



# Understanding Prophetic Voice of Amos 5 in Church Leadership in Nigeria

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**Abstract:** The prophetic voice of Amos in Chapter 5 offers a compelling critique of religious practices, social justice, and leadership, providing valuable insights for contemporary Nigerian church leadership. This chapter denounces ritualistic worship devoid of moral substance, calls for genuine social justice, and advocates for authentic repentance. For Nigerian churches, Amos 5 serves as both a challenge and an opportunity to realign their practices with principles of justice, righteousness, and ethical behavior. This paper explores the implications of Amos 5 for Nigerian church leadership, emphasizing the need for worship that integrates ethical living, the importance of advocating against systemic injustice and corruption, and the necessity for fostering genuine repentance. By addressing these areas, Nigerian church leaders can lead their congregations toward a more authentic and impactful expression of faith, reflecting the transformative power of Amos's prophetic message.

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## **Introduction**

Nigeria as a country is blessed in all ramification but still in the face of its economic development, the majority of the citizens are living in abject poverty and this revolves around all its sector of human life which Nigerian church is not left out. Okwor (2008) supports the notion by saying that Nigeria is blessed with plentiful mineral and material resources. But despite these riches, the increase in poverty rate

and corruption in Nigeria is so alarming. This has been traced to the aspect of poor leadership among Nigerian church leaders. Shedding further light, Dahiru (2017) adumbrates that Nigeria is not blessed with abundant natural and human resources, as popularly believed. That Nigeria is endowed with a number of natural mineral resources in commercially viable quantity must not be mistaken for abundance. Nigeria's chief mineral export is crude oil, which accounts for about 80 per cent of the country's total export earnings. Nigeria's hydrocarbon reserve is conservatively estimated 37.2 billion barrels, with a daily oil production output of 2.28 million barrels per day making her the 11th largest oil producer in the world; this is where the good news ends.

Just like the writer of the wisdom corpus mentioned, there is nothing new under the sun. The leadership challenges and corruption that is seen in Ancient Israel which Amos decried, is very much contemporary in Nigerian churches. Beginning with the Roman Catholic, to the mainline churches down to the Pentecostal movements, leadership dilemma seems to have defied known solution. According to Yagboyaju (2017) the emphasis of many of Nigeria's Pentecostal churches by their leaders is on prosperity. Also, Genger (2018) avers that there is moral depravity and the aversion of social responsibility. It is also worthy of note that the cause of this moral collapse is because some church leaders do not take their service to God and mankind very serious, thus forgetting that they are to serve and not to drain the nation or church wealth. The situation that has bedeviled the church is similar to the context of Amos where his homilies were geared towards research ecclesia and state leadership.

Prophet Amos was an eighth century prophet who was a native of southern Israel but was sent to northern Israel to prophesy against. Amos charged Israel with injustice, oppression, immorality, among others, in the midst of the increased burnt offering and peace offering that the people offered to God. As consistent with prophets before Amos, these offerings were rejected by God. In the words of Johnson (2022), these offerings may be understood as being done in the temple; however God deems it that their heart was not right in the doing of it. According to Henry (2009) the people of Israel had their feast-days at Bethel, in imitation of those at Jerusalem, in which they pretended to rejoice before God. They had their solemn assemblies for religious worship, in which they put on the gravity of those who come before God as his people come, and sit before him as his people sit. They offered to God burnt-offerings, to the honour of God, together with the meat-offerings which by the law were to be offered with them; they offered

the peace-offerings, to implore the favour of God, and they offered them of the fat beasts that they had. Henry (2009) further quips that in imitation likewise of the temple-music, they had the noise of their songs and the melody of their viols, vocal and instrumental music, with which they praised God. With these services they hoped to make God amend for the sins they had committed, and to obtain leave to go on in sin; and therefore they were so far from being acceptable to God that they were abominable. He hated, he despised, their feast-days, not only despised them as no valuable services done to him, but hated them as an affront and provocation to him, as we hate to see men dissemble with us, pretend a respect for us when really they have none. According to Ugwuweye (2002), Amos prophecy addressed the situation of the day and its relevance, in any society facing familiar experience as Israel of the eighth century BC. This is the reason why this work is carefully carried out on Amos 5 in order to understand his prophetic voice in the Nigeria church leadership and draw the attention of the leaders on the right track to follow. This study using thematic analysis analyses the challenges of Nigerian church leadership in the light of the aphorisms in the book of Amos.

