
An Impact Appraisal of the Prosperity Theology in the Pentecostal Churches in Kwara State, Nigeria

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Abstract

The impact of materialism and prosperity cannot be ignored or said to be overemphasized as the matter of economic hardship remains an ordeal biting the entire world with Africa, Nigeria and Kwara State as the center of attraction. The need to describe and analyze the understanding of the concepts materialism and prosperity is crucial because of how they affect the socioeconomic lives individuals, families, communities, including churches. The purpose of this paper is to understand the perspective of Kwaran Pentecostals on the concept of materialism and prosperity theology as well as to apply a review of the issues therein as they relate to the welfare of the Pentecostal churches in Kwara State, Nigeria. The methodology for this research is the qualitative analysis which employs the analytical and historical approaches. The questions guiding the findings in this research are: what is the attitude and approach of average Kwaran Pentecostals on materialism and prosperity theology? What are the issues associated with materialism and prosperity in the lives of many Kwaran Pentecostals? What role is the ecumenical Nigerian church playing towards addressing the misconceptions on prosperity? The realization of pertinent answers to the above questions guarantees solving the perceived problems in this paper.

Keywords: Impact, Materialism, Pentecostal church, Prosperity, Prosperity Theology

Introduction

Amongst all the continents in the world, Africa is tagged as one of the continents on the top list of those said to be having the highest number of poor countries and without mincing words, poverty is a bane to individuals, groups, societies or nations having it. Looking at the definitions of poverty, the closest meaning as it relates to this chapter is a state of being incapacitated to meet one's basic needs or having lack, insufficiency, scarcity or shortage of the basic necessities of life. Hence, because of the prevalence of poverty and the attempt to get out of such condition of life, the matter of materialism and prosperity have become topics worth delving into, not just for theoretical discussions, but practically among Africans, most especially Nigerians.

In pursuit of freedom from poverty in Nigeria, materialism and prosperity have become a gospel being preached and sought after by the common man and unfortunately most especially those in the Pentecostal churches, thereby leading to the outburst of many recurrent and ambivalent issues both socio-culturally and ecclesiastically, calling for attention and response most especially in Kwara State, Nigeria. Therefore, this paper is dedicated for describing and analyzing materialism and prosperity from various perspectives, especially, the biblically with an outlook on the socio-cultural worldviews of many Kwaran Pentecostals with reference to the issues and problems related to materialism and prosperity evaluated theologically.

Fundamentals of Materialism and Prosperity

Meaning of Materialism

There are diverse worldviews about the term materialism but in this chapter the focus is on the philosophical and religious (Christian) views of materialism. Philosophically, materialism is a form of philosophical monism which holds that matter is the fundamental substance in nature, and that all things, including mental states and consciousness, are results of material interactions of material things. It is further described as the philosophical theory that regards matter and its motions as constituting the universe and all phenomena including those of the mind as due to material agencies (Yerkes: 1989, 884). This implies that the mind and consciousness are by-products of material processes without which they cannot exist. It also emphasizes on the physical aspect of life as the most authentic which is in line with the saying goes “Seeing is believing” as a connotation of the fact that only what a person can see is what the person should go for. For a materialist, physical matter is primary to idealism; nothing makes sense to them except something to have and to hold (Novack: 1979, 8). Consequently, this shows that to a materialist only the physical matter is reality anything that is not physical is to be considered as nonexistent.

In Christian theology, materialism has to do with the act of giving more attention to or emphasis on material objects, needs and considerations, with a disinterest in or rejection of spiritual values. To a materialist, anything spiritual does not make sense to him and so he will not even attempt anything spiritual or invest in them because they are foolish to him. Materialism refers to the belief that material possessions and wealth are the primary indicators of success and happiness in life. It revolves around the idea that acquiring more possessions brings about greater satisfaction and fulfillment. This mindset is closely linked to the pursuit of prosperity, which is generally defined

as the state of being successful, wealthy, and abundant in material resources (Heuser: 2016, 3).

Advocates of materialism argue that the acquisition and accumulation of wealth and possessions can lead to a comfortable and enjoyable life. They believe that owning expensive belongings and experiencing a high standard of living can boost one's social status, self-esteem, and overall well-being. Material wealth can provide opportunities for personal growth, access to better education, healthcare, luxurious experiences, and a sense of security for the future.

