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A contextual political theology for the Ghanaian society and its implications for human flourishing

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DECLARATION

I, Isaac Boaheng, declare that the thesis, "A contextual Political Theology for the Ghanaian society and its implications for human flourishing," which I hereby submit for the degree of *Philosophiae Doctor* at the University of Pretoria, is my own work and has not previously been submitted by me for a degree at this or any other tertiary institution.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

ABSTRACT

Every human society is faced with one challenge or the other. Ghana (the context of the study) is a West African country facing such challenges as poverty, hunger, poor education system, poor road networks, environmental degradation, poor governance, bribery and corruption, injustice, human rights abuse, high inflation, and local currency depreciation, among others emanating from political governance. In addition, there are a lot of misconceptions about human flourishing and so many people use unethical means to acquire wealth and yet, consider their ways as means of attaining a flourishing life. The survey of existing literature revealed the persistence of Ghana's political is partly due to the lack of a strong biblical foundation, and the lack of adequate contextualization as some of the key research gaps to be filled.

This literature-based research, therefore, was undertaken to explore how contextual political theology might be formulated to address Ghanaian political challenges and correct wrong notions about human flourishing. After the general introduction, a biblical-theological study of selected biblical texts was conducted which was followed by an examination of the political thoughts of selected scholars from the ancient Greek era to the contemporary era. The study then examined the contemporary Ghanaian political situation to determine which issues need attention in the study. Using the historical, biblical and Ghanaian political situation as contextual frameworks, a Ghanaian political theology was formulated to cover governance and nation-building, education, work, wealth and the environment, among others.

The study found that Ghana's political challenges are diverse and therefore cannot be addressed without the involvement of all relevant stakeholders. It was also found that Ghana's communal sense of life resonates with the biblical perspective of life and so can serve as a tool in developing and implementing policies to address the nation's problems. The main thesis of the dissertation is that a political theology that can address Ghana's political challenges and correct wrong notions about human flourishing needs to be biblically grounded, historically informed and genuinely contextual within the Ghanaian socio-cultural framework. Such a theology will not only offer an antidote to people's misconceptions about political power but will also foster improved divine-human, human-human and human-environment relations.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AICs   African Initiated Churches

ASB   African Study Bible

AD   Anno Domini (In the year of the Lord)

BCE   Before Common Era

CAHF   Centre for Affordable Housing Finance in Africa

CDD   Center for Democratic Development

cf.   Confer

CHRAJ   Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice

DDT   Dichlorodiphenyltrichloroethane

EC   Electoral Commission

EPA   Environmental Protection Agency

ERIB   ECOWAS Regional Investment Bank

EOCO   Economic and Organized Crime Office

GFA   Ghana Football Association

GRA   Ghana Revenue Authority

GYEEDA   Ghana Youth Employment and Entrepreneurial Development Agency

ICGC   International Central Gospel Church

MOFA   Ministry of Food and Agriculture

NACC   National Anti-Corruption Coalation

NPASP   Northern Presbyterian Agricultural Services and Partners

NIV   New International Version

NIB   National Investment Bank

NLC   National Liberation Council

NRSV   New Revised Standard Version

PPE   Personal protective equipment

SFO   Serious Fraud Office

v.   verse

vv.   verses

WB   World Bank

Gen.   Genesis

Exod.   Exodus

Lev.   Leviticus

Num.   Numbers

Deut.   Deuteronomy

Josh.   Joshua

Judg.   Judges

1-2 Sam.   1-2 Samuel

1-2 Chron.   1-2 Chronicles

Neh.   Nehemiah

Est.	Esther
Psa.	Psalm
Prov.	Proverbs
Eccles.	Ecclesiastes
Isa.	Isaiah
Jer.	Jeremiah
Lam.	Lamentations
Ezek.	Ezekiel
Dan.	Daniel
Hos.	Hosea
Mic.	Micah
Matt.	Matthew
Rom.	Romans
1-2 Cor.	1-2 Corinthians
Gal.	Galatians
Eph.	Ephesians
Phil.	Philippians
Col.	Colossians
1-2 Thess.	1-2 Thessalonians
1-2 Tim.	1-2 Timothy

Heb.   Hebrews

1-2 Pet.   1-2 Peter

Rev.   Revelation

CHAPTER ONE

BACKGROUND AND INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

1.1 Introduction

This introductory chapter provides the general background for the entire study. It addresses preliminary matters such as the background to the research problem, the research problem, research questions, hypothesis, objectives, preliminary review of related literature, the methodology for the research, significance of the study and outline of the chapters.

1.2 Background to the Research Problem

No human society is completely free from sociopolitical challenges. Day in and day out, news from around the globe show numerous societal challenges facing different parts of the world. Issues of social relevance are of great concern to all nations because what affects one nation (directly or indirectly) also affects other nations. Sociopolitical issues engaged the United Nations Millennium Summit, held in September 2000, which debated how human society can be improved. At this Summit, the United Nations set eight goals to address socio-economic and political challenges across the globe. These goals include: (a) eradicating extreme poverty and hunger; (b) achieving universal education; (c) promoting gender equality and empowering women; (d) reducing child mortality; (e) improving maternal health; (f) combating diseases such as HIV/AIDS, malaria, and others; (g) ensuring environmental sustainability, and (h) developing global partnership for development (Opoku-Mensah and Salih 2007:182). Although the Millennium Development Goals were meant for the entire globe, Africa was a prime focus because it is the continent with the highest levels of socio-economic and political challenges.

African leaders have engaged and continue to engage the subject of Africa's development at various meetings. A series of such engagements yielded the formulation of a continental strategic framework (Declaration)—dubbed "Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want"—which was signed by African leaders in 2013 during the Golden Jubilee celebrations of the formation of The Organization of African Unity (OAU)/African Union (AU). This Agenda aims at transforming Africa into a global powerhouse within fifty years after the Declaration (that is, 2013-2063). The

implementation of this strategic framework is expected to yield inclusive and sustainable development in Africa through unity, self-determination, freedom, progress and collective prosperity, pursued under Pan-Africanism and African Renaissance. African leaders, having reflected upon Africa's past successes and challenges, adopted this blueprint "to build an integrated, prosperous and peaceful Africa, driven and managed by its own citizens and representing a dynamic force in the international arena" (African Union 2015:2). Africa's Agenda 2063 has a sevenfold vision, namely (i). "A prosperous Africa based on inclusive growth and sustainable development"; (ii). "An integrated continent, politically united and based on the ideals of Pan-Africanism and the vision of Africa's Renaissance"; (iii). "An Africa of good governance, democracy, respect for human rights, justice and the rule of law"; (iv). "A peaceful and secure Africa"; (v). "An Africa with a strong cultural identity, common heritage, shared values and ethics"; (vi). "An Africa whose development is people-driven, relying on the potential of African people, especially its women and youth, and caring for children" and (vii). "Africa as a strong, united, resilient and influential global player and partner" (African Union 2015:6-7). Agenda 2063 has since its adoption been engaged in political discourses at different levels. The obvious reason for the high level of political interest in this Declaration is that the root cause of the poor state of affairs in most African societies is predominantly (if not exclusively) a political matter. Sometimes, the politicization of human suffering takes place in the context of a theistic discourse, attributing the world's hardship, violence, and pain to the universal sinfulness of humanity. At other times, the responsibility of evil is located in "secular" (or non-Christian) terms; there is someone here and now responsible for the world's crises. Whichever way one looks at the issue, there is an urgent need to find solutions to the problems confronting human society.

Ghana (the context of the study) is a West African country with many political, social and economic challenges despite her abundant natural resources (such as gold, bauxite, diamond, and oil). Ghana's problems started many decades ago. After independence, the country started well but later failed woefully. In 2002, Ghana joined The Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) because of her inability to successfully manage her economy. Ghana received debt relief amounting to US$275.2 million in 2002, US$290.8 million in 2003, and US$318.3 million in 2004 (Bank of Ghana 2005:3). In spite of these reliefs, the country continues to face huge economic crises due to corruption, mismanagement of the economy and other factors. Contemporary Ghana is characterized by poverty, hunger, disease outbreaks, poor education system, environmental

degradation, poor governance, bribery and corruption, injustice, human rights abuse, high inflation, high budget deficit, frequent power outages (referred to as *dumsor*), frequent labor unrests, and local currency depreciation. Over-reliance on external loans and grants has raised Ghana's foreign debt to a very high level, making the economy weaker and weaker.

Consequent to Ghana's high external debt, President Nana Addo Dankwa Akuffo-Addo, in his address to the Summit on Financing African Economies (in Paris, France, on Tuesday, 18th May 2021) pleaded with European leaders to cancel Africa's debt (Larnyoh 2021: Online article). He attributed Africa's poor economic performance partly to the global financial architecture that resulted from the Second World War, which, in his view, has been unfavorable to Africa. He stated that "Without the 'fiscal room to breathe', Africa could truly become 'the forgotten continent, and that is why there is an urgent need for comprehensive debt relief and debt cancellation'" (Effah 2021: Online article). The President's plea underscores the gravity of Ghana's/Africa's current socio-economic challenges. The seriousness of Ghana's economic woes is also evident in the three-billion dollar loan that the country has recently applied for and is taking from the International Monetary Fund to stabilize the economy (Naadi 2023: Online article). The bailout program requires the government to increase its income, while reducing expenditure (Naadi 2023: Online article). This will result in increased taxes and a higher unemployment rate as the government strives to reduce spending and improve the state's revenue.

Closely connected with Ghana's socio-economic and political problems is the issue of public morality. Ghana's socio-economic and political challenges have had a negative effect on the ethical life of the citizenry. In their quest for wealth, some Ghanaians do what seems right in their own eyes without considering the effect of their activities on other individuals or the entire society. For example, some youth engage in internet fraud and/or ritual murder for wealth (referred to in Ghanaian parlance as *sakawa*), sports betting and armed robbery to make ends meet. Youth in mining areas often undertake illegal mining activities (referred to as *galamsey*) that result in the pollution of water bodies which serve nearby communities. The use of poisonous chemicals (such as DDT and cyanide) for fishing is also not uncommon in Ghana (Nyemah, Dehlor and Akakpo 2017:65–77). The above examples underscore that some Ghanaians pursue "happiness" at the expense of the welfare of others. Equating human flourishing (including being well, living well, and doing well) with health and wealth, people use all available means to make money without

considering the moral implications (Marais 2015:1; Bok 2010:39). Such people fail to appreciate the fact that true human flourishing must benefit the entire society by promoting peace, security, love, health, peaceful co-existence, harmony, interdependence, and joy. There is obviously a misplaced notion of wealth and human flourishing in the contemporary Ghanaian community.

Paradoxically, while the socio-economic and political situations in Ghana are distressing, the country is religiously "flourishing", with a majority of its populace professing Christianity (about 71.3 percent of the populace profess the Christian faith; Ghana Statistical Services [GSS] 2021:58). Christianity is flourishing and Christian activities take place in every part of the country on daily basis. Large and flamboyant chapels are built, revival meetings are organized, huge tithes are paid and church donations keep rising. There are currently two Ghana's—one Ghana is in sociopolitical shambles and the other is religiously flourishing. The apparent contradiction between the two Ghana's makes the discussion of political theology urgently relevant.

Religious and non-religious agencies alike have a role to play in fixing the country. However, Christianity, being the dominant religion, has a major role to play in providing solutions to life challenges confronting the general Ghanaian public. Unfortunately, the secularization and privatization of Christianity in Ghanaian society have marginalized the role of the Christian faith in the public arena. The dichotomization of "church" and "society" into "spiritual" and "secular" realms respectively, tends to make Christianity less relevant and impactful in Ghanaian society today. Since most of the challenges facing the country have political roots, there is an urgent need for the church to engage the country's political space by analyzing and scrutinizing political structures with the effect of charting a new course of socio-economic and political development. Ghana's flourishing and dynamic Christian expression must have a direct impact on its political and economic realities. The need for a Christian theology that has both spiritual and sociopolitical ramifications will guide this research.

1.3 Preliminary Literature Review

1.3.1 Defining Political Theology

According to Cavanaugh and Scott (2007:2), political theology refers to "the analysis and criticism of political arrangements (including cultural-psychological, social and economic aspects) from the

perspective of differing interpretations of God's ways with the world." Political theology simply refers to how theological concepts relate to politics or religious thought about politically related questions. It focuses on the public relevance, meaning, impact, and implications of Christianity. Cole (2019:3) observes that the key problem with contemporary political theology is its imbalance between theology and politics; contemporary political theology overemphasizes theological aspect to the neglect of the political dimension. Since political theology without adequate "political" engagement is merely theology, it is important to know exactly what the term "political" means in the context of "political theology."

In political theological discourses, the term "political" goes far beyond the issues which fall under the heading "politics" in everyday life. "Political" includes more than the question of "the best form of government or what rulers should and should not do" to include "what things make human beings flourish and how common life should be ordered in ways that promote that flourishing" (Phillips 2012:2). For Cavanaugh and Scott (2007:2) "political" encompasses how government and economic structures are organized in the civil society. Given this understanding, the term "political" is used hereafter to refer either to "political, economic and social" issues or strictly "political" issues depending on the context in which it is used. Political theology therefore engages three interrelated realms: government, economic institutions and society (social institutions). This understanding of political theology will guide the entire study, especially the selection of issues that will be considered.

Aside from the term "political", the meanings of the expressions "theology" and "theological reflection" also need clarification. According to McGrath (2017:85) theology is "the study of the fundamental ideas of the Christian faith." "Theology" may also be considered in the functional sense as referring to an academic discipline undertaken at the university or seminary. Simply put, theology is a discourse about God or the study of the nature of the divine. The expression "theological reflection," on the other hand, deals with the process of finding God in human experience. Theological reflection comes through experiential and intellectual encounters with God in the world. The church's task is to reflect theologically on life situations to the end of knowing where it fits into the *missio Dei* ("mission of God"). Doing theology involves investigating its "sources, historical development, mutual relationship, and application to life"

(McGrath 2017:85). Theological reflection then requires a critical conversation between knowledge and experience of the Bible, other academic disciplines and one's own situation.

1.3.2 Key features of Political Theology

It is important to clarify at the onset what qualifies a theological discourse to be considered as political theology. This clarification will guide the researcher to ensure that the theological formulation in this study is truly political. Some key features of political theology can be noted and outlined as follows. First of all, like other forms of theology, the nature, content and implications of political theology result from engagement with Scripture. The Bible serves as the final (though not the only) authority for political theology. Therefore, political theology is informed by biblical theology. Secondly, political theology is an interdisciplinary discipline that engages religion in dialogue with scholarship from the fields of economics, sociology, political science, ecology, anthropology and cultural studies, philosophy, ethics, and critical theory, and among others (Cavanaugh and Scott 2007:2). The interdisciplinary nature of political theology distinguishes it from any academic field that confines itself to a single discipline. Thirdly, political theology provides political direction in that it provides "orientation, direction, and even guidance for policy-making and decisions about public life" (Forster 2020:19). The outcome of political theology is not only for the government but also for every believer who may be called upon to help improve human society. Fourthly, political theology has a prophetic character, equipping Christians to speak to contemporary societal issues based on the gospel. In the process, the gospel is contextualized, not compromised. Fifthly, political theology takes place in the *Sitz im Leben* (or setting in life) and as such, shapes and is also shaped by "specific situations, concerns, cultures, social, economic and political experiences of a people" (Pears 2010:7-8). Therefore, political theology is a form of contextual theology.

According to Bevans (1992:1), contextual theology is "a way of doing theology in which one takes into account the spirit and message of the gospel; the tradition of the church; the culture in which one is theologizing; and social change within that culture, whether brought about by western technological process or the grass-roots struggle for equality, justice and liberation." Contextual theology facilitates the interaction between Scripture, tradition, reason, socio-politico-economic situation, and religious experience of the community for which the theology is formulated. Any

theology built upon these principles will not only be contextual but global as well (leading to the emergence of the term "glocal"). Therefore, political theology is sensitive to both local and global concerns.

How have Christians in Ghana encountered the public square with the Christian faith? The next section surveys selected works by selected scholars in their quest to engage the Ghanaian public space with theology.

1.3.3 Christianity in Ghana and the Public Space

As indicated earlier, most Ghanaians look up to Christianity to provide answers to their existential issues. Consequently, different Christian scholars have conducted different studies on the church's role in the public realm. In his book *Theology and Society in Context,* Asante[1] (2014) engages the public with theology on topics such as politics, national development, nation-building, corruption, and the church and economics, among others. He argues that Christianity must encounter human society and this encounter must provide a roadmap for improving human society (Asante 2014:2). Thus, a holistic Christian ministry must affect all aspects of human well-being in areas like health, food, education, housing, religious and cultural values, among others (Asante 2014:5). Asante argues further that in whatever capacity one serves (for example, as a physician, nurse, teacher, security, footballer, actor/actress, comedian, driver, banker, and so on), one must aim at advancing the Kingdom of God; therefore, all professions are sacred (2014:12). Asante's view serves to correct the false impression that some works are "sacred" and others are "secular." One can conclude from Asante's contention that being a pastor is not a higher calling than being a farmer. The erroneous polarization of "secular" and "sacred" professions is part of the reason why many people restrict their faith to their private lives, and hence fail to engage the public arena with the Christian faith (Asante 2014:2).

On the subject of "Church and Politics", Asante (2014:59) observes that the traditional African worldview has no place for a dichotomy between the sacred and secular (or religion and state). He outlines three key positions regarding church-state relations, namely, the separation view which discourages Christians from engaging in sociopolitical issues; the transformation view which

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[1] The Most Reverend Professor Emmanuel K. Asante is a Ghanaian theologian, a past Presiding Bishop of the Methodist Church Ghana and the immediate-past Chairman of the National Peace Council.

considers the church as God's agent for transforming the society (through the implementation of Christian principles), and the involvement position which mandates Christians to participate actively in sociopolitical affairs of the society (Asante 2014:61-68). Asante (2014:70) argues in favor of the involvement position on the basis that Christians are also affected by events happening in society. He argues further that, discussions on human rights within the African context must take cognizance of the African communal worldview that sees the "secular" and "religious" as a unit (Asante 2014:74).

Asante also discusses the subject of corruption which he describes as "injustice, anti-social and inhuman" (Asante 2014:99). Asante's discussion on corruption is rooted in covenant theology. The covenant community is to live in harmony and ensure justice in all spheres of human life (Asante 2014:99). Corruption is an unjust act (based on selfishness) and it tends to disharmonize the covenant community. Asante (2014:105) identifies low wages, lack of public accountability, greed and avarice as key triggers of corruption and then charges the church to use her prophetic authority to confront corruption "on behalf of the impoverished majorities who have been exploited, discounted and dehumanized through the instrument of systemic corruption."

Apart from Asante, Opuni-Frimpong focused his research on the public relevance of Christianity. Opuni-Frimpong is a lecturer in Religion in Media, Religion and Social Issues and Religion and Public Policy at the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, Kumasi-Ghana and a former Secretary of the Christian Council of Ghana. In his book *Christian Ministry of Advocacy,* Opuni-Frimpong (2015:78) emphasizes the biblical foundations for public engagement with theology, though he does not give an in-depth analysis of any biblical passage that mandates the church for such an important task. In his view, the lack of interest in national issues among some Christians is due to the church's failure to integrate societal issues (like good governance, democracy, public accountability, national interest, and others) in its education curriculum (Opuni-Frimpong 2015:78). Since public activities are governed by public policies, the church must play an advocacy role and be an active player in the formulation of public policies (Opuni-Frimpong 2015:78). The church's involvement in policy formulation, in Opuni-Frimpong's view, will ensure sustainable development based on Christian principles.

In the article "Doing Public Theology in African Christianity: A Reflection on Communiques by Churches in Ghana", Opuni-Frimpong (2021) demonstrates that the church in Ghana (since the missionary era) has always engaged the society in one form or the other. He notes that the separation between the church and the state is not something that the church in Ghana has ever advocated for (Opuni-Frimpong 2021:191). The church has always stood against the view that religion must be limited to private matters. Opuni-Frimpong's work demonstrates how church leaders have influenced public decisions through the issuance of various communiques to governments. Like Asante, Opuni-Frimpong argues that the expression of the Christian faith in the public spheres highlights that even though the church is on pilgrimage on earth, it is equally affected by whatever goes on in society. For Opuni-Frimpong (2021:191), the church must give hope to the lost world through meaningful and sustainable engagements with the public arena. Such engagements are meant to seek the common good of the society. He concludes that faith in public life needs to "be directed by the Christian faith, doctrines and the Christian witness" (Opuni-Frimpong 2021:192).

On their part, Mpere-Gyekye and Brodie (2019:142-159) give a reinterpretation of Wesley's political thoughts for the Ghanaian context. The main argument of the research was that Wesley's concept of "political image of God" (based on Gen. 1:26-27) is indispensable in recovering his political theology. The scholars relate the concept of "political image of God" to Wesley's order of salvation and then give a contextual application of Wesley's political thoughts for the Ghanaian situation. Their study of Genesis 1:26–28 yielded "a dominion theology", which they relate to the political image of God in humans. They further argue that the political process in any given society must be centered on the citizenry (Mpere-Gyekye and Brodie 2019:147). After integrating the idea of the political image of God into Wesley's order of salvation, Mpere-Gyekye and Brodie (2019:149) concluded that the redemption of humanity meant the restoration of humanity to the center of the political process. The contextual Wesleyan theology of politics formulated for the Ghanaian context, aimed at fulfilling the divine redemptive and transformative governance of the entire creation, is informed by the concept of divine sovereignty, the idea that humans bear God's political image, and the need to put the people at the center of the political process, among others.

The above survey of literature shows major efforts made by Christian scholars to facilitate the church's engagement with the public space in Ghana. The survey shows clearly that the subject of

political theology is not new in the Ghanaian theological landscape. Nonetheless, certain gaps exist in the existing literature on political theology to justify the present study. First, the existing scholarly works lack extensive engagement with Scripture. None of the existing studies has a strong biblical foundation for the issues discussed. The only study that critically engages Scripture is the work of Mpere-Gyekye and Brodie. However, this work focuses mainly on Genesis 1:26-28 and how it informs political theology; the failure to critically engage other biblical texts related to political theology leaves a huge research gap. Secondly, the existing studies did not establish the nexus between political theology and human flourishing. No wonder the practice of *sakawa*, the question of the acceptability of betting as a legitimate means of dealing with socio-economic challenges, and others remain a challenge to the Ghanaian Christian community. Additionally, some of the existing studies fail to engage the Ghanaian indigenous worldview to ensure adequate contextualization of the Christian faith for contemporary society. Consequently, theological formulations by these scholars are almost the same as what comes from Western scholars whose preoccupation with Western political context makes their works less relevant to the Ghanaian/African political arena. Theological engagement in the ever-expanding world of new questions regarding what political theology is, therefore, pertinent to the Ghanaian society. The proposed research will bridge the identified research gaps by formulating a political theology for Ghana based on extensive engagement with Scripture (from both the Old and the New Testaments), a critical engagement with historical data on Christian political thoughts and Ghanaian political context and worldview (expressed in stories, proverbs and idioms) and sociopolitical situation.

1.4 Problem Statement

The fact that Ghana faces many societal challenges despite its abundant natural resources is disturbing. From the background data presented above, Ghana's political challenges may be attributed largely to the dichotomization of "Church" and "society" into "spiritual" and "secular" realms which tend to make Christianity less impactful in the society. This highlights the need for the church to engage the political space. Given that most of the country's challenges have political roots, the church must engage the country's political space by analyzing and scrutinizing political structures from biblical-theological and Ghanaian socio-cultural perspectives, with the effect of charting a new course of socio-economic and political developments.

1.5 Research Questions

Given the foregoing, the main research question in this dissertation is: How might a contextual political theology be formulated to address Ghana's sociopolitical challenges and correct wrong notions about human flourishing? The main research problem is further divided into five subsidiary questions as follows.

1. What are the biblical foundations for political theology?

2. How have theologians throughout church history developed their political theologies in the light of their sociopolitical milieu?

3. What sociopolitical challenges is contemporary Ghana confronted with?

4. How might a political theology be formulated to address the sociopolitical needs of contemporary Ghana?

5. What implications has a contextual political theology for Ghana for the understanding of the concept of human flourishing?

1.6 Research Hypothesis

Given the above research question, the main hypothesis of this study is as follows: A political theology that is biblically credible, historically informed and genuinely contextual within the Ghanaian traditional worldview and culture is relevant to address Ghana's political challenges and correct wrong notions about human flourishing.

1.7 Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study include:

i. To establish the biblical foundations for public engagement with theology.

ii. To examine what selected theologians have said about the church's engagement with societal issues.

iii. To examine the current political situation in Ghana.

iv. To formulate a political theology suitable for the contemporary Ghanaian political situation.

v. To deduce implications from the theological formulation for the understanding of the concept of human flourishing.

1.8 Research Methodology

The research is a literature-based study aimed at formulating a contextual political theology for addressing Ghana's political needs and correcting wrong notions about human flourishing. The research falls within the field of systematic and historical theology, specifically, the sub-discipline of public theology. Systematic theology refers to the branch of theology that deals with the overall biblical teaching on a particular subject for today's readers. Systematic theologians interpret, restate, and contextualize all biblical teachings about a particular topic.

Public theology can be considered from different perspectives. Smit (2011) outlines six theories related to the origins, nature and scope of public theology. Firstly, public theology may be considered as the discussion of public issues from a theological perspective and for public scrutiny (Smit 2013:13). This approach to public theology is traced to American theologian Marty who (in 1974) introduced the term "public theology" into North American theological discourses. Marty's public theology is a form of public religion that focuses on the role of the church or the role of the church in the public space. The second story about the origins of public theology is connected with Tracy's seminal essay "Theology as Public Discourse" published in The Christian Century in March 1975. Tracy asked fundamental questions pertaining to the "modes of argumentation... methods... warrants, backings, evidence" that define the publicness of theology (Smit 2011:13). The "Theology and the Public Sphere" narrative traces the origin of public theology to Europe, specifically the German-speaking world (Smit 2011:15-16). In Huber's opinion, the "public" constitutes one societal realm in which actors of the society argue their case (for the development of the society) by transparently drawing on their particular sources.

The fourth narrative about the origin of public theology connects the emergence of this theological sub-discipline to the people's struggles (Smit 2011:16-18). Here, public theology may be considered as a response to the public struggles of those who practice theology. Liberation

theologies, black theologies and feminist theologies are examples of public theologies, but they are not the totality. Fifthly, Smit (2011:18) identifies the ecumenical attempts to deal with issues of global concern as contributing to the emergence of public theology. Though the church's efforts in dealing with human struggles are not a recent development, the 20th century Ecumenical Movement pushed the agenda forward with various slogans coined to create awareness. The slogans include: "responsible society", "churches in revolutionary situations", "a decade of development and peace", "liberation instead of development", "justice and participation", "justice, peace and sustainability", "justice, peace and integrity of creation" and "a decade to overcome violence" (Smit 2011:18-19). Lastly, the increasing global efforts to combat the secularization of faith and encourage the publicization of religion is also a contributor to the emergence and development of public theology (Smit 2011:19). People have been ambivalent about the presence of religion in the public sphere because they feel it will lead to the clash of civilizations. Yet, the church has not relented in her efforts to confront the public sphere with the Christian faith because without such an approach secularization will relegate the Christian faith to the private aspect of human life. The influences of the above stories are not equal; yet, each story contributes to the holistic understanding of the emergence of public theology. In all the above stories, the audience includes both the church and people outside the church. The researcher's political-theological approach leans toward Marty's approach; that is, the role of the church (and hence Christian theology) in the public affairs of society.

Given the nature and scope of the research, the researcher used Osborne's (2010:379-383) four-fold approach to theological and religious research—comprising Scripture, historical theology, contextual analysis, and theological formulation and practical implications—as a methodology for the research. According to this model, a theological formulation requires the interaction between Scripture, historical theology and the situation of the community for which the theology is formulated. This approach is suitable for this research because the study sought to develop a literary investigation into a conceptual construction. The steps required for conducting the research are outlined below.

Step 1: Biblical Theology

The first step provides a biblical and theological framework for the study by conducting an exegetical study of selected biblical texts related to political theology. This step is very significant because any appropriate and acceptable theological discourse must be Scripture-based. The passages considered include Genesis 1:26-28; 3:1-15; 1 Kings 21:1-29; Jeremiah 22:1-9; Amos 5:1-7, 16-24; Matthew 5:1–16; Luke 4:16-22; Mark 10:35-37, 42-45; Romans 13:1-7 and 1 John 3:16–18. Using the text-immanent approach, the researcher espoused biblical theology to serve as a biblical foundation for the theological formulation. The sources of data for this step included monographs, Bible Commentaries, journal articles, books, theses, and dissertations of the selected texts.

Step 2: Historical Theology

This step comprises a historical survey of various scholarly perspectives on the concept of political theology to provide the appropriate historical context for the study. The views of Greek philosophers like Plato and Aristotle and theologians such as Augustine, Thomas Aquinas, Martin Luther, John Wesley, and Jürgen Moltmann on politics were engaged. The review was organized thematically based on data gleaned from books, articles, theses and dissertations.

Step 3: Prevailing Sociopolitical Situation

This step examines the general political situation of contemporary Ghana to ascertain the issues that need immediate attention. Again, the prevailing Ghanaian views about human flourishing are examined. To place the study in the right religious perspective, this step also accounts for the planting, development and growth of Christianity in Ghana. The prosperity theology and its impact on the church and national development were also considered in this step.

Step 4: Theological formulation and implications

The final step is the formulation of a political theology for Ghanaian society based on the results from the first three steps. The presentation covered such areas as governance and nation-building, education, work, wealth and the environment. Next, this step explored ways in which the theological formulation can correct the wrong views about flourishing among Ghanaians. Published books, articles, theses and dissertations were the main sources of data for this step.

1.9 Chapter Outline

The study is organized in six chapters as follows.

Chapter One, "**Background and Introduction to the Study**", serves as a general introduction to the entire study with its focus on the background to the research problem, the statement of the research problem, the research questions, the research hypothesis, the objectives of the study, literature review, research methodology, and structure of the study, among others.

Chapter Two, "**Political Theology in Biblical Context**", presents a critical study of selected biblical texts to place the study in the right biblical and theological contexts.

Chapter Three, "**Political Theology in Historical Context**" presents a historical survey of the political thoughts expressed by selected Christian scholars across the various epochs in church history.

Chapter Four, "**The Ghanaian Political Context**", focuses on the key political issues in Ghana that need to be addressed. The chapter also engages relevant aspects of Africa's *Agenda 2063* blueprint.

Chapter Five, "**A Contextual Political Theology for Ghana**", presents a political theology from a Ghanaian perspective based on biblical data, historical data and the contemporary Ghanaian political context. Ghanaian traditional political philosophy was engaged to enhance the contextualization of the resulting theology. The chapter also focuses on how the theological formulation should inform Ghanaian notions of human flourishing.

Chapter Six, "**Summary and Conclusion**", summarizes the findings of the study, draws conclusions and suggests areas for further research.

1.10 Value of the Study

The study has the following values. (a) For the academic community, the research will generate interest in political theology among African scholars, hence fostering some scholarly debates on the subject. Thus, the study will serve as a springboard for future studies on the subject. (b) In terms of Christian belief and practice, the study will encourage Christians to partake actively in

political activities in their societies. The study will also effectively address inappropriate and misleading notions of human flourishing among Ghanaian Christians. (c) For the general society, the study will bring about theological, ethical and spiritual renewals that will yield improved God-human, human-human and human-environment relations.

1.11 Ethics of Research Methodology

The research was guided by the following ethical considerations.

i. The researcher ensured the use of inclusive language.

i. The researcher acknowledged all sources used for the research.

ii. The researcher avoided the absolutization of his insights into the study subject.

1.12 Conclusion

This chapter has introduced the study by outlining the background to the research problem, the statement of the research problem, the research questions, the research hypothesis, the objectives of the study, the literature review, the research methodology, and the structure of the study, among others. The review of literature established the lack of adequate biblical engagement and contextualization in the existing literature of political theology for the Ghanaian sociopolitical environment. The survey also revealed the lack of literature on the link between political theology and human flourishing. The study will formulate a contextual political theology that fills these literary gaps. Such a theology needs to be placed, firstly, in a biblical context. The next chapter, therefore, establishes the biblical foundations for political theology.

CHAPTER TWO

POLITICAL THEOLOGY IN BIBLICAL CONTEXT

2.1 Introduction

As a study that aims at formulating a contextual theology, the outcome of the research needs to be theologically/biblically grounded, historically informed and contextually relevant. The purpose of this chapter is to provide the needed theological/biblical basis for the study by espousing key theological themes on the concepts of political theology and human flourishing based on selected biblical texts (including Gen. 1:26-28; 3:1-15; 1 Kings 21:1-16; Jer. 22:1-9; Amos 5:1-7, 16-24; Matt. 5:1–12; Luke 4:18-19; Mark 10:35-37, 42-45; Rom. 13:1-7 and 1 John 3:16–18). The choice of these passages was informed both by their relevance to the subject matter as well as the researcher's desire to present a focused examination of passages from as many genres of Scripture as possible. Detailed exegetical analysis of the texts is not provided since such an approach is beyond the scope of the study.

2.2 The Researcher's Approach to Biblical Theology

Chapter One of the study identified the lack of thorough engagement with Scriptures as a key research gap in existing literature on political theology for the Ghanaian context. This chapter addresses this literature gap by providing a biblical theology based on a credible and robust interpretation of the Scriptures. Such an approach does not intend to invent something new, but to build on existing approaches and to avoid potential pitfalls. Therefore, an outline of existing approaches to biblical theology needs to be provided at this point. The historical descriptive approach seeks to discover what the text meant to the first audience. Here, biblical theology is practiced by historians, not theologians. This approach frees the theologian from "the anachronistic interpretations of its predecessors and forces itself to accept the hiatus between the time and ideas of the Bible and the time and ideas of the modern world" (Klink and Lockett 2012: np). Krister Stendahl and James Barr are among the proponents of this approach to biblical theology. The redemptive history approach deals with the historical events contained in the text and as revealed progressively (Klink and Lockett 2012: np). With D. A. Carson and Sally Lloyd-Jones as its key

advocates, the redemptive-history approach traces salvation themes that run through Scripture as they were progressively revealed through time.

The worldview-story approach to biblical theology is more concerned with the structure of the narratives themselves than with the actual events that inspired them (Klink and Lockett 2012: np). This model offers a thick, intertextual reading of the whole Scripture that serves to coalesce the diverse parts with the whole, as well as the story of God with the story of its audience. N. T. Wright, Richard Hays and Craig Bartholomew are among the main advocates of this approach to biblical theology. The theological construct approach considers the aim of biblical theology as discovering what God is revealing about himself through the witness of the biblical text (Klink and Lockett 2012:np). Francis Watson, Stephen Fowl and Daniel Treier are key supporters of this view.

The canonical approach focuses on the final shape of the text and how it was shaped to become as it is. It is less concerned with the historical events underlying the book and more concerned with the recounting and retelling of the events. This method also has to do with the process which yielded the Christian canon that serves as the main witness to the Christian gospel (Klink and Lockett 2012:np). Here, the theologian focuses on the final form of the text which the Christian canon has handed over to the church which is believed to be the original material that was produced by the biblical writers (Tate 2012:61; Klink and Lockett 2012:np). Proponents of this model of biblical theology include Brevard Childs, James Sanders, and John Sailhamer (Tate 2012:61).

Using a text-immanent exegetical approach (also known as the synchronic text-immanent approach), the research will formulate a biblical theology that could be described as a canonical theology. The approach used by the research may thus be described as "the text-immanent canonical process." The text-immanent reading gives prominence to the final form of the text as it appears in the Judeo-Christian canon, allowing the text "to speak for itself." In this approach, the standard for judging the credibility of the interpretation of a text is the text itself. This method considers the biblical texts as an independent literary work of art that can stand on its own artistic feet without support from the historical context within which it emerged (Eagleton 1983:104; De Villiers 2019:1). The interpretative approach will focus on three key aspects; namely, artistic strategies, textual coherence and literary genre. Reading the text according to the literary genre

enables one to approach the text with the appropriate interpretative strategy for appreciating the theology embedded in it (De Villiers 2019:1; Waltke and Yu 2007:188). Textual coherence has to do with the semantic property of discourses that is based on how each individual sentence is interpreted in relation to how other sentences are interpreted (Van Dijk 1977:93). Thus, the text-immanent approach promotes the interpretation of Scripture in the light of Scripture. Coherence requires the theologian to view the text as a whole and to demonstrate how the individual parts fit into the structure and purpose of the whole. Furthermore, the text-immanent approach is sensitive to the literary devices within the text; that is, the technique used by the author to convey his/her message to the audience (De Villiers 2019:1). This approach frees the exegete from the controversies that usually surround authorship, date of composition, and audience and makes the exegete focus of what the text reveals about itself (De Villiers 2019:1). It invites the reader to surrender his or her thoughts and traditions and to approach the text objectively to allow the text to presents its message without forcing any meaning on it. To this end, the text-immanent approach highlights the primacy of Scripture correlated with tradition, reason, experience and nature.

With the text-immanent approach as an interpretative framework, the study now proceeds with the theological analyses of theological themes; namely, the political image of God in humankind and the effect of sin on human life.

2.3 The Political Image of Humankind

2.3.1 The *Imago Dei*

The first two chapters of the book of Genesis serve as the main foundation for the biblical anthropology espoused in this study. The creation account indicates that God created humankind in his own image (Gen. 1:26-27). A key interpretative deduction from the text is that human beings, unlike God, are not eternal. Beyond the mere fact that God created humankind in his own image, the text does not give an adequate explanation of the nature of the divine image in humankind. Therefore, one cannot be fully certain about the nature of the divine *imago* in humankind. Nonetheless, the following survey of interpretative deductions by scholars is helpful for the present study. Grudem (2011:445-447) considers the *imago Dei* as comprising the following aspects. First,

it consists of morality; that is, the ability to distinguish between what is right and what is wrong, and to make responsible decisions. Second, the *imago Dei* has a spiritual dimension in that humans have spiritual components in addition to their physical body (cf. Gen. 2:27). Creativity and intellectual ability also form part of God's image in humankind. Finally, like God, humans are social beings who always desire to fellowship with others. For such systematic theologians as Grudem (2011), Berkhof (2000) and Erickson (1998), the *imago Dei* is unique to human beings; other creatures do not possess this feature. Berkhof (2000:205), for example, links human possession of the divine *imago* to their distinctiveness among all creation and their position as "the head and crown of the entire creation." Erickson (1998:532), after an extensive discussion on the different interpretations of the *imago Dei*, concludes that it is "the powers of personality that make humans, like God, beings capable of interacting with other persons, of thinking and reflecting, of willing freely."

In the view of Wesley (2007), God's image in humankind comprises the natural image, moral image and political image. The natural image of God in humankind refers to those qualities that define what humanity is; it includes will, freedom and affection (Mpere-Gyekye and Brodie 2019:144). The moral image (comprising holiness, love and righteousness) enables humans to relate to God. The political image is that which enables humans to govern/rule this lower world. It comprises leadership and managerial abilities. As political beings, humans are not to be ruled by other creatures; rather, humans must rule themselves (Mpere-Gyekye and Brodie 2019:144). Wesley (cited in Taylor [ed.] 2008:376; see also Buddemeyer-Porter 2005:125) extends the doctrine of the *imago Dei* to cover all created beings saying, this doctrine is "best understood as a special relationship between God and all created beings" not just between God and humankind only. Wesley is of the view that the primary bearers of God's image (that is, human beings) mediate the *imago Dei* to other creations (Buddemeyer-Porter 2005:125). Wesley's view seems to provide a foundation for J. Wentzel van Huyssteen's interdisciplinary study of what it means to be human.

In this work, *Alone in the World? Human Uniqueness in Science and Theology*, van Huyssteen (2006) provides an impressive reinterpretation of the biblical metaphor of the *imago Dei* from both theological and scientific viewpoints and arrives at conclusions that further advance Wesley's consideration of the *imago Dei* as extending to non-humans also. van Huyssteen (2006:117) considers "the doctrine of the *imago Dei*" as "one of the most enduring, core traditions of the

Christian faith", and a particularly theological articulation of human uniqueness. According to van Huyssteen (2006), God's purpose in creating humankind in his image is to set forth his presence in this world. He analyzes the biblical account of creation in the light of evidence from natural science such as biological evolution and evidence from paleontology (the study of ancient life, from dinosaurs to prehistoric plants, mammals, fish, insects, fungi, and microbes). He argues that human beings were formed through biological phenomena like natural selection, and yet are unique in that only the human species has attained the capacity for self-consciousness and symbolic thought that makes communication and complex art possible (van Huyssteen 2004:14, 40). Similar to Wesley's view, van Huyssteen (2004:322) opines that the *imago Dei* may not be limited to *Homo sapiens* species. This means *non-Homo sapiens* species may have the *imago Dei* which has not fully been realized. He contends that if one were to compare life in the Upper Paleolithic period to life in today's world, one would realize that the *imago Dei* evolved over time. He considers the rapid developments in both functional and symbolic artifacts (including cave paintings) that emerged during the Upper Paleolithic period as an expression of the spiritual nature of humans. Thus, van Huyssteen moves away from the traditional interpretation of the *imago Dei* in terms of such attributes as rationality and reason to consider the complexity of human life in its evolutionary, biological, social, and ethical dimensions as an expression of the divine *imago*. Yet, his study also emphasizes the moral dimension of the divine *imago.*

Admittedly, van Huyssteen's theological-evolutionary approach to the *imago Dei* gives a cause to rethink the traditional theological-philosophical view of the doctrine. His view can be appreciated if one reads it critically in the context of the primaeval history (Gen. 1–11) which describes the relationships between humans and animals, men and women, parents and children, and between neighbors. The attribution of the *imago Dei* to humans is rooted in their ability to create, shape, and change the networks of relation that connect them and with the rest of creation. These abilities that make humans capable of setting forth divine presence in the world, as noted earlier, have developed over several years. The fact that humans have attained that status first after several years of existing on earth does not mean they are the only creatures with the "seed" that bears the "fruit of *imago Dei.*" Furthermore, the fact that God's love extends to all creation and the fact that redemption is for all creation makes it possible (if not conclusive) that the *imago Dei* could extend to non-human creation as well. Beyond the above brief evaluation of the non-traditional interpretation of the *imago-Dei* metaphor, the scope of the research will not permit the researcher

to offer any extensive analysis of the legitimacy or otherwise of non-human creation also bearing the image of God.

Shifting the locus of discussing the *imago Dei* from the doctrine of creation (with its emphasis on the portrayal of Adam and Eve as *imago Dei* within the context of Genesis 1–11) to the doctrine of Christ, the Christological model of the *imago Dei* considers Christ, not humanity in general, as the definitive *imago Dei*. Here, emphasis is placed on such New Testament texts as Colossians 1:15, 2 Corinthians 4:4, and 2 Corinthians 3:1–8 where Christ is described as the image of God. One of the key proponents of the Christological view of the *imago Dei* is the German theologian Dietrich Bonhoeffer (2009) who argues for the centrality of the idea of Christ's promeity in the Christian understanding of the doctrine. Christ's promeity means his nature of existing for us (the one who stands *pro* me): "in my place, where I should stand, but cannot … on the boundary of my existence, beyond my existence, yet for me" (Bonhoeffer 2009:60). According to this view, Christ forms the center of human existence. Christ epitomizes the *imago Dei* because he is a true definition of God's image in every respect. Therefore, a human being becomes truly human when he/she becomes like Christ.

