chapters. It will furthermore demonstrate how preachers can take

courageous prophetic stance and, at the same time, to identify some mode of prophetic preaching that can support the fight against corruption and to promote the culture of faithful stewardship in Nigeria.

## **Chapter Four: Prophetic Preaching in a Context of Corruption in Nigeria**

### **4.1 Introduction**

Having briefly highlighted the mandates of the Church and the dimensions of prophetic preaching in a context of corruption, this Chapter will consider how this context challenges preachers to take prophetic stance in proclaiming God's Word. To elaborate, this Chapter will discuss the role of the Church in the fight against corruption in Nigeria, prophetic preaching as biblical hermeneutic task, techniques for prophetic preaching as biblical activities, and an attempt to suggest some methods of interpretation for prophetic preaching in a context of corruption in Nigeria. Furthermore, modes of prophetic preaching will also be considered, with the aim to argue and recommend specific approaches that can support the fight against corruption in Nigeria.

### **4.2 Role of the Church in the fight against Corruption in Nigeria**

Fighting corruption according to Nuhu Ribadu, "is an extremely difficult task, but it is a task that must be accomplished" (cited in Orji 2001, p.58). Globally, accomplishing this task has resulted in establishing anti-corruption organisations such as; Transparency International (TI); Global Organization Against Corruption (GOPAC); International Group for Anti-corruption Coordination (IGAC); Stolen Asset Recovery Initiative (STAR) – World Bank and UNODC; African Parliamentarians Network Against Corruption (APNAC), to mention but a few. Similarly, in Nigeria, the anti-corruption initiatives have

resulted in the establishment of several agencies<sup>51</sup>, contributing significantly to combating corruption. For example, the Budget Monitoring and Price Intelligence Unit (BMPIU), introduces “*Due Process*”<sup>52</sup>. The overriding aim of this initiative “lies in assessing the reasonableness of quotations to curb the current widespread practice of excessive over invoicing of contract bids. By so doing, the government aims at formulating and implementing appropriate policies on procurement and contract awards” (Agbiboia 2012, p.338).

Some of the laudable anti-corruption initiatives were the enactment of the Economic and Financial Crimes Act, which led to the subsequent establishment of the Economic Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) and the institution of the Independent Corrupt Practices Commission (ICPC). These agencies were commissioned and empowered to

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<sup>51</sup>Most of the ongoing anti-corruption efforts, are birthed from previous initiatives for combating corruption in Nigeria. Thus, it would appropriate to recall some of the previous initiatives; (a) the promulgation of the Public Officers (Decree No.5 of 1966); (b) the enactment of the corrupt Practices Decree No 38 of 1975, and the embellishment of a Corrupt Practices Bureau under that law; (c) the introduction of the war Against Indiscipline (WAI) in 1984; (d) the establishment of a National Committee on Corruption and Economic Crimes in 1989; (e) the reintroduction of War Against Indiscipline and Corruption (WAI&C) in 1994 (Shehu 2005). Recently, some agencies were established to strengthen the fight against corruption, these includes; *Nigeria Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (NEITI)*. This initiative strives for openness and transparency within the oil sector, including monitoring the used of oil-based revenue, which accounts for about 87% of total public revenue, and about 92% of foreign exchange earnings (Agbiboia 2012). In June 2000, the Corrupt Practices and other Related Offences Act was enacted; and the Independent Corrupt Practices Commission (ICPC) was established and given a full mandate to investigate and prosecute reported cases of corruption. One of the private sector anti-corruption initiative is the establishment of the; Convention on Business Integrity (CBI). According to Agbiboia, “under this initiative, notable private sector organizations willingly sign on to the convention, indicating that they will never offer any form of gratification as an inducement for securing public sector contacts” (2012, p.342).

<sup>52</sup>This initiative was introduced by Olusegun Obasanjo government in 1999. Due Process implies that governmental activities and businesses can be executed openly, economically and transparently without favoritism and corruptible tendencies (Ezekwesili 2005). According to former President Obasanjo, Due Process is a mechanism that certifies for public funding only those projects that have passed the test of proper implementation packaging and that adhere stringently to the international competitive bid approach in the award process (Cited in Agbiboia 2012). Some of the objectives of the initiative are; To determine whether or not Due Process has been observe in the procurement of services and contracts through the initiation of such projects; To introduce more probity, accountability and transparency into the procurement process; To monitor the implementation of projects during execution with a view to providing information on performance, output, compliance with specifications and targets (cost, quality and time).

ensure corrupt free public and private institutions. There are some level of success gained by these initiatives, resulting in the arrests and trials of some top public office holders, such as “former President of the Senate (Sen Wabara A.); Inspector General of Police (Tafar Balogun); and some State Governor” (Orji 2001, p.58). However, these agencies are perceived and described as “weak, toothless bulldogs, and as an instrument of vendetta by the government against any opposition to the wishes of the president. To say the least, such accusations maybe unfair because the public is not fully aware of the constraints of the commissions” (Shehu 2005, p.73). For example, the ICPC has suffered the dearth of funds and faced many court injunctions. Buttressing this, Justice Emmanuel Ayoola, chairman of the commission, posited that “the commission had to fight for its own survival” (Nwaomah 2007, p.77).

Recently, the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, Muhammadu Buhari, in a speech to commemorate his first year in office, stated that “from day one, we purposely set out to correct our condition, to change Nigeria”<sup>53</sup>. The writer observes that this change should aim to foster social cohesion and focus to create a peaceful and corrupt free society of justice, human dignity and national development. To achieve this, there is need for collaboration amongst all sectors of society to fight corruption - churches included. Thus, the Church is called to compliment, support and contribute in this direction.

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<sup>53</sup>This presidential speech was presented on the 29<sup>th</sup> May 2016 during the celebration of democracy day in Abuja Nigeria. For the full text; cf <http://www.premiumtimesng.com/news/top-news/204256-full-text-president-buharis-democracy-day-message-nigerians.html> (Assessed 12<sup>th</sup> July 2016).

Significantly, the Church is one of the most effective mediums for social change and transformation (Orji 2001; Stuckelberger 2003; Forster & Oosterbrink 2015; Daniel 2014). To illustrate, George (1996, pp.1–2), posited that, “millions and millions of Nigerians are Christians” and they belong and attend Church related functions. Despite this numerical increase and participation, Emenyonu, lamented that “The bad news is that while the numerical increase in the number of Christians in Nigeria is self-evident and Church attendance is an all-time high, it is however, unfortunate that there is no significant commensurate impact on the level of virtue and integrity in the Nigerian society. Nigeria has consistently ranked as one of the most perceived corrupt countries on earth. This has given rise to a befuddling paradox, namely; how can a people that profess so much faith and religiosity be regarded as the face of the earth” (cited in Orji 2001). In other words, based on the numerical increase and strength of the Church, corruption should not continue to flourish in Nigeria.

