AN AFRICAN'S PERSPECTIVE ON LEADERSHIP IN THE BOOK OF TITUS

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Abstract
Leadership is central in Paul's letter to Titus. Previous studies have focused more on the arguments surrounding its Pauline authorship and the advice it gives on the pastoral care of the receiving communities, rather than the letter's contribution to the success of leadership in the Greco-Roman society. This paper, therefore, investigates leadership in Titus through the lens of an African leader who recognises that his people are also part of a society in which their aspiration to have credible leadership remains limited, albeit in more subtle ways than in Greco-Roman society. Using Abogunrin's approach to decolonising biblical interpretation in Africa, this paper reveals that leadership in the African context and in Titus is similar to some degree. It highlights the likely obstacles to credible leadership that bedevil contemporary Nigeria.
Keywords: *African leader, Decolonising biblical interpretation, Greco-Roman society,*
Leadership in Titus, Letter to Titus.

Introduction
Colonial and post-colonial Africa have recorded quite a number of individuals who have provided leadership for the achievement of national aspirations. In Nigeria, we speak of Herbert Macaulay, Nnamdi Azikiwe, Tafawa Balewa, Obafemi Awolowo and Ahmadu Bello. In Ghana, there was Kwame Nkrumah and Danquah; in Guinea Conakry, there was Sékou Touré; in Mali, there was Madibo Keita; in Sierra Leone, there were the Miltons, Albert Margais and Siaka Stevens. In Ethiopia, there was Haile Selaise; in South Africa, Nelson Mandela provided a contemporary model of leadership.

It is disheartening that issues of corruption and corrupting environment still exist in Africa. Bayart, Ellis and Hibou, have convincingly argued, with documentation, that African states are a continuum of "literal Kleptocracies,"[1] thanks to the elite. They asserted that some African leaders have destroyed the economy, the state, the politics, the practice of democracy and, by implication, the population; and that the behaviour of many elected officials amount to a "fusion of criminal and political practices," and Nigeria is somewhere on that continuum.

Femi Odekunle[2] avers that one of the marvels of Nigeria's history is the tolerance with which Nigerians have borne burdens unnecessarily, especially those avoidably placed upon them by some leaders, particularly since 1986. On this, Ebegbulum[3] opines that Nigeria has unfortunately been managed by leaders who are narcissistic and corrupt. They accumulate wealth at the expense of national development without deference to the basic needs of the masses. Furthermore, he avows that the leadership since 1960 has criminally managed Nigeria's affairs and resources and throwing Nigerians over the precipice where they now wallow in absolute poverty, illiteracy, hunger, rising unemployment, avoidable health crisis and insecurity. He submits that selfish, mediocre, tribal leaders and opportunistic small-money minded people masquerading as leaders have continued to regenerate over time.

Has the situation changed perceptibly, if at all? The cumulative effect of the system's operations and the conduct of its successive "circulating" operators over these decades result in the continued reproduction of unwholesome leaders in Nigeria.

The penman of Titus discovered in the Greco-Roman society (i.e. the island of Crete), a culture deprived of morals and the gospel as at the time the letter to Titus was written.[4] Notably, throughout the Second Temple period, there were several shifts in leaders. First, Jews endured a tough battle to obtain freedom from the Roman law while Gentiles (Christians) struggled with how to live in a religious embedded society, full of Jewish traditions.[5]

The Greek culture, Hellenism, also dominated this period and instilled cultural norms, philosophies, and rules for moral conduct.[6] In addition, the political–economic facets were inseparable from religious aspects. Hagner states, "Due to political upheaval in Rome (Nero was emperor most likely when the letter to Titus was written), Paul wanted to ensure that the lifestyles of the Christians on Crete accurately reflected the gospel and did not simply react to the culture they were present in. Of utmost importance was the idea of good works, which he refers to at least six times (explicitly) within the text."[7]

Besides, Paul did not enumerate what was lacking, though there might have been some clarification of the gospel needed to stabilise each assembly, and that might have included acceptance of uncircumcised believers, before elders could be appointed. Sound leadership is important whenever people assemble around the word of God. Elder leadership is for those most mature in their faith, and quite often these people would also be elders in physical age to the majority of the assembly.

Paul, therefore, wrote to Titus, his apostolic delegate, and left him guidelines on how to handle issues with the Cretes. He also wanted Titus to resolve the chaos[8] and to establish and prepare leaders within the Christian community. Titus took the initiative and negotiated with the church, solved the problems, and made peace within the community.

This study was premised on Abogunrin's approach to decolonising biblical interpretation in Africa, which is an interpretation of the text that is done from the perspective of the African worldview and culture. It is a reading of the Christian scriptures from a premeditated Africentric perspective.[9] An African leader can pursue dynamic and innovative policies, generate mass following, radically alter pre-existing modes of thought and life, and overturn a previously established order of things.

There are also different qualities required of political leaders today as distinct from the 'elders/bishop' of Titus' time. For example, presidents are also commanders-in-chief of the armed forces and can order them into battle; they can authorise death sentences; they manage massive economies; they rule over people who have no choice but to live under their rule. None of this is true of pastors.

Likewise, can we realistically expect all political leaders today to be Christians (as required in Titus 1:9)? What about countries which are 99.9% Muslim? What about Mahatma Ghandi, who, even as Christians acknowledge, was a great leader even though he was a Hindu? However, the guidelines of credible leadership in Titus must exist for the emergence and effectiveness of such leadership.

