

**A Christian Perspective of the Moral Implications of
Covid-19 Experience in Nigeria**

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Abstract

Christianity has been misconstrued by some as a religion of prophecy and miracle alone; however, this study holds that Christianity is most importantly a religion of salvation. There are Christians at various government agencies that believe in prophecy and miracle but exercise their duties at the expense of morality and salvation. The experience of Covid-19 pandemic in Nigeria serves as an eye opener to this reality. This research suggests that for a renaissance to take place, an insight must be drawn from the Christian morality which holds that man is both preternatural and supernatural and, must give account of his stewardship here and in the hereafter. Religious practices must at all times synchronize with morality. Whenever religious practices and morality disintegrate in handling human affairs the people are left in the hands of corrupt tyrants who maximally use propaganda, falsehood, intimidation, and religion as escape routes from their corrupt and ungodly practices geared towards amassing wealth meant for common good at the expense of the populace. This work employs the method of critical analysis and calls for *sophia-religio-moral-consciousness* as a necessary condition in seeing that Christians at all times work towards salvation, which is the heart of true Christian calling. (Word Count: 200)

Keywords: Christianity, Covid-19 pandemic, Miracle, Nigeria, Prophecy, Renaissance, Salvation, and *Sophia-religio-moral-consciousness*.

Introductory Discourse

The outbreak and experience of Covid-19 pandemic, a strain of virus from the family of Corona Virus has affected almost all the countries across the globe. And so, Covid-19 pandemic has become one of the topical issues that have generated a lot of debate, diverse opinions, and controversy in the whole world in general and Nigeria in particular. This pandemic is so devastating to the entire humanity that even 'the super powers of the world'

were brought to their knees. It was and is still an experience which opens to sight that 'the rich also cry'. As a controversial and polemical issue, in Nigeria, some are of the view that there is completely absence of Covid-19 pandemic in nation, which implies that it is a scam; others are of the opinion that Covid-19 pandemic is real, but that the leaders of the nation and the management of Nigeria Centre for Disease Control (NCDC) and other governmental agencies are telling Nigerians lies and, at best, half-truth about the true situation of things as it concerns the pandemic (Awolabi 3). Some out-rightly construe that the heart of corruption in Nigeria is with the leadership of the nation at all levels namely: federal, state, and local government as well as the executive, legislature, and the judiciary arms of the government who see Covid-19 outbreak as a veritable opportunity to amass wealth at the expense of the citizenry. In fact, corruption is at the root of all these experiences of controversy and confusion.

Essentially, Corruption is at the basis of problem of Nigeria ranging from social, religious, moral, cultural, academic, economic, and in fact, almost in all sectors of human endeavor as a nation. No country in the world is immune from corruption. That notwithstanding, the rate at which corrupt practices thrive in Nigeria is not only alarming but devastating. The polemical nature of this is such that the more it is talked about, the more intense it becomes (Uzoigwe and Chukwuma-Offor 71-72). Worrisomely, there are Christians in various arms and levels of government and governmental agencies who take part in all these sharp practices. In all these, one thing has been ascertained: that Covid-19 pandemic is real not only in Nigeria but in the entire globe and that no nation has proffered any lasting solution to the highly dreaded virus. What are in the increase are falsehood, propaganda, all manner of lies, deceit and conspiracy theories. All these endanger the common man, especially the vulnerable (Idike 12).

In a radio programme on January 15, 2022 there was a debate on the polemical issue of Covid-19 pandemic in the world. Some of the scholars were of the view that the experience of Corona Virus in the world in general and Nigeria in particular goes a long way to prove the ineffectiveness of Christianity as a religion. One of the discussants, Wilberforce, for instance, tried to instantiate this claim by arguing that at the eve of the New Year 2020, a lot of prophecies came from pastors of various churches, but none preempted the outbreak of Covid-19 pandemic, locking down of the entire nation and the sufferings people went through as a result of the dreaded virus. As if that was not enough, he went much further to argue that even when Covid-19 pandemic began to ravage the world no single miracle could be recorded by way of the world witnessing a partial or total expurgation of the dreaded virus across the globe. It is on that basis that he rested his case by arguing that Christianity or Christian religion has failed.