With different approaches and emphases, each of the interpretations of the *imago Dei* contributes to the church's understanding of theological anthropology. However, for the sake of this study, the political dimension of the *imago Dei* will be discussed further in the following section.

2.3.2 The Political Nature of Humankind

Whichever interpretation one gives to the *imago Dei,* the fact remains that human beings are political beings. Some facts about the political aspects of the divine *imago* may be noted and outlined below. First, the political image of God in humans makes it possible for them to mediate divine blessings to other creatures. God is the source of all blessings; his blessings are to reach other creatures through human activities. Mediating God's blessings to other creatures requires humans to have and maintain good relationships with God and other creatures.

More so, humankind (being God's image bearers) is not to be ruled by other creatures; rather, humans must rule themselves (Gen. 1:28; cf. Mpere-Gyekye and Brodie 2019:144). However, since human authority is exercised under God's sovereignty, human governance must reflect God's

will and purpose for the common good of the society. Humankind's dominion over all living creatures is a responsibility to care for other creatures, not a license to abuse them. The use of the words "subdue" and "dominion" (1:28) is not meant to legitimize the exploitation of God's creation.

Human beings were not created to exercise destructive power over the rest of creation; they were rather given the power to take proper care of God's creation. God's appointment of humankind to take dominion over the earth therefore means humankind is "responsible to God the ultimate King, and as such expected to manage and develop and care for creation, this task to include actual physical work" (Hart 1995:322). As stewards, humans are accountable to God for how they relate to other creatures. Therefore, human dominion over the earth must align with God's model of dominion. Humankind was entirely derived from God and so must depend on God, and rule as God would rule (Calvin 1960:35).

Sin affects the way humans exercise political power. Therefore, it is important to end the discussion on the political image of humankind with the concept of sin. At the end of the first chapter of the book of Genesis the writer says God evaluated all his creation as "very good" (Gen. 1:31). The text is meant to show that life began in goodness, without evil. Thus, the evil that one finds in the world is not the result of some relentless fate; evil contradicts God's purpose for creation. The stories of Adam's abode in the Garden of Eden and his disobedience to God through the serpent's deception (cf. Gen. 2–3), are therefore meant to teach that sin is the result of the misuse of human free will. In the story, the serpent—described as crafty—is the instrument that facilitated the human disobedience of God's command. The serpent may be considered theologically as an "anti-God symbol" (Wenham 2003:40). Here, the story that has been interpreted theological as the fall of humanity can legitimately "be read as a paradigm of every sin" describing "what happens every time someone disobeys God" (Wenham 2003:41). This view, which the text-immanent reading of Genesis 3 may support, underlines that the essence of sin is basically the rejection of God's command and the preference of human wisdom to God's.

Observations from human society reveal that human political challenges are caused by sinful desires and actions. In the absence of sin, there is peace and harmony as well as excellent human-divine, human-human, and human-environment relations. A society in this state is said to be

flourishing; here human flourishing is understood as the fulfillment of God's purpose for humankind in such areas as humankind's relationships with God, relationships with others, and living a physically embodied and integrated life. Such a state cannot be attained without the proper use of human political power. It is in this light that one can appreciate Wenham's (2003:41) argument that "The immediate consequence of sin is disruption of relations, introducing alienation between God and [hu]man and between [hu]man and [hu]man. The long-term effects of sin are toil, pain, blighted relationships and untimely death." Therefore, each person's "fall" comes through sins committed by that person and these sins can lead to death. The above discourse points to the fact that most of the human challenges are due to sinful political structures.

The negative effect of bad political structures on citizens is underlined in the story of Ahab's murder of Naboth (1 Kings 21:1-16) which is considered in the next section.

2.4 Land and Sociopolitical Injustice (1 Kings 21:1-16)

First Kings 21:1-16 gives an account of Ahab's abuse of human rights due to Naboth's refusal to give him the land he coveted. The event took place in Jezreel (v. 1) where King Ahab had his palace. Close to Ahab's palace in Samaria was a vineyard which belonged to Naboth the Jezreelite. The king wanted the land to cultivate vegetables. Naboth refused to give the land to the King (v. 3), resulting in Jezebel's plot against him which led to his death and the subsequent possession of the land by Ahab. The socio-economic and theological significance of land play a key role in this account. Therefore, it is important that one read the passage in the context of Israel's theology of land, which is briefly outlined below.

2.4.1 Theology of Land in Ancient Israel

One of the major themes in the Pentateuch and the early historical books is the divine promise of land and its fulfilment in the gift of land to future generations. The Old Testament theology of land originates from God's promise of Abraham to give his descendants the Land of Canaan as their possession (Gen. 17:7-8). God made this promise as part of his covenant with Abraham. The theology of land in ancient Israel is, therefore, closely linked to Israel's covenantal relationship with YHWH (Brueggemann 1977:3).

Wright (2004:85-92) draws the following facts from Israel's land-gift tradition which the researcher finds useful for this study. First, the land-gift tradition underlined Israel's dependency on YHWH. Right from the time that God called Abram (Gen. 12), it was clear that the patriarchs were aliens, sojourning in the land which God would later give to their descendant as an inheritance (cf. Deut. 26:5; read Gen. 23:4; Lev. 25:23; Deut. 23:7; 26:5 to appreciate Israel's self-consciousness about being aliens and strangers in the land of Canaan). Therefore, Israel had no right to make any "natural, autochthonous claim to their land" (Wright 2004:85). Israel's possession of the land was made possible by God's act of electing them and the promise he made to Abram and the other patriarchs. The Israelites were, therefore, stewards responsible for taking proper care of the land. Ancient Israel, like Ghana, was a predominantly agricultural society. People's survival largely depended on agricultural products. Given this fact, it follows that Israel's acknowledgment that YHWH is the owner of the land that produces food and other human needs amounts to a declaration of their dependence upon YHWH. This principle contradicts the Canaanite tradition that all the land belongs to the royal family who then entrusts it to their subjects (Waltke and Yu 2007:721; Walton, Matthews and Chavalas 2000:383).

Secondly, Israel's land-gift tradition underlined YHWH's covenant faithfulness and dependability. God promised to give the land to Israel, and he fulfilled his promise. Israel could therefore trust God for his promises. In Deuteronomy 26:5-10, the Israelites who were about to enter the Promised Land were urged to make the following declaration when they eventually possessed the Land and brought their harvest before the altar: That they were foreigners and slaves in Egypt, but YHWH heard their plea, redeemed them through miraculous acts and brought them to the Land of Canaan, which he gave them as their possession. Wright (2004:87) asserts that although the occasion for this declaration "is the goodness of God in the faithfulness of nature, its total emphasis is on the faithfulness and power of God in control of history." Israel's possession of the land is concrete proof of YHWH's faithfulness and dependability. Any true Israelite could, therefore, not forget God's covenantal faithfulness while living in the Promised Land.

Thirdly, the land-gift tradition served as proof of YHWH's covenantal relationship with Israel. YHWH's promise of a land to the Israelites is central to both the Abrahamic and Mosaic (Mt. Sinai) covenants (Gen. 12:1-4; 15 and 17; Exod. 19). The land became a reminder of Israel's relationship with YHWH. The land was Israel's inheritance, meaning a property that they received

from YHWH. It is in this sense that the land is both Israel's (Psa. 105:11) and YHWH's (Exod. 15:17; 1 Sam. 26:19). In the family context, the land was an inheritance in the sense that it had been passed by one generation to another (eg. from a father to his son or sons). Given this understanding, to speak of Israel as inheriting the land from YHWH implies the Father-son relationship between YHWH and Israel. This reminisces YHWH's reference to Israel as his firstborn son (Exod. 4:22). Israel's land theology and theology of sonship both emphasize God's grace and covenantal faithfulness.

Fourthly, the historical land-gift tradition established property rights. The land was held as a corporate possession and as an individual possession. When the Israelite farmer brought his/her first fruits to YHWH, he/she alluded to the possession of the land at the individual level when he/she declared: "I bring the first of the fruit of the ground that you, O LORD, have given me [not given us]" (Deut. 26:10a NRSV). Wright (2004:89) argues that "The gift of land percolated, so to speak, down to the lowest social level, so that each individual household could claim that its right to the land it possessed was guaranteed by [YHWH] himself." The principle for sharing the land was meant to ensure equitable distribution of the entire land to every clan and every household to possess a piece of the national inheritance (Num. 26 and 34; Josh. 13—16). This means that the national asset was not to be kept in the custody of the national rulers while the ordinary people lived in hardship. In other words, God taught Israel, through property rights, that the country's natural resources are meant for the common good of the people and not for the good of a selected few. Had God given the land to the leaders of Israel, they would have used it for their benefit while the people suffered. It was, therefore, forbidden for one to sell family property and hence deprive the family (both living and unborn members) of their source of livelihood.

Fifthly, Israel's land theology was the reason behind the prophetic preoccupation with issues of economic exploitation. Israel prophets were spokespersons of God who acted as covenant enforcement mediators, always urging Israel to be faithful in their relationship with YHWH. The prophets spoke against economic exploitation and injustice because these acts indicate unfaithfulness to YHWH (cf. Amos 5:1-27). This principle was meant to protect the poor and the weak from exploitation by the rich and powerful. It was also meant to ensure that the land was not monopolized. Monopolization of the land by the rich would inevitably increase the plights of the poor. Therefore, there was a need to put measures in place to check it.

The theology of land outlined above provides the theological and socio-economic context for Naboth's reaction to Ahab's proposal to have his land.

2.4.2 Naboth's Covenantal Loyalty

Naboth's decision not to give the land to the king was motivated by his determination to remain faithful to his covenantal relationship with YHWH. He recognized that the land is a gift from YHWH to his family and he is only a caretaker of it. Therefore, he could not act in a way that implies that he is the owner of the land. Again, his response to the king shows his trust in YHWH's covenant faithfulness and dependability. The king is powerful and so humanly speaking must be given whatever he asks. But YHWH is the supreme ruler who can be trusted in all situations, even if such a situation will lead to death.

Naboth's faithfulness to YHWH's covenant with Israel made him selfless. He realized that his action could bring insecurity to his family and the unborn generations. The land had been passed to him by his ancestors and it was his duty to ensure that he passed it to the next generation. The identification of Naboth as a Jezreelite (v.1) is meant to underscore that he was born in Jezreel and the land in question had been his family's land for generations. He did not want to enjoy the payment the king would make for the land and then cause his descendants to suffer.

Naboth's response to the king highlights his deep knowledge of Israel's property rights. The land is generally a national asset, yet each clan and each family have a specific share. His refusal was not based on feeling or on just a family tradition but on theological issues—the most critical issue being that land was God's gift to Israel due to his (God's) covenantal relationship with Israel and this gift has been distributed among clans and families for corporate enjoyment (Walton, Matthews and Chavalas 2000:383). Leviticus 25:23 is key in this regard: "The land shall not be sold in perpetuity, for the land is mine; with me you are but aliens and tenants" (NRSV). Thus, YHWH has given the land to Naboth's family to act as a tenant and so their responsibility to maintain the family ownership was inalienable (Brueggemann 2000:257; Waltke and Yu 2007:721).

Furthermore, the land was also not to be sold from one tribe to another according to Israel's land theology (Num. 36:7). All these were to ensure that "the land remained within the extended family as a sign of their membership in the covenantal community" (Walton, Matthews and Chavalas

2000:140). Ahab wanted Naboth's family land permanently. It was this covenantal relationship that Naboth wanted to maintain for his family and the unborn. Naboth's refusal was thus motivated by the fact that land is an "inheritance" that cannot be traded. The king dismissed and disregarded the inalienable nature of the land in Israel and eventually abused his political power.

2.4.3 Abuse of Royal Authority (vv. 4-16)

King Ahab's reaction to Naboth's decline of his request and the subsequent actions by Jezebel (the queen) suggest the abuse of royal authority and weakness and irresponsible behavior of Ahab. Ahab's immediate reaction to Naboth's refusal to sell his family property to him was to return home "sullen and vexed" (v. 4 NRSV). The king's reaction was childish, underscored his egocentric posture, and did not fit a powerful leader who takes his responsibility of seeing to the proper administration and development of his region seriously (Sweeney 2007:249).

Jezebel, having found the reason for the king's sullen and vexed state as Naboth's refusal to give him the land he desires to possess (v.6), reprimanded and encouraged him to take the land by force (Brueggemann 2000:259). Jezebel was applying a Gentilic royal possession and use of power which was unacceptable before YHWH, Israel's God. She was brought up in Sidon, a commercial and idolatrous city on the coast of the Mediterranean Sea where her father (the king) used his royal power to get whatever he wished (Brueggemann 2000:257). There, the king placed himself above his subjects and legitimized the use of royal authority to his advantage (Walton, Matthews and Chavalas 2000:383). Jezebel therefore became uncomfortable that the king would not just take what he desired.

In reaction, Jezebel wrote letters in the name of the king and used the king's seal to seal it asking the elders and the nobles of the city to accuse Naboth of cursing God and the king, and hence having him stoned to death (vv. 9b-10). The elders and the nobles implemented Jezebel's scheme and had Naboth stoned to death (v. 12-13). After the incident, Jezebel urged Ahab to take over Naboth's vineyard because its owner was now dead (v.15-16). Royal irresponsibility is further demonstrated in Ahab's failure to question the cause of Naboth's death.

YHWH reacted to this grievous sin by sending Elijah to once again go and confront Ahab, this time at Naboth's vineyard (vv. 17-18). YHWH told Elijah to tell Ahab that dogs will lick up his

(Ahab's blood in the same place where dogs licked up Naboth's blood (v. 19). This was a strong and startling prophecy. The fulfilment took place in Samaria where Ahab died and the dogs licked his blood (1 Kings 22:38), instead of in Jezreel where Naboth was murdered. The entire story shows YHWH's displeasure for injustice and abuse of human rights.

The foregoing analysis shows strongly that leadership is a responsibility to care for the people and not an opportunity to abuse, exploit, or oppress. This idea is further developed in Jeremiah 22:1-9 where God charged the leadership of Israel to cater for the needs of all, especially the marginalized such as the widow, the orphan and the foreigner. The next section considers this text.

2.5 The Leader's role in protecting the vulnerable (Jer. 22:1-9)

Throughout the Old Testament YHWH made it clear that leadership is a privilege that comes with responsibilities. Jeremiah 22:1-9 underscores the king's responsibility in protecting the vulnerable in the society. YHWH's demand from the king to protect his people from exploitation and unfair practices is set within the context of his covenant with Israel (Carvalho 2016:70). The following theological themes are interpretatively deductive from the text.

2.5.1 Traditional leadership and justice (v.3a)

In the first two verses, Jeremiah is commanded to "go down" from the temple to the palace of the king to deliver a message to him (Martens 2008:535). The temple was on a lower ground; from the palace to the temple, one "goes up" (Jer. 26:10). Even though the king was approached in private, the message was given to him in public because part of the message was meant for his officials and those who came through the gates (v.2b). The people who came and went through the palace gates undoubtedly were royals or people who did so for the affairs of the state (Lundbom 2004:118). They were servants of the state who together with the king were responsible for the administration of justice.

In verse 3, the king is commanded to act with "justice" and "righteousness". One of the key duties of the king of Israel was to ensure that justice and righteousness prevail in the society (Psa. 72:1) and that the poor and downtrodden are catered for. Both terms (justice and righteousness) are usually used together to underscore the covenant responsibility of the people of Israel (see Amos 5:7; Isa. 1:21; Psa. 72; 89). Justice, in this case, must not be limited to legal court decisions; it must

be extended to social concerns for the oppressed, voiceless, marginalized and the weak—that is, those who are usually victims of exploitation (Martens 2008:535).

This is the reason why the king of Israel is usually pictured as a shepherd. God is the Shepherd of Israel (Ezek. 34:11-16; Psa. 23). He has, however, placed over his people a human shepherd responsible for the day-to-day administration of the society (Wright 2007:233). Zedekiah's failure to play his shepherding role is the reason for God's anger against him. "If the king was genuinely to pursue justice among his people, defending the afflicted, saving the children of the needy, crushing the oppressor (see Psa. 72:4), then he had to be available and approachable, just as the shepherd is to his sheep" (Wright 2007:233). YHWH expected Zedekiah to be a shepherd to his people by ensuring that the needs of the needy are addressed.

2.5.2 Leadership and oppression (v. 3b)

Again, the king is commanded to deliver from the hand of the oppressor him who has been robbed. As it is in contemporary Ghana, it was a common phenomenon in ancient Israel to see the rich and the powerful oppressing and exploiting the poor and the weak. Israel at that time lacked respect for human rights, human dignity, and the principle of equality before the law (Diamond 2003:574). That is why the king was tasked to defend the victims of oppression and the marginalized. God commands the king to ensure that national security, social order, and justice prevail.

2.5.3 Leadership and the plight of the needy (v. 3c)

The king is to do no wrong or violence to the alien, the fatherless, and the widow. The verb "wrong" means cheating, exploiting, or taking unfair socio-economic advantage of another, usually the weak and the vulnerable (Lev. 25:14). The resident aliens were immigrants or foreigners living in Israel who owned no lands; the fatherless were minors without landowning fathers and widows were women who had no landowning male to cater for them (Carvalho 2016:70; Rivera-Pagán 2013:39). The care for aliens is the foundation of an ethics of hospitality Rivera-Pagán 2013:39). In the biblical world, Abraham's (Gen. 18:1-15) and Job's (Job 31: 32) acts of hospitality are commended. In Ghana and other parts of Africa, hospitality is an important part of everyday life. Hospitality serves as how many needy people survive in Ghanaian society. In ancient Israel, these three categories of people (the alien, the fatherless and the widow) occupied

the lowest position in the socio-economic ladder because "The alien had no means of support, the widow no husband and the orphan no father" (Coulibaly 2006:902).

The phrase "the stranger, the orphan, or the widow" is found many times in the book of Deuteronomy. In all its appearances, it is connected with God's action and care (Deut. 10:18; Ps. 146:8-10). The call to the king not to do wrong to the alien, the fatherless and the widow is rooted in the Deuteronomistic requirement that the king sees to the welfare of his people. The Mosaic law placed a curse on those who exploit the weak and the poor in society (particularly the alien, the fatherless, and the widow) (Deut. 27:19). Israel is admonished to help them (14:29; 24:17,19), rejoice with them (16:1), give a special offering for them (26:12-13) and to treat them justly to avoid divine curses (27:19). Israel's sociopolitical ethics prohibited everyone from taking advantage of such people and denying them of their rights (cf. Exod. 22:21; Prov. 23:10; Isa. 1:17). The Old Testament ethics about caring for orphans and widows serves as the foundation for James' assertion that pure and faultless religion reduces the plight of orphans and widows (James 1:27). The Deuteronomistic tradition requires the king to know, read and apply the law of which the care for these group of people is key. The king was not a super-human above the law but a model Israelite (among the people cf. Deut. 17:14-20) whose obedience to the law was to inspire the obedience of his subjects (Wright 2007:236).

The theological demands to cater for orphans and widows is key to dealing with the challenges that these categories of people go through in Ghana. There are many street children in many Ghanaian societies and many orphans in various orphanages who lack basic life needs. These people become targets for abuse and exploitation. The struggle for survival makes some of them end up committing various crimes and becoming popular scapegoats (Coulibaly 2006:902). The present discussion is therefore an important invitation to consider how sociopolitical structures in Ghanaian societies can be revised to cater for the needs of these and other people who a left uncared for.

2.5.4 Political Power and Bloodshed (v. 3d)

Finally, the king was commanded not to shed innocent blood. The idiom "to shed blood" means "to murder." Blood represents the life of a person and taking innocent blood means killing someone without any just cause. Strictly speaking, no human being has the right to take another person's

life. Unfortunately, the Ghanaian society has witnessed and/or continues to witness the shedding of innocent blood due to the struggle for political powers, and the search for wealth and fame, among others. Shedding innocent blood suggests weak and insensitive sociopolitical structures characterized by loss of human dignity, misplaced priorities, misconceptions about human flourishing and abuse of human rights. God's command to Zedekiah to avoid shedding innocent blood, therefore, serves as a good starting point for African theological discourses on the rule of law, peaceful coexistence, respect for human dignity and true human flourishing. In all, verse 3 highlights that kingship/leadership in Israel was a call to duties, not glories (Wright 2007:233).

2.5.5 God's Judgement for leadership failure (vv. 4-5)

Verse 4 has a positive conditional and it is followed by a negative conditional in verse 5. The particle "if" at the beginning of verse 4 indicates the conditional element related to the actual doing of the covenant commands of this verse. The use of the protasis-apodosis construction in prophetic covenantal speech (in the form "If ... then ... if not ... then") is common in covenantal speech (Exod. 19:5-6; Deut. 11:26-28; 28: 1-68; Josh. 24:15, 20; 1 Sam. 12:14-15, 25; Jer. 7:3-7; 17:24-27; 22:1-5; 26:4-5). Therefore, this verse reminds Jeremiah's audience of God's covenant with them. Verse 4 reminisces 17:25 and indicates the survival of the Davidic dynasty depends on whether or not the king heeds the command. Carrying out what God has commanded will ensure that kings who sit on David's throne will continue to come through the gates of Jerusalem, riding in chariots and on horses with their servants, and people (Lundbom 2004:121). The land will be blessed with economic bounty, God will continue to be with its people and the society will flourish.

The king is urged to comply with God's command as failure to do so would bring judgment upon everything he has in his kingdom and his kingdom will be in ruin (v.5). Here, YHWH swears an oath ("I swear by myself"), saying, if covenant faithlessness continues, the city of Jerusalem and the temple will become a desolation. YHWH swearing by himself means that he himself stands behind this word; the word remains true for as long as YHWH remains the only true God (Jer. 11:5; 16:14–15; 44:26; 49:13; 51:14). The king and his officials had to make a choice: Doing what is right and just and receiving rewards or rejecting God's commands and facing divine judgment. Thus, the nation's fate was dependent upon the king's treatment of these lowest members of the Judean community.

Verse 6 gives further details about the ruin of the palace using the metaphors of Gilead and Lebanon. YHWH compares the palace to the fertile, beautiful, and forested Gilead and Lebanon. Gilead was known for its livestock, pastures, bounty, and healing from balms obtained from its trees. Lebanon was famous for its tall and stately cedars, which still appear on the country's flag (1 Kings 5:13; 2 Kings 14:9; 2 Chron. 2:8; Psa. 29:5; 92:12; Hos. 14:6). Both Gilead and Lebanon were mountainous and renowned for their forest vegetation (Walton, Matthews and Chavalas 2000:657; Feinberg 1986:511; Hyatt 1956:981; Dyer 1983:1156; Lundbom 2004:124). The construction of the royal palace made use of timber from these places (especially from Lebanon) (cf. 1 Kings 5:6, 8-10; 7:2-5; 10:27; Isa. 22:8, 14) (Feinberg 1986:511). The Gilead-Lebanon metaphor "suggests that the palace was as exalted and stable as these mountains" (Coulibaly 2006:902). Thus, the palace is seen as a place of bounty, rich in forest products obtained from Gilead and Lebanon. The present state of the palace is, however, bound to change after God's judgment comes upon it. The judgment will change the palace from its state of bounty (as Gilead and Lebanon) to a wilderness existence with uninhabited towns (Coulibaly 2006:902). The city will change from riches to rags. The healing property of Gilead will not be effective in healing the land because the king has broken their covenant with YHWH (Lundbom 2004:124).

In verse 7 YHWH says he would "set apart" ("commission") destroyers equipped with weapons of destruction to "cut down their choicest cedars and cast them into the fire" (Kaiser and Rata 2019:154). The expression "setting apart" is a holy war language (Lundbom 2004:125). In light of Judah's conquest by Babylon, the Babylonians could be considered "woodcutters." This idea is highlighted in Psalm 74 which gives a vivid picture of how the Babylonians destroyed the temple with axes, hatchets, and hammers. Jeremiah's point is that the palace which looks like the beautiful cedars of Lebanon will be cut and burned into ashes. The fire imagery used in verse 7 draws on Jewish sacrificial tradition by stating that the city will be burned. Burnt offerings involved the burning of the sacrificial victim after it had been killed. The prophecy in verse 7 draws from Deuteronomy 29:24-26 where Moses predicts that all the nations will ask this question after they see what has happened to Jerusalem (see also Leviticus 26).

The ruins described in verses 6-7 have witnesses (v. 8), presumably non-Israelites, who will talk about the destruction of the city as they pass by on their way to their destinations (Kaiser and Rata 2019:155). Many foreigners passing by the city would ask why God would do such a thing to this

great city. The answer to this question is that the people "forsook the covenant of the LORD their God and worshiped other gods and served them" (v. 10), even though they were warned long ago by Moses (Deut. 29:25–26). The covenant in mind here is not the Davidic covenant (2 Sam. 7) but the Mt. Sanai covenant. The sin of idolatry is a breach of God's covenant with Israel (Exod. 20:3; Deut. 5:7).

The text examined suggests an inevitable impending divine wrath upon the people of Judah in an analogous way Amos prophesied the imminent judgment of Israel. A key conclusion is that YHWH expects leaders to rule for the common good of the people in accordance with his commandments. The same point is central to the message of Amos, especially in 5:1-27 which is examined in the next section.

2.6 Leadership, Lustice and Righteousness (Amos 5:1-7, 16-24)

Amos chapter 5 deals with misconceptions about human flourishing and warns Israel about God's impending judgment upon them due to their failure to make their society flourish. The sin of the nation was so grievous that God's judgment was imminent.

2.6.1 Death of a Nation and a Call to Seek YHWH (vv. 1-6)

The opening word "hear" is meant to call attention to what is about to come. Prophets were known to speak on behalf of God and as such the message they deliver is to be taken seriously. Amos uses the imperative to direct the attention of the entire political entity of the house of Israel (the northern kingdom) to the word that he had received from God. He then presents the lament proper (in v.2) as his introduction to the accusation, exhortations, and judgments that follow. Amos fashions his "political" lament in the form of a funeral lament, uttering it in the tone and meter of the traditional song (dirge) familiar to his audience (Mays 1969:85; Osuagwu 2016:77; Ironside 2004:108; Wiersbe 2007:1426; Barton 2012:9; Sweeney, Walsh and Franke 2000:233).

The prophet uses the present tense in the expression "The virgin of Israel is fallen ..." to indicate its prophetic nature, underscoring the certainty of the projected overthrow of the kingdom. The word "fallen" in the dirge means "fallen by the sword" (cf. 2 Sam. 1:19, 25, 27; 3:34; Lam. 2:21) (Sunukjian 1983:1438). Jeremias (1998:48) notes that the word *"virgin"* used here means "a young girl who died all too young and in the blossom of her years" (Deut. 22:23). It does not indicate

Israel's moral quality or that Israel has never been defeated before. Jeremias (1998:48) further explains that the context in which the word is used also suggests "a maiden" who is yet to get married, though she might have been betrothed to a man. Therefore, Israel, which considered itself a full bloom youth with vigor has been cut off before her time (Wiersbe 2007:1426; Sweeney, Walsh and Franke 2000:233). The death of a virgin or young man without children was a very sad situation in ancient Israel. The same applies to African society where dying young is considered calamitous and such death disqualifies one from becoming an ancestor.

Israel will die in her own land and her corpse will lie unattended to. The writer uses war imagery to draw his audience's attention to the devastating nature of the impending judgment. The audience was aware of previous tragedies (such as military conquests by other nations) that befell Israel due to disloyalty to God. Therefore, their ideology (informed by their history) prepared them adequately to appreciate the severity of God's judgement that was about to hit the commonwealth due to faithlessness. Presently, Israel is prosperous and relatively peaceful under Jeroboam II; but soon the land of hope will be a land of no hope (Sunukjian 1983:1438).

In verse 4 the writer shifts from a military language in the previous verse to a religious language and links the two verses (vv. 4and5) thematically. Even though national judgment was imminent, God (due to his graciousness and mercy) wanted to withhold his judgment and so he appealed to the people to repent and thus save their lives (Bitrus 2006:1067). Individuals could seek God and live. The meaning of "seek" in this verse is like its meaning in Isaiah 55:5-6: "Seek the LORD while He may be found, Call upon Him while He is near. Let the wicked forsake his way, And the unrighteous man his thoughts; Let him return to the LORD, And He will have mercy on him; And to our God, For He will abundantly pardon" (NKJV). Obviously, to seek God does not to "inquire about" or "search for" him as if he is hiding from Israel. The first step toward seeking YHWH is to repentance and abandon vain thoughts and ways that lead us astray. This leads to forsaking sin and turning to YHWH for forgiveness, resulting in a personal transformative encounter (Rodas 2003:693; Barton 2012:93).

The expression *"and live"* suggests that the danger of death ahead of Israel will not go away unless the nation seeks God. To live means to live free from God's judgment. Amos' audience thought that their regular visits to such religious sites as Bethel, Beersheba and Gilgal amounted to seeking

God; but in this, they were totally wrong because these sites had turned into centers of idolatry, false teachings and false worship. Therefore, God tells them not to seek him at Bethel, enter Gilgal, or cross over to Beersheba (v.5a).

The three locations (Bethel, Gilgal and Beersheba) reminded the Israelites of their covenant relationship with God. Bethel (lit. "house of God") has a long history of religious activities, ranging from the construction of an altar there by Abraham (Gen. 12:8), the offering of a sacrifice to God by Abraham (13:3-4) and Jacob's dream (of a ladder connecting heaven to earth) there (28:10-12). Bethel was located on the border between the northern kingdom of Israel and the southern kingdom of Judah. Jeroboam I erected a golden calf at Bethel as a form of rebellion against God (1 Kings 12:26-30; Hos. 10:5). Jeroboam II made Bethel his royal sanctuary and Bethel became the most popular cultic site in Israel (Sunukjian 1983:1435).

Gilgal (lit. "roll away") was the place where Joshua raised memorial stones to commemorate Israel's crossing of the Jordan River (Josh. 4:19-20). It was at Gilgal that Israel's spiritual reproach was rolled away through the circumcision of the conquest generation of Israel and the celebration of the Passover after about forty years of travelling on through the wilderness (Josh. 5:1-12) (Stuart 1987:346). Gilgal, with its memorial stones (cf. Josh. 4), continued to be a center of religious pilgrimage and sacrifice; Samuel paid an annual visit to it, along with Bethel and Mizpah (1 Sam 7:16) (Garrett 2008:141). Hosea noticed and condemned corrupt religious activities at Gilgal (Hos. 4:15; 9:15). Jeroboam I made it one of Israel's major centers of religious activities (1 Kings 12:29-30).

Beersheba was an ancient sanctuary celebrated in the patriarchal narratives (Gen. 21:33; 21:31-33; 22:19; 26:23-25; 26:31-33; 28:10; 46:1). It was about fifty miles southwest of Jerusalem and the place where Samuel's sons served as judges (1 Sam. 8:1-2). Beersheba was situated in the extreme south of Judah (Rodas 2003:693). King Hezekiah destroyed some shrines at Arad, Beersheba (2 Kings 18:4). Yet, in Amos' time, Beersheba was a popular resort for pilgrims from Northern Israel.

These cities had become centers of unspiritual worship at the time that Amos prophesied (Ironside 2004:108-109). The Israelites enthusiastically visited these sites to perform religious activities such as giving daily sacrifices, praying, fasting and payment of tithes. Yet, these activities did not have any impact on their social lives. Their sins multiplied as they visited these religious sites to

perform religious activities (Amos 4:4). Israel's sins were social-economic (including illegal conduct, injustice, exploitation of the poor, bribery, violence, dishonest commerce, and cruel slavery practices, among others) and religious (including idolatry, syncretism, display of religious practices that had no spiritual impact, among others (Pardosi 2017:184). Consequently, each of the three cities which had religious significance will now lose their relevance. Gilgal which served as a memorial of Israel's entrance into the Promised Land (Josh. 4) was to become the symbol of Israel's exile from the Promised Land. Similarly, Bethel, "the house of God" was to become "Beth-Aven", "the house of nothingness." Again, Beersheba, an ancient religious sanctuary, was to become a place of desolation.

The section ends with the call to seek God (v.6) not through zealous and ritualistic worship that has no impact on one's life but through "doing justice and rightness, worshiping God in the right way, and seeking the word of the Lord" (Pardosi 2017:182). Seeking God involves "a total transformation of their worship and of their private and public lives" (Bitrus 2006:1062). The main argument is that true "seeking" of God is not expressed in sacrificial cultic activities, but in practicing justice and righteousness (v.7). As in verse 4, those seeking God will make one live. To live means to be renewed from sins and consequently have peace with God, the neighbor and the environment.

2.6.2 Judicial injustice (v.7)

In Amos 5, Amos accuses the people of Israel of legal injustice and warns them against God's impending judgement. Verse 7 suggests that the corruption in the law court is one of the main reasons why God is about to judge the nation. Court officials and judges had turned "justice into wormwood" and had cast "righteousness to the ground" (v.7). Wormwood is an extremely bitter and poisonous Palestinian tree that lies close to the ground (cf. 6:12; Deut. 29:18) (Sweeney, Walsh and Franke 2000:235; Mays 1969:91; Sunukjian 1983:1439). The metaphor of the wormwood, therefore, denotes the seriousness of the perversion of justice in Amos society. Instead of the judicial system having therapeutic value to heal wrongs and restore the downtrodden, it had become a deadly poison in the community. The people have poisoned the river of justice and knocked down the pillars of righteousness. Righteousness is represented as fallen and prostrate on the ground without anyone to raise it up and support it.

Amos' society was far from flourishing because it lacked justice, respect for human rights and righteousness. The elders who judged at the city gate[2] favored relatives and friends, and sold justice to the highest bidder, leaving the poor (including widows, orphans, and aliens) without anyone to address their welfare concerns (cf. 2:7; 5:10, 12). The plight of the poor in Amos' society is well articulated by Premnath (2003:170): "The vulnerable members of society, with no power or influence, could not protect themselves in the social order. They needed the help of the court. But the irony of the situation was that the very courts meant to promote and maintain justice, have, in fact, become the instruments of distorting and subverting justice." The vulnerable, therefore, became objects of exploitation and ridicule; the rich deprived them of their lands because of high debt and slavery (2:6-8; 4:1; 5:10-12; 8:4-6). Consequently, the economic gap between the rich and the poor kept widening just as it is in contemporary Ghana.

Amos' concept of justice has at least three features. First, there is a political dimension to justice. God demanded justice from the ruling class, comprising the kings, the judges, the prophets, the rich, and the merchants. These people had failed the nation morally and God expected that they pursue justice and righteousness by showing mercy and kindness to the needy (Weinfeld 1995:29; Harrison 2008:634; Wright 2004:81).

Secondly, justice has a social/relational dimension (cf. v.11). In verse 11, Amos pictures the rich as trampling the poor into the mud by claiming their crops as payment for the rent the poor owed them. The rich landowners were extremely harsh and heartless in the manner in which they treated the landless farmers (Domeris 2007:99). Wiersbe (2007:1428) maintains: "The rich were literally taking the food right out of the mouths of their tenants and their children. And if these hungry tenants appealed to the local judges for justice, the wealthy landowners bought off the judges." The rich used their ill-gotten wealth to bankroll their extravagant and luxurious lifestyles, build mansions of hewn stone and plant expensive vineyards. Since humans (like God) are by nature social beings, the way humans relate to one another is important in the community of God's people. Amos gives no room for the dichotomization of life into secular and spiritual. People's way of life in the market, in the street, and on the farm is as important as their way of life in the Temple on the Sabbath.

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[2] The city gate functioned like the modern court, though not as organized as today's court. All adult males qualified to join proceedings.

Thirdly, there is a judicial dimension where God expects his people to judge fairly without fear or favor. The corruption in the judicial sector comprised bribery (5:12), false testimony (5:10), and inequitable rulings (2:8), leading to the abuse of human rights, the enslavement of the poor, and exploitation (Miller 2009:375; Dyer 2017:15; Mays 1969:11). The judges, witnesses, and others who played any role in the nation's judicial process were tasked to ensure justice. A key lesson from this verse is that material wealth, peace, and health without good relationships with God, other human beings, and the environment (exhibited in justice and righteousness) fall short of God's idea of human flourishing.

2.6.3 The Day of YHWH (vv. 16-20)

Amos (in vv. 16 and 17) indicates that after the impending divine retribution, there will be a funeral and wailing all over the land. No one will be exempted from the judgment; everyone will mourn because all will be affected in one way or the other. He pronounces "woe" to those who were eagerly expecting the day of YHWH. The concept of the day of YHWH was not new to Amos' audience. The existing and dominating thought of the Israelites was a conception of the day as a period characterized by great glory, joy, prosperity, and permanent security for Israel; on that day Israel will have victory over her enemies and be exalted over all nations (Isa. 24:21-23; 34:1-3, 8; Jer. 46:10) (Bitrus 2007:1062; Mulzac 2002:99).

Contrary to their expectation, Amos says the day of YHWH will be darkness for Israel, not light. The day will not be disastrous for other nations alone; it will be a day for testing and purifying covenant-defiant Israelites through great tribulation before entering God's kingdom (Wiersbe 2007:1429; Mulzac 2002:101). Israel had confused their national material prosperity and political flourishing (general well-being of the nation) with God's pleasure, but on that day God visited them with his displeasure and deprived them of the peace and prosperity they were enjoying. Experiences on that day will teach Israel that prosperity is only a part of true human flourishing, but it is not the whole picture. It is therefore wrong to consider material wealth as the key indicator of overall *shalom,* overall blessedness, or human flourishing. Obviously, Amos' theology of the day of YHWH was a total reversal of all the hopes that Israel had so long associated with this day.

Amos proceeds to illustrate what the day will be like using imageries that express the same meaning as the proverb "from frying pan to fire" (cf. v. 19). Amos resorts to a simile drawn from

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his own background to dramatize forcefully and picturesquely the inescapability from impending punishment. The day of YHWH would be as if someone finds a lion chasing him/her and is fast enough to get away. However, he/she turns around and runs right into a bear. He/she still manages to elude the second danger and runs into a nearby shelter. Having found a place of rest, he/she leans his hand against the wall in exhaustion and relief only to be bitten by a poisonous snake hiding in the shadows. Similarly, Israel will find no safety on that day. Ironically, destruction will come upon them at the time they feel secure. That day will be calamitous, full of darkness and gloom (v.20) (Mulzac 2002:101; Sweeney, Walsh and Franke 2000:238).

2.6.4 Religious hypocrisy (vv. 21-22)

Amos announces YHWH's dissatisfaction and outright renunciation of Israel's religious festivals and solemn assemblies using a pair of negative verbs, "hate" and "despise," with "your festivals" (v. 21). Jewish religious festivals are occasions for celebrations and a means of honoring, thanking, praising and drawing closer to God (Walton, Matthews and Chavalas 2000:770). Unfortunately, religious festivals had become so empty and mechanical that they had lost their spiritual value (Akintola 2021:409).

Amos also indicates YHWH's non-acceptance of the sacrifices, namely burnt offering (cf. Lev. 1), food/grain offering (cf. Lev. 2) and wellbeing (fellowship or peace) offering (cf. Lev. 3) offered by covenant-defiant Israelites (v. 22). The wellbeing offering was a social event supplied the meat of the sacrificial animal. It was a fellowship or communion offering that symbolized the peaceful and harmonious relationship between God and his people (Opade 2021:71; Leliovskyi 2015:14). It also indicated and enacted the well-being of the offeror, his/her family, and the entire community. Ironically, the Israelites kept bringing this offering without first mending their broken relationship with God, their neighbors, and the environment. YHWH taught them that obedience to his commandment is more acceptable than mechanical religious sacrifices (2 Sam. 15:22). Because of sin, Israel's sacrifices produced an unpleasant smell instead of a pleasing aroma before YHWH.

Therefore, YHWH commands the Israelites to "take away" the burdensome noise of their songs and indicates that he would not listen to the melody of their harps (v. 23). They honored special

days and festivals, offered sacrifices, and sang songs of worship. Their meetings looked holy and beautiful, but YHWH despised and hated it because their hearts were full of wickedness.

2.6.5 Demand for justice and righteousness (v. 24)

Instead of hypocritical religious activities, Amos tells the people to let "justice" run down like water and "righteousness" like a continuous stream. YHWH wanted to hear and smell the sweet music and aroma of justice and righteousness instead of the unpleasant noise of harps and the unpleasant smell of animal and food sacrifices. Amos uses imagery drawn from his agricultural background and the arid climate of the Ancient Near East to express the permanent character of justice and righteousness more powerfully.

Water was essential for farming activities and livestock keeping. People relied on YHWH's gracious provision of rain for their daily existential activities. By asking people to let justice run down like waters, Amos was making the point that YHWH's action of providing water to ensure the survival of the Israelites is a paradigm for right social behavior (cf. Deut. 11:13-15; 28:12; 1 Kings 8:35-36; see also Psalm 72; Hos. 6:3; 14:5-7). In other words, just as people's survival depends on God's provision of water, the survival of human society also depends on the practice of justice and righteousness. Again, just as water rolls itself and comes in abundance, so should society abound in justice and righteousness in order to have the needed social, physical, moral, and psychological transformation. Thus, justice and righteousness should be allowed to flourish permanently, perpetually, voluminously and without any impediments within the community of the covenant people. Amos' point is that religious rituals can be corrupting, deceiving, and inconsistent with the YHWH's direction toward moral and spiritual transformation.

The passage continues by drawing attention to the fact that God's acceptance of Israel during their wilderness wanderings was not based on sacrifices because, in those forty years, Israel offered no sacrifice to God (v. 25). Amos then draws attention to Israel's idolatrous act of worshipping and honoring "heavenly bodies" (Sakkuth and Kaiwan) instead of the Creator (v.26) and concludes that because their idolatry and hypocrisy God would send Israel into exile beyond Damascus (v.27).

From the witness of the First Testament/Old Testament, the researcher now turns to the witness of the Second Testament/New Testament, focusing on Matthew 5:1–12; Luke 4:18-19; Mark 10:35-45; Romans 13:1-7 and 1 John 3:16–18 because of their relevance on the subject of politics (leadership) and human flourishing.

2.7 Marks of a flourishing life (Matt. 5:1-12)

The beatitudes (in Matt. 5:1-12)— which introduces the Sermon on the Mount (Matt. chapters 5 to 7)—expresses Jesus' view of what it means to flourish as a human being created in the image of God. They address the theological-philosophical question: "What does a truly flourishing life look like?" (Pennington 2017:1). Jesus' audience conceived human flourishing in terms of wealth acquisition and accumulation, power, fame, honor, and good health, among others. Contrary to the worldly view of happiness/flourishing in terms of fame, power and wealth, the Beatitudes find happiness in being poor in spirit, mourning, meekness, and even persecution. Therefore, Jesus' pronouncements in the Beatitudes were counter-cultural—contradicting the imperial conception of the good life within the first-century Greco-Roman world—and hence brought a great shock to his addressees.