It is in this context that this paper examines an African perspective of Paul's leadership in Titus. It also discusses some level of similarity between leadership in the context of Africa and Titus and highlights the likely obstacles to credible leadership that bedevil contemporary Nigeria.

African Perspective on Leadership

Cole[10] declares that within the traditional African worldview, leadership, religion, and the community were all interwoven within a collective whole. To separate the religious from the 'secular,' as Western culture is known for doing, seems impossible. This is because the religious affects all aspects of life, and was, therefore, fundamental to the identity, authority, and responsibilities of the leaders. There were different levels of leadership which included kings/queens, chiefs, prophets, medicine men and women, diviners, priests, elders, and finally, leaders of family groups. At all of these levels, however, the spiritual dimension was incorporated into the identity and responsibilities of the leader.

One of the most primary characteristics of the African society is the collective identity of the community. On this, John Mbiti's frequently quoted statement, "I am, because we are," captures the essence of this identity. In this regards, the collective identity is only reinforced and strengthened by the corresponding identity of the leader. Laurenti Magesa says:

> Leaders at the higher social levels of the lineage, clan, sodality or ethnic group represent and personify the life-force of the entire people more intensively than the family heads. They also personify the order of the world and the harmony that enables its life to continue for the

benefit of humanity. This implies that the vital force of these leaders – or the lack of it—signifies the actual conditions and environment of the entire society.[11]

Also, Evans Pritchard posits that "a king symbolises a whole society,"[12] while Mbiti further corroborates this concept by saying that such leaders are the "divine symbol of their people's health and welfare."[13] Consequently, the identity of the leader is the responsibility of the entire community since the prosperity and identity of the community is directly related to that of the leader's identity.

It is noteworthy that the relevance and relationship of authority cannot be over-emphasised since the collective leadership identity carries powerful spiritual truths within the African Traditional world. First, the leader's authority comes from God. Mbiti opines, "It may be said that the first ruler was sent down from the sky by God, or was called or chosen by God to become king... For that reason the ruler has names of praise like, 'child of God,' 'son of God,' and 'the chosen of God.'"[14] Since the leader arises from the authority of God, he likewise represents to the people some knowledge or words from God. It is in this context that Mbiti avows that kings are "divine or sacral rulers, the shadow or reflection of God's rule in the universe."[15] Second, the leader's authority is reinforced by the submission, obedience, and perpetual loyalty from the community. This authority, and the rights and privileges it entailed, were usually for the life of the leader until his death. The reason for this was because of the leader-follower identity. For instance, among the Luo community of Western Kenya, the king, "derived his authority from his clan or sub tribe.... He was a semi-sacred person, because he represented not only the tribesmen that were alive, but also those who were buried in the tribal land."[16] If the leader derived his authority from God, he also received it from the people. This enabled the community to function around the identity of the leader.

This brings us to the issue of the importance of leadership in governance. In this regard, it is important to note with reference to Chinua Achebe's view that "leadership... is indispensable in any association of human beings desirous of achieving whatever goals it sets for itself."[17] On the essence of African leadership, John Galbraith says, "All the great leaders [Leaders Galbraith had known or worked with and were regarded by him as leaders, including Nehru, Kennedy, Eugene McCarthy and Martin Luther King] had one thing in common—it was the willingness to confront, unequivocally, the major anxiety of the people in their time."[18] Olusegun Oladipo asserts that the first generation of Nigeria's post-independence leaders did this. It was largely because of the failure of subsequent generation of leaders to confront this challenge that Nigeria today has become as disorderly, unproductive and backward as any society with bad leadership could be. Nigeria today is indeed a troubled nation.[19]

Responsibilities and Qualities of the African Leader

Inasmuch as traditional African leadership arose out of identity and authority, it also came with various responsibilities. By virtue of proximity to God (in terms of authority and knowledge), the leader was compelled to use that authority and knowledge to preserve the community and reinforce its collective identity. Therefore, such responsibilities included "to pass on tradition,"[20] "the security and safety of their people,"[21] and "to see to it that things are right between the visible and the invisible world and in the visible world itself."[22]

There was no dichotomy between the spiritual needs of the people and those which might be termed 'secular.' As such, while there were spiritual specialists within the ranks of leaders (i.e. mediums, diviners, medicine men/women), the traditional leader also had significant spiritual power. This power, which arose from his rights as leader, was to be used for the fundamental needs of the people—whether seen or unseen. Magesa focuses upon this particular facet by stating, "In practical terms, the most significant purpose of existence of these leaders is to guard the power of life in the community."[23]

By the nature of their status, the traditional leader must be caring and should take special interest in the peace, security and progress of their subjects as well as in the common good and in the people's resources within their jurisdiction. To do this well, the traditional virtue of solidarity must be clearly exhibited. This virtue helps the traditional leader to see all his subjects as belonging to one family and, so, identifies with them in their moments of joy and sorrow. This also characterises their relationship with close associates, the chiefs, whether 'high' or 'ordinary'.

Inherent within this picture one witnesses a *very* fascinating cycle of leader-follower identity: God gives the leader authority, which the people embrace. Olawuyi[24] opines that true leadership is demonstrated when an individual appropriates the weight of his influence to bear on a people, through the power of persuasion in order to accomplish clearly identified objectives. The people, therefore, believe it is for their identity (benefit) that they preserve, maintain, and develop the leader, who, for his part, has various responsibilities to perform for the benefit of the common good. Having performed these, he is further blessed by God, esteemed as a leader by the people, and continues with his responsibilities to the people.