Conversely, we strongly argue that Christianity has not failed; it is as relevant and salvific as ever. The fact that an individual Christian or a group of Christians decided not to live and abide by the moral dictates of the gospel and the entire Christian teaching does not in any way indicate that Christianity has failed. Rather those individual Christians or group of Christians have failed. Christianity is not only a religion of prophecy and miracle alone, but

most importantly a religion of salvation. Wilberforce committed two fallacies in his submission namely: fallacy of over generalization and fallacy of hasty conclusion. He failed in his argument to understand that prophecy and miracle are only parts of the whole. There are other indices like faith, hope, charity, *metanoia*, endurance, benignity and, of course, salvation which one necessarily has to count while talking about Christianity. This study suggests *sophia-religio-moral-consciousness* as key towards having a renaissance where Christians will be Christians in all things and at all times not undermining the Christian moral or ethical principles, taking human life as sacred and focusing on salvation, which is the core of all Christian calling.

Clarification of Some of the Key Concepts

i. Christianity as a Religion

In order to clearly delineate the meaning of Christianity or Christian religion, it becomes of importance to first define religion for clarity and precision. Religion derives from three Latin words as its roots, namely, *Ligare* (meaning to bind), *Relegere* (meaning to unite, or to link), and *Religio* (meaning relationship) (Northbourn 1). By implication, religion is basically a relationship between human person and divine person. Religion etymologically, is something that binds or unites man with a transcendental being; a deity believed to exist and worshipped by man. The concepts of man (human person) and deity are essential in understanding of religion. To instantiate this claim, in his book *Comparative Religion*, Bouquet defines religion as a fixed relationship between the human self and some non-human entity, the sacred, the supernatural, the self-exist, the absolute or simply, God (16).

As humans we need religion. In his *Theology of Culture*, Tillich posits that religion is a necessary dimension of man's spiritual life which cannot be rejected or ignored. In his own words: You cannot reject religion with ultimate seriousness, because ultimate seriousness, or the state of being ultimately concerned, itself is religion. Religion is the substance, the ground, and the depth of man's spiritual life... Religion opens up the depth of man's spiritual life which is usually covered by the dust of our daily life and the noise of our secular work. It gives us experience of the Holy, of something which is untouchable, awe inspiring, an ultimate meaning, the source of ultimate courage (8-9).

Christianity is a religion which was founded by Jesus Christ about 2000 years ago. It is a religion that is geared towards salvation of man. Faith, hope, love (charity), prophecy, miracle, redemption and lots more are among its essential components. None should be taken at the expense of the other. All the indices or components of Christian religion must necessarily synergize and complement each other as they are geared towards human salvation. Christianity as a religion strongly believes in the triune God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

ii. Miracle

Internet dictionary, *Oxford Languages*, defines miracle as "an extraordinary and welcome event that is not explicable by natural or scientific laws and is therefore attributed to a divine agency" (<http://www.google.com> retrieved 03/02/2022). Miracle is an extraordinary

event that goes against nature, and cannot be explain by science and that Christians believe is caused by God” (<https://www.merriam-webster.com> retrieved 03/02/2022). Miracle is an event that involves the direct and powerful action of God, transcending the ordinary laws of nature and defying common expectations of behaviour. Miracles are extraordinary occurrences that can only be attributed to the supernatural work of God and demonstrate His involvement in human history. God employs miracles in the Bible to reveal Himself, His character, and His purpose to humans through phenomena that are not otherwise explainable (Exodus 3:1-6). Miracles provide evidence of God’s presence and power in the world and demonstrates His authority on behalf of His servants (<https://www.gotgotquestions.org> retrieved 03/02/2022).

