

## A CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF PENTECOSTALISM AND DEVELOPMENT IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

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### ABSTRACT

Can religion in Africa be a genuine and permanent partner for sustainable development in an asymmetrical world and modern world system? Can indigenous African peoples create African futures within the aforesaid question and in the midst of spiritual coloniality? Despite apparent differences between the regions and cultural groups on this colossal continent, we can identify similar elements in religion. Religion has proven to be the highest social institution with an overwhelming influence on the lives of indigenous peoples in Sub-Saharan Africa, in contrast to other social institutions. This is evidenced by the contemporary realities that wherever you turn in this region's communities, Churches overwhelm the landscape. Therefore, this is a testimony that belief in religion has grown stronger in the same region compared to the yesteryears. Of colossal interest in this article is the comparison between the classical Pentecostalism and the new Pentecostalism / Charismaticalism Mega-Churches. The former's approach was and/or is more oriented in empowerment in its thrust – thus, they are conduits for sustainable development, whereas the latter's thrust is more inclined in food distribution than in development programs and projects, as well as their theological, behavioural activities and characteristics or distinctive are the opposite of the former. The latter's charismatic prophets and preachers who are sole owners of these Mega-Churches accumulate wealth more than their governments. Their spiritual advice is shrouded with 'gosprenurship' premised on carnal, greedy, treacherous and selfish inveiglement that seeks to continue fleecing and milking unsuspecting poor masses of congregants of their hard earned. There is mass enslavement here. Therefore, in relation to the aforesaid challenges posed by these new Pentecostal/Charismatic Mega-Churches in Africa the article's contention is that there is a need for freedom or liberation from spiritual coloniality for sustainable development in order to create new humanism and genuine African futures.

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### Introduction

This article grapples with the contemporary or new Pentecostalism / Charismaticalism Mega-Churches' theology, activities and characteristics as constitutive elements of spiritual coloniality, that have created power structure which makes it hard for indigenous Africans to beget their own genuine futures for sustainable development. This Pentecostal / Charismatic Mega-Churches' leadership abhors change, in this context, change that can free or liberate these poor congregants' minds, hence there is subjectivation and they prefer gospel that pacifies and tranquilizers their followers. For this reason, these leaders have psychologically charmed and imprisoned their congregants who are poor and fascinated with miracles. To this effect, religion has become the safe sanctuary for many troubled African minds considering the socio-economic and religiopolitical challenges experienced by most Sub-Saharan African countries – thereby taken advantage of. *Kwazinatorhwa matumbu ndiko kwazinomhanyira*, (most people flock in their massive numbers where they are always tricked and robbed). However, with unsuspecting minds,

Africans take haven in religion largely on the assumption that those prayers; miracles accompanied with faith healing will deliver them from their earthly challenges and usher in abundant life here on earth as well as into the next life. The article focuses on these Mega-Churches because they are colossal crowd or masses pullers hitherto most of the Sub-Saharan African countries had experienced high levels of poverty, unemployment, and inequalities exacerbated by poor governance, corruption, and civil wars. This is compounded by failed developmental theories implemented in Africa since world war two and has an impact on indigenous African minds hence, took refuge in religion (mostly from the 1970s in Pentecostal/Charismatic Churches). They are largely lured with prosperity theology, which promised and/or continues to promise instant success in life – thus, attainment of wealth and health in the life before death. Against this backdrop, we witness that most poor masses have cast their belief and confidence in these new religious movements or Churches rather than in their own governments. Therefore, religion plays a fundamental role in the lives of most indigenous African peoples.

Christianity has massive followers than any other religions in Sub-Saharan African countries, hence the proliferation of these new Pentecostalism / Charismaticism Mega-Churches.

They are differently interpreted by scholars of religions, such as Allan Anderson, Ezra Chitando, and Paul Gifford to mention just but a few. Focusing on their theology and behavioural activities as well as characteristics or distinctives, the undesirable observations cast doubt and a murky future for Africa. Considering their demographic levels, they can easily influence sustainable development by inculcating spiritual epistemologies of production and development. On another level, with such an overwhelming social influence on the lives of indigenous African peoples, religion can be a permanent partner in sustainable development. Jesus' disciples taught Luke 4: 16-30, therefore the spirit's mission manifesto is holistic. There is no brainwashing here in order to gain financially and materially, as is the common phenomenon in these Mega-Churches. If Jesus Christ's spirit is maintained there are genuine benefits in Sub-Saharan African countries' communities which are drowning in rivers of poverty.

Therefore, the main aim of this article is to advocate for liberation or freedom from spiritual coloniality of Mega-Church members. The essential arguments are clearly articulated in four sections. The first section deals with definitions of terms. The second section briefly sets the scene on the historical trajectory of classical Pentecostalism and the new Pentecostalism or Charismaticism Churches. The third section unpacks and explains as well as explores the general characteristics of both classical and new Pentecostalism to ascertain their developmental thrust, respectively. The fourth section focuses on the pertinent issues of the new Pentecostalism prophets and preachers' theological thrusts, behavioural activities, and characteristics or distinctives in relation to their spiritual coloniality for self-enrichment. The fifth section deals with the fundamental issue of abhorring change of mental faculties "that make it difficult for indigenous African peoples to realize their full potential as active subjects capable of shaping their futures" (to use Ndlovu-Gatsheni's words – 2014: 181-202). The last section is the conclusion and it underscores the need for liberation from spiritual coloniality for African minds to genuinely create African futures for sustainable development.

### Definition of Terms

It is important and relevant in an article of this nature to define some of the key terms and phrases being used. The section does not seek to trace the

etymological developments behind these terms but seeks to underscore in what ways these terms are understood in this article. **Coloniality** is defined as "a name for the dark side of modernity that needs to be unmasked because it exists as an embedded logic that enforces control, domination and exploitation disguised in the language of salvation, progress, modernization and being good for everyone" (Mignolo 2005: 6-8). As for Ngugi Wa Thiong'o, coloniality is the "psychological/epistemological as well as cultural and linguistic impact on the African minds" (Ngugi, 1986). However, with the aforementioned definitions of coloniality – **Spiritual coloniality**, therefore, refers to spiritual epistemological dominance, control, and exploitation disguised in miracles and the gospel that pacifies and tranquilizes congregants' minds or mental faculties by the contemporary new Pentecostalism / Charismaticism Churches' prophets and preachers. By this overwhelming spiritual coloniality of the souls of their poor congregants, these charismatic preachers seek perpetual control, domination, and exploitation of them.