Of course, what has been developed here is a representation of the highest leader within the given society, but elements of this identity authority-responsibility cycle would continue down the structure of society and would be represented even (and especially) at the lower levels of leadership (i.e. family leadership). Furthermore, the reader should note that what has been developed is the ideal for that community. More often, the ideal was not attained and the leader took the privileges of his position to benefit and serve himself, rather than the people.

On the qualities of "good" leadership, Otunba Gbenga Daniel (former Governor of Ogun State, Nigeria) says, "The leader must be focused, honest, courageous and adamant on principles, robust in thinking, spiritual, moral and determined. He must be ready to call a spade, not an agricultural implement, but a spade." For General Muhammadu Buhari (retired), a former Head of State and the current President of Nigeria, the qualities of good leadership include the following:

> ... A good sense of fairness and ability to manage crisis as and at when they arise. But the most crucial attributes that the leader needs is that of personal example, and it is, perhaps the most difficult of all. He should lead by example and, at all times, be able to demonstrate personal integrity and wholesome character, which can inspire respect and loyalty. He must be honest and trustworthy so that his followers will always be sure they can trust him and will never have anything to fear from accountability by conducting himself in all situations in a manner that he can render back trust in his charge without failure or embarrassment.[25]

Walter Lippmann says, "The final test of a leader is that he leaves behind him, in other men, the conviction and the will to carry on," as Chief Obafemi Awolowo had done.[26] Judged against these main qualities, Nigerian leaders, as a social category and the leadership they have been providing to date, have been a disappointment.

Otunba Gbenga Daniel laments the character of African leaders, and the kind of leadership they have been providing. Odekunle, quoting Otunba Gbenga Daniel, says:

> ... Regrettably poor leadership performance has remained with us despite years of complaints and grumbling... We have acquiesced in our own progressive destruction by submitting ourselves to the leadership of political misfits... People in public offices are the most unaccountable set of people we have in Nigeria. Painfully, many of our public leaders have been conducting themselves in such a manner as to suggest that they are neither accountable nor responsible to anybody, including God. They flagrantly abuse the sacred privileges of their offices... I have no doubt that we do have a crisis of leadership in this country... What we need really are not just leaders but true leaders, leaders that are patriotic, selfless and visionary.[27]

In spite of the tragedy in leadership, I am of the considered opinion that Africa is not in short supply of leaders—leaders in every sense of the word. The truth is, most of the people who aspire for leadership positions are not equipped with requisite skills needed to surmount the inundating challenges of the position they seek. Rather, they were either attracted by the trappings and pecuniary gains of office or they were foisted on the people in order to act someone else's script. While the focus in the preceding section has primarily centred on the traditional

past, the intrinsic elements of identity, authority, responsibility and qualities are present and essential to understanding contemporary African leadership.

Paul and Leadership in Titus

Eze[28] avers that leadership, which has played an important part in classical and behavioural management theory, is inseparable from the whole concept of a leader. It may be defined as a way of stimulating and motivating subordinates to accomplish assigned tasks. Breach, says, "leadership is the process of getting the members of the team to pull their weight effectively, to give their loyalty to the group, the task to carry out properly the activities allocated, and generally to play an effective part in the operations, services or task that the organization has undertaken; with this general inspiration goes a process of supervision to ensure that the working teams are keeping to plans and attaining an adequate level of effectiveness and economy of work."[29] If one agrees with the view of Engstrom[30], leadership may be hard to define.

The one characteristic common to all leaders is the ability to make things happen, to act in order to help others work in an environment within which each individual serving under him finds himself encouraged and stimulated to a point where he is helped to realise his fullest potential to contribute meaningfully. A leader is viewed as a good manager, but a good manager is not necessarily a leader, because he may be weak in motivating action in others. Engstrom, citing Olan Hendrix, drew the following comparison between leadership and management:

- Leadership is a quality; management is a science and an art.
- Leadership provides vision; management provides realistic perspectives.
- Leadership deals with concepts; management relates to functions.
- Leadership exercises faith; management has to do with facts.
- Leadership seeks for effectiveness; management strives for efficiency.
- Leadership is an influence for good among potential resources; management is the co- ordination of the available resources organised for maximum accomplishment.
- Leadership provides direction; management is concerned about control.
- Leadership thrives on finding opportunity; management succeeds on accomplishment.

Hence, Warren Bennis[31], the distinguished professor of leadership at the University of California, says that the three things people want from leaders are: *direction*, *trust* and *hope*. For Auken[32], credible leadership resides in the person more than the process. Ultimately, Christ was a leader not because of what He did, but because of who He was. This principle is found throughout the Scripture. People such as Moses, David and Paul led because of their relationship to God, not because they were expert managers. Once we are the kind of people God wants us to be, He will uphold us as leaders.

Thus, credible leadership is a matter of personal spiritual maturity and growth. Sheep follow the shepherd not so much because he knows where green pastures are, but because they trust him and recognise his voice. Mastery of managerial skills will enhance a leader's success, but is not substituted for spiritual maturity.