Despite the above challenges, the Church is conscious of its role as the “voice of the voiceless” (Ignatius 2009, p.626). Over the years, this voice has positively contributed in providing and promoting social welfare for the betterment of humanity. For instance, the struggle for the abolition of slave trade, the establishment of educational institutions and health care facilities (Ogbuagu 1999; Orji 2001). Similarly, the Church was at the forefront in the fight against the unjust and oppressive regime of Apartheid in South Africa (Forster & Oosterbrink 2015; Orji 2001; Cilliers 2015c; Koopman 2004).

Historically, the Church in Nigeria have significantly contributed in combating corruption. For example, the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) issued a press statement and a

written memoranda<sup>54</sup> advocating for the removal of the *immunity clause* from the Nigerian Constitution. Similarly, the Catholic Bishops' Conference of Nigeria (CBCN) unites in her ecclesiastical and episcopal influence against corruption. According to Ugwu "two of her plenary assemblies in the month of September 1998 and 1999, has as its subject of discussion "Corruption in Nigeria: Implication for Nation building". One of the communique issued reads:

"We are painfully aware that corruption has eaten deep into the very fabric of the Nigerian society. It has become so pervasive that many now accept it as the "Nigeria way of doing things. People now speak about a so-called 'Nigerian factor' when they mean corruption has been institutionalized to a point where it almost passes for official policy in both the public and private sectors of our national life. The socio-economic and political system itself appears to be built on corruption and thrives in it. Even the Church and other religious organizations are themselves not completely free from corruption" (cited in Orji 2001, p.103).

Furthermore, the CBCN produced a prayer against corruption and bribery in Nigeria. Each parish, including Priest and laity are expected to recite the prayer at every mass and even at home. Herewith is an extract from the prayer:

"...We are deeply sorry for the wrong use of ... Your gifts and blessings through acts of injustice, bribery and corruption, as a result of which many of our people are hungry,

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<sup>54</sup>The written memoranda was to the National Reform Conference, and was published by Vanguard newspaper on the 10<sup>th</sup> January 2005. This was a laudable step, because the immunity clause is still one of the biggest challenges in combating corruption in Nigeria.



sick, ignorant and defenseless. Father, You alone can heal us and our nation of this sickness. We beg You, touch our lives and the lives of our leaders and people so that we may all realize the evil of bribery and corruption and work hard to eliminate it. Raise up for us God-fearing people and leaders who care for us and who will lead us in the path of peace, prosperity and progress.”

In a sermon, preached Archbishop Peter Akinola (Premate Church of Nigeria Anglican Communion), in celebration of the 44<sup>th</sup> Independence Anniversary of Nigeria in Abuja, he proclaimed that “Nigeria will change when we individually change. The root of Nigeria’s problem is corruption emanating from corrupt individuals. We should have a redefinition of the nation’s morality, code of conduct and belief. Righteousness exalts a nation. Make the fear of God and righteousness the foundation of nationhood”.

These and many other contributions of the Church sprang from the understanding that the Church is not only called to make disciples “but also to be an agent of change (salt and light – Mt 5:13, 14) through whom the principles of God’s kingdom such as justice, equity, human dignity, flourishing, et cetera, are to be established in society” (Forster & Oosterbrink 2015, p.4). This signifies that the Church is called to be public witnesses playing a public prophetic role in the society. Therefore, the Church cannot remain silent in the midst of societal ills such as corruption. Buttressing this point, Pope Gregory the Great averred that:

“A religious leader should be careful in deciding when to remain silent and be sure to say something useful when deciding to speak. In this way, he would avoid saying things

that would better not be said, or leaving unsaid things that ought to be said.... ill-advised silence can leave people in error when they could have been shown where they were wrong. Negligent religious leaders are often afraid to speak for fear of losing favour with people...they are acting like hirelings because hiding behind the wall of silence, is like taking flight at the approach of a wolf...”

In the light of this, Tisdale (2010, p.ix), writes about the courage of some prophetic witnesses from America and South Korea who boldly proclaimed God’s Word to their context. Thus she posited that “they dared to speak honestly about what was going on and to wrestle with those issues in the context of the Christian faith. With them the Christian faith was not irrelevant; it has a significant and meaningful word proclaimed not only to individuals but also to city, nation and the world”.

Based on these significant and meaningful words, Cilliers, from a South African context, argued on how the Church through preaching can support the fight against HIV/AIDS, thus he stated:

“I believe it is the task of the Church, and therefore, also of preachers, to supply language that gives form to the primal, human outcry. The significance of this language lies in the fact that it gives voice to the suffering; in it suffering is given dignity of language. But more: with this language we protest against the absurdity of suffering, and, theologically speaking, we confirm that we have all been created in the image of God, and that suffering is not what God willed for His created image (2007, pp.158–159).

This signifies that, prophetic voices in Nigeria must be strong in the fight against the epidemic of corruption in the society. Thus, there is a need to develop a prophetic homiletical approach, to enable preachers to preach prophetically in a context of corruption. The following section considers mode of prophetic preaching in the context of corruption in Nigeria.

### **4.3 Prophetic Preaching in a context of Corruption**

According to Ignatius, (2009, p.626), the Church as a ‘voice of the voiceless’; “performs this role, among others, through prophetic proclamation against corruption, its causative and promoting factors, and aftermaths, as well as through humanitarian assistance to numerous victims of the dastard fallouts of corruption”. Therefore, prophetic preaching in any context, especially in the context of corruption, is a homiletical concept of boldly declaring and proclaiming God’s Word to the concrete realities of life. In other words, it is an approach that relates preaching “to the real life situation of a particular place at a particular time” (Daniel 2014, p.78). Hence, this notion carries the idea of interpretation<sup>55</sup>, proclamation, and courageous application of biblical text to all ramifications of life.

Applying this concept in South African context, Pieterse (2013, pp.6–7), noted that “The process of understanding the message of the text for our situation opens up new worlds

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<sup>55</sup>Interpretation as an act of preaching is an attempt to search for the meaning of the text by using the method of exegesis. With this approach, preachers interprets the context of the first hearers of a biblical text, whilst keeping their own context in mind in their hermeneutical activity (Pieterse 2013). Thus interpretation in preaching, is a hermeneutical activity that leads to courageous conversation between God’s word and the concrete realities of the listener.

to the preacher and the congregation; honing and refining their prejudices and biases, putting them in a new light, and changing us to see new light and new hope in a context of suffering; in short, God's vision for the contemporary situation".

This concept is very unique and significant because it takes seriously the nexus between the theology of proclamation and the concrete realities of the audience. This signifies that "the preacher stands in the gap between the demands of God and the deepest needs of man, and their task is to bring the two together...They will be close enough together to enable the fires of kindling knowledge, hope, and strength to leap in to being" (Lloyd 1973, p.105).