### **Historical background of the book of Amos**

It will be very nice to understand historical context of which Amos wrote his work from before relating his prophecy to our present-day situation. According to Okwueze (1998), the kingdom established by David was interrupted after the death of King Solomon, and was later divided into two which consists of the Northern and Southern Kingdom. In this prophecy, the Northern kingdom is not only called Israel but also Jacob and Joseph (the last because its two main tribes, Ephraim and Manasseh were the sons of Joseph). Established by Jeroboam I, it was the stronger of the two kingdoms and achieved great power under Omri. He was the one who built the city of Samaria and made it the capital of his realm. He also made an agreement with Phoenicia, and brought about the marriage of his son Ahab to Jezebel, daughter of the king of Tyre. This Pagan queen actively promoted in Israel the worship of Baal-Melkart. This act of worship was later challenged by Elijah in the dramatic contest on Mount Carmel.

During the first half of the 8th century BC, Israel and Judah enjoyed geopolitical stability. The lack of international and local conflicts coupled with the long reigns of Jeroboam II and Uzziah gave Israel and Judah the ability to focus on internal development, and thus the incentive to initiate changes in their political economies—

in particular, to expand production to acquire more wealth (Marvin, 2014). This is why Winward (2007), also asserted that the Northern kingdom, having been set free from all foreign interference, entered upon a period of peace and prosperity. During the long reign of Jeroboam II (783-743), it reached the zenith of its power. The trade routes of the Ancient Near East passed through her territory which now extended from mount Harmon to the Dead Sea (II kings 14:25). Great wealth and power came into the hands of the noble and the merchants. The prosperity was especially evident in the Capital city of Samaria, whose notable men were proud and self-indulgent, lazy and luxurious.

Furthermore, it will be nice to note that some scholars believe that Amos was a cultic prophet and sees his ministry as rooted in the covenant renewal festival. He was familiar with cultic language and with the folk wisdom of his day. His career took place at the time when Israel enjoyed prosperity which was also the period of social and religious corruption. These were years of economic affluence and international peace but spiritual decadence for both kingdoms, especially Israel. In line with this view, Okwueze (2013:160) affirms that “at this time both the Israelite and Judean societies have become so well developed that the vices and evils which torment civilized societies had already set in.” Central in this regard was oppression of the poor by the rich.

Finally, this period is being attributed to that of moral anarchy and outward religious observance. The rich were getting richer while the poor were getting poorer. The elites imposed fines unjustly on the poor and extorted the defenseless. There was no justice but oppression of the weak by the strong. The righteous were sold for a silver and the poor for a pair of shoes, the houses of the great were stored with the spoils of robbery, bribery and corruption and many grievous sins were rampant, weights were falsified and food was adulterated, immorality was open and courts were corrupt and religious observance was maintained but the soul of religion was missing. It was the uneven distribution of wealth in the 8<sup>th</sup> century that set the atmosphere for the social crimes that Amos so vehemently abhorred (Swindoll, 2017).

### **Authorship of the book of Amos**

The debate on authorship of Amos is one area in the study of Amos that scholars are yet to come to a definitive settlement. This is despite the internal evidence that the book provides as could be read in Amos 1:1, “The words of Amos, who was among the sheep breeders of Tekoa...” Some scholars are of the opinion that the majority

of what we have today is the work of historical Amos whose name is seen in the text as the writer. Others dispute this fact based on internal evidence such as language and style. Guyette (2008) asserts that Amos, whose name is mentioned in Amos 1:1, is the authentic author of the book, because there are no serious evidences for denying this oracle to Amos, because he announced hope for his people. In fact, the declaration of hope or restoration, which has been the subject of argument by some scholars, is a common message in Prophet Amos' time;

Furthermore, Rosenbaum (1990) believes that the book of Amos was written by Amos. He also drew attention to the fact that the book contains so many strange spellings, forms and preferences that the whole gives the impression to Amos. This is an emphatic rejection of the notion that the book has undergone structural development. Smith (1995:29) shares a similar opinion with Rosenbaum; he believes that "the entire book should be seen as the work of Amos as every other theory and hypothesis that says otherwise is based on mere assumption and thus speculative."