2.7.1 Poverty in the Spirit (v.3)

The first beatitude ties true blessedness/flourishing/happiness to being "poor in spirit." Vincent (2009:36) defines "poor in spirit" as "the utter spiritual destitution, the consciousness of which precedes the entrance into the kingdom of God, and which cannot be relieved by one's own efforts, but only by the free mercy of God." Being poor in the spirit does not mean being materially poor; rather, it means having no treasure in heaven because one is unsaved and so has no share in God's inheritance. Thus, to be poor in spirit is not to accept material poverty as a necessary condition for Jesus' disciples but rather, to find one's wealth in God, to trust that God will cater for the poor (Exod. 22:25-27; Isa. 61:1). The poor in spirit have a disposition that is the very opposite to that which they possessed by nature, have the first sure evidence that God's saving grace has started working in them and realize their helplessness and the need to seek forgiveness and true spiritual enrichment from Christ (Pink 2015:4). God, through his Spirit, leads people to realize their spiritual poverty and fills them his Spirit, empowering them to live a blessed life in Christ (Pink 2015:4; McKnight 2013:13-14). Poverty in spirit makes one humble. Humility is the opposite of

pride, the sin that led to the fall of humanity. That humility is necessary for salvation is underscored in Jesus' parable about the Pharisee and the tax collector who went to the temple to pray (Luke 18:9-14).

Jesus says the poor in spirit are flourishing/blessed because the kingdom of heaven belongs to them. The phrase "kingdom of heaven" means "God's overall reign in the universe, his present spiritual reign in his people, and his future messianic reign on earth" (Geisler 2011:1347). Entrance into the kingdom of heaven comes by having a transformational encounter with Christ beginning with one's recognition of his/her brokenness/weakness. In the ancient Near Eastern and Greco-Roman settings of honor and shame, associating poverty, brokenness, and weakness with blessedness was unacceptable. Yet, Jesus insisted that without realizing and accepting one's poverty in spirit, it is not possible to enter the kingdom he came to inaugurate.

2.7.2 Being Mournful (v.4)

The second beatitude follows from the first beatitude in that realizing the poverty of human nature leads to mourning over our sins. When people mourn for their sins and the sins of others, they realize the need to receive the comfort that God provides those who come to him. This is not just remorse but a deep sorrow for one's sins leading to forsaking sin and yielding a strong determination to live a holy life. The mourning in view here is not the one that results from loss of hope, but that which leads to repentance, conversion, and determination to resist sin and temptation.

According to Jesus, those who mourn are flourishing because they will be comforted. Jesus' assertion that mourning yields human flourishing contradicts the contemporary Ghanaian worldview that values merry-making, pleasure-seeking, and fun and places virtually no value on mourning. This beatitude does not mean Jesus prohibits celebrations; it means that any kind of joy/happiness one experiences must be rooted in the comfort God provides.

2.7.3 Meekness (v.5)

The beatitudes continue to attribute blessedness to the meek. The third beatitude reminisces Psalm 37:11, which says the "meek shall inherit the land." The word "meek" denotes forbearance under provocations, self-denial, humility and submission to God's will, respect for others, gentleness,

having a true view of oneself, lowly and humility (cf. Matt. 11:29; Luke 1:46-55) (Lloyd-Jones 1970:68). To be meek does not mean accepting injustice but to know our place as children of God and to ensure that all are treated as kingdom citizens (Reid 2013:63). The meek must respond to maltreatment and persecution in a peaceful way and pray that God sees them through such circumstances.

Jesus' society considered meekness as weakness and so the meek were easily ignored and trampled underfoot by others, making their chances of progressing somehow slim. That society subscribed to the use of power to acquire whatever one desires without considering the effect of their action on their relationship with others. Therefore, Jesus' pronouncement that the meek is blessed was opposite to the assumptions in the prevailing worldview. Jesus considered the meek as flourishing because they were the inheritors of the land.

2.7.4 Hunger and Thirst for Righteousness (v.6)

The next beatitude speaks of the craving for spiritual righteousness metaphorically as hunger and thirst to see the world set right. Just as physical hunger and thirst are satisfied through eating and drinking respectively, so the spiritual hunger and thirst for righteousness are satisfied spiritually through the deepest level of spiritual experience. Righteousness comprises legal, moral and social aspects. Legal righteousness denotes the right standing before God. Moral righteousness is about character and conduct that pleases God. Social righteousness is the believer's contribution to the liberation of the oppressed and the promotion of peaceful coexistence, respect for human rights and human dignity, and integrity in one's business and social relations, among others.

The contemporary society wants nothing to do with righteousness and calls it "legalism." On the contrary, Jesus insists that hungering and thirsting for righteousness makes one flourish because it leads to being filled/satisfied. This satisfaction comes through a spiritual encounter with God that has spiritual, moral and social implications. The spiritually satisfied person is flourishing because that person is not only at peace with God, his/her neighbor, and the environment but he/she also practices justice, and mercy, among others to ensure the flourishing of the entire society.

2.7.5 Being Merciful (v.7)

The next three beatitudes demonstrate how authentic one's love for God translates into a genuine love of neighbor. Jesus teaches that true blessedness is found in acts of mercy. Mercy is the practicalization of compassion and love in such acts as forgiving others, calling people to the saving knowledge of Christ, sharing resources with others, ensuring justice, speaking for the voiceless and solidarity with the marginalized. Thus, a truly flourishing life requires love for God and neighbor exhibited in practical acts toward helping other people to improve their lives. Having mercy on others makes one receive mercy from God, thereby resulting in true happiness.

2.7.6 Purity in the Heart (v.8)

Jesus continues to attribute purity in heart to blessedness/flourishing person. The "heart" denotes the core of a person, the seat of a person's will, intellect and decision-making. The expression "sound/healthy eye" in Matthew 6:22 relates to purity in the heart. Jewish tradition attributes greed, covetousness, and other such sins to the eye; meaning the eye is also considered the seat of sin or righteousness depending on how one uses it. The pure in heart does not serve God and Mammon but serves God alone (6:24). Purity in heart also brings about seeking first the kingdom of heaven, not the kingdom of wealth (6:33) and striving to be perfect just as the Father is perfect (6:48). Purity in heart is a potential antidote to the misplaced priorities in the lives of many contemporary Ghanaian Christians. To be pure in heart means having an undivided heart. The pure in heart are undivided because they anchor their lives on God and thereby live with wholeness/completeness. The opposite is the divided heart that is filled with anxiety (cf. Matt. 6:25-34). Purity in the heart leads to flourishing because it is a step to seeing God.

2.7.7 Peacemaking (v.9)

Another attribute of blessedness is peacemaking. Peace in this sense is not just the absence of conflict, but the tranquility of order. Peacemakers "engage in acts of mercy and forgiveness, which cleanse the heart and allow us to see God in the faces of our brothers and sisters here and now" (Reid 2013:63). Peacebuilding heals hurtful memories of the past, reconciles, unites, and transforms members of society toward a hope-filled future. In Ghana, where many people still harbor bitterness due to political abuses that characterized both colonial and military regimes, the

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concepts of peacebuilding and reconciliation need to be developed and promoted to facilitate harmony, peaceful coexistence, and development. Peacemakers are flourishing because they are the children of God.

2.7.8 Standing firm in times of persecution (vv.10-12)

Jesus also encouraged his disciples to endure persecution for the sake of the kingdom. Persecution is inevitable in the life of the believer because the world hates those who follow Christ. The Jews held that living a righteous life attracts God's mercy and blessing and brings prosperity and peace rather than persecution (which was considered a sign of God's displeasure). Jesus' world valued public recognition and reputation. People did all they could to attain and maintain social honor. To tell such a society that being persecuted (and hence being deprived of one's dignity) means flourishing is counter-cultural.

People who are persecuted, reviled, and falsely accused because of Christ are flourishing because they have great rewards in heaven. The flourishing not only hunger and thirst for righteousness (5:6) but are ready to face persecution because of righteousness (5:10). True human flourishing therefore entails suffering for the sake of Christ as one lives in the inaugurated kingdom and awaits its eschatological consummation in the *Parousia*. Most contemporary Christians are not ready to suffer for the sake of the gospel. Prosperity preachers abound in Ghana who promise a crown without a cross and a heaven without holiness. Their ministry leads many Christians to seek happiness through unethical means. Jesus' teaching about righteousness and suffering as an integral part of the Christian life is important in correcting the wrong notions about success among contemporary Ghanaian Christians. Suffering-flourishing people can rejoice and be glad because they have great rewards in heaven.

The lessons taught in the Beatitudes are further taught in other texts and exemplified in the life and ministry of Jesus Christ. Mark 10:35-45 plays a key role in the Christian understanding of discipleship and leadership. In the next section, this text is examined to add to the biblical perspective on politics.

2.8 The true meaning of leadership and authority (Mark 10:35-37, 42-45)

Mark 10:35-45 is meant to give a picture of leadership from a Christian perspective. It plays a key role in the Markan understanding of the reason and meaning of Jesus' death. Following each of Jesus' passion predictions in 8:31, 9:31, and 10:33-34, the disciples struggle for power and prestige. The unit can be divided into two parts as follows (Stein 2008:482). The first part (vv. 35-40) deals with James and John's request for prominent positions in Jesus' kingdom. The brothers made the request (vv.35–37) and Jesus declined it (vv.38–40). This comes right after the second passion prediction and the teachings of 9:33–37. The second part consists of Jesus's response to the Twelve due to their struggle for power and various teachings about what leadership means in the kingdom of God (10:41–44). It ends with the example of Jesus's own substitutionary death (10:45).

2.8.1 Misplaced leadership priority (vv. 35-37)

Two brothers—James and John— selfishly approached Jesus privately (v.35) and asked for places of highest authority and honor in his messianic kingdom (cf. 8:38; 9:1-2; 13:26) (Musiyambiri 2015:6-7; Evans 2003:1088). Given Jesus' teachings on renunciation of social power, one can feel his weariness as he listened to the two brothers. James and John were seeking selfishly to occupy such a position and use it in a similar way as leaders in their society using political power. Given this understanding, James and John could be likened to leaders in the Ghanaian society who struggle for power not for the benefit of the community but for their own benefit. Such a model of leadership (as I will point out later) contradicts Jesus' philosophy of leadership, which is based on dialogue, selflessness, servitude, and justice, among others. James and John mistakenly defined leadership in terms of prestige and acquisition of positions of honor and fame. For them, to be a leader means attaining a higher rank/position.

In response (vv. 38-40) Jesus indicated that God the Father is the one to assign those positions to those for whom he has prepared these places. Jesus' assertion that the places of honor are reserved for those intended underscores that "in the kingdom of God, knowing who can pull strings is not what determines honor" (Cole 2006:1216). The two brothers were close associates of Jesus; yet they would not get the places of honor if these places were not intended for them. Those worthy of occupying these positions are those who are determined "to build an egalitarian community that

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embraces the poor and honors them in God's kingdom" (Ajambo 2012:189). To some extent, Jesus refused them the places they asked for because he wanted them to appreciate what true leadership is and be willing to lead others according to godly principles before they could be given key leadership roles. He wanted them to understand that leadership means "decoding the old social order of society and constructing an egalitarian community as opposed to a faction or patronage group" (Ajambo 2012:189). Thus, Jesus' failure to grant John's and James' request was partly due to their wrong perception of leadership. Ironically, the phrase "on the right and left" will appear again to describe those who were crucified with Jesus (15:27); these people were robbers, not James, John, or any of the other ten disciples.

When the news of the private request got to the other ten disciples, they became indignant with the two brothers (v.41). The other ten disciples also had selfish ambitions. They worried because they knew that if the two got the two positions of honor, then the others were going to lose out and become servants. They failed to realize that it is through servitude that one becomes great in God's kingdom. They equally failed to understand and apply Jesus' teachings about the proper view of power and honor. Jesus took the opportunity to teach them about the true meaning of leadership and power (vv. 42-45).

2.8.2 Leadership as Service (vv.42-45).

Jesus took his time to teach them about the differences between kingdoms ruled by unbelievers (pagan) and the kingdom of God (vv.42-44). Gentile leadership is characterized by lording it over others (throwing their weight around) and the exercise of authority (playing the tyrant) (v.42). By contrast, those who want to be great in the kingdom of God must be servants and those who want to be first among others be a slave to all (vv.43-44). Jesus concludes that the Son of Man did not come to have servants but to give himself to be a servant. He voluntarily veiled his greatness and glory (cf. 8:38; 13:26) and then incarnated as God's servant (Psa. 49:5-7; Isa. 52:13—53:12; Phil. 2:6-8) not to be served by others but to be the servant of all (Mark 2:17; 10:46-52; Luke 22:27) (Lane 1974:383) and to give his life as a ransom for many.

The leadership style and philosophy of Jesus' disciples are substantially different from those of leaders in the secular world in at least three respects. First, greatness in leadership is expressed in service to God and humanity. Humility, evidenced in one's willingness to serve others, is the mark

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of those who desire to be first (Gruenler 2008:786; Matagora 2022:25). Greenleaf (2002:27) asserts that: "The servant-leader is servant first. It begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve. Then conscious choice brings one to aspire to lead." An illustration of this fact is Jesus' act of taking a little child in his arms and encouraging his disciples to serve "little children", that is, the helpless and by doing so welcoming Jesus and the Father who sent him (9:36-37). Jesus is the epitome of greatness because he lived his life in humble service to humanity.

Secondly, leadership requires sacrifice for the benefit of others. In the Good-Shepherd pericope of John 10, Jesus speaks five times about laying down his life for the sheep (10:11, 15, 17–18). He made this great sacrifice on the cross for the benefit of sinful humanity. He committed no sin to deserve death but as a great leader, he willingly died so that humankind would live (cf. v.45). Similarly, he requires his disciples to prioritize the welfare of their followers and demonstrate genuine care (Adeyemo 2006:546).

Thirdly, kingdom leaders are not to consider themselves as having supreme power; they are to realize that their authority to rule comes from God (Rom. 13:1-2), therefore, they must rule as servants of God. Such leadership is dialogical, allowing people of all social classes to express their views and participate in the governing process. Leadership of this kind upholds justice, respect for human rights and human dignity, and opposes exploitation of the weak in the society. Based on the foregoing, it can be concluded that Jesus introduced radical and countercultural principles of leadership that have no room for selfishness and domineering conduct, but rather promote greatness through humility demonstrated through servanthood. Such leadership inevitably yields a flourishing society in which economic equality, interdependence, interconnectedness, respect for human rights, equity and democracy are core values.

Christian leadership must liberate, and not put people in bondage. This idea is expressed in Luke 4:18-19 which is studied below.

2.9 Liberative Theology (Luke 4:18-19)

Liberative theology is a key biblical theme that emphasizes both the social and spiritual ramifications of the Christian gospel. This section espouses the liberating effect of Christianity based on Luke 4:18-19. The narrative is set in the context of one Sabbath where Jesus entered the

synagogue and when given a scroll to read, unrolled and read the portion of Isaiah which underscores his Messianic identity and the liberating nature of his ministry (as outlined below).

2.9.1 Ministry to the Poor (v.18)

The first goal of Jesus' ministry was "to preach the gospel to the poor". Luke has a special interest in this group of people (1:53; 6:20, 24; 12:16-21; 16:19-31; 19:1-10). In Jesus' time, the entire Judean region was colonized by Rome. Roman imperialistic rule began centuries ago before Jesus was born. As with most colonial governments, Roman imperial rule instituted a system of taxation by which it generated revenue for the central government. Josephus (Anth xviii. 8.4) noted that the reign of Herod the Great was characterized by extremely high taxes; the Jews groaned due to the huge levies they had to pay to the Herodian government. In 6 AD the procuratorship of Coponius and Quirinus introduced new taxes on each individual including women and slaves in the form of the poll tax (Uwaegbute 2013:146). Those who kept flocks were expected to pay income tax in the form of paying out a percentage of the flock to the government. Those who farmed were also made to pay tax on their produce. The introduction of these taxes brought a huge financial burden on the Jews of Jesus' time. According to Carter (2006:10) the introduction of these taxes "led to a great divide between the economic elites and the ninety – seven percent of those in the whole of the Roman Empire who live in some degree of poverty." The Jewish ruling-theological-political class supported Rome for their own benefit (Luke 1:5, 23:1-4). Jesus' society was far from flourishing because a few people controlled the state resources for private gain, selfish goals and own security, thereby depriving the ordinary citizens of dignity, selfhood, sight, voice, and daily needs (Schmidt 2018:48). Jesus's concern was for those who "were poor, non-elite, generally without citizenship and landless, similar to their forbears exiled in Babylon years prior" (Schmidt 2018:43). A key Messianic task was to lead the poor to salvation through the proclamation of the gospel. Jesus offers salvation to the needy who approached Jesus in humility and in acknowledgement of his efforts to address their needs (Luke 4:40; 5:12; 8:41, 42, 44; 17:13).

Obviously, Jesus' society was far from flourishing because a few people controlled the state resources for private gain, selfish goals and own security, thereby depriving the ordinary citizens of dignity, selfhood, sight, voice and daily needs (Schmidt 2018:48). Jesus' concern was for those who "were poor, non-elite, generally without citizenship and landless, similar to their forbears

exiled in Babylon years prior" (Schmidt 2018:43). A key Messianic task was to lead the poor to salvation through the proclamation of the gospel.

2.9.2 Liberating Captives (v.18)

Jesus came to proclaim freedom for the "captives" or "prisoners", probably referring to people who had been sold as slaves due to their debts and who were to be freed in the Jubilee year (Reiling and Swellengrebel 1971:200). It actually includes people who need freedom because of the slavery to other human or to sin. The "captives" experience oppression by guilt, sin, Satan, or people who abuse power. In the broader context of Jesus' ministry, the deliverance he brought transcends deliverance from material poverty to include deliverance from spiritual, physical, psychological, and emotional (Luke 4:43-44). Jesus' mission was meant to set the captive free and give hope to the lost world.

2.9.3 Recovery of sight for the blind (v.18)

The third dimension of Jesus' ministry is to proclaim recovery of sight for "the blind", including the physically blind (Luke 7:21; 18:35-45) and those blind to their spiritual poverty and bondage and in need of a savior, for example, the Pharisees (cf. John 9:31-41) (Nolland 2002:112). Physical blindness result comes as a result of sin and leads to selfishness, pride, materialism, and egocentrism, all of which oppose human flourishing. Both physically and spiritually blind people benefited from Jesus' healing ministry. Jesus healed the physically ill (4:38-39; 5:12-15; 6:10,18b; 7:3, 10; 8:40, 46-47; 13:10-13; 17:11-19; 18:35) (Bingham 2002:114). Jesus' healing ministry yielded deliverance from demonic or physical diseases, rendering the poor the ability to work and enjoy economic progress (Schmidt 2018:45). The spiritually blind also got healed as they received messages of enlightenment from Jesus.

2.9.4 Releasing the Oppressed (v.18)

The fourth effect of Jesus' ministry is the release of the "oppressed"—including those politically oppressed and exploited and those spiritually oppressed by Satan. Jesus' ministry included the release of those under satanic oppression (Luke 4:31-35, 41; 6:18b; 7:13; 8:26-38; 9:37; 10:33; 15:20). The use of the anointment of the Spirit for the release of the oppressed contradicts the situation in Ghana where people who claim the anointing of the Spirit are found oppressing,

harassing and exploiting the poor and vulnerable in the name of providing solution to their life challenges. Jesus makes freedom a reality not only to the poor and sinners, but also to the marginalized such as the Samaritans, Gentiles, tax collectors, and women (Blomberg, Schreiner and van Pelt 2018:4-6). Jesus' ministry was non-discriminating; he catered for both Jews and Gentiles.

2.9.5 Proclaiming the year of YHWH's favor (v.19)

Furthermore, Jesus' anointment made him the herald of the year of YHWH's favor (that is, the Jubilee Year). The Jubilee Year is mentioned in Isaiah 61:2a in reference to the time when people will regain their properties that harsh economic circumstances forced them to sell; in this period also, Jewish slaves were freed (cf. Lev. 25:10, 28, 40-41) (Schmidt 2018:40). The Jubilee Year was therefore a period of freedom from poverty and slavery. The start of the Jubilee Year was signaled on the Day of Atonement with a trumpet sound. Isaiah 61:1-2a gave hope to the Jews in Babylonian exile and those enslaved and in poverty living in Judah. In Isaiah 58, the Jews are rebuked for neglecting the poor and hence being captives to sin (Bock 2004:66). Given this fact, the exilic Jews needed deliverance from slavery to sin, something that required preaching the good news, repentance and God's act of forgiveness and hence, release from Babylon. The Jews still living in Judah, also needed deliverance because the Babylonian conquest and their own sins had rendered them poor and hopeless (Schmidt 2018:40). Therefore, the key to understanding Jesus' message in Luke 4:18-19 requires a proper understanding of the concepts of deliverance from sin and from exile, and divine pardon through atoning sacrifice. To sum up the operation of the Holy Spirit through Jesus was meant to change humankind's spiritual, personal, psychological, social and economic conditions.

The three New Testament texts examined above are representative of what Jesus taught about politics and human flourishing. Having considered Jesus' perspective, the researcher now moves to the epistles where he discusses one Pauline text and another text from the general epistles to conclude the survey of biblical texts.

2.10 Christian-State Relation (Rom. 13:1-7)

Romans 13:1-7 is central to the Pauline political theology in that it is Paul's longest message regarding the believer's relationship with the state (governing authority). The passage deals with the source of political power and how Christians are to live under authority. The text was written in the context of the first-century Roman Empire.

2.10.1 God as the source of political power (vv. 1-2)

Paul's main argument in this verse is that authority comes from God, therefore Christians are expected to submit to authority. The message is sent primarily to the Christian community in Rome who are Paul's primary recipients (1:7-8) (Longenecker 2016:945), yet it also includes every person (Fitzmyer 2011:864). Paul then proceeds to give a theological defense for his proposition, saying, that Christians should submit to governing authorities because those authorities are divinely established. Paul's point is that there is only one authority and all other authorities are derived from this one authority, God's authority.

Since God is the authority behind human authority, resisting human authority amounts to resisting divine authority (v. 2). The brutalities and wickedness that sometimes characterize human rule may hinder one's appreciation of Paul's attribution of every human authority to God. If God is the source of human authority, then how come some rulers act tyrannically? The answer lies in the doctrine of God's sovereignty (the fact that God has the power, wisdom, and authority to do anything he wills). Since God is sovereign, he is the source of all powers and no one acts outside his control. The fact that human authority is divinely ordained means that those in authority are required to do God's will (Reumann 2003:1306). Human civil authorities are required to seek the welfare of the community. Paul is not exalting the authorities; rather he is putting them in their right place as subordinates to God.

2.10.2 How are Christians to react to evil governments?

For Paul, Christians should be inclined toward submission to and compliance with the laws of governing authorities. However, he is not in any way advocating blind subjection to the government. The following guiding principles are noteworthy. First, believers must lead quiet, peaceful and ordered lives; however, if the governing authority acts contrary to the will and

purpose of God, they have no other choice than to resist the government (Schreiner 2001:251). That is, if what the ruling authorities demand the believer to do does not in any way conflict with God's moral standards, "then the choice is to do whatever is right and whatever glorifies God" (Hafer 2021:251). Resistance by believers, however, becomes necessary when there is/are conflicting moral imperative(s). In that case, the Apostolic principle expects obedience to God rather than to humans (Acts 5:29). However, such resistance must be peaceful, not involving arms and violence. The resistance must be in the form of Christians' refusal to do the evil thing that the government demands. In addition, Christians must persuade the ruling authorities about the right and just thing to do. Also, Christians must pray that God changes the hearts of the ruling authorities so that they will act in accordance with God's moral standards. This means that Christians are not to rebel against or disobey the government's law unless they require Christians to violate God's moral standards (Kuwornu-Adjaottor 2012:487). Thus, opposition to divinely ordained authority for purely political or selfish reasons is unacceptable; opposition for moral and religious reasons is, however, allowed (Gundry 2012:444).

2.10.4 Responsibility of governments (vv. 3-4)

Paul speaks of the government in ways contrary to what some people have experienced in life. For instance, he says "rulers are not a terror to good conduct but to bad" and also that the person in authority is "God's agent for your good" (v.3 NRSV). These propositions may be true for some societies, but not for such countries as Ghana, South Africa, Nigeria, Uganda, Sudan, Ivory Coast and Zimbabwe where people have been killed to make someone have political power or where people have been killed because of their political affiliation (Lategan 2012:265; Gusha 2020:6). Evidence the biblical accounts of David's murder of Uriah and Ahab's treatment of Naboth and the unjust sufferings caused by such leaders as Idi Amin, Saddam Hussein, Robert Mugabe and Muammer Gaddafi underline the unjust ways in which leaders may sometimes treat their subjects (Gusha 2020:6). Given these facts: "Paul's statement should not be read to imply that every use of force by government is justifiable by definition. To say this would be to morally legitimatize the Holocaust, the Crusades, and the persecution of Christians in ancient Rome, all [of] which involved acts of force performed by governments" (Olree 2005:191).

While it is true that Paul's propositions are not wholly true in some instances, it is important to note that he intends to give the ideal situation rather than give the situation on the ground. In other words, he is saying that the purpose of God establishing the governing authorities is to have leaders who will work for the good of the citizenry. Those in authority are required to serve the common good of the people (Lategan 2012:264). Whether all governing authorities live up to this standard or not is not the main issue here.

Paul acknowledges that since those in authority are divinely ordained, they have delegated power to punish wrongdoers. Therefore, Paul presupposes that the governing authorities to be obeyed "are carrying out their divine mandate to administer justice, punishing wrongdoers and supporting those who do right" (Powell 2009:269). Rome's rule is authorized by God and the sword that the governing authorities hold is divinely sanctioned. The authorities are to restrain evil behavior and reward good behavior. Though Christians are prohibited from avenging themselves (Rom. 12:19), the state has the responsibility of avenging wrongdoing (13:4), at least to maintain public order (cf. Deut. 13:11; 17:13; 19:20; 21:21) (Keener 2009:154).

2.10.5 Responsibility of citizens (vv. 5-7)

Paul further states that the submission of his audience to authority is required not only because of the wrath of the authorities (and of God; cf. Rom. 12:19) but also because of their conscience (v. 5). The reference to conscience underscores the potential for criticism and resistance to the state. Paul appeals to conscience because he realizes that fear of punishment may not be effective in deterring citizens from flouting civil authority. The appeal to conscience (v.5) leads to the last principle (vv. 6–7), namely; Christians must pay taxes and other dues to the authorities because the authorities are servants/ministers of God in charge of that obligation. The demand to pay taxes to the ruling authority is rooted in the fact of the divinely instituted authority over the people (Thompson 2015:19). In addition to paying taxes, Christians are required to give whatever else is due to the authorities, including revenue, respect and honor.

Like any other ancient or contemporary society, taxes are needed for development. In the Roman world, taxes were used not only to do good such as maintain law and order, but were also used to maintain state cult. Yet, Christians were expected to pay taxes. Paul draws on Jesus's teaching on

giving to Caesar what is Caesar's (13:6–7; Mark 12:17), bearing in mind Jesus's caveat that some things are for God alone (Mark 12:17).

Before ending the survey of biblical texts, there is the need to consider 1 John 3:16-18 which gives an outstanding teaching about the practicality of the Christian religion. The teachings of this text will inform the theology of the sharing of resources in chapter 5 of this study.

2.11 True religion and spirituality (1 John 3:16-18)

One of the key themes in First John is love. This section demonstrates the meaning of Christian love and contrasts the behavior of a loving Christian to Cain's hatred which resulted in the murder of Abel (in the previous unit). It underscores that Christian love is so far "from the spirit of murder that its essence lies in giving one's life for others rather than taking lives" (Hodges 1983:897). While Cain demonstrates the painful results of hatred (vv. 12, 13, 15), Jesus demonstrates what true love leads to (Ngewa 2006:1559; Painter 2003:1520; Smalley 1991:192). Jesus' love demonstrated on the cross and its practical implications for Christians is the focus of this text.

2.11.1 The sacrificial death of Christ (v.16a)

The writer makes the point that Jesus exemplified true and authentic love when he laid down his life on the cross for us (v.16; cf. John 10:11, 15, 17, 18; 13:37, 38; 15:13) (Smalley 1991:193-194; see also Jobes 2014). By his death "We know" what love is; that is, by his death, we experience love and learn that Christian love is "more than an emotional rush of warm feelings" (McDermond 2011:189). The text indicates that Jesus voluntarily gave up his life for the sake of humankind. Christ's self-giving on the cross defines what love is.

This act of self-giving obligates Jesus' followers to sacrifice their lives (if need be) for the sake of others (Smalley 1991:194; italics original). Thus, Jesus' love for man, demonstrated in his sacrificial and substitutionary death places a moral obligation on believers to love one another (cf. John 15:12-13; 3 John 11) (De Young 2008:1183; Painter 2003:1520). The writer interprets the Christ event from an exemplarist perspective in which the cross primarily serves as a revelation of divine sacrificial love, and as an example to follow. Believers cannot and are not expected to die for their neighbors; however, they are mandated to use their material possessions (that is, "the ordinary things in life" such as food, clothing, and shelter (Smalley 1991:196) to help sustain other

people's lives. The responsibility to help others with our material possessions lies on all Christians, whether wealthy or not (Smalley 1991:196; McDermond 2011:189). The community's love ethics is grounded in Johannine theology.

2.11.2 Love's practicality (vv. 17-18)

Verse 17 is a direct application of how to show God's love abides in the believer. The writer extends the principle of self-giving to the Christian mandate to help other believers materially. According to John, love must have a practical application on how one relates to other especially in terms of meeting other people's needs. In other words, there is no way a person who truly possesses true Christian faith can refuse to care for the needy. John illustrates this point by saying three things about the selfish believer who does not have the love of God. First, the person is one who has plenty of material wealth in comparison with the one in need. That person has "an adequate though perhaps not lavish physical livelihood" (Yarbrough 2008:203; see Kruse 2000:138). Secondly, this believer sees, notices, or beholds a fellow believer "in need". Thirdly, this believer with enough means "closes his heart" to the needy. This means the believers capable of helping the needy are callous toward the needy and so considered as closing his/her heart to the needy to prevent them from entering his/her heart. Such a believer has no "pity" for the needy, "pity" being "a deep-seated emotional concern or affectionate sympathy (also used in Luke 1:78; 2 Cor. 6:12; 7:15; Phile. 7, 12, 20)" (Hodges 1983:897; see also Yarbrough 2008:203). This believer does not have God's love in him/her. A person who truly possesses genuine Christian love cannot see his fellow believer in need and fail to pity the person. The practical expression of one's love toward the neighbor serves as concrete proof that one knows God and God's love lives in him/her (Yarbrough 2008:205).

Deuteronomy 15:7–9 provides the background to the idea of closing one's heart towards others in need. The passage warns the Israelites against being hardhearted or tight-fisted toward the needy. They were encouraged to be generous and lend to the poor and the needy even if the year of debt cancellation (the seventh year) was approaching. The passage also indicates that giving willingly to the poor attracts God's blessings. John seems to draw on this passage in reminding his audience the love of God cannot coexist with and meanness of spirit (Kruse 2000:138-139). John's admonishment that believers share their resources also reminisces John the Baptist's

encouragement to those who have two shirts to share with those who have none (Luke 3:11). Paul also taught that those who have acquired wealth have the responsibility of sharing it with others. The wealthy are not to trust in the uncertain their wealth, but be full of good works, using their earthy treasure to acquire heavenly treasure (1 Tim. 6:17-19). This is one of the standards of the judgment as portrayed in Matthew 25:31-46. John's point is that if God willingly made such a great demonstration of his love for us, we must respond to his love by loving others and helping them in every way that we can. Sharing of resources is an effective means of ensuring that the poor have the means of life.

True love goes beyond verbal profession to helping others. This was to serve as an antidote to the situation whereby people consider love in the generic and abstract sense. His point is that Christian love is not just some feeling, emotion, or impulse but also deeds. Thus, people are known by their fruit (Matt. 7:16-20). One cannot love God without loving the neighbor and one cannot love the neighbor without practicalizing the professed love (Painter 2003:1520; Yarbrough 2008:203). James' assertion that "Religion that is pure and undefiled before God the Father is this: to care for orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself unstained by the world" (James 1:27 NRSV) serves as a useful commentary to this verse. James argues that genuine and authentic Christianity must be practical Christianity. The one who professes the Christian faith must prove his/her faith by good works such as caring for orphans and widows and living a righteous life. Given that the word translated "religion" in the text literally means ritualism, one may conclude that James' addressees equated Christianity to the mere performance of religious rituals. This recalls Israel's misconception about authentic religion in Amos 5 which brought God's wrath against them. Andria (2006:1537) argues that "Without action, good doctrine is useless. Pure religion shows itself in behavior." Therefore, Christian love that does not prove itself through good deeds is dead and unacceptable. Christian love implies Christian faith. The call to love "in truth" suggests that "our actions and our words must not simply be formalities or attempts to appear in a good light, but must reflect sincere concern for the one loved" (Ngewa 2006:1560). The nature of one's love therefore shows whether he/she belongs to the realm of truth or not. To sum up, Christian love derives from Christ, and it is practical and genuine (cf. James 2:15-16).

2.11 Conclusion

This chapter has discussed political theology and human flourishing from a theological/biblical perspective. On the subject of human flourishing, the following interpretative lines need to be recapped. True human flourishing begins with one's communion with God. Secondly, as one's vertical relationship with God flourishes, it must have a corresponding impact on the person's horizontal relationship with other people and with the environment. Again, human flourishing requires humans to work and multiply the resources that God has given to them in their environment. Work must not, however, in the first place solely be seen as an opportunity be seen as an opportunity to make money; it must be seen as a privilege to serve God and humanity. More so, human flourishing is all-inclusive and non-discriminatory. A flourishing society must cater for the needs of all manner of people. On the subject of political theology, the chapter highlighted God's concern for the poor, sick, and social outcasts. Christian spirituality has a social dimension, which Jesus' earthly ministry epitomizes. Christian theology and ministry must address such issues as poverty, oppression, abuse of human rights, violence, child abuse, oppression, and ill health which constitute a major part of the existential challenges of most contemporary Ghanaians. The study now proceeds to consider the historical development of political theology.

CHAPTER THREE

POLITICAL THEOLOGY IN HISTORICAL CONTEXT

3.1 Introduction

After discussing political theology from a biblical perspective, the study now considers what selected scholars, including Plato, Aristotle, Augustine, Thomas Aquinas, Martin Luther, John Wesley, and Jürgen Moltmann have said about the subject of politics across the major epochs of history. The scholars have been selected based on their influence on the subject of politics as well as the researcher's desire to cover as many epochs of history as possible. The historical survey provides the theological foundation upon which the researcher can build and reveals theological pitfalls that need to be avoided.

3.2 Political Philosophy of Plato

3.2.1 Background of Plato's Philosophy

This chapter begins with the political philosophy in ancient Greece, beginning from the classical period of Greek thought in the fifth century BCE to the end of the Roman Empire in the fifth century CE. It is important to consider Greek political thought because of the huge influence it had on some of the theologians considered in this chapter. The history of political philosophy is traced to early antiquity, with seminal works such as Plato's *Republic* and Aristotle's *Politics*. The English term "politics" derives from the Greek word *politiká* which means "affairs of the cities" (Aristotle 2013:vii). It was used by classical Greek philosophers in reference to the various activities involved in the decision-making process of groups as well as power-related activities like the distribution of resources (Aristotle 2013:viii). The *polis* was the form of political organization that prevailed during the classical Greek era roughly the eighth to the third century BCE as an independent state organized around an urban center and governed typically by formal laws and republican political institutions.

Plato (c. 427-347 BCE) was born in Athens in about 427 BCE, his father's side descending from Codrus, one of the early kings of Athens, and his mother's side from Solon (Korab-Karpowicz 2016:16; Murphy 2015:2). Plato's father died when he was still a child and her mother married an

Athenian statesman who exposed him to Athenian politics right from childhood (Day 1994:4-5). Plato became a student of Socrates who was considered as the wisest and most influential person of his time. Greek philosophers who came before Socrates dealt predominantly with issues of cosmology and ontology with virtually no attention to politics (Korab-Karpowicz 2016:16). Socrates, on the other hand, showed great interest in ethics and politics. Having witnessed the social, political and religious corruption of his Athenian society, Socrates attempted to reform Athens. Socrates' reformation agenda resulted in his execution in 399 BCE based on an unjust charge of impiety. After Socrates' death, Plato began serious scrutiny of the political structures of Athens and the laws, customs, and constitution of other Greek cities (Korab-Karpowicz 2016:16). He found the Greek political system to be corrupt and argued that the only remedy was to bring philosophy and politics together. He developed his political ideas and became the prototypical political philosopher for future Western political theory.

3.2.2 Plato's *kallipolis* (ideal state)

In his *Republics*, Plato (2016:282, 396; see also Casey 2017:120-121) argues that human beings are social beings who express this attribute by living in a community so that they can benefit from one another. Plato (2016:135-137) identifies three classes of people in the *kallipolis* (ideal state)—producers, auxiliaries and guardians. The producers (workers) take instructions from the rulers and are responsible for providing goods and services. They are the majority in any state, including farmers, craftsmen, merchants, doctors, artists, actors, lawyers, and judges. The auxiliaries maintain order in the society, protect it from invaders and ensure that the producers obey orders. The guardians rule the state. Plato (2016:131) compares the three functions of the state to the three parts of the human soul. The soul has a bottom-level component meant for basic appetites and their satisfaction, a spirited part meant for protection and an intellectual component that knows, reasons and directs the whole. It is in this sense that the state can be metaphorized as the human soul.

Plato (2016:245) considers the suitability of democratic governance for the *kallipolis*. He uses the analogy of a ship to illustrate the democratic institution (Plato 2016:245-246). He notes that for a ship to accomplish a safe and successful journey, it needs to be manned by an expert navigator who is familiar with the capacities of the vessel, geography, meteorology, water currents, navigational astronomy, supplies management, and other related issues. Leaving the ship in the

hands of an untrained person would endanger the vessel, cargo, crew, and passengers. Similarly, the state is like a ship which needs expert governors—governors who have adequate training in such subjects as law, economics, sociology, military strategy, and history. The state will be in disaster if it is left in the hands of incompetent governors. Therefore, just as the ship will not be left in the hands of an incompetent navigator, the state should not be left in the hands of an incompetent leader.

With this foundation, Plato critiqued the democratic institution of his time, as outlined below.

3.2.3 Plato's view on democratic governance

Plato (2016:20) saw democracy as a failure and argued that democratic self-government fails because it puts the management of the state in the hands of people who have inadequate knowledge about how to run the ship of state. The incompetent governors have inadequate knowledge in such subjects as economics, military strategy, conditions in other countries, or the confusing intricacies of law and ethics. Though they could have acquired such indispensable knowledge, most of them do not have the desire to study. Yet, they get into the corridors of power by beguiling voters with their appearances and nebulous talk (Plato 2016:20; Casey 2017:113). Eventually, the electorates find themselves at the mercy of administrations and conditions over which they have no control. When the selection of leaders is guided by unreliable emotions rather than by careful analysis, the state is bound to fail.

Plato (2016:324-326) raises the following objections to democracy. Democracy is an inherently defective system of government because it makes it possible for the unqualified to rule. He asserts that democracy brings excessive freedom which poses a threat to society. He argues further that democracy gives chance to people who care nothing about the people to attain power. More so, democracy allows people to pursue their selfish interests at the expense of society. In addition, democracy may create dissensus because everyone can have a say and be in control and so everyone, who will have different views, wants to be in control. In this regard, it may violate the proper order of society by creating an artificial equality. Based on the foregoing discourse, Plato further contends that only those with the prerequisite knowledge about politics should be allowed to rule, no matter the opinion of the majority (Casey 2017:113). This leads to Plato's concept of the Philosopher-king which is examined below.

3.2.4 The Ideal Ruler

Plato's (2016:226, 322) ideal ruler is the Philosopher-king, a ruler in whom political expertise is combined with philosophical knowledge. Plato (cited in Casey 2017:121) argues that just as people care and pay attention to the breeding of animals, so should they have a regulated and eugenic breeding system for future generations of human beings. Therefore, marriage should be arranged between guardians to produce offspring as potential rulers. The future leaders are to be raised communally in a barrack (Casey 2017:121) without letting them know their biological parents so that the selection of leaders can be done in the interest of the society rather than on the basis of biological affiliation. When a leadership position becomes vacant, the most wise and virtuous, regardless of gender, is to be selected. The Philosopher-king is barred from owning private properties such as land, money, or house and from engaging in commercial activities because of the corruption and distorting effect such things may have on his ability to rule selflessly.

Plato (2016:20, 323-324) notes that a state may be ruled by one person (being kingship or tyranny) or by a few (being either aristocracy or oligarchy). Plato considers authority in two modes (Casey 2017:114). The first authority (authority-E) is that of an expert. The doctor possesses this authority and so people believe what he/she says about their health. The doctor has authority because he is believed to possess knowledge in the area of medicine. The second kind of authority (authority-P) is that which is not necessarily connected to any actual expertise but connected to the role a person plays in a social or political organization. An idiot in authority in any form is an example. For Plato, authority-E is a prerequisite for having authority-P (Casey 2017:114). One must have expert knowledge in an area before being given the authority to operate in that area. Politics is, therefore, not about the use of force or promises to attain power but about; rather, it is the acquisition of power through the acquisition and demonstration of relevant expertise (Casey 2017:114). For Plato, not all philosophers must be kings but all kings should be philosophers.

According to Plato (2016:20-22), rulers must know how things really are, as distinct from how things merely appear to be. Thus, they must have true knowledge about reality. He uses the metaphor of a cave to illustrate that only the Philosopher-king has true knowledge among the people in the state (Casey 2017:115-116). In this metaphor Plato describes a group of unenlightened prisoners chained to the wall of a cave all their lives, facing a blank wall. All they

could see were shadows cast on the wall from objects passing in front of a fire behind them. Should they be freed, they would stand up, and turn around to see the real objects whose shadows appear to them as reality. Nonetheless, if they were to leave the cave altogether, they would know that all their experience in the cave had occurred in a world of shadow and darkness in comparison to the radiant world illuminated by the sun. The shadows are to the prisoners the reality, though they are not accurate representations of the real world. According to Plato, the shadows represent the fragment of reality that can normally be perceived through human senses, whereas the real objects under the sun are the real forms of objects that can only be perceived through reason (Casey 2017:116). The philosopher is like a freed prisoner who is fully aware of the reality. The philosopher aims to understand and perceive the higher levels of reality—the natural sciences; mathematics, geometry, and deductive logic; and the theory of forms. The other people are like the other prisoners who do not desire to leave the cave because they know no better life. Among the three categories of people in the state (workers, auxiliaries and guardians or kings), only the philosopher-king can grasp reality, and thus he is the only people who have actual knowledge. Knowledge is obtained through education and so the next section considers Plato's philosophy of education.