In relation to leadership, Keating[33] was of the opinion that the major thrust of the book of Titus from a syntactic structure is "parenetic" in nature; the author of the epistle is giving instructions to Titus. Most of these instructions come in the predominant imperatival sections and involve Titus' responsibility to teach the believers. As a leading figure among the churches on Crete, he is told to rebuke the insubordinate (Titus 1:13), to teach men and women (Titus 2:1), to urge proper conduct of young men and slaves (Titus 2:6), and to remind them all to be subject to authorities (Titus 3:1). These instructions to Titus all involve his responsibility to impact their lives by teaching them the ethical instructions and responsibilities of the gospel. The letter's personal directions to Titus concerned the need for him to carry out his pastoral ministry of imparting proper doctrine and ethical instructions to the believers.

In this regard, the participle λείποντα, which is derived from the verb λείπω (leave), has a unique sense in Titus; and it occurs six times in the New Testament. Literally, the statement ἵνα τὰ λείποντα ἐπιδιορθώσῃ, which means "that you might set right the things lacking," infers the primary purpose of a wholesome leader. This statement corresponds with the imperative commands given to Titus, which include λάλει ἃ πρέπει τῇ ὑγιαινούσῃ διδασκαλίᾳ (speak/teach what befits sound doctrine) and show τύπον καλῶν ἔργων (a model of good deeds), ἀφθορίαν (integrity or purity), σεμνότηταν (gravity or dignity) and λόγον ὑγιῆ (sound speech). It is probable that these commands reveal the bedrock of credible leadership and are in conformity with the classic summaries of Christian doctrine in Titus 2:11-14. For the most part, the other themes are contained in purposes, clauses and other modifying phrases. Being dependent clauses as they are, these clauses and phrases are grammatically subordinate to their corresponding independent clauses containing the primary finite verb. However, in terms of discourse, they are semantically more significant since they often show the goal and intended outcome of the independent clause. Thus, the strength of the letter's discourse is not only urging Titus to teach others, but it is focused on the ethical instructions for the believers to have healthy speech and the necessity of believers' good works in order to validate the message of the gospel.

The importance of τῇ ὑγιαινούσῃ διδασκαλίᾳ "sound doctrine", also referred to as 'healthy teaching', is emphasised throughout the letter. Titus' responsibility is to teach this sound doctrine, which includes strong ethical overtones. The desired outcome is that the believers in Crete would not only understand this healthy teaching, but that it would have an impact on their character. It becomes clear that the instruction for both Titus and the other

believers on Crete is that they would know the healthy teaching of the gospel and have lives that exemplify its truth. All believers are to have sound speech. The apostles' healthy teaching needs to be validated and confirmed by the believers' sound speech. The following phrases illustrate how this theme appears dominant in much of the letter. The first imperative in the letter is that Titus should rebuke the insubordinate Cretans. The purpose for this is "so that they may become sound in the faith" (Titus 1:13b). The second imperative is for Titus to 'teach' (Titus 2:1). The substance of what he is to teach is "what is consistent with sound doctrine." In describing how Titus should carry out the instructions of the third imperative, he is to "urge the younger men to be self-controlled." The letter says, "In your teaching, show integrity ... and sound speech that cannot be censured" (Titus 2:7-8). Thus, this theme is closely related to many of the syntactically dominant imperatives. Even the older women in the church are "to teach what is good" (Titus 2:3). The fact that all believers are to speak sound doctrine becomes even more prevailing; as it is contrasted to the negative speaking of disobedient people and non-believers. (Cf. Titus 1:10-11; 2:3, 9b; 3:9).

The other dominant theme in the letter is how this healthy teaching needs to be validated and confirmed by the believers' proper conduct and good works. In dealing with this topic in Titus, an expert in New Testament text linguistics, Ernst Wendland, says, "the pastoral activities of 'teaching'...can never be credible or convincing unless they are explicitly confirmed by one's own lifestyle."[34] This theme is found both as the actual content of certain instructions and in the purpose clauses for others. The purpose of Titus' good works and sound speech is so that "any opponent will be put to shame, having nothing evil to say of us" (Titus 2:8). Young women are to be taught to be proper wives and mothers "so that the word of God may not be discredited" (Titus 2:5). Slaves are to be taught to be trustworthy and respectful "so that in everything they may be an ornament to the doctrine of God our Saviour" (Titus 2:10). The very reason that Jesus Christ "gave himself for us" was so that he might "purify for himself a people of his own who are zealous for Good deeds" (Titus 2:14).

Ernst Wendland[35], additionally says, further examination reveals how important this exhortation to 'do good' is to the entire epistle, semantically, as well as structurally. In fact, it forms the other essential half of the thematic equation that summarises the pragmatic component of the discourse and serves as the rhetorical-structural 'backbone' which gives a sense of overall shape and direction to the message as a whole. In the latter part of the letter, the theme of performing good works becomes even more prevailing. Part of what Titus is to remind the believers is that they would "be ready for every good work" (Titus 3:1). In the concluding exhortation in Titus 3:8, the letter gives the reason for insisting on these things "so that those who have come to believe in God may be careful to devote themselves to good works" (Titus 3:8). It is even more striking when the final instruction in the letter and the last word before the closing greeting is, "And let (our) people learn to devote themselves to good works"

(Titus 3:14). This again becomes more conspicuous when it is contrasted to actions of non-believers who "profess to know God, but they deny him by their actions. They are ... unfit for any good work" (Titus 1:16).