To connect this approach within the Nigerian context, it is important to reiterate that corruption is one of the current concrete problems in the country. This implies that, in preaching prophetically in a context of corruption, preachers have to honestly and prayerfully bring in to conversation biblical text and the real life situation of the audience<sup>56</sup>, inviting citizenry to live in a "prophetic exemplary manner in fighting against corruption by fostering values of justice, accountability, transparency, participative collaboration, equity and truthfulness. Without which, the necessary credibility to inaugurate the much needed transformation of hearts, lives and structures (political, social, economic, and cultural) necessary or any successful campaign against corruption" (Ignatius 2009, p.626) will be an exercise in futility.

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<sup>56</sup> Corruption is one the current life threatening reality in Nigeria. In chapter, i made an attempt to extensively discussed corruption in this context. Significantly, based on my research methodology and design, it is very important to note that, this work is not an interpretation or exegesis of any biblical text. Instead, it seeks to uphold and promote a preaching approach that is deeply rooted in biblical tradition and take into serious account the context of the listeners. In other words, it seek to encourage a kind of preaching that is bible base and socially relevant and faithful to its context.

Such preaching therefore, is a Christian proclamation of faith, which reforms, transforms and dictates God's will and expectation for humanity with regard to faithful stewardship. Apparently, it aimed at creating and strengthening an "inner transformation and deep reorientation on ethical, moral and spiritual values for members of a given society to embrace-transparency, self-denial, dedication and faithfulness within a given cultural milieu" (Atwoju 2009, p.78).

Thus, both the text and the context need to be hermeneutically engaged in order to pave way for a mode of prophetic preaching that will effectively contribute to the fight against corruption. The following is an attempt to critically reflect on these notions.

#### **4.3.1 Prophetic Preaching as a Biblical Hermeneutic Activity**

The word 'hermeneutics' is derived from the Greek verb '*hermeneuein*', meaning 'to express, explain, translate, or interpret' (Louw & Nida 2001; Barton 2008). Thus, according to Mathew (2004, p.101), "hermeneutics refers to the art of interpretation, especially of written text". Similarly, Boraas (2001, p.531), posited that, hermeneutics is the rendering of a text from a language into another, and the exposition of something said or written with a view to bringing out its meaning. Broadly speaking, the act of hermeneutics is not restricted to written text, but encompasses all forms of communication whether verbal or nonverbal (Ambady & Rosenthal 1998; Boynton 2004).

According to Mantzavinos (2016); "Hermeneutics as the methodology of interpretation is concerned with problems that arise when dealing with meaningful human actions and

the products of such actions, most importantly texts. As a methodological discipline, it offers a toolbox for efficiently treating problems of the interpretation of human actions, texts and other meaningful material". The terms hermeneutics and interpretation are mostly used interchangeably to refer to the process of determining meaning and significance of a text (Randolph 2008).

Biblical hermeneutics according to Thiselton (2009, p.1), "investigates more specifically how we read, understand, apply, and respond to Biblical text". In Biblical hermeneutics<sup>57</sup>, the Bible is the source of the subject matter. Although "the Bible is a very old book, it does still speak. It treats of things that are far beyond our comprehension, yet it has a way of cutting right into the quick of the behavior of body and soul, of individuals and communities, of ideologies and establishments" (Barth 1975, p.163). Thus, theories of Biblical interpretation tend to coagulate around the three foci of author, text and the reader, and it is the interplay between these elements that hermeneutical understanding takes place (Barton 2008, p.380). Based on this concept, Biblical hermeneutics embrace both exegesis and exposition from investigation of the text to actual proclamation (Jones 1975).

The major problem of Biblical hermeneutics according to Croatto (1987, p.ix), is the tension between a fixed text in the cultural milieu that is no longer ours and a living word

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<sup>57</sup> Cf (Mathew 2004). Biblical hermeneutics is defined as a method of reading, translating, and interpretation the bible. There are different types of biblical hermeneutics such as; Liberation hermeneutics; Feminist hermeneutics; inter-faith hermeneutics. Comparative hermeneutics, etc. Historically, several methods have been adapted in interpreting the bible, namely; Historical Criticism; Existential hermeneutics; Form criticism. Literary criticism. Significantly, a biblical hermeneutic that matters moves toward theological significance. Illumination of human existence, historical information, and literary sensitivity find their finest fruition in theological understanding (Jones 1975). It is very important to note that this research cannot do accurately give a broad and thorough presentation of biblical hermeneutics due the complexity of its nature.

capable of forging history. Reinforcing this point from a pulpit perspective, Daniel (2014, p.79), noted that “Christian preaching always faces the problem of conveying the meaning of a text written in another place and time in the context of what is now being experienced in the life of local congregations”. This problem can be minimized by ‘fertile reading’ of the text (Mathew 2004, p.101), and by giving and communicating the text with a ‘new twist’ (Daniel 2014, p.79).

Prophetic preaching as a Biblical hermeneutics activity is an intentional interpretation, translation, and proclamation of scriptural text that enables both the preacher and the audience to feel and hear a Word from God and their context, with the aim to discern and apply God’s will to concrete human situations leading to transformation in all ramifications. Such hermeneutical activities occur “when a man or a woman is totally exposed, if not shattered, by two voices: the cry of despair and want resounding from today’s situation, and the voice of God that cannot be muted.

These two voices are related to one another totally unlike the sound channels of a stereophonic reproduction which the listeners may accompany by beating the time in their armchairs. They are related like prayer and hearing of prayer, or, like cursing and blessing” (Barth 1975, p.165). This concept of hermeneutics in prophetic preaching embraces the past, present, and future of God’s activities in the world, leading to a deep reflection of what God expects from God’s creation, especially human beings.

Examples of such conversations can be seen in some of Jesus’ parables and in Amos’ prophetic oracles. For instance, in Amos 2:7, prophet Amos proclaims God’s Word

“against societies that ‘trample the heads of the poor as upon dust of the ground and deny justice to the oppressed’ (Woodbridge & Semmelink 2013, p.84). Similarly, Luke 12:16-21 recorded a parable of the ‘rich fool’, whose life philosophy is exclusively in terms of materialistic and sensual pleasure (Folarin 2010, p.319). Significantly, Jesus uses this parable to reveal God’s will to His audience on the dangers of selfishness, and living one’s life apart from God. Additionally, in Luke 12:12-21, Jesus also warns about the covetousness-acquisition of wealth that belongs to others and by dishonest means (Evans 1930). These and other parables of Jesus do not only explain and reveal the will of God, but expose the deep spiritual and social conditions of the listeners when authentic encounter happens. By extension, they illuminate general human existence in a telling fashion (Jones 1975, p.141). Thus, this approach of prophetic preaching as Biblical hermeneutics activities is aimed at capturing the attention and to arouse the interest of the audience by the story, and to also show that the story is about their current realities.

Affirming this point, Barton (2008, p.383), noted that “in Gadamer’s view, interpretation is never just about reproducing a meaning that is objectively there in the text. Interpretation is always productive in the sense that something new is born as the interpreter engages with the text”.