3.2.5 Plato's Philosophy of Education

Most aspects of modern Western educational traditions are rooted in ancient Greek civilization, especially the Platonic philosophy of education. Plato lived at a time when the Athenian education system was not well structured (Sanni and Momoh 2019:68). He received the common Greek education comprising learning to read and write, and to study the poets. According to Murphy (2015:2), the history of Athenian education began around 640-550 BCE when Solon decreed compulsory swimming, reading and gymnastics training for Greek boys. In those days, schools were owned by individuals and not by the state. Education was optional and open only to male children of the citizens. The Athenian educated ideal was meant to produce liberally educated people with adequate knowledge of politics, military affairs and general community life and could partake effectively in the democratic process of the state (Murphy 2015:2-3). When women were included in the education system, they were trained to master domestic tasks rather than acquire intellectual skills. Even in this case, most Athenian girls were educated at home.

Plato founded an Academy in 387 BCE which became the first institution of higher learning in Greece (and in Europe at large), a model for other schools and later for European higher institutions (Korab-Karpowicz 2016:16). Academic activities in Plato's Academy geared toward making students acquire the ultimate philosophic truth through question and answer, argument, and discussion. Among other subjects, Mathematics, rhetoric, astronomy, and dialectics were studied as necessary components of philosophy. The Academy existed for 900 years and was dissolved by Justin in 529 AD along with other Pagan institutions (Murphy 2015:4).

In Plato's view the best way to develop a state is to educate its citizenry (Plato Book VII: 528; cf. Murphy 2015:10). Education ensures the safety of the individual and the state and serves as a panacea for ineffective leadership. The transformational effect of education on the educated is crucial to Plato's approach to societal evil. He considers virtue as knowledge and knowledge as the key that leads to good human life. Education is meant to turn the soul towards light. Borrowing from Socrates, Plato argues that people do wrong because of ignorance. The cure for ignorance is education which will in turn reduce wrongdoing (Casey 2017:126). Wrong-doers must be educated rather than punished. Given the key role of education in eradicating evil, Plato advocates for compulsory state-sponsored and regulated education for all (Casey 2017:122). Once people are educated there is no need to make laws; laws are for the uneducated. Thus, the key to maintaining a stable society lies in the education of the citizenry. Again, education promotes communalism and eliminates egoism so that people always seek communal rather than personal interests. He, therefore, argues that nothing should be included in the education system if it does not contribute to the wellbeing of the individual and society.

Plato (Book VII: 528) considers education as a lifelong process rather than merely memorizing facts while sitting in a classroom as a youth. As a lifelong process, age does not prevent one from studying. He introduced adult education. Again, education should be holistic affecting the entire human being. Education begins in infancy and childhood, where the character is trained through emotions. In adolescence, one learns to reason logically and to appreciate science and philosophy. In the early part of adulthood, people learn more advanced physical and intellectual concepts and begin to search for their own versions of truth. For Plato, education helps humans to recollect the knowledge that they were born with rather than exposing them to that which they did not have at birth (Sanni and Momoh 2019:67). Plato's idea of education as a rediscovery of knowledge was

rooted in his metaphysical philosophy about humankind and their soul. He argues that each person's soul had a previous existence in an ideal world, ("the world of ideas"') where it had a perfect knowledge of all that exists in the present world. The soul lost this knowledge when it was later placed in the human body to live in the physical world. Hence, the role of education is to help the soul rediscover the lost knowledge and apply it to real-life situations.

In terms of curriculum, Plato (Book VII: 528) divided the education system into two–elementary and higher education. He also divided classes based on age and class just as modern societies have. In his opinion, males and females should study together at the elementary level in areas such as mathematics, literature, poetry and music until they attain eighteen years of age. After this, the youth are trained for the next two years in physical education to prepare them for military service. Future guardians (leaders) are to receive higher education from age twenty to thirty-five to prepare them for the state's administration. Thus, education should progress from enhancing physical fitness, and moral and spiritual development of the soul to progress from the possession of fallible opinions and beliefs to regain true knowledge which it used to have before its embodiment (Sanni and Momoh 2019:68). Thus, Plato advocates for education for all by the state such that people are educated according their talents and abilities in preparation to contribute to the wellbeing of the society either as a ruler, security personnel or a producer. He became the first person to give women the right to education.

Pedagogically, the Platonic philosophy of education considers the teacher as both a master and a mentor to the student. Plato's education strategy was more practical than theoretical. At the advanced levels of education, he used the question-and-answer method he had learnt from Socrates. He would ask penetrating questions that require one to think deeper and arrive at a pure intellectual comprehension of the essence behind the objects of sense (Murphy 2015:10). The good teacher, then, is a good dialectician who helps students to use the eyes of the soul to perceive the real meaning of things. The dialectical method compels the student to soar beyond the realm of sense knowledge to reach heights of pure reason. In addition, he used imageries whereby he made his students project themselves into real-life problematic situations, and try to reason about and proffer solutions by posing the "ifs ands," "buts," "pros" and "cons." This problem-based approach to learning became an effective tool for the development of Greece and other European countries.

After Plato, Aristotle reinvented political philosophy. The section below considers Aristotle's contributions to political philosophy.

3.3 Aristotle's Political Philosophy

Both Plato and Aristotle lived in a similar sociopolitical context. Aristotle (384-322 BCE) was born in 384 BCE in Stagira, in northern Greece to Nicomachus (his father), who was court physician to Amyntas III of Macedon. In 367 BCE when Aristotle was seventeen years, he joined Plato's Academy and remained there until Plato died in 347 BCE. Though he was influenced greatly by his teacher, Aristotle's philosophy was unique in many ways. For example, while Plato believes that knowledge automatically produces other virtues, Aristotle considers knowledge as virtuous but does not say it automatically yields other virtues. Aristotle became the teacher of Alexander (the Great) and many other children (from royal homes) who rose to prominence in Greek society. In the following sections, a highlight of Aristotle's philosophy of politics is given.

3.3.1 Aristotle's Political Naturalism

Like Plato, Aristotle (*Politics* 1289a16-19) holds a natural view of politics. He argues that the *polis* exists by nature because human beings are by nature political animals (Aristotle, *Politics* 1289a16-19; Kraut 2002:257). Thus, the *polis* is naturally prior to any individual citizen. Aristotle's political naturalism is rooted in his anthropology which considers human beings to be social animals that differ from other animals because of their civilized nature. Aristotle's reference to humans as political animals underlines that human beings are naturally sociable—they dislike a life of solitude (Kraut 2002:259). Humans have the natural political desire to associate with others, even if such interaction would bring no material benefit. Humans have a natural, rational and affective nature that joins them together. The human desire to interact with others also grows as people age. Sexual urges that lead to procreation also naturally bring humans together. Thus, the family is a natural institution which people need to go on living.

According to Aristotle (*Politics* 1289a16-19), the first institution of human civilization and the institution that meets the immediate needs of the individual is the family. When families increased, they formed villages and tribes to address greater needs. To address greater problems and needs, the tribes and villages came together to form a single, greater, and more complex institution, the

polis which is the highest form of society. Unlike the family, the *polis* is a stable social institution that does not need to grow into a bigger entity to be able to provide human goals (Kraut 2002:259-260). The goal of the political community goes beyond merely providing a means of life for people to creating an enabling environment for people to flourish (Kraut 2002:260). In other words, being part of the political community serves to provide a better life than belonging only to the family institution. Regarding human political desire, Aristotle (cited in Kraut 2002:264-265) argues that the family and friends can satisfy this political desire; but it is the *polis* that provides the environment with full satisfaction. Part of the reason is that a philosophical life in which humans desire to live cannot be satisfied in an environment that cannot provide them with the resources they require to devote themselves to political thinking. For example, a fully human life requires leisure, and this can only be enjoyed in a political community. Therefore, teleologically, the *polis* is the most natural institution.

Aristotle (*Politics* 1289a16-19) holds a communal worldview of life, arguing that the *polis* (by nature) comes before the individual. The political community is prior to the individual just as an organism is prior to its organ (parts) (Kraut 2002:259-260). The individual is considered metaphysically as a fragment of a larger whole (the state), the state being a higher degree of reality than the individual. Therefore, any household is not more important than the other households in the *polis*, and no single citizen is more valuable than all the other citizens. Hence, every worker may risk their lives for the sake of the community if it becomes necessary. The soldier on the battlefield, for example, must be ready to die for the nation because the goal he serves (that is, the wellbeing of the community) takes priority over his own life. Against this backdrop, Aristotle (like Plato) argues that the authority derives its authority from the good it does rather than from the individual citizens. This view contrasts the liberal tradition that the state's authority comes from the individual citizens who have absolute and natural authority over their lives. In the former, the authority of the state is not limited in scope as in the latter. This leads to the question of what the best form of government looks like; the next section considers this.

3.3.2 Aristotle's Ideal Political Regime

Aristotle's *Politics* was meant to assess the ingredients of a good and a bad government and to identify the factors that favor and those that do not favor the preservation of a constitution. He

argues that the politician's key task is to establish a constitution—including laws, customs, and institutions—to govern the city-state. Aristotle (1977:281) defines a constitution as "the regulation of the offices of the state in regard to the mode of their distribution and the question what is the sovereign power in the state and what is the object (*telos*) of each community." Having established the constitution, the politician ensures that it is implemented and maintained, introducing reforms where necessary. Aristotle considers politics as finding its authentic expression in civic engagement and collective deliberation about sociopolitical issues. In his view, politics requires people to gather at the public square to deliberate and decide about issues of public interest (Elecbi 2018:188). Consequently, he defines a citizen as an active participant in the political affairs of the state.

In *Politics*, Aristotle (2016:39-40) classifies constitutions into two broad categories, namely the normal/correct constitution which aims at the common good of the entire society, and the deviant constitution which serves the private interest of the ruling class. Aristotle says the *polis* may be governed by one person, a few people, or many for the benefit of all or for the benefit of only the ruler(s). Based on who benefit(s) from the government and the size of the ruling body, Aristotle identifies six types of constitutions. Government by one person for the general good is monarchy/kingship and for private gain, tyranny. A tyrannical rule may adopt laws and use them to rule (Aristotle 2016:38-39; cf. Johnston 2011:82). Government by a few people for the state's best interest is aristocracy. Rule by a minority for the interest of the ruling class is oligarchy. The aristocrats are virtuous and the oligarchists are wealthy. Like an aristocrat, Aristotle argues that money is to be used for exchanging goods and services; it should not be given out at an interest. Popular government in the common interest is polity (*politeia*). Polity is a form of democracy that governs for the interests of all, not just the interest of the leadership. Aristotle reserves the term "democracy" for sectional rule by the poor majority. He considers monarchy as the ideal form of government and aristocracy as the next best. He, however, considers "polity" as the best form of governance to practice because monarchy and aristocracy cannot be practiced in their best forms. Virtuous people are rare to come by to constitute the ruling class in aristocracy. Similarly, it is not easy to find a king who is smarter and more capable than everyone in the society.

Aristotle discusses democracy and oligarchy in further detail because he considers them as the most common forms of government, with many similarities except their allocation of power.

Comparing these two regimes, Aristotle observes that the size of the government is simply accidental for the two. The most important factor in classifying a particular government is the part of the community where sovereignty resides. In the case of democracy, power lies with the people majority of whom are poor. In an oligarchy, the ruling class constitutes the majority but are wealthy (Aristotle 1983:309). He classifies both democracy and oligarchy as deviant constitutions because in both cases, the rulers seek their own wellbeing at the expense of the entire community. Oligarchy and democracy are not considered inherently bad; leaders make them look bad. For example, people often use democracy to sanction despotic rule by oppressing the part of the free population which is not sovereign. Since political regimes must be geared toward achieving justice, the section below considers Aristotle's concept of justice.

3.3.3 Aristotle's Justice Theory

Before Aristotle's time, the Greeks used the word "justice" mainly to denote a balance; for the individual, a balance of ego forces, and for the community, a balance of its compartments (Ebrahimpour, Golshani and Malaekeh 2017:77). Aristotle developed this notion further and used the word "justice" in two senses. First, "justice" refers to conduct that is in conformity with the "law" (that is, an established, authoritative rule of behavior) (Johnston 2011:64). Justice, therefore, denotes the moral disposition that makes one act in accordance with authoritative rules of human conduct (Chroust and Osborn 1942:129). This kind of justice—that requires one to adjust to established laws— is referred to as "moral justice" or virtue of righteousness. The second dimension of justice signifies equality or fairness (Chroust and Osborn 1942:130). The principle of equality states that individuals should be treated equally, except that they differ in ways that are relevant to the situation in which they are involved. Thus, justice in the sense of equality means that equals should be treated equally and unequals, unequally. As an example, wages must be paid according to the labor invested by the receiver.

"Justice" therefore refers to either abiding by legal rules or the use of fair means. Making a distinction between the moral just and justice based on equality, Aristotle (1996:11) states that a person whose conduct contradicts established moral principles and therefore, lacks virtue, is not necessarily unjust with respect to the principle of equality. One may not act justly concerning authoritative rules of conduct but may treat people fairly and so will not be guilty of breaking the

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equality code. That is, not every breach of moral justice amounts to a breach of the principle of equality. However, every infraction of equality amounts to an infraction of moral justice.

According to Aristotle (1996:117), equality (particular justice) consists of two phases, namely, distributing and correcting phases. Distributive justice comes into play in the distribution of honor, wealth, opportunities privileges, and any other thing among competing parties in the state (Aristotle 1996:117). Distribution always has to follow the principle of proportionate equality. In this sense, distributive justice is the extent to which a state ensures that benefits and burdens are distributed fairly among citizens.

Corrective justice, on the other hand, addresses injustice in transactions and relationships between two or more persons in a society (Aristotle 1996:117; see also Ebrahimpour, Golshani, and Malaekeh. 2017:77). Concerning corrective justice, liability rectifies the injustice inflicted by way of one individual on another. Aristotle (1996:117) further divides corrective justice into two depending on whether the transactions involved are voluntary or involuntary. Activities like selling, buying, lending money with interest, depositing, and letting for hire are considered voluntary transactions because they are voluntarily entered upon. Involuntary transactions may be furtive (including theft, adultery, poisoning, enticement of slaves, assassination, false witness) or violent (including assault, imprisonment, murder, robbery with violence, maiming, abusive language, contumelious treatment) (Aristotle 1996:118).

Moral justice is a virtue displayed toward others and not toward oneself. The other-centeredness of the virtue of moral justice makes it different from all other forms of virtues (Chroust and Osborn 1942:134). Justice is a perfect virtue because it does not only benefit the individual but also benefits others; thus, justice has both individual and social applications. Moral justice, then is a social virtue in that it involves one relationship with others and aims at ensuring the wellbeing of others. Aristotle (1996:117-118) opines that the social nature of justice is also applicable to justice displayed in the form of equality. To treat someone fairly is to be other-centered; therefore, the principle of equality also aims at doing good to others. The social nature of both moral justice and equality makes these two virtues simply two aspects of the same virtue. Given that justice— whether moral justice or equality—is meant for the welfare of fellow humans, the term "just" is applicable to the "citizen" whose actions are directed toward the common good of the political

community. To sum up, Aristotle's theory of justice implies that all citizens must be given equal opportunities and political rights.

The two personalities, Plato and Aristotle, have given the philosophical foundation of politics. In the rest of the chapter, the study examines the contributions of selected Christian scholars toward the Christian understanding of politics. Each of these scholars was outstanding in their era. St. Augustine, a patristic scholar, is considered in the next section.

3.4 Political Theology of St. Augustine

3.4.1 Background of Augustine's Political Theology

St. Augustine (354-430 CE) had a unique background. He lived in late antiquity, the period marking the transition from the classical civilization of Greece and Rome to the Christian civilization of Western Europe. His era is located at the intellectual intersection of Christianity, philosophy, and politics. Augustine's political ideas constitute a significant link between the later antiquity and the medieval period. Living in an era full of heresies, Augustine became a Christian apologist who defended Christianity against heresies (Plantinga 1999:2-3).

Augustine was a philosopher of Platonic tradition, particularly Alexandrian Neo-platonism (Brown 2000:86). He was a skilled Roman-trained rhetorician, a prolific writer Catholic bishop of Hippo in northern Africa (Brown 2000:9). He did not devote any of his publications to political issues, yet he discusses politics in many of his letters and sermons. His theological and philosophical ideas influenced many scholars including Machiavelli, Luther, Calvin, and Hobbes. As a prominent Roman citizen, Augustine (Bk. 14, 1994) perceived the Roman Empire as a divinely ordained medium for spreading and safeguarding the Christian faith. He lived through the sack of Rome by Alaric. Augustine's *City of God,* in which he upholds Roman authority, offered a necessary explanation that Christianity was not responsible for the fall of Rome. In his ministry, one finds an intersection of faith and everyday life.

In this section, the research attempts to present key aspects of Augustine's political theology based on his publications. A survey of various scholarly works on Augustine indicates that Augustine's political theology has a three-fold thematic emphasis; namely, the fall of humanity and its consequences and the dual citizenship of humanity.

3.4.2 The fall of humanity

Augustine's anthropology is pivoted on his interpretative deductions from the biblical account of the creation of humankind, their probationary life in the Garden of Eden and the fall as presented in the first three chapters of the book of Genesis). Augustine (1994:94) argues that God created a morally upright Adam who became corrupted through the misuse of his free will. Augustine holds that Adam's fall resulted in enmity between God and humanity. Deane (2013:16) interprets Augustine's view of sin as "disobedience and revolt—[hu]man's turning away from God and from his will and his commands" or human refusal to accept their position as "a creature, superior to all other earthly creatures but subordinate to God." If that is the case, then evil occurs in the context of human use of the divinely given free will to choose between good and bad (Jacobsen 2021:116). In his view, the fall affected human nature—imprisoned humankind—in such a way that only God, through his grace, could provide a remedy. In other words, the sinner desires to escape from bondage but cannot gain that freedom except through the application of divine grace. Consequent to sin, human nature becomes bifurcated in that sinful humankind desires salvation but is incapable of achieving it.

For Augustine, the psychology of sinful humanity is key to understanding the institutions of human society; including, property, the family, slavery, and political institutions and operations. He reasons this way because he believes that only a small fraction of the human population is redeemed by God's grace during their earthly lives; thus, majority of people in every human society are fallen/sinful (Deane 2013:39). A proper understanding of the nature and operations of the human society should, therefore, begin on the premise that the society is occupied predominantly by fallen human beings who (more often than not) set the tone and fix principles for earthly instructions and life.

According to Augustine (cited in Deane 2013:39), God animates the soul in a similar way that the soul animates the body. God supplies the souls with godliness, righteousness, and charity. Continual obedience to God's commands sustains the spiritual life given by God; dead human souls also receive divine quickening accomplished by divine activities in the heart of the sinner which bring the sinner back to the true light (Deane 2013:40). Those who abandon God, the source of life and happiness, and live according to their sinful desire live hopelessly in darkness. Such

people exchange their love for the incorporeal, eternal, unchangeable, all-good, and all-wise Creator for love for temporal, mutable, and insubstantial creatures. This means that loving God keeps one closer to God and farther from sin. Against this backdrop, Augustine (2008:278) (following Plato) argues that love is the energizing/animating force of the human soul, regarding eros as the ultimate power which informs human actions. Augustine's point is that humans are drawn to that in which they place their love. Those who place their love in heavenly things are drawn to heavenly things and those who place their love in earthly things are drawn to earthly things. The natural and healthy soul loves God, moves toward him and becomes godlier. Such a soul uses the temporal things of this world; yet, it neither loves them nor lives for them. Should the soul fall away from God, its action will be directed by the new object of its love, temporal earthly goods, from which it hopes to obtain happiness. The good soul leans toward God and flees from sin and evil; but the bad soul flees from God and embraces transient pleasures which result in inescapable pain, misery, suffering, and death (Deane 2013:41). With this background, Augustine developed the doctrine of the two cities, which is considered below.

3.4.3 The Doctrine of the Two Cities

Augustine (2019) developed the bifurcated nature of humankind (demonstrated above) as the foundation of his political doctrine of the two cities—the city of God for the elect and the city of man for the damned. These cities are metaphors for the two spiritual powers—faith and unbelief— that have engaged in a cosmic battle since sin entered the angelic world. Love is foundational to the two cities, though the object of and motivation to love differs in each case (Augustine 2019:381). Augustine (2019:381) contrasts a city in which pride dominates, where people live according to what pleases them, and seek their own glory with a city in which citizens live and work in the love of God, "even to the point of contempt for oneself."

The desire for salvation makes one a potential citizen of the city of God, a simultaneously temporal and eternal city. Citizens in the city of God live by faith temporarily among the impious; in the eternal sense, this city is the community of believers and angels living in heaven (Deane 2013:29). This city can be considered as the church as God sees it, the invisible church. The earthly life of the believer (a citizen of the city of God) must demonstrate the humility that characterizes heaven under God's authority. Life in this city requires putting others before oneself, servant-leadership

and willful obedience to authority (Augustine Bk. 14, 1994:109). Human submission to earthly authority typifies the ultimate submission of believers to God in this city. The full realization of life in this city will result in the removal of all traces of the city of man (Augustine Bk. 14, 1994:109). Life in the city of God is a return to pre-fall human life, in which humankind flourished and had fulfilment in God alone.

The city of man is the home of those who seek their own glory. This city was founded on pride, the human desire to be exalted above God. The pride and self-glorification that characterize life in this city are the same pride and self-glorification that initiated the fall of humanity. Though human sinfulness is traced to Adam and Eve, Augustine traces the founding of the city of man to Cain who is said to have founded a city after murdering his brother, Abel (cf. Gen. 4:17). Augustine notes that humankind's pursuit of power and bodily pleasure cannot be satisfied fully; therefore, human beings will continue to seek power and pleasure as long as they live in this city. Some members of the city of man conceive the ultimate good as pursuing pleasure and avoiding pain. Consequently, they attempt to satisfy their desire for happiness in sensuality (White 2012:156). There is the will to power, the desire to dominate, the lust for government and a natural insatiable lust for power in this city.

A person, as a result of the fall, is full of pride which makes him/her a citizen of the city of Man. Yet, God's saving grace makes the believer a citizen of the city of God. Thus, believers possess dual citizenship suspended between these two cities. The citizens of these two cities are inextricably intermingled on this earth and will remain so until the end of age (Weithman 2001:237). Therefore, no human political society can be identified with either the city of God or the city of man.

3.4.3.1 Political implications of the doctrine of two cities

Augustine's doctrine of two cities has the following implications for political theology. First, Augustine (1994) accepts human political power because of original sin. Human nature, according to Augustine, is fractious: being at the same time the most social being with the desire for peaceful co-existence with others and being quarrelsome by perversion (Von Brück 2010:163). The realization of human life in harmony with others is, however, hindered by "the psychological disorder which is symptomatic of our sinfulness" (Weithman 2001:239). Before the fall, God gave

humankind dominion over irrational creatures but not over their fellow human beings. The perverted nature of humankind is evident in egoistic arrogance and presumption, selfishness, chaos and domination that characterize human societies. The human tendency to conflict is so strong that peaceful co-existence cannot be achieved through the exercise of parental power alone. The perversion of human nature, as a result of sin, therefore necessitated the institution of political power. In Augustine's view, the political power of the state constitutes a hedge against excessive societal disorder. Therefore, God gives political authority to people as a remedy for sin (Weithman 2001:239). However, strictly speaking, politics cannot remedy human ills because the cause of and cure for human ills are ultimately spiritual.

Secondly, the aims of political authority must be limited because of human sinful nature (Sosnowski 2019:7; Weithman 2001:239). In other words, humankind is not to be governed only by the city of man because the kind of rule exercised in this city is imperfect due to sin. This city loves self-exaltation and dominion, hence placing limitations on what this city can achieve in terms of restoring the broken divine-human, human-human and human-environment relationships. In response to the pagan claims that the abolition of pagan worship by Christian emperors was the reason for the sack of Rome by barbarians in 410 CE, Augustine (2019:143) pointed to Rome's internal moral decay as the cause of her fall. He argued further that Christianity has saved Rome from complete destruction and therefore, the nation can only rise again if it abandons its sinful ways. Augustine cites Rome's constant engagement in warfare as a manifestation of her *libido dominandi* ("lust for domination"). He also draws attention to Nero's cruel, selfish and luxurious reign due to his lust for domination and subjugation of other nations (Augustine 2019:143). Part of Rome's sociopolitical woes are also attributable to internal wars, which according to Augustine (2019:91) "more disastrous, more hideous, more bitter" than all of the foreign wars. Augustine's point is that Rome's political problems were caused by their sin, which apparently predates Christianity. Therefore, sin limits the effectiveness of human political power.

Thirdly, the doctrine of the two cities underscores the transient nature of the present world. Human beings are on pilgrimage in this life and all things in this life are passing away. Eventually, the citizens of the two cities will be separated; but this will only happen in the eschatological age. Christians must, therefore, use this world as a means of pilgriming to the city of God without conforming to worldly standards. Instead of conforming to worldly standards, Christians should

set godly standards for worldly people. As the soul journeys through this world, it must not forget its origin and destination and become "enmeshed in the charms and pleasures of the sights and sounds seen and heard on the journey, while its thoughts are diverted from that home whose delights would make us truly happy" (Deane 2013:41). Christian must not shun temporal happiness; they must enjoy it but should not regard it as the highest good or even as necessarily good. They must not allow temporal happiness to push them away from achieving eternal treasures.

Fourthly, Augustinian political theology considers politics as a means of regulating sin to provide temporal and inferior kinds of peace. Augustine (2019:551) notes that when human beings suppress their *libido dominandi* ("lust for domination"), their political systems and operations can yield "well-ordered concord" through obedience. That is, human political activities provide a temporal peace that citizens of both cities can enjoy. Such peace, however, is not perfect because of the human condition. The city of man wills earthly peace for the sake of enjoying earthly goods. It is deducible from Augustine's thought that this earthly peace is God's gift to believers to enable them to endure the burdens of the world and pursue the Christian life. This means that Christians can take advantage of the temporal good that human government provides (including, health, material possessions, honor, friends, a home, wife and children, and peace and quiet) to pursue heavenly treasures. Christians need to recognize that though God is the source of all earthly goods and benefits, their obedience to and worship of him should not aim at receiving these benefits from him for he gives to both the good and the wicked alike. Rather, they must worship him to receive the most important divine gift, eternal life and heavenly blessedness. Given this understanding, Christians must live as responsible citizens and support their society in all respects. After Augustine, the study considers Thomas Aquinas as a representative of medieval political thought.

3.5 Political theology of Thomas Aquinas

3.5.1 Background of Thomas Aquinas's Political Theology

Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274) was a late medieval theologian who lived through a time of changing political authority. His political ideas and context were radically different from those of Augustine. Aquinas' era is situated between the end of the Roman Empire (476 CE) and the creation of the nation-state (1648) (Sosnowski 2019:15). After the fall of the Roman Empire,

remarkable changes occurred in the political structure of both the church and state. People no longer looked to the pope in Rome or to ecumenical councils for guidance. Before Aquinas' time, the Roman Empire (in 800 CE) had enjoyed political dominance that allowed Pope Leo III to crown Charlemagne emperor over Germany and other parts of Europe.

Later, the Roman Emperor considered himself to possess divine right and authority; hence, he named his empire the Holy Roman Empire (Sosnowski 2019:15). With time, the Emperor extended his political power to the religious affairs of the empire, thereby encroaching on the ecclesiastical sphere. Anointed kings ignored the canon law that gave the clergy the sole right to elect bishops, assume religious responsibilities, and nominate and install bishops and abbots in a ceremony referred to as investiture (Sosnowski 2019:16). The investiture of the bishop by the king was then followed by consecration by his ecclesiastical superior.

Because both the king and the bishops were keen to maintain their political powers, they engaged in a controversy known as the Investiture Controversy (or the Investiture Contest), that is, the controversy between the church and the state over who has the right to choose and install bishops and abbots of monasteries (Sosnowski 2019:16). The battle between political and ecclesiastical powers, which started in 1076, reached a peak in the century before Aquinas with the Investiture Controversy. Both Pope Gregory VII and King Henry IV argued for their right and ability to appoint bishops and invest them with their authority (Sosnowski 2019:16). The controversy resulted in excommunications and military actions after attempts to resolve it had failed. The struggle for supremacy between the institutions of the church (*sacerdotium*) and monarchy (*regnum*) continued until the papacy and empire reached an agreement at Worms in September 1122 (Sosnowski 2019:16). In this agreement, the Concordat of Worms, King Henry V renounced investiture with ring and staff and allowed for the election of bishops and abbots; Pope II, in turn, allowed the king to witness the elections of German prelates and to invest prospective bishops and abbots using his scepter (Blumenthal 1998:167-168). The agreement made the political atmosphere relatively peaceful but failed to resolve the matter completely.

Aquinas took up this issue of power struggle in his later publications. Philosophically, Aquinas aimed to mediate between Aristotle's philosophical system and the Christian faith. He harmonized Christianity and Aristotelianism and consequently, attempted to harmonize political and

ecclesiastical authority to the effect that he considered "the government, in addition to the church" as having "moral formation as a purpose" (Sosnowski 2019:16). The foregone background provides the context for interpreting Aquinas' political theology considered below.

3.5.2 Aquinas' Jurisprudence

The concept of law holds a high place in Aquinas' understanding of politics. The law is "a dictate of practical reason emanating from the ruler who governs a perfect community" or simply, a law is that which induces humankind to act or restrains them from acting (*Summa Theologica* I-II, Q 91, Article 1; Aquinas 1997:np). The law, then, is the standard which measures what should or should not be done. The ruler is not just a lawmaker but one who transcends all the judge and judicial authority. Aquinas (*Summa Theologica* I-II, Q 91) distinguishes between four kinds of law namely; eternal law, divine law, human law and natural law. Analyzing these laws brings to the fore the nexus between religion and politics and the understanding of human law in terms of divine law. The dichotomization of laws as secular and divine may, therefore, not have any place in Aquinas' jurisprudence, because for Aquinas God is the source of all just laws.

Eternal law (Lat. *lex aeterna*) refers to all the scientific (physical, chemical, biological, and psychological) laws that God has made to govern the universe and to direct all actions and movements toward their appointed ends (Aquinas *Summa Theologica* I-II, Q 93, Article 2). Eternal law is the mind of God as seen by God himself. Aquinas (*Summa Theologica* I-II, Q 93, Article 2) established that the eternal law is the source of all law and as such serves as the fountainhead of the moral and physical orders.

Divine laws are divinely established standards that govern human actions and that must be satisfied to achieve eternal salvation (Aquinas *Summa Theologica* I-II, Q 91, Article 1). It is the appearance of eternal law to humankind in history usually promulgated by revelation. Divine law is revealed to judge both human actions and motives. It gives certainty when human law is incapacitated and forbids all sins, even those that human law cannot forbid (Sosnowski 2019:23).

Human law is established by human reason to direct human actions within a specific geographical, historical and social situation. Human law is made by leaders as an instrument for promoting virtue. It has some limitations in that it is not possible to touch on every issue related to human

existence and in addition, humans lack the ability to be perfect in every respect. This law, therefore, focuses on forbidding vices so that people can abstain; hence it promotes interpersonal virtues like justice, peace and others. Like Aristotle, Aquinas also argues that people avoid crime because of the existence of law. Law, therefore, means to lead in the direction of virtue.

The doctrine of natural law plays a key role in Aquinas' moral and political teachings. For Aquinas (*Summa Theologica* I-II, Q 94, Article 5), the natural law is the manifestation of the eternal law which God has placed in humankind. Similar to Aristotle's thought, Aquinas (2002:83) taught that God has endowed all things with specific features that define what each thing essentially is. These definitive features give the object natural inclinations which make it behave in a certain way characteristic of its nature. Thus, the nature of an object is not only determined by its appearance but also by its natural inclinations and behavior. Aquinas (*Summa Theologica* I-II) refers to the divine authorship and active role in determining and sustaining the nature of each creature as a "law" which he defines as a standard or rule of acts whereby humankind is induced to act or is restrained from acting. By its nature, the law is directed to the good, especially the common good. The law relates directly to reason, first divine reason and second human reason. This law is alluded to by Paul when he says that though the Gentiles did not have God's law written for them, they observed the requirements of the law naturally (cf. Rom. 2:14). Thus, one knows about the natural law by default without the need to be taught what it is. Aquinas' natural law relates closely to his theory about government, which is considered in the next section.

3.5.3 The Nature of Government

Aquinas notes that in practice, an ideal government is not achievable. Yet, humans can make society a better place to live if they adhere to godly principles of governance. Therefore, political choices and actions must be governed by the principles of love and the common good. Aquinas does not explicitly endorse a particular form of government; rather, he advocates for principles that promote peace, unity, and well-being of the society. These principles, "the first principles", are defining characteristics of politics considered as action and a scientific discipline (MacIntyre 1990:np). Aquinas, like Aristotle, believes that politics is a practical science that must be lived, experienced, and undertaken for the benefit of the entire society. The common good includes protecting life, preserving the state, and promoting peace. The communal interest of governance

is important for every human society, more so the Ghanaian community which holds a communal sense of life. Aquinas' interest in the wellbeing of the community will therefore serve as a foundation upon which a political theology for Ghana will be formulated in chapter five of the study.

Aquinas (cited in Tsonchev 2015:48) makes another key observation about governance, namely, governance is no a child's play; it requires mature minds. The fact that politics requires mature people is underscored in Ecclesiastes (10:16) where a country is said to be in trouble if its ruler is childish and the leaders feast all day long. Taking care of a household is not an easy job, but leading an entire community or a nation is more demanding. Therefore, without adequate skill, life experience and maturity, one is likely to fail in his/her political career. This does not, however, mean that the youth should be excluded from political activities. Rather, it underscores the need for mentorship; one must receive enough mentoring before undertaking independent political activities.

Furthermore, politics is for "autonomous" people, that is, people who are capable of governing and taking care of themselves and others (Tsonchev 2015:48-49). Every society is made up of two groups of people, the ruler and the subjects (ruled). The survival and wellbeing of the society and the living standards of the people are the responsibility of the ruler and depend on the maturity and experience of the ruler's mind (Tsonchev 2015:49). One may use the metaphor of the family to explain this. The family is an institution responsible for self-preservation and procreation. In the family, there are different people with different roles. For example, the father (acting from love) is naturally inclined to care for his wife and children; the children naturally depend on the care and support of their parents. Many children make a natural decision to leave the house and stay on their own as soon as they are capable of doing so. This, according to Rousseau (2013:94), is because all human beings are born free and have the desire to live independently. Other children may voluntarily decide to continue to stay with their parents even after reaching maturity; the relationship between such children and the family is no more natural but contractual (Rousseau 2013:94). From a political perspective, the family is "the first model of political society: the leader is the image of the father, and the people the image of the children; all being born equal and free, give up their liberty for their advantage" (Rousseau 2013:94). The difference, however, is that "in the family, the father's love for his children repays him for his care for them, while in the state the

pleasure of command takes the place of love that the leader does not have for his people" (Rousseau 2013:94). The bottom line is that one does not lead a family (or the society) unless that person is mature. The idea of the family as an exemplary political organization maintains that good governance is informed by love and true concern for the welfare of the ruled.

Given that politics require the mature mind to take political actions for the common good of the society, it stands to reason that politics requires knowledge of the "final good." It is not just an intellectual knowledge of what the final good is but a belief in (faith) and practice of it (public theology). Without knowing what the final good is, one may lead a society to achieve a better standard that may not necessarily be the final good in life. Inexperience and immaturity in the context of Aquinas' political theology, therefore, refers to a lack of knowledge about what is finally good. The inexperienced and immature mind is full of worldly passions and personal ambitions because of misplaced priorities; it attaches itself to secondary aims and moves the ruled in the wrong direction (Tsonchev 2015:49). Moreover, the inexperienced and immature mind may know the final good without knowledge about how to achieve it. Clearly, Aquinas' idea of politics (as a practical science) needs realism as opposed to idealism. The former holds that particular things exist independently of perception while the latter holds that reality exists only in the mind. Politics then requires knowledge about what is the ultimate good, belief in the existence of good and an experience necessary to achieve the final good.

3.5.4 Political Power/Authority

Aquinas' view on political power is informed by his anthropological thoughts. Like Aristotle, Aquinas (1963:1.4-5) considers human beings as political animals whose political desires can be satisfied only within the society. The political nature of humankind relates to their nature as social beings. Even in the "state of innocence" before the fall, humans ruled over one another. He reasons this way because even before the fall, humans lived as a community due to their social nature and (Aquinas 2018:446). Aquinas (2018:446) argues that since "a social life cannot exist among a number of people unless under the presidency of one to look after the common good," political authority exists as the means of directing the community toward the common good.

As reasoning beings, humans naturally use their intellect to comprehend, build, and create things for their survival. The need for a social life is because one person cannot provide all physical needs.

In other words, though God has endowed humankind with reason to apply to provide life needs, one person cannot survive without the existence of other humans (Aquinas 1963:1.5-6). Just as humans are naturally ruled inwardly by the soul, and the soul by reason, so are they (humans) ruled by others as a means to achieving a natural perfection and to partake in higher things (Sosnowski 2019:18). Life in society is, therefore, meant to provide human existential needs and to direct people to the ultimate good of life, happiness. Political authority should, therefore, not be used as a means to enslave people but as a means to promote common wellbeing.

In addition to nature, legitimate authority comes also from God (who is the ultimate source of all authority). By nature, humankind is to be ruled; God is the Supreme Ruler. God expects humankind to be obedient to the authority he (God) has placed on earth (Sosnowski 2019:18). In his *Commentary on the Sentences of Peter Lombard,* Aquinas (N.d: online article) asks whether Christians are required to be subject to secular authority, even the authority of tyrants. He argues that Christians are obliged to obey the authorities inasmuch as they are from God; but they are not obliged to obey authority that is not from God (Aquinas N.d: online article). He identifies the manner of acquisition and use of authority as key determinants for knowing whether one's authority is from God or not (Aquinas N.d: online article). With regards to acquisition, two possible defects include the unworthiness of the leader and the use of illegitimate means (like simony or violence) to acquire power. Tyrannically exercised authority is not to be obeyed because it is not lawful authority at all, even if it is lawfully acquired (Monahan 1987:175). Similarly, a lawfully exercised authority must be obeyed even if it is not lawfully acquired. Hence, for Aquinas, the mode of acquisition of power is not as important as the mode of exercising authority.

Aquinas argues that human society must be organized and directed by a center, analogous to the human mind which controls the body. He, therefore, rejects any form of anarchy. In his view, the governing center is responsible for the management and well-being of the society. He argues that "every multitude is derived from unity" and in every unity there is one part that moves and others that are moved (Aquinas 2002:11). He argues that something which is in itself a unit can better yield unity than that which is fragmented (Aquinas 2002:10). He argues further that power, when exerted from a single source, has a greater potential of achieving its purpose than when exerted from divided sources (Aquinas 2002:12). In the same way, the human society is best ruled by one.

Aquinas (2002:12-13), like Aristotle, considers monarchy as the best and most natural and tyranny as the worst form of government but warns that monarchy can also turn into a tyrannical regime when the ruler seeks personal gains at the expense of the well-being of the society. There are examples to prove how a monarch can rule tyrannically under the pretext of royal dignity. The Roman commonwealth, at a point in time, had subjects expelling kings due to the heavy burden the monarchs placed on them. The people chose consuls and magistrates to rule and guide them, in a form of aristocracy. Rome began to grow again after achieving her liberty (Aquinas 2002:15). In Ghana where traditional rule still exists despite the introduction of Western democracy by colonial masters, it is easy to appreciate how people who desire monarchical leadership may fall victim to the savagery of tyrants. Some traditional authorities pursue their selfish ambition and create so many problems for their subjects. Bad tyrannical monarchical leadership may lead to a situation whereby the subjects refuse to contribute their part to the life of the community because of the belief that whatever they do will be used for the benefit of the leader. But when no one is seen to have the sole prerogative to rule, people do not consider the common good as belonging to someone else but as something belonging to all. Given that both the best and worst forms of government can occur under monarchy (rule by one), Aquinas (2002:15) advocates that monarchy should be organized as a mixed government similar to the Presidential republic of modern days.

Though Aquinas has his preferred system of governance, he does not consider the form of governance as something of primary importance. Rather, he judges a political organization it effects and achievements. Whether the government promotes peace and unity is what matters and not just the form of that government. Any form of government is therefore good provided it promotes the well-being of the society at a specific moment (Tsonchev 2015:52). Such government promotes human flourishing by eliminating oppression, and exploitation and promoting justice and peace.

The Reformation era that followed the medieval period was full of political ideologies from both Christian and non-Christian scholars. In the following section, the study considers how Martin Luther made meaning of political issues in his socio-political.

3.6 Political Theology of Martin Luther

3.6.1 Background of Martin Luther's Political Theology

The 16th-century Protestant Reformation marked a major turning point in the history of the church. This event challenged the claim by the Roman Catholic Church and the papacy to have universal authority over both religious and civil issues. Though the immediate cause of the Reformation was religious, there were political factors that contributed to the build-up to this event. The political context of the Reformation relates to political activities in such areas as Saxony in Germany, the Holy Roman Empire, Spain, France, England and Italy. Prior to the Reformation, the spirit of nationalism arose and national states and free cities emerged in these regions, making people display their loyalty to their nation than to the Roman Empire (Enns 2008:471). The strong nationalistic spirit that arose through local political leaders became a vehicle to carry out the Reformers' agenda (Enns 2008:471). Also, the downfall of the Eastern Church due to Islamic conquest and the extension of Islamic activities to the West served as an additional challenge to the papal authority.

Another factor was education, evoked by the Renaissance (meaning "rebirth") which opened people's minds to study classical literature in addition to the Bible. Erasmus, one of the Christian humanists, produced the Greek version of the New Testament and encouraged people to study the Bible in its original language rather than the Latin version (Enns 2008:471). The invention of the printing press also catalyzed the distribution of Christian literature to the masses.

Through their own study, the Reformers realized discrepancies between the biblical teachings and the practices of the Roman Church. The priesthood was corrupt and people could buy church offices (Enns 2008:471-472). Church courts sold justice to the highest bidder. The sales of indulgences which allowed people to buy "forgiveness" for sins they had committed and/or were yet to commit, the teaching that church tradition was as authoritative as Scriptures, and the theology of salvation by synergy between God and humans were some other religious factors that triggered the Reformation (Enns 2008:472).

The most prominent actor in the Reformation was Martin Luther. Luther was born in 1483 to peasant parents in Eisleben, Saxony (Heinze 2001:717). He completed his preparatory education

at Georgenschule in Eisenach and then entered the University of Erfurt in 1501 to study trivium (including grammar, rhetoric and logic) and quadrivium (comprising arithmetic, geometry, music and astronomy) in preparation for a profession in law (Heinze 2001:718; Needham 2004:67). After only a few months of legal studies, he left the university and entered the Augustinian monastery in fulfilment of a promise he made to St. Anne to become a monk after his deliverance from a violent thunderstorm (Enns 2008:472). Later (1510/1511), Luther went to Rome on a missionary trip and while there, witnessed the worldliness and corruption of the clergy. He returned to Wittenburg, completed his doctoral studies in theology and became a lecturer in biblical studies at the university (Heinze 2001:718; Needham 2004:64). While at Wittenburg, Luther encountered scholars who placed considerable emphasis upon human abilities to perform morally good actions. They taught that human beings can do good works to compel God to reward them with justification. Through his study of the Bible (especially Rom. 1:17), Luther established that justification comes by faith alone without any human deeds contributing to it.