On the contrary, Andersen & Freedman (1999) are of slightly different opinion from those who strongly affirms that Amos wrote the book. They are of the opinion that the Amos we have today is the work of one person. According to them, this could be either the handwork of original Amos or if not, could be an editor who is very close to the teacher and whose contribution was to arrange and integrate the prophecies that Amos himself produced. This implies that either way the work was the work of one person.

In a view to conclude the debate on the authorship, the above analysis highlights the fact that the book of Amos may not have existed as one entity at the beginning or may have gone through editorial processes. This may not necessarily translate to the fact that Amos did not write the entire book. To determine what belongs to Amos and what does not belong to him will be almost impossible at this stage of the book. Even in modern times, a book goes through editorial processes. But that does not deny the original author the claim to authorship. Also the use of first person singular 'I' in verses 14-15 of Amos 7 proves beyond doubt that Amos is the author of the book. This research will align with the view of Okwueze (2013:162) that Amos set down his own oracles in writing.

### **Calling of Amos**

Amos' call to the prophetic ministry came directly from Yahweh and it came unexpectedly. While Amos was tending the flock, he heard the voice of the Lord

telling him to “go and prophesy to the people of Israel” (Amos 7:15). The information about Amos’ experience with the Lord is given in the context of his confrontation with Amaziah, the priest of Bethel. Nothing is known as to when this confrontation between Amaziah and Amos took place. However, it is evident from the words of Amaziah that Amos had been preaching for some time. According to Amaziah, Amos’ preaching could not continue since it posed a threat to the survival of the monarchy.

When Amos started his prophesy, there was peace and prosperity in Israel and Judah. Both kingdoms were wealthy, but the wealth did not reach the poor. This was because the wealth and power were in the hands of the king, his family, his officials, and wealthy merchants. As a result, Israel citizens were divided into two classes; the rich and the poor. Unfortunately, the rich people owned big luxurious houses. They drank wine and used the most expensive perfumes. They acquired their wealth at the expense of the poor. They oppressed and exploited the poor. The merchants of trade for example, were dishonest in their trade businesses. They sold bad wheat to unsuspecting customers and overcharged customers by measuring with false scales. Because of the inflated prices, the poor borrowed money from the rich at high interest rates to buy basic things like food. Hence, there was massive bribery and corruption in society and law courts. As a result the poor lacked basic necessities or needs like food, shelter, and clothing. It was at this time when God sent Amos to give prophesy to Israel (Liberty University, 2014).

Amos was fed up. While most of the prophets interspersed redemption and restoration in their prophecies against Israel and Judah, Amos devoted only the final five verses of his prophecy for such consolation. Prior to that, God’s word through Amos was directed against the privileged people of Israel, a people who had no love for their neighbor, who took advantage of others, and who only looked out for their own concerns. More than almost any other book of Scripture, the book of Amos holds God’s people accountable for their ill-treatment of others. It repeatedly points out the failure of the people to fully embrace God’s idea of justice. They were selling off needy people for goods, taking advantage of the helpless, oppressing the poor, and the men were using women immorally (Amos 2:6–8; 3:10; 4:1; 5:11–12; 8:4–6). Amos rebuked them because he saw in that lifestyle evidence that Israel had forgotten God.