### 4.3.2 Techniques for Prophetic Preaching as a Biblical Hermeneutic

#### Activity

From the above description of prophetic preaching as a Biblical hermeneutics activity, it is very crucial at this juncture, to briefly consider some methods or techniques for this task, because every effective and fruitful interpretation is carried out with a method. Nonetheless, this research cannot do justice to the complexity of these methods. However, an attempt is made to give a brief historical presentation of the methodology for Biblical hermeneutics. In view of this, Randolph, averred that there are groups of theories regarding the locus and actualization of meaning, namely “author-centered (with attention directed behind the text), text-centered (with the focus on the word within the text), and reader-centered (where the spotlight is trained upon the world in front of the text, or the reader’s world)” (2008, p.2).

Significantly, questions as to whether meaning resides in the text behind or in front of the text, continue to exercise preachers and interpreters. Whether one gives priority to the author’s intended meaning, form and structure of the text, or the contextual framework and concerns of the interpreter, depends largely on the kinds of philosophical commitment that one brings to the task of hermeneutics” (Barton 2008, p.380). For instance, Ricoeur (1981), in his concept of “hermeneutics of suspicion” argued that interpretation should be concerned with uncovering what is not said rather than being focused on the recovery of meanings.

Jones (1975, pp.139–147), in an article titled “Biblical Hermeneutics”, identified four perspectives to biblical hermeneutics, known as; Historical; Existential; Literary; and Theological.

Firstly, he stated that historical criticism is “a method of evaluating a text and /or event not accessible<sup>58</sup> in the present”. The aim is to attempt in recovery of the original meaning of the text at the time when it was written. Interpretation for from this approach, is based on the intention of the author. To achieve this, this method maintained close ties with historical sociology, archaeology and comparative religion (Oeming 2006).

The historico-critical method is indispensable...Because the books of the Bible were shaped through historical process” (1975, p.143). Thus, the best approach to any subject in the Bible, is by its history. This technique have brought our attention to the historical and cultural milieu in which the biblical texts took shape (Mathew 2004). It has also helped us to appreciate the humanity and divinity of Jesus Christ. However, there are some pitfalls<sup>59</sup> with this method. To explain, Croatto, noted that “For a theology of the oppressed people especially, this approach offers only a partial solution. Its importance is undeniable. One must pass this way. But one must not rest here” (1987, p.9).

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<sup>58</sup>Carries the idea of the current listener not being physical present when the event took place.

<sup>59</sup> Cf (Croatto 1987) argued that the historical method bring out the “behind” of the text and thereby shifts the attention of the exegete to a pre-canonical level. In the same way, Sugirtharajah stated that this method is colonial in nature, because; they displaced the norms and practices of our indigenous reading methods; they justify the superiority of Christian texts, undermining the sacred writings of others; they are thought to be the ‘right reading’, having universal validity and significance, whereas they represent the Western world view (cited in Mathew 2004). In addition, the object pursued or found will always be no more than human and earthly history (Jones 1975), in view of this,

In passing this route, prophetic preaching as a biblical hermeneutics take into account the Biblical historical dimensions and contributions of preaching within a specific place and at a specific time. For example, the events of the prophets' time influenced their message (Randolph 2008, p.43). This means that prophetic preachers as interpreters "must use imagination and historical research to learn how the first readers of a text would understand it" (Thiselton 2009, p.6). Therefore, "the current generation whose history has yet to be written, can learn much from those whose history is now complete. Time yet, remains to change, refocus, improve, and be moved to greater accomplishment" (Stitzinger 1992, p.7), especially in the context of corruption.

Secondly, Existential Hermeneutics as a concept of Biblical interpretation was developed by Rudolf Bultmann (Richards 2008; Mathew 2004; Barton 2008). For Bultmann, hermeneutics is not about detailed exegesis, but an inquiry into the meaning of language as existential, thus, preaching occupies a significant place in his hermeneutics "for it is through the kerygma or preached word that hearers are summoned to the possibility of a new existence" (Barton 2008, p.382). Buttressing this point, Jones (1975, p.140), noted that "the Christ Event" itself as an historical event, a fulfilment of promise was interpreted by Jesus as an existential happening for His generation....In the sermon at Nazareth (Luke 4:16-30), Jesus opened His sermon existentially indeed with a salvation history bombshell: "Today this writing has been fulfilled in your hearing" (Lk. 4:21b). This simple announcement was a happening, a language event, a moment of truth, a claim requiring a response".

Applying this method of interpretation to prophetic preaching, signifies a deliberate optimistic attempt that preaching the Word can radically open a new future with a new way of doing things.

Thirdly, in describing the literary method of biblical hermeneutics, Jones, tartly maintained that “the Bible arrives as literature and elementary observation of enormous significance” (1975, p.144). The mainspring of any literary approach is the view that the Bible is literature; thus the Bible as literature is the basic presupposition for literary criticism (Randolph 2008, p.89). Many literary interpreters such as John C. Ransom (1838); Monroe C Beardsley (1946-1954), came to believe that texts conveyed meanings in effect as autonomous systems of signs and meanings in their own right, apart from the writer or author who had produced them (Thiselton 2009, p.24). This literary quality requires interpretation and central importance in interpretation are the concepts of genre and sub-genre (Randolph 2008, p.89).

The literary method of interpretation varies greatly from one text to the other. In view of this, John Hayes and Carl R. Holladay argued that “depending upon the nature of the texts and their relationship to normal communication. Some texts merely need to be read to be understood. Others require very detailed analysis. Some use normal, everyday language, grammar, and sentence structure. Others use a very specialized vocabulary, involved grammatical and sentence structure and distinctive forms of expression. Some texts employ symbolic and metaphoric language. Others seek to employ language and words, so as to limit severely the range of meaning and the potential to persuade. Others seek to merely inform. Some texts are produced to

entertain. Others seek to produce some particular response and action” (cited in Randolph 2008, p.91). This means that literary context of a passage must be considered during the task of interpretation. Because a given passage means a particular thing in a particular literary context (Jones 1975, p.146).

Finally, a Biblical interpretation that matters most moves towards theological significance. Buttressing this point, Leggett (1990, p.76), noted that; “the preacher needs to understand not only what the text says, but also the concerns that caused it to be said, and said as it was. His exegetical labors are, therefore, not complete until he has grasped the text’s theological intention”.

An excellent way of seeking theological context, according to Jones, “is to ask for the intention of a Biblical unit... A sermon that centers in the theological intention of a passage should be profoundly biblical and then magnificently relevant when related to an audience through pastoral awareness” (1975, p.146). The concept of theological approach to Biblical hermeneutics, is to significantly provide the Church and the society with that intangible sense of “a voice from beyond”<sup>60</sup>.