iii. Morality

Morality as it is applied and employed in this research is one and the same thing with ethical conduct. Here we refer to: “The study of the concepts involved in practical reasoning: good, right, duty, obligation, virtue, freedom, rationality, choice” (*Oxford Dictionary of Philosophy*126). Among other things, Christian morality holds that man is both preternatural and supernatural and, must give account of his stewardship here and in the hereafter. It is on that basis that the moral virtues of honesty, sincerity, benignity, purity, probity, forthrightness, and so forth are encouraged to be embraced by Christians as veritable instruments in the realisation of salvation which is the heart of all Christian quests. It has to be noted that God is very central in Christian morality and religion. As it were, “Different religions conceive God differently, but what is common to all of them is that they conceive God anthropomorphically” (Omogbe 30). Anthropomorphically here, implies that no matter the religion, a deity is conceived in the image and likeness of man, with human attributes such as eyes, ears, hands, feet beings., nose, emotions, etc. like human, excluding human limitations. And that is why, it is part of Christian moral teaching that God sees and hears everything and will reward each man according to his deeds.

iii. Prophecy

Prophecy is a statement that says what is going to happen in the future... (<https://www.dictionary.cambridge.org> retrieved 04/02/2022). Prophecy is a prediction of what will happen in the future; it is a divinely inspired revelation or interpretation; a prediction or an utterance from a prophet inspired by God (<https://www.vocabulary.com> retrieved 04/02/2022). Prophecy is a knowledge of the future (usually said to be obtained from a divine source); a prediction uttered under divine inspiration; it is the foretelling or prediction of what is to come, something that is declared by a prophet, especially a divinely inspired prediction, instruction, or exhortation, a divinely inspired utterance or revelation, the action, function, or faculty of a prophet (<https://www.collinsdictionary.com> retrieved 04/02/2022).

iv. Renaissance

Renaissance means different things to different people (Peters 5). A philosopher, a religious scholar, a historian, a sociologist, a psychologist and an economist might not construe renaissance the same way. According to *The Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, ‘Renaissance’ is the term customarily employed to designate a cultural movement that began in Italy in the middle

of fourteenth century and spread throughout the rest of Europe...The concept of the Renaissance, however, arouses particularly strong opposition because it involves a disparagement of the preceding period, the Middle Ages (*medium aevum*), from which culture presumably had to be awakened. The idea of a rebirth of literature or of the arts originated in the period itself (174).

Within the context of this research, renaissance is discussed from the perspective of a rebirth not of literature but of character, a disparagement of bad attitude to good moral behaviour, a reawakening of a culture of seeing human life as sacred that it is, not of literary revival of the antiquity, but in a change of position from what used to be the case to what ought to be the case, especially as it concerns seeing Christianity from a holistic point of view where all the components of Christianity namely but not limited to miracle, prophecy, faith, hope, and love must synchronise, and indeed, synergise with each other and properly integrated for human salvation, a situation where Christians in various government agencies, ministries and parastatals will at all times be truly Christians.

v. Salvation

Salvation is derived from the Latin word: *salvatio*, and from the root word *salva* (meaning safe or saved). From the purview of Christian religion, salvation is the state of being saved or delivered from sin and its consequences. Salvation is the saving of human beings from sin and its consequences which include death and separation from God. The seven doctrines of salvation are forgiveness, justification, reconciliation, redemption, sanctification, newness of life, and adoption (<https://mncogconference.org> retrieved 04/02/2022).

These sevenfold elements of salvation are gratuitously done for human being by God through His Son Jesus Christ, because all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God. Human beings only need to make efforts and cooperate with God in order to gain salvation which is a gratuitous gift of God to mankind. As debtors, sinners are forgiven; as condemned criminals, they need justification; as enemies of God, they need reconciliation; as slaves to sin they need redemption; as defiled and unholy, they need sanctification; as dead, they need newness of life; as poor strangers, they need adoption. The seven elements of salvation are divine works; they designate the divine side of salvation. The human side of salvation is conversion which includes repentance, faith, and baptism. So, human efforts and cooperation are required for human salvation. When a sinner accepts God's gift of salvation through repentance, faith and baptism, God lifts him out of the world, places him in Christ, and bestows upon him spiritual riches indicated by the seven doctrines of salvation (<https://mncogconference.org> retrieved 04/02/2022).

