

CORRUPTION IN NIGERIA: CAUSES, EFFECTS AND A SEARCH FOR BIBLICAL SOLUTIONS

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Abstract

Corruption is a vile disease that sucks and drains the wealth of a nation. Corruption has been a cankerworm that has been eaten deep into the Nigerian society. People do things without conscience. Under development in country is as a result of corruption. This research aimed at finding out what corruption is all about. This paper discusses the causes and consequences of corruption and a search for biblical solution to corruption in Nigeria. The research found out that corruption is the bane of underdevelopment in the Nigerian society. It also found out that lack of transparency, accountability and consistency, as well as institutional weaknesses such as in the legislative and judicial systems; provide fertile ground for growth of corruption in Nigeria. Observation method, primary and secondary methods were used. It was recommended that those found guilty will be sanctioned without mercy.

Introduction

Corruption is any behaviour that leads to the benefit of an entity in power at the expense of others. As such, it's considered to be an abuse of power. Corruption occurs when someone in a position of power uses their authority to influence decisions or conducts any other dishonest or fraudulent behaviour like giving or accepting bribes or inappropriate gifts, double-dealing, under-the-table transactions, manipulating elections, diverting funds, laundering money, and defrauding investors. Corruption is a form of dishonest behaviour that has a big impact on everyone. It occurs when an entrusted entity abuses its position of power for its own benefit. Corruption can come in many forms including bribes, double-dealing, and fraud by individuals, businesses, and governments. Corruption has a big impact on people's social and financial well-being. As such, it can threaten the foundations of democracy, leading people to lose trust in their leaders.

Corruption seems to have come to stay in the Nigerian society as a result of attitude of people towards those that loot. Looters are being honoured and worshipped by the society not minding their ill-gotten wealth. They take the best seat in our society and their words are being regarded as final. Corruption is not only on the Government level. We have corruption in our different homes. People follow those with ill-gotten wealth as their god.

Nobody is able to tell them that what they are doing is bad. Anybody that dares do so is regarded as stupid and the society turns against such a person. They squander public money-making life miserable for the people. They take peoples land by force and eliminate those that dare says the truth. Corruption has eaten deep into the fabric of our society and it needs to be addressed without fear or tremble. There must also be clear penalties in place to dissuade people and organizations from engaging in corrupt behavior. This can include financial penalties and even legal action—prosecution and perhaps jail time.

Definition of Corruption

Corruption is the abuse of power or position for personal gain, often through unethical norms, or illegal means. It involves a deviation from established rules, norms, or standards to benefit an individual or group, often at expense of others or the broader community. James Chen (2023), defined corruption as follows:

- Corruption is dishonest behaviour by those in positions of power, such as business managers or government officials.
- Corruption can come in the form of bribery, double-dealing, and defrauding investors.
- The consequences of corruption can be social and financial but it has a major impact on those who are financially vulnerable.
- Government intervention in the economy is a root cause of corruption.
- Preventing corruption includes the reinforcement of best business practices, education in the form of mandatory anti-money laundering courses, and increased accountability.

There are many situations in which someone can be considered corrupt. Corruption can involve any entity, whether that's an individual, company, or government. For instance,

- A politician may be deemed corrupt for taking money to sway a vote on a key issue.
- A corporation may be deemed corrupt for trying to influence the market by cooking their books.
- A government may be deemed corrupt by offering a higher degree of resources and incentives, such as tax breaks and health care, to the wealthy rather than to those who are financially vulnerable (James Chen 2023).

The act of corruption has financial and social consequences for everyone. Where corruption thrives, poverty thrives. But it does have a disproportionate effect on the most vulnerable. Corruption may further limit their access to the education, health care, and legal services they need. And they may end up paying more in bribes, as they are often

targeted because they may be less likely to report corruption. Corruption, according to U Myiniit (2000) is defined as the use of public office for private gain, or in other words, use of official position, rank or status by an office bearer for his own personal benefit. He listed the following as examples of corrupt behaviour: (a) bribery, (b) extortion, (c) fraud, (d) embezzlement, (e) nepotism, (f) cronyism, (g) appropriation of public assets and property for private use, and (h) influence peddling.