Luther's political theology is rooted in his emphasis on faith and grace, as opposed to works and law. For Luther, the believer's political activities must be informed by a love for God and neighbor rather than the obligation of the law. The following sections outline key aspects of Luther's political theology.

3.6.2 The Doctrine of Justification by faith alone

The Doctrine of Justification by faith alone is one of the major teachings of the reformers, and the atoning sacrifice of Christ is the foundation for this teaching. For Luther (2022:np), justification means to acquit someone of their sin and declare the person righteous on account of Christ's righteousness. Thus, to be justified does not mean one is innocent; rather, God justifies the sinner because of Christ's righteousness, his obedience to God's law, his suffering, death and resurrection. Justification goes beyond mere forgiveness to include imputation of Christ's righteousness to the justified, all these happening apart from human merit (Johnson 2001:720).

Luther (cited in Johnson 2001:720) identifies two kinds of righteousness; namely, internal (personal) righteousness and external (or civil) righteousness (*justitia civilis*). The former is purity and perfection of heart generated by the Holy Spirit while the latter is acquired through just conduct or good deeds (Johnson 2001:720). This is the basis of Luther's distinction between the private

"justified" believer (*persona privata* or *coram Deo*) and the public person (*persona publica* or *coram hominibus*) who operates in the public sphere mindful of their social responsibilities. Inner righteousness comes to humankind as a divine gift graciously bestowed; no deeds contribute to it.

Luther (2022: Treatise I) argues that faith is how justification accrues to the sinner. Medieval scholasticism distinguished between faith that "could be acquired through instruction and preaching" from infused faith that comes as a divine gift (Johnson 2001:720). Luther rejected this idea and argued that the faith that can be "acquired" coincides with the one that justifies and does not come through human efforts but comes as a gift from God. He insisted that faith is "receptivity, receiving Christ and all that he has done" rather than meritorious; therefore, personal accomplishments play no part in justification (Johnson 2001:720). Luther's position on justification contrasts the Catholic synergy view which considers justification as something based partly on God's grace and partly on human merit (Enns 2008:479). He vehemently rejected the Catholic doctrines of penance, indulgences and other doctrines that made human efforts necessary for salvation. For Luther, "works of the law"—that is, works done by an unbeliever—have no contribution to a person's justification; however, "works of faith" are evidence of a person's justification. Since the saving faith inevitably yields good works, the justified will have good deeds to justify their justification. That is, the life of a truly justified person will inevitably yield good works because even though salvation is by grace through faith alone, the faith that saves is not alone; the saving faith is accompanied by the power to do good works after one's justification.

Luther's doctrine of justification by faith through grace has sociopolitical implications, which can be noted and outlined as follows. First, his emphasis on grace in the salvation process is a good antidote to pride on the part of the saved, hence promoting the virtue of humility. No one has the right to boast because one's justification is unmerited. Second, the grace factor in salvation also evokes love in people in their interactions with God, with other humans and with the environment (Pfrimmer 2017:9). For Luther, salvation is not the destination that people desire to reach but the beginning of a new journey with a loving God (Pfrimmer 2017:9). Luther considers baptism as the beginning of this spiritual journey, an act that bestows on every believer equal status before God by removing any barrier between the believer and God (Pfrimmer 2017:9). In Luther's opinion, a person's private justification must be the basis for the fulfilment of their public responsibilities. This links well with Wesley's teaching that personal holiness must be practicalized through social

holiness. Thirdly, the love factor in justification by faith alone is motivation to fight the course of the oppressed, the marginalized, the exploited and the poor to move the society toward the path of flourishing. Luther's political theology is, therefore, a theology of liberation.

3.6.3 The Doctrine of the Two Kingdoms

Luther propounded a two-kingdom doctrine similar to Augustine's "two cities" though Luther's interpretation differed from that of Augustine. He formulated the two-kingdom doctrine to address the confusion that surrounded the roles of church and state (Palmer 2009:13). His theory makes him the first scholar to accept the legitimacy of secular rule. In Luther's day, some political leaders were assuming ecclesiastical responsibilities. Some Anabaptists attempted to establish temporal earthly kingdoms, while others rejected earthly kingdoms and preached that only the church had the right to rule on earth (Palmer 2009:13). The dichotomy between the church and state was not clear.

In his *Temporal Authority: To What Extent It Should Be Obeyed,* Luther (1962:88) identifies two mutually exclusive kingdoms—namely, the kingdom of God and the kingdom of the world. The kingdom of the world, in contrast to the kingdom of God, is a secular, temporal and finite realm and lacks equity. The worldly kingdom is administered by humans (whether believers or non-believers) who have the power to judge and punish members of the kingdom. Luther claims that both the kingdom of the Gospel and the secular kingdom should remain, "the one to protect piety, the other to bring about external peace and prevent evil deeds; neither is sufficient without the other" (Luther 1962:371). Members of the kingdom of this world are born of the flesh and are earthly and carnally minded while members of Christ are born of the Spirit and are Spirit-led. On the contrary, the kingdom of God is heavenly, eternal and imperishable and characterized by truth, peace, joy, righteousness, safety, salvation and equity (Prill 2005:18).

Luther considers earthly authority as divinely ordained for improving human lives and maintaining excellent human-divine, human-human and human-environment relationships. He, therefore, valued earthly authority highly and did not want to usurp it. In other words, Luther was not ready to destroy earthly authority or replace it with the authority of the church. He speaks so highly of earthly authority that he described civil government as the greatest treasure on earth. He criticized those who used the gospel to justify their rebellion against civil government.

Luther's political thoughts dichotomize the "civil use of the law" and the "evangelical use of the law" (Pfrimmer 2017:10). The former is a political use to preserve peace and order in society by curtailing crimes, lawlessness, incivility, and restraining evil while the latter use goes beyond establishing and enforcing civil standards to convicting offenders of their sins and the need for pardon from God (Lose 2001:254). He contends that the civil use of the law is applicable to all persons regardless of their religious affiliation. Lose (2001:253) summarizes the effect of Luther's approach: "For Luther, God's law establishes our responsibility toward neighbor (what we should do) and, along with the gospel, establishes our identity in relation to God (who we are). What we should do is love our neighbor; who we are are sinners for whom Christ died and who, for Christ's sake, God declares righteous." This recalls Luther's concepts of inner righteousness and civil righteousness (mentioned earlier). Civil righteousness forms the basis for public ethics and this kind of righteousness can be shared with anyone (regardless of religious tradition) in order to promote social justice and the common good (Lose 2001:254). Civil righteousness, therefore, encourages one to work with others toward ending apartheid, improving healthcare, addressing poverty, ending oppressive rule, or ending homelessness. Luther argues that the private person having stood before God (*coram Deo*) to passively receive his grace must become a public person who stands before their neighbors (*coram hominibus*) and is a Christian whose attitude and actions are motivated by love. Neighbour love, then, is a central imperative in public life and aims at promoting human flourishing.

After Luther, John Wesley became another influential theologian in terms of the sociopolitical ramifications of the Christian faith. Luther's concepts of internal and external righteousness found expressions in Wesley's theology and praxis. Given the striking continuities between the political theologies of Luther and Wesley, and the fact that the contemporary Ghanaian socio-political context has key similarities with Wesley's English context, the researcher finds it important to examine Wesley's political thoughts and practices in the next section.

3.7 Political Theology of John Wesley

3.7.1 Background to John Wesley's political theology

John Wesley was born on June 17 1703 to Rev. Samuel Wesley and Mrs. Susanna Wesley at the Epworth Rectory in England. His religious foundations began at the rectory where his immediate

family facilitated his character formation. He attended the University of Oxford where he, together with his brother Charles Wesley and others, formed the Holy Club whose members were known as the Methodists. John Wesley got converted on May 24, 1738, at a society in Aldersgate Street where someone was reading Luther's Preface to the Epistle to the Romans. Immediately after his spiritual experience, Wesley became very much aware of the transforming power of the gospel in human lives and society. Prior to Aldersgate, he considered good works (being religious, and not being so bad as other people) as a means to salvation. After his conversion, he knew good works as the result of salvation.

The end of the seventeenth century witnessed more than fifty percent of the English population living below the poverty line (Sigsworth 1982:40). Earlier (in the sixteenth century), the Elizabethan Poor Law had been established with the aim of financial assistance for the aged, sick, and infant poor, provide employment opportunities for the unemployed able-bodied and to place a ban on begging and casual almsgiving (Heitzenrater 2002:17). The initial plan was to cater for a rural agricultural community and citizens whose annual income was less than 30 pounds. Not long after its implementation, most laborers of the day—including husbandmen, manufacturers (spinners weavers, dyers, shearers), small craftsmen (tinsmiths, blacksmiths, carpenters, tailors), and manual laborers— fell within this bracket and were therefore included in the relief program. The "poor" then referred to laborers whose income was only sufficient for their existential needs, and so did not have any savings, land or investment (Heitzenrater 2002:17-18). Consequently, the wealthy defined poverty in terms of employment status, income level and one's contribution to national development while the masses defined it as hunger, vulnerability, and inability to afford health care.

The socio-economic situation in 18th century England was described by Wesley (cited in Sigsworth 1982:39) himself as being "on the brink of destruction." By the eighteenth century, stigmatization against the poor made some of them prefer self-help to enjoying the relief program. A sharp social divide emerged between the poor and the rich such that the relief program instead of assisting the poor ended up conceptualizing and classifying poverty (Heitzenrater 2002:25). As the economic instability continued, the rich-poor divide became pronounced. Peasant farmers and freeholders mortgaged their land for loans from the rich, and hence became vulnerable and objects of further socio-economic exploitation and abuses by the rich. As a result of poverty, war, migration, famine,

unemployment, and urbanization, many people became homeless and the poor continued to suffer as socio-economic structures failed to address their challenges.

Wesley lived in a society with pronounced class distinctions. Moral standards were low resulting in exploitation of the poor, tax evasion, and accumulation of material wealth through evil means. Gambling was practiced throughout the country as a means of making money. The demand for food was high, resulting in food shortages and spikes in prices of foodstuffs which also led to frequent riots (Sigsworth 1982:41). The wealthy people bought and hoarded oats to feed their horses which they used for transport. About half of the nation's wheat went into the breweries to produce liquor. Consequently, while food was expensive, gin was relatively cheap and available (Sigsworth 1982:39). Gin shops spread out throughout the country (with an estimated 17,000 shops in London alone), making it possible for people to get drunk with the little money they had (Sigsworth 1982:39). Other moral issues were sexual promiscuity, idleness gratuitously violent sports and sordid entertainment in theatres (Sigsworth 1982:40). The high cost of living resulted in rampant incidence of highway robbery, smuggling in the country's ports. The mortality rate increased due to a lack of healthcare facilities and the use of unsanitary means of treatment. Moreover, education was expensive and accessible only to the upper classes; this resulted in a very high illiteracy rate (Marquardt 1992:50).

Of the various aspects of Wesley's political theology, the study considers his theology of work, wealth acquisition, poverty, and education. These aspects were selected because they cover the major areas in Ghana's political challenges espoused in the next chapter.

3.7.2 Wesley's Economic Theology

3.7.2.1 Wealth Acquisition (*Gain all you can*)

Wesley developed a three-fold economic principle, "Gain all you can, save all you can, and give all you can" to guide Christians on the proper way to handle money and other economic goods (Boafo 2014:220). Each of the three principles is explained briefly below. The first principle "Gain all you can" may be considered as Wesley's career guidance and work ethics, with a special focus on permissible profession, and the Christian approach to business (Boafo 2014:220). Wesley's admonishment to earn all one was a reaction to the idleness he witnessed in his society. For

Wesley, wealth acquisition is good; however, wealth must not be acquired through unethical means (Boafo 2014:220).

Wesley's ethics on wealth acquisition is ontological, not teleological. Thus, the moral assessment of wealth does not only lie in how much one has earned but more importantly in how one earned it (Brown 2020:8). The ethical implications of the first principle are not far-fetched. First, acquiring wealth by means harmful to the neighbor is ethically wrong. Such means include selling expired goods to customers, undertaking mining activities that pollute the source of drinking water for some communities and the sale of drugs for people to use for abortion. Secondly, the sale of items that harm one's soul through "temptation, unchastity, or deceit" is also unethical (Oden 2014:64). Wesley spoke against the sale of liquor which he believed murdered the people of his English society. Selling alcohol to the drunkard puts the person's physical health at risk and makes them guilty before God for getting drunk. This also affects the family and friends of the drunkard when the person's act of drinking results in serious health problems and/or makes him/her behave in a way that jeopardizes his/her own reputation and that of his/her family and associates. The devastating economic and psychological effects of alcohol on both the consumer and the society make the sale of alcohol unethical. Furthermore, Wesley's business ethics prohibits "predatory lending practices, price-gouging, and profiting from another's hardship" as well as "routine competitive practices" (Moltmann et al., 2015:96). Selling goods at too high prices because of shortage is unacceptable; similarly, selling goods below the market prices to attract all customers with the effect of collapsing another person's business is also not acceptable. Competition in business is good, but competition that makes one's business thrive because of the collapse of another's is not a good practice. Wesley condemned the corrupt and exploitative practices of bankers, ministers of the gospel, doctors, pharmacists, lawyers and judges in his society.

3.7.2.2 Wealth accumulation (Save all you can)

Wesley's admonishment to work and acquire all the money one can sound good to the mindset of an upwardly mobile, high-achieving, success-driven, consumer-oriented culture of his day and contemporary Ghanaian society. People naturally want to live good lives, live in mansions, use the latest electronic gadgets, drive expensive cars, wear expensive clothing and so on. His ethics is, however, not meant to make people make money and spend anyhow. The maxim "save all you

can" is a call to a simplified lifestyle, a warning against extravagance, opulence and self-gratification (Russie ed., 2011:71). He encourages people to cover their basic needs, the needs of families such as food, clothing, shelter and health needs (Macquiban 2016:421, see also 1 Tim. 5:8) and then save what is left.

Therefore, one has to consider the worth of an item in his/her life and how critical he/she needs it before buying it. Wesley warns parents against buying things for their children which may endanger them with more pride and vanity. According to his economic principle requires that only things that will enhance the love and devotion to God should be purchased for children. Thus, it is wrong to buy things simply to please taste or other senses or to attract praise from others.

3.7.2.3 Wealth Distribution (Give all you can)

For Wesley gaining wealth and saving it is simply a means to the end of having others benefit from the acquired wealth. He encouraged his audience to give all they could (Marquardt 1992:36). He was against having bank accounts with large sums of money sitting in them. Thus, the acquisition of money comes with the responsibility to share with others. Referring to the Sermon on the Mount, he argued that those who accumulate earthly wealth are not fixing their eyes on earth and do not deserve the Kingdom of God (Barry 2003:216). Fixing one's eye on wealth is a hindrance to holiness because one cannot pursue both wealth and holiness at the same time.

In most of his sermons, Wesley observes that an increase in wealth destroys Christian virtues such as humility, patience, and loyalty to God and encourages selfishness and pride. He argues further that an increase in wealth results in "a decrease in 'the mind that was in Christ' and an attachment to riches would subvert one's simple reliance on the gospel" (Boafo 2014:220). Wesley often used the story of Ananias and Sapphira to illustrate how greed can lead to evil thoughts and acts. He practicalized the third principle by ministering to the poor, raising funds for them, making personal donations to them and fighting for their relief.

3.7.3 Wesley's approach to poverty reduction

3.7.3.1 Causes of poverty

Wesley attributed poverty partly to the lifestyle of the rich—the way they eat, the way they drink and the way they travel. As the rich developed a high interest in the use of horses for transport, a large number of horses were raised in the country. These horses were supplied with a disproportionate amount of oats, causing a shortage in oats supply and consequently an increase in its price. He also suggested the reduction of the number of horses in England as a measure to check the rising cost of oats. The rich were noted for buying plenty of foodstuffs, hoarding them in their kitchen and eventually throwing them away when they got spoilt. He condemned the luxurious life of the rich and charged them to distribute to every one according to the person's needs (Boafo 2014:224, 227). The rise in food prices also contributed to the high rate of unemployment as many industries could not buy raw materials that required a high labor force (Barry 2003:225).

Grain was in high demand as industries needed large quantities for the distilleries. As more wheat and barley were used in the distilleries to produce alcohol, hence, people went hungry because of a shortage of food. Wesley lamented why the government should support the conversion of about half of the nation's grain into alcohol, a poison which not only endangers the physical health of the country but also its moral standards (Barry 2003:225). Confronting the argument that the breweries bring large income to the King, Wesley argued that the King cannot exchange the lives of his subjects with income no matter how large the income is. He charged the government to close down distilleries to reduce the price of grain.

Welsey also identified smuggling and tax evasion as contributing immensely to poverty. Wesley condemned smuggling of goods—that is, importing selling or buying goods on which duty has not been paid to the government—as a violation of divine law, and defrauding of the state of it resources. Both smuggling and tax evasion are sinful because they deprive the state of her legitimate resources and make people rich at the expense of the nation. By reducing government revenue, smuggling and tax evasion, the government can increase taxes to raise the needed revenue, which puts more burden on the poor (Boafo 2014:227). He therefore insisted that employers must pay the right amount of tax to the government.

Wesley's attachment to the poor allowed him to know what kind of help they needed and how this help could be offered. His approach to poverty reduction consisted of measures toward self-help and charitable deeds. Some of the practical steps Wesley took to address poverty among his people are outlined below.

3.7.3.2 Financial Relief Program

Wesley's approach to poverty reduction included financial and material aid. The early Methodists made voluntary contributions (in the form of money and foodstuffs) to help the poor during the weekly class meetings (Marquardt 1992:28). Heitzenrater (2002:29) records that by 1750, while 25 percent of the members of the Methodist societies earned an average of 30 pounds annually, at least 65 percent of them received an average income of fewer than 25 pounds annually and were thus below the relative poverty line of the Poor Laws. The majority of these poor were in the manufacturing group. Wesley adopted the begging-for-the-poor approach in times of great social and economic distress consequent to poor harvest, severe drought, and other situations. He literally begged for alms to be distributed to the poor, the sick, prisoners of war, and lunatics and he encouraged his followers not to be ashamed to do the same (Barry 2003:220). This system took the form of special appeals made by the Methodists and non-Methodists at revival meetings. In his sermons, conversations and writings, he often stirred public conscience about the need to help the poor.

Aside from begging for the poor, Wesley founded a relief organization in London called the Strangers' Friend Society which was supervised by John Gardner. This Society was meant to provide support for the poor, sick and friendless. This happened when the number of the marginalized in the urban areas increased and made it difficult for the Methodists to keep focus. This new program was to ensure that the Methodists maintained their focus on the poor, sick and social outcasts. Wesley contributed three pence every week and encouraged others to contribute as it were. He saw charity as a means of grace and practiced it even in his days at Oxford. When he was teaching at Oxford he had an income of 30 pounds a year. He lived on 28 pounds and gave two pounds away. When his income increased to 60 pounds, 90 pounds, and 120 pounds a year from his work and books, he still lived on 28 pounds and gave the balance away. Even at age 82

Wesley walked through snow all day to beg for the needy (Barry 2003:220). Wesley is said to have disposed of 30, 000.00 pounds in his lifetime (Boafo 2014:98).

Another step Wesley took to help the poor was the provision of soft loans (Barry 2003:220). Wesley provided an interest-free loan facility to enable the poor to acquire working capital, tools and raw materials for entrepreneurial purposes. One could take the loan and repay it weekly within three months. This system, which rescued the poor from the high interest rate of borrowing money from lenders, benefitted so many people, two hundred and fifty people in a year and twice that number in 1767 (Marquardt 1992:29).

3.7.3.3 Provision of Healthcare

Another contribution Wesley made in alleviating poverty was the provision of free medical care. Wesley's society was in deplorable hygienic conditions; people had minimal knowledge about health, health facilities were not easily accessible, qualified physicians were scarce, and malnutrition was common, especially among the poor. Wesley's provision of medical aid began with his appointment of forty-six members of the London society to visit the poor. Two of the members were to cater for one of the twenty-three districts in London at that time. They were tasked to visit the sick thrice a week, inquiring about their condition and taking pragmatic steps to help them. This program had a soul-winning and therapeutic effect on the sick. The success of this program was short-lived especially because the stewards did not have adequate knowledge in medicine.

Wesley established a clinic and used the knowledge in medicine he acquired at Oxford to provide medical care, referring serious cases to specialists (Marquardt 1992:28). He taught his clients about sanitation, good nutrition, effective ways of caring for the sick and the devastating effect of such substances as alcohol on one's health (Marquardt 1992:28). Later, Wesley employed an apothecary and a skilful surgeon to dispense medicine and handle complicated cases (Boafo 2014:100). Wesley's provision of free medical care for the poor was not limited to Methodists but was open to all. Wesley's effort opened up medical services to a broader stratum of the English population (Marquardt 1992:29). He compiled his knowledge in medicine into a book—*Primitive Physick*—which had over 800 remedies for nearly 300 medical conditions which he published in 1747. In

1748 Wesley recorded that about three hundred people received medicines occasionally, and one hundred received them regularly within the year (Barry 2003:222).

3.7.3.4 Provision of Employment Opportunities

Recognizing unemployment as a major cause of poverty, Wesley committed himself to helping people to find jobs. He encouraged the poor to find work to do. He initiated work projects which could employ people. The first of these projects was established at a London meetinghouse, where twelve people were employed to process cotton which was later knitted by women employed in addition (Marquardt 1992:29). Though the number of people who benefited from this initiative and the duration of the projects is unknown, one can be certain that it helped a lot of people. In addition, the financial assistance that Wesley provided for people helped them in establishing their own businesses. As the poor became gainfully employed, their income increased and social stigma was removed as people no longer considered them as "lazy and indolent" (Heitzenrater 2002:33). At the same time, some of them also employed others, hence contributing to the economic development of the state. Thus, Wesley's provision of employment opportunities had social ramifications in removing the stigma that was placed on the poor.

3.7.3.5 Provision of Education

As noted earlier, during Wesley's time, the educational system in England was expensive and so prevented the poor from having their children educated. In response, the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge (SPCK) provided elementary instructions in charity schools for the children of poor people without charging any fee. This was a great move though it could not cater for the education needs of the whole of England. Therefore, the quest to provide education for children of all social backgrounds still persisted. Wesley, considering illiteracy as a key hindrance to poverty alleviation and social emancipation, attended to the pedagogical needs of his people. Available literature for education was expensive and the poor could not afford them. In reaction, Wesley produced a dictionary and other literature for the poor free of charge.

Wesley also introduced the Methodist School Project which facilitated the establishment of Methodist schools. The focus of the Methodist schools was to provide education for children from poor homes. His motive was both religious (to expose pupils to Christian teachings) and

humanitarian (to help the needy have access to education) (Marquardt 1992:51). While working in Georgia, Wesley attended to the education needs of his congregation. After his return to England, he built schools at Foundry and Kingswood in Bristol (Marquardt 1992:51). These became a model for those established later at Newcastle and other places.

Wesley's philosophy of education may be summarized as follows. First, education must be biblically based (Best 2022:1). This means that the content and principles taught in any subject should not contradict biblical teachings. From the Ghanaian perspective, one may cite the saying "respect is reciprocal" as an example. What people mean by this saying is that one has to respect another person only if the other person also respects the first person. Such traditional philosophy may filter into the education system and end up raising leaders who based on this principle behave rudely toward others. By applying Wesley's education philosophy, such traditional wisdom may not be incorporated into the Ghanaian curriculum.

Secondly, education must seek perfection, meaning people must become better and closer to God through education (Boafo 2014:100; Best 2022:2). This idea comes from Wesley's doctrine of Christian perfection. Education must repair the ruin of sinful humanity by helping individuals regain a proper knowledge of God. To the end of perfection, the student needs to identify both their shortfalls and potentials and seek God's grace to move toward Christian perfection through a life dedicated to serving God and other people. Education must promote self-discipline, understanding, wisdom, and life-changing encounters with Christ. Wesley was not happy with the educational system in his days which he thought failed to provide the moral transformation that his society needed. He objected to the provision of playtime for children which he argued encouraged idleness. His ideal education system fosters a deep commitment to Christ through learning how to read and write, among others. This requires instructors who are also committed to Christ and seek nothing on earth than to glorify God (Boafo 2014:101). Within such a model school, freed from corruption and worldly ambitions, young people could be developed into future leaders who will change lives and society at large.

Thirdly, education is a life-long process, meaning education does not end with graduation (Best 2022:2; Boafo 2014:100). Rather, it must continue throughout a person's life. The same principle also means that no one is too old to learn. Right from the onset, Wesley did not limit education to

children. He established adult schools where mature people could learn and acquire substantive knowledge. Adult education was done "by special school courses for adults, by the availability of inexpensive and suitable literature, and by sermons and conversations in the classes and societies" (Marquardt 1992:55). Special Sunday Schools devoted to teaching basic school education for adults emerged later (Marquardt 1992:56). Since everybody matters in God's eyes, every boy and girl, man and woman deserve to have their educational needs addressed. Wesley's system of education contributed tremendously to the emancipation of women.

Fourthly, Wesley advocates for holistic education (mind, body, and soul) (Boafo 2014:100). He believes that salvation in Christ is holistic and therefore, education must touch all dimensions of human life. Education should not only give someone head knowledge; it must equip the student to solve real-life problems. Education should equip people to use what they have studied to establish gainful employment, and if possible, employ others to reduce the unemployment situation in society. This function of education was crucial in Wesley's society because of the high unemployment rate that the society English society witnessed in Wesley's time. In contemporary Ghana, the need for education to equip students with problem-solving skills is even more crucial.

Jürgen Moltmann is one of the outstanding theologians in modern times. The context in which he ministered is similar to the contemporary Ghanaian context in terms of socio-economic and political struggles. The researcher, therefore, considers Moltmann's view as relevant to the study.

3.8 The Political Theology of Jürgen Moltmann

3.8.1 Background of Jürgen Moltmann's political theology

Arguably, Jürgen Moltmann is the most quoted lived scholar of all time; therefore his influence on Christian theology is so huge. Moltmann was born in Hamburg (Germany) in 1926 (Currie 2001:784). He is still alive at the time of writing this dissertation (that is, August 2023). Moltmann studied theology at Gottingen, where he was heavily influenced by Karl Barth's theology. His theological thoughts were shaped by his experience as a prisoner of war and by his interactions with the Max philosopher Ernst Bloch whom he met at the University of Tubingen (Enns 2008:629). His study of the New Testament gradually renewed and deepened his faith and made him realize God's presence amidst human suffering (Currie 2001:784). Moltmann considers

eschatology and hope as the major theme in the Christian Bible (Enns 2008:629). His political theology permeates every aspect of his theology; it is a theology of hope, a theology of the cross, a pneumatology, an ecclesiology, a doctrine of creation, a doctrine of the Trinity, and an eschatology. His experience of suffering made the subject of theodicy central to his theology. This experience also informed his description of his biography as "shaped, interrupted and radically changed, in a very painful way, by the collective biography of the German people in the last years of the Second World War and by the lengthy imprisonment after it" (Moltmann 1991:166). His concept of hope therefore emerged first in real-life crises before becoming a theological and philosophical issue. In the following sections, aspects of Moltmann's political theology relevant to the present study are considered.

3.8.2 The Trinitarian foundation of Moltmannian theology

Moltmann (1972; 1993) believes that the doctrine of the Trinity should inform all aspects of the Christian life. His earlier works (in the 1960s) did not give a complete picture of his Trinitarian thoughts especially due to his lack of discussions on the Holy Spirit. A more explicit form of Moltmann's Trinitarian theology began at the beginning of the 1980s, for example, in his *The Trinity and the Kingdom of God* (1993). As orthodoxy demands, Moltmann avoids the extremes of overemphasizing the three-ness (tritheism) or the one-ness of God (modalism). He critiques classical monotheism and the various treatments of the Trinity that overemphasize the concepts of unity and immutability. For Moltmann (1993:150), divine unity based solely on a single substance or subject does not fit with the "concept of unity corresponding to the biblical testimony of the triune God, the one who unites others with himself." He prioritizes the biblical narrative over Greek philosophical ideas in his conception of the Trinity (Moltmann 1993:150).

Moltmann develops the concept of the Trinity based on divine love and relationship. Moltmann (1993:22) studied historical theology and was troubled that "most theologians have simultaneously maintained the passion of Christ, God's Son, and the deity's essential incapacity for suffering– even though it was at the price of having to talk paradoxically about the 'sufferings of the God who cannot suffer.'" He considers this as an unnecessary contraction and sets out to deal with it. He argues: "If God is incapable of suffering, then… God is inevitably bound to become the cold, silent and unloved heavenly power" because "a God who cannot suffer cannot love either. A God

who cannot love is a dead God" (Moltmann 1993:22, 38). Given this understanding, "Christian theology is essentially compelled to perceive God himself in the passion of Christ, and to discover the passion of Christ in God" (Moltmann 1993:22). Therefore, the passion of Christ is the passion of God. Moltmann believes that Christian theology must develop what he refers to as "trinitarian hermeneutics"—which is completely rooted in the life, passion death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ— because it is such hermeneutical framework that can produce theology that fully explains God's relationship with himself and with the world, thereby leading humankind to think in terms of relationships and communities. Moltmann's relational approach to the Trinity deals adequately with the dichotomy between an immanent and a functional Trinity, as well as the one between God's general nature and his inner Triune nature.

The Trinitarian unity, according to Moltmann (1993:150), must be understood in terms of "unitedness, the at-oneness of the three Persons with one another, or the unitedness, the at-oneness of the triune God" because "only the concept of unitedness is the concept of a unity that can be communicated and is open." This means (as the study will argue later) that the Triune God is not a transcendent monarchical deity who has no business to do with his creation; rather, he is a God who has a constant relationship with his creation. Moltmann (1993:150) argues further that the concept of unitedness is in tandem with "the personal self-differentiation of God, and not merely a modal differentiation, for only persons can be at one with one another, not modes of being or modes of subjectivity." He rejects the concepts of *homousios*, *ousia* and *substantia* as these terms assume that the unity of Godhead is established by the three Persons sharing of a single substance, as sameness of divine identity. On the contrary, Moltmann (1993:150) argues that the "unitedness, the at-oneness, of the triunity is already given with the fellowship of the Father, the Son and the Spirit." He further adds, "It is only of the living God that it is possible to say that 'God is love', for love is not solitary, but presupposes those who are different, joins those who are different and differentiates between those who are joined" (Moltmann 1993:151). His concept of the unity of God's triunity is later explained by his perichoretic theology. As Moltmann (1993:150), sees it, "If the unity of God is not perceived in the at-oneness of the triune God, and therefore as a perichoretic unity, then Arianism and Sabellianism remain inescapable threats to Christian theology." The question of how the divine persons relate to one another is explained by the concept of *perichoresis,* which is examined below.

3.8.3 The Doctrine of *Perichoresis*

The Doctrine of the *perichoresis* is crucial to Moltmann's conception of the communal relationship within the divine Persons of the Trinity. The word "*perichoresis*" and its equivalent, *circumencessio*, *circuminsessio*, mean "mutual indwelling" or "mutual interpenetration" and deals with the connection among the Trinity and the person and works of Christ (Smith 2001:906). In its relation to the Trinity, it was John of Damascus who first used "*perichoresis*" to describe the mutual relationship between the persons of the Trinity. Smith (2001:907) quotes Karl Barth as stating that "The divine modes of being mutually condition and permeate one another so completely that one is always in the other two [persons of the Godhead]" without losing their individuality. Trinitarian *perichoresis* "begins with the unity of the natures or a strict consubstantiality and affirms a reciprocal interrelation." (Smith 2001:907). Thus, *perichoresis* describes the eternal relationship of the three persons of the triune God to one another. Moltmann (1993:16) explains the unity of the Triune God through *perichoresis,* arguing that "The one, indivisible, homogenous, divine substance is constituted as three individual, divine persons" and also that "the three persons are certainly different from one another, but they are one in their common divine substance."

Perichoresis is a circulation involving "an exchange of energies" (Moltmann 1993:174). Love is that energy that flows reciprocatively among the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. According to Moltmann (1993:175), the intensity of the exchange of energies among the three persons in inner-trinitarian life is so high that it yields a unity in which the divine persons dwell in one another in such a way that they are one. Thus paradoxically, the very thing, love, that necessitates a differentiation for love to be given and received binds them together (Moltmann 1993:175). In perichoretic unity, the relations are equal as "they live and are manifested in one another and through one another" (Moltmann 1993:176). In *perichoresis,* "personalism and socialism cease to be antitheses and are seen to be derived from a common foundation" (Moltmann 1993:199).

Moltmann's perichoretic Trinitarian theology differentiates between two kinds of divine love, namely, *philia* (love of the same) and *agape* (love of the different). The divine *philia* is manifested among the members of the Trinity while divine *agape* is exercised universally for all creation. The distinction allows Moltmann to account for both the love manifested in the ongoing relations

among the "same" members of the Godhead and the love God exhibits towards the "different" other which comes to be in a forsaken place. Again, the difference between *philia,* which is involved in inner-trinitarian communion, and *agape*, involved in the divine-creaturely communion serves as the foundation for Moltmann's description of reality as open to the possible. His perichoretic view of the trinity informs his rejection of the view of God as a transcendental absolute being who is completely unconcerned with the suffering of this world. The perichoretic relationship in the Godhead depicts how God relates to the world.

Given the Moltmannian understanding of God as a relational divine being who engaged in the lives of his people, it is important to consider what he teaches about human suffering. First of all, the perichoretic understanding of the Trinity based on divine love has sociopolitical implications. It emphasizes the need for creation care and the need to maintain excellent social relations. If the trinitarian God who relates to himself perichoretically also relates to his people and his creation perichoretically, then the image bearers of God (that is humans) are also obliged to respond to God's love by loving him back, loving other humans and the environment as expected of a good steward. The perichoretic view of God serves as a paradigm for how humans are to relate with other creatures to promote peace and justice in the world.

Secondly, Moltmann (1993:191-192) argues that strict monotheism presents God as a single person in heaven who subjects everything under himself. Such a view promotes patriarchal authoritarianism and political autocracy. He says, "the notion of a divine monarchy in heaven and on earth.... generally, provides the justification for earthly domination – religious, moral, patriarchal or political domination – and makes it a hierarchy, a 'holy rule.'" The idea of one God in heaven eventually translates into a central government system with hierarchical political structures that tend to oppress people. An antidote to this political problem is the perichoretic understanding of the Trinity which establishes egalitarian sociopolitical structures that enhance human flourishing.

Thirdly, the perichoretic view promotes the idea of God's loving relationship with his people and his created world so that even those who suffer can be comforted that God is with them in their sufferings. God's plan for the future includes his material creation, recreated incorruptible form. Moltmann (1999:251-252) points out that, "The future of God which is symbolized by the term of

'kingdom of God' includes the future of the world: the future of the nations, the future of humanity, the future of all living things and the future of the earth, on which and from which everything that is here lives." Moltmann's perichoretic theology is fully expressed in his understanding of suffering and sin and his theological program for dealing with suffering. This subject is considered below.

3.8.3 Human suffering and liberation

One of the key issues in political theology is God's response to human suffering. Many societies exhibit various degrees of human suffering without an adequate explanation of why suffering persists and what God has to say about the plight of people. How can a loving God allow suffering and misery? Moltmann (1993:47) writes, "It is in suffering that the whole question about God arises, for incomprehensible suffering calls the God of men and woman in question. For a God who lets the innocent suffer and who permits senseless death is not worthy to be called God at all." Indeed, human suffering challenges the existence of and people's trust in a loving and all-powerful God. The miseries of human life call God's goodness, justice, power and even his into question. Moltmann (2003:73) at one time admitted his theological vulnerability, asking "How is faith in God, how is being human possible after Auschwitz?", and replied, "I don't know." Thus, Moltmann, like any other theologian, finds the question of theodicy a difficult one. Moltmann (2003:50) formulates the theodicy question thus: "If God is omnipotent why then do guiltless children suffer and die? If God is omnipotent, the misery of the earth proves he is not good, or he is good but then obviously not omnipotent."

Moltmann (1971:33) identifies two kinds of theodicy, namely, "positive" and "negative" theodicies. Positive theodicy may be classified as the Augustinian-type which considers suffering as divine judgment upon human sin and the Irenaean-type theodicy which views suffering largely as a character-and-faith-building tool. Negative theodicy is the use of rejection of the existence of God based on the existence of human suffering. Moltmann (1993:52) rejects positive theodicy on the basis that it has the tendency to make people justify their suffering and hence have no motivation to overcome it. His rejection of the cosmological, theistic worldview also leads to his refusal to accept positive theodicy. Moltmann regards negative theodicy as being well-founded insofar as it attacks the theistic view of God as an insensitive and unmoved being incapable of

suffering. He, however, rejects this view and provides an alternative to the God whom atheists denounce. Moltmann (2015:251) argues that if theism thought of God at man's expense, so now in turn protest atheism "thinks of man at God's expense as a powerful and perfect, infinite and creative being." His response to theodicy is rooted in his understanding of the Trinitarian God (espoused earlier).

Moltmann argues that the primary sufferings of humankind in the world are politically informed. In other words, human suffering is due to selfish political decisions and actions taken by societal leaders. Therefore, the focus of the problem has shifted from the old inner quest for justification before God to the quest for social and political justice. There is a shift from a theocentric focus to an anthropocentric focus. Rather than saying the quest to be justified before good is obsolete, Moltamnn argues that the answer to human pains cannot be based only on the gift of faith the suffering without addressing the sociopolitical challenges in society. Moltmann (1969:206) concludes, therefore, that humankind cannot find identity in themselves "without engaging his personhood in a battle for a just and human world." Moltmann's approach to theodicy is therefore essentially political. He considers politics as permeating every facet of human life and activities. His concept of "political hermeneutics" is meant to chat a path for making the Christian gospel relevant to the lives of its audience. Moltmann's concern for the needy, the marginalized, the oppressed, the exploited and human suffering in general is informed by the painful impact of the Second World War on his life which played a key role in his conversion and his theological thoughts. His concept of hope therefore emerged first in real-life crises before becoming a theological and philosophical issue.

 Moltmann's liberation theology is based on his contention that God suffers with humanity, while also promising humanity a better future through the hope of the resurrection (which he labels "theology of hope"). He, therefore, stirs Christians to take seriously the sociopolitical implications of the gospel of Christ. For Moltmann (cited in Currie 2001:784), "the resurrection gives the promise of a new creation, giving meaning to human suffering, hope for God's final triumph over evil in the future, and impetus for Christian involvement in overcoming suffering in the meantime, through the power of the Spirit." Moltmann's concern for the poor, the marginalized, the downtrodden, the exploited and human suffering in general is rooted in his personal experience in the Second World War and his lengthy imprisonment after it.

Moltmann emphasizes the social dimension of sin and says little about personal or individual sin. The human predicament is explained in terms of the conflict between oppressors and oppressed, exploiter and exploited. Moltmann's soteriology is therefore centered mainly on the liberation of humankind from oppression. His theological program and his concept of salvation, based on his diagnosis of the human condition, is essentially that of a theology of liberation based on love for God and for neighbor. The love demonstrated on the cross must inform people's social relations. Through neighborly love, believers can re-orient the society to give the world a foretaste of the divine future hope. According to Moltmann (1993a:77) the gospel must offer liberty, salvation and peace to the world (cf. Isa. 61:1). The proclamation of the gospel is an announcement of the universal and everlasting lordship of Christ aimed at enhancing righteousness, fellowship and peace. The gospel is offered to prisoners, the wretched, the poor, the forsaken, the marginalized, and the hopeless. It empowers enslaved people to move from their state of slavery to a state of freedom that enables them to work toward the transformation of the world through the power of the Holy Spirit (Moltmann 1993a:78). Given this understanding the gospel must be proclaimed as the message of the Liberator, Jesus Christ, whose aims is to facilitate an eschatological exodus from the world of suffering to the world of joy (Moltmann 1993a:84). This gospel of freedom is not the church's own invention; rather, it is this gospel that creates for itself a people of the exodus through missionary activities.

3.9 Conclusion

This chapter has made the following points, among others. First, from the views of Augustine and Aquinas, one realizes that the Christian view of the administration of justice by the state differs significantly from the secular view. The secular society may use unethical means to achieve justice but from the Christian perspective, the means must be ethical before the end can be acceptable. Secondly, Christian scholars like Augustine, Aquinas and Wesley argue that there is no dichotomization between what is "secular" and "sacred." Every action must be taken based on one's love and reverence for God. This fact is important for dealing with the privatization of Christianity which has reduced the impact of Christianity in the public space. Thirdly, the political theories of such scholars as Plato, Aristotle, Moltmann and Wesley emphasize the need to liberate the marginalized, the oppressed and the poor. Fourthly, Plato, Aristotle and Wesley contend that the political development of society requires a holistic education with the effect of making learners

problem solvers. Fifthly, all the scholars considered in this chapter prioritize the communal interest of the society and frown upon any form of selfishness and egoistic tendencies. Sixthly, given the role of Christian scholars such as Augustine, Aquinas, Luther, Wesley and Moltmann in the political activities of their societies, one can conclude that there is nothing inherently wrong with a believer's participation in the political activities of the society. Lastly, the need to make love central in the process of making political decisions was emphasized by all the scholars whose works were examined. The love factor may serve as an antidote to the problems of environmental degradation and negative work ethics which were identified (in chapter 1) as key challenges in the Ghanaian context. The next chapter considers Ghana's present political context and issues that need to be addressed.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE GHANAIAN POLITICAL CONTEXT

4.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to examine the political situation in contemporary Ghana. The chapter is divided into three parts. The first focuses on Ghana's political structure from pre-colonial times till date. The second part deals with key political issues in contemporary Ghana, including poverty, corruption, land acquisition, and environmental challenges. The last part critiques the prosperity theology which is the most dominant Christian approach to dealing with socio-economic and political issues in Ghana. The findings from this chapter will form a key component of the contextual framework that will inform the theological formulation in the next chapter.

4.2 An Overview of Ghana's Political History

Ghana, a West African country, is a heterogeneous society with different ethnic groups including the Akan, the Mole Dagbani, the Ewe, the Ga-Adangbe, the Guan, the Gurma, the Grusi and the Mande-Busanga (GSS 2021:36). These ethnic groups are further divided into tribes which share a common cultural heritage, history, language, and origin. The Ewe, for example, can be divided into the Nkonya, Tafi, Logba, Sontrokofi, Lolobi, and Likpe. The Akan is the biggest ethnic group in Ghana, and it comprises such tribes as the Bono, Fante, Akwapim, Akyem, Akwamu, Ahanta, Asante, Nzema, Kwahu, and Sefwi. The Akan trace their root to the Sahel from where they migrated to establish the Bonoman Kingdom in the 12th century, with Bono-Manso as its capital (Ankrah 2018:59). The Bono people are, therefore, the first of the Akan group to have settled in the Gold Coast (now Ghana). Most of the Akan people speak the Twi language, which, according to Anane-Agyei (2012:2), was the language spoken by an ancient Bono king, called Nana Twi (*Tsi*) whose language was referred to as Twi's language. Thus, even though the Twi language (dialect) spoken in different Akan communities varies today, the "mother" of all the Twi dialects is Nana Twi's Twi which has been preserved (to a large extent) by the modern-day Techiman people and is spoken in different forms in Ghana and beyond. The researcher belongs to the Akan group.