**Prosperity Theology/Gospel** – Researchers who include Gifford (2004), Ayegboyan (2011), and GarrardBurnett (2012) have defined prosperity theology as a specifically Pentecostal doctrine that places emphasis on the attainment of wealth and health in the life before death. Prosperity theology celebrates wealth in this life. They contend that believers must 'sow' in order to 'reap' financial rewards and good health in this life. Through giving generously, God will reward them richly. The work of their hands will thrive, irrespective of the prevailing situation. In their preaching and prophecies, proponents of prosperity theology such as TB Joshua, Olukoya, Oyedepo, Chris Oyakhilome, Gilbert Deya, Chisanpo, (writer's addition, Magaya, Makandiwa, Angel, and Prophet Passion, to mention just a few) – promises their adherents who give generously that their lives would be transformed. They would no longer in want, but they would become stable economically. God would ensure that poverty would not haunt them any longer (Asamoah-Gyadu 2013: 388-409).

**Pentecostalism** – is a religious brand of Christianity that emerged in the dawn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century in America (Alexander, 2011 Cf. Musoni 2013: 1-8). The term, Pentecost, is a Greek word prominent in the Old Testament to mean Feast of Weeks. It was celebrated on the 50<sup>th</sup> day, seven weeks after the Passover Festival. In the New Testament, it has a new meaning. Pentecost was celebrated in the church as the day on which the Holy

Spirit descended (Acts 2). Pentecostalism refers to the 'spirit type' churches, which emphasizes Acts 2, as the basis of their doctrine. Furthermore, these churches believe in the doctrine of speaking in other tongues (glossolalia) as was experienced after the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, and they regard it also as 'baptism in the Holy Spirit', hence it is an indispensable aspect of Pentecostalism (ibid). In addition, "Pentecostalism, like the other Born-again Christian movements, emphasizes the literal 'infallibility of the scripture' and it also stresses the centrality of conversion experience and the possessing of the gifts of the spirits: divine healing, exorcism, and prophecy" (Maxwell 2005: 5 Cf. Marongwe and Maposa 2015: 1-22).

**GOSPRENEURSHIP** – Marongwe and Maposa drawing from Jonathan Mbiriyamveka's article in *The Herald of 27 July 2013*, they noted that he introduced a profound term 'gosprenurship' in specific reference to the works of the emerging trend where New Pentecostal Churches are being perceived as lucrative financial ventures and the 'prophets' and their wives who are also turning out as 'prophetesses' are exhibiting opulence. Thus, from that article, 'gosprenurship' can be taken to mean the setting of the gospel; mission as a platform for profiteering as in a business venture that is as a 'latter day, money-spinning family enterprise' (Marongwe and Maposa 2015: 1-22).

### The History of Classical and New Pentecostalism

The historiography of the origins and the pioneers of classical and new Pentecostalism are shrouded with glaring gaps as well as biases that need to be corrected for the current generation and the posterity's comprehension. As most historians of Pentecostalism give prominent convictions of classical or early Pentecostalism from the Azusa Street Revival, some have a different perspective. For this reason, it is noted that "the historians of Pentecostalism have often reflected a bias interpreting history from a predominantly white American perspective, neglecting (if not completely ignoring) the vital and often more significant work of African, Asian, African-American, Caribbean and Latino as Pentecostal pioneers. Some of these western histories add the biases of domination and race and most of the earlier ones tended to be hagiographies" (Anderson 2004: 1-20). Furthermore, Grant Wacker (1986) has pointed out that early histories of Pentecostalism suffered from a 'ritualization of Pentecostal history' that included a 'white racial bias' that ignored the central influence of black culture on Pentecostal worship and theology,

and in this view, the 'more serious distortion' of a 'persistent gender bias' in which the leading role of women was overlooked (ibid).

In addition, for example, it is explained that African American worker Lucy Farrow, who not only a leader at Azusa Street but also was one of the first Pentecostal missionaries to reach Africa (Liberia), has largely been written out of the histories. These race and gender distortions are indeed problems to overcome, but there may be even more serious issues facing the interpretation and writing of Pentecostal history. Pentecostal histories usually begin with American pioneers like Charles Parham and William Seymour, and then emphasize the beginnings of Pentecostalism in other countries with reference to missionaries sent from the west. So, for example, John G. Lake (Canadian) is credited with the founding the Pentecostalism in South Africa, George Berg (German American) in India, Gunner Vingren (Swedish) and Luis Francescon (Italian American) in Brazil, William Burton (English) in the Congo, and so on. Without understanding the important role of these missionaries or ignoring those historians who have attempted to correct errors of the past, it remains true that many historians have still not acknowledged, or have overlooked or minimized the vital role of thousands of national workers in early Pentecostalism, particularly in Asia and Africa (ibid). This being the case, the main thrust of this section is to critically grapple with the historicity of classical Pentecostalism and new Pentecostalism / Charismaticism in SubSaharan Africa. Classical Pentecostalism is usually branded as the 'third force', after Protestant from the Roman Catholic. To this effect, Newbigin Leslie (1953) in his book entitled 'The Household of God', he "casts Pentecostalism in terms of the third force in Christianity, following the Protestant emphasis on the Word, and the Roman Catholic emphasis on the sacraments" (Asamoah-Gyadu 2013: 388-409).

Classical Pentecostalism denominations, some of which have roots in the 1901 Charles Parham and 1906 William Seymour Azusa Street revivals of North America, have gained much prominence in Africa. In most Sub-Saharan Africa, this period was marked by increased insertion into liberal market ideology as well as globalization processes characterized by rapid travels and mass communication. According to Allan Anderson (2002), this newer form of Christianity is fast becoming one of the most significant expressions of Christianity on the (African) continent, especially in Africa's cities (Ukah 2007: 1-18). In South Africa, for example, the Assemblies of God, Apostolic Faith

Mission, and the Full Gospel Church of God belong to this tradition. The bulk of classical Pentecostal Churches operating in Africa, however, were initiated locally; foreign assistance often came later. Other Pentecostal collectivities found in Africa include New (Independent) Pentecostal Churches (NPCs), trans-denominational Pentecostal Fellowships like the Full Gospel Businessmen's Fellowship International (FGBMFI), Women Aglow, and Intercessors for Africa; and Charismatic renewal groups of the mainline Churches. These together with itinerant international Pentecostal preachers and prophets have taken over the religious landscape as the new faces of African Christianity (Asamoah-Gyadu 2013: 388-409). The AFM, with its roots linked to the Ministry of John G Lake, is the first Pentecostal Church in Africa.

Lake started his ministry in Johannesburg on 25 May 1908 (Burger 1987: 167 Cf. Erasmus 1996: 1-237). His mission was to proclaim the Pentecostal message in Africa with the focus on mission work. He and Tom Hezmalhalch, with the help of others, were the founders of the AFM on the African continent (ibid). This initial non-racial movement began with the emphasis on the power of God to save, heal, baptize in the Holy Spirit and through evangelism to reach the world's lost people for Christ (Erasmus 1996: 1-237).