### **4.3.3 Towards a Biblical Hermeneutic for Prophetic Preaching in a Context of Corruption**

Building from the above mentioned methods of biblical hermeneutics, this section attempts to conceptualize techniques for Nigerian Biblical interpretation that may

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<sup>60</sup>For instance, the present ethical challenge from the fight against corruption cannot be adequately met with anything less than a biblical hermeneutics that moves toward theological interpretation that prayerfully acknowledges and seek the transcending divine intention.

strengthen prophetic preaching in the fight against corruption. To support this, Hessel (1992, p.97), averred that, “if preaching is to become more socially transformative, interpreters of the scriptures must develop a social hermeneutic for its interpretation”. This is very crucial because interpretation plays a key role to proclamation.

The concepts of developing and adopting methods of Biblical hermeneutics in a context is not new nor foreign. For example, the Biblical interpretation of liberation theology, was necessitated and birthed from a context of oppression and poverty (Justo & Gozalez 1980; Cone 1986; Gonzalez 1995). Similarly, the black theological Biblical interpretation in South Africa was born out of the oppression, separation, and degradation of human dignity by the Apartheid government (Cilliers 2015c; Mosala 1998; Ukpong 2000; West 1991; Tshehla 2015). In addition, feminist theological approach to biblical interpretation sprung from a context of resistance to patriarchal domination and control (Kanyoro 2002; Osiek 1997; Fiorenza 1997).

In the same fashion, a Biblical hermeneutic for prophetic preaching in a context of corruption can be developed within an African biblical hermeneutics<sup>61</sup> principle of “interpretation of the Bible for transformation in Africa...That is vital to the wellbeing of our society” (Adamo 2015, pp.32–33).

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<sup>61</sup> Cf (Adamo 2015, pp.34–38) African biblical hermeneutics is the biblical interpretation that makes African social cultural context a subject of interpretation. It is the rereading of the Christian scripture from a premeditatedly Afrocentric perspective. Specifically, it means that the analysis of the biblical text is done from the perspective of African world-view and culture. The chief task of African Interpretation is to formulate a biblical hermeneutic that is “Liberational I and transformational”.

Biblical hermeneutics for prophetic preaching in a context of corruption must enable “the empowerment of people for authentic Christian living, and for taking responsibility and action for change in society” (Ukpong 2001, p.192). Such interpretations take into serious account the complex social, cultural, religious, and political realism on the continent, and the challenges of the people. In other words, it encompasses every aspect of public and private life of the nation.

According to Farisani (2014, pp.221–22), three fundamental elements should guide interpretation of scripture in African context, these are “the Biblical itself, the African context and appropriation”. These approaches open doors of conversations between the text and the context, leading to application of scripture in all spheres of the nation.

In the context of corruption, scripture should be critically interpreted in such a way that it promotes the dignity of labour, faithfulness in stewardship which calls for accountability and transparency in managing and utilizing the resources of the land. Scripture should also be interpreted in light of the social milieu. In other words, interpretation of Biblical text should certainly have a bearing on how to address societal challenges such as corruption, violence, and poverty.

Similarly, an inclusive interpretation of scripture which appreciates and appropriates the theology of diversity<sup>62</sup> in preaching prophetically, should be encouraged and practiced

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<sup>62</sup> The theology of diversity is concerned with the multi-religious and pluralistic nature of societies. It is a theological frame for preaching the presence and activity of God in a pluralistic society. Thus, it seeks to “understand real difference among religions and develop relationships with members of other faith traditions without dumbing down the Christian identity in Jesus Christ...And how to talk of the identity and the reality of God beyond the church” (Kim 2013, p.268).

in the context of corruption. Supporting this, Kim (2013, p.277), noted that the goal of interpreting and faithfully preaching scripture through the lens of the “theology of diversity is not to prove or argue God’s revelation in different religious communities, but to broaden and deepen hearers’s experience of the presence of God by helping them recognize what God is doing to make and keep human life human within and beyond the church”. Significantly, this concept will foster and embrace collaboration in the fight against corruption, and encourages religious tolerance and social cohesion.

By and large, the Bible as power approach<sup>63</sup> for interpretation should be encouraged for prophetic preaching in the context of corruption because “the Bible is the Word of God and it is powerful and its power is relevant to everyday life of Africans” (Adamo 2015, p.38). Having briefly looked at Biblical interpretation for prophetic preaching in the context of corruption, the following section will discuss modes for prophetic preaching in this context, because it gives shape to prophetic proclamation.

#### **4.4 Modes of Prophetic Preaching in a context of Corruption**

One of the focuses for this study, as outlined in the research questions, is to investigate the modes or styles of prophetic preaching in a context of corruption. Therefore, it is very crucial to reflect on this question; “how do we bring a difficult and often countercultural word from God to bear in such a way, that people can actually hear and consider what we are saying?” (Tisdale 2010, p.41). In view of this, understanding the form of a sermon is very significant, because it “is an organizational plan for deciding

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<sup>63</sup>Cf (Adamo 2015, p.39) This is an existential and reflective approach to the interpretation of the Bible.



what kinds of things will be said and done in sermon, and what sequence..., although often largely unperceived by the hearers, it provides shape and energy to the sermon and thus becomes itself a vital force in how a sermon makes meaning” (Long 2005, p.118). This section is an attempt to discuss a variety of forms that prophetic preaching can take, and to argue for some specific modes that can support the fight against corruption in Nigeria.

As important as a sermon’s form is, there is no uniformity among scholars of homiletics<sup>64</sup>. Since a sermon may assume a variety of shapes and designs, the task for preachers is how to formulate a method for a particular sermon that “best embodies its message and aims” (Long 2005). For example, Craddock (1971, p.56), argued for what he termed the “inductive” form of preaching. This method argued that sermons be shaped according to the same process of creative discovery employed by preachers in their exegetical work. This signifies that the inductive form of preaching is structured and approached from a “problem-solving”<sup>65</sup> perspective with a focus of understanding the contemporary meaning of a Biblical text. Therefore, by the time the listeners arrive at the end of the inductive sermon, they ideally have become so engaged in this discovery process that they, and not the preacher, complete the sermon by naming its resolution in their own minds and lives (Long 2005; Craddock 1971).

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<sup>64</sup>One of the school of thoughts, is the traditional outline form (Long 2005). Also, the four sequence form, namely; Conflict-Complication-Sudden Shifts-Unfolding (Lowry 2001). For further readings on sermon forms Cf (Buttrick 1978; Massey 1980)

<sup>65</sup>From Craddock’s view point, the preacher should imagine that the hearers are going to solve a specific problem, and then design the sermon to give them all the necessary information, and in the proper order, to resolve that problem for themselves (Long 2005, pp.125–126)

Similarly, Tisdale (2010, pp.63–88) discussed various forms for prophetic preaching namely, Invitation to dialogue; Narrative structure: my story, the biblical story, our story; Thesis-antithesis-synthesis; Socratic teaching sermon (moving from question to answers); Play on words; Upsetting the equilibrium; and Invitation to lament; Problem-resolution-new possibility; Structure around an image; Letter form; action Structure; Biblical models, Areas needed action and call to action. Therefore, suggesting modes for prophetic preaching in a context of corruption requires a critical and selective engagement of some of the above mentioned methods.

