

## **THE ROLE OF CHRISTIAN MORAL PSYCHOLOGY IN AN INDUSTRIAL SECTOR (PROBLEMS AND PROSPECTS)**

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### **Abstract**

Christian moral psychology revolves around morality that concentrates on an action, is morally good in the community/society. This implies that, Christian moral psychology which is a branch of religious ethics ensures that people's actions and behaviors are in tandem with the acceptable moral standards, thereby contributing a lot in human moral development. It becomes worrisome that despite Christian moral psychology, corruption perpetrated freely in every nooks and corner without those concerned having requisite moral compunction to abstain from corrupt acts. This ugly situation diminishes the role of Christian morality in human moral development. Human behavior that will help us keep in mind that, there are internal and external forces that have the potential to influence our behavior is Christian morality. I think some clues to understanding our struggles can come from recognizing that our Christian moral psychology interacts with our thoughts, feelings, and habitual ways of acting, health, and social factors to influence our moral conduct. Therefore, it has become necessary to examine the prospects and problems that revolves within Christian moral psychology. The researcher made use of phenomenological approach. It was descriptive and analytical. The work used primary and secondary sources. The primary source includes observation while secondary sources include books, journals, and internet materials. Despite the fact that, Nigeria is predominantly populated with Christians, it is still classified as one of the most corrupt countries in the world. There is no doubt that, most of the Christians do not apply Christian moral psychology in their workplace due to Materialism, Secularization, Colonialism, change of moral values, irreligious attitude, family background, western influence, imported religion behavior from other countries.

***Key words: Christian, Morality, Ethics, Moral psychology, Theology.***

### **Introduction**

Christian moral psychology exert a profound influence on all societies and many of the world's people. Throughout history, it has proven to be the primary force for social progress, motivating individuals to develop spiritual qualities and empowering human to make sacrifices for their fellow human beings and to contribute to the betterment of their communities. Those universal principals which lie at the heart of Christian morals are: love, tolerance, compassion, justice, humility, sacrifice, trustworthiness, dedication to the wellbeing of others, and unity which are the foundations of progressive civilization. It is thus obvious that, Christian morals can help to meet the manifold challenges confronting the world community. Based on what Christianity is all about, Christian moral psychology have always preached through behavior or acts that, the spiritual accomplishments and well-being of the individual are linked to the collective advancement of the total community. As a result of tireless service and an active commitment to integrity and harmony, Christian moral psychology have had a positive impact on industrial sector. That is, issues related to human beings having the fear of God, behaving and acting according to the Biblical teaching.

### **Conceptual Underpinnings**

In attempting to discuss this topic beneficially, it will be pertinent to begin by clearly defining our terms with rigor and exactitude to avoid any possible misconceptions in the mind of the reader or listener. In order to provide the basis for this discussion, this paper will provide the definitions of

Christian, morality, values, ethics, moral psychology and theology. The understanding of such concepts would throw light on the understanding of a topic of this nature.

**Christian:**

The word Christian etymologically comes from two Greek words “Christianos and Christos”, meaning “follower of Christ” and “anointed one”. It appeared three times in the New Testament Bible (Acts.11:26; 26:28, 1peter 4:16). The Bible tells us that, “it was in Antioch that the followers of Jesus were first called “Christians”. Gotan (2005) stated that, ‘a Christian is a follower of Jesus Christ, that is, one who believes and practices the tenets of the Christian faith as presented in the Bible’. A Christian is one who is a follower of Jesus Christ, that is, a person who believes and practices the tenets of the Christian faith as presented in the Holy Scriptures. In other words, a Christian is a person who adheres to Christianity; a monotheistic religion based on the life and teachings of Jesus Christ, who Christians believe is the Promised Messiah. Thus, a Christian is a social human person in whom God is present in grace through Jesus Christ, and whose whole life is shaped by that belief.

**Morality:**

Morality can be regarded as rightness or pureness of behavior of an action while religion can be interpreted as belief in the existence of Supreme Being. It can be said that morality concerns itself with the norms of individual behavior. It also deals with how we ought to behave in the society. Morality means a system of moral values against which human conduct is judged and ordered of a balanced living. Morality aims at moral decency in thought, behavior and action. Morality is a theory of morals and obligations that concerns itself with what is right and what is wrong, good and bad, positive and negative, reward and punishment, praise and blame.