Theories of Corruption

There are many theories of corruption such as: psychological theory, social network theory, political theory, economic theory, cultural theory, moral hazard theory, rent-seeking theory, principal-agent theory.

The most relevant theories to this work are:

1. Principal-Agent Theory: This theory posits that corruption occurs when an agent/public official betrays the trust of the public for personal gain. The agent has a duty to act in the best interests of the public, but instead, pursues their own self-interest.
2. Political Theory: This theory sees corruption as a means to maintain political power and influence. Political actors use corruption to secure support and maintain their position.
3. Economic Theory: This theory views corruption as a rational response to economic incentives, where individuals and organizations seek to maximize their benefits.

Forms of Corruption Are

Embezzlement: This simply means stealing funds or resources for personal gain. Wealth is grabbed into the greedy hands of those who get fat on toil and labour of good people.

Bribery: This simply means offering and receiving something of value to influence a decision or action. Example is a lecturer taking money from a student in order to pass him or her. Corruption is nothing less than a form of theft and national robbery.

Fraud: This is act of intentionally deceiving or misrepresenting information to gain an advantage.

Conflict of interest: This is a way of using one's position for personal gain, by exploiting access to resources or information.

Nepotism: This simply means favouring family members or friends in business or professional matters whether they qualified or not.

Extortion: This is getting or obtaining something through threats or coercing.

Money laundering: This is the act of concealing the source of funds obtained through illegal activities. They will sign contracts by lining the pockets of rotten government officials who participated in this kind of corruption and then hold hostage by their indecent and greed.

Kickbacks: This simply means accepting or offering payments in exchange for services or contracts. Corrupt nations hiding behind large companies will seek to invest in other to take over the assets of the nations that they have invested into. They will provide financial loans to a nation for the much-needed infrastructure and they will do it with assets that they provide.

Graft: This is using one's position to embezzle or steal resources for personal gain. Corruption people compromise on truth, equity and fairness choosing to instead to feed the short-term benefits of crookedness exploitation and financial perversion.

Patronage: This is the act of exchanging resources for political or personal support.

The Two Major Contributors of Corruption in Nigeria are

1. Politicians

Most Politicians engaged in corrupt practices, such as embezzlement, bribery, and nepotism. Political corruption occurs when a ruling party takes on a more invasive and pervasive role. Forms of political corruption include nepotism, bribery, lobbying, embezzlement, and cronyism. The most corrupt people in Nigeria are Nigerian Politicians. That is why they never want to leave the office at the end of their tenure. If forced out, they begin to engage in fraud and form godfatherism, sponsoring other political aspirants into political seats so as to manipulate them and be issuing order on how to run the country. They lure the young politicians into corrupt practices. Nigerian politicians find themselves in a strong position of power and wealth due to their connections with the oil and gas industries in Nigeria. These gas industries are under the control of the state-owned company NNPC Limited. Oil and gas exports account for over 90% of all Nigerian export revenues (Varrella, Simona 2020). While many politicians own or have shares in these industries, tax revenues from the energy sector are diminished and the benefits of Nigeria's energy wealth are not evenly distributed throughout the country with Lagos State benefitting disproportionately (*The Guardian*. 2017-07-18). Oil and gas revenues, therefore, account for the vast majority of the federal budget and the salaries of government officials (Businessday NG 2023).

Vote rigging by political parties in elections is widespread, and corruption is endemic within government. Business arrangements and family loyalties dominate governmental appointments, paving the way for politicians, officials, and their business associates, who together make up the ruling elite to ensure that they all become wealthy through behind-the-scenes agreements and the awarding of profitable contracts to favored supporters (Ralby, Ian (2017). The recent presidential election marked the peak of corruption in Nigeria where election result is being manipulated and election announced before the end of the election. Some people disguised themselves as Bishops just to confirm that Christians are in support of Muslem-Muslem ticket.

