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THE PLACE OF INTEGRITY IN NIGERIAN POLITICS:  
A MORAL ASSESSMENT OF THE FOURTH REPUBLIC

A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO  
THE FACULTY OF THEOLOGICAL STUDIES  
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## ABSTRACT

The value of moral integrity in Nigerian politics has been shifted to lesser values. Many Nigerians see politics as the quickest way to make money and to become popular. Thus, to grab political power becomes a do or die affair. Hence, the present level of moral integrity in Nigerian politics is very low. Integrity as a moral virtue is essential to practical politics. But this has been neglected in the politics of Nigeria. Many successive governments in Nigeria had shown concern about the poor morality by launching various ethical-orientation programmes, which yielded no result because their initiators did not abide by the tenets of the programmes. This is why the place of integrity in the national politics demands urgent attention. It is a striking indictment on the political system because many of our politicians cannot lead the way in promoting sound ethical standards, and impeccable moral ethos.

This negligence has generated some socio-ethical problems that demand an academic research. The enormous lack of integrity in Nigerian democratic politics heightened the researcher into this venture. Thus, the dissertation is titled: "The Place of Integrity in Nigerian Politics: A Moral Assessment of the Fourth Republic". This study attempts to proffer solution based on the perspective of biblical Christianity. That is, the research applied the biblical revelation as regard to politics and ethics to this vital issue. We use the normative ethic of politics as revealed in the scriptures to unravel the issue of lack of integrity in the politics of Nigeria.

The study commences with the statement of the problem, the three fold purpose of the study, the significance of the study, research methodology, scope and limitations of the study as well as the working definitions of some



operative terms such as morality, politics and integrity. And some related literature are reviewed.

The research examines the meaning of politics in relation to biblical revelation. God is the starting point of politics because he initiates it in creation. God establishes a political relationship with His creation-God becomes the executive while man and woman are the administrators. It is expected that mankind will depend on his moral rules for a successful political relationship. This is essential in Nigerian politics because most political leaders in Nigeria manifested weak commitment to political moral values and behavioural lifestyles. This is explicit in the ecology and practice of Nigerian political society as treated in chapter three as well as in the current political practice of Obasanjo administration.

The work further assess the place of integrity in Nigerian politics. The issues, causes and effects of lack of integrity in the current Nigerian political affairs are discussed. This research discloses that the present administration witnesses unprecedented political assassinations. Prominent men and women were murdered in cold blood across the country in the name of politics. This, insecurity of life and property become a major crisis in Nigerian political scene. Few causes of moral decline are identify as follows: poor understanding of politics lack of ideological bases for party formation, manipulation of ethnic or religious sentiments imposition of power by the political elites, false nationalism and patriotism in governance, inability of politicians to accept losing an election, lost of materialism and nonchalant attitude of Christians to politics. The adverse effects of the negligence of moral virtues result to political instability and national disintegration,

emergence of political godfathers, suppression of human rights and values, political brinkmanship, and political affluence in the midst of poverty.

The research attempts on how to inculcate integrity into Nigerian politics. It applies the harmonious biblical concept of integrity as treated into some areas such as the politicians, political parties, government, electorates, public opinions and the Christian faith. It is asserting that the Christian community has what it takes to inculcate integrity into Nigerian politics through her teachings. Nigerian political history has been a history of perpetual conflict and blood shedding. But the Christians as citizens have the divine mandate to turn Nigerian politics to be a revolution of morality and ethical behaviour. And finally, the study concludes with some further recommendations, that Nigerians need new orientation on what democratic politics is all about; there is great need for more clear-sighted, courageous and dedicated godly men and women in leadership; and there is need for God's centered political process that is characterized by divine holiness, justice and love to be respected equally by all Nigerians.

It is the hope of this writer that this research work will be a boost to Nigerian democratic politics and also help to improve the moral situation of the country.



## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A word of summary is now necessary in order to bring this research to a close. The writer is heightened by the enormous neglect or lack of integrity in Nigerian democratic politics. Thus, this work attempts to proffer solution based on the perspective of biblical Christianity, that is, the work applies the biblical revelation as regard to politics and ethics to this vital problem: "The place of Integrity in Nigerian Politics:." In other words, the writer uses the normative ethic of politics as revealed in the Bible to unravel the problem of moral failure in Nigerian governance.

Hence, the first chapter introduces the work, given the statement of problem that the present level of integrity is very low. And that integrity as a moral venture is essential to Nigerian government. In the same introductory part, the writer sets up three goals or purpose of the research. The second chapter is a review of related literature.

The first objective of the dissertation is to expose the Nigerian democratic society, political stalwarts and government to the biblical concepts of politics and integrity. This is achieved mainly in chapter one of this work. The study develops the biblical overview of the significance of integrity in Israelis politics. Here, the work disclosed the origin of politics that it originated from the very heart of God and entrusted to man and woman right from creation. Israel as a nation was chosen to model integrity in human governance but she failed as disclosed in the Old Testament. In the New Testament God elects the "new Israel", the church, to proffer moral nature of God on earth.