**Values:**

Ayuba (2015) stated that, values have several contextual meanings. Basically, they refer to worthiness, quality, importance and usefulness. Thus, values are those things we believe to be inwardly desirable or worthwhile. Religion is among the basic institutions and major force in influencing social behavior. Certain Christian ethical values are progressive to national development. Values represent broad ideas regarding what is desirable, correct and good, that most members of society share. They enable society members to make evaluations regarding what is proper and what is improper and reprehensible. Values, therefore, serve as a guide for socially acceptable behaviors. Values are matters of importance as distinct from mere matters of fact. It can also be regarded as what an individual cherishes. What is valuable to Mr. **A** may not be valuable to Mr. **B**. Hence, value is subjective. Values are the basis for the judgments people make as to what is desirable, correct and good, as well as undesirable incorrect and bad. In other words, values are issues regarded with esteem in the society. They are standards which serve as guide to what is acceptable to people.

**Ethics:**

Benner (1988) saw that the term 'ethics' comes from the Greek word 'ethos' meaning norm or customary and it is equivalent to moral. It means a customary way of acting, contrasted with historical or anthropological way of acting. Ethics is the branch of philosophy known as moral philosophy or philosophical thinking about morality. It includes moral problems and moral judgments. The subject matter of ethics is nothing but human absolute end. Ethics is a discipline that studies morality. It is a theory of morals that deals with right and wrong thoughts or actions. Ethics therefore, deals with judgment as to the rightness or wrongness, virtuous or vicious, desirability or undesirability, approval or disapproval of our actions. Ethics signifies a general pattern or way of life. In another sense, ethics is used to signify a set of rules of conduct or moral code. Ethics is seen as an inquiry into the measuring of ethical terms and its relation to ways of life and rules of conduct. This sense relates to meta-ethics which is a branch of moral philosophy.

**Moral psychology**

Moral psychology is the study of moral identity development, or how people integrate moral ideals with the development of their own character. It encompasses the study of moral judgment, moral reasoning, moral character, and many related subjects at the intersection of philosophy and psychology.

**Theology**

Theology is the study of God. It comes from the word 'Theos' which is in Greek for "God" and ology which is the Greek word meaning "word". Theology therefore means 'the study of God'. The work of handling the word of truth. It is the study of the nature of God and religious belief.

**Christian Moral**

Christian morality consists of living one's life with guidance and inspiration from the Christian scriptures and traditions. Christian moral as an academic discipline uses scriptures and traditions in developing and critiquing ethical norms and theories and applying them to ethical issues in our daily lives. Most Christian morals agrees that the sources of morals include revelation (scripture) and tradition, as well as human reason and experience.

Being shaped by Biblical revelation is the primary way that Christian ethics can be distinguished from alternative ethical perspectives, both religious and secular; thus, one important question for a Christian moral is how it is the practice or ideas about the practice which depends on religion (convictions and commitments) or theology (critical discussion about those convictions and commitments).

**The Perspectives of Christian Moral Psychology for Good Prospects.**

It is obvious that Christian moral psychology embraces the appropriate attitudes and values that are essential for good prospect in industrial sector which is basically on attitudes and values which include: good character development, respect for human rights and dignity, promotion of the common good; and protection of the poor and vulnerable as discussed below:

**(1). Formation of Good Character:**

Formation of good character is fundamental in Christian moral life. It does not only recognize, but also require a discipline in a formation of character and points to self-discipline as an ideal norm (Bible Encyclopedia, 1975: 401). For example, Christians are urged to live good and righteous life for the well-being of the society (industrial sector), "Seek good and not evil that you may live; Hate evil and love good, and establish justice in the gate" (Amos 5:14, 15). "Follow justice and justice alone" (Leviticus 19:35) while (Proverb 14:34) writes: "Righteousness exalts a nation but sin is a reproach". The sixth commandment condemns stealing, hence, (Deuteronomy 5: 19) says: "thou shall not steal". Dishonest acts and lying are also condemned: "if you have not been faithful in that which is another, who will give you that which is your own". On the danger and consequences of lying, the Bible says that: Everyone, who has practiced falsehood have their abode in hell fire. "Do not lie to one another, for he who pours out lie will perish" (Revelation 22: 15; Rev. 21: 8.). A false witness will not go unpunished and he who litters lie will not escape (Proverb (19:5). "Do not swear at all, let what you say be simply yes or no, anything more than this comes from the evil" (Matt 5:33-37).