However, there are critics of materialism who question its validity as a measure of success and happiness. They argue that focusing solely on material possessions can lead to a superficial and empty existence. This mindset often creates a continuous cycle of desire and consumption, where individuals are constantly chasing after the next big acquisitions, never feeling content with what they have. It can also contribute to unhealthy comparisons and social competition, where self-worth is determined by one's ability to accumulate wealth and possessions.

In contrast, proponents of alternative approaches, such as simplicity or spiritual well-being, advocate for a shift away from materialism towards a more meaningful and balanced perspective on prosperity. They posit that true prosperity encompasses multiple dimensions of life, including relationships, personal growth, community engagement, and overall fulfillment. These individuals argue that the pursuit of material wealth should be balanced with other aspects that contribute to a rich and fulfilling life.

Meaning of Prosperity

Deducing from the Oxford Advanced Learners Dictionary, prosperity refers to a state of thriving, success, and abundance in various aspects of life. It generally implies a sense of well-

being, financial stability, and material comfort (Hornby: 2010, 1178). Nevertheless, prosperity can extend beyond just material wealth and encompass other dimensions, including emotional, spiritual, and relational well-being.

In the framework of faith and spirituality, prosperity can have different interpretations and applications. Some religious beliefs, such as those associated with the prosperity gospel in Christianity, underscore material abundance and financial success as signs of God's favor and blessings while others view prosperity in a broader and more balanced way. They understand it as the overall well-being and flourishing of an individual or community, encompassing spiritual, emotional, and relational aspects, in addition to material prosperity.

The concept of prosperity can vary based on cultural, personal, and religious perspectives. While material abundance may play a role in understanding prosperity, it is often complemented by a broader understanding of well-being, spiritual fulfillment, and the pursuit of a meaningful and purposeful life.

Lastly, the relationship between materialism and prosperity is idiosyncratic and can vary from individual to individual. While material possessions can offer momentary satisfaction and convenience, it is important to recognize that long-term happiness is often derived from more profound and meaningful experiences. Striking a balance between material wealth and a complete understanding of prosperity can lead to a more fulfilling and well-rounded life.

Meaning of Gospel and Theology

Theology and the gospel are closely entwined concepts within Christianity. Theology is derived from two Greek words *theo* meaning God and *logos* word, study or discourse; joining the two words together, theology then means the study or discourse about God (Aremu and Malomo: 2020, 1). It is also known as doctrine and refers to the study and understanding of God, His

nature, and His relationship to the world. Erickson defined Christian doctrine as simply the statements of the most fundamental beliefs the Christian has, beliefs about the nature of God, about his action, about us who are his creatures, and about what he has done to bring us into relationship with himself (Erickson: 2015, 4). This imply that theology is God-centered but directed to humans.

The gospel, on the other hand, is the central message of Christianity, which focuses on the good news of salvation through Jesus Christ's life, death, and resurrection. Theology provides the framework for understanding and interpreting the gospel message. It helps to articulate and clarify the beliefs and doctrines of the Christian faith. Theology seeks to explore and explain various aspects of God's nature, such as His love, justice, holiness, and sovereignty, which are crucial in understanding the gospel message.

The word 'Gospel' literally means 'Good News' or good tidings (Boyd: 1952, 49). Broadly speaking, the Gospel is the whole of scripture; the mega narrative of God's plan to restore humanity to Himself. Specifically speaking, the Gospel is the good news about Jesus; the story of who He is and what He did. The core message of the Gospel, or Good News, is that mankind can be restored to God and live as people of His Kingdom, under God's rule and reign through Jesus Christ. This is great news to people who admit that they are living in brokenness and not in God's design for the world.

The gospel itself is embedded in theological concepts. It affirms that God, out of His love and mercy, sent Jesus Christ to reconcile humanity to Himself. This theological understanding of God's nature and His desire to redeem humanity is foundational to the gospel message. Theology also delves into the implications and application of the gospel message in various areas of life, such as ethics, mission, and community. It helps believers in Christ to deepen their understanding of God's purposes and their role in living out the gospel in

practical ways. Additionally, theology engages in discussions and debates about numerous interpretations of the gospel message.

Various theological standpoints can shape how individuals and communities understand and proclaim the gospel. These discussions and debates contribute to a richer and deeper understanding of the gospel's significance and impact. It is important to note that theology and the gospel should go hand in hand. Theology should not be disconnected from the gospel but should serve to illuminate and uphold the core message of salvation in Jesus Christ. The gospel, in turn, should inform and shape Christian theology, ensuring that the understanding of God aligns with the revealed truth in Scripture.