Amos is a shepherd and a fruit picker from the Judean village of Tekoa when God called him, even though he lacks an education or a priestly background. Amos’

mission is directed to his neighbor to the north, Israel. His messages of impending doom and captivity for the nation because of her sins are largely unpopular and unheeded, however, because not since the days of Solomon have times been so good in Israel. Amos' ministry takes place while Jeroboam II reigns over Israel, and Uzziah reigns over Judah. Amos also tended sycamore trees.

The call of Amos in 755BC years before the earthquake was in the form of a vision. Amos was not trained or professional prophet like others who existed during his time. Amos responded to God's call in faith and obedience. God sent Amos to go and proclaim his message to the people of Israel (Northern Kingdom). He preached at the shrine in Bethel which was the centre of worship for Kings and the people of Northern Kingdom.

### **The Message of Amos**

The people of Israel foolishly believed that materialistic wealth meant that God favored the rich. Furthermore, God required his people to treat each other fairly, respectfully, and properly. The people lacked the social obligations and dedication that was required to bear the image of God. God's intention with Amos was to find a morally respectable man who could deliver the messages of the Lord to those who were currently unfit. God said that the people of Moab were unfit for desecrating the bones of Edom's king. He said that the people of Judah were to be punished for rejecting His instruction, and the people of Israel were corrupting His holy name by means of oppression of the weak, idolatry, and sexual scandal. In the name of the Lord, Amos delivered the eight judgments on Israel and its neighbors. Amos delivered three particular messages to Israel regarding the punishment of the chosen people. Importantly, Amos delivered the message that God wanted the people to repent before receiving their punishment. Two woes were also placed against Israel via Amos. Amos informed them that they were foolish to believe they were living righteously according to the Lord, and that their desire for judgment day to come was foolish since their judgment would not be positive. Amos served the Lord by delivering harsh, blunt, but morally and spiritually necessary messages to the people of Egypt most especially to the Israelites. Amos informed them that they did not have exclusive access to God and that God would not always be on their side, despite them being the chosen people. He informed the people that God did not favor any particular region or religion, but that He would always prioritize the oppressed. Since Amos was a common man speaking to people with a false superiority complex,

he had to use shocking threats against them so that they would take heed to God's message. That message was clear in the end as we see that God wanted His people to protect each other most especially those who are socially weak.

### **Church Leadership in Nigeria**

A lucid observation of the concept of church has attracted widespread interpretations from scholars. Ramsey (2009:12) noted that no denomination could say that it alone is the "true" church unless it recognized that all those who respond to the Gospel are also part of Christ's body which is His continuing presence in this world. According to Cavanaugh (2011), there is something about the essential form of the Church (and this is not her most inconspicuous feature) that is reminiscent of sin, conditioned by sin, something that in the present context always means infidelity and fornication. And yet it is not guilt but assimilation to the form of the sinner assumed by her Head.

With regards to leadership, Ensor (2022) relates that the word leadership is about an act of guidance and providing direction to others. Church leadership is not any different; but along with providing guidance, it is also about how the leader behaves, communicates, and manages. Ensor (2021) further noted that Church leadership is about serving others in accordance with Christ's interests so that they can see and accomplish God's purpose for them in the world. A church leader needs qualities that influence and morally support the congregation. Such qualities include moral trustworthiness, social aptitude, empathy, pastoral care, and more.

Leadership has become one of the primary foci for church growth in these days (Bridges, 1995). If the church wants to experience growth, it definitely should have excellent and appropriate leadership in the changing world. Zook (1993) addresses that the church really needs to have creative and effective leadership for leading through the change, uncertainty, and complexity of the given age. However, reflecting on the real situation of the current church and its leadership, it is an undoubted fact that the church has not had appropriate leadership both for the church itself and the world that the church relates to.