iv. Sophia-Religio-Moral-Consciousness

Sophia-religio-moral-consciousness are a combination of Latin and English words from the philosophical, religious, and psychological fields of study. *Sophia* is a Latin word which means wisdom. *Religio* is an ablative case of the Latin expression of religion. Moral here can be interchanged with ethical, which is concerned with human behaviour which could be right

or wrong, good or bad. Consciousness, on the other hand, is a psychological state of a person-being fully aware of his actions as a human person.

As a contribution to knowledge, the context in which *sophia-religio-moral-consciousness* is employed in this study is such that Christians have to apply wisdom, and be truly religious and, at the same time moral and remain fully aware of their actions and inactions in discharging their duties of Christians. Wisdom, religion, and morality must be integrated, complementing each other in day to day activities. It is in such a situation and, with such disposition that Christians in various walks of life should act wisely by placing the pre-eminence of God over and above everything acquisition of wealth inclusive; bearing in mind that they will give account of their stewardship on earth at the end of their earthly journey.

The Experience of Covid-19 Pandemic in Nigeria

It is considered necessary to state at this point that there are so many experiences of Covid-19 pandemic in Nigeria such that this brief research cannot contain all of them. What we try to do is to bring to light some of the experiences as they proximately or remotely touch the content and context of this study. The experience of Covid-19 pandemic in Nigeria was characterized by confusion, lies, half-truths, propaganda, intimidation, cacophony of voices and conspiracy theories. Like the days of Noah in the Bible, before the outbreak and experience of Covid-19 pandemic in Nigeria was and is still a time in history when people seem not to care so much about God and what wisdom, religion, and morality could offer. It was and is still a time of consumerism and secularism in the affairs of men. People were and are still busy looking for prophecy and miracle without a corresponding change of attitude from wrong to right, from bad to good. The moral values, especially as encapsulated in St. Paul's outline of the gifts and fruits of the Holy Spirit were considered unfashionable by many. In his first letter to the Corinthians, St. Paul teaches:

Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of services, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who activates all of them in everyone. To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. To one is given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom, and to another the utterance of knowledge according to the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by the same Spirit, to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another the discernment of spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. All these are activated by one and the same Spirit, who allots to each one individually just as the Spirit chooses (12:4-11).

In his letter to the Galatians, St. Paul further writes: "...the fruit of the Holy Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control" (5:22-23). Why is it that all these indices of Christian religion which are geared towards human salvation mean nothing to some of the people, Christians inclusive, who performed and are still

playing various roles in government and nongovernmental agencies to ensure prevention and possible eradication of Covid-19 pandemic in Nigeria? A critical look at the book, *Wisdom: The Most Essential of All Gifts*, clearly shows that Maurice has an answer to this question when he writes:

Making money in particular and acquiring wealth in general makes more sense to a lot of people in Nigeria than upholding the beauty and sacredness of human life encapsulated in the gifts and fruits of the Holy Spirit. Unfortunately, after acquiring so much wealth and having fat bank accounts, they will one day leave them and answer the ultimate call. Is that not lack of wisdom? (3).

Amassing wealth at the expense of the dignity and sanctity of human life is indeed a worrisome experience in Nigeria. That is why among other reasons, the New Year 2020 prophecies, especially that it would be a year of financial breakthrough and prosperity pronounced by some pastors, nearly outnumbered the recipients of the prophecy, but none prophesied about Covid-19 and the devastating nature of the pandemic. Prosperity and wealth entered people's psych that even when the government decided to lock down the entire nation some of the staff of law enforcement agencies who blocked inter-state and intra-state routes saw it as an opportunity to extort money from the motorists, keke, and okada riders and never cared to vouchsafe the lives of the citizenry, whom they were meant to protect. It was a situation that some people were violating safety protocols at will provided they gave money to some of these government agents along federal and state roads. Painful as it were, a good number of Christian were there.