2. Government Officials

Government officials are granted large discretionary powers with respect to interpreting rules; are given a lot of freedom to decide on how rules are to be applied, to whom and in what manner they are to be applied, are vested with powers to amend, alter, and rescind the rules, and even to supplement the rules by invoking new restrictive administrative measures and procedures. There are no effective mechanisms and institutional arrangements in the country to hold administrators accountable for their actions. In 2018, according to Campbell, Page; John, Matthew (2018: 89-103), many government employees received annual salaries over \$1 million. Corruption runs through every level of the Nigerian government. From considerable contract fraud at the top, through petty bribery, money laundering schemes, embezzlement, and seizing salaries from fake workers, it is estimated that corruption within the state apparatus costs the country billions of dollars annually (Naijabeat.com. 2022, Campbell, Page; John, Matthew 2018: 89-103).

Other contributors to corruption in Nigeria are: Business leaders, traditional rulers, security personnel, civil society, international partners, institutional weaknesses, cultural and social norms, individual citizens and so on.

Causes of Corruption

Lowering wages for Civil Servants compared to those in the Private Sector

Certain employees may resort to taking bribes in order to compensate for the difference in wages. Generally, civil servants with insufficient salaries to meet the living expenses of their families are driven by necessity to engage in corrupt practices. Raising their pay, it is argued, will mean less need to depend on illegal activities to earn a living while they have more to lose if they get caught. This sounds reasonable and there are cases where countries that pay their civil servants well, tend to have less public sector corruption than in those where pay scales are low (Asia-Pacific Development Journal Vol. 7, No. 2, December 2000 41). As a result, some of these employees become nasty, rude and indifferent in their dealings with the general public. They can be exasperating and create a

lot of nuisance value to ordinary citizens. Under these circumstances, it is also hard to recruit and retain good workers as they will seek employment or leave to take up more challenging and higher paying jobs in the private sector or abroad.

Price Controls

Corruption thrives when governments intervene by putting these in place to keep prices lower for certain goods and services.

Eliminating Foreign Competition

Through trade restrictions, tariffs, and trade barriers, there is the possibility of a semi-monopoly by domestic players. The latter are more likely to resort to corrupt behavior to keep restrictions in place for foreign companies to keep their place in the market. Corporations and groups may receive government grants and subsidies when they aren't the intended recipients (James Chen 2023).

Misconduct at the top and by Leading Politicians

Since these politicians are generally well-off and have a lot of privileges associated with their high office, their corrupt behaviour is not attributable to low pay and out of necessity to meet the living expenses of their families. Instead, greed is considered a main motivating factor.

Greed: Greed is a motivating factor for engaging in corruption.

To remain in office: To remain in office, for example, can also be an overriding motivating force. With election campaigns becoming expensive, corruption related to campaign financing is a big political issue in our country.

To dispense favours: The need to dispense favours among political allies, colleagues and subordinates to keep them happy, cooperative and loyal is another factor.

Traditions and customs: Moreover, in some societies there are traditions and customs whereby elected officials are expected to make substantive contributions to the welfare of the people in constituencies that elect them. For instance, in Nigeria, a politician is required by tradition to present an expensive gift at a wedding involving a supporter in his electoral district. When such a community has a large number of wedding receptions, birthday parties, anniversaries, celebrations, rituals, festivals, and fund-raising ceremonies for all sorts of worthy causes, the financial burden of these festivities can fall heavily on elected officials. And the higher up you are in the pecking order, the larger is the contribution you are expected to make by custom and long held traditions of the land.

Government Contracts

Bribes can influence who gets the contract, the terms of the contract, as well as terms of subcontracts when the project is implemented.

Government benefits

Bribes can influence the allocation of monetary benefits such as credit subsidies and favoured prices and exchange rates where price controls and multiple exchange rates exist. Bribes can also be important in obtaining licenses and permits to engage in lucrative economic activities such as importing certain goods in high demand and in short supply. Moreover, bribes can be employed to acquire in-kind benefits such as access to privileged schools, subsidized medical care, subsidized housing and real estate, and attractive ownership stakes in enterprises that are being privatized.