Ghana is divided into sixteen (16) administrative regions, none of which is ethnically homogeneous. The regions are further divided into 216 local districts. The overriding feature of the country's ethnic polarization is a north–south divide. The southern zone is a predominantly Akan community; it is more developed than the northern because from colonial times till now, the majority of the country's infrastructural development in health, education, and productive projects has been concentrated in the south. Consequent to ethno-spatial inequalities in infrastructure and well-being, there is a north-to-south flow of migration in search of a better life. The urban centers in the southern part are both overpopulated and ethnically diverse because of this migration. Ghana's political map is shown below.[3]

Fig. 5.1 The map of Ghana

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[3] The map was retrieved from
https://www.google.com/search?q=Ghana+map+showing+Akan&client=firefox-b-d&sxsrf=ALeKk00CJccSP4vz5o4e5uaIztyCJDSTlg:1593678971795&source=lnms&tbm=isch&sa=X&ved=2ahUK
(Accessed on 12nd July, 2022).

In the next section, attention is given to the leadership structure of the country from precolonial times till date.

4.2.1 Precolonial models of leadership

The political history of Ghana has to do with the history of various political systems that have operated in Ghana from the pre-colonial era, through the colonial era to the post-colonial era. In the pre-colonial era, the country was organized according to states and ethnic groups with a centralized, non-centralized, or theocratic political structure. The Mole-Dagbani political structure, for example, was a centralized institution whereby each state had its own autonomous government that was presided over by a supreme ruler. The king (overlord) of the Mamprusi, for example, was the Nayiri whilst the Gonja king was the Yagbomwura (Clif 2019:190). The supreme rulers administered their states with the help of their council of elders. Next to the king were divisional chiefs who administered jurisdictions allocated to them (Clif 2019:190). They also exacted tributes from their people to support the administration of their states. Each state had a well-defined constitution that defined the powers exercised by the chiefs at the various levels.

The Ewe political structure is also centralized. It is headed by the *fiaga* (head chief), the political overlord over the *du* (the largest political unit among the Ewes) or *dukɔ*[4] (Kludze 2018:45). After the *fiaga* there is a *dufia*, who oversees the *fia* of the *duta*. Each *duta* is further partitioned into *sãawo* and each *sãa* has a *sãamefia*. The chief is the head of the military, political, religious, administrative and judicial institutions of the society. As the military head, he leads his people to war and ensures that his people are safeguarded against threats by other societies. The chieftaincy subdivisions indicate hierarchical lines of authority that are strictly adhered to. The significance of these chieftaincy subdivisions is mainly to enhance grassroots participation in decision-making.

The ethnic groups with a non-centralized political system include Vagala, Sisala, Guan and Talensi. The characteristics of the non-centralized or acephalous political systems include the lack of recognized leaders, chiefs or kings; the lack of clear-cut boundaries with their neighboring communities; and the lack of recognized administrative, legislative and judiciary structures (Hiadzi 2017: Slide 6). There are two kinds of non-centralized political systems; namely,

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[4] *Dukɔ* may also be used in reference to a nation, for example, Ewe *dukɔ* ("the Ewe people").

segmentary lineage system, a type of tribal society where the largest political unit is the lineage (e.g. the Tallensi of Northern Ghana) and small-scale societies where the largest political unit are very small kin groups (Hiadzi 2017: Slide 6). In the Tallensi community, the *Tendaana* (derived from "*ten*" [land/earth] and "*daana*" [owner]), the traditional priest whose duties are connected with the land, was/is the locus of authority. Each Tallensi family lineage was/is headed by an elder known as the *Kpe'em* who was/is socially and spiritually responsible for the conduct of the members of his lineage.

The Ga-Adangbe and the Guan were two theocratic societies where a priestly class led the people. Each Ga-Adangbe town was independent, hence there was no central government in the Ga-Adangbe. The Ga priestly class was represented by the *Wulomei* (traditional priest). Later, probably as a result of influences from the Akan states, the Ga people established a separation between governmental and religious authority. While religious power remained in the hands of the *Wulomei*, the *Ga Mantse* (Ga chief) became responsible for civil concerns. Each town had its own king rather than having one leader who oversaw all the towns/states. An elders' council was established by the clan chiefs of each state to advise the chiefs on matters of policy.

In precolonial Ghana, leaders were not officially given salaries but benefits from the gifts and taxes they received from their subjects. Whether the chief/king or the traditional priest led the community, there were laid down democratic processes that were used to adjudicate matters and make decisions concerning the society. The Ghanaian traditional leadership structure was, however, affected by colonial rule and the introduction of Western political systems and structures into the country. The next section considers this issue more closely.

4.2.2 Colonial model of leadership

The first Europeans to come to the Gold Coast (now Ghana) were the Portuguese who arrived in 1471. The Portuguese built forts in the coastal areas to facilitate their trade with the indigenous people. In 1554, the British also visited the Gold Coast under the leadership of Captain Wadham. The English were followed by the Dutch (1598), the Danes (1642), and other countries. From the 1600s the Gold Coast had strong trade ties with the Europeans. Initially, the main object of the trade relation was gold. However, the 18th century saw a shift in demand from gold to slaves due to the establishment of plantation colonies in the New World (Addo-Fening 2013:39). The

abolition of the slave trade in 1807 shifted the demand in the external trade of the Gold Coast to natural products such as palm oil, cotton, rubber and gum copal, in addition to gold (Addo-Fening 2013:39).

Eventually, the Gold Coast became a British Crown colony in 1821 and remained so until her independence in 1957. In the colonial era, the British Empire employed different forms of government in the Gold Coast. Following the adoption of the Western system of government by the colonial master in the late 19th century, the nation was governed by a few educated elites who had been hand-picked to participate in the colonial rulers' new political system. Therefore, chiefs and priests in the colonial government were no longer actively involved in national governance. The recognition of traditional leaders depended on whether or not they were recognized by the central government which issued certificates/gazettes to them (Dankwa 2004:19). A chief ceased to be chief if he was no longer recognized by the central government. Consequently, a lot of traditional leaders were cautious in challenging colonial authorities. From the 1940s onward Ghanaians pushed further for independence, resulting in various constitutional amendments and the establishment of the position of the Prime Minister in 1952. In 1957 when the country gained independence the name "Ghana" was adopted to replace "Gold Coast" under the leadership of Dr. Kwame Nkrumah. Since this time, the country has remained independent to date with a unique post-independence political history which is covered in the next section.

4.2.3 Post-colonial models of leadership

After independence, Ghana initially adopted the British system of democracy composed of the executive (including the Prime Minister, a group of ministers and other officials), the legislature (comprising parliamentarians who had been elected by their constituents on the ticket of the Convention People's Party or the United Party to represent them in the national decision-making process). The Prime Minister was the head of the ruling party in parliament and the opposition leader was the head of the minority group in parliament (Asante 2007:64). After becoming a Republic in 1960, Ghana abolished the British model that was initially adopted and now made Ghana's then Prime Minister Dr. Kwame Nkrumah the president of the nation, the head-of-state and the Commander-in-Chief of the Ghana Armed Forces. The multi-party democracy that Ghana practiced was short-lived. In 1964, Kwame Nkrumah's administration prevailed in a constitutional

referendum, establishing Ghana as a one-party state and installing him as president for life (Asante 2007:65). In February 1966, the National Liberation Council (NLC) led a coup d'état that resulted in the overthrow of the Nkrumah government. The NLC ruled for the next three years.

The Second Republic was born in 1969 when a new Parliamentary democracy, involving a multi-party system of government, was set up under the leadership of Prof. Kofi Abrefa Busia, as the Prime Minster and head of government as well as a ceremonial president (Asante 2007:66). The Busia government was ousted in January 1972 through a coup d'état led by Colonel Ignatius Kutu Acheampong while Busia was in Britain for a medical check-up. He remained in exile in England and returned to Oxford University, where he stayed until his demise in August 1978.

Ghana's Third Republic, modelled after the American representative and executive presidency, was inaugurated in September 1979 under the leadership of Dr. Hilla Limann (Asante 2000:66). In this system, one was not required to have a majority in parliament before becoming the president. Rather, the president had to win more votes based on the votes cast by the people in a general election. The Third Republic ended with the coup d'état on 31 December 1981, which brought the Provisional National Defence Council of Jerry John Rawlings to power. This was the last coup d'état in the history of the country. Ghana's military rule was characterized by violent suppression and detentions without trial, political deaths in detention, and capital punishment, among others.

After a long period of military rule, the country went back to constitutional rule in 1993, a decision which was reached through a referendum. The country adopted the American system of government. Article of the 1992 Constitution reads: "The Sovereignty of Ghana resides in the people of Ghana in whose name and for whose welfare the powers of government are to be exercised in the manner and within the limits laid down in this Constitution" (The Republic of Ghana Nd:7). The expression the "Sovereign Will of the People" underline the supremacy of the Constitution and the power that the people have in governance. This article (in totality) underscores that political activities must be geared toward the welfare of the citizenry. In the Fourth Republic, the government consists of the following arms: The Executive, the Legislature, the Judiciary and the Free and Independent Press.

Since the inauguration of the Fourth Republic, Ghana has enjoyed political stability and eight general elections have been conducted successfully. In these elections, two political parties, namely the National Democratic Congress (NDC) and the New Patriotic Party (NPP) have been dominant, even though there are other political parties in the country. The general elections have been generally peaceful and the transition of power from one party to another has been generally smooth. Today, Ghana is considered one of the most peaceful countries in the world.

How has Ghana's political history affected the development of the nation and what issues need attention in contemporary Ghana? The next section answers this question.

4.3 Socio-economic and political challenges in contemporary Ghana

This section considers four key issues: poverty, corruption, land acquisition issues and environmental issues. Poverty—its causes and effects—is considered first.

4.3.1 Poverty

4.3.1.1 Poverty and economic inequality

Poverty is one of the greatest challenges facing the global world in the twenty-first century. However, while poverty affects almost every part of the world, developing countries such as Ghana are the most affected for the obvious reasons of weak state institutions, poor supervision, high rate of corruption, and the lack of technological resources required for sustainable development. Poverty is a multifaceted concept that can be considered from economic, social, political and historical perspectives. However, this study focuses on the economic dimension of poverty and defines it as the situation where a person or household lacks the means to maintain the minimum level of living that society requires.

The Millennium Development Goal of the United Nations had poverty reduction as the topmost priority. Every country was tasked to reduce poverty by half by the end of the year 2015. Ghana's economic growth began to accelerate as the country moved from a military government to a democratic government in 1993 and then attracted investors to improve its economic fortunes. According to the World Bank Global Report on Poverty, Ghana was among the countries that achieved the first-millennium goal of reducing poverty by more than half between 1991 and 2012

(World Bank [WB] 2020:17). However, despite Ghana's consistent economic growth and poverty reduction in the few decades, the country experienced an increase in economic inequality between 2012 and 2016 (WB 2020:17). Ghana's poverty rate decreased from 24.2 in 2012 to 23.4 in 2016, yet the economic gap (between the rich and the poor), the severity of poverty and inequality all increased within this period (WB 2020:17). Before 2012 the poverty gap had decreased. The increased severity of poverty in this period (2012-2016) suggests a reduction in the consumption of the extremely poor. In the same period, the inequality coefficient increased from 0.4 to 0.43 for 2012 and 2016 respectively (WB 2020:17). The report attributes the reduction in poverty between 1991 and 2012, to the rise in average household consumption (growth component) in this period (WB 2020:18). The report confirmed that consumption rate lowered for the poor, especially between 2012 and 2016 (WB 2020:18).

The report further found poor households with consumption levels just above the poverty line as being vulnerable to external shocks. It indicated, for example, that when the COVID-19 pandemic hit the world, such households were highly affected (WB 2020:19). The level of vulnerability reduced remarkably between 1991 and 2012, but, it however reduced slightly between 2012 and 2016 (WB 2020:19-20). The level of vulnerability was more intense in rural communities than in urban communities (WB 2020:18).

The report found a correlation between the size of the household and poverty margins (WB 2020:21). For example, it was found that large households with more dependents usually live in rural areas, are usually headed by old males and are usually poorer than other families (WB 2020:21). This means that the probability for those living in the rural areas becoming poor is higher than that for those living in the cities. A correlation was also found between the education level of the head of the family and the level of poverty in that family. The correlation was that the higher the education of the head of the family the lesser the poverty situation. In other words, people who lived in houses headed by people of low education were poorer than those living in households with a family head who was more educated (WB 2020:21).

In terms of properties, it was found that poor people normally have bicycles and motor-bikes as their most valuable properties in life (WB 2020:21). The report saw an increase in the percentage of poor people owning bicycles from 28% to 42% between 1991 and 2016, the percentage of the

poor owning motor-bikes also increased remarkably between 1991 and 2016 (WB 2020:21). The fact that more poor were found to own bicycles and motor-bikes suggests that motor-bikes and bicycles are more common means of transportation among the poor. The report further noted that most poor households undertook agricultural activities as their main employment as non-poor households were engaged in wage employment or non-farming sort of employment activities (WB 2020:22).

The economic inequality in Ghana also relates to geographical regions. There are economic inequalities from region to region in Ghana with some regions classified as richer regions and others as poorer regions (WB 2020:37). Poverty is more intense in the northern part of the country than in the southern part of the country. The northern sector has fewer job opportunities and a more unpredictable rainfall pattern compared to the southern sector. Statistics show that between 2012 and 2016, poverty reduced remarkably in the four wealthiest regions in Ghana; including Greater Accra, Ashanti, Central and Eastern regions and at the same time increased remarkably in the four poorest regions including Upper West, Upper East, Northern Volta regions (WB 2020:37). Among the wealthier regions, the Eastern region experienced the most significant decline in poverty (9%), followed by the Central region (5%) and Ashanti and Greater Accra regions (each 3%) (WB 2020:37). Within the poorest regions, the Northern region recorded 11% increase in poverty, the Upper East region 10%, the Volta region 3.4%, and the Upper West region above 70% of poverty rate (WB 2020:37). At the same time, the depth and severity of poverty rose in the poorest four regions but decreased in the wealthiest regions. The five wealthiest regions in which the poverty gap was reduced include the Western, Central, Greater Accra, Eastern and Ashanti regions and those where the severity increased were the Volta, Brong Ahafo, Northern, Upper East and Upper West regions (WB 2020:37).

As a result of the above regional disparity, there was a widening of regional economic inequality within the country in the period under review. Using the Greater Accra region for example, it was observed that both consumption growth and reduced inequality led to a decrease in its poverty rate (WB 2020:37). However, in the Northern and Upper East regions, for example, both negative consumption rate and increased inequalities led to increases in poverty rate (WB 2020:38). Clearly, the consumption rate did not favor the poor areas in the country as it led to an increase in poverty rather than a decrease in poverty. It was further observed that regions that experienced the largest

poverty reduction also witnessed a major employment shift from the traditional sectors such as agriculture to private sector wage employment and non-agricultural self-employment activities (WB 2020:40). The report also revealed a remarkable shift, for example, in Greater Accra, Ashanti, and Central regions from agricultural activities to non-agricultural self-employment and wage employment in the private sector between 1991 and 2016 (WB 2020:40). On the contrary, deprived regions continued to increase their reliance on agriculture as the main sour of employment within that period (WB 2020:40).

People continue to wonder why Ghana faces economic challenges amidst its abundant resources. The causes of the poverty situation in Ghana are not far-fetched. The next section analyzes some of the key factors that perpetuate Ghana's poverty situation.

4.3.1.2 Causes of Poverty in Ghana

4.3.1.2.1 Colonialism

Ghana's poverty situation is partly attributable to the impact of colonial rule on the country's economy. This does not mean that the colonizers did not contribute to Ghana's development. The British contributed to the country's development by constructing schools, hospitals, communication networks, roads, harbors, and railways, among others (Addo-Fening 2013:51-52). They also created trade opportunities which yielded a boost in the local economy. However, a critical evaluation of the overall impact of colonization on Ghana shows that the colonial strategy was geared toward the exploitation of the physical, human, and economic resources of their colony to their benefit (Settles 1996:n.p). This argument is unpacked in the following paragraphs.

Before colonialism, the African communal sense of life was very strong and formed a key basis for societal development. The introduction of Western civilization weakened the African worldview and ended up promoting individualism which does not promote communal development, at least from the African perspective. The introduction of formal education was good; however, it ended up dividing the Ghanaian community into the educated and the uneducated whereby the educated no longer willingly identified themselves with the illiterates. Again, the demarcation of (artificial) borders resulted in the emergence of partisan politics, ethnic conflicts and civil unrest, which eventually halted economic growth (Settles 1996:n.p). The road

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networks constructed by the colonialists were primarily meant to enhance the transportation of raw materials to the harbors for export. Colonial trade activities ended up halting the natural development that was taking place in the country before their arrival (Settles 1996:n.p).

The British Industrial Revolution (the transition from creating goods by hand to using machines) that reached its peak around 1860 increased the demand for industrial raw materials and markets for industrial goods and eventually resulted in a structural change in the economy of the Gold Coast (Addo-Fening 2013:50). Ghana and other African countries became the producers of raw materials to feed the British industries. Cocoa, timber and a few others received a big boost and triggered a scramble for the forest lands. The cocoa industry became popular in forested areas such as today's Bono, Bono East, Ahafo, Ashanti, Eastern and Western regions. Instead of helping Ghana to become an industrial nation, the colonizers used her as the producer of raw materials for the industrialization of the colonizers' country.

The unfair cocoa prices given by the colonizers prompted reactions from some chiefs and their people. For example, in January 1904, Adontenhene Kwabena Kena expressed concerns about the unfair prices that cocoa merchants gave to cocoa farmers (Addo-Fening 2013:53). Nana Kena's complaint to the British Governor Lieutenant-Colonel Sir Matthew Nathan was reiterated by Okyenhene Amoako Atta II who admonished the Governor to encourage the merchants to increase the price of cocoa in order to prevent the industry from collapsing (Addo-Fening 2013:53). The complaints were not given the needed attention and the country eventually recorded the lowest price of cocoa during the First World War when farmers were paid less than 25 pence per load of 27kg of cocoa as compared to £1.00 for the same quantity in 1901 (Addo-Fening 2013:53).

The overwhelming exploitation of Ghanaian farmers by European merchants prompted reactions from the kings of the Eastern Province. They noted bitterly that while cocoa is taken by the European merchants for almost nothing, European goods on the Ghanaian market had "reached such a prohibitive height that one feels most unhappy" (Addo-Fening cited in Addo-Fening 2013:53). They further cautioned that "if the interference by government in this connection be considered impractical, we shall find ourselves compelled to take measures to guard our people against such manifest exploitation of the natives' poor resources" (Addo-Fening cited in Addo-Fening 2013:53). Today, the same colonial strategy which made the colonizers determine the price

of cocoa still persists. The government takes money from the importing countries, even before the cocoa season starts, and so becomes handicapped in insisting on what price is desirable.

Gold mining was exclusively done by the indigenes until the mid-20th century when the Europeans joined the mining business and eventually monopolize it (Addo-Fening 2013:50). The Europeans reduced the role of Ghanaians in the mining business "from that of entrepreneurs to that of unskilled labor" (Addo-Fening 2013:52). While one can admit that the indigenous probably lacked expertise in the mining technology introduced by the colonizers, it was wrong for the colonizers to deprive them the opportunity to act as entrepreneurs who have other people working under and for them in the mining industry. The selfish interest of the colonizers is the main reason why they relegated the indigenes to the background and took over the mining industry. This selfishness and economic exploitation were illustrated by the extremely small concession they paid to the local authorities. Addo-Fening (2013:52) cites the example of the payment of an annual rent of £12 per annum for the Pusupusu concession, the resulting complaint of the chief to the British Governor and the subsequent dismissal of the complaint by the Governor. Again, the daily wage paid to the Ghanaian laborers was also very small compared to the labor they offered.

In addition, the foreign mining investors did not pay any rent for the mining site until they started mining even though by acquiring those lands, no one was allowed to use it for any other purpose (Addo-Fening 2013:52). More so, "Except for small annual payments to chiefs and the governments, mining companies which were the beneficiaries of the railway system and road network, paid no direct taxes to government till the Nkrumah regime introduced its new taxation measures in 1952" (Addo-Fening 2013:54). Further, inhabitants of villages that were within the mining area could not enter their own village after 6:00 pm without permission from the mining investors or their representatives (Addo-Fening 2013:53). Today, Ghana's gold is mined largely by foreigners whose activities are geared toward the development of their nation, not Ghana.

Further still, the slave trade that formed part of colonization deprived Ghana of her human resources and eventually subordinated the indigenous Ghanaian economy to the interests of Europe by replacing "European manufactured products for those products which normally would have been made locally" (Settles 1996:np). The slave trade took away the cream of the Ghanaian society and eventually deprived the country of the human resources required for effective and sustainable

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development. The colonizers also forced their culture on Ghanaians, forced them to develop a taste for Western culture and eventually, made locally manufactured goods appear inferior to those manufactured in Europe. The residue of this colonizers' strategy in contemporary Ghana is the over-reliance on the Western market for goods, the importation of which negatively affects the local economy. As the country continues to depend heavily on commodities from the West, her chances of developing local businesses become slimmer.

Aside from colonialism, a poor agricultural system also contributes to Ghana's socio-economic and political problems. The next section considers this issue.

4.3.1.2.2 Poor agricultural practices

Ghana's rising poverty is also attributable to poor agricultural practices (Adjei 2012:48). Agriculture contributes approximately 19.7% of the national Gross Domestic Product, accounts for over 40% of export earnings, provides over 90% of the food needs of the country and engages about 42% of the workforce (Essegbey and Maccarthy 2020:1). The agricultural sector subdivides into subsectors like livestock, fisheries, forestry and crops. The livestock subsectors include mono-gastric animals (such as pigs and poultry), ruminants (including cattle, goats, and sheep) and non-traditional animals (like snails, rabbits and grass cutters). The fisheries sub-sector comprises marine, inland and aquaculture fisheries. Forestry products are basically timber for construction and other purposes. In addition to timber, nuts, fruits, resins, gums and charcoal, fruits, and medicinal plants are obtained from the forest.

The crop subsector is the biggest among all the subsectors of agric. Its significance extends beyond its contribution to food and nutrition security to include its role in establishing a foundation for agro-industrial operations and exports (Essegbey and Maccarthy. 2020:5). For a sizeable segment of the population, particularly in rural areas, it provides employment and a means of subsistence. Key among the crops grown in Ghana include cocoa, shea nut, coffee, maize, yam, cassava, rice, oil palm, cotton, rubber, tobacco, sugar cane and various other varieties of fruits and vegetables, the first three constituting the major foreign exchange earnings for the country (Essegbey and Maccarthy 2020:1).

The changes in rainfall patterns, temperature rise and other extreme weather conditions have a huge effect on agricultural production. Ghana's overdependence on the weather for success in the agricultural sector puts the lives and food security of millions of the populace who depend on agriculture at risk due to climate change. The lack of modern equipment for farming (such as irrigation facilities) makes people rely on rainfall for cultivation, a situation that makes all-year-round farming impossible (Adjei 2012:49). Ghana has two seasons. They are the rainy season and the dry season. People usually cultivate their land and wait for the rains before planting so that their crops do not sprout and wither along the line due to lack of rain. Failure in the agricultural sector due to poor rainfall patterns is more serious in the northern sector of the country compared to the southern sector. This is part of the reason why the northern sector remains the poorest region of the country. A farmer who goes for a bank loan to cultivate his/her crops and experiences poor rainfall patterns or pest invasion with resulting poor yield would definitely start the next season with debt.

More so, Ghana lacks a "formalized" market for food crops where prices of farm produce are standardized. Therefore, prices of goods are determined by the buyers who price goods based on their demand. There are cases where middlemen in the trade buy food from the farmers with a measuring sack that is far bigger than what they would use to sell to retailers. In the Ghanaian parlance, the measure used to buy from the farmer is referred to as "bush weight", meaning that a larger sack is used to buy from the farmer, usually in the farm/bush. Consequently, farmers earn less irrespective of the cost of production.

Post-harvest losses are also one of the poor agriculture practices. The road network to most of the areas where crop production takes place is poor, making it very difficult to transport farm produce to the cities where the market is available (Adjei 2012:49). Due to the scarcity of markets in the rural areas, farmers must fight for customers, which finally allows consumers to set the price of food without taking into account the farmer's investment in its production. The few buyers who manage to go to these areas buy the harvested crops very cheaply and leave others to perish. Consequently, a large amount of farm produce is left in the farming community to rot, a situation that both causes financial loss to farmers and discourages potential farmers (Adjei 2012:50). Again, farmers are forced to sell their products like cocoa, coffee, and cashews as raw materials at low prices since the country is unable to add value to agricultural products through processing. In

addition, most Ghanaian farmers undertake subsistent farming as the capital-intensive nature of the labor-intensive farming system and this prevents them from undertaking large-scale farming. Many farmers are only able to cultivate a little more than what they can consume.

Due to a combination of these factors, many farmers end the year unable to pay their debts (much alone turn a profit) despite putting up their best efforts. Many farmers start each new farming season in debt from the previous one, which feeds the poverty cycle. Thus, farmers continue to remain poor, farming remains unattractive to the youth, and Ghana continues to lack sufficiency in food production.

4.3.1.2.3 Unemployment

Unemployment is one of the key political challenges facing contemporary Ghana. The GSS (2022:16) report for the first quarter of 2022 indicated that about 1.74 million (13.4%) of the total Ghanaian working population of 13 million in the age bracket of 15 years and above were unemployed. In the second quarter, the unemployment rate went up to 1.8 million people (13.9%) (GSS 2022:16). The formal sector (white-color jobs) is one of the main sectors that employ people. In the past few decades, the number of graduates in Ghana has increased due to the increasing desire to have employment in the formal sector.

Unfortunately, most of these graduates are not able to get employment because of the limited number of employment opportunities in their communities. The system of education in Ghana does not provide students with the practical skills required to start their own enterprises. The education system in Ghana encourages students to memorize what they have been taught, write it in an examination, and pass their exams without necessarily understanding the concept taught or without acquiring any meaningful practical skill to solve any practical problem. Consequently, the best-graduating student may not be able to add anything new to the job market or any skill to become self-employed. Imagine a poor family that uses virtually its resources to educate a young person with the hope that he/she will be gainfully employed and relieve the family of its economic distress. If after graduation the young man or woman cannot be employed and cannot start his/her own enterprise because of a lack of money and/or lack of practical skills, the family will remain poor. The unemployment rate in the country increases and the poverty situation does not get better.

4.3.1.2.4 Corruption and mismanagement of state resources

Ghana's poverty situation is also due to the high level of corruption and mismanagement of funds, especially in the public sector (Adjei 2012:51). Corruption perpetuates poverty in the nation by diverting state resources intended for development and thus incapacitating the government from providing basic services to the people (Annan 2004: iii). Because of corruption "state expenses are not used effectively or even efficiently, but according to individual and corporate profit interests of high-ranking politicians, influential middlemen and big international businesses" (Koechlin 2008:16). Ghana's efforts at reducing poverty are thwarted by inequality and injustice that result from corruptive activities. Investors are also discouraged from coming into the country to provide employment for people because no one would like to work in a corrupt environment. Thus, corruption poses a significant barrier to socio-economic progress and the reduction of poverty, thus contributing hugely to Ghana's chronic economic underperformance. Ghana lacks such basic preconditions for inclusive and sustainable development as the rule of law, transparency, probity and accountability that are required to fight against corruption and so the practice persists (Koechlin 2008:18). Since corruption compromises all these preconditions, there is an urgent need to tackle corruption more effectively. The issue of corruption is further examined in section 4.3.2 below.

Poverty may also be caused by unfavorable political structures (Donkor 2011:29). Contrary to their mandate of seeking the common good of the people, some political leaders in Ghana make policies that not only establish but also legitimize means by which they use their positions for their personal gain (Kisseadoo 2014:np). Instead of carrying the burden of their people on their shoulders, some political leaders amass wealth while many lack basic life necessities. The huge gap between the salaries of politicians and of other civil workers also contributes to the poverty of the masses (Kisseadoo 2014:np). More so, most of the political leaders are not only incompetent but also selfish people who think only about their welfare. Consequently, there is mismanagement of state resources which could have helped reduce the plight of the poor. The state institutions responsible for checking mismanagement of resources are also not effective in carrying out their mandate.

4.3.1.2.5 Over-exploitation of natural resources

Ghana is blessed with a variety of natural and mineral resources which makes the country potentially rich. However, the overexploitation and unethical means of tapping these resources—including excessive cutting down of trees, illegal mining, and chemical methods of harvesting fish—result in environmental problems, such as land degradation, soil erosion, pollution of rivers, streams, and lagoons, air pollution, and desertification, which require the use of state resources to manage. Since a majority of Ghanaians have no formal employment, people usually tap the resources available to them to make a living. For example, people living in forested areas depend on the forest for food, meat, timber and traditional medicine. Such people may resort to cutting down trees for firewood or charcoal and in the end, deprive the land of its vegetation cover, making it no longer capable of supporting plant life. The deliberate cutting down of timber— for export, charcoal, firewood, or any other use—without deliberately and effectively replacing them, eventually deforests a vast amount of land. Tamakloe (2000:np) observes that approximately 90 percent of Ghana's forest was logged from the late 1940s to 2000 with a deforestation rate of about 22,000 hectares (ha) per year. The result of the over-exploitation is not only that the environment will no longer support plant life and make people poorer, but also that the government has to spend money dealing with the problems brought by the exploitation of resources. Section 4.3.4 has more to say about this issue.

Poverty affects many sectors of the country. Some of the effects of poverty on society are outlined briefly below.

4.3.1.3 Effects of poverty

4.3.1.3.1 Emigration

Emigration (that is, the act of leaving one's own country to settle permanently in another) is the situation in which many young Ghanaians find themselves. The poverty situation in Ghana makes some people so frustrated with life that they end up taking various routes to get to Europe and other parts of the globe where they perceive life to be easier. Ghanaians normally pass through Libya and cross the Sea to enter Europe by boat. In 2015 Ghana became the eleventh country with most of her nationalities migrating to Europe by boat, with a total of 4,431 Ghanaians arriving in

Italy alone (Dovi 2016:27). From Techiman (the Bono East regional capital) where most of these youth start their journey, they go through Burkina Faso to Agadez, Niger (Dovi 2016:26). They travel on overloaded trucks in convoys and "part of the way on foot through the Sahara Desert to the Borkou region near the Libyan border" (Dovi 2016:26). It is a dangerous journey in which many people die from exhaustion and dehydration (Dovi 2016:26). Before getting to Libya, these young people meet a lot of human traffickers who exploit them financially. Recounting his experience, Twum (cited in Dovi 2016:26) said he saw many corpses abandoned in the hot Saharan Desert, some of which leaned on the rocks, as if they were sleeping, and others buried in the dust.

The emigration of skilled Ghanaians to Europe, North America and other places to seek greener pastures end up making the country poorer. The emigration (also called brain drain) decreases Ghana's potential "to effectively and efficiently deliver public services and contribute to the skill pool requirements of the private sector" (Hope 2008:153). Unlike the colonial era when Ghanaians were forced to serve abroad, contemporary Ghanaians willingly and eagerly left the country to seek a better life abroad due to poverty. Some of these people have been trained by the government and are expected to contribute to Ghana's development. In the post-COVID-19 era, health workers (including nurses, doctors, laboratory technicians and others) are among the category of workers that are leaving Ghana for Europe or North America. This will eventually increase the patient-to-doctor ratio and have a negative impact on the efficiency of Ghana's health delivery system and worsen the country's poverty situation.

4.3.1.3.2 Food insecurity

A country's ability to provide sufficient, safe, and nutritious food for the populace correlates with its state of socio-economic development. Food insecurity is usually an indication of poverty and inequality, and under those conditions, the disadvantaged populations are those affected most (Ghana Statistical Service [GSS] 2022:8). Even though Ghana is blessed with vast and fertile land, there is inadequate food for the populace. The Ghana Statistical Service's report on food indicates that nearly half (49.1%) of Ghana's population experienced food insecurity in the first quarter of 2022 (GSS 2022:11). According to the report, food insecurity is more prevalent in rural areas than in urban areas. This finding is interesting because farming activities are done mainly in rural areas. The reason for the observation may be that after cultivating their crop, many rural settlers send

their produce to the cities where there is a ready market and end up not having enough reserved for the rural settlers. Whether in the rural or urban areas, households with more aged people and children and those with heads who have no formal education experience higher food insecurity than households without any dependents (GSS 2022:14-15). Ghana's food insecurity is evident in the amount of food items imported into the country annually. Ghana imports such food items as rice, millet, onion, wheat, poultry, tomatoes, and maize which could be cultivated in abundance if the agricultural sector was strengthened. The importation of these and other items ends up weakening the local currency and worsening the economy.

4.3.1.3.3 Poor housing and housing deficit

Poverty in Ghana has resulted in poor housing for many of the citizens. Many houses in rural areas are constructed with mud and lateral brick and are not properly roofed. Due to inadequate accommodation a household of about nine people may sleep in one room, a situation which forces some of the children to find their own means of accommodation which mostly ends in an increased incidence of teenage pregnancy and social vices. Aside from poverty, the rapid increase in population and urbanization also contribute to Ghana's housing deficit situation. Ghana's population increased from 24 million to 33 million from 2010 to 2021, (Centre for Affordable Housing Finance in Africa [CAHF] 2022:113). In this period (2010-2021) there was a boom in the real estate enterprise and a decrease in the country's population growth rate between 2010 to 2021, with an average growth rate of 2.1% in 2020 which is the least the country has experienced since its independence in 1957 (CAHF 2022:113). Yet, the country still has a large housing deficit despite a 33% reduction from 2010 to 2021. As the population increases, there is pressure on accommodation facilities, resulting in the deficit.

Poor housing and housing deficit in urban areas are due to rural-urban migration. Consequent to the lack of employment opportunities and lack of social amenities in most rural areas in Ghana, there has been an increase in rural-urban migration in the last few decades. Consequently, the majority of natives of seven out of Ghana's sixteen administrative regions live in urban areas, particularly Accra and Kumasi, the two most populated centers in the country (CAHF 2022:113). The increased demand for accommodation in the urban areas due to the movement of people from other regions to seek employment opportunities in the cities results in an increased cost of

accommodation. As many people are not able to afford accommodation, they end up sleeping in the street, in tents, in cargo cars, under bridges, in kiosks and at other indecent places.

4.3.1.3.4 Increasing incidence of (violent) crimes

The high poverty rate makes people engage in all manner of commercial activities to survive. In Ghana, internet fraud is common among the youth in both urban and rural environments. Some of these young people undertake betting activities to make a living; others are involved in illegal mining activities. Kidnapping is also common these days, especially in Sekondi-Takoradi, Kumasi and Accra. In 2019, 13 cases of kidnapping and abduction of women and girls were reported (Sarkodie, Aggrey and Dwomor 2020:484). In 2022, four men were each sentenced to 10 years in prison for kidnapping two Canadian volunteers (Kokutse 2022: Abc news). The kidnapper may demand a ransom from the family and or friends of the kidnapped, force the kidnapped to withdraw money from the ATM for him/her or make a political demand from the kidnapped or his/her relatives or associates (Sarkodie, Aggrey and Dwomor 2020:485).

The use of juju (evil powers; *sakawa*) to trick wealthy people, most frequently foreigners, into sending them astronomical sums of money online without rendering any services to these foreign wealthy people is also a common phenomenon among contemporary Ghanaian youth. The phenomenon of *sakawa* may require one or more of the following rituals: sleeping in coffins, not bathing for weeks, killing and eating human flesh like a delicacy (Amstrong 2011:2), carrying a coffin around one's neighborhood at midnight; utilizing human organs or blood in a for certain rituals, sacrificing a close relative and having a midnight encounter with a spirit or other strange being. Eventually, those who practice *sakawa* may be disgraced, become mad, or even die untimely. In April 2021, the police arrested two teenagers aged 16 and 17 for allegedly murdering a young boy for money rituals (BBC News 2021: Online). While this incidence underlines ineffective parenting, it also speaks volumes about the ungodly desire for wealth among contemporary Ghanaian youth. In other words, this situation underlines wrong notions about human flourishing among contemporary Ghanaian youth.

Again, the poverty situation in Ghana has resulted in a high incidence of violent crimes. The first half of the year 2021, for example, recorded an increase of 79% in the use of a firearm in the commission of crimes, with more than 80% of violent crimes happening outside of the place of

abode/homes of victims (at places such as roads and highways, offices, business/trade spaces, and worship centers) and a 28% increase in violent crime deaths (Bureau of Public Safety 2021:2). Murder/manslaughter, armed robberies, aggravated assaults, suicides and sexual assaults were the top five most reported violent crimes in the first half of 2021 (Bureau of Public Safety 2021:9). High way armed robbery involving young people (both men and women) between the ages of 12 and 30 have been reported in many parts of the country in recent times. The year 2022 witnessed the murder of a 52-year-old gold buyer by a gang of armed robbers at Wassa Saaman, the robbery of church members during the Good Friday festivity at a Church at Atwima Afrancho, the shooting and killing of three suspected armed robbers during an exchange of fire with the police at Shiashie, gunning down of an armed robber who snatched an envelope from a bank customer, and the arrest of six suspected robbers at Techiman (Tornyi 2022: online article). Obviously, the poverty situation and the high unemployment rate in Ghana threaten the country's security and peace. Unless something is done urgently about it, the country may be in chaos in the next few years.

4.3.1.3.5 Poor Health Delivery

The development of a society depends partly on its ability to provide the health needs of the citizenry. A community cannot survive or progress if it does not deal with its health challenges. Poverty is one of the key contributors to poor health and a barrier to receiving necessary medical care. Financial constraints prevent the poor from acquiring the necessities for optimal health, such as enough quantity of high-quality food and medical care. The poor may not be able to afford a balanced diet, and in the end, fall sick. Sanitation issues are also mostly associated with the poor and this has health implications on the poor. In a country like Ghana, where many people struggle to make ends meet, access to quality health care is a big challenge for the majority of the citizenry. People find it difficult to afford the out-of-pocket spending on health care (such as consultations, laboratory tests and medicine), as well as transportation costs and any informal payments to providers.

There is a National Health Insurance Scheme which covers medical bills for those who have registered with the scheme. The 2021 Population and Housing census report indicates that 68.6 % of the population is covered by either the National Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS) or private health insurance schemes (GSS 2021:35). However, government's failure to pay the health

providers has resulted in a situation whereby most health facilities refuse to accept the National Health Insurance. For hospitals that accept it, the Insurance covers only a small percentage of the medical cost and so the patient has to pay for drugs and major health services. For one to enjoy quality health using health insurance one has to register with private Insurance companies, most of which are very expensive and above what the ordinary Ghanaian can afford.

Again, Ghana lacks adequate health facilities and health personnel due to its poverty situation. There is a high doctor-to-patient ratio, so people queue from morning till evening before getting access to qualified medical practitioners (Adjei 2012:66). People travel long distances to access medical facilities, a situation that sometimes makes people's situation worse and some even die, before arriving at the facility. Shortage of hospital beds and overcrowding is not uncommon in Ghana. The no-bed syndrome is typically present in public hospitals and frequently worsens patients' illnesses, sometimes even resulting in their deaths. In 2018, a case was reported of a seventy-year-old man who died on his way to another hospital after being rejected by seven hospitals due to the lack of beds in the first hospital he visited (Aryee 2018: online article; Adogla-Bessa 2018: CitiNews). Something needs to be done urgently to save the situation.

Apart from poverty, corruption is also a serious social canker in contemporary Ghana that prevents the country from progressing. The next section is meant to discuss this issue.

4.3.2 Corruption

Corruption is a global problem. It is one of the main reasons for Ghana's chronic underdevelopment and backwardness. Like other terminologies, "corruption" defies a single definition. Etymologically, "corruption" comes from the Latin expression "*cur-rumpo*" which means "to break completely; to destroy, annihilate, ruin, spoil, waste; to falsify, adulterate, pervert, degrade, seduce, mislead; to gain by gift; to bribe" (Christian Council of Ghana 2002:8-9). From its etymological meaning, corruption denotes any human act that destroys social harmony and prevents people from experiencing the fullness of life. The National Anti-Corruption Coalition (NACC 2011:23) defines corruption as "the misuse of entrusted power for private gain." Corruption is injustice, antisocial and inhuman.

In Ghana, corruption in its varied forms takes place in both the private and public spheres. However, the effects are particularly horrible within the public sector where people in authority use their power in immoral ways for their benefit. The probability of detecting and punishing corruption in the private sector is higher than in the public sector. Consequently, the incidence of corruption is not prevalent in the private sector as compared to the public sector. Corruption takes different forms, some of which are outlined below.

4.3.2.1 Forms of corruption

4.3.2.1.1 Bribery

Bribery is the act of offering, giving, promising, receiving, or soliciting anything of value to influence the recipient's conduct (Kunhiyop 2008:165; Hall 2022:181). The expression "anything of value" does not only have to do with monetary rewards and cash equivalent but also such favors as "gifts, discounts, entertainment (drinks and meals), transportation and lodging benefits or even the promise of future employment" (Zgheib 2015:145). Usually, a bribe is given to a person in a position or to another person who can influence the decision of the one whose favor is sought. It is meant to make the bribed acts illegal, unjust or immoral in favor of the briber. It is an anti-social behavior because it makes people compromise standards which eventually affects society adversely.

4.3.2.1.2 Nepotism

Nepotism refers to public officials' preference to give public advantage to their relatives and friends (Zgheib 2015:145; Kunhiyop 2008:165). Nepotism usually leads to the dominance of a particular ethnic group or tribe over others and eventually affects nations building in many adverse ways. Ghana's two dominant political parties, the NDC and the NPP, have their strongholds during elections. The NDC has many strongholds in the non-Akan areas whereas the NPP is usually more popular among the Akan communities. Consequently, the kind of people appointed to hold public offices usually come from the so-called strongholds of the ruling party. Apart from this, the President's own family or tribe may dominate in government. The current President, His Excellency Nana Addo Dankwa Akuffo-Addo has been accused of not looking beyond his family and friends in making political appointments. In 2019, the NDC listed fifty-one supposed family

members or friends of the President as holding key positions in his government (Nana 2019: n.p). Such a nepotistic practice (if found to be true) militates against political inclusiveness and ends up retarding national development.

4.3.2.1.2 Extortion

Extortion is the use of threats, coercion, violence, intimidation, or misuse of authority to obtain money, goods, or services from someone (Kunhiyop 2008:165). Simply put, extortion is the unlawful exaction of money or any other benefit through intimidation or violence. The threat to harm or blackmail someone, destroy someone's property, or reveal embarrassing information about someone are all means of extortion. Extortion can also be in the form of a superior abusing a subordinate sexually in order to give him/her some favor. The practice of trading sex for grades that happens in some Ghanaian institutions may be classified under extortion.