Keating[36] submits that it thus becomes evident that the message to Titus is twofold. The syntactical focus of the book is that Titus is to teach sound doctrine to those living in Crete. However, Titus himself is not only instructed to speak sound doctrine, but to live as an example of what this healthy teaching should produce in a person's life. His speech should be without reproach and his character should be one of integrity, full of good works (Titus 2:7-8). Although Titus' ethical behaviour is syntactically subordinate; semantically, it carries as much weight as his responsibility to teach. The other semantic focus of this letter is the ethical instructions to the believers whom Titus is teaching. The healthy teaching of the apostles should be verified by the character shown in the believers' lives. In both speech and actions, they should "live lives that are self-controlled, upright, and godly" (Titus 2:12), devoting "themselves to good works ... so that they may not be unproductive" (Titus 3:14).

What an African Leader Must Not Be (1:7b)

An African leader must not be αὐθάδης, which means one who pleases himself – wilful, obstinate, arrogant or imperious. Barclay, quoting Trench, said of such a man that, "he obstinately maintains his own opinion, or asserts his own rights, while he is reckless of the rights, opinions and interests of others."[37] Besides Titus 1:7b, αὐθάδης is also found in 2 Peter 2:10, in the LXX Genesis 49:3, 9 and Proverbs 21:24; in all these passages αὐθάδης is always used in a bad sense such as stubborn, harsh, remorseless and the like. Bauernfield posits that αὐθάδης is used of arrogant people who despise (governmental) authority.[38] Clearly, the man who is αὐθάδης has an unpleasant character. He is intolerant, condemning everything that he cannot understand, and thinking that there is no other way of doing anything except his own way. As Lock said, such a quality "is fatal to the rule of free men."[39] Such a leader that expects all to pay homage to his understanding can do little good and much mischief. It is probable that such a spirit incapacitates for leading a willing flock, instead of driving. The wholesome African leader is not expected to be such a man of contemptuous and arrogant intolerance.

An African leader must not be ὀργίλος. The word literally means "to be prone to anger, irascible or passionate." The term ὀργίλος is derived from the noun ὀργή, which denotes "anger, indignation and wrath." Attributing ὀργή to God, it refers to that reaction of the divine nature against sin which in anthropomorphic language is called חֵמָה "anger" (Proverbs 22:24, 29:22; Romans 1:18, 9:22, 12:19; Hebrews 3:11, 4:3; Revelation 14:10, 16:19, 19:15). Whereas חָרוֹן connotes "burning anger" and it refers exclusively to divine anger as that which is "burning" (Exodus 32:12). There are two Greek words for anger. One is θύμος, which is the anger that quickly blazes up and quickly subsides, like a fire

in straw. The other is ὀργή, which is the one connected with ὀργίλος, and it means inveterate anger. It is not the anger of sudden blaze, but the wrath which a man nurses to keep it warm. A blaze of anger is an unhappy thing; but this long-lived, purposely maintained anger is worse. A choleric individual that has no proper command over his own temper is deficient in the quality of a wholesome African leader.

An African leader must not be πάροινος. It means "to be given to wine" or "to be prone in temperance." The word is elastic in its meaning. It also describes all conduct which is outrageous. The Jews, for instance, used it of the conduct of Jews who married Midianite women; the Christians used it of the conduct of those who crucified Christ.[40] It describes the character of the man who, even in his sober moments, acts with the outrageousness of a drunken man.[41] Commenting on πάροινος, Easton writes:

> The secular origin of the list of qualities of a leader is seen not only by its close parallels in Greek writers but in the very moderate moral standard it sets; the warning that power should not be entrusted to drunkards, brawlers and embezzlers might not be out of place in a Greek city, but such vices ought to exclude a man not only from the Christian ministry but from the Christian church altogether. So no attempt should be made to soften the language; as in other instances, a familiar formula is used without reflecting on the inappropriateness of some of its terms.[42]

Likewise, Abogunrin, citing Idowu, says:

> In Traditional African Society, a drunkard would hardly be given any position of trust and wine is even strictly forbidden to the worshippers of certain divinities. For example the worshippers of Obatala, the arch-divinity of the Yoruba religion must not drink palm-wine.[43]

An African leader must not be πλήκτης, which means a striker, one who is apt to strike; a quarrelsome or a violent person. To paraphrase Barclay, πλήκτης was used for over-zealous elders who chastised erring members of their flock with physical violence in the early church, the period in which the book of Titus was written about 62 - 63 A. D. Therefore, the *Apostolic Canons* says, "We order that the bishop who strikes an erring believer should be deposed."[44] Furthermore, Pelagius says, "He cannot strike anyone who is the disciple of that Christ who, being struck returned no answering blow."[45] The meaning of this word also includes a violent speech. The man who abandons love and resorts to violence of action or speech is not fit to be an African leader.

An African leader must not be αἰσχροκερδής. Αἰσχροκερδής is a compound word; it is made up of αἰσχρός, which connotes "dishonourable or indecent" and κερδός denotes "gain or profit." The word αἰσχροκερδής means "to be eager for dishonourable gain or something sordid, etc." It describes a man who does not care how he makes money so long as he makes it. It so happens

that this was a fault for which the Cretans were notorious. On this, Polybius says, "They are so given to making gain in disgraceful and acquisitive ways that among the Cretans alone, of all men, no gain is counted disgraceful." The Cretans counted material gain far above honesty and honour. They did not bother about what it involved to get rich, but the Christian is aware that he must not get involved in any shady deal. The man whose only aim in life is to amass material things, irrespective of what it involves, is not fit to be a religious or political leader.