Government revenue

Bribes can be used to reduce the amount of taxes, fees, dues, custom duties, and electricity and other public utility charges collected from business firms and private individuals.

Time Savings and Regulatory Avoidance

Bribes can speed up the granting of permission, licenses and permits to carry out activities that are perfectly legal. This is the so-called “grease money” to turn the wheels of bureaucracy more smoothly, speedily and hopefully in the right direction. It is also not difficult to think of a really awful situation where rules and regulations, and the way they are applied, are so complex and burdensome that the only way left to get things done is to pay money to avoid them. (Asia-Pacific Development Journal Vol. 7, No. 2, December 2000:36).

Influencing Outcomes of Legal and Regulatory Processes

Bribes can be used to provide incentives to regulatory authorities to refrain from taking action, and to look the other way, when private parties engage in activities that are in violation of existing laws, rules and regulations such as those relating to controlling pollution, preventing health hazards, or promoting public safety as in the case of building codes and traffic regulations. Similarly, bribes can be given to favour one party over another in court cases or in other legal and regulatory proceedings.

How to Prevent Corruption

Corruption can increase criminal activity and organized crime in the community when left unchecked. But there are a number of steps that can help to manage it. James Chen (2023) enumerated the following list as possible steps that can be taken to prevent corruption: Education, Environment, Accountability, Regulation, and Reporting. To fight corruption, a strong educational emphasis is essential. This can be achieved by implementing mandatory training programs, such as anti-money laundry (AML) courses, to equip managers and employees with the knowledge to identify potential corruption. Moreover, senior executives and managers must foster a culture of honesty and integrity by setting a strong example and leading from the top.

Implementing a robust control environment and conducting comprehensive background checks on potential hires and promotions can significantly minimize the risk of corruption within an organization.

Implementing robust mechanisms can cultivate a culture that prioritizes ethical behaviour, while also ensuring that those who fail to meet these standards are held responsible.

Implementing comprehensive code of conduct and ethics is crucial in preventing conflicts of interest, particularly in high-stakes industries like finance, where professionals must uphold these standards to maintain their reputation and avoid facing consequences.

Streamlining reporting mechanisms and ensuring the safety and confidentiality of those who report corruption can significantly contribute to its reduction. This encourages a culture of transparency and accountability, where individuals feel empowered to speak up without fear of retribution.

Effects of Corruption

Damage from corruption is multi-fold. When reported, it can lead to unflattering media attention. It can also attack the foundations of democracy, dampen (economic) growth and development, skew laws and regulations, create red tape and bureaucratic hurdles, and stunt investment to name a few. This leads to damage to the offending party's reputation and an erosion of trust. That's because people can lose faith in the people and organizations in question (James Chen 2023). Corruption has social and financial implications but disproportionately affects the most financially vulnerable. Under a corrupt system, the privileged and the well-connected enjoy economic rent. Economic rent, by definition, represents abnormal or monopoly profits and can bestow large benefits. As such, there is a tendency for wealth to be concentrated in the hands of a tiny minority of the population. In addition, the burden of corruption falls more heavily on the poor as they cannot afford to pay the required bribes to send their children to a decent

school, to obtain proper health care, or to have adequate access to government provided services such as domestic water supply, electricity, sanitation and community waste disposal facilities. An undesirable situation can arise as in a situation where through illegal connections to the water mains, the water sprinkler system in a golf course operates most of the day to keep the grass green on the fairways, while villagers living across the street do not have sufficient water for their daily household needs. At night, through payment of bribes, the driving range of the golf course is ablaze with floodlights, while children in the nearby village have to do their homework by candlelight in support of the government's energy conservation effort.