From another perspective, when palliatives were provided, they were packed in different warehouses and were not given to the people they were meant to cushion their hunger such that some of the hungry youths sabotaged the peaceful protest of the 'Endsars Protesters' across the country, and invaded those warehouses and, in the process, destroyed property worth of millions of naira. Even during the lock down some government agencies also saw it as a means of amassing wealth at the expense of the populace (www.endsarsprotest.com retrieved 5/02/2022). In as much as we do not applaud those who looted and damaged government property, it is so disheartening an experience that some of the palliatives meant to alleviate hunger and sufferings of the people expired in the warehouses, and some of these warehouses were managed by Christians.

The way Corona Virus (Covid-19) pandemic is being tackled by the leaders of government of some developed nations is quite different from the way it is being tackled by the leaders of government of the developing nations, especially in Nigeria. Some Nigerians are skeptical about everything concerning the government of Nigeria because of the manner in which the government and her agencies are handling the situation. Some out-rightly hold that Covid-19 pandemic has been appropriated as a veritable means of ensuring that an evil agenda sails through in Nigeria (Olusola 11). There is controversy and conspiracy in almost all the

issues surrounding the pandemic in Nigeria, especially in the area of Covid-19 vaccines and the mode of vaccination across the nation.

In an article titled, *What Nigerians Should Know About the Controversial "Infectious Disease Bill, 2020" (HB863): Amazing How 104 Out of 109 Nigerian Senators Sponsored Controversial Vaccine Bill*, the controversial Vaccine Bill, also known as the Nigerian Emergency Health Bill, 2020 was sponsored by 104 out of 109 senators, clearly indicating that the Bill will scale through without much hurdles in the Red Chamber. Same Bill also entitled Control of Infectious Diseases Bill, 2020 was promoted by Speaker of the House of Representatives, Femi Gbajabiamila and two others. Recall that when it was introduced barely three weeks ago, the Speaker had wanted it to be given speedy and accelerated hearing without a public hearing (www.thenewsguru.com retrieved 9/02/2022).

The following week Tuesday he made a u-turn that the Bill can now undergo a public hearing after public outcry condemning the imported bill. In the Senate the message was loud and clear that it's basically a Bill for the entire chamber. This development has further fueled speculations in so many quarters in Nigeria giving credence to the fact that there is a conspiracy theory somewhere along the line. In a recent analysis by Rep Kingsley Chinda, a member of the House of Representatives Obio/Akpor Federal Constituency, the underbelly of both legislative chambers was well exposed. In the analysis, Chinda made a vivid comparison of both bills exposing all the similarities and verbatim sections. All the inherent dangers of the bill that was imported from Singapore were properly x-rayed (www.thenewsguru.com retrieved 9/02/2022).

Is it not surprising that the Nigerian populace were not properly carried along in the issues of Covid-19 vaccine? In every human relationship where morality is given its pride of place, people are carried along in issues that concern them. Therefore, the place of *consensus gentium* becomes inevitable. *Consensus gentium* are Latin words which means 'consent of the nations', but in this research it means concept of the people – *consensus populi*. It means an idea believed by everyone and everywhere. The demand for *consensus gentium* or *consensus populi* does not in any way imply that whatever the generality or majority of the people affirms is always true or right.

It is true that what is believed or endorsed by the majority of the people might not be true or right always, however, it is the right of the people to be carried along and their consent ought to be sought in a matter that concerns them in a democratic dispensation. It is strongly argued in this work that, within the context of Covid-19 vaccines and vaccination peoples' opinion ought to be sought, because issues of vaccines and vaccination concern their lives, and life is sacred and should be treated as such. The people have their moral and even constitutional rights to say yes or no without fear of intimidation in what directly or indirectly affects their lives. Little wonder Raup as cited in (Williams 33) holds that, a standard of action has moral validity only when a community for which the action is performed, freely and in common agrees that the action is the best as the community sees and experiences its application and implication.