The Bible urges individuals to be upright in their duties, "You shall not take bribe for bribe blinds the officials and subverts the course of those who are in the right" (Exodus 23:8). The Bible admonishes irresponsibility using the parable of the ten virgins in the Gospel of Matthew, but at midnight there was a cry, watch therefore for you do not know the hour" (Matt 25:1- 13). Injustice is also seriously condemned, "Do not pervert justice or show no partiality (Amos 5:7). In social relation, honour both the rich and the poor (James 2:1-6). From the above Biblical injunctions,

Christian moral psychology is indeed against all these and preaches formation of good Character. A true Christian ensures that he or she is guided by these scriptural principles which are essential attributes of good living. This is one of the prospect that Christian moral psychology is advocating and really making an impact in the industrial sector.

## **(2). Respect for Human Rights and Dignity**

According to Scott, (1989) "human right has its origin from creation. Man had respect for human rights from the beginning. He received it with his life from God who created him/her. It is inherent in his/her creation. " The dignity of human being is asserted in three successive sentence in (Genesis 1; 27, 28). First, 'God created man in His own image.' Secondly, 'Male and Female He created them....' Therefore, every person, regardless of race, sex, age, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, employment or economic status, health, intelligence, or achievement is worthy of respect. Thus, human rights are foundational, and so to enjoy the dignity of having been created in God's image and of possessing in consequence unique relationship to God Himself, to fellow human beings and to the material world. William Temple quoted in (Scott, 1989:163) states:

"There can be no rights of man except on the basis of faith in God. My worth is what I am worth to God; and that is a marvelous great deal, for Christ who died for me. Thus, incidentally, what gives each of us His highest worth gives the same worth to everyone; in all that matters most we are all equal".

Hence, equality of all comes from the essential dignity as children of God. Treating equals equally is one way of defining justice, and justice in turn means that, we render to each person his or her due, which is the attribute of good Christian moral psychology. While each person is different, while each culture and customs varies, while talents varies, discrimination because of these differences goes against the more basic principle of human dignity. It is worth mentioning that, Christian moral psychology has been instrumental in ensuring that individual respect for Human Rights and Dignity are maintained.

## **3). Promotion of Common Good**

In the catechism of the Catholic Church (Suleiman, 2011), the common good is to be understood as the "sum total of social conditions which allow people, either as groups or as individuals, to reach their fulfillment more fully and more easily. A proper concern for the common good is the antidote to unbridled individualism, narrow mindedness and self-centeredness. Working for, and serving the common good involves three basic elements: respect for the human person; and the social well-being and development of the group. Jesus Christ began His preaching by proclaiming that the Kingdom of God is at hand. His Kingdom, open to all and for all is a Kingdom of truth and justice, peace and love.

In the industrial sector, public officers squander and loot the money meant for the common good of the masses. In amazingly, the turmoil called corruption which is found in all spheres of industrial sectors is largely responsible for the stunted economic growth of the country and for the mass poverty that reign in the land (Suleiman, 2011). It should be noted that, if not for Christian moral psychology, the industrial sector would have been worse than it is now, which is a great prospect in our industrial sectors.