Corruption's adverse impact on private investment, both domestic and foreign, is considered to be particularly harmful for a developing economy. Bribes may have to be given before any investment takes place and upon entering into negotiations for the establishment of an enterprise. More payments usually follow in the process of setting up the business. Procurement of leases for land and buildings; permission to engage in activities such as production, transport, storage, marketing, distribution, import and export; obtaining connections for water, gas, electricity, and telephone; having access to telex, fax and e-mail facilities and so on; can involve payment of substantial bribes at various stages and may require the services of agents with specialized expertise on how to get around complex rules and procedures to acquire these things. Unfortunately, these agents and middlemen, instead of being part of the solution can often become a part of the problem. Closely associated with an unequal income distribution and concentration of wealth in the hands of a few, there emerges a distorted consumption pattern aimed at meeting the lifestyle of the new and extremely rich urban elite. This involves import of a large variety of luxury goods from abroad – flashy cars, lavish home furnishings, state-of-the-art consumer durables and electronic products, fashion clothing, exotic perfumes, expensive foodstuffs, fine wines and spirits, and fancy goods of all kinds that can be found in supermarkets. Most of these goods are, of course, beyond the reach of ordinary citizens in the cities and in the countryside.

Conspicuous consumption with expensive cars cruising along dirt roads, and conspicuous construction with luxury apartment buildings rising amidst poverty and squalor, bring home the point that affluence is not widely shared in this country. Bribe payments constitute a form of tax on enterprises. But they represent a pernicious type of tax as bribery deals have to be struck in a surreptitious way and bribe-givers cannot always be certain that bribe-takers will live up to their part of the bargain. It is also a regressive form of tax. Its burden falls more heavily on small businesses in trade and service sectors. Surveys have also revealed that business people have to spend a lot of management time in discussions, negotiations and waiting for appointments with bureaucrats and public

officials in corrupt regimes than in countries where there is less corruption (Gray and Kaufmann op. cit).

At a more fundamental level, corruption makes it difficult for a low-income country to establish and maintain domestic and internationally acceptable “rules of the game” which are necessary for orderly and proper conduct of investment and business activities. This deficiency is believed to be an important reason why the least developed countries in the world are poor. It is also believed to be a reason why some of them will remain that way (Klitgaard op. cit). Corruption can have undesirable consequences on both the revenue and expenditure sides of the government budget. The consequences on the revenue side are more familiar. Paying bribes to reduce taxes, fees, dues, custom duties and public utility charges such as for water and electricity, are common in many countries. Bribes are also used to make illegal water, electricity, gas and telephone connections to have access to these facilities without paying for the services obtained. All these result in serious losses of revenue for the government. Fraud, embezzlement and misappropriation of public funds add to the losses. Corruption adversely affects the composition of government expenditure. This is because large benefits can be realized from corrupt deals on expenditure items that are expensive, whose costs are not readily apparent, and which are considered to serve some high national priority concern so that they have to be undertaken in a discreet and secretive way.

Corrupt regime enriches themselves to the detriment of the masses. Violating building codes through the connivance of corrupt officials and building contractors has resulted in collapse of apartment buildings, department stores and hotels in some countries. Failure to observe proper fire prevention and safety regulations has caused supermarkets, hotels and discos, filled with shoppers and customers to go up in flames. Overloaded ferries and passenger ships have sunk in seas and rivers all over the region. Paying bribes to operate un-roadworthy and poorly maintained public vehicles have led to accidents on the highways and buses plunging down ravines and gorges due to mechanical failure are common in many countries. Obscure insider trading practices and financial scams that can result from poorly supervised financial systems also have serious economic and social consequences. People have lost their life savings and fortunes in financial scams.

Lack of transparency, shady deals and corrupt practices have also been a contributing factor to the financial and macroeconomic crisis that has swept across Nigeria. Corruption creates an environment conducive to organized crime, human trafficking, and drug cartels. Corruption can result in the looting and destruction of cultural artifacts, historical sites, and intangible heritage. Corruption leads to inefficient allocation of resources, misappropriation of funds, and embezzlement. Corruption can lead to substandard healthcare, contaminated food and water, and other public health. Corruption fosters crony

capitalism, where personal connections and favours are valued over merit and competition. Corruption can subvert democratic processes, allowing authoritarianism and dictatorship to take hold. Corruption tarnishes a country's or organization's reputation, deterring foreign investment and tourism. Corruption discourages investment, innovation, and entrepreneurship, stifling economic growth and development. Corruption erodes trust in institutions, leaders, and systems, leading to widespread disillusionment and disenfranchisement.