Their understanding of the dependence on the Holy Spirit as counselor and guide created a theoretical basis for theological education. They initially trusted that this dependence on the Spirit was all that was needed to be effective in the ministry and that formal theological education was not required (ibid). Furthermore, in Africa today, there are not only major western mission-related Pentecostal denominations such as the Assemblies of God originating from the USA, but also African-initiated ones like William F. Kumuyi's Deeper Christian Life Ministry, which started in Nigeria in 1973. In addition, there are the multitudinous 'mega' independent New Pentecostal Churches like Mensa Otabil's International Central Gospel Church in Ghana, Andrew Wutawanashe's Family of God in Zimbabwe, and The Zimbabwe Assemblies of God Africa (ZAOGA), led by Archbishop Ezekiel Guti with an estimated membership of over 600,000 is one of the largest in that region. Guti was originally part of South Africa Apostolic Faith Mission (AFM), founded in 1908, until 1959 when he was expelled together with a small band of followers after disagreements with white missionaries; therefore, all were born out of local initiatives. The Assemblies of God Church in the West African state of Burkina

Faso was established in 1921 and today its membership is around 400,000. Classical Pentecostalism is also found in Malawi, Kenya, Burundi, Rwanda, and Congo (ibid), and all other Sub-Saharan African countries not mentioned in the article.

It is, however, evident from the above brief history of the classical Pentecostalism that as much as their origins are attributed to initiatives of the indigenous African people, most of them have attachments with the Euro-Western Classical Pentecostalism. These denominations planted classical Pentecostalism in Europe as well. For this reason, it is explained that, as with the African initiated classical Pentecostal denominations, all these Churches are now proliferating internationally. African Pentecostal Churches have become a dominant force in Western Europe and North America providing participants the religious context to 'sing the Lord's song in foreign lands'. The fact that African religions have emerged in Europe not as primal forms but in terms of Christianity is itself evidence of the growing strength of the Christian faith in modern Africa. Pentecostal stream, have re-crossed former mission boundaries forcing missionary countries to take note of the upbeat mode of African Christianity. To this end, the largest single Christian congregation in Europe since Christianity began is Nigerian Pastor Matthew Ashimolowo's Kingsway International Christian Centre (KICC) in London. Pastor Matthew Ashimolowo founded KICC in 1992 and has within ten years grown to become the biggest Church in Europe (Asamoah-Gyadu 2013: 388-409).

The New Pentecostalism / Charismatism Churches in Sub-Saharan Africa are believed to have originated from the USA, therefore, are considered to a certain extent be different from the classical Pentecostalism though they have some similarities in their theological thrusts on the Pentecostal event in Acts 2. Three key individuals sparked the revivalist movement and played a prominent role in shaping and giving it further direction, thus, William Branham (1909-65), Oral Roberts (1908-2009), and Gordon Lindsay (1906-1973) (Moriarty, 1992 Cf. McBride 1993: 1-17). Like the classical Pentecostalism, new Pentecostalism shot into prominence from the 1970s onwards due to a combination of socio-economic and political factors.

For this reason, it is posited that there are many reasons to classify differently a group of new Churches which emerged since the 1970s in Africa. The newer Pentecostalism or Charismatism movements were spread chiefly by independent preachers who: subscribed to Pentecostal doctrine but were not aligned with or accountable to a Pentecostal denomination, such as the Assemblies of God or Four

Square Church (Moriarty, 1992 Cf. McBride 1993: 1-17). They had a stronger emphasis on miraculous manifestations. Deliverance evangelists saw themselves as spiritual catalysts in God's healing process.

Its characteristics are; popularized a doctrine of salvation that included physical health and healing as an essential part of the believer's deliverance. By 1940 the central focus of revival meetings was the moment of miracle – when the 'miracle event' occurred in the meeting. Responsible Church leaders (especially Assemblies of God) were appalled and disgusted by the outlandish claims and personality cults emerging from this new emphasis. Questionable motives and methods of fundraising developed; they taught not only physical but financial healing. They were powerful money raisers (ibid). Moreover, they taught a distorted view of faith; faith is a power or force with which Christians could supposedly 'move things' – even the God of the universe. They have robbed him of His divine sovereignty and His loving prerogative to say no to His children when it's in their best interest. They are preoccupied with Satan, demons, and spiritual warfare, and incessant boasting of new revelations. They are an anti-intellectual spirit. The Holy Spirit will teach you all things, so why burden yourself with academics?

Despite all that the movement was and/or is generally viewed as indicative a deeper work of the Holy Spirit.

The economic crisis of the mid-1980s which resulted in the adoption of World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF) designed structural adjustment resulted in the retrenchment of workers throughout Sub-Saharan African countries, high graduate unemployment, social disorganization and near economic meltdown (Ukah 2007: 1-18). This situation fuelled the quest for a spiritual solution to people's many problems, but also the ready acceptance of religious answers to social and material questions. Gradually, a new class of religious elite with university education and a strong appetite for foreign ideas and taste emerged bearing a new religious message (ibid). Another trend that is interesting is that Zimbabwe has become a center for the global spread of Pentecostalism/Charismatic Christianity in the new millennium in the Southern African region. To this extent, it is not uncommon to hear or read in the press, for example, that a Zimbabwean prophet had performed miracles in, say, South Africa, Botswana, or the UK (Marongwe and Maposa 2015: 1-22). In addition, to spreading Pentecostalism from Zimbabwe, there is increased interconnection of activities between the Charismatic leaders from Zimbabwe and the others from across Africa.

### **Criticism of New Pentecostalism**

Having explored a brief history of New Pentecostalism/Charismatic churches above, we are compelled as scholars of Religion and Development "to consider their activities critically because the gospel of Jesus Christ is being given a new interpretation daily.

The vogue in the teachings of the majority of these churches is based on prosperity theology/gospel. In fact, many of these churches are now given different derogative names. Abogunrin refers to such churches as "health and wealth" gospel. According to him young graduates of Universities and Polytechnics who could not find jobs started to float churches and the teaching of holiness is being gradually abandoned in preference for prosperity theology/gospel" (Omotoye 2010: 1-10). In addition, our area of concern here is, many of the charismatic "Pastors do not bother about and/or question the money being brought to the church. We believe that this is encouraging bribery and corruption in Africa. There are stories of people stealing money in their place of work and donating millions of dollars to some churches" (ibid). Drawing from Omotoye, it is noted that "in the month of March 2003, Lawrence Agada, a cashier at the Lagos Sheraton Hotel and Towers was arrested for stealing 40 million nairas from his employers. During interrogation, he confessed that he gave all the money to Christ Embassy, pastured by Chris Oyakhilome in cash and equipment. Furthermore, he said that another case was also reported of Dipo Kehinde of Eko International Bank, who stole 39 million nairas from his employer out of which he gave 10 million to Christ Embassy as "seed money", with the hope that it would yield several millions of money later" (Omotoye 2010: 1-10). It is, further pointed out that according to Dada "in Nigeria today, as in most African countries, poverty, distress, violence and corruption are ever-present realities. He went on say prosperity theology/gospel is probably an answer to the situation. The prosperity preachers believed that poverty is a sign of sickness that must be wiped out of the society. Positive confession is encouraged and sowing of the seed of faith is the hallmark of such churches" (ibid).