The matter of leadership is not just an issue of the business world, but also it is a critical issue of the church. Engstrom & Dayton (1976) address that dynamic and effective leadership is the key to growth and success in any organization, including the church. They say that Christian leadership is "motivated by love and given over to service and has been subjected to the control of Christ and his example". Sanders (1994) divide leadership into spiritual leadership and natural leadership. He addresses that people cannot be a great leader without natural leadership skills, but



the Holy Spirit releases gifts and qualities that are dormant beforehand. These shows there are some critical differences between two different leaderships. However, there are also many common elements between them in terms of function and this is why Sanders (1994) still maintain his stand that “Leadership is influence”, the ability of one person to influence others. One man can lead others only to the extent that he can influence them to follow his lead. The meaning of this conclusion is that leadership is not related to the position that one holds, but to the influence that one exercises. In support of this, Yukl (1989) also emphasizes the importance of a leader’s influence to followers, saying that the essence of leadership is influence on followers. Without followers there cannot be leaders.

Thus, there are similarities and differences between secular and spiritual leadership which can be termed church leadership. Many scholars also show distinctive characteristics of church leadership. Orr (1994) insists three characteristics of Christian leadership: purpose-oriented, people-oriented, and God-oriented. Sanders (1994) insists on eight characteristics of spiritual leadership: spiritual leader is confident in God, also know God, seek God’s will, humble, follow God’s example, delight in obedience to God, love God and others, and depend on God. Paterson (1992) shows basic characteristics of church leadership: a church leader is a person of vision, a person of action, a person of steadfastness, a person of servant-hood, and a person of dependence. Analyzing those characteristics, it is clear that church leadership is different from secular leadership in terms of purpose and scope, even though there are a lot of common grounds with secular leadership components. The main point is that the source of leadership is God, so that a leader is gifted by the Spirit, and a leader should be a man of service for God and people.

### **Causes of Leadership Conflict in Nigerian Contemporary Church**

From the survey of leadership in Nigeria church today, it is evident that litigation, authoritarianism, crises and so on, are nearly becoming a permanent feature among the church leaders in Nigeria. Based on the ongoing, the researcher, however, identify some of the factors responsible for incessant leadership conflict in Nigerian church today. They include:

#### **Leadership incompetence**

Leadership incompetence is one of the major factors responsible for leadership conflict in Nigerian church today. This often manifest when a group of unfit or

incompetent peoples forcefully dubiously assume leadership position in the church. It is clear that the worst tragedy that can befall an organisation is to be peopled by incompetent personnel especially at the helm of affair, because the quality of the leadership is the determinant of the fate of the organisation. According to Awojobi (2011), whenever incompetent persons are elected or selected into the leadership position in the church, such leadership will lack focus, hence lead to confusion and leadership conflict. This means that an incompetent leader is visionless. He cannot show others the way because he is lost himself. He is like a blind person who cannot help other blind people find the right path. So it is always terrible when a leader (especially a church leader) is incompetent because it makes him paranoid, believing that his subordinates are after his job. The end result is usually crowned with conflict.

### **Lack of proper succession plan**

Lack of proper succession plan for church leadership is also among the major causes of continuous tension and conflict in the Nigerian church today. For instance, this posed a great challenge in the Celestial Church of Christ after the death of Oshoffa, the founder of the church. Similarly, Alokun, et'al (2019) posits that there was serious conflict after the death of Joseph Ayo Babalola, the first General Evangelist of Christ Apostolic Church (CAC). This makes Onyekwere & Onoja (2019) to suggest that, there is the need for every church to have comprehensive guideline on the qualifications and criteria of ascension to the leadership of the church in the constitution and by-laws. This implies that most church conflicts occur as a result of lack of succession plan

### **The love of money**

The love of money is also one of the causes of leadership conflict in Nigerian church today. It appears nowadays that one of means of living in flamboyant affluence and conspicuous consumption in Nigeria is to hold church leadership position. Most church leaders in Nigeria often involve in several dubious means to amass dynastic wealth which their generation born and unborn cannot finish. Billions of naira is often being misappropriated and looted by our church leaders from the church treasuries without anything been done by the church council to track them down (Onyekwere & Onoja, 2019). The selfish ambitions to be rich by all means on the part of the church leaders and to gather riches most times encourage double standard in

dealings. To them church politics are business career and not a place to serve and improve the qualities of peoples' living. The manipulations that usually follow such actions on the part of leadership always end in crisis and conflict in the church.

