

AUGUSTINE'S CITY OF GOD AND
ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

This thesis examines "Augustine's *City of God* and Its Implications for Nigeria." The rationale for this study is that the event of the fall of the Ancient Roman Empire and the reactions that follow, are of great significance for the Nigerian Society.

The research method employed by this researcher is historical library research. Relevant books and journals in the J. C. Pool library of the Nigerian Baptist Seminary Ogbomoso, were consulted.

The effort of the researcher is aimed at knowing St. Augustine, his views in the City of God and to draw lessons from his city of God for the contemporary Nigerian society. This research has revealed that the ancient Roman Empire fell as a result of godlessness, which is also prevalent in Nigerian society today. The research also reveals that St. Augustine has cautioned against all forms of godless living, since the fifth century. Such great cautions by a renowned father of the early church ought to be jealously guided. Furthermore, the research reveals that the Nigeria of today is heading towards the predicament of the ancient Roman Empire

This thesis has contributed to scholarship by way of making Augustine's thoughts in the 5th century, to speak to Nigerians today. Another contribution of this research is that it added to the sources of information on Saint Augustine, one of the foremost African fathers of the Christian church. It is the belief of this writer that a first time reader on Augustine can almost

identify him through this work. Finally, this thesis is an eye opener to the fact that any nation that does not imbibe the principle of godliness, love, peace and justice, is standing the risk of doom.

Conclusion

Man's sojourn on earth is a mystery. As a result of this, people tend to believe whatever they want to believe. By so doing, they wander away from God their Maker. The danger is that life is meaningless when it is detached from its source, which is God. And so the Christian message becomes very significant that man must live in the world, in total obedience to God through Jesus Christ. The love that is sincere must be the guiding principle of man's life. This was the message of Augustine in his *City of God*. The end of it all is that man came from God and God will decide the final destination of man.

The challenges of this thesis are thrown to our nation Nigeria. Nigeria is a country that has been blessed by God in all ways. Whereas Nigeria is so rich, people are living in abject poverty as a result of greed and corruption. These were the vices that led to the fall of the ancient Roman Empire. If Nigerians fail to learn their lesson and turn a new leaf, this writer foresees an impending doom, in which God will cause the nation to fall like Rome. A genuine change and godly lifestyle will avert the pending doom.

The best conclusion this writer can give to a work like this is the conclusion which Saint Augustine gave in his *City of God*. He says,

I think I have now, by God's help, discharged my obligation in writing this large work. Let those who think I have said too little, or those who think I have said too much, forgive me; and let those who think I have said just enough join me in giving thanks to God. Amen.¹

Recommendations

On the basis of this research, this writer wishes to make the following recommendations;

First, the leadership of our great country Nigeria should develop interest in history. A historical Council of Nigeria should be constituted by government at national, state and local government levels. The council should be responsible for the study of great events in world history, and national history and counsel government. This writer believes that if Nigeria takes time to reflect on the history of great empires and kingdoms such as Egypt, Babylon, Assyria, Medes, Persia, Rome and lot more, there will be a sense of caution that will be displayed to avoid negative occurrence in the country.

Second, the entire Nigeria nation needs a reorientation concerning life. The major way to kill corruption is to deal with the value system in Nigeria. While an American could spend all he has to discover and invent something new, an average Nigerian is thinking of how to drive the latest car in the market. The government should begin a massive campaign against

¹Saint Augustine, *The City of God*, 867.

materialism with the use of reliable foreigners. Those in the helm of affairs should set example.

Third, the Nigerian government should ensure that justice and fair play is upheld in every sector. The Nigerian Police and Judiciary should be reorientated and empowered to do their work conscientiously. They should ensure that no one is allowed to suffer injustice.