## **(4). Protection of the Poor and Vulnerable**

A society is measured and evaluated by its treatment of the weak and the powerless. The common good, the good society as a whole requires preferential protection to those affected by the absence of power. The heart and hand of Jesus went out in compassion to the sick, the hungry, the leper and the outcast. Jesus told the disciples of John the Baptist that the sign that He is the true Messiah is that, "the poor have the good news preached to them (Mt 11:5). Pope John Paul II emphasizes that the poor are not burdens, but our brothers and sisters. The Catholic Catechism indicates that,

“those who are oppressed by poverty are the object of a preferential love on the part of the Christian, which since her origin and in spite of the family of many of her members, has not ceased to work for their relief, defense, and liberation through numerous works of charity which remain indispensable always and everywhere.” Indeed, if the Christian politicians and leaders sincerely imbibe these Christian moral values in the performance of their duties, good governance will inevitably be enthroned. The Christian moral psychology never relents to making impact to industrial sectors.

**(5). There will be full fulfillment:**

A Christian moral psychology will gain fulfillment. This implies that, I will be filled with ecstasy and joy because one is not working for man but for God. I see myself as a workman of God. In 2 Timothy 2:15 the Bible says, “Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth”.

**A Christian of Moral Psychology is likely to face some problems in Industrial sector as:**

**1. You will be hated by many people in the Industrial Sector**

When one stands firmly for Jesus Christ in preaching morality to those who are not standing firm for Jesus Christ, one is bound to be hated in the industrial sector. This implies that, those that do not accept Jesus Christ as their personal Lord and Saviour will indeed dislike you. The Bible was clear that if one is not of the world, the people of the world will hate you. **John 15:18-25** “If the world hates you, know that it has hated me before it hated you. If you were of the world, the world would love you as its own; but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you”. This is a problem because one is a Christian of morality.

**2. Many will avoid you as a Christian of Morality:**

In the industrial sector out there, those who are not Christian will always avoid you, isolate themselves from you and you will be seen as an enemy to them. None of such persons would like to share anything in common with you. It should be noted that, as they avoid you, they will say all sorts of issues against you. In Matthew 5:11 the scripture says “Blessed are you when people insult you and persecute you, and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of Me”. This is the Word of God for those who stand as workmen of God.

**3. There will be little or no love:**

A Christian of Biblical morals or ethics would only be loved by his/her fellow Christians. Those who call themselves Christians but lack morals, rarely could have love for him. It is clear that, if you are for the world the people will love you as well. In the book of **John 15: 19** “If you were of the world, the world would love you as its own; but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you”.

As an individual, these are some basic problems one would hardly avoid as a Christian of Moral Psychology in industrial sector.

**When Confronted with Abuse and Suffering for the sake of Christ Jesus, how will you Handle it?**

When I endure grief or suffer wrongly at the hands of others, in other words when I endure mistreatment which is abuse and take it patiently the Scriptures tell us “this is acceptable with God”. God is not excusing the actions of the abusers. But God is saying when I am on the receiving end of various kinds of abuse and I take them patiently, that is acceptable with God.

The following will be the steps that I will personally take by the grace of God:

First of all, I will call or get to the person who abuse or insult me in love. I will happily let him/her know that, it is not good with some explanations and example of such from the Bible. In essence, I

will not return insult or abuse him but have an opportunity to show to him that, God is not happy with what he has done to me.

Secondly, as I sit with him in love, I will pray with him that, God should forgive him and bless him. The Bible says in 1 Peter 3:9 "Don't *pay people back with evil for the evil they do to you, or ridicule those who ridicule you. Instead, bless them, because you were called to inherit a blessing*". Matthew 5:44 "But I say to you, *love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you*". The Bible says in Luke 6:28: "*Bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you*".

Finally, I will try to be closer to him which can be achieved by knowing where he stays or his resident, pay him visit from time to time and always share with him Biblically for God's glory. By coming closer to him, the standard of Christian morality will not fade from me to him and prayerfully, he will change from his bad ways to serve the Lord Jesus Christ in whichever way the Lord wants to use him. These are the steps that I will take so as to win his soul for the Lord Jesus Christ.

### **Will you give up or you will carry on in getting the right thing done?**

In life, as long as we live we are bound to face abuse and insult. One rarely runs away from it especially as a Christian who maintains morality in the industrial sector.