Moreover, the main question in relation to the above evidence on criticism of these charismatic churches is; Are all congregants rich as their prophets, preachers, and pastors? Drawing again from Omotoye, "this question and more have been

answered adequately by Dada and Abogunrin in their scholarly works. It is a delusion and false hope being given to the worshippers. It is believed that the interpretation of the teaching of Jesus Christ is not properly done. How do we interpret the saying of Jesus that the poor will always be with you? It is also observed that it is true that the establishment of Private Universities by some of the churches would create employment and provide admission to the admission seekers. The question is: How many poor people in these churches could afford to send their children to such schools they labour to build as church members? It is being seen as a business enterprise in Nigeria and other African countries. In fact, it has become a rat race among the major Pentecostal preachers to establish such schools” (Omotoye 2010: 1-10).

It is, however, further alleged that the African Charismatics had gotten their powers from TB Joshua; a Malawian *sangoma* and various other ‘non-godly’ sources. Furthermore, the press also gave its own versions. Among other allegations from the press (My Zimbabwe Newspaper of 19 August 2013), was that most of the Zimbabwean prophets, as well as 1,700 others from different parts of Africa, were ‘given’ their powers by a Ghanaian traditional healer, Nana Kwaku Bonsam (Marongwe et al. 2015: 122).

Despite these negative perceptions aforesaid, Pentecostalism/Charismaticism movement has USA origins, therefore, these preachers had broken away from their original denominations they were fulltime pastors. To the above notion, it is postulated that “new Pentecostalism / Charismaticism split very often as pastors claiming ‘new visions’ continue to establish ‘new altars’. Charismatic renewal movements operate unofficially as ecumenical organizations and may on occasion grow bigger than the local Churches where they were operating” (Asamoah-Gyadu 2013: 388-409). In most cases, these Charismatic prophets and preachers seek wealth since they would envy their counterparts who have established their own Churches and exhibiting opulence. Contemporarily, these prophets and preachers have built Mega-Churches and they have massive followers as well as more riches compared to their counterparts who are under classical Pentecostalism and historic or missionary or mainline denominations. Therefore, the above is the brief historical background of both classical and new Pentecostalism.

### **Classical Pentecostalism’s Distinctive and Theological Tenets**

The classical and new Pentecostalism’s characteristics and theological tenets are discernible. Therefore, the former’s characteristic and theological

tenets are explained, thus: as Pentecostalism progressed, certain characteristics are developed, and are still true of the mainline denominational Pentecostalism. It is a restoration in orientation; hence, tenets of restorationism are that God is reviving the Church, who lost her power historically. He is restoring her first-century apostolic authority and power. The sign of restoration revival is the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Therefore, they exalt spiritual manifestations. It is experience-oriented, which blurs the centrality of scripture. Experience has become the measure of truth. Spirituality is measured by the number or intensity of one’s encounters. For this reason, it is prone toward personalities. In addition to high-profile, highly emotional preachers, the movement continue to generate a slate of Christian celebrities and personalities, for example, musicians and actors (McBride 1993: 1-17).

The above characteristics of the classical Pentecostalism usually attract criticism that “it is theological, doctrinally, and biblically thin. Why, because it places a heavy emphasis on Pentecostal distinctive – thus, healing, the baptism of Holy Spirit, speaking in tongues and second coming of Christ. However, often other doctrines are virtually ignored, therefore, systematic biblical exposition is almost non-existent and it desires unity in the Church, yet often brings division (ibid). In brief, theological thrusts and tenets “appeals for its legitimacy primarily to the biblical Pentecost predicted in Joel 28 and fulfilled in Acts 2. It’s a religion of the heart, so worship in these Churches and movements is characterized in the main by spontaneity and pneumatic manifestations. Rijk Van Dijk (1992) has written extensively on Pentecostalism in Africa. The young ‘born-again preachers’ ties together the characteristic of Pentecostal, especially in African contexts. The Christianity of the ‘born-again preachers’ is characterized by a strict morality seen in their zero tolerance for the use of alcoholic beverages, cigarettes, and drugs. They fulminate against adultery, violence, and theft. Frequenting bars, hotels and discos are castigated as ‘Satanic habits’.

These negative injunctions are balanced with clear demands for a rejuvenated strict morality put forward in an atmosphere of ‘religious excitement and emotionalism’. During evangelistic campaigns, repentant sinners are invited to surrender evil objects, which in African contexts include anything from stolen goods and offensive weapons to traditional amulets and charms (Asamoah-Gyadu 2013: 388-409). Furthermore, Van Dijk describes how worshippers seeking new birth are ‘urged to step forward at the altar call in order to receive the ‘infilling’ of the Holy Spirit, which is stressed as the

single most important way to become cleansed of worldly, defiling forces. The born-again is considered so empowered that, the forces of darkness, witchcraft, and evil spirits, can no longer hold sway over his or her life (ibid).

### **Classical Pentecostalism and Sustainable Development**

Classical Pentecostalism has an emphasis on sustainable development too; on this issue, we discuss Zimbabwe Assemblies of God Africa, Forward in Faith Church (ZAOGA), in brief, though many of classical Pentecostalism churches such as Apostolic Faith Mission (AFM) and others are involved in sustainable development. In Sub-Saharan African countries what the generality of the masses faces contemporarily are high levels of poverty, unemployment, and inequalities as well as health, water, and education challenges inter alia, therefore uplifting the living standards of African communities must be the main thrust through developmental programs. To this effect, some classical Pentecostalism denominations have established schools for education and human development. Therefore, it is posited that “development in society can only be realized if people are educated to some recognizable levels” (Haralambos, 2008 Cf. Musoni 2013: 1-8). Furthermore, it is argued that it must be noted that sustainable development is prevalent in a situation where universal values like honesty, integrity, respect, creativity are promoted and inculcated. Education curricula must be a balanced product. Zimbabwe Ezekiel Guti University (ZEGU) is offering courses like, ‘philosophy of *Ubuntu* and the Total Person and Christian Ethics, respectively. It has come up with curricula which balance both vocational courses and theoretical courses. ZAOGA has also built a big hospital known as Mbuya Dorcas Hospital in Zimbabwe. It covers both medical treatment (practical) and non-medical treatment (spiritual), a great development indeed (Musoni 2013: 1-8).