For instance, the *problem-resolution-new-possibility* approach can tremendously support the fight against corruption in Nigeria. Because this form of prophetic preaching begins by “explicating the problem at hand, its cause, and the challenges it poses for contemporary hearers. The preacher then turns to the Bible and theology for the solution to the problem. Finally, the preacher moves to a place in which he or she envisions new possibilities for living in light of the new perspective given to the problem through biblical and theological reflection ” (2010, p.66).

A simple description of this form in a prophetic sermon will be, *The problem*: Corruption; *The resolution*: We determine with God’s help, not to promote and participate in corrupt practices. We choose to be faithful stewards in both our public and private dealings. We choose to promote and uphold the integrity of law and order in the land and to live as salt and light of the nation. *The new possibility*: Positive actions such as promoting the dignity of work, love for neighbour, being accountable and transparent, and to humbly

and prayerfully allow the transformative power in God's Word to come alive in us (Roman 10:9).

Significantly, prophetic sermons designed from this perspective, mostly inquire and acquire a deep and broader understanding on the dynamics of corruption, and a well equipped and articulated Biblical and theological knowledge that will lead both the preacher and the listeners to a deliberate alternative life style.

Prophetic preaching in a context of corruption, can also imbibe a mode that is structured around imagery given the fact that images stay with us longer after specific words, written or spoken, have been lost. To affirm this, Green asked "who has not gone away from a sermon, having forgotten title and text, but remembering well that fabulous illustration?" (1984, p.70). This means that images are not "mere descriptions in a sermon, they are active ingredients of communication" (Long 2005, p.199) that fructifies in the hearts of the listeners (Bartlett 1995). Amplifying this, Tisdale (2010, p.71), posited that "one of the values of images is that it appeals to the senses and engages the hearer through sight, sound, touch, taste, or smell". Similarly, images are of great significance to us on "multiple levels, both on the individual and corporate, as well as the spiritual and political. It carries with it the capacity to heal and to illuminate, to purify and to instruct, to unite and to empower" (Wallace 1995, p.9).

The images used in this context might be drawn from the preacher's own experience and imagination, the media, the world around us, and from biblical text. (Long 2005; Tisdale 2010). For instance, the Biblical imagery of locusts inversion might be used to

explicate the effect of corruption. Also, the image of the good shepherd might be an illuminating picture to demonstrate the love, care, and the determination for good leadership and followership that will promote the quality of life in Nigeria.

Having briefly looked at some modes of prophetic preaching in a context of corruption, it is very crucial to discuss and suggest a medium that may effectively support the fight against corruption in Nigeria.

#### **4.5 Channels of Prophetic Preaching in a Context of Corruption**

According to Scott (1982, p.167); “It is the preacher’s responsibility to open up the biblical principles which relate to the problems of contemporary society, in such a way as to...inspire and encourage the opinion-formers and policy-makers in the congregation, who occupy influential positions in public life, to apply these biblical principles to their professional lives”. In the same fashion, the prophetic responsibility which rests upon the preacher cannot be fulfilled until the preacher speaks to the needs of men in the pews in a way that can be understood and acted upon by them (Lloyd 1973, p.104)

From the above statements, one can deduce that the channel of preaching is from the pulpit within a Church setting or Christian gatherings. Nevertheless, this traditional channel of preaching is exclusive in nature, especially in a pluralistic religious context such as Nigeria because it does not make provision and accommodate those who occupy ‘influential position’ but do not belong to or attend Church services.

In view of this, Rick Warren, averred that “Our message must never change, but the way we deliver that message must be constantly updated to reach each new generation” (2013). Therefore, any form of preaching that is concerned with the social reality of its context must critically reflect on creative ways in which the sermon will be heard by individuals, society and the nation. The pressing question at this point is: “How can the content of the sermon be disseminated within a context?” In particular, to those in authority, empowered by the laws and constitution of the nation to formulate and effect policy that focus on transformation and promote quality of life in the country, bearing in mind that not all of these people are Christians, or attend Christian related functions.

To answer this question, it is important to note that despite the limitations in the traditional strait of preaching, this method is still used globally and have served as a launching path to develop more channels of preaching, which covers a wider range of audience. In line with the traditional channel of preaching, prophetic preaching in a context of corruption in Nigeria should seriously utilize the social media and letter writing as channels of preaching.

#### **4.5.1 Social Media as Channel for Prophetic Preaching in a Context of Corruption**

Globally, technological advancement have infiltrated human life in all ramification, and are affecting our day to day working environment, and giving us access to information in more ways than we can think or imagine (Aluri et al. 2014; Baird & Parasnis 2011;

Muller 2013; Chilwa & Adegoke 2013). Social media is one of the vehicles through which these advancement is transported and noticeable. It is generally described as “web sites that provide individuals with a personal profile and allow that profile to be connected with other profiles” (Turansky 2012, p.1). Some examples of social media platforms are Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, WhatsApp, Google+, YouTube, and many more.

The worldwide explosion of social media coverage and usage, has aided businesses and economic developments (Baird & Parasnis 2011; Kristie 2011), political campaign and national orientation (Muller 2013; Harris & Harrigan 2015), mobilization for local and international protests and revolutions<sup>66</sup> (Velasquez & LaRose 2015; Hamid et al. 2016; Nwagbara 2007). The Church is also not excluded in the use of social media for Christian ministry (Hall 2012; Turansky 2012; McCracken 2010)

However, social media is also a channel for crime and violence. Affirming this point, Hall (2012, p.2) noted that “the ugly side of this technology can also provide a balancing of our moral, professional and legal responsibilities to assure the privacy and confidentiality of donors, clients, members, participants and vulnerable persons...can present a big challenge for leaders in Churches and other Christian agencies. Convenient means for paedophiles to prey on minors online give criminals an opportunity to commit financial fraud on a scale previously not possible and allow

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<sup>66</sup>Examples of these protest are; #fessmustfall (This protest is organize by some student of South Africa Universities demanding for free tertiary education); #thisflag (A protest calling for good governance in Zimbabwe, and request President Robert Mugabe to step down). Similarly, Hall (2012, p.1) posited that the social media “is instrumental in organizing social revolutions that can cause tyrants to fall and is capable of being used as a tool to warn of impending natural disasters that can prevent large-scale death, injury and property damage”

individuals to spread hatred, misinformation and gossip, that can unfairly and permanently damage the reputation of others”.

Despite these challenges, social media is radically shifting the way Christian ministries spread the Good News of Jesus Christ within their congregation and communities. It specifically calls for “changes in homiletical presentation that correspond to the new ways in which people receive information in an age increasingly characterized by the widespread use of digital and image-based media” (O’Reilly 2010, p.43).