By the grace of God, I will not give up but ensure that the right thing is always done. I will not give up by the grace of God no matter the abuse or insult I am standing firm for God. For example, I am a practical example to be abused and insulted for the sake of our Lord Jesus Christ. This is my story:

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I got married to my beloved wife in May, 1997 and stayed for twenty-one (21) years without an issue of a child. Within the years, no kind of abuse and insult directly and indirectly that I did not receive. All the abuse and insults come from close Christian brothers that we were all serving elders in the church Board. While some of the abuse and insults come from my colleagues in the same organization and mostly Christians. To an extent that, one of the church elders called me to say: "elder Kondo! Are you among those that killed Jesus Christ that you don't want to bear a child outside my wedlock? May you continue to hold on firmly to Jesus Christ and end up without a child here on earth" I held on to God that, with a child or no child I will continue to maintain and do the right thing in serving God. This is just a few out of many abuses and insults that I received. The following Bible scriptures encouraged and helped me: -

**Genesis 2:24** that says: "Therefore, shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh." This verse helped me to maintain my beloved wife no matter what. The second verse is from **1 Corinthians 9:16**

"When I preach the gospel, I cannot boast, since I am compelled to preach. Woe to me if I do not preach the gospel!"

Praise and honour be ascribed unto our Lord, in the twenty-second (22) years we were blessed with twin babies. All those that abused and insulted me were surprised and ashamed during the naming and dedication of the babies.

With God on my side, I can always face tomorrow. By His grace, I will never give up my Christian morality in the industrial sector, and I will ensure that the right thing is done.

### **Conclusion:**

The purpose of developing a Christian view of the world is not merely to evaluate and judge the world, but to change it. By our actions each of us, each human being is changing the world in which we live. Ultimately, Jesus Christ will introduce a radical change to our world when he comes in glory. But until that time, He is using His people to change the world. This indeed, happens one person at a time, but it also happens one family at a time, or one school at a time, or one church at a time, or even one nation at a time. Wherever you are, you have an opportunity to participate in changing the world for Jesus Christ.

The place to begin, of course, is with ourselves. The gospel of salvation by grace which is basic to the Christian worldview teaches us that before we can change the world for Christ, we must ourselves be changed by Christ. We must trust in him to bring us into a relationship with the Father (John 14:6) and to begin making us into sons and daughters of God who mirror the love of God's eternal Son Jesus Christ (Rom. 8:29). In this age of the gospel, God is not calling together mere servants or "employees" to work for him, but is raising up children who will participate in the "family business" out of a sense of love and mutual commitment.

Essential to changing our world is changing our view of the world and then living in light of the new vision. God, as a loving Father, has given us his word in the Bible to enable us to see the world as he would have us see it. As the world changes around us, we need to assess those changes in light of Scripture, as well as to assess our own understanding of Scripture in the light of new ideas and new perspectives. In this book we have tried to provide a sampling of the issues facing us as Christians seeking to understand our changing world according to God's word.

Where do we go from here? Each one needs to make a commitment to participating in the work of God's family in whatever context and through whatever opportunities He opens up to us. God calls scientists, psychologists, philosophers, theologians, ministers, missionaries, historians, physicians, educators, attorneys, politicians, artists, mothers, and fathers, people of all professions, of all races, of both sexes, and of all nations, to use the gifts God has given them to make a difference where they are. We need to encourage young Christian men and women to pursue excellence in their professions, to look for ways in which they can make a difference for Christ in the industrial sector. Wherever we are and whatever roles we fill in life, part of living in light of the Christian world view is learning to communicate Christian faith and values to others and to defend them when they are challenged. Whether we are mothers or fathers answering the many difficult questions our children ask us, or students taking classes that raise troubling or complex issues, or workers at our job engaging in conversations over lunch with people of other religions or lifestyles, all of us will face challenges to our Christian convictions. If we are to meet these challenges effectively for Christ, we must take seriously our calling to "be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you" (1 Peter 3:15). In turn, this means that we must commit ourselves to the lifelong mission of learning and growing in our understanding of Christian faith and values and their application to the changing world in which we live. It is our hope that the term paper has helped you in that mission.

#### **Recommendation:**

- As Christians, we have a great role to play in our industrial sector, even though we shall be insulted and hatred, but we should stand firm for the Lord and make a difference in the industrial sector for God.

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