Lastly, the relationship between theology and the gospel is an ongoing dialogue. Theological exploration enhances understanding of the gospel, and the gospel continually invites believers in Christ to delve deeper into theological reflections. Together, these concepts form the foundation for Christian faith and practice. Therefore, any gospel that is not theological is no gospel at all and any theology that does not align with or promote the gospel of Christ is theology at all. The gospel and theology are two terms that are intertwined and meant to be inseparable.

Meaning of Pentecostalism

Many Scholars have not failed to illustrate the complexity in the definition of Pentecostalism. As opined by Renee Neh Chinkwo (Chinkwo, 2017, 22) much needs to be known about the worldwide movement, its convictions, history, liturgies, and social practices before a definition can be attempted. Pentecostalism is growing exponentially thus defining Pentecostalism has become difficult thing to define. Many Pentecostals hold to the view that it is a movement involving an encounter with the Holy Spirit or 'baptism in the Holy Spirit with the evidence of speaking in tongues.

Pentecostalism according to Asamoah-Gyadu is, Christian groups which emphasis salvation in Christ as a transformative experience wrought by the Holy Spirit and in which pneumatic phenomena including speaking in tongues, prophecies, visions, healing and miracles in general perceived as standing in historic continuity with experience of the early church as found especially in the Acts of the Apostles, are sought, accepted, valued and consciously encouraged among members as signifying the presence of God and experience of his Spirit (Asamoah- Gyadu, 2005, 12).

Prosperity Gospel: A Questionable Gospel

Observing from the initial clarification on the gospel and theology as previously discussed, the question arise “Should there be anything called ‘Prosperity Gospel?’” Before getting a vivid answer to the raised question it is appropriate to consider the term prosperity gospel itself. The Prosperity Gospel is a belief system associated with certain strands of Christianity, particularly within the charismatic movements. It emphasizes the idea that financial and material prosperity are signs of God's favor and blessings. According to this belief, God desires his followers to be financially successful, healthy, and abundant in all areas of life (Mumford: 2012, 371).

As explained by Roberts, a major pointer against the promotion or acceptance of the prosperity gospel is that the proponents of the Prosperity Gospel argue that if one has enough faith, gives generously to the church, and follows specific religious practices, they will be blessed with monetary wealth and success (Roberts: 1970, 37). They believe that material blessings are a manifestation of God's grace and that financial prosperity is a reward for obedience to God's principles. Advocates of the Prosperity Gospel often point to biblical passages that mention God's blessings and promises of provision to back their beliefs. As explained by Mbe, they underscore the importance of positive thinking, speaking

affirmations, and avoiding negative thoughts or situations that might hinder blessings (Mbe: 2004, 47).

Critics of the Prosperity Gospel, conversely, argue that this belief system can be deceptive and potentially harmful (Karen: 2017, 77). They contend that it oversimplifies the complexities of life and ignores the realities of poverty, suffering, and inequality. Critics also point out that not everyone who faithfully follows Christian teachings experiences financial or material success, which has often led to the feelings of guilt, shame, or questioning of one's faith, whereas men like Dangote, who is one of the richest men in Africa is not even a Christian but has consistently increased his wealth.

Furthermore, opponents of the Prosperity Gospel argue that it can foster a preoccupation with material wealth and personal gain, potentially disparaging from more essential spiritual values, such as compassion, humility, and service to others. They suggest that true prosperity encompasses more than just financial abundance and that a focus solely on material blessings can distract individuals from pursuing a deeper, more holistic relationship with God and the spiritual aspects of life.

It is crucial to note that within Christianity, perspectives on the Prosperity Gospel vary widely. While some individuals find comfort and inspiration in the belief that prosperity is a reflection of God's blessings, others prefer to focus on different aspects of the faith, such as the importance of spiritual growth, moral integrity, and social justice. Ultimately, each person interprets the teachings of their faith based on their own experiences, beliefs, and values. Whatever be the case, a message void of the emphasis of the sacrifice by Jesus Christ on the cross for the salvation of mankind which in turn calls for the need to be selfless towards others is not worth being called a gospel, thus such gospel is not worth being preached or accepted in the church. Financial wealth is not erroneous but making it a gospel worth preaching about as a state being attainable through calculated attempts makes it questionable.

The four books of the Bible referred to as gospels were so called because they were devoted to describing the person, works, death, resurrection, ascension and imminent coming of Jesus Christ. Such was the message Jesus charged the disciples and all who would ever believe in Him to preach as Good News.