According to Lloyd (1973, p.104), the Christian preacher has an opportunity and a responsibility to set forth the Christian principles and to point out where the existing social order is at variance with them. This means that; he/she will not only preach on personal problems, but on community and national problems as well. Therefore, the wider coverage and usage of social media might be an effective channel to fulfil this responsibility by speaking about national problems such as corruption, and proffering God-centred solutions. Hence, preachers must use the opportunities granted on social media platforms to prophetically preach and proactively engage and advise Nigerians on honesty, transparency, accountability, and dignity of labour that can support initiatives against corruption.

Social Media is so powerful and effective, because it carries the capacity to make things go viral, the ability to attract and gather an audience, it creates a platform for engagement (Turansky 2012, p.23; McLaren 2006, p.164). Similarly, “the stories and images we encounter in the media and internet...help to shape our individual and

collective imaginations, bringing distance and faraway others with lives that might be very unlike our own into our living rooms. Such encounters feed the way we see, think of and feel about the world, about our relations with others and about our place in the world” (Andrews 2014, p.8). Hence, this research affirmed that social media can play a prophetic role in the fight against corruption because the majority of Nigerians are giving their time and attention to it. Through this channel, a prophetic sermon might go beyond the location of Church or boundaries of Christian gatherings.

To successfully exploit the potential of social media, prophetic preachers need to design a Bible-based sermon that captures the social realities and centered on the love for God, neighbour and the nation. Such sermons might deliver noticeable value in return for audiences’ time and attention that may lead to public awareness on behavioural change and transformative action towards the fight against corruption.

#### **4.5.2 Letter Writing as Channel for Prophetic Preaching in a Context of Corruption**

In Christian tradition, the history of letter writing as a channel for preaching is not a recent method. For instance, “the early letters of the apostles to the first Christian Churches were one of the most common forms of preaching in the earlier days of Christianity” (Tisdale 2010, p.73). Significantly, a letter conveys a written message from an author to private or public domain or to both. This message is aimed at expressing some thoughts, feelings, and addressing specific areas by giving instruction, hope,



healing, encouragement and call to action (Chohan 2011; Vos 2005; Nevala & Palander-Collin 2005).

In letter writing, the author is in effect, imitating the way people talk to each other when they are not under the physical influence of each other's presence (Moffett 1992). This suggests that letter writing represents a genuine medium of communication (Nevala & Palander-Collin 2005). Therefore, the use of letter writing as one of the channels for prophetic preaching in contemporary homiletics has been utilized and demonstrated by preachers such as Martin Luther King Jr, Allan Boesak, Desmond Tutu, and many others.

For instance, in a prophetic sermon titled; "A Letter to the South African Minister of Justice", Boesak (1984, pp.58–65) personally wrote and sent this sermon to the former Minister of Justice<sup>67</sup> during the Apartheid Regime, calling him to abolish the policy of segregation and dehumanization. Thus, he stated: "I plead with you: stop your disastrous policy before it's too late" (1984, p.63). This letter, written with courageous and prophetic holy indignation, was structured around salutation, introduction, and body of the letter, a call to action, conclusion and prayer.

At this point, it is crucial to critically think about the motivation behind the medium of this sermon. In other words "Why did Boesak choose this channel for his prophetic proclamation to the minister?" An accurate or satisfactory answer to the question, can only be obtained from Boesak himself. However, this research is not approached from

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<sup>67</sup>The Honorable A. Schibusch was the South African minister of Justice.

an empirical perspective that requires interviewing Allan Boesak. Nonetheless, I shall briefly attempt the question from insights gained in the sermon and through a critical homiletical lens. Significantly, answers to this question might stimulate preachers to effectively utilize this channel of communication in preaching prophetically in a context of corruption.

Firstly, Boesak maintained that “I shall stand guilty before God if I don’t witness against this government” (1984, p.65). This implies that living on earth with eternity in view is a motivating factor to publicly engage prophetically against any form of opposition to the kingdom of God on earth. It also shows that God is concerned about justice and the quality of life. In the same fashion, preachers in Nigeria or anywhere else for that matter, will stand guilty before God if they do not witness against the evil of corrupt practices in the nation and the world. Thus, we need to caution our citizenry to change its value system in the light of the eschatological judgment of God (Folarin 2010, p.321).

Secondly, he understood the social, legislative and judicial influence the minister’s office can play in enacting laws and policies that speak and uphold justice for all. On this, he quoted Augustine of Hippo saying “Justice is the only thing that can give a worldly power worth. What is a worldly government if justice is lacking? It is none other than a bunch of plunderers” (1984, p.63). Based on this, where is the integrity of leadership in a context of corruption? Where there is no accountability, transparency and faithful representation. Thus, letter writing as a channel for prophetic preaching in a context of corruption is not an invitation to highly influential individuals to attend Church functions

or Christian gatherings, but a God-centered, people oriented and nation building call for faithfulness in all ramifications.

Thirdly, he experienced excruciating pain caused by the Apartheid government. Also, due to laws that separated the South African people from one another, Boesak might not have had the privilege to preach in the presence of the Minister, or, the Minister might not even have belonged to Boesak's congregation. In view of this, one may humbly ask, whether Nigerian preachers are really feeling and experiencing impart of corruption in the country. If yes, then, how are we homiletically reflecting on our brothers and sisters who occupied influential positions but are not members of our congregation or people of different faiths?

Finally, Boesak's motivation might have sprung from the need to publicly support, collaborate, and to be a public prophetic example to individuals and organizations that were calling for the end of the Apartheid government. Thus, he affirmed that "I am using this letter as an open witness and thus will make it available to the press" (1984, p.65). To apply this in a context of corruption, it means that prophetic preaching must seek to collaborate and courageously stand together in this fight.

From Boesak's example of letter writing as a channel for preaching prophetically in South Africa's context of injustices, Nigerian preachers should adopt and use this method in the fight against corruption. Obviously, writing a prophetic sermon requires knowledge, wisdom, understanding, and commitment to God, humanity and nation building.

Sermons should be written in letter form and addressed to individuals and organizations. Prophetic sermons, geared towards combating corruption, should be published in the newspaper because it will sensitize and stimulate the public to a collaborative effort in the fight against corruption in Nigeria.

#### **4.6 Conclusion**

In essence, Chapter Four can be described as the thrust of this thesis because it was structured around the research topic, which is “prophetic preaching in a context of corruption in Nigeria”. This type of preaching was described as a courageous homiletical concept that boldly declares and proclaims God’s Word to the concrete realities of life. It encompasses imagination, proclamation and exemplary living which aims to transform individuals, communities and nations. Also, the research question was answered by demonstrating how preachers can take prophetic stance in a corrupt context.

The Chapter begins by reinstating that the Church is a key player in addressing the various global challenges. This implies that the role of the Church in Nigeria towards combating corruption, is very crucial and that pulpit ministry is central in faithfully fulfilling this role. Since, in preaching, both the Biblical text and the context engage critically. In view of this, the Chapter discusses biblical hermeneutics as an activity for prophetic preaching in a context of corruption. Also, some techniques for Biblical interpretation were highlighted. In addition, the Chapter explicate modes for prophetic

preaching in the context of corruption. Thus, argued for the; problem-resolution-new possibility; and structure around an image forms.