### **Unhealthy communication channels**

Another factor responsible for leadership conflict in the Nigerian church today is poor communication or hoarding of information from the followers (Adeniyi, 2018). Situations where church leaders fail to communicate correct information to members, conflicts are inevitable. This is because everyone wants clear instruction about what they need to do. According to Adeniyi (2018), good communication is the key to sound organizational practice and successful group relationships. It is the responsibility of the church leadership to provide clear, accurate facts and figures so that their followers can effectively complete their spiritual tasks or ministries. Unfortunately, many Christian leaders in Nigeria do not give accurate and clear information to their followers and this has generated serious tensions and conflicts in the church.

### **Doctrinal Differences**

Doctrinal difference is defined in this context as the different views, beliefs and mode of operation of various churches that varies with that others. This has led to friction and serious conflict among the key leaders of the church in the past and it is still causing serious havoc among believers in Nigeria today. A good example is the Christ Apostolic Church that practice divine healing that made it irreligious for any member to study medicine, banking and law in the universities in within and outside Nigeria. The white missionaries that were using anti-malaria medicine were seen as unbelievers. This led to schism in the church and her leadership during that time (Awojobi, 2011). The Faith Tabernacle Movement also experienced the same doctrinal crises sometimes ago (Ajayi, 2005). In essence, diversity is a good thing (Proverbs 27:17), but disunity is not. It is observable from the above that conflicts oftentimes, arises whenever two or more churches or sects in the church disagree doctrinally.

### **Personality clash**

Besides, personality clash is also responsible for most leadership conflict in Nigerian church today. The church is always filled with people of different temperament like

sanguine, melancholy, choleric and phlegmatic. The sanguine and choleric have the tendency to dominate and control others. Since both temperaments seek to lead in the same church, there is always going to be friction which usually results in leadership conflict because of the different personality which the members have. According to Awojobi (2011), most of the tussles in our churches today are more of personality than theological or doctrinal. They always arise from struggle for power, which resulted from a basic dislike of one person for another member opposing the leadership when they are not the kind of persons they like or they are not acting according to their own expectations.<sup>26</sup> In alignment with Awojobi, Huhlocker (1990) opined that:

...most of us have fairly strong opinions about how persons would speak and generally conduct themselves. We accept those who meet such expectations and are inclined to reject those who do not. We find ourselves with the latter.

The above excerpt shows that personality clashes often stimulate serious conflicts among church leaders.

### **Leadership style**

The leadership style exhibited by most of the Nigerian church leaders so far is that of self-aggrandization. Their motive for leadership (as exemplified by their style of leadership) was not to promote the growth and welfare of their but to accumulate wealth for themselves and their families. The subordinates, upon discovering this motive, most times confront the leader which often results to litigation or revolution. More so, certain leadership styles also stimulate conflict in the Nigerian church today. There is always a leadership style commonly acceptable in every denomination. The attempts of the leadership to deviate from the acceptable norm always lead to conflict in the church. The daily administration of the church programs may not be acceptable to some individuals and such is among the causes of trouble and division among the leaders in the Nigerian church today.

### **The misconception of authority and Christian leadership roles**

The misconception of authority and Christian leadership roles also generate conflict in most churches in Nigeria today. The Christian concept of leadership and authority are that of servant hood as taught and exemplified in the life of Jesus Christ, particularly in John 13:1-17. A true leader leads by example and does not demand obedient but earns it through his selfless service which inspires his

followers to imitate him because of confidence they have in him. Most Christian leaders who lead according to the worldly standard of leadership, are those that lack fundamental understanding of biblical leadership role, and their actions and inactions usually arouse conflicts in the church.

### **Leadership in Nigeria**

Most Nigerians believed that all of Nigeria's problems can be summarized as 'leadership failure. Hence, they tend to point at political leadership, specifically the president/presidency as the sole cause of all Nigeria problems and ultimately the reason why we are where we are. While acknowledging the fact that the major problem with Nigeria is squarely a failure of leadership and the unwillingness and the inability of our leaders to rise up to their responsibility, and coupled with the challenge of personal exemplary leadership style, which are the hallmarks of true leadership (Asaju, Arome, & Mukaila, 2014).

