

Religion and Enterprise Africa Summit 2022.

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Entrepreneurial Transformation in Africa through Faith-Based Innovation, Ethics and Integrity



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Goal of the summit

Building faith-based **Entrepreneurs of Integrity** who are **committed** to transforming Africa into a **first world continent** through **SMEs** shaped by **God centered values.**

Content:

- ▶ Why Faith- Based Innovation for Transformation at this time
- ▶ Contradictions in Africa
- ▶ Disturbing observations in Africa
- ▶ The example of a practical Church / Religious Institution
- ▶ Need for Ethics and Integrity
- ▶ Suggestions for appropriate Action.
- ▶ Conclusion

Why Faith- Based Innovation for Transformation at this time?

Influencers & Vital Stakeholders in Development.

- ▶ Faith matters to people, and matters to development. In many parts of the world, Religious and Faith Businesses (RFBs) and Religious Leaders (RLs) are influential in both the political and social spheres, and have a broad following in society.

Contradictions in Africa:

The current state of affairs in **Africa** is characterized by:

Being known as **incurably Religious people** and yet having a serious lack of **authentic spirituality, Morality** and **Integrity** in all spheres of life (in religious institutions and society).

Contradictions in Africa:



Wealthiest continent - natural resources and yet having the poorest people on Planet Earth.



Conflicts to peace and stability in Africa.

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- The identity crisis in which African values and Western values are often confused.
- The need to strengthen the proactivity of the church vis-à-vis issues of development, governance and justice.

Disturbing observations in Africa

I am disturbed by the massive **poverty** especially rampant in many African villages. I am particularly disturbed by the fact that Africa, which is the poorest, and backward continent is at the same time a Religious continent (at least south of the sahara).

Do these two faces of Africa, being **poor and Religious** have any relation to one another?

Disturbing observations in Africa

Any institution that has penetrated and touched even the remotest African village and person?

Church/Mosque:

While a great number of African peasants may not know the **RDC** or the **Prime Minister**, they would almost for sure know their parish priest/pastor and Sheik, both by name and face. He preaches to them every Sunday; he baptizes them, marries them, and eventually buries them.

Disturbing observations in Africa

I mean the church has to get beyond the theological concern for the salvation of souls (which is promised beyond this life), and beyond a mere claim for what has been called the preferential option for the poor, **to preaching a gospel that can make a difference** (a material) difference in the people's life here and now. Otherwise the church might find that she herself has become part of the problem of poverty. Many times we have been Pious (preaching the word), towards salvation and Pastoral (Visiting the sick and counselling). There is also an urgent need for a prophetic or practical church. Let me explain.

The example of a practical Church / Religious Institution

The prophetic church of Mary Magdalene who made a fool of herself by wiping the feet of Jesus with her hair (in public) and anointing them with oil. In the risky endeavor of this prophetic action, she envisioned change, a new world, a new social order made possible by the life and story of Jesus.

- The church of Mary Magdalene, the prophetic church, is a church that cares for the coming reign of God and its obligation to bring it now.
- Mary Magdalene does not wait till death, but anoints the body of Jesus now. Not only does she break tradition and the usual rules of decency, by breaking the expensive jar of oil, she shows that nothing must be spared to fill the house with aroma-now.
- The church of Mary Magdalene is the church that insists that the salvation of the poor is not for the life to come. It is now .

Cont...

- **It is a church that is deeply material.**
- **It is a church not simply concerned with a soul alone.**
- **It is a church that anoints (saves) the feet as well.**

It is a church therefore, which rises above the Pious (salvation of souls) and above the necessary, but enabling, service of the Pastoral church to the practical efforts in making a difference to the material and spiritual lives of people. It is a church that strives not only to convince the people that outside the church there is no salvation, but also that without a toilet, clean drinking water, or without good food or business enterprise to support your family, there can be no salvation.

Need for Ethics and Integrity

- A unique factor that contributes to **corruption in Africa** as a result of lack of **Ethics and Integrity**, is the **Social Pressure** from the **EXTENDED FAMILY**, as a result of lack of innovation.
- Some Religious leaders have ended up being manipulative and exploitative to promote self aggrandizement.
- Leaders who give in to these pressures can end up stretched and over committed. The only solution is to find ways to get more resources. This is one force that leads to responsible people down the road of compromising moral values and integrity.

SUGGESTIONS FOR APPROPRIATE ACTION:

Government

- ▶ Establish accountability structures to ensure that leaders operate with integrity and deliver on their promises.
- ▶ Urge governments and religious institutions to set up peer review structures, mechanisms, and departments to foster ethics and integrity.
- ▶ Establish methods of recognizing and affirming persons with integrity so as to create and publicize role models.

SUGGESTIONS FOR APPROPRIATE ACTION:....

Religious Institutions

- ▶ The church/Mosque in Africa in all its manifestations needs to be transformed by God into something new that will be at the forefront as an instrument for transformation. Africa has enormous potential and urgently needs a new breed of courageous and visionary leaders of integrity who are able to lead transformation in all spheres of society.

Start business Enterprises, support and sustain them.

- ▶ Take responsibility for developing leaders for various sectors of society (professional, business, corporate, government, etc.
- ▶ Encourage religious bodies to allocate resources to develop leadership skills of their members.

Suggestions for appropriate Action:

Leadership Development

Ensure leadership development promotes a culture of excellence at individual, religious bodies, corporate and government levels.

Theological institutions should incorporate Entrepreneurial studies and development studies in their curricula.

Cont..

- ▶ The religious institutions should be at the forefront for fostering and advocating Enterprise development.
- ▶ Create an environment in which on-going learning takes place for sharing best practices, needs and resources for development.

Conclusion:

I have therefore argued that as a church/Religious Institution we must adopt strategies and a wholistic theology of salvation which will help us to face the challenge of poverty. But I have also argued that as a society we have the moral responsibility to re-examine at every stage the strategies we adopt in dealing with any issue that confronts society.

We have adopted the liberal market economy as our chief weapon to eradicate poverty. If however, we lack the resources and / or ability to subject this economic vision to a critical and honest inspection, we may discover too late the very means we have adopted to fight poverty are part of the problem. And instead of having a total eradication of poverty and salvation, which is our moral responsibility, we may see just a deepening of the crisis.

Conclusion...

- Our God in Gen 1:28, blessed us and said, “Multiply and Fill the Earth and subdue it. (Be fruitful and increase in number) Be masters of everything that has life. Fill the Earth, Replenish distribution, fill the whole Earth within your reach. Don’t be a local champion when God created you to be a global champion, be a solution to the community, increase your sales to the whole Country.
- Subdue – claim space, subdue your enemies, subdue a bad business season by Resilience, subdue the media reports by keeping quiet and being diplomatic.
- Be Masters over things, have dominion, so that when you speak, people listen. Be a man/woman of influence. Don’t be masters of spending be masters of production.

Conclusion...

“Your ability dictates your prosperity”.
You are the greatest resource, the
greatest resource is not Education,
Not money, not connections but you
– Invest in yourself. You can be both
righteous and rich.

Go and start a saving culture, start to protect your money ,intentionally, Don't spend before you invest/ have money first but remember that as you build your wealth, Do not forget God and his Kingdom values.

The solution lies in our hands.

Thank You