Impacts of Prosperity Gospel on Pentecostals in Kwara State, Nigeria

The prosperity gospel demands an academic reflection because it has become a tradition of thought within the full range of Christianity and because it influences the multiform reliefs of religions in Nigeria through its emphasis on material blessings and financial success as signs of God's favor. It is another form of Pentecostalism which is being quickly embraced in the African continent by most especially the Pentecostal churches (Gbote and Thias: 2014, 3) and these have socio-economic causes and effects on the Pentecostal churches in Kwara State Nigeria churches in ways that impact individuals and communities.

The genealogy of the prosperity gospel shows that it is deeply indebted to and influenced by globalization and colonization. Globalization because of its ability to travel far and wide through the opportunities it avails and colonization because of colonization because of its economic impacts. Grosfoguel (Grosfoguel: 2011, 37) defined Coloniality as a particular global class formation where a diversity of forms of labour (slavery, semi-serfdom, wage labour, petty-commodity production etc.) are going to coexist and be organized by capital as a source of production of surplus value through the selling of commodities for a profit in the world market. Furthermore, its economic impact is also inclined with the consumerist ideology where the benefits are not meant for the corporate church but on the individual believer through the spiritualization of materiality and the raising of classic symbols of surplus excess such as expensive vehicles, properties and affluence as symbols of holiness and God's blessings.

The prosperity gospel, also known as the "health and wealth" or "name it and claim it" gospel, is a religious doctrine that has gained significant traction in Africa in recent years (Anyawu: 2004, 38). It advocates the idea that personal faith and financial generosity can lead to material prosperity and overall well-being. While it has its promoters and followers, the prosperity gospel has also attracted criticism and raised concerns regarding its impact on the African population. This paper explores the issues and problems associated with the prosperity gospel among Pentecostals in Kwara State, shedding light on its potential negative consequences for individuals and communities.

Causes of the widespread and acceptance of the prosperity Gospel in Kwara State

Below are factors that causes the widespread and acceptance of the prosperity Gospel in Kwara State, Nigeria:

Greed: Due to the economic hardship in most Nigeria, Kwara State inclusive, many have become greedy for money so preach or accept messages that are appealing to their quest for financial freedom. Some hold to the view that because it is working or yielding results it is authentic whilst ignoring the fact that it is not everything that is working that is authentic because fake things also work. In his letter to Timothy, Paul warned against greed by explaining that many have shipwrecked their faith in an attempt to gain wealth thus making it known that the love of money is the root of all kinds of evil but godliness with contentment is great gain (1Timothy 6:6-10).

Ignorance: One of the paramount things that enslave people is ignorance; even the people of God are not exempted for God declared through Hosea "My people perish for lack of knowledge" (Hosea 4:6). Many Christians in Kwara State are ignorant of the means to get out of their impoverished conditions of living and so tend to believe in the easy way out

they are taught with lots of false hopes that things would be better someday if they remain consistent. An ignorant person cannot but be deceived even over and over. Besides, Jesus declared that it is by knowing the truth that freedom is gained from every form of bondage.

Economic insecurity: The pursuit of financial prosperity within the prosperity gospel often stems from a desire to escape poverty or economic uncertainty. Many Pentecostals in Kwara State are attracted to the promise of financial blessings and stability in a world full of financial hardships. Those who advocate for the prosperity gospel do so in an attempt to escape their financial insecurity.

Cultural context: The prosperity gospel is more prevalent in the Kwara State and environs because of the strong focus on individual success, consumerism, and upward mobility. Cultural factors such as materialism and a desire for quick fixes and instant gratification have been the major contributing factors to the popularity of the prosperity gospel in most Nigerian societies.

Televangelism and Mass Media: The advent of televangelism and mass media has aided prosperity gospel preachers to reach a wider audience, spreading their message of financial prosperity and abundance to millions of people in Nigeria within a short time and in a fast and easy way. This accessibility has increased the influence and reach of the prosperity gospel in Africa currently more than ever before.