In a society where values of integrity and honesty are rooted in the hearts and minds of its leaders, such judges must be made to face the full wrath of the law, and pay back all the salaries and emoluments he enjoyed illegally. This could serve as deterrent to others. But the culture of impunity has over taken social justice in Nigeria judicial system. The supposed salvaging institution like the educational institution is inundated with bribery and corruption. From top to bottom, the management of the educational sector and the academic environment are no exception from the scourge. Allegations of admissions racketing, trading of gratification between teachers and students for better grades and outright diversion of funds provided for running the institutions by the management abound (Asaju, Arome, & Mukaila 2014).

Thus, one cannot but agree with the position that Nigeria is a victim of poor leadership and convoluted systemic corruption which has become pervasive and cancerous in the country's national life. This view has been held strongly in literature by scholars and writers who have identified the inexorable nexus between leadership crisis, hunt for materialism, struggle for power, nepotism and corruption in the country as the continued reason for Nigeria's inglorious economic throes, political convolutions and national underdevelopment. Current debates rest on the conclusion that Nigerian leadership suffers from extreme moral depravity and attitudinal debauchery (Agbor, 2011; Agbor, 2012; Ezirim, 2010). In fact, Agbor argues that the success or failure of any society depends largely on the mannerism

of its leadership. He adds that the result of poor leadership in Nigeria is embodied as poor governance manifested in consistent political crisis and insecurity, poverty of the extreme order among the citizens, debilitating miasma of corruption and rising unemployment indices. Tipping corruption as a dinosaur syndrome in Nigeria's national life (Anon, 2010), Nigeria's nationhood has been caught in the whirlpool of a corrupt public sector that has remained a hotbed of all that is vice, sleazy and retrogressive.

Consequently, an investigation into public sector operations in Nigeria as represented by different institutions reveals a polychromatic picture of deceit, skullduggery, shenanigans, cronyism, political corruption, economic vice, "kleptocracy" and compromise of quality and safety standards for filthy lucre as demonstrated in the recent crashes involving Dana airline in 2012, Bellview and Sosoliso airlines with heavy loss of lives and property of citizens before government set up panels to review the aviation industry. Nigeria also boasts of an abundant corps of leaders who pretend to fight corruption but use their sacred and revered positions to get soaked in corrupt practices. Onifade & Imhonopi (2012) argued that it is high time the country began to look towards the east to tame the distended monster of corruption so that corrupt political and economic managers of the common patrimony can be forced to face the full wrath of the law.

The laws and rules in the present Nigerian situation are made to represent special interests and the power that matters. Most of the time, the laws are enforced only on the weaker ones and implemented for the common people in the society. The only application to top politicians and government officials is when the image of the high-ranking and powerful leaders is at stake in the eyes of the public. The law under the present condition is not comprehensive, and it is not working well enough to serve the interest of the country due to lack of implementation and enforcement. Most people are sometimes afraid of the system of government, because of insecurity, chaos, and lack of rule of law ( Ejimabo 2013).

## **Conclusion**

The lessons that Amos 5 brings to bear in the Nigerian church cannot be overemphasized. It has brought out the need for church leaders to be bold in the discharge of their duties and responsibilities. It has also emphasized the need for church leaders to be frequent in their call to morality. It did not also fall short in warning church leaders to desist from collecting ill-gotten wealth from their

members because when apocalypse comes, all material benefits shall be nothing in the other world of existence.

From the research so far, it is obvious that God desires people who genuinely love Him with their hearts and not acting that they do. God cannot be mocked, and He knows the deepest motives of every human soul. He wants His own to live in righteousness because he is righteous. God wants His people to become like Him and worship Him. Those who depend on their self-righteousness will be punished, but those who put on the righteousness of Christ will be saved. Religious performance such as seed sowing, tithing cannot guarantee salvation.

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