Additionally, it covers women empowerment, through the school of Talents introduced in the 1970s – that teaches women not to work under someone in a master-servant relationship. The denomination advocates and trains women to work by using their own hands for the support their own livelihood and material support of the Church. Therefore, the founder Guti taught and teaches that God has given them hands to use and be better people (Musoni 2013: 1-8) – thus, building sustainable development and creating African futures. Moreover, ZAOGA is immensely involved in community development

through the ministry of Orphanage and Destitute Care (ODC) which was founded in 1975, with a few identified disadvantaged children and now there is a big Orphanage Center in Mutare with many children. A number of these children have graduated from universities through what they call Tin Mission Fund – thus, fund-raising through putting money in a small tin (ibid).

Furthermore, ZAOGA has built a rehabilitation centre for the disabled persons. The disabled people receive professional and vocational training on how to survive in a harsh economic situation. The Rehabilitation Centre was established in 1989 at Murambinda Growth Point in Manicaland Province. The main purpose was to integrate the disadvantaged people in the mainstream community by teaching people not to borrow and not to beg in any way (ibid).

ZAOGA like other classical Pentecostal Churches, she is involved in mitigating on HIV and AIDS, through a program called ‘Sofa Conference’. This is the teaching that discourages young boys and girls to do dating. If a young man intends to marry he should go through the Church Elders so as to receive counselling and given proper procedures to that effect (ibid). This seriously reduces high percentages of HIV and AIDS which characterize African communities, thereby, reinforces sustainable development for African futures. To a larger extent, it is generally clear that classical Pentecostalism as depicted above has a theological thrust that resonates well for the creation of African futures through developmental programs. For this reason, classical Pentecostalism Christianity is a force to reckon with in development. However, this doesn’t mean that classical Pentecostalism is free of flaws which may impede development.

### **Features of New Pentecostalism**

New Pentecostalism / Charismaticism movements and Churches are characterized with “preaching a faith gospel that focuses on this-worldly blessings, and that is balanced with a ‘healing and deliverance’ theology built on an amalgamation of African traditional worldviews and biblical thought” (AsamoahGyadu 2013: 388-409). Furthermore, they espouse specific doctrines that mark them out among other groups of Christians. They believe that they constitute a special people of God who alone is served and the rest humanity is doom to perdition. Theologically, a person is saved who is ‘born-again’ and is regenerated or sanctified by an inward feeling of holiness. Sanctification purifies a believer from sin and all forms of pollution. Of special importance is the teaching on the baptism of the Holy Spirit and external manifestation of speaking in tongues. This is

both spiritual and social makers, setting members apart as God's elected people (Anderson, 2004 Cf. Ukah 2007: 1-18). There is a keen emphasis on transformation, which is constituted by an intense encounter with God that introduces profound changes in the life and circumstances of the person who experiences it. The Holy Spirit, God's empowering presence, is the one who facilitates the direct character of the encounter. A sense of transformation takes place at the personal and communal levels including a new dynamism in worship inspired by the Holy Spirit. In the African context, congregants keenly testify not only about their new life but also to transition often made from resorts to traditional religious resources in order to be sincere Christians believing in God alone (Asamoah-Gyadu 2013: 388-409).

In addition, new Pentecostalism theology is a theology of empowerment. In other words, there is an emphasis on the empowering effect of the gospel of Jesus Christ. There is a relationship between transformation and empowerment.

They insist that it is possible to be a Christian and be dominated by desires of the flesh and demonic influences and has led to the provision of ritual contexts in which people could renounce such stumbling blocks through healing and deliverance in order that they may be empowered to victory in life. Such empowerment may be conceived of in terms of anointing, often symbolically applied in the form of oil. Empowerment is needed not just for ministry, but also for survival in a precarious African environment full of evil powers, for example, evil eyes, demons, witchcraft, and curses, that causes sickness, failure, childlessness and other setbacks in life. Empowerment occurs first through the infilling and manifestations of the Holy Spirit, second, the ministries of healing and deliverance, and third, general prosperity and well-being (ibid). Furthermore, a successful implementation of a healing and deliverance ministry paves the way for good health, success, and prosperity in life, and makes possible the realization of God-given abilities. Thus, it is possible to view the deliverance theology as a response to or the mutation in the face of the shortfall of faith preaching. When things are not going well, the appeal to the work demons and witches come in handy as explanations. Prosperity theology may have some ground to recover in respect of its weak theology of suffering. They draw attention to the fact that the gospel is about restoration, so it is expected that the transformation of the personality would be manifest in personal health, well-being, and care, in short salvation is

holistic and includes spiritual as well as physical abundance. The process of restoration is not individualistic as people are encouraged to disengage from generational curses and through fasting, prayer, and personal ministration also releases family members from any such bondage (ibid).

There is an emphasis on the theology of restorationism, thus, the view that God has been progressively restoring truths to the Church since the reformation. These restored truths include justification by faith (Martin Luther), water baptism by immersion (the Anabaptists), holiness (John Wesley), divine healing (A.B. Simpson and John Alexander Dowie), and the baptism of the Holy Spirit (Azusa Street Revival). Fivefold ministry – is important to them, the belief is that apostles and prophets are being restored to the Church, making the five-fold ascension gifts recorded in Ephesians 4: 11, fully operational. The Church cannot be fully effective without all five offices – apostle, prophet, evangelist, pastor, and teacher – functioning in the body of Christ (Moriarty 1992: 60-61 Cf. McBride 1993: 1-17). They emphasize spiritual disciplines – various disciplines like deliverance (the casting out evil spirits to free the believer from sickness, sin, and demonic influences), fasting (going without food for long periods of time to liberate the body from sickness, fatigue, and human weakness), and the laying on of hands, (a ritual performed by anointed leaders to impart the Holy Spirit and other spiritual blessings and gifts) were all viewed as necessary elements to restore the Church to its New Testament brilliance. Prophecy is fundamental too – the view that the practice of personal prophecy is being restored to the Church. Prophecy would no longer be restricted to general words of exhortation but would include personal detailed revelations for guidance and instruction. Recovery of true worship is integral to this movement – the belief that God's manifested presence is dependent upon a certain order of worship involving singing in tongues, clapping, shouting, singing prophecies, and a new order of praise dancing (ibid).