The Effects of the Proliferation of the Prosperity Gospel in Kwara State

The effects of the proliferation of the prosperity gospel abound but few are discussed below as it affects the social-economic state of things in the Kwara State:

Financial exploitation: Another major problem with the prosperity gospel is the potential for exploitation and

manipulation of vulnerable individuals. It is not uncommon to find preachers who manipulate their followers by urging them to give financial offerings or tithes in order to receive blessings from God. One of the criticisms directed towards the prosperity gospel is the potential for financial exploitation (Coleman: 2014, 73). Followers are often pressured to give generously to religious leaders or ministries with the hope of receiving greater financial blessings in return. This usually leads to financial pressure and exploitation within vulnerable communities, thus making the rich richer and the poor poorer.

Burden of guilt and shame: The prosperity gospel teaches that material blessings are evidence of one's faith and obedience to God. Therefore, many individuals in Kwara State today who do not experience financial success often develop a sense of guilt or shame, believing that their lack of prosperity is a reflection of their personal inadequacies or absence of faith. The prosperity gospel tends to present false promises of instant wealth and miraculous transformations. This creates unreasonable expectations that usually lead to financial burden for believers who invest heavily in the promises made by prosperity preachers. Furthermore, when these material blessings fail to emerge, individuals concerned generally experience disappointment, disillusionment, and even a crisis of faith.

Diversion of resources: The focus on individual financial success and personal prosperity often leads to the diversion of resources (both financial and human) away from communal or social grounds. Funds that could be directed towards community development, poverty alleviation, or other social initiatives in Kwara State are rather channeled towards personal enrichment thus embossing individuals over the populace like the case with those in government towards the masses.

Lack of focus on systemic issues: The prosperity gospel tends to place a heavy emphasis on individual faith and personal success, potentially overlooking systemic issues such as

economic injustice, inequality, and social structures that perpetuate poverty. This has impeded efforts towards addressing broader socio-economic challenges in many Kwaran societies today.

Impact on community and social cohesion: The prosperity gospel's emphasis on personal wealth usually prioritizes individual success over communal well-being. This has strained community relationships and diminished a sense of collective responsibility and solidarity in most Kwaran communities at present. Instead of encouraging individuals to address broader societal issues such as poverty, inequality, and corruption, this doctrine often focuses on individual success and accumulation of wealth. This neglect of social responsibility can hinder the progress of African societies, as it fosters a culture of self-centeredness rather than promoting community support and development.

Misinterpretation of Scripture: One of the primary issues with the prosperity gospel in Africa is its misinterpretation of biblical teachings. Proponents of this doctrine vigorously emphasize certain Bible verses that apparently support the idea of material blessings and financial success, while neglecting the broader message of humility, service, and spiritual growth. In doing so, they create a lopsided understanding of God's intentions and distort the true essence of Christianity.

Shallow Spirituality: The emphasis on financial prosperity in the prosperity gospel often comes at the expense of developing a deep and meaningful spiritual connection. The focus on material blessings hinders the growth of one's faith, causing individuals to prioritize personal wealth over genuine spiritual fulfillment and inner transformation. This shallow spirituality often lead to a lack of resilience in facing life's challenges and an inability to find true meaning beyond material possessions.

Theological Stance on Materialism and Prosperity

The theological stance on materialism and prosperity is a matter of interpretation and there are varying views within Christianity. While some proponents of the prosperity gospel cite certain biblical passages to support their beliefs, critics argue that the teachings of the prosperity gospel are not in line with the broader message and teachings of the Bible. Critics of the prosperity gospel assert that it places an excessive focus on material wealth and can distort the true message of the Gospel. They argue that the primary emphasis of Jesus' teachings and the overall message of the Bible are not centered on financial prosperity, but rather on spiritual transformation, salvation, and a relationship with God (Barron: 2022, 94).

In the Bible, prosperity is often connected to the idea of living in alignment with God's principles and seeking His kingdom. For instance, Psalm 1:1-2 states, "Blessed is the one who does not walk in step with the wicked or stand in the way that sinners take or sit in the company of mockers, but whose delight is in the law of the Lord, and who meditates on his law day and night." Here, prosperity is linked to following God's ways and finding fulfillment and spiritual nourishment through a close relationship with Him. This understanding highlights the importance of spiritual growth, virtues, and obedience to God's commandments as a pathway to true prosperity.

One concern with the prosperity gospel, which is mostly materialistic in nature, is that it reduces faith to a transactional relationship with God, where people are led to believe that if they have enough faith and give generously, God will bless them with financial prosperity. Critics contend that this view overlooks the biblical understanding of suffering, sacrifice, and the role of perseverance in the Christian life. Moreover, as emphasized by Kunhiyop, biblical passages caution against the excessive love of money and material possessions abound (Kunhiyop: 2019, 107). For example, 1 Timothy 6:10 states, "For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evils. It is through this craving that some have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many pangs." Jesus also warned about

the potential dangers of wealth and its potential to distract from a wholehearted devotion to God (Matthew 19:23-24, Luke 12:15).