A Paradoxological and Anthropological Interface in the Experience of Covid-19 Pandemic in Nigeria

There was and, is still a paradoxological and anthropological interface in the experience of covid-19 pandemic in Nigeria. Paradoxology is the study of the paradoxes of “nature”. The subject-matter of paradoxology was a rational observation of “unusual” and “irregular” phenomena, such as earthquake, thunderstorm and eclipse (Okon 54), and it will not be out of place to add Covid-19 pandemic. Apparently, the experience of Covid-19 pandemic in Nigeria could be likened to earthquake, thunderstorm, and eclipse. Recalling the massacre of some innocent Nigerian youths at Lekki Toll Gate, Lagos in October, 2020 is a strong affirmation to this. What is most worrisome is that some of the individuals at various government agencies, ministries and parastatals, and law enforcement agents never considered the sacredness of human life. Rather, human life was used for experimental purposes in order to advance the course of their masters and masters’ masters who raised funds, manufactured vaccines which the health care givers were reluctant in administering to themselves and their family members.

A Christian Perspective of the Moral Implications of Covid-19 Experience in Nigeria

In the course of the outbreak of Covid-19 Pandemic in Nigeria, the true situation of things in Nigeria was significantly brought to bear such that there was no need to prove the deteriorating nature of the nation state in all spheres of human endeavour. Some Christians and even non-Christians alike in some of the governmental agencies and organisations saw and still see the Covid-19 pandemic in Nigeria as an opportunity to amass wealth at the expense of the masses who were and are still suffering in the land filled with milk and honey. It is like a situation of having ‘undertakers’ and ‘neo-capitalists’ as the supposed ‘messiahs. The law enforcement agents and other workers in different agencies of the government for instance, were called to be ‘saviours’ but because of their capitalist orientation the reverse became the case such that almost everything turned to ‘how much do you have and how much do I get?’. This reality that stays us in the face calls for sober reflection, critical thinking and change of attitude. How did we arrive here? Could there not be anything people can do in Nigeria without a trace of corruption in it. Could it not be possible to value human life over and above all riches and glory that comes with it? Were Christians not part of these agencies and agents of the government?

In Christianity, man is a trio-dimensional being made up of body, soul, and spirit. Man is created in God’s image and likeness (Gen. 1:26). Indeed, man has always been seen in that light. It was such that anthropology in the ancient Greek science was the study of the antiquity of man. Some of the scholars of the ancient, medieval, renaissance interlude, modern and contemporary epochs concerned themselves with the nature and composition of man. Humanity was studied as a tripartite being with body, soul, and spirit. That was the springboard for the argument on the mortality and immortality of the soul which dominated religious and philosophical discourse in ancient Greek thought and in some other cultures of the world. Going into details would mean deviating from the scope of this work.

It is in man's soul that he resembles God. Therefore, soul is the definitive essence of a thing, seat of wisdom, seat of character and seat of intelligence. For Christian morality, 'all must give account of their actions and inactions before the Ultimate Judge' (Kizinga 55). This implies that, an aspect of Christian morality which holds that man must give account of his stewardship on earth applies to all both small and great and cuts across those who work in government agencies, private and nongovernmental sectors including 'yahoo boys and girls'. The three basic moral principles namely: always obey a certain conscience, when you are in doubt do not act, and do good and avoid evil are all contents of Christian ethics and apply to all irrespective of family background, colour, race, affiliation, and so forth.

Applying Critical Thinking to A Christian Perspective of the Moral Implications of Covid-19 Experience in Nigeria

If man is created in the image and likeness of God, is it proper that man is treated as a means to an end? If human soul is the seat of wisdom, where is the wisdom in a situation where some individuals in government agencies appropriated funds mapped out for prevention and precautionary measures against Covid-19 pandemic for themselves at the expense of the populace? Where is intelligence in a situation where palliatives were kept in warehouses where some expired while the people they were meant to cushion their hunger went to bed hungry? Why is it that no 'conscience' or at best 'lax conscience' was found in the actions and inactions of some of the people entrusted with the care of ensuring that safety protocols of wearing of face mask, washing of hands, social distancing are maintained, etc.?