They have distinctive claims – thus, experiencing Jesus personally (spiritual or often allegedly physical and actual) encounters with Jesus which led to being baptized with the Holy Spirit. Power - spiritual power is necessary for godly living, witnessing, obedience to God's word, serving others; worship – they emphasize on contemporary and vital worship; prayer – praying in spirit, became a common phrase meaning praying in unknown tongues – supposedly higher plane of worship; sign gifts – first-century miracle power and manifestations; new revelations, thus God speaking directly to individual believers – this is the heart of the movement; the word – the baptism supposedly enables believers to know the

deeper truths of the scriptures, which are revealed directly by the Holy Spirit; demonic activity – heightened awareness of spiritual warfare – thereby practicing gifts of deliverance and exorcism; they emphasize apocalyptic – increasing expectancy of the Lord’s return; and evangelism – baptism of the spirit supposedly brought greater power for effective evangelism for the movements (ibid). Moreover, they believe that prophetic messages to the Church will prepare the way for Christ’s return; prophets are the revellers of the meaning of scripture. The prophet is not just one method that God uses; he is the only method He uses to speak to this generation. The prophet is God’s only means of informing this generation of new and greater insights into recorded revelation in God’s word. Who will speak to this generation if God does not raise up prophets? If you need a word from the Lord, don’t go to scripture or to teachers of the word, go to the local prophet. He will give you direct revelation from God especially your own circumstances. However, Apostles are equally important and are defined as traveling evaluators of the health, doctrine, and direction of Churches and give authoritative guidance – often directly from God Himself (Moriarty 1992: 88-97 Cf. McBride 1993: 1-17).

Given the above depth analysis of both classical and new Pentecostalism, it is, however, fundamental to note that classical Pentecostalism is more oriented in developmental programs that support and develop the livelihoods of Sub-Saharan African communities. This approach serves to create sustainable African futures as well as to correcting the biography and geography of the African minds from spiritual coloniality which is concealed in spiritual epistemologies. To a greater extent, it’s crystal clear that classical Pentecostalism movement is more grounded in African philosophy and cosmivision and is not wholly attached to Euro-Western Pentecostalism – a fact that can be contested. There are no scandalous fund-raising techniques, as well as false faith appropriation. There is less preoccupation with Satan, anti-intellectualism, and extreme spiritual disciplines as well as erroneous healing and deliverance methods. There are less cult-like figures compared to new Pentecostalism movements.

The new Pentecostalism/Charismatic movements and Churches are drowned in theological thin preaching, and they are divisive as well as sensationalistic. They are more inclined to spiritual empowerment that confuses their congregants so that they can manipulate them financially and in kind. Therefore, giving too much to charismatic prophets and preachers for self-enrichment is a common phenomenon. However, the general and critical analysis tends to subscribe to the fact that their

congregants’ minds are colonized by such activities fascinated in miracles.

They are immensely attached to Euro-Western Pentecostalism hence, it is explained that new Pentecostalism/Charismaticism belong to international networks and is reflected in their names, which invariably include the words, ‘world’, ‘international’ or ‘global’: Kingsway International Christian Center; Ministries International; Global Revival Ministries; and International Central Gospel Church (writer’s addition – United Family International Church-UFIC; Prophetic Healing and Deliverance Ministries, etc.). Their favored Church logo is the globe embellished with other Pentecostal symbols such as the dove, a lamp, Bible, or burning flame. The internationalism of the new Pentecostalism has generated accusations that these African Pentecostal movements and their leaders are clones of USA – based televangelists. The foreign influences as noted have come from the media ministries of international evangelists: book publications, and audio and video cassette tape recordings. The global view and international character that the new Pentecostalism/Charismatic take off their movement are what has led to submissions that Africa’s new Pentecostals are North American creations. Together, Brouwer, Gifford, and Rose deny that the Christianity evolving through new Pentecostalism is a genuinely African construct, arising from African experience and meeting African needs (Asamoah-Gyadu 2013: 388-409). Moreover, Liberia is an exceptional case in which large numbers of pastors acted as agents for North American Churches and Bible Schools operating in that country and Ray McCauley from America, founder of Rhema Bible Church of South Africa, for instance, regularly ministers in several countries including Germany, Australia, the United States, Zimbabwe and the DR Congo, and his bookstores stock the books, video and audiotapes of influential foreign evangelists notably Kenneth Hagin and Reinhard Bonnke (ibid).

Therefore, in light of the above discussion, we can conclude that they cannot genuinely create African futures – this is evidenced by these sole owners of new Pentecostalism’s egocentric as well as amassing of wealth to themselves and their families. This is achieved through brain-washing African minds – thereby, imprisoning their congregants to fleece their hard-earned money since they are fascinated with miracles, faith healing, well-being and instant riches which rarely come to fruition. However, there is a need to free them from this spiritual colonialism.

These prophets and preachers are taken as cult-like figures or little gods – hence, infallible. They are small gods here on earth. They display erroneous deliverance methods; unconventional fund-raising techniques; false faith appropriation; they are preoccupied with an accumulation of money, and they are too worldly oriented; they claim to have new revelations, prophecy and are anti-intellectualism, they extremely elevate the work of the Holy Spirit. They claim to usher in new restoration for the Church, and to have new prophetic outlook as well as emphasizing extreme spiritual disciplines and recovery of true worship and they are absolute to immortalization of the saints inter alia, therefore, they are true or genuine movements and Churches compared to the classical Pentecostalism and mainline / missionary denominations.

### **The New Pentecostalism / Charismatism and African Future**

In order to profoundly comprehend how the new Pentecostalism shot into prominence in Sub-Saharan Africa, one has to focus on their prophetic activities, that stole and/or are still stealing poor masses' attention, thereby, creating anxieties. These poor masses' anxieties heightened by an existential combination of socio-economic and religiopolitical experienced in Africa. For this reason, the charismatic prophets and preachers who are sole owners of these Mega Churches, "have a special attraction for Africa's upwardly mobile youth, a lay-oriented leadership, ecclesiastical office based on a person's charismatic gifting, innovative use of modern media technologies, particular concern with congregational enlargements, and a relaxed and fashion-conscious dress code for members" (AsamoahGyadu 2013: 388-409). Furthermore, it is pointed out that, in the prosperity discourse, there is continuity between coming to Christ and experiencing a redemptive uplift that is evidenced partly through the possession of material goods. They do not encourage the use religious symbols like the crucifixes and mounted portraits of Jesus in places of worship. The preferred decorations are potted plants and colours of various countries to underscore their international leanings (ibid). English is often the principal mode of communication where the Church is an urban one, and there is an ardent desire to appear successful, reflecting a modern outlook and portraying an international image. Many of its leaders come from professional backgrounds and some have PhDs. in their fields. To give practical expression to their new images as leaders of the 'born-again' however, Pentecostal pastors are now frequently 'Dr', 'Bishop', or both (ibid).

The prosperity gospel or prosperity theology espoused by new Pentecostalism Churches hold that God wills spiritual and material prosperity for all believers and so every Christian must appropriate the victory that Christ has won over sin, sickness, curses, poverty and setbacks in life. Christians may appropriate these blessings through positive confessions of faith as found in 'the prayer of Jabez' (1 Chronicles 4: 9-10), and also the faithful payment of tithes and offerings. Such giving is reciprocal, so the faith gospel teaches that 'sowing' gifts of money and other valuables in the lives of 'God's anointed', as the pastors are called, is one principal means of attracting God's prosperity. Tithes and offerings, in keeping with this reciprocal giving, bring in millions in cash that enable new Pentecostal/Charismatic to undertake gigantic and grandiose projects from internal resources (Asamoah-Gyadu 2013: 388-409).