4.3.2.1.3 Fraud

Fraud has been identified as a key threat to the growth and development of Ghana. Fraud is defined as any purposeful action or inaction intended to deceive another party, which results in a loss for the victim and/or a gain for the offender (Zgheib 2015:145; Kunhiyop 2008:165). It occurs, for example, when "funds raised for such activities as famine relief, bursary funds for poor children's school fees, and funds to assist the disabled within society are not put to the intended use" (Otenyo cited in Kunhiyop 2008:165). The forging of cheques, falsification of accounts and the bloating of the cost of services are some examples of fraud in the Ghanaian context.

4.3.2.1.4 Embezzlement

Embezzlement means the stealing or misappropriation of funds placed under one's stewardship (Zgheib 2015:145). In other words, it means the act whereby a person fraudulently takes money or other property entrusted to him/her. Some politicians embezzle public funds and place them in accounts abroad. The misappropriation of public funds, a crime that has a catastrophic effect on the nation's economy, is frequently reported in the media. When compared to the costs of similar projects handled by the private sector, the costs of projects undertaken by the government are excessively high. This is a clear indication that corruption is at play (Adjei 2012:51ff).

4.3.2.2 An overview of Ghana's fight against corruption

Although corruption started from time immemorial, the political history of Ghana shows that this social evil became ingrained in politics in the immediate aftermath of independence or just before that. Almost every new government tends to exploit the patronage system, among other things, to reward its key supporters (Agbele 2011:7). The reality and seriousness of corruption in Ghana a few years after her independence is evident in Parliament's decision in 1960 to criminalize this act (NACC 2011:9).

Ghana's fight against corruption has been approached through the formulation and implementation of different strategies, both constitutional and unconstitutional. In the early part of Ghana's post-independence history, the expression "greasing of the palm" became synonymous with bribe-giving (NACC 2011:16). The idiom "greasing the palm" metaphorizes the palm as a moving part of a machine that cannot work efficiently without greasing it. Here, the palm has a key role to play in ensuring that what the briber wants done is done. Without the grease, there is much friction in the hand that prevents it from working fast. This friction, in the Ghanaian context, may include bureaucracy. The friction is dealt with by greasing the palm with gifts.

The soldiers who overthrew Ghana's first President, Dr. Kwame Nkrumah, and his CPP Government on 24th February 1966 partly attributed their action to their quest to combat corruption in the public sector (NACC 2011:16). Lt.-Gen. A. A. Ankrah resigned as head of state of Ghana on April 2, 1969, after having admitted that he had received money for political purposes from a private company. Prof. Kofi Abrefa Busia's government was also overthrown as a way of arresting corruption in the country.

Nonetheless, corruption permeated every aspect of Ghanaian public life throughout the 1970s, with the term *kalabule* (fraud) becoming its household referent. *Kalabule*—probably from the Hausa expression "*kere kabure*", meaning "keep it quiet"—was used to denote making excessive profits, corruption or hoarding of goods. During those days, storekeepers hoarded goods, monopolized their sales and made unreasonably high profits and political leaders used state resources for their private gain. The corruption and perceived bad governance in the country were the major reasons for the June 4th, 1979 Uprising which overthrew Gen. Fred William Kwasi Akuffo's Supreme Military Council, as well as the subsequent "House Cleaning Exercise" which was initiated by the

Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC) Government led by Flt. Lt. Jerry John Rawlings (NACC 2011:16).

After overthrowing Akuffo's government the AFRC handed over power to Dr. Hilla Limann in September 1979. The "House Cleaning Exercise" led to the execution of three former military leaders of Ghana, Lt. Gen. A. A. Afrifa, Gen. I. K. Acheampong and Lt. Gen. Fred Akuffo and five other senior officers for corruption allegations against them. Flt. Lt. Rawlings led the AFRC to overthrow Limann's Government on 31st December 1981 due to corruption allegations against the president (NACC 2011:16). Like other military rulers, Rawlings confiscated properties acquired unlawfully by politicians. From the foregoing account, the overthrown of both constitutional and unconstitutional governments in Ghana has been justified as a step toward fighting corruption in the government they overthrew (NACC 2011:17-18).

Different governments have formulated different anticorruption policies and passed them into bills, notable among them being: the launching of moral crusades through the help of religious and societal leaders to urge citizens to uphold integrity and display strong moral principles in their daily lives; the execution of persons involved in corruption; the enactment of harsh laws that included the enforcement of lengthy custodial sentences and the confiscation of properties corruptly acquired by public officials; the declaration of a policy of "zero tolerance" for corruption (NACC 2011:9). Other strategies are: the passing of many anti-corruption legislation to strengthen the country's anti-corruption legal framework; the restructuring of the public sector and financial management framework; empowering state institutions such as the Ghana Police Service, Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice (CHRAJ) and Serious Fraud Office (SFO; now The Economic and Organized Crime Office [EOCO]) to better perform their anti-corruption roles (NACC 2011:9) and establishment of the office of the Special Prosecutor. In addition, the Constitution of Ghana champions equity, justice, integrity and accountability and provides a *Code of Conduct for Public Officers* by which public officers can be scrutinized. A public officer is prohibited by this Code from placing themselves in a situation where their personal interests conflict with or are likely to interfere with the execution of their official duties (The Republic Ghana N.d: chapter 24). In addition, the Constitution mandates that certain classes of public officials periodically report their assets and liabilities. Nonetheless, corruption still remains

a major challenge in Ghana. Selected cases of corruption in contemporary Ghana are outlined below.

4.3.2.3 Cases of Corruption in Ghana

This section examines key cases of corruption in Ghana in the past few years to make the reader appreciate Ghana's corruption situation. The examples are categorized into political, judiciary and sports cases, with particular reference to Ghana's Fourth Republic.

4.3.2.3.1 Corruption in the political sector

Political corruption remains a major challenge in Ghana despite various attempts to curb it. Earlier, the point was made that Ghana's post-independence history was characterized by frequent coup d'états which were partly justified as means of arresting corruption in the country. Since Ghana returned to democratic rule in 1993 to begin the Fourth Republic, the country has remained relatively peaceful under different constitutionally-established governments. All the former presidents in the Fourth Republic have had corruption allegations levelled against them. Former President J. J. Rawlings, for instance, was said to have abused his office. To be specific, it was alleged that a whooping amount of US$7 million cash went missing from a total of US$10 million that was allocated for the refurbishment of the Tema Food Processing Factory (Andoh 2021:32). Rawlings was also accused of not making the sale of most of the state-own companies transparent. The purchase of Nsawam Cannery Company (a state-owned company) by Rawlings' wife was cited to support the alleged political Prebendalism and Patrimonialism in his government. In addition, a number of Rawlings' appointees were jailed for political corruption that resulted in financial loss to the state (Andoh 2021:32).

Rawlings' successor, President John Agyekum Kuffour was not free from corruption allegations. People levelled charges of abuse of political power against him. The purchase of the African Regent Hotel by Kuffour's son at a cost of US$3.5 million became a major issue in the country (Andoh 2021:33). The President declared the uncompleted hotel building, which was close to his private residence, as posing security threats to him and so had to be sold to be completed and used. The hotel project was funded by Prudential Bank, a Bank part-owned by SSNIT, a state-owned enterprise, and by the National Investment Bank (NIB), another state-owned bank, and by the

ECOWAS Regional Investment Bank (ERIB), which advanced US$1 million to the hotel. Given that President Kufuor was the Chairman of ECOWAS and Mr. J. S. Addo, Chairman of the Board of Directors of Prudential Bank, was his representative on the ERIB and the Chairman of the Board of Directors of ERIB at the time that his son purchased the hotel, one sees a clear conflict of interest, pretence, and patrimonialism in this case (Andoh 2021:33). Nonetheless, an investigation in the issue cleared the president of corruption.

Some of Kuffour's appointees abused their powers. For example, the CHRAJ recommended the relief of Dr. Richard Winfred Anane, Minister of Transportation of his post after findings of abuse of power and conflict of interest were levelled against him by the Commission (Andoh 2021:33). The vanishing of 77 parcels of cocaine from police surveillance into thin air, and the heroin scandal that ended Hon. Eric Amoateng (then Member of Parliament and a member of Kuffour's government) in jail in the United States were among the drug trafficking issues that disturbed Kuffour's government. Again, eight of Kufuor's ministers were alleged to have misappropriated GH¢ 440,814,014,679.00 (that is about US$ 35.7 billion) state funds in 2005 through corruptive activities, mismanagement, ineptness, and sheer laxity (Andoh 2021:33).

The John Dramani Mahama's government was not corruption-free either. It was also charged with several high-ranking and highly-publicized cases of corruption (Rahman 2018:5). In November 2013, a former deputy communication minister, Hon. Victoria Hammah was dismissed after she was recorded allegedly saying that she would stay in politics until she made $1m (Odartey-Wellington 2014:2; Andoh 2021:34-35). In December 2015 a former Minister for Transport, Hon. Dzifa Attivor, resigned after she was investigated for winning and executing a contract that made her spend GH¢3.6 million on rebranding 116 buses (Andoh 2021:35). The incident prompted many Ghanaians to question how that outrageous budget could be approved by the President.

In the heat of the campaign leading to the 2016 general elections, a video circulated on social media in which President Mahama was seen allegedly "buying votes" from traders (in Abossey Okai in Accra) by sharing money (Rahman 2018:5; Andoh 2021:33). In response, President Mahama's chief of staff, Mr Julius Debrah, said the video was doctored because it is unusual for the President to carry such an amount on a campaign tour (Arku 2016:GraphicOnline). Some of the traders later revealed that they received 50.00 Ghana cedis each from the President to

"compensate" them for having their wares destroyed by the crowds that struggled to catch a glimpse of the president (Owusu-Mensah 2016: Prime News Ghana). Speaking on Joy FM's Newsfile, the then Deputy Minister of Education, Mr. Samuel Okudzeto Ablakwa stated that the President gave an egg seller an amount of money after seeing her get pushed down by the crowd at the campaign grounds (Owusu-Mensah 2016: Prime News Ghana). Mr. Ablakwa, therefore, described the incident as the President's act of compassion rather than voter bribery. The then Greater Accra Regional Chairman of the NDC, Mr. Ade Coker, justified the President's act on the ground that almsgiving is part of the Ghanaian culture (Frimpong 2016: Graphic Online). He noted that the President gives alms on a daily basis and whenever he visits any palace he gives drinks to the chief and his people. Mr. Coker cited the President's donation of a vehicle to the Gonja chief as an example of his generosity toward traditional leaders (Frimpong 2016: Graphic Online).

In 2016, President Mahama was also alleged to have received a bribe in the form of a Ford Expedition from a Burkinabe contractor to help him secure a road-building contract in Ghana (Kpodonu 2020:10; Laary 2016: Online article). The president denied the corruption allegations and claimed that the vehicle was a gift which he received and added to the Presidential carpool as a state property (Kpodonu 2020:10; Laary 2016: Online article). The incident was considered by some public personalities as a breach of the provisions of Ghana's laws, a conflict of interest, and a shameful act that merited impeachment (Laary 2016: Online article). Although the CHRAJ later cleared the president of bribery, he was found guilty of breaching government rules regarding the acceptance of gifts (Quayson 2016:74; Andoh 2021:34).

Interestingly, in a survey conducted by The Washington Post in 2015 to examine the issue of corruption as it relates to elections in Africa 43% of Ghanaians answered that bribing voters were either "not wrong at all" or was "wrong but should not be punished" and 76% of the participants felt nothing wrong with politicians directing development projects toward their "strongholds" (Cheeseman, Lynch and Willis 2016:np; Andoh 2021:33-34). A few weeks before the alleged voter bribery incident (mentioned above), The Ghana Center for Democratic Development (CDD-Ghana) conducted a survey that indicated that 51% of Ghanaians felt that the ruling NDC was bribing voters (Arku 2016: GraphicOnline). Usually, people become frustrated, and furious and develop negative perceptions about the government when they hear of bribery allegations amidst their economic woes. These allegations of corruption coupled with the harsh economic situation

in the last years of President Mahama's administration contributed to its downfall in the December 2016 general election.

Nana Akuffo-Addo's government took over from Mr. Mahama on January 7, 2017, and has ruled till date (June 2023). One of the first issues of corruption that was tackled by Akuffo-Ado's government relates to a former Boss of the Ghana Cocoa Board, Dr. Stephen Opuni. Dr. Opuni served as the boss of the Ghana Cocoa Board during Mr. Mahama's administration. While in office, there were rumors that he was receiving huge sums of money as salary and allowances. On January 12, 2017, Dr. Opuni was sacked by the new government. Corruption allegations were leveled against him and his accounts were frozen pending conclusions into investigations of the charges against him. The case was taken to court and it is still not settled. Currently (June 20, 2023) Dr. Opuni is being tried for 27 counts of causing financial loss (to the tune of GH¢2.1billion) to the state (Andoh 2021:34). Among the charges levelled against are money laundering, violation of procurement laws, and defrauding by false pretenses.

Later in 2017, the internal audit of the National Youth Employment Agency identified approximately GHc 50 million (US$11.1 million) of payroll fraud in the agency (Rahman 2018:5). The year ended without any evidence of the government holding anyone responsible for this fraud (Andoh 2021:34; Hawkson 2018: Graphic Online). In the same year (2017) the Electoral Commission (EC) of Ghana, 2017 was entangled in a corruption scandal, as some high-ranking members of the commission accused each other of fraud and maladministration, including awarding contracts illegally, embezzlement of funds, and perceived political nepotism (Andoh 2021:34). After a thorough investigation conducted by the EOCO probing the allegations the chairperson of the Commission, Mrs. Charlotte Osei, and her two deputies charged with corruption and incompetence, and subsequently dismissed (Andoh 2021:34; Rahman 2018:6).

In February 2018 a former National Coordinator of the defunct Ghana Youth Employment and Entrepreneurial Development Agency (GYEEDA), Mr. Abuga Pele, and a businessman, Mr. Philip Akpeena Assibit were convicted and charged with a total of 18 years in prison for willfully causing a loss of GH¢4.1 million (that is about $ 332,356.00 in March 2022) to the state of Ghana (Andoh 2021:34; Hawkson 2018: Graphic Online). In September 2019, the acting Board chairperson of Ghana Revenue Authority (GRA) Adelaide Ahwireng was tied in a conflict of

interest scandal involving the rental of two of her buildings to the GRA at an exorbitant amount of GH₵ 1.4 million per annum (Andoh 2021:35). In November 2022 President Nana Akufo-Addo sacked Mr. Charles Adu Boahen, the minister of state for finance, after an expose alleged that the minister had taken bribes from some mine investors. The President referred the issue to the Special Prosecutor for further investigations.

The controversies and corruption allegations surrounding the National Cathedral Project need to be mentioned. President Akuffo-Addo in 2017 decided to build a National Cathedral for Ghana. Advocates of the project argued that it would serve as a symbol of a rising Ghana, make Ghana rise, boost the economy, consolidate democracy and inspire other grand-national projects. Considering the economic hardship in the country, many people opined that the cathedral is not what Ghana needs at this point. The President went ahead to execute his plan by forming a 13-member board to design, supervise and raise funds for the project. In March 2018, the government of Ghana unveiled artistic impressions of a proposed National Cathedral. Since then, the project has been associated with controversy over utility, propriety, finances, and transparency. The government has been criticized for demolishing judges' bungalows of historical importance to pave the way for the construction of the monument. In January 2023 North Tongu MP Mr. Samuel Okudzeto Ablakwa tied the National Cathedral Secretary in ₵2.6m conflict of interest and corruption allegation.

4.3.2.3.2 Corruption in the Judiciary

Ghana's judiciary service is the third arm of government; its key responsibility is the interpretation of the law. Despite the constitutional and legal protection given to this arm of government to enhance its services and to be independent, the judicial service is also plagued with the menace of corruption and bribery (Ofori 2018:29). Judiciary corruption has to do with judicial service personnel's use of public power for the personal gain. It comes in two categories: administrative corruption and operational corruption. Administrative corruption occurs when court administration staff members flout official or unofficial administrative rules for their own gain (Amankwah, Bonsu and Peter 2017:4). The payment of bribes to administrative staff in order to change the legally prescribed handling of files and discovery of materials or to hasten or slow down a case by improperly changing the order in which a case is to be decided by a judge are examples of

administrative corruption. Operational corruption, on the other hand, has to do with large-scale corruption schemes involving significant political and/or commercial interests (Amankwah, Bonsu and Peter 2017:5). An arbitrary change in venue and/or politically driven court decisions for the private gain of judges constitutes operational corruption.

A 2007 study within selected courts in Accra, Tema, and Kumasi had more than 52 % of the judges and magistrates, 64.2% of Lawyers, and 513 % of litigants perceiving judicial corruption as a reality (Ghana Integrity initiative cited in Amankwah, Bonsu and Peter 2017:3). Later (in 2011) three lawyers of the Ghana Bar Association also asserted that the judicial service is corrupt (Amankwah, Bonsu and Peter 2017:3). Several allegations of corruption were levelled against the judiciary service, but they were considered as mere perception (probably due to lack of empirical evidence to back the claims).

In 2015, Ghana's undercover investigative journalist Anas Aremeyaw Anas, released a documentary accusing 180 judicial officers, 34 judges and hundreds of prosecutors and prosecutors of bribery for favorable rulings between 2013 and 2014 (Rahman 2018:8; Kpodonu 2020:11). Consequent to the expose, 22 circuit court judges and magistrates were suspended, 12 Supreme Court judges were investigated while 20 magistrates and judges were dismissed (Kpodonu 2020:11). However, no criminal charges were filed against any of the judicial officers found to be corrupt (Rahman 2018:8). Anas's expose served to confirm some previous allegations that were levelled against the judiciary.

4.3.2.3.3 Corruption in the Sports Sector

Corruption is also present in the sporting sector. The image of Ghana football was dragged in the mud in 2007 when some clubs fixed their matches on Wednesday 28th March Middle League fixture. That week recorded unprecedented score lines in the matches played between Nania FC and Okwahu United, and Great Mariners and Tudu Mighty Jets. Nania FC won their match by 31 goals to nothing while Great Mariners won by 28 goals to nil. It was the final day of the Middle League and the promotion to the Ghana Premier League was tied to the results (GhanaWeb 2007: Online article). Nania FC qualified for the premiership after the 31-0 win over Okwahu United. The first half of these matches were played competitively but the second half was very bizarre. Nania FC ended the first half with one goal up and Great Mariners went on recess with

three goals up. A win for both Nania FC and Great Mariners meant both teams would end the league with the same point. The tie would then be broken by considering the goals that each team scored in the league. This is the reason why each team needed so many goals to ensure qualification into the Premiership.

The four clubs appeared before the Football Association's Disciplinary Committee. After a series of investigations, the Ghana Football Association's (GFA) Disciplinary Committee concluded that the club officials and players "instigated, commanded, counseled, solicited, procured, purposely aided, encouraged, facilitated and promoted the playing of a fixed match or a match of convenience" (GhanaWeb 2007: Online article). Each of the teams was banned for a year and fined 5,000 GH cedis. The following year (2008), the GFA introduced the head-to-head rule where tied teams were to be separated by the overall results of the two clubs when they faced each other.

In June 2009, then President John Evans Atta Mills asked a Member of Parliament and Minister of Youth and Sports, Hon. Mubarak Muntaka, to step down following investigations into many allegations of financial negligence and abuse of power that were levelled against him. Hon. Muntaka was asked to refund the embezzled funds (Andoh 2021:34). The 2014 FIFA World Cup tournament was marred with a lot of corruption allegations against the then Minister of Education, Youth and Sport, Mr. Elvis Afriyie Ankrah, and the then President of the GFA, Mr. Kwesi Nyantakyi. Ghana performed poorly in this competition as compared to their performance in the 2010 World Cup in South Africa in which they reached the quarter-final stage. In Brazil in 2014, the Black Stars only picked a point with Germany and lost by two goals to one to the United States of America and Portugal. After the competition, pictures of Mr. Elvis Afriyie Ankrah eating coconut with some other Ministers of State popped up on social media. Mr. Afriyie Ankrah is alleged to have said, during interrogation, that the cost of a coconut in Brazil was about $200. The issue of airlifting about 3 million dollars as an estimated bonus for players also popped up. A Committee was formed to investigate the matter but no one was prosecuted (Powell 2021: Opera News).

In 2018, Anas aired an investigative documentary titled "Number 12" which uncovered extensive corruption in Ghana's football industry (Allotey 2018:np; Rahman 2018:6). The documentary showed match referees bribed to favor particular clubs, and match officials and football

administrators involved in match-fixing businesses (Allotey 2018:np). It was also alleged that the selection of players for the Ghana national team involves the payment of bribes. In all, seventy-seven (77) Ghanaian referees and fourteen (14) GFA executives were caught up in a slew of corruption allegations (Oteng 2018:np; Rahman 2018:6).

In the video, the then-president of the GFA, Kwesi Nyantakyi, claimed to have a huge influence on many sectors of the Ghanaian economy. He also claimed that a bribe was required to facilitate business transactions involving Ghana's president and vice president (Rahman 2018:6). In addition to banning him from all football-related activities for life, FIFA also fined Mr. Nyantakyi an amount of about GHS 2.4million.

What factors perpetuate corruption in Ghana? The next question considers this question.

4.3.2.4 Factors that promote corruption in Ghana

4.3.2.4.1 Socio-economic and political factors

Many socio-economic and political factors account for the rise in the rate of corruption. This section outlines some of these factors. First of all, corruption may be the result of low salaries of public administration employees (state officials) which makes people look for illegal earns to earn additional means (Asante 2014:101; NACC 2011:28). In a developing country like Ghana, the salaries of public-sector workers are not able to meet the demands of the rising cost of living. In such a context, some people use every available opportunity to make extra money without considering the ethical issues associated with the means. One may resort to asking for bribes when rendering services to people. Those who do not give bribes suffer from the "go-come-go-come" approach, which is a situation whereby the service to be rendered to a person is delayed unduly. For example, the worker may deliberately refuse to work on the file of those who fail to offer monetary gifts and work on those who offer him/her gifts irrespective of who deserves to be served first. To avoid this, some people pay bribes and have their requests granted as early as possible.

Secondly, corruption may also happen due to weak democratic values and ineffective state institutions (Transparency International 2019:1). More often than not, corruption flourishes in societies that have weak democratic foundations which makes it possible for selfish politicians to capture and use state institutions for their personal gain. Even though Ghana has practiced

democracy for a relatively long time, its democratic institutions are still weak and non-transparent, hence unable to support anti-corruption efforts. Thus, the Ghanaian environment makes it possible for the politically powerful to pay their way through. Institutional weakness makes it difficult to implement laws and policies that would otherwise ensure transparency, probity and accountability (Transparency International 2019:27). More so, the weakness in state institutions makes it difficult to detect and catch corrupt people.

Thirdly, corruption in Ghana remains a problem for the nation because of the extreme acquisitive greed and avarice of some people (Asante 2014:104). According to the Christian Council of Ghana (2002:2), the human predisposition for greed which yields certain corrupt activities "is what in the human being could be baser and more bestial than even the beast." Carnivorous animals usually kill to satisfy their hunger and/or to protect themselves. Once they are full and are not threatened by anyone, a lot of their prey may pass around unharmed. On the contrary, greedy people are never satisfied no matter how much wealth they accumulate. Such people are self-centered and show no love for their neighbor (Asante 2014:104). Most Ghanaians respect and adore wealthy people without questioning where they got their riches from. Consequently, there is pressure on people to get rich no matter how they make it. This is part of the reason why many Ghanaian youth have developed a get-rich-quick attitude and are engaged in all sorts of activities to make it in life. This situation promotes corruption in society as people see it as a means of getting rich quickly and enjoying societal acceptance and prestige.

The seeming immunity of persons in authority from prosecution is also another contributor to the rise in corruption in Ghana (Asante 2014:103). Oftentimes, people involved in corrupt practices are suspended or dismissed rather than being prosecuted. In the few cases where corrupt persons are prosecuted, their sentences are not deterrent enough. Their sentences are lower as compared to what ordinary persons receive for the same or similar crimes. The reason is that corrupt people are usually persons with the political power of one form or the other. Even though on paper, the law is no respecter of persons, in reality, senior public officials and politicians seem to enjoy some immunity from prosecution. Therefore, though occasionally one or two politicians may be made scapegoats, in most cases, corrupt senior public officials use their political power, fame and wealth to manipulate the judicial system and get away with high-level corruption (Asante 2014:103).

Fifthly, corruption persists in Ghana because of the lack of commitment to society (Adei 2018:13; Asante 2014:103). Most Ghanaians consider the government as detached from their personal actions. The fact that everyone is part and parcel of the government and hence needs to protect the public purse is not popular among the citizenry. Hence they consider such actions as pilfering, stealing, under-invoicing, over-invoicing, and smuggling as affecting the government but not them. People undertake all sorts of corrupt activities and think "after all it is the government's money." Because they fail to recognize the overall effect of their action on the general wellbeing of the nation, they keep on undertaking corrupt activities.

The high levels of economic and political monopolization also perpetuate corruption in Ghanaian society (Asante 2014:103). In Ghana, certain economic activities are regulated, limited and monopolized. For example, only a few people (usually people who have been loyal to the ruling party) are allowed to import certain commodities. Contracts are given to party members at inflated costs so that they can save money to help the party during the campaign season. The restrictions placed on certain areas of the Ghanaian economy encourage people to offer money to those in higher authority to avoid these restrictions. Politically, Ghana's Fourth Republic has been dominated by two political parties; namely, the NDC and the NPP. The political dominance of these two parties also serves as a motivation for corruption. The reason is that when one of these parties is in power it does not (seriously) prosecute members of the opposition who might have been involved in corruption because the ruling party knows that shortly, it will also be in opposition and may be paid in its own coin.

4.3.2.4.2 The Ghanaian culture and corruption

4.3.2.4.2.1 Gift-giving and gift-taking

The traditional Ghanaian/African culture does not frown upon offering gifts to superiors. Some forms of such gifts can be noted and outlined. First, Ghanaians/Africans offer gifts when approaching deities/gods (Kunhiyop 2008:166). These gifts are meant to appease the gods for wrongdoing, to thank them for such blessings as longevity, prosperity, fertility, bumper harvest, or plenty of rainfall, or to ask for blessings from the gods. Thus, traditional Ghanaian/African worship is on a transactional basis. Secondly, Ghanaians/Africans present gifts when appearing before their kings/chiefs or the elders of the society (Kunhiyop 2008:166). Appearing empty-

handed before one's leader is considered an act of disrespect. Thirdly, the consultation of traditional priests, diviners and medicine men and women also requires the presentation of gifts.

The question of whether these gifts amount to bribery and corruption needs consideration. The researcher contends that while the gifts presented in each of the above scenarios compare well with the gifts given as bribes in the public sphere, the offering of gifts in interpersonal relationships in the Ghanaian/African traditional setting does not necessarily amount to bribery and corruption, though it has the potential of influencing the beneficiary. For example, the gods who receive gifts from worshippers cannot be bribed to act immorally because they cannot act immorally (Kinhiyop 2008:166). Also, the chiefs and elders who receive gifts from the subjects have been appointed as morally upright people to act justly. The moral standards of such people make it unlikely (if not impossible) to be influenced by such gifts in their activities and decision-making. A chief/king or an elder found guilty of corruption would under normal circumstances lose his/her political position. The motivation for the offeror to offer gifts to kings/chiefs and elders is to honor them and also to play their role as good "children" who take care of their "parents." In the Ghanaian setting, it is said that after parents have taken care of the child to grow teeth, the child is expected to take care of his/her parents to have their teeth removed in old age. This simply means that children must reciprocate the services that their parents rendered to them when they were children. By extension and based on the Ghanaian communal sense of life, it means that people are expected to cater for the elderly, whether or not they are their biological parents. Yet, in a human institution, gift-giving can influence a traditional leader's use of his/her political power to favor the giver.

The traditional priest mediates the human-divine relationship, bringing messages from the gods to the worshipper and sending messages from the worshipper to the gods. As a human being, the priest may be influenced by someone's gift and consequently help him/her to have such benefits as possessing a piece of land unlawfully. The belief that an attempt to do so will prompt the gods to kill the priest in question serves as a deterrent to those who might have considered taking bribes. Given this understanding, the gifts given to the traditional priest cannot be said to be a bribe. The gifts given to the medicine man/woman are believed to enhance the efficacy of the medicine received. The gift is a form of thank you that makes the medicine man/woman shower his/her blessings upon the medicine and pray for its effectiveness. There are cases where these gifts influence the medicine man/woman to use evil means to make people mad, kill someone or make

someone fall in love to the advantage of the offeror (Kunhiyop 2008:166). In this case, the evildoer may be punished by the gods.

Summing up, while gift-giving and gift-taking may not always be associated with corruption, it undoubtedly fosters an expectation of reciprocity and may create conditions for corruption. Therefore, the motivation for giving the gifts and/or the impact of the gift on the political act of the receiver is/are what determine(s) whether it can be considered a bribe or not.

4.3.2.4.2.2 Cronyism and Nepotism

The patrimonial nature of Ghanaian society, where informal relationships, familial ties, and social reciprocity are reflected in levels of favoritism, cronyism, and nepotism, greatly fosters and influences corruption (NACC 2011:26). Ghanaian traditional social order is organized around the concepts of kinship, community and reciprocity which "creates strong patron-client relationships bound by a traditional sense of deference to leadership and an expectation that loyalty towards patrons will be rewarded through subsequent personal favors" (NACC 2011:26). The extended family system underlines the need for every family member to contribute solutions to the socio-economic challenges of the family. Neglecting the welfare of one's family is one of the terrible things one can do; generosity is a highly appreciated human virtue. Consequently, one may find a rich person providing employment for unemployed members of his/her family.

Because of the favoritism in the Ghanaian social milieu, there are inconsistencies between how institutions should function in theory and how they actually function, with informal practices taking the place of formal structures. This system provides the social milieu in which some corruptive activities take place. Take the police, for instance: "We have always turned two faces towards a policeman. We expect him to be human, yet, inhuman. We employ him to administer the law, yet ask him to waive it in certain instances. We resent him when he enforces a law in our own case, yet demand his dismissal when he does not elsewhere. We shamelessly offer him bribes, yet denounce his corruption…" (Whitaker cited in Jagmohan 2007:376). A police officer arrests someone for undertaking illegal mining activities and in the next moment receives a call from a relative or friend pleading for the release of the offender. A police officer arrests someone for driving without a license and has to release the person because a superior officer instructs the offender's release based on the officer's relationship with the offender. There are many instances

where passengers even plead on behalf of their driver after the police have arrested the driver for flouting one road regulation or the other. Interestingly, the same passenger will attribute an accident that results from the driver's carelessness or a faulty car to the works of evil powers. This is a clear indication of the public disregard for the law. People profess to be law-loving but practically oppose the enforcement of the law due to the prioritization of their social relations with others. This situation shows immaturity in the Ghanaian society. People in a mature society appreciate their civic responsibilities and discharge them willingly and diligently. Civilly mature people will respect and assist the police in their efforts to maintain law and order. It also shows selfishness; people want their interests to be met at the expense of the well-being of society. Unfortunately, many Ghanaians run away from their responsibility to the police. Instead of reporting crime and criminals, they pretend not to have seen them. While this assertion is made with regard to the police service, it equally applies to many Ghanaian institutions.

Consequent to the influence of the traditional patronage system on people's way of life, Ghanaians carry nepotistic ideas into their political life in such a way that "the formal legal structures and institutions that prescribe the normative rules for gaining and exercising power may be publicly honored but privately circumvented through informal institutions and arrangements that shape political behavior and expectations" (Attafuah 2011:6). Thus, public administration and political activities are often driven more by personal ties than formal regulations. People treat state-owned assets as their personal property and distribute them to their friends and family as they please and make policies to favor some people rather than for the advancement of the common good of society.

In addition, many Ghanaian political leaders surround themselves with family, fellow tribesmen/women and associates. Ghana's first president, Dr. Kwame Nkrumah, being a nationalist, frowned upon tribalism and fought hard to unite all the diverse people in Ghana for nation-building. He states, "I had to combat not only tribalism but the African tradition that a man's first duty was his family group and that therefore nepotism was the highest of all virtues" (Nkrumah 1968:66). Nonetheless, Nkrumah (1968:66) notes his inability to totally eliminate the scourge of tribalism. He admits, "While I believe we had largely eliminated tribalism as an active force, its by-products and those of the family system are still with us. I could not have chosen my government without some regard to tribal origins, and even, within the Party itself, there was at

times a tendency to condemn or recommend some individual on the basis of his tribal or family origin" (Nkrumah 1968:66). Just as it is inevitable to make political appointments along tribal and family lines, so the acceptance of gifts for favor also becomes inevitable.

While nepotism is not in itself bad in the traditional sense, it is unacceptable in the political sphere because it not only breeds political exclusiveness but also results in putting square pegs in round holes. Thus, while nepotism fosters the well-being of the family, in the political sphere, it does not promote nation-building.

4.3.2.5 Consequences of corruption

Corruption has many socio-economic and moral consequences on society, a few of which are outlined briefly below. First, corruption erodes moral values by perverting people's sense of right and wrong (Kunhiyop 2008:167). As corruption becomes pervasive, it makes people perceive the wrong as right and the right as wrong. Eventually, people's consciences are deadened, resulting in the loss of respect for human life and property. By tearing apart the fundamental values that bring society together, corruption threatens to undermine its moral foundation and render it unfit for the achievement and maintenance of human flourishing.

Secondly, corruption leads to disregard of law and order (Kunhiyop 2008:167). Corruption undermines the integrity of the social and legal foundations of legally established authority and hence leads to a loss of legitimacy and respect. In a corrupt society, people disregard the law because they know that they can bribe their way through and go unpunished when they break the law. Justice is sold to the highest bidder and so one can ignore the law as long as he/she can bribe judicial officers without facing any legal consequences.

Thirdly, corruption provides a conducive atmosphere for such social evils as tribalism, dishonesty, selfishness, greed, exploitation and sometimes murder (Kunhiyop 2008:167). In corrupt societies, the rich and powerful exploit the poor and the weak to amass wealth. In a corrupt society, greedy people use corruption as a vehicle for amassing wealth and satisfying their greediness. The poor may not even be able to access judicial service due to the cost involved. Even if the poor manage to take their case to court they are not given a fair hearing because of their inability to pay bribes. Consequently, many of the poor make no attempt to seek legal services when cheated, oppressed

or exploited. Again, the politically powerful use their power to make laws that favor them and allow them to exploit the vulnerable.

Fourthly, corruption serves as an obstacle to economic growth. At the macro level, corruption negatively and directly affects economic growth and development (Transparency International 2014:2). Here are some of the ways through which corruption may affect economic growth. Corruption results in the misallocation of resources as it (corruption) distorts market forces and incentives; it diverts talent and human resources away from productive activities; it increases the cost of production and reduces the profitability of investments as it acts as an inefficient tax on businesses; it may reduce the quality of resources and consequently reduce the productivity of investments; it leads to inefficiencies, which in turn leads to waste of resources and reduced efficiency of public expenditure (Transparency International 2014:2). Corruption can reduce tax collections by making it more difficult for the government to collect fees and taxes, albeit the precise impact depends on how the corrupt officials choose the regulatory burdens and nominal levies to impose.

Fifthly, corruption compromises standards and leads to poor productivity and incompetence (Kunhiyop 2008:168). In corrupt societies quality of service is not prioritized; thus, poor services become the accepted standard. The quality of manufactured goods is compromised as the inspector decides to ignore defects in the product after receiving the bribe. As corruption in the education sector promotes examination practices, unqualified students bribe their way into the next class and eventually complete school without any competencies for the job market. Imagine a student who cheats in an examination to obtain the grades required for admission into medical school; the student cheats or bribes his/her way through and finally graduates as a medical doctor. Definitely, the health care that this doctor will render to patients will be of poor quality and people's safety will be compromised. Corruption in the education sector erodes social trust, worsens inequality and undermines national development. It also undermines the formation of educated and qualified individuals, depleting the nation's workforce and leadership. Similarly, people's safety may be compromised when a building inspector accepts bribes and ignores defects in a state-funded school project or when a police officer accepts bribes and refuses to insist on the roadworthiness of a car before allowing it to move on the road.

Lastly, corruption promotes mediocrity and militates against the merit system of rewards, appointments and entitlements (NACC 2011:25). Because of corruption, contracts are given to the one who pays the highest bribe, regardless of the person's competence in relation to other bidders. According to NACC (2011:25), approximately two-thirds of private companies offer gifts to get government contracts. These companies will obviously charge a high amount for their services so that they can cater for the gifts they offer as a means of securing the contracts. A World Bank 2007 (cited in NACC 2011:25) Enterprise Survey found that 39% of companies make informal payments to public officers to get things done, 23% to get an operating license, 18% in gifts for meetings with tax officials and 61% to secure government contracts. With this situation, there is no way that incompetence and mediocracy can be eradicated.

Aside from poverty and corruption, the acquisition of land is also a major sociopolitical issue that needs attention. The following section examines this issue.

4.3.3 Land-Related Issues

4.3.3.1 Land and Inheritance

Land is an important resource in Ghana, especially because a chunk of the economy depends on natural resources. The Constitution of Ghana gives the state the power to manage all public land and the stool and skins (customary authorities or chieftaincies) families and lineages the power to manage all customary land. Stool and skin land is held in trust for the community, including their ancestors, living members, and unborn members (Sarpong 1974:117). Every clan/family has a piece of land for the members (stool land). Stool land could be acquired through first occupancy, war, service, purchase, or forfeiture (Sarpong 1974:117-118). As the member increases and segmentation sets in, the head of the family (upon the approval of the ancestors) assigns the individual members of the family portions of the family land to use (Sarpong 1974:117). The land belongs to the ancestors and is given to the living to take stewardship of it. The chief, the clan head, the family head or any person appointed to take care of the land on behalf of the people has complete ownership over the entire plot of land or other piece of common property (Kusi et al. 2022:127). He decides how, when, where, and to whom to sell the land with the help of their neighborhood surveyors.

The inheritance of lineage/stool land is determined based on the system of inheritance of the community involved. In Akan, where matrilineal inheritance is practiced, stool land cannot be transferred to the children of male family members; only descendants of female family members can inherit family land (Sarpong 1974:118). In the Ewe community, which practices patrilineal inheritance, stool lands are transferable to the offspring of male members, and not those of female family members. Land acquired through one's own effort can, however, be given to anyone irrespective of the system of inheritance. Generally, most Ghanaian tribes prohibit women from owning land. Among the Krobos, the exception to this rule is the case of unmarried daughters still living in their father's house (Sarpong 1974:118). This compares well with Israel's land tradition where one does not have the right to sell the family land unless (section 2.5.1).

The Supreme Being lives far from the earth and has delegated the ancestors to take charge of the land (Sarpong 1974:117). Since the ancestors are the real owners of the land, no living person has the right to sell the land or transfer its ownership to another clan unless it becomes extremely necessary (Sarpong 1974:117). The ancestors must be consulted for permission before the land is sold or hired out. Strictly speaking, land can never be sold even if an exchange of money has been made permanently. In any case, it is the use of the land that is sold or hired out. The earth being a deity can neither be sold nor bought (Sarpong 1974:117).

The Ghanaian traditional religious worldview provides for environmental care. Among the Bonos (Akan) going to farm on Thursdays is prohibited. The land is made to rest on Thursdays because it is believed that the earth deity (Asaase Yaa) is a Thursday born. The coastal communities (such as the Gas and the Fantes) do not "disturb" the sea on Tuesdays, the sea deity being a Tuesday born. Another environmentally-related taboo is having sexual intercourse in the bush. This evil practice is said to defile the land and make it less productive. Sacrifices are made in the form of chickens, sheep, eggs, cola nuts and mashed yam or plantain before the earth is cultivated (Sarpong 1974:116). This is done to ensure a bumper harvest. The sacredness of the earth is the reason why chieftaincy stools and chiefs are not allowed to come into contact with it (Sarpong 1974:116).

Moreover, it is taboo to defecate or urinate near water bodies as such practices pollute water bodies and make them unsafe for drinking. From the beginning to the end of the dry season, people are not allowed to set fire to the bush. Many communities have task forces to enforce this law and to

help put out the fire in case there is an accidental fire outbreak. Until recently, clearing of the bush for farming was done using the cutlass. The use of agrochemicals for farming is a recent development and this has come with various health implications (see section 4.3.42 for more on this). Similarly, the use of chemicals for fishing is a recent development.

While land is required for development, land acquisition in Ghana comes with a lot of challenges which end up making people lose interest in acquiring their own land for development. In the next section, the study considers some of the key challenges associated with land acquisition in Ghana.

4.3.3.2 Selected challenges associated with land acquisition

There are two main means of acquiring land in Ghana, either from the customary owner or from the statutory or public (Ameyaw and de Vries, WT 2021:1). Thus, lands in Ghana are managed by customary laws and traditions or by State laws and Acts. In Ghana, customary lands make up 80% of the total land area, while public lands account for 20% (18% of which are lands that the State has taken compulsorily from customary authorities, and the remaining 2% are lands that the State has been given legal rights to manage as trustees on behalf of the customary owners) (Ameyaw and de Vries, W.T. 2021:1; Kusi et al. 2022:127). Since the majority of the lands are managed customarily, traditional authorities provide the largest market base for land acquisition in Ghana, whether for private or public use. This situation is not peculiar to Ghana; other African countries like Uganda, Kenya, and Zambia have similar land management and acquisition plans (Ameyaw and de Vries, W.T. 2021:1). Quaye (2013:6) has noted that between 70% and 90% of land acquisition in African involves customary institutions. Therefore, the chiefs/kings are the main marketers of land in Ghana/Africa. This almost monopolistic nature of the land market in Ghana creates a lot of problems, some of which are outlined briefly below.

First of all, there is a lack of standardized prices for building plots in Ghana (Sarfo-Kantanka 2020:12). The price depends on the area (urban or rural, developed or undeveloped, close to the road or far from it), the custodian(s) of the land, the intended use of the land (commercial or residential), and the bargaining abilities of the purchaser, among others. The money paid for the land—usually referred to as "drink money"—has no receipt to cover it.

Secondly, in a situation whereby the chief who demarcated the land did not consult the Ghana Lands Commission before demarcating the land, buyers may face problems (such as their plots being allocated for a road or a market) in the future (Sarfo-Kantanka 2020:12). When this happens one may have their buildings demolished when the area gets developed and it is found that their building is not located at a proper place. The government usually finds it difficult to undertake such demolishing exercises because of the fear of becoming unpopular.

Thirdly, there are cases where residential areas are found to have no allocation for parks, markets, schools, hospitals, road construction, drainage systems or toilets (Sarfo-Kantanka 2020:12). This happens when the chief in question asks the surveyor to demarcate the entire land into only building plots so that he (the chief) could maximize his income. The frequent floods in some parts of the country and the Ghana Fire Service's lack of access to some houses to quench fires could be traced to the selfish interest of some traditional authorities. The affected area might not be accessible because someone refused to provide land for the road to that area due to selfishness and the desire to maximize revenue.

Fourthly, there are cases where a chief's desire to acquire more wealth yields the rezoning of land which was first allocated for recreational purposes now into building plots, hence depriving the future occupants of the areas of recreational facilities (Sarfo-Kantanka 2020:12). If the rezoning takes place when a majority of the people who have acquired the plots have not built on them, it may reduce the size of each plot to yields new plot whose numbers are usually designated N^A or N^B or N^C (N being the original plot number and the alphabets A, B, C, … being a new designation to differentiate the newly demarcated land from the original plot[s]).

The fifth challenge has to do with the multiple sales of land by traditional authorities (Sarfo-Kantanka 2020:12). Some traditional authorities sell a piece of land to one person and, later sell the same piece of land (especially if not developed) to another person. In some cases, it is not the same chief who sells the same piece of land to different people. Rather, a land that has been sold by a higher chief is then sold by one of his subordinate chiefs or a land that is sold by a divisional chief is again sold by a paramount chief. Multiple sales may also happen when the plot sold by the predecessor of a paramount chief is also sold to another person by the current paramount chief. In addition, chieftaincy disputes may also lead to the multiple sale of lands. Whatever the case may

be, the multiple sales of the same piece of land may result in clashes between the original buyer and the new buyer, a situation that may lead to a long period of litigation in the court. The situation prompted the following assertion by Ghana's President, Nana Addo Dankwa Akuffo-Addo in his address at The National Land Conference in Accra, on December 7, 2022: "Unfortunately, in our urban areas, the customary lands system has been the bane of most of our problems such as the double sale of lands, wrongful sale of lands by people without capacity, multiple claims to lands by different stools, skins, clans or families among others" (Osei 2022:np). The President further suggested that the country take a relook at land management principles and develop a model that will be more effective.

The sixth challenge—namely, the high cost involved in protecting the land against encroachers—is the direct result of the fifth problem. Suspecting that the land has to be resold to other people, many people who have undeveloped lands hire Land Guards to protect their lands (Sarfo-Kantanka 2020:12). The Land Guards are usually strong-armed men who are hired to prevent people from encroaching on other people's land. Land Guards may also be used by chiefs and family heads to protect their lands and to destroy structures on plots that have not been sold by them (the chief and the family head) (Sarfo-Kantanka 2020:13).

The foregoing discussions underline that land acquisition is one of the biggest threats to Ghana's socio-economic development. Without putting measures in place to ensure safe acquisition and successful land use, Ghana cannot achieve sustainable development that will improve livelihood and enhance poverty reduction. Ownership of land may be private, customary, public, temporary, huge, tiny, secure, or unsecured. The same problems that one faces in securing land for residential purposes are faced by those securing land for commercial purposes. Obviously, there is a need for land reforms to address the challenges identified above.

4.3.4 Environmental and health challenges arising due to mining and agricultural activities

Ghana is rich in natural resources including timber, gold, oil, diamond, bauxite and others. Ghana is Africa's largest producer of gold, followed by South Africa and Mali. The extraction of gold, for example, has created thousands of jobs for indigenous people and helped develop many parts of the country. The construction of roads, building of schools, hospitals, community libraries and public toilets are common contributions of mining companies to mining communities. While

Ghana has laws on mining and gives permits to people to mine appropriately to minimize the effects of mining activities on humans and the environment, some people take the laws into their own hands and engage in illegal mining activities. This form of mining is mostly undertaken on a small-scale basis, though not all small-scale mining activities are illegal. Illegal mining started some decades ago with a few people participating in the business. However, in recent times, Ghana's high unemployment rate in the formal sector has forced many people to join the illegal mining business (Attua, Annan and Nyame 2014:25). Despite its benefits, there are numerous ecological issues and difficulties related to mining, which are brought on mainly by the contaminating of, as well as the competition for, surface and groundwater.

4.3.4.1 Effects of Illegal Mining Activities

4.3.4.1.1 Water pollution

The first negative effect of illegal mining (galamsey) activities is the pollution of water bodies. The pollution caused by mining activities is due to the discharge of harmful substances like cyanide and other chemicals used in the extraction of mineral ores into water bodies. Illegal mining involves extracting gold-bearing ores from the ground and processing them to recover the gold, typically using crude methods. Galamsey activities are usually undertaken by relatively few individuals, particularly the youth within rural communities. The chemical (mercury) used for Galamsey and the waste heaps constitute a major source of long-term contamination of soil and water bodies (Attua, Annan and Nyame 2014:25). These substances may either seep into subsurface water or flow into the environment (surface water bodies), thereby posing danger to the nearby communities that source water from these water bodies for drinking and other domestic uses (Duncan 2020:1). They leach or seep into the soil and travel to contaminate of water bodies and soil in nearby communities, subsequently accumulate in foodstuffs like cassava, fruits, vegetable, yam, and fish— a major source of dietary protein (Mantey et al. 2020:2).

In a recent study on the pollution of the Fena River (in the Ashanti region) due to illegal mining activities, Albert Ebo Duncan discovered the six heavy metals; namely, lead (Pb), cadmium (Cd), copper (Cu), mercury (Hg), iron (Fe), and zinc (Zn) in the water (Duncan 2020:1). The amount of these metals in the water samples studied were higher than the safe drinking water guidelines. Thus, the Fena River was made unsafe for drinking and domestic purposes due to mining activities.

In a study of selected water bodies in Kwaebibirem, Atiwa and East Akim communities of the Akyem-Abuakwa Traditional Area in the Eastern region of Ghana, it was found that "concentrations of arsenic, mercury, total dissolved solids, turbidity, water colour, nitrate-nitrogen and phosphate-phosphorus are higher in most rivers/streams used by communities as drinking water sources, compared to World Health Organization limits for drinking water" (Attua, Annan and Nyame 2014:24). This means that these water bodies have been rendered unsafe for drinking as a result of galamsey activities in the area. Water pollution also kills aquatic animals.

4.3.4.1.2 Air pollution

Furthermore, the chemicals used for galamsey pollute the air. Inhaled mercury causes neurological damage and other serious health problems for the miners and other people in the community (Mantey et al. 2020:2). The effects of mercury emissions on children may include both physical and mental impairments as well as compromised development (Mantey et al. 2020:2). Breathing mercury vapor while working in a mine increases the risk of developing a variety of health issues, including cognitive decline, renal damage, and neurological damage (Mantey et al. 2020:2). Mercury is emitted into the air when amalgam is roasted, which might cause respiratory problems if consumed (Mantey et al. 2020:2).

4.3.4.1.3 Land degradation and deforestation

Illegal mining activities also cause land degradation, loss of biodiversity and other natural resources, and deforestation (Biney et al. 2022:2). The fact that forest reserve helps in reducing ecological challenges such as air pollution, global warming and drought is indisputable. Ghana is blessed with many forested areas to ensure that the country enjoys a good ecosystem. Unfortunately, surface-mining activities have led to the clearing of most of the forest reserves in the country. As mining activities reduce the vegetation cover, desertification sets in. Mining is, therefore, a major contributor to deforestation and desertification in Ghana. From 2001 to 2021 Ghana experienced a deforestation rate of 5% with greater portions of deforested areas found in areas where illegal mining and intense agricultural activities took place (Biney et al. 2022:2). The increase in deforestation increases the amount of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere which not only makes it unsafe to inhale but also leads to global warming and drought.

Mining companies make efforts to reclaim the land by replanting; however, the change in the natural ecosystem due to mining activities and the destruction of the biodiversity makes it difficult to regain what is lost (Biney et al. 2022:2). In a study on the impact of mining on vegetation cover in the Prestea Huni-Valley Municipality a significant decline in the land cover (forest and open vegetation) was observed over the last few decades with intense decline between 2002 and 2016 (Biney et al. 2022:9). The deforestation rate increased tremendously between 2002 and 2016 because attention shifted to the mining sector during this this period.

4.3.4.2 Effects of the use of agrochemicals in farming

Ghana is a country of about thirty-one million people, most of whom engage in agricultural activities. Agricultural activities contribute immensely to the country's economy. Cocoa, for example, contributes 30% to the country's exports, employing about 45.0% of the workforce (Osei-Owusu et al. 2022:255). Though agricultural practices such as bush burning, overgrazing, and indiscriminate felling down of trees among others affect the environment negatively, the use of agrochemicals is what the present section examines. The term "agrochemical" refers to any chemical product that increases agricultural production, including fertilizer, hormones, fungicides, insecticides, and soil treatments (Biswas et al. 2014:32).

In Ghana, agrochemicals are commonly used in cocoa, oil palm, cola nut, coffee and cotton farms, vegetable (e.g. tomato, onion, pepper, okra, cabbage, lettuce, carrot) and fruit production (e.g. papaya, citrus, avocado, mango, cashew, pineapple). Common pesticides used on vegetables in Ghana include one or a combination of the following: pyrethroids, organophosphates, carbamates, and organochlorines. The use of agrochemicals for agricultural activities in recent times has yielded increased food supply and improved public health (Fianko et al. 2011). Agrochemicals are effective for keeping crops free from damage.

4.3.4.2.1 Improper use of agrochemicals

A survey conducted among selected farmers in the northern part of Ghana identified six key contributors to the unsafe use of pesticides by farmers. First, some farmers continue to use banned or restricted chemical pesticides, such as aldrin, dieldrin, endosulfan, lindane, Dichlorodiphenyltrichloroethane (DDT), methylbromide and carbofuran (Northern Presbyterian

Agricultural Services and Partners [NPASP] 2012:4). The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has noted that about 30% of pesticides that were sold in 2007 were either imported illegally or unlicensed (NPASP 2012:6). It is estimated that 10-15% of imported agrochemicals as illegal, either imported by unregistered dealers and/or are expired or adulterated (NPASP 2012:6). The survey found four of the banned/restricted chemical (including DDT, aldrin, lindane and dieldrin) in certain agrochemical shops in the Upper East Region. Another survey involving 206 cocoa farmers in the Western North and Central Regions of Ghana indicated that 30% of the farmers used unapproved agrochemicals for their agricultural activities (Osei-Owusu et al. 2022:255). The commonly used unapproved chemicals listed in the study are *Sumitox* (chlorpyrifos), *Akate Suro* (diazinon), *So Bi Hwɛ* (suspected cocktail), *Lambda Super* (lambda-cyhalothrin), *Consider* (Imidacloprid), and *Carbamult* (Promecarb), the first four having the most devastating impact on human health(Osei-Owusu et al. 2022:255).

Second, some chemicals have been cleared by the government for use which are also dangerous to human health. The report lists atrazine, paraquat and chlorpyrifos as examples of such chemicals (NPASP 2012:4-5). Although it is against the law to import, market, and use unapproved pesticides, this rule is not strictly implemented, and the punishment is insufficient to prevent illicit activity, which largely accounts for their widespread usage and sale. These ones are highly patronized by farmers because they are sold at a relatively cheaper price than the approved ones, they are considered more effective than the approved ones and they are not known by some farmers as banned products (Osei-Owusu et al. 2022:260).

Third, there is the misuse of agrochemicals by some farmers (NPASP 2012:4-5). Some farmers spray their crops too close to the harvest (and so their harvested crops are contaminated for consumption), exceed the prescribed dosage, or spray food crops with pesticides meant for cash crops and/or spray stored crops with pesticides meant for growing crops. Others use obsolete or expired pesticides and mix different chemical pesticides without consulting specialists in that area.

Fourth, the conditions under which most farmers apply these chemicals expose them to health hazards (NPASP 2012:5). Many of them do not use personal protective equipment, PPE (such as hats, gloves, goggles, respirators, protective boots, and coveralls) or fail to use recommended equipment while spraying their crops. Miyittah et al. (2022:7) have found the use of protective

equipment during the application of these chemicals relates directly to one's level of education. Most of the people who do not use any PPE are those without any formal education. Among other factors, financial constraints also contributed to the non-use or partial use of the PPEs. The problem is compounded by the practice where children are made to apply the chemicals with little or no supervision. In almost all cases, farmers inhale chemicals and have spillage of chemicals on the body. This may lead to skin irritations, headaches, nausea, general body weakness, itching, difficulty in breathing, chest pain, skin rashes, dizziness and sexual weakness (NPASP 2012:11; Miyittah et al. 2022:8). The situation may be so severe as to take a person's life.

Fifth, there is a widespread practice of storing agrochemicals near to, or even in, food storage rooms, making foodstuff get contaminated by these chemicals (NPASP 2012:5). Miyittah et al. (2022:6), in a survey, found that most of the farmers (32%) stored their agrochemicals in the bush, 17% stored theirs in their living rooms, 7% in the shop, 3% in the kitchen and 4% in the animal house. Most of the farmers indicated that their common and usual way of disposing of empty pesticide containers and remnants from spraying equipment was throwing them in their farms (Miyittah et al. 2022:6). This practice may lead to food poisoning and eventual death.

Sixth, the lack of adequate training, advice and education given to farmers by the Ministry of Food and Agriculture (MOFA) and its extension service is also a contributor to the health issues associated with the use of agrochemicals in Ghana. The report notes that only less than half of Ghanaian farmers have received adequate training on the use of agrochemicals. In the Upper East region, 43% of farmers sampled were found to have had some training on the safe use of pesticides. Of these, a little more than half had received their training from the MOFA and the rest from local NGOs.

4.3.4.2.2 Effects of improper use of agrochemicals

The improper use of agrochemicals has a lot of negative consequences. First of all, it leads to food poisoning. Some recent deaths related to pesticide poisoning can be noted and outlined. In 2010 twelve farmers died in the Upper East Region (in Garu) and six three were affected to various degrees and treated at the hospital due to consumption of food and water poisoned by agrochemicals (NPASP 2012:13). This situation prompted the then Regional Director of Health Services for the Upper East, Dr. Koku Awoonor-Williams, to send a memorandum which he

headed "Protocol for managing people who report food poisoning due to glysophate" which was sent to all health service directors in the region. In it, the Director stated: "Glysophate is a key component of herbicides used by farmers. We are increasingly getting reports of people ingesting food contaminated with herbicides and/or weedicide this season" (NPASP 2012:13). Dr. Awoonor-Williams further stated that most of the "natural" death of a farmer in Ghana could be due to pesticide poisonings which could not be detected due to the difficulties associated with its diagnosis, especially if the doses are low (NPASP 2012:13). In the same year in Bawku West, 5 people died and 54 hospitalized from eating food contaminated with chemicals (NPASP 2012:13). In another household, 2 people died and 9 got poisoned from contaminated food (NPASP 2012:13). In Talensi-Nabdam one household recorded the death of 2 people and the poisoning of 8 others from contaminated food while in another household, 21 people got poisoned from contaminated food (NPASP 2012:13).

Secondly, the improper use of agrochemicals causes water pollution in many communities (Onwona-Kwakye 2020:32). Research shows that the use of pesticides contaminates water bodies, fish, vegetables, food, and soil. Onwona-Kwakye (2020:32) studied 156 farmers in various locations in Ghana and discovered that many farmers mix the agrochemicals close to the rivers, streams and canals. After work, some of them wash their spraying equipment into these nearby water bodies. By mixing pesticides with water, cleaning tanks near and in rivers, and throwing pesticide containers into rivers or woods after use, among other behaviors, aquatic habitats may be damaged. Storage of pesticides in homes and bedrooms for an extended period raises exposure hazards and the potential for intoxication.

Thirdly, food contamination may also be the result of the improper use of agrochemicals. There are cases where people spray their vegetables (especially tomatoes) and then harvest them immediately for consumption to prevent them from rotting. Such vegetables eventually get to the kitchen with residues which threaten the lives of consumers. In the fishing industry, the use of chemicals for harvesting is one of the major unethical practices that pollute the environment and threaten human life. The long-term effects of these chemicals on consumers include cancers, birth defects, and infertility.

In addition, the improper use of agrochemicals causes the destruction of the environment and the killing of certain organisms. Pesticides harm the populations of insects, spiders, and birds that naturally ward off pests and pollinate crops, either directly or indirectly (by reducing the number of flowering weeds that insects visit). Air pollution is also caused by the use of agricultural chemicals. The chemicals also kill vertebrates (e.g. rodents, reptiles) and freshwater aquatic species (such as snails, water fleas and aquatic plants) when residues of the chemicals dissolve into water. Agrochemicals also affect pollinators and soil organisms.

Against the background of the exposition of the political context, poverty and corruption, the researcher now turns to the Christian response to the political situation in Ghana. The section begins with an account of the introduction of Christianity in Ghana by Western and American missionaries and ends with an appraisal of the prosperity theology which is the most influential form of Christian response to Ghana's economic situation.

4.4 Christianity and the Ghanaian political situation

4.4.1 Brief Account of Christianity in Ghana

According to church historians the planting of Christianity in Ghana was pioneered by Portuguese explorers, merchants and Catholic missionaries who arrived at the coast in 1482 (Agbeti 1986:4). Agbeiti (1986:3-4) gives reasons for the visit. First, the Portuguese wanted to explore beyond the Canary Islands and Cape Bojador and find a route to India. Second, they were looking for Christian trade partners. Third, their visit was meant to help them determine the strength of their Muslim enemies. Fourth, they wanted to establish partnerships with African Christian princes to help them fight their Muslim enemies. Fifth, and most importantly, they desired to evangelize Africans. Led by Don Diego d'Azambuja, the Portuguese hoisted their flag on a tree, built an altar and had their first Eucharistic service under the tree. They visited the chief of Elmina, Nana Kwamena Ansah, and introduced their faith to him. Nana Ansah was encouraged to accept the faith and enjoy, among others, economic and military benefits (Agbeti 1986:4). The chief accepted the faith and offered them a parcel of land to build a fort and a chapel. The ensuing years witnessed the activities of other Catholic missionaries of the Jesuit, Dominican, Franciscan, Augustinian and Capuchin orders (Kpobi 2008:68). Later, other missionary agencies (including the Basel, Bremen, Wesleyan and Anglican missionaries) joined in the evangelization of the Gold Coast.

The missionaries introduced formal education, orthodox medicine, African mother-tongue development and literacy, certain species of agricultural crops and Bible translation projects, all of which helped in the planting of the Christian faith and the expansion of the church. Through formal education, Ghanaian indigenes like J. W. De Graft Johnson, J.P. Brown and John Mensah Sarbah were equipped to pioneer the formation of the Aborigines' Right Protection Society which opposed British imperialism. The reduction of various Ghanaian indigenous dialects into writing and the production of mother tongue Bibles and other Christian literature allowed Ghanaians to access God's word in their own language and hence, understand it better in their socio-political context.

Nonetheless, the missionary approach used by early missionaries had a lot of setbacks that led to the emergence of African Initiated Churches. With an ethnocentric mindset, the missionaries considered everything African as inferior and contradictory to the gospel. They did not take the African worldview seriously in their pastoral, hermeneutical and theological models. Consequently, the Christianity presented to Ghanaians failed to address the spiritual, psychological, health and economic needs of the people. They forbade their converts from partaking in traditional festivals, singing indigenous songs, drumming, clapping and dancing. They forced their polygamous converts to divorce all their wives which created a lot of socio-economic problems. They severed their converts from their family ties by forcing them to live in special communities built for Christians, thus undermining the African communal sense of life. Further, the structure of the formal education they introduced ended up segregating the educated from the non-educated.

Responses to this approach to ministry were in the form of confrontations and the search for an African-brewed Christianity to establish a meeting point between the African culture and the biblical worldview. The failure of the historic mainline churches to meet the needs of Ghanaians resulted in the emergence of spiritual churches (Akan: *Sunsum sɔre*) which emphasized the power of the Holy Spirit. The activities of three prophetic figures—namely, Prophets William Wade Harris (the "Black Elijah" of West Africa), John Swatson and Sampson Oppong—prepared grounds for the spiritual churches and later Pentecostal churches. The African Initiated Churches (AICs) insisted that "Christianity must become incarnate in African cultures; that Christ is present in every human situation, in every community and every human tradition…that Africans must

experience Christ in their own cultural tradition" (Shorter 1975:22). These churches addressed the existential issues of Africans and allowed for an African expression in Christians theology and praxis (Koech 2008:66). In addition to satisfying the spiritual needs of indigenous converts, the AICs broke the Western dominance over the church in terms of theology, worship style, governance and culture (Koech 2008:66). They allowed their members to sing indigenous songs, dance, drum and clapping at worship services. The AICs gained roots because of the use of the African mother tongue in their liturgy, music and sermons. They were built around charismatic figures whose charisma attracted a large following (Koech 2008:66). The lack of theological education, lack of succession plan, and syncretism were key setbacks that made these churches short-lived, in spite of their effectiveness in addressing African socio-economic and religious needs. The spiritual churches were influential but short-lived.

In the early 1930s, a new brand of Christian ministry emerged in Ghana through the activities of the indigenous precursors of Pentecostalism (named above) and European and American Pentecostal missionary activities (Foli 2006:73). Ghanaian Pentecostal Christianity is characterized by "its belief in the experience of the Holy Spirit and by the normalization of charismatic experience in religious practice" (Asamoah-Gyadu 2013:17). In other words, Pentecostalism emphasizes work of the Holy Spirit and the direct experience of the presence of God by the Christian. This brand of Christianity stresses such pneumatological experiences as speaking in tongues, revelations, prophecies, healing, and exorcism or deliverance. Pentecostal Christianity is experiential, not creedal. Unlike the Spiritual churches which were syncretic, the Pentecostal churches are more orthodox in belief and biblically-based in discipline and practice. The Christ Apostolic Church International, which started in 1917 as the Unity Prayer Group, became the first Pentecostal denomination in Ghana (White 2019:1). Today, some prominent Ghanaian Pentecostal churches include the Church of Pentecost, the Assemblies of God Church, and the Apostolic Church.

From the 1960s and 1970s onward, Charismatism (Neo-Pentecostalism) also emerged as a new brand of Christianity. Charismatism, an offshoot of Pentecostalism, emerged from the influence of Pentecostalism on historic mission churches. Prior to Charismatic Christianity, there were a number of renewal groups that had been established in most of the historic mission churches. These groups later provided the founders of Charismatic churches which, like Pentecostal Churches,

highlight Holy Spirit baptism, speaking in tongues, healing, deliverance and prophecies (Larbi 2001:296). These churches attract middle and high-class people, often use English as the medium of communication, are concentrated in urban areas and are led by charismatic figures.

In recent times a new brand of Christianity has emerged that is characterized by the leader's frequent visit to the spiritual world, the use of Ghanaian indigenous language (sometimes with Pidgin English) and emphasis on spiritual directions for deliverance and breakthrough purposes. Referred to as "New Prophetic Churches" in this study, these churches are "problem-solving churches" or "solution centres" where people go basically to find solutions to their problems. The leaders live extravagantly as evidenced by their outfits, mansions, expensive cars, and use of security guards to protect them.

As a predominantly Christian country, many Ghanaians look up to the church to provide solutions to the socio-economic and political challenges facing the country. One of the key responses of many Ghanaian churches to the socio-economic challenges is the prosperity theology. Though the prosperity theology may also be found in other strands of Christianity, it is more prominent in Pentecostal/Charismatic circles. The Pentecostal/Charismatic group forms a high percentage of the Christian population in Ghana, constituting about 44% of Ghanaian Christians (GSS 2021:96). With this large following it is obvious that Pentecostal/Charismatic Christianity has a huge influence on Ghanaian religious landscape. It is against this backdrop that the researcher finds it appropriate to examine the effectiveness and suitability of this popular gospel as a panacea to Ghana's challenges identified earlier in this chapter. The next section focuses on prosperity theology.

4.4.2 The Prosperity Theology

4.4.2.1 What is Prosperity Theology?

According to Kasera (2012:25), the term prosperity may refer to "literal wealth, success, and honor" or an upward movement "in something desirable: the state of succeeding or flourishing, [especially] financially." Prosperity theology can be defined as the belief that "God has met all the needs of human beings in the suffering and death of Christ and every Christian should now share the victory of Christ over sin, sickness and poverty" and that one can have access to these blessings

through "a positive confession of faith" (Gifford 2007:20). Thus, the doctrine of prosperity holds that everyone who professes faith in Christ will experience material prosperity and good health and that these blessings can now be activated through financial contributions to church leaders and the affirmation of one's faith. In other words, God has provided for all believers the solution to poverty and ill health because Christ's suffering and death enabled him to triumph over sin, disease, and poverty. As hinted earlier, this type of teaching is mostly found in Pentecostal–Charismatic Christianity, though it is not completely absent in the historic mainline churches.

Prosperity theology thrives in Ghana because it draws on traditional African spirituality. The African religious worldview considers God as the source of all blessings, including money, good health, progeny, plentiful harvests, and peace. The widespread inequality, poverty, poor governance, and natural and man-made disasters that plague the Ghanaian context make Ghanaian Christians pray to God for material success. The promise of success, therefore, makes prosperity theology acceptable to Ghanaians. Prosperity preachers usually consider supernatural causes, witches, demons, and generational curses as major causes of poverty and then see institutional failure, crime, bad parenting, and corruption as minor causes of poverty (Kwateng-Yeboah 2017:49). Given this understanding, they direct most of their ministerial efforts to healing and deliverance to free people from the effects of malevolent forces and hence enhance their chances of becoming successful in life.

Prosperity theology has four main emphases; namely, material prosperity, seed sowing, faith healing, and the positive confession of faith. The first two are considered in this study because these two are more directly related to the socio-economic and political development of the believer and the society. According to proponents of the prosperity gospel, God wants every Christian to be financially successful and God has blessed the faithful with material prosperity, especially financial assets like personal and professional success (Goliama 2013:143). Pastor Oyedepo (1997:7), for instance, contends that it is never God's will that a believer should be poor. He reasons as follows: "Why … do you think that your lack excites God? Which father is excited to see his children begging all around? Have you ever heard somebody give a testimony, saying, 'I thank God, two of my sons are beggars?'" (Oyedepo 1997:7). Based on this, he declares, "Your children's children will never beg! I want you to know that the prosperity God has planned for you has nothing to do with your profession, your career or your family background" (Oyedepo 1997:7)

Prosperity preachers preach that God's promise to make Abram rich (Gen. 12:1-3) which was fulfilled (13:2) is available to anyone who, by faith, is Abraham's descendant (Gal. 3:13-14, 29); hence one cannot operate under the blessing of Abraham and be poor (Otabil 1992:24). Duncan-Williams (1990:58, 102) argues that God never intended for (us) or anybody else in humanity to be ill, afraid, feeling inferior, losing, or failing. God never intended for (us) or anybody else in humanity to be ill, afraid, feeling inferior, losing, or failing. Referring to Genesis 1:29-30 he adds that God's word is a tree of life that brings wealth, dignity, advancement, and joy. In addition, he establishes a link between material achievement and the *imago Dei* (1:26) (Duncan-Williams 1990:58, 102). Other passages from which prosperity preachers derive their teachings include John 10:10 (where Jesus promises abundant life), 2 Corinthians 8:9 (Paul's assertion that Jesus became poor to provide his followers with riches) and 3 John 2 (where John prays for physical wellbeing for Gaius even as he was well spiritually).

Another important aspect of the prosperity theology is the principle of seed sowing (Ayegboyin 2006:78). The right of a believer to receive God's blessing, according to prosperity preachers, is realized when "seeds of faith" are given to a spiritual leader, who then shares with the giver God's plan for their success (Okosun 2018:83). According to prosperity teachers, the act of giving money or other gifts to church leaders sows seeds in their ministry which will later be reaped in manifolds (Maura, Mbugua and Piper 2012:9ff). Based on this belief, followers of prosperity teachings are motivated to donate huge sums of money to their churches with the aim of having multiple folds of their donation. Giving to the church or a church leader, therefore, becomes a means to economic empowerment. People can give to the church and expect their miraculous wealth the following day. It is in this light that Oyedepo (2007:76) argues the only way to obtain "enduring wealth, as every other means of acquiring riches is time-tagged" is to give sacrificially to the church. Paul's sowing and reaping metaphors of 2 Corinthians 9:6-11 (cf. Luke 6:38) are considered as supporting the seed-sowing principle (Heward-Mills 2009:1). They also seek support from Jesus' promise of a hundred-fold reward to his followers (Mark 10:29-30). The mathematical formula for the human-divine transaction is made explicit in Copeland's (as cited by Cotterell 2013:17) assertion that: "You can give $1 for the Gospel's sake and $100 belongs to you; give $10 and receive $1000; give $1000 and receive $100,000." The hundred-fold principle in the "sowing and reaping" business encourages a lot of believers to give to their churches.

Tithing is another form of giving that is considered to attract prosperity. That tithing gives one access to heaven is underlined in Adeboye's (2003:44) assertion that: "Anyone who does not give the required amount in tithes will not enter heaven. You have been told by some that you won't receive blessings from God if you do not pay your tithes. This is accurate, but on a more serious note: If you do not provide your tithes, you will not enter heaven." The salvific significance of tithing is a huge encouragement for people to tithe faithfully. Heward-Mills (2009:1) contends, "[n]ot paying your tithes separates you from [the] most basic principle of sowing and reaping. When you do not pay your tithes, you harm your finances because you take away the foundations of your prosperity." Heward-Mills (2009:1) further argues that without paying tithe labor will be fruitless. With such teaching, believers are highly motivated to give to the church.

4.4.2.2 Prosperity Theology and Ghana's Development

Prosperity theology has both positive and negative impacts on the socio-economic development of society. In the sections that follow, some of these contributions are outlined.

4.4.2.2.1 Positive Contributions

Prosperity-preaching churches contribute to the nation's economic development by offering services like microfinance institutions, housing facilities, portable drinking water, and road networks (Gifford 2004). The operation of these and other facilities owned by prosperity preaching churches provides work for a large number of people, which lowers the unemployment rate in Ghana. Notably, some prosperity-preaching churches solicit for funds foreign aid from supporters to cover the costs of some of the development initiatives they carry out (Kwateng-Yeboah 2017:82). There are many people whose lives have improved as a result of these techniques. The progress of the nation also benefits financially from these facilities.

Additionally, prosperity-preaching churches sometimes urge business ownership (Kwateng-Yeboah 2017:84). Some prosperity preachers host workshops for the public where incisive lectures are given on subjects including creating jobs, composing a business plan, and looking for financial support, among others. Members receive financial assistance (in the form of a loan or gift) to help young entrepreneurs launch their own businesses. Many people have gained their financial independence and are now able to hire others. According to one follower of prosperity theology,

she received working capital from her pastor and prophetic direction to help her succeed (Kwateng-Yeboah 2017:85).

Furthermore, some preachers of prosperity give to organizations like schools, orphanages, and jails. According to Gifford (2004:115), the International Central Gospel Church (ICGC) NGO, Central Aid, has "been assisting excellent causes—for a cardio-thoracic unit, the physically handicapped, breast cancer, the blind and...the Trokosi women since the 1990s." These donations not only improve the lot of those residing in these facilities but also enable them to have extra money on hand to take care of other urgent needs. Furthermore, some churches provide free medical evaluation, diagnosis, and treatment of illness for their members and/or selected populations.

Prosperity preachers have contributed to the field of education. To ensure that education is available to as many people as possible, some prosperity-preaching congregations have founded educational institutions. These institutions exist to nurture individuals with integrity and moral character to fill leadership roles in the future (Frakue-Quarshie 2017:98). The majority of these schools offer very flexible payment options for tuition and other costs, enabling even the most disadvantaged students to finish their degrees. Some of these organizations, along with the churches that founded them, help disadvantaged youngsters by purchasing school uniforms and providing food, and housing.

Again, some churches offer financial aid. For instance, to assist gifted yet deserving students in Ghana's secondary, technical, and vocational institutions, Pastor Otabil launched a nondiscriminatory scholarship program. Five hundred (500) academically endowed but financially challenged students received scholarships totaling 200 million cedis under this scheme (Gifford 2004:115-116). In Ghana, poverty is a big barrier to education. By awarding scholarships to qualified students, the founder of the ICGC is helping the nation lower its illiteracy rate and eventually raise the level of living for its residents. This has a huge positive impact on the nation's development.

Despite these positive results of prosperity theology, this form of theology has some negative consequences. The next section below outlines these setbacks.

4.4.2.2.2 Negative consequences

The prosperity gospel is not an effective solution to Ghana's socio-economic woes. First, it is based on faulty hermeneutical principles. For example, a close reading of 2 Corinthians 8:9 shows that the riches that Paul is talking about are not material wealth but spiritual wealth that believers possess by virtue of their position in Christ. Again, the prayer of John for the physical well-being of Gaius (3 John 2) is erroneously taken as a divine promise of prosperity. The context of this passage shows that it is a form of greeting/prayer rather than a doctrinal statement. The Greek term *euchomai* translated as "pray" means "a desire" and *euodousthai* means "to journey successfully", "to succeed", "to be led along a good road," or "to get along well" (Lieu 2008:268). Both terms make the prosperity-reading of this text faulty.

More so, the prosperity gospel promotes greed and the accumulation of wealth in that it portrays material wealth as a key indicator of human worth and a sign of God's blessings (Mashau and Kgatle 2019:4). Originally formulated in a Western context, prosperity theology promotes individualism and opposes the African communal sense of life (Goliama 2013:336). In chapter two the study found that human flourishing requires the sharing, not the accumulation, of wealth. This is the reason why Wesley encouraged his audience to share as many resources as possible. In Ghanaian society where many people live in poverty, human flourishing cannot be realized without interdependence, interconnectedness and sharing of wealth.

Further still, prophecies about prosperity are sometimes rooted in selfishness. For example, businessmen/women are prophesied to prosper, but the reasoning behind this is that when they do, the prophets will also prosper. Some of these business people make hasty business decisions based on the prophecies received, thinking that these prophecies are signposts of success. However, a significant number of them ultimately give away the little they have, wait expectantly for a hundred-fold return on their investment but never have it (Mashau and Kgatle 2019:4). Some of these church leaders, therefore, use God's gift as a selling point. Such prophets are servants of their bellies, not servants of Christ. In the end, the economic gap between the minister and the church members keeps widening as the poor members continue to donate money to the church with the hope of receiving it back, a hope that is not all the time realized. Kwateng-Yeboah (2017:87) gives this report about a certain prosperity-preaching church in Accra: "Comparatively, while the

prophet seems enriched by receiving money from believers as seed sowing, the majority of the church members experience an insignificant change in their economic conditions."

Since prosperity theology says that wealth is a sign of God's blessing and he desires that every believer have it, the poor suffer psychologically because they consider themselves as being under God's curse. Again, because wealth is considered as a sign of divine blessing prosperity gospel indirectly promotes unethical means of acquiring wealth. It does not matter how one acquires wealth; one's wealth is definitely an indicator of divine favor. Further still, prosperity theology does not promote hard work. Rather, it promotes a get-rich-quick attitude by proposing that one can become rich overnight after donating to the church. That is, perhaps the reason why many Ghanaian youth are engaged in betting, internet fraud and ritual murders for wealth.

Prosperity gospel fails to provide an effective solution to Africa's underdevelopment because they attribute Ghana's situation basically to spiritual factors like witches, wizards and curses, and by so doing fails to address the pertinent issues of corruption, negative work ethics, oppression, injustice, bribery, and institutional failure, among others. It is therefore not surprising that in spite of mega revival programs organized by prosperity-preaching churches (usually the Penteco-Charismatic churches), Ghana continues to experience increasing rates of corruption (Atiemo 2016:7). In his article, Atiemo compares the mega revival meetings that go on in Ghana as a cloud that gather without giving rains (Atiemo 2016). His point is that when the church meets it is expected that a revival will happen whereby people will go home revived and reformed to live a victorious Christian life that is controlled by the Holy Spirit. However, on the contrary, the more revival meetings are organized the more evil abounds. These meetings focus on fundraising and the display of the leader's charisma and power instead of focusing on the word of God. There is no proper discipleship of church members in most prosperity-preaching churches. Members are, therefore, not rooted in the word of God and are easily blown by all sorts of doctrinal wind. Unless prosperity preachers deal adequately with the root causes of Ghana's underdevelopment, their message will not have an overall positive impact on Ghanaian society.

In addition, prosperity preaching has often been associated with the commercialization of the gospel (Ayegboyin 2006:78). In addition to the "give and flourish messages," most prosperity preachers fully commercialize the gospel through the selling of "breakthrough handkerchiefs"

(also called mantles), holy water, miracle soaps, anointing oil, prayer manuals, breakthrough pomade, *sobolo* (spiced hibiscus tea) and vow-making. The seriousness of the issue of commercialization of the gospel made the South African Commission for the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Cultural, Religious and Linguistic Communities conduct an official investigation into the activities of some prosperity gospel preachers (Kgatle 2017:1). The exercise aimed at probing how these churches were generating and spending their revenues. In Ghana, many people have suggested that the church should be made to pay taxes because it has become a commercial and profit-making institution.

The foregoing discourse reveals that the prosperity gospel is not biblically grounded and culturally suitable for the Ghanaian context. It does not only promote materialism, extravagance, and love for riches but also encourages contentment, simplicity, modesty and sharing of resources with others. Again, it is not socio-economically and politically effective for dealing with Ghana's woes. Given this fact, there is a need to provide an alternative model for dealing with Ghana's underdevelopment. This fact will guide the theological formulation in the next chapter.

4.5 Conclusion

This chapter set out to bring out socio-economic and political issues that need attention in contemporary Ghana. The main issues considered include poverty, corruption, incompetent leadership, land acquisition challenges, ecological problems, and an ineffective education system, among others. Prosperity theology was also critiqued regarding its effectiveness in dealing with Ghana's socio-economic and political problems. The study found that though a popular theology, the prosperity gospel is not biblically grounded and socio-economically effective in dealing with Ghana's woes. This underlines the need for an alternative Christian approach to the issues raised. One thing that came out strongly in this chapter is that many commercial activities go on in Ghana that really militate against the country's efforts toward flourishing. Until now, people erroneously consider such activities as ethically acceptable. The use of unethical means of mining and cultivating crops which eventually threatens the lives of many people and destroys the environment is a case in point. Against this backdrop, the next chapter will formulate a political theology for Ghana and outline what implications it has for the contemporary Ghanaian Christian community.

CHAPTER FIVE

A CONTEXTUAL POLITICAL THEOLOGY FOR GHANA

5.1 Introduction

The purpose of the previous chapters was to provide a contextual framework for the study. Using the biblical data, historical data and political situation of contemporary Ghana as contextual backgrounds, the study proceeds to formulate a contextual political theology to provide the road map for achieving a flourishing political economy in which everyone serves honestly and wholeheartedly; the education contributes effectively to national development; natural resources are used sustainably for the common good of the society; human dignity and rights are respected and protected; policies are formulated to protect the weakest in the community and the citizenry is spiritually/morally mature. The theological formulation is organized around the following thematic areas: governance and nation-building, education, work, wealth and the environment.

5.2 A Political Theology for Ghana

5.2.1 Theology of Governance and Nation Building

Ghana's sociopolitical challenges are partly caused by incompetent and inefficient leadership. In Chapter 4, the problems of mediocrity in leadership and corruption in the political circles were noted as contributing to Ghana's underdevelopment. As a remedy, this section formulates a theology of governance and nation-building to address Ghana's leadership challenges.

5.2.1.1 Defining Leadership

Every nation/society, organization or institution needs leaders with the necessary expertise to facilitate the continual existence, growth, development and fulfilment of the goals of the group. Therefore, a political theology for contemporary Ghana needs to begin with the concept of leadership. Of the different publications on leadership, the research found Bickes' and Yilmaz's (2020) "Leadership Theories" useful for this section because it comes from two experts in leadership studies and the publication is a recent one. The word "leadership" derives from "lead," (meaning to be first or to be a pioneer), "-er" (meaning, to take responsibility) and "-ship" (meaning, to have a skill or expertise) (Bickes and Yilmaz 2020:4). Leadership then means using

the necessary skills to identify the goal of a group, determining the right path the group will take and leading them to realize the goal (Bickes and Yilmaz 2020:4). Leadership is, therefore, a process, not an event. Leadership requires followership; without followership, there can be no leadership. Therefore, leadership needs the approval of followers, not simply the individual's own claim to be a leader.

A leader is a person "who changes the paradigms of people, creates a vision, motivates followers with internal resources, engrains the idea that everyone has something to contribute to the shared goal, leads them and directly affects the flow of events and results" (Bickes and Yilmaz 2020:1). Several deductions can be made from this definition. First, the leader is an active participant in his/her group, institution or society. He/she does not only instruct others to work but takes an active part in the running of the society. This view collaborates with the Akan saying that "If the royal does not fight, the slave will run away from the war front." This maxim draws from the war imagery where a village gathers for war. The royal is expected to participate actively in the war to motivate the rest to fight. This traditional view of leadership prepares the Ghanaian to appreciate the need for the leader's active participation in all that goes on in society. Secondly, a leader must be visionary; that is, have a clear, distinctive and specific view of the future. This vision must be clearly communicated to the followers so that they can appreciate, own and support it. In a country like Ghana, the need to have a strategic plan that directs the country toward a better future is critical (more will be said on this later in the chapter). Thirdly, the leader must have managerial expertise. He/she directs people and manages resources. Finally, being a leader is not a fixed position. Expiry of one's term of office, leadership failure, retirement, ill-health or death may necessitate the replacement of a leader with another. The temporal nature of leadership should inform people's attitudes toward leadership.

Where do leaders get their power from? The next section considers this question.

5.2.1.2 The source of political power

Governance is about power and so the right place to start a discussion on governance is to find out the source of political power. In the study of Romans 13:1, it was noted that there is no other genuine source of political power than God. Writing to the ancient Roman society Paul argues that God all authority comes from God. Paul's assertion is rooted in the doctrine of divine sovereignty

which is not in doubt among the Ghanaian Christian community. He encourages Christians to live in peace with all people as long as it is possible. He further urges Christians to contribute the quota to the development of their society, for example, through the payment of taxes. From the passage, one might reason that whether a person occupies political authority through the democratic election process, through election by kingmakers and installation process, or by appointment by a higher authority, his/her authority derives from God. While this might have sounded in for the first-century Roman community, one needs to be critical in its application to the 21st-century society. The Roman context was different from the contemporary context in terms of its composition, political ideology and political model. The difference in context between the ancient Roman society and contemporary Ghana should signal one of the potential pitfalls as one applies this passage to the modern world. The question one has to ask is how Paul's statement should be applied to the contemporary Ghanaian context.

Since not all Ghanaians are Christians one has to consider the issue from a broader perspective. In chapter four, it was noted that pre-colonial Gold Coast (now Ghana) was organized and ruled on a tribal/ethnic basis. There was no centralized national government. With the introduction of Western democracy by the colonial masters, with its centralized government and indirect rule, the traditional system of government was weakened. Ghana's political history (in the post-independent era) has been characterized by military *coup d'état*, bloodshed, oppression and exploitation indicating that political authority may also come through violence. Nonetheless, the country has had four democratic experiments since 1957, the last starting in 1993.

Democracy is a system of government in which the people have the supreme power which they exercise directly or indirectly through a system of representation involving periodically held elections. In the modern democratic dispensation, political power lies in the hands of the electorates. Political parties are formed, candidates a chosen, campaigns are made and elections are held to determine the leader. The candidate's ability to appeal for votes results in the transfer of power from the electorates to him/her to lead. Democracy is not an ideal political system. Plato (section 3.2.2) rightly notes that this system of government allows people to get into the corridors of power by beguiling voters with appearances and nebulous speeches. Plato further states that democracy may lead to a situation whereby leaders are elected based on emotions rather than careful analysis.

In contemporary Ghana, political propaganda, lies, vote buying and election rigging are among the possible ways of gaining political power. It is widely known that politicians make sacrifices for various beings to win elections (Mayer 1998:17). They also seek protection, fame and success from evil powers (Mayer 1998:