By and large, the chapter argued for the use and significance of channels through which messages can reach its context or target audience. Therefore, the social media and letter writing methods were advocated. Hence, the wider coverage and usage of social media makes it an important platform for disseminating information and the letter writing channel can be utilized as a medium to prophetically preach to organisations and individuals who might never attend Christian gatherings, but occupy influential positions that can strengthen the fight against corruption in Nigeria.

The next chapter, which is the conclusion, will give a general summary of the research and some recommendations for preaching prophetically in a context of corruption.

## Chapter Five: Summary, Recommendations and Conclusions

### 5.1 Introduction

Based on the previous chapters, this Concluding Chapter sums up all the arguments and discoveries made in this research. It also gives some recommendations that will effectively strengthen the pulpit ministry in its effort to faithfully proclaim God's Word in a context of corruption.

### 5.2 Summary and Conclusion

The task of this research was to demonstrate how a context of corruption challenges preachers in Nigeria to take prophetic stance from the pulpit ministry and to argue for methods of prophetic preaching that will continue to support the fight against corruption in this context. Since impact and causes of corruption in Nigeria is quite alarming and worrisome, new and renewed perspective in combating this monster is highly needed. Therefore, following the prophetic examples of Allan Boesak, Beyers Naude, Desmond Tutu and Martin Luther King Jr, prophetic preaching is a vital force that cannot be ignored in the fight against corruption in Nigeria.

To illustrate this, the research was structured around the Osmer's four ways of undertaking practical theology investigation, namely, descriptive observations, interpretive, normative and pragmatic and was approached from a *macro-theory* perspective called the '*conflict paradigm*' which is a theory that views human behaviour as attempts to dominate others or avoid being dominated. It is interested in the

relationship between individuals and society - particularly the amount of freedom individuals have to surrender for society to function.

Through a historical lens from pre-independence to post-independence of Nigeria, this paradigm explicates the tension between corruption and the quest for a corrupt free society. This tension is visible in every organization in the country, including the Church (see chapter 2-3).

Nonetheless, the voice of the Church is of paramount importance in combating corruption because the Church is responsible to speak and act against societal problems like the Biblical prophets, who felt compelled to speak against the religious, societal and leadership crisis during their time and context. Thus, the Church is called to be a public witness in Nigeria. In faithfully responding to this socio-ecclesia responsibility, prophetic preaching is a vital tool in this task.

Building from some critical scholars of homiletics such as Leonora, Brueggemann, Cilliers, and many more, this research described prophetic preaching in a context of corruption as a courageous homiletical concept that boldly declares and proclaims God's Word to the concrete realities of life. It encompasses imagination, proclamation and exemplary living which aims to transform individuals, communities and nations.

This type of preaching is very critical with the nexus between the Biblical text and the context. Thus, an attempt was made in this research to discuss Biblical hermeneutics as an activity for prophetic preaching and the techniques for Biblical interpretation in this context. Additionally, modes for prophetic preaching that can effectively contribute in the

fight against corruption were also considered. Therefore, the problem-resolution-new possibility and structure around an image forms were argued for and recommended.

Based on the findings of this research, the context of corruption challenges Nigerian preachers to rethink and utilize the social media and letter writing channels for preaching prophetically to support the fight against corruption.

In conclusion, the fight against corruption in Nigeria is therefore very crucial and urgent. It calls for collaboration and the need to prophetically preach with credibility and efficiency in word and deed. Such preaching, with the help of the Holy Spirit, will enhance inner transformation and a thoughtful reorientation on ethical, moral and spiritual values that will encourage transparency, accountability and faithfulness in stewardship, leading to a corrupt free attractive Nigeria. Now is the time to brace up pulpit ministry.

### **5.3 Recommendations**

Based on the findings of this research on the concrete dynamics of the nature of corruption in Nigeria, this study recommends three interrelated prophetic essentials that will continue to support the fight against corruption. These are;

#### **1) *Prophetic Pronouncements***

- i. The Church in Nigeria need to faithfully and courageously declare and proclaim God's Word by making it relevant, inspiring and



transforming. This implies the need for the Church to re-evaluate, deconstruct and reconstruct its approach to preaching.

- ii. Prophetic proclamation in this context, needs to critically utilize the social media and letter writing channels of preaching. Thus, there is a need for preachers to inquire and acquire basic computer knowledge.
- iii. In order to create public awareness that might lead to behavioural change in the fight against corruption, the Church in its advocacy, needs to continue to make and publish its prophetic statements and sermons against corruption. In addition, its quest for good governance, human dignity, peace, justice and the dignity of work need to be accessible to the general public. Thus, prophetic pronouncements must call for prophetic actions.

## ***2) Prophetic exemplary lifestyle***

- i. The Church in Nigeria need to truthfully acknowledge and publicly repent for contributing directly or indirectly to corrupt practices in the country. In the light of this, preachers in Nigeria do not only need to be eloquent in the craft of prophetic preaching, but also to live and lead by example. This calls for a radical approach to prophetic public witnessing through lifestyle that imbeds and promotes the culture of dignity and integrity in both private and public domain.

- ii. Preaching prophetically in the context of corruption by living an exemplary life, needs a deliberate and willingness attempt to collaborate and network with other individuals, interfaith movements, public and private organizations in the fight against corruption.
- iii. The need for the Church and its preachers to practically demonstrate and promote the culture of transparency, accountability and faithfulness in stewardship is highly recommended.

### **3) *Prophetic imagination***

- i. The Church needs to thoughtfully and creatively imagine a corrupt free Nigeria. Hence, if this can be imagined “it is not absolutely impossible” (Andrews 2014, p.6). This implies that prophetic imagination is a crucial guide in the journey to realizing new possibilities in the fight against corruption in Nigeria.
- ii. Prophetic preaching in the context of corruption needs to envision and prepare Nigerians, especially the Christians, on how to live in the present with anticipation for a beautiful future.
- iii. The Church needs to re-think and re-feel its understanding of the causes and effects of corruption and to also do some imaginative planning on its strategies on how to effectively combat corruption. Therefore, we need our imagination in addressing corruption, an imagination that prophetically inspires hope, gives courage and the faith to believe that “if the resurrection is possible, then all of reality

holds a possibility beyond human control or imagination-God's possibility" (Catherine 1998, p.83).

By and large, prophetic pronouncement and prophetic imagination that can effectively contribute to the fight against corruption in Nigeria, must be accompanied with a public prophetic exemplary lifestyle, rooted in the love for the blessed Trinity, humanity and the nation.

#### **5.4 Suggestions for Further Research**

This Thesis recommends that an empirical interreligious research be conducted on the role and contribution of pulpit ministry in combating corruption in Nigeria. Furthermore, a study on the preaching curricula in Nigeria's seminaries and Bible schools need urgent attention. In addition, a research on the "immunity clause" as one of the hindrances in combating corruption should be carried out.

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