Rather than focusing on material wealth, the Bible emphasizes the value of inner transformation and the pursuit of spiritual virtues, such as love, generosity, humility, and selflessness. Scriptures stress the eternal values of seeking God's kingdom and righteousness (Matthew 6:33) and storing up treasures in heaven (Matthew 6:19-21). It is essential to approach the interpretation of biblical teachings with wisdom and discernment. While proponents of the prosperity gospel may highlight certain passages, critics argue that a holistic understanding of the Bible's teachings reveals a broader focus on spiritual growth, obedience to God, and living a life aligned with His purposes, rather than an exclusive emphasis on material prosperity.

Materialism remains an excessive focus or attachment to material possessions or wealth involving the prioritization on earthly treasures and temporal pleasures over spiritual and eternal values. It has the potential of being a stumbling block on the path of spiritual growth and development and a distraction from the pursuit of God's kingdom. The Bible warns against the dangers of placing too much importance on wealth and possessions, emphasizing the need for a balanced and proper perspective. One of the key teachings in Christianity is the understanding that true fulfillment and contentment come from a relationship with God and adherence to spiritual values, rather than the accumulation of worldly goods. Jesus, for example, frequently spoke about the potential dangers of wealth and the need to prioritize God's kingdom over temporal treasures (Boaheng: 2020, 2569).

In Matthew 6:24, Jesus states, "No one can serve two masters. Either you will hate the one and love the other, or you will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money." This teaching highlights the inherent conflict

between the pursuit of material wealth and the pursuit of a relationship with God. Christianity encourages its followers to adopt an attitude of gratitude, contentment, and stewardship towards the material resources they have been given. It calls for responsible use of wealth and possessions, recognizing that they are ultimately gifts from God that should be used to bless and serve others.

Furthermore, Christians are called to prioritize eternal treasures, such as love, compassion, kindness, and service, over temporary material wealth. The Apostle Paul wrote in Colossians 3:2 "Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things." This verse accentuates the importance of focusing on spiritual values rather than being consumed by materialism. It encourages believers to seek a balanced approach to wealth and possessions, valuing spiritual richness and eternal treasures over worldly goods.

Recommendations

Below are the recommendations from the study:

1. Kwaran Pentecostal church leaders should re-examine biblical teachings on prosperity to understand God's perspective on wealth and possessions
2. Kwaran Christians should seek to understand the Biblical concept of stewardship that Christians are meant to be stewards of God's resources and use them to glorify God
3. Kwaran Christians should also evaluate the teachings of prosperity preachers by analyzing their sermons and comparing them to Biblical principles
4. Leaders of Pentecostal churches in Kwara State should assess the impact of prosperity Theology on church growth, most especially on how it affects the spiritual

lives, relationships and financial decisions of their church members

5. Kwaran Christians should prioritize spiritual growth and humility through the cultivation of deeper relationship with God over material gains
6. Other Christian bodies should engage in discussions with Pentecostal church leaders and members about prosperity theology in respective ways through objective dialogue
7. Churches and Christian or Para-church organizations should create supportive initiatives that promote biblical stewardship and generosity towards the

Conclusion

This paper has attempted to describe the issues and problems associated with the prosperity and materialism in Nigeria among Kwaran Penecostals as weighty thus not to be ignored thereby calling attention to the need to adhere to Biblical teachings which highlights the significance of generosity, compassion, and justice as integral components of a prosperous life. Proverbs 11:25, for example, says, "A generous person will prosper; whoever refreshes others will be refreshed." In this context, prosperity is not exclusively about personal and material gains but also about contributing to the well-being of others, sharing one's resources, and engaging in acts of kindness and justice. It emphasizes the interconnectedness of individuals and communities in experiencing prosperity.

Kwaran Pentecostals ought to uphold the fact that true prosperity is when all people have the opportunity to thrive by fulfilling their unique potential and playing their parts in strengthening their communities and nations. It is reinforced by an inclusive society with a strong social contract that protects the fundamental liberties and security of every individual, where people live in peace, free from threat of

violence, oppression and crime; where everyone's dignity is respected; where stable families and supportive communities instill the values that shape the culture and build the bonds of trust needed for the society to flourish.

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