Solution to Corruption

A comprehensive public relations campaign is often required to limit reputational damage and restore trust. This requires valuable resources, such as time and money, which may result in other critical areas of the organization being deprived. As a result, inefficiencies that lead to financial losses can occur. Corruption can be prevented by putting certain checks and balances in place. This includes educating the public, creating a robust environment, putting accounting mechanisms in place, implementing regulations, and opening up avenues to reporting and ensuring the safety of those who make these reports. It's also important to enforce penalties for charges of corruption, including fines and prosecution. Accountability is necessary in order to checkmate are necessary corruption. Accountability has to do with the fact that for proper observance of rules and regulations, those administering the rules must be held responsible and accountable for their actions. When something appears questionable, improper, or inaccurate in the information and accounts presented, the authorities can be called upon to provide an explanation to clarify the matter and to take corrective action and make amends, as necessary. Those in charge are obliged to respond to such queries so that doubts are cleared, and remedial or disciplinary actions are taken to the satisfaction of all concerned. Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) helps augment the much-needed capital resources in the country. It can also bring technology, knowhow and managerial and marketing skills that improve a country's international competitiveness. It helps develop valuable market outlets abroad, and strengthen foreign contacts and broaden the outlook of its business community. Foreign Direct Investment can increase employment opportunities, assist in improving labour skills, and can produce useful goods and services for the domestic market. It can also be crucial in building modern infrastructural facilities, establishing reliable energy generating and distributing systems, setting up high technology communication networks, providing efficient transport links with the rest of the world and in developing capital markets and business and financial services which are essential for a country to become a modern, developed nation.

However, FDI can play an important role in assisting a country to modernize and to more fully develop its productive potential. A corrupt person should be jailed in order to protect society from vile deeds of corrupt person. Government should be protecting us from the foul results of corruption instead of being the proponents and participants in corruption. Corruption can only be defeated when enough people have had enough and decide to do something about it.

Biblical View of Corruption

In the Bible, corruption is seen as a sin that separates us from God and leads to spiritual death. The Bible often uses bribery and fraud to refer to corruption. The word bribery generally refers to giving money or favours to someone who is in a position of trust, to pervert their judgment or corrupt their conduct. This is also referring or denotes corruption. It is the act of taking bribery that climax to or bring about corruption. In this context, we will use bribery and corruption interchangeably. The Bible emphasized that God strictly forbids bribery, as it is clearly written that giving or receiving a bribe is evil: *“And you shall take no bribe, for a bribe blinds the clear-sighted and subverts the cause of those who are in the right”* (Exodus 23:8 ESV). This law is also repeated in Deuteronomy 16:19 where God our Lord says: *“Do not pervert justice or show partiality. Do not accept a bribe, for it blinds the eyes of the wise and twists the words of the innocent”* (NIV). The teaching of the New Testament corresponds to this in the solemn command: *“I charge thee before God, and Lord Jesus Christ, and the elect angels that thou observe these things without preferring one before another, doing nothing by partiality.”* (1 Tim 5:21 KJV).