What an African Leader Must Be (1:8-9, 13; 2:1, 15; 3: 2)

According to the letter, there was nothing wrong with the idea of aspiring to be a leader, only that those who have such ambition must have the type of character which is expected of an African leader. Two famous "pagan" thinkers commented on a wholesome leader that could be a model to an African leader. Diogenes Lectus (7:116-126) hands down a Stoic description thus: "He must be married; he must be without pride; he must be temperate and must combine prudence of mind with excellence of outward behaviour." Gnosander added: "He must be prudent; self-controlled; sober; enduring in toil; intelligent without love for money; able to speak competently and of good reputation."[46] It is interesting to note how the author's ideas are closely identical with the two writers but it is doubtful whether Paul drew upon them as sources.[47]

For Abogunrin, the leader in the early church has three spheres of responsibility. His responsibility did not begin and end in the church. His first sphere is the home, then the church and the public. In that order, if a man cannot rule his own household, how can he rule the church of God…it is no virtue for any leader, whether religious or political, to be so engaged in public that he neglects his own family. The family background of a person aspiring to be a leader, as well as his own family, if any, ought to be considered before electing him or her into office. Unfortunately, things like these are never considered in the appointment and election of leaders in Nigeria.[48]

An African leader must be φιλόξενος. The term φιλόξενος, used in Titus 1:8, literally means to be kind to strangers, a lover of strangers or hospitable person. In the ancient world, there were always many who were on the move. Inns were notoriously expensive, dirty and immoral; and it was essential that the wayfaring Christians should find an open door within the Christian community. To this day, no one needs Christian fellowship more than the stranger in a strange place, comments Barclay.[49]

Citing the Shepherd of Hermas, Sanders says that "The ἐπισκοπος must be hospitable; a man who gladly and at all times welcomes into his house the servant of God."[50] The Christian must be a man who has an open heart and an open home. But the most effective teaching is done not by speaking but by being. "A saint is a man in whom Christ lives again."[51] But one of the tragedies which have befallen the church today is that the administrative functions of leaders have

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almost completely usurped the teaching function. The result is a church lacking in knowledge, potency, maturity and spiritual vitality.

Every leader especially an African leader must be φιλάγαθος. The word φιλάγαθον, employed in Titus 1:8, literally, means a lover of goodness, a fosterer of virtue, either a lover of good people, or a lover of good things. In the LXX, Wisdom 7:22, φιλάγαθον connotes "a lover of that which is good." Grundmann[52] submits that φιλάγαθος stands between, φιλόξενος "hospitable" and σώφρωνν "self-controlled". The leader must be a man whose heart answers to the good in whatever person, in whatever place and in whatever action he finds.

An African leader must also be σώφρων. Σώφρονα, used in 1:8, means sound mind, sane, staid, temperate and discreet. Euripides calls this prudence "the fairest gift the gods have given to men."[53] Socrates calls it "the foundation stone of virtue."[54] Xenophon says that it was that spirit which shunned evil, not only when it could be seen but even when no one would ever see it. Trench defines it as "entire command over the passions and desires, so that they receive no further allowance than that which the law and right reason admit and approve."[55] Σώφρων is applied to a man, whose thoughts are saving thoughts. The leader must be a man who wisely controls every instinct.

Like any other 'good' leader, an African leader must be δίκαιος. Δίκαιος, used in Titus 1:8, defines a just man as he who gives both to men and to the gods what is due to them. The leader must be such that gives to man, respect; and to God, reverence, which are their dues. For example, Joseph was δίκαιος in his conduct towards Mary (Matthew 1:19).

Particularly, an African leader must be ὅσιος. The word ὅσιος generally connotes "right and upright." In the Septuagint ὅσιος is used to describe the character of men and women as "godly ones" (Psalm 4:3; 12:1; 86:2; 149:1, 5, 9, etc). Also, it denotes personal piety, an inner attitude of conforming to what is felt to be pleasing to God. The term ὅσιος describes the man or woman who reverences the fundamental decencies of life, the things which go back beyond any man-made law. An African leader that possesses this leadership skill would constantly keep himself/herself free of any thing which would "stain" him/her in the eyes of God.

An exceptional leader like an African leader must be ἐγκρατής. It refers to the possession or mastery of self or self-control or a man who has achieved complete self mastery. An African leader must first be master of himself.

Mostly, an African leader must be able παράκαλειν; which means to call for, invite to come, send for; to call upon, exhort, admonish or persuade; to animate, encourage, comfort or console. The leader must be able to encourage the members of the church. The navy has a rule which says that no officer shall speak discouragingly to any other officer in the performance of his duties. There is always something wrong with preaching or teaching whose effect is to discourage others. The function of a true leader is not to drive a man to despair, but to lift him up to hope.

An African leader primarily must be able ὑγιαίνειν. And it means to be healthful or sound in faith or doctrine. The leader must be the custodian of the Christian faith. Hence another function of his is to lead his members always to faith in Christ alone, who is the author and finisher of the Christian faith. What the author said to Timothy, "Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a workman who has no need to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth," (2 Timothy 2:15) is also relevant to an African leader.