The business of preaching also referred to as 'gosprenurship' has made many individuals and their wives filthy rich and they often stash weekly takings – one could say loot – outside the country. It has been easy to ship out these monies – that come in huge bins and stashed envelopes – outside for the purposes of 'safe-keeping' and investments. These investments are being made in the form of building mansions in and outside their respective countries, worth millions of dollars (Zindoga, 2016).

Furthermore, these charismatic prophets and preachers use media frequently as means to reach out to their members and attract new members. To this end, it is posited that media and religion are best friends in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, thus, "as elsewhere in the world, Sub-Saharan Africa, audio-visual media are important means for charismatic leaders to attract followers and to spread their messages. It could even be argued that broadcasts have contributed significantly to the increasing popularity of these types of

Churches. Several channels have a commercial profile, while others are explicitly linked to a prophet or a Church group for whom the medium is an excellent instrument to dialogue with their religious communities and to attract new members. The confessional channels continue to grow because many leaders of the Pentecostal/Charismatic Churches attempt to create their own television station, where they can send out taped images of their religious activities (Pype Katrien 2015: 116-136). They export their books, videos, CDs, DVDs, as well as opening branches in other countries throughout Africa and internationally. In Johannesburg alone, there are well over 100 Nigerian founded new Pentecostal Churches existing in March 2007 (Ukah 2007: 1-18) – to date (2016), they are pretty well over

the aforesaid figure. Are these new Pentecostal/Charismatic Churches conduits for sustainable development? Can they create African futures in relation to their activities depicted above?

On another level, these Charismatic Mega Churches or Christianity has “flowed, rapidly changing the social, religious, economic and political landscape (throughout Sub-Saharan African countries), there are certain important social characteristics of them espousing the prosperity theology and abundance. There is a discernible American influence in both theology and organizational structure and practice in these Churches. The theology of prosperity itself has been widely regarded by scholars as an ‘American export’ (Ukah 2007: 1-18). Moreover, while many of the founders of these Churches claim divine authorization for establishing what now seems more like an economic empire than a religious organization, they unabashedly look to principal prosperity preachers and televangelist in North America as their mentors, often clearly copying what they think to be responsible for the ‘successes’ of these American godfathers – although most Southern African region prosperity preachers have their mentors in Western and Eastern Africa, respectively. Attempting to understanding the new religious landscape of Africa without critically assessing the influence of American preachers and the roots of the message they propagate to Africa is impossible. Gifford is unequivocal about the American roots of prosperity message in Africa even as Ojo insists the prosperity gospel has African roots (ibid).

Another important feature emphasized is “faith healing – in African cultural worldview, religion and healing are inextricably linked. An important function of religion is to bring restoration in the face of brokenness or damage to man’s body, relationships, and social and spiritual networks. Deliverance is the second component of the prosperity gospel, hence is called ‘wealth and health gospel’. They base this doctrine on Mark 16: 15-18. Healing is conceived as a comprehensive restoration of a believer to superabundant health or status accruing to him/her as a result of what Jesus Christ has wrought on the cross. Healing has not restricted to diseases alone but to other situations of morbidity or disability – physical, material, mental, financial or spiritual (Ukah 2007: 1-18).

According to Chris Oyakhilome, as one of faith healers says, “I have a message that certainly heals people. You cannot hear that message and remain sick, poor or dejected. It would bring you hope and life of a necessity; there will be healing and miracles.

Miracles of healing are like your credentials. If you preach Jesus Christ and he sent you, he will back up your claims (ibid). T.B. Joshua’s Synagogue of All Nations Church “heals those suffering from HIV and AIDS. Mountain of Fire and Miracles specializes in casting out demons of all specifications. Because of the proliferation of new Churches, competition among them is rife and each thus makes an effort to carve out a niche that it will service through a welldefined or streamlined set of products” (Ukah 2007: 1-18). This is more than Churches, they are business enterprises.

They are ‘Firm-Like Structural Organizations’ – in order to compete effectively with other Churches, and as a carryover of the American influence, these Churches are organized as firms or commercial enterprises engaged in the production, distribution, and pricing of religious and non-religious commodities with primary motives of making satisfactory profit and maintaining a market share. They are founded and owned by one person who claims a special divine authorization with a specific mandate with global ramification. There is a Board of Trustees (BoTs) appointed by the founder and registered with the appropriate government agency, the locus of control of the organization (the founder). He is the Chairman/President/Chief Executive Officer. He is a ‘bank of grace’, a repository of charismata, and a special bridge between his followers and God (Ukah 2007: 1-18). He/she is an oracular instrument and initiator of doctrines and orientation. He alone holds a special privilege of interpreting the will of God to his followers. While resources such as money, time, and expertise are mobilized aggressively from followers and the general public (believers and non-believers alike), the control of these is wrested from the contributors and rested solely on the founder/owner of the Church and his/her spouse (ibid).

The role of women in these Churches is fascinating, “it is nothing close to what obtains in the mission Churches although it is closer to how women functioned in the African Independent Churches (AICs) – though contestable. Women receive a great deal of visibility; they are integrated into the decision-making processes and exercise a certain degree of power and authority. Related to the ‘firm structure’ of Churches is another feature which reveals their ‘economic character’. Their leaders are media savvy individuals who, with the university education background (some of them), have introduced commercial practices into their organizations and in the production of religion and other goods” (Ukah 2007: 1-18). Religious

advertising which constitutes a special form of religious communication, for example, posters and handbills, billboards, branded vest, caps, pens, etc. Some Churches advertise imprint media of newspapers and signposts. Lastly, they generally tend to reconstruct religious geography through the construction of ‘religious camps’ (ibid). Furthermore, “they buy up large expanses of land, sometimes measuring well over ten square kilometres, and construct a range of facilities such as auditoriums, schools, guesthouses, dormitories, presidential villas (for VIP guests such as politicians), banks, gas stations and hospitals.

These camps provide the physical venues for commercial companies to patronize the Churches by sponsoring some of the religious programs in exchange for marketing their products and services during the events. Similarly, regional and national politicians pay frequent visits to the camps to demonstrate their religiosity, consult the charismatic pastors and solicit for votes or public sympathy” (Ukah 2007: 118).