Other Bible passages that condemn fraud, bribery, and corruption are: *“Divers weights, and divers measures, both of them are alike abomination to the Lord”* (Proverbs 20:10 KJV) *“Look the wages you failed to pay the workers who mowed your fields are crying out against you. The cries of the harvesters have reached the ears of the Lord Almighty”* (James 5:4 NIV). *“Nor thieves, nor the greedy, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers will inherit the Kingdom of God”* (1 Corinthians 6:10 ESV). *“Thus says the Lord God: Enough, O princes of Israel! Put away violence and oppression, and execute justice and righteousness. Cease your evictions of my people, declares the Lord God”* (Ezekiel 45:9 ESV). *“For the congregation of hypocrites shall be desolate, and fire shall consume the tabernacles of bribery”* (Job 15:34 KJV). Corruption is seen as a moral decay or rot that affects individuals, institutions and a society leading to a departure from God’s will and purpose. The Bible condemns corruption and warns against its consequences as we can see in the following chapters of the Bible: *“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” (1 Timothy 6: 10 ESV). “Righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people” (Proverbs 14:34 ESV). “Therefore, I will judge you, O house of Israel, every one according to his ways, declare the Lord God. Repent and turn from all your transgressions, lest iniquity be your ruin...” (Ezekiel 18: 30-32 ESV). Corruption is seen as a manifestation of sin and rebellion against God’s authority and design. Corruption has effect on the society as it is seen as a major contributor to social injustice, oppression, and exploitation.

Christians are called out to accountability and are encouraged to speak out against corruption and promote transparency and integrity. Through Jesus Christ, God offers redemption and restoration from corruption, enabling Christians to live a life of righteousness and integrity.

The church is called to be a beacon of hope and a voice against corruption, promoting godly values and principles in society.

Bribery blinds the influence on wisdom and discernment and distorts the words of those who would be righteous in the sight of God. It must be understood that neither the one who gives nor the one who receives a bribe care about truth or justice. The Bible condemns greed, including ungratefulness, love of money and of self “And he said to them, take care, and be on your guard against all covetousness, for one’s life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions” (Luke 12:15 ESV). Understand this, that in the last days there will come times of difficulty. For people will be lovers of self, lovers of money, proud, arrogant, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, heartless, unappeasable, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not loving good, treacherous, reckless, swollen with conceit, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, having the appearance of godliness, but its power. Avoid such people” (2 Timothy 3:1-5 ESV). Bribery is one of the hallmarks of a corrupt society because where people give and receive bribes, it causes evil in the society. However, as the apostle Paul exhorts Timothy in the above passage, these sins are more prevalent in today's end-time corrupt society. In today's pressure situations, with the advanced malicious methods of the enemy, there are many incentives for bribery.

Conclusion

Corruption is filthy work and despicable act of treachery done under the table and behind closed doors. It is a disgusting shame. In today's society corruption continues to grow. Corruption is a symptom of deep-seated and fundamental economic, political and institutional weaknesses and shortcomings in a country. It keeps a nation back from true development. It plunders the nation’s wealth. Those who participate in corruption have

chosen evil over good, lies over the truth and personal gain of the wellbeing of all. Emphasis must thus be placed on preventing corruption by tackling the root causes that give rise to it through undertaking economic, political and institutional reforms. Anti-corruption enforcement measures such as oversight bodies, a strengthened police force and more efficient law courts will not be effective in the absence of a serious effort to address the fundamental causes. Another observation that may be useful to bear in mind is that corruption is most prevalent where there are other forms of institutional weaknesses, such as political instability, bureaucratic red tape, and weak legislative and judicial systems. The important point is that corruption and such institutional weaknesses are linked together and that they feed upon each other. For example, red tape makes corruption possible and corrupt officials may increase the extent of red tape so that they can get more bribes. So, getting rid of corruption helps a country to overcome other institutional weaknesses, just as reducing other institutional weaknesses helps to curb corruption. The main issue taken up in this paper is that corruption is a major obstacle in the process of economic development and in modernizing this country, Nigeria. The feeling that corruption should receive priority attention in the development of our country's agenda and that corruption can have a serious adverse impact on development has been a cause for concern.

In a recent survey of 150 high level officials from 60 third world countries, the respondents ranked public sector corruption as the most severe obstacle confronting their development process (Gray and Kaufmann 1998). There is no doubt, corruption is a major constraint that is hindering our economic, political and social development, we thereby view it as a problem requiring urgent attention at the highest level.

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