An African leader must be able ἐλέγχειν. This means to refute, confute, expose, convict or to rebuke a man in such a way that he is compelled to admit the error of his ways. Trench says that it means "to rebuke another, with such an effectual wielding of the victorious arms of the truth, as to bring him, if not always to a confession, yet at least to a conviction, of his sin."[56] Demosthenes[57] says that it describes the situation in which a man unanswerably demonstrates the truth of the things that he has said. Aristotle[58] said that it means to prove that things cannot be other than as we have stated them. A Christian rebuke means far more than flinging angry and condemning words at a man. The leader must be speaking in such a way that the erring member sees the error of his ways and accepts the truth.

An African leader must not attempt βλασφημεῖν. It means to speak of God or divine things in terms of impious irreverence or to blaspheme, etc. For Calvin, βλασφημεῖν means to speak evil of another person and that the letter now lays down the principle of maintaining peace and friendship with all men. Man is more prone to despising others in comparison with himself. The penman, therefore, forbids every leader to glory over what they are or to despise others. Yet, he does not want leaders to flatter the wicked men.[59]

An African leader must be ἐπιεικης. It is difficult to find an appropriate equivalent in English language for ἐπιεικης. Aristotle describes ἐπιεικεια as "that which corrects justice; that which is just and better than justice." Sometimes, justice may become utterly unjust when the law is applied according to the letter. Therefore, it is the principle which corrects the law when it errs because of its generality or ambiguity. It is the quality which recognises the impossibility of cleaving to the letters of the law or legal rights which may in the end become moral wrongs. Ἐπιεικης is, therefore, the quality which rectifies and redresses the injustice of justice. Scott, citing Aristotle, says:

> To pardon human feelings; to look to the law-giver, not to law; to the intention, not to the action; to the whole, not to the part; to the character of the actor in the long run and not in the present moment; to remember good rather than evil, the good that one has received rather than the good that one has done; to bear being injured; to wish to settle a matter by words rather than deeds.[60]

A society which recognises this virtue in the administration of law and justice is a society where, "justice will roll down like water and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream" (Amos 5:24).

Other qualifications of an African leader include

Κόσμιος (1Timothy 3:2) denotes "well-behaved, orderly, honest, decorous or modest."[61] Κόσμιος, which is used in paying tribute to the dead, is also commonly used to describe a man who is a good citizen; a citizen who performs his civic rules without being loud-mouthed about it. However, it means more than a good citizen; it refers to someone whose life is beautiful and whose characters in all things are harmoniously integrated.

Ἀνεπίλημπτος (1Timothy 3:2) connotes "above reproach, faultless or irreproachable."[62] Ἀνεπίλημπτος is used of a position which is not open to attack and a life which is not open to censure. It is used of an art or technique which is so perfect that no fault can be found with it and of an agreement which is inviolable. Therefore, an African leader is one who lives an irreproachable life. An African leader must not only be free from such faults as can be assailed by definite charges; he must be of such fine character as to be even beyond censorship. The Greeks translate ἀνεπίλημπτος as, "affording nothing which an adversary can take hold."[63] This is an ideal perfection which may not be fully attained, but a sincere and dedicated leader must leave no loophole for criticism. Enemies may bring all manners of accusations, but these charges are proved to be empty whenever just methods of investigation are adopted. But the hard fact is that church leaders of this nature are rare in the Church. Many of the leaders who should show Nigerians how to attain the irreproachable standard in any position of trust have been found terribly wanting.

Δίλογος (1Timothy 3:8) conveys the meanings of "double-tongued, speaking one thing and meaning another, and deceitful in words."[64] An African leader must be straight and not be double-tongued, speaking one thing and meaning another or deceitful in words. A good illustration is found in Pilgrim's Progress where John Bunyan met a man named By-ends from the town of Fair-speech. When Christian requested to know who were By-ends' relations in the city of Fair-speech he replied: "Almost the whole town; but, in particular my Lord Turnabout, my Lord Time-server, my Lord Fair-speech, from whose ancestors the town first took its name; also Mr. Smooth-man, Mr. Facing-both–ways, Mr. Any-thing; and the person of the parish, Mr. Two-tongues, was my mother's own brother, by father's side; and, to tell you the truth, I am become a gentleman of good quality; yet my grandfather was but a waterman, looking one way and rowing another, and I got most of my estate by the same occupation."[65] This is a good and accurate description of the average Nigerian as of today, including its religious leaders. Commenting on the letter's concept of administration, Abogunrin says:

> For Paul, a leader must not be a new convert; lest he becomes inflated with a sense of his own importance and therefore falls into the snare of the devil. He must not be a neophyte who lacks the spiritual maturity and stability which are essential to wise leadership. There is always need for a time of test and probation, a time to learn the art of leadership and to acquire experience. But the average Nigerian-

> Methodists do not know the wisdom of waiting to acquire the experience and the maturity needed for church administration. This is probably one of the contributing factors to the spiritual, numerical and financial dwindling of Methodist Church Nigeria.[66]

Likewise, Eze adds, "A leader must possess discipline, vision, wisdom, swift and clear decision, courage, integrity and sincerity, the sense of humour, anger where necessary, patience, friendship, tact and diplomacy, inspirational power, executive ability, the therapy of listening and the art of letter writing."[67]

Chadwell[68], in his critical study on Leadership Profile in Titus, resolves that congregations in the New Testament often enjoyed four kinds of leadership: (i) congregational leadership provided by an apostle; (ii) congregational leadership provided by the Holy Spirit; (iii) congregational leadership provided by evangelists, such as Titus; and (iv) congregational leadership provided by local elders. To me, the profile drawn in Titus 1 does not create a "check list" of qualifications for a generic kind of leadership in congregations anywhere they exist in the world. To me, they stress this essential understanding: spiritual leadership in a congregation provides shepherding while addressing the real needs of the congregation in the real context of their existence.