The above discussion, on prosperity theology, activities, and distinctive/characteristics, as well as features within new Pentecostalism / Charismaticism movements and Churches, has a number of negative issues that cannot create genuine African futures. It is crystal clear from the discussion that, the founders are after wealth accumulation. It is, however, argued that these churches have impoverished their adherents, and have grown exponentially – hence, “they have pauperized congregants, too, who are fleeced by these charismatic individuals heading Churches urged to pay and pay and pay in return for material wonderments. People pay. And pay. They expect miracles. They call their Church leaders men of God. Others see the same individuals as simple men of gold, torching off a bitter contestation among Africans about the import, role, and authenticity of these charismatic preachers and prosperity teachers. There are many people who call them charlatans who rob poor peoples of their hard-earned-cash, while their followers and cheerleaders will defend them to the hilt. We are told to touch not the anointed” (Zindoga, 2016).

It is evident that African minds need spiritual freedom because what is happening through preaching, miracles, and healing is a sophisticated mind weapon against the unsuspecting congregants. Are there any pragmatic sustainable development projects thrusts? Like during the colonialism epoch, religion was used as epistemic coloniality,

contemporarily it is used through these Charismatic prophets and preachers. For this reason, it is postulated that “as religion was a major weapon in the colonial era, the spiritual colonization of the soul is overwhelming in Nigeria at this time. The poor in the Church do the menial works for God while the rich get recognized by the leadership. The poor reproduces poverty in the Church and cannot send their children to the educational institutions owned by these Churches, which their offerings built” (Tade 2015: 1-3) – because most of these poor congregants cannot afford to send their children to these schools.

Furthermore, congregants challenge no sayings of the Charismatic pastors thinking everything they say is spiritual. The spiritual colonization has reached the point that Church members take everything (sex, family, work, relationships, etc.) to their pastors (ibid) – they accept everything because they put too much faith in the Charismatic pastors and treat them as infallible. Pastors of these Mega Churches – “blossom amidst the poverty of mind and body of the masses and make millions at their expense. They are quick to quote ‘touch not my anointed’ when people speak about them. Can they help empower the poor? What are these Churches doing about unemployment, rape, marital infidelity among other social problems within it? How has Church growth translated to the development of the downtrodden who are the majority of their parishioners? The corrupt even have a place in the Christendom; they even get anointed as deacons and deaconesses.

These Charismatic Churches contribute to corruption as people compete to beat one another to make the lion donation during project fund-raising. Preaching afterlife happiness to the poor while the few big men enjoy everything on earth is deceitful. The key to this liberation is for the followers to be conscious of this illusion. Karl Marx had opined that ‘man makes religion, religion does not man. Religion is, indeed, the self-consciousness and self-esteem of man who has either not yet won through to himself, or has already lost himself again (Tade 2015: 1-3). There is a great need to emancipate these poor masses who are taken advantage of through the bible, feeble and staggering miracles, as well as the thin theology of prosperity inter alia, to realize genuine African futures. Therefore, African futures are entangled by spiritual coloniality of power, coloniality of being, and coloniality of spiritual epistemology/knowledge by these charlatan prophets and preachers. These charismatic prophets and preachers are after exhibiting opulence. However, they are driven by wealth accumulation, and for that reason, they cannot change and create African futures for sustainable

development. Through this type of religious thrust by these charlatans, it is impossible for Africans to “take charge of their own destiny, and mapping their own autonomous development trajectory” (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2014: 181-202). Genuine African futures are hinged on independent African minds, free from coloniality of power, being, and epistemologies as well as socially, economically, religiously and politically from the global north. Therefore, spiritual epistemic freedom is fundamental. These charismatic leaders are using spiritual coloniality to control and dominate their congregants; minds, which needs to be vigorously combated to change the current systems and pave future narratives for Africans. To this effect, it is posited that “a mind that knows is a mind that is truly free” (Tade 2015:1-3).

What has compounded the phenomenon of spiritual coloniality is that these new Pentecostal/ Charismatic prophets and preachers inherited Euro-Western Christianity in spreading the gospel of pacifism and dominance upon their congregants. Most of these prophets are rated the richest people in Africa and the world, for instance, Bishop David Oyedepo, T.B. Joshua, E.A. Adeboye, Chris Oyakhilome (Gazette Review, 8, March 2016) – within Africa, they are all Nigerians, thus, Chris Okotie, Matthew Ashimolowo – to mention just a few.

### Conclusion

Grouped together, prosperity gospel or theology; feeble instant miracles, faith healings, firm-like structural Churches; religious advertisements; economic character; sole ownership; media savvy inter alia, constitute a formidable spiritual coloniality that stands as a bulwark on the path to liberate, free and emancipates indigenous African minds. Ultimately, this entangles initiatives to create African futures. To this end, new Pentecostal/Charismatic Mega Churches have no sustainable development programs to alleviate masses of their congregants’ sufferings. They concentrate on fleecing and milking these followers of their hard-earned money. They give to their pastors valued movable and immovable properties, in the midst of Sub-Saharan Africa’s socio-economic and religiopolitical challenges, which has exacerbated poverty, unemployment, and inequalities. Their religious activities are shrouded with self-enrichment; hence, they changed a free gospel to be a profiteering enterprise, thus, ‘gospreneurship’.

This is evidenced by capitalism tendencies of immense commercialization of all Churches’ production of videos, videocassettes, magazine, CDs, CVDs, books, booklets, pamphlets, stickers, key-holders and other religious memorabilia such as

handkerchiefs and oils. These charismatic prophets and preachers forget that human life is more than money and wealth accumulation. Therefore, greed has become a religion of these rich prophets, this leads to idolatry (worship of wealth) through the accumulation of money. Wealth must serve peoples not and end in itself. It seems these Mega Churches celebrates disparities of wealth and income among their congregants. The Church should be known to create good living standards for every person in this mundane world, not wealth accumulation to the founders. Very few of these Mega Churches are involved in genuine development programs such as “T.B Joshua of Synagogue Church of All Nations based in Lagos is known for his care of the poor and destitute. He is also reported to the provision of the less privileged with education support from primary to tertiary levels” (Omotoye 2010:1-10). Furthermore, some of the churches also have scholarship programmers for indigent students. Oyedepo once said: ‘All school-age children not in school, due to the inability of parents, will be fully taken care of by the church’ (Omotoye 2010: 1-10). In Zimbabwe, there are Makandiwa and Magaya who are also involved in humanitarian services. However, considering the number of these New Pentecostalism churches in Sub-Saharan Africa versus those who are involved in sustainable development, it is evident that they are not doing enough. Therefore, most of them are in philanthropic areas, thus short-term services such as seasonal food distributions which are not under the category of sustainable development – thereby, going against a common saying that goes, “don’t give me fish, teach me how to catch fish” – thus, empowering humanity for sustainable development. Genuine development encompasses programs and projects that incorporate indigenous people to work with their minds and hands to elevate their good living standards. In other words, there is the creation of jobs to alleviate high levels of poverty and unemployment and inequalities in communities. Therefore, that is creating genuine African futures which are sustainable. Only after genuine liberation and freedom from spiritual coloniality struggles have been attained can African peoples be able to create African futures.

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