Why is it that even the government at various levels and arms acted while in doubt? Is it not surprising that some people chose not to do good, and also, chose not to avoid evil including desecration of human life which is sacred? How many people were killed at Lekki Toll Gate? What was their offence? Did they not have right under a democratic dispensation to peacefully protest against police brutality, injustice, inequity, and lack of fairness? Is it godly for some of the health care givers and their masters to convince people to accept Covid-19 vaccines which they pretended to have administered to themselves and their family members which they did not? According to Awolabi, "The true situation is that some of the health care givers in government agencies cunningly refused to administer the Covid-19 vaccines to themselves, their family members, close friends and relatives, but they encouraged others to accept it" (9). Is it proper to use other peoples' lives for experimental purposes? Does the experience of Covid-19 pandemic in Nigeria not look like the Hobbesian state of nature where might is right? Is the situation in Nigeria with special reference to Covid-19 pandemic not likened to George Orwell's *Animal Farm*, where "all animals are equal, but some are more equal than others"?

It has to be clearly stated that God has no favorites, but man does. Experience shows that during the lock down of the entire nation, the rich took care of themselves while the poor were lavishing in hunger. Does Christian morality not teach us that "all humans are equal before God"? (Thomson 11). Do you not see that those who were supposedly entrusted with the care

of safeguarding the lives and property of the people became 'undertakers' including Christians among them? In all these, one fundamental question that also needs to be asked is: has Christianity failed because no miracle or prophecy was recorded with regard to Covid-19 outbreak across the globe and in Nigeria in particular?

Apparently, there will be more questions than answers if a critical look is taken into the moral implications of Covid-19 experience in Nigeria. One thing that is certain is that both those who advance the kingdom of God and those who look for prophecies and miracles and yet perpetuate evil will definitely and definitively give account of their stewardship on earth to the Just Judge. Every deed whether open or hidden, good or evil has a reward or punishment, respectively.

Conclusion

Covid-19 Pandemic which has globally affected humanity has clearly shown that there are things man does not have a total control over. It is so challenging that almost one year after the outbreak of this highly dreaded pandemic, no permanent solution has been proffered to it by any nation of the world. It has also shown that though being influential, having wealth and the best of scientific and technological knowhow are all important but there are higher values. A critical look at the experience of Covid-19 pandemic in Nigeria clearly shows that some of the people in government agencies did not care about human life as sacred and precious as they discharged their duties. Morality was not taken into consideration where human person was considered as a means to an end and not an end in itself.

This study construes that Christian ethical conduct or morality is still fashionable. Christianity has not failed; rather individual Christians and some group of Christians have failed Christianity. Man is an image of God (*imago Dei*), a composite of body, soul, and spirit, and must therefore always do good and avoid evil so as to gain salvation which is the most essential of all Christian yearnings. If that is understood to be the case, 'human beings will not be used to experiment on Covid-19 vaccines which have been and are still being administered to people without ensuring its efficacy beyond reasonable doubt' (Thomason 19).

The fund and palliatives mapped out to cushion the adverse effect of Covid-19 pandemic in Nigeria were not properly utilized for that purpose in some places. Some people at various agencies of the government, Christians inclusive, did not care about human life simply because they want to amass wealth for themselves. At the climax of confusion, humanity must return to the Creator as the only safe and reasonable option. Religion is indispensable to humanity in existential crises. Human beings are naturally, and incurably religious, and may not manage for a long time without religion. Religion is a life support system for humanity (Okon 262-263). It is further discovered that Christians need wisdom that is lived-out side by side religion and morality. Until *sophia-religio-moral-consciousness* is imbibed as a way of life, no meaningful renaissance will be achieved, because it is in imbibing such a culture that moral values that are geared towards salvation, the core of all Christian yearnings, are authentically lived out.

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