Besides these responsibilities and qualifications of an African leader, African government must be adequately knowledgeable about the importance of avoiding succession disputes resulting from appointment of a non-acceptable candidate to the throne of a community. The appointment of Muhammadu Maccido to the sultanate of Sokoto by the erstwhile military dictator, General Sani Abacha, could not be sustained due to fate and the eventual mortality of all men. Today, the dethroned Sultan, Ibrahim Dasuki, lives like an everyday man with his life intact. Other political office holders drag traditional rulers into politics after appointing them to the traditional throne and expecting such rulers to provide political support for their governments. In this sense, many traditional rulers tend to compromise their authority and end up reducing the status of their throne and their role in the general administration of modern states like Nigeria. This role must be addressed constitutionally to engender healthy competition in providing leadership solutions to the 21st Century challenges of the Nigerian state.

African leaders can also take a cue from the words of Igwe Nnaemeka Achebe on the selection process of a king and the qualities such a king must have in Onitsha. While some communities now place emphasis on material wealth, Oyewo remarks:

> The process does not ask you how much you have because at the end of the day, the town is there to support you. They don't ask you how much you have but they want to know who your father was, who your grand and great grandfathers were. They also consider character; if they are people of honour or dishonour. They will trace your whole genealogy; it is your pedigree that is the most important. Your personal

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qualifications, character, where you worked, how you performed there and so on would also be checked. They don't ask questions about how much you have in your bank account. Rather, the way you talk, and the value of your contributions in meetings and in the community is what matters. And I will advise other communities to use the same approach to focus on how much services the would-be leader can render to the community.[69]

African leaders are not merely leaders, either of a community, or a society. The essence of their authority is not that they are the representatives of the people over whom they are placed. It has a higher origin; African leaders are "God's stewards". The term οἰκονόμον, which is employed in Titus 1:7, is also found in Luke 12:42, 43; 1 Corinthians 4:1, 2 and 1 Peter 4:10, and it connotes "God's steward." It is God's household that our leaders direct and administer, and it is from Him that their powers are derived. As οἰκονόμοι "God's steward," they have treasures to guard with reverent care, treasures to augment by diligent cultivation, treasures to distribute with prudent liberty. They have to be labouring to advance the interests of God's kingdom. African leaders must be ready to sink every personal interest in the interests of the great Employer. Jesus Christ has nothing of his own. He deals with his Master's goods, and must deal with them in his Master's way. An African leader who labours in this spirit will one day be rewarded by the Divine voice of welcome: Εὖ, δοῦλε ἀγαθὲ καὶ πιστέ, ἐπὶ ὀλίγα ἦς πιστός, ἐπὶ πολλῶν σε καταστήσω· εἴσελθε εἰς τὴν χαρὰν τοῦ κυρίου σου. "Well done, good and faithful servant; you have been faithful over a little, I will set you over much; enter into the joy of your master" (Matthew 25: 21, 23).

In so far, this research calls for .a change in the traditional discourse on the challenges to peace and national development in contemporary Nigeria. It also brings insights from the guidelines of "good" leadership in the African context which can distinctively be emulated in evolving African leaders as enshrined in Titus.

Conclusion

This paper has established that leadership crisis is at the heart of the challenges to peace and national development in contemporary Nigeria. An African leader would do well to distance himself from the coterie of professional adulators who can easily derail his vision because they would only tell him that which is palatable. Hosanna today, crucify him tomorrow is the operative catchword of such people.

Leadership in the African context and Titus is similar to some degree. Virtually all the guidelines of "good" leadership in the African context are clearly and distinctively found in Titus. Detailed qualities and responsibilities of leaders are enshrined in Titus. For instance, leaders are those whose commitment and "labour," whether in the political, economic or social sphere, are devoted to the overall interest, welfare and security of their people, over and above their own

personal and material concerns. Credible leadership is manifested in the observable development and progress of the society on an enduring basis. Judged against these main attributes and yardsticks, Nigerian leaders, as a social category and the leadership some of them have been providing to date, have been a disappointment. Thus, the dominant leadership ethos in the country amount to wealth without value added work; consumption without conscience; position or office without character; business without ethics or morality; worship without belief; and politics without principles. As a result of these failures, the system has not been able to minimise, let alone avoid, the "corrupting privileges" of the rich, the "corrupting deprivations" of the poor, and the corresponding widespread corruption or indiscipline in almost all spheres of life in the society.

This paper brings to the fore the wholesome leader in Titus that could stand the test of time. Therefore, for the political and socio-economic viability of Nigeria, her leaders need to 'redeem' themselves by imbibing the attributes and ethos of credible leadership in Titus, which can translate into positive changes in the Nigerian social organisation and generate a reliable supply of leaders. Furthermore, the question of having credible leadership is not limited to Nigeria. Most African countries face similar concerns. It is therefore recommended that every prospective leader in Africa should imbibe the aforementioned guidelines of leadership in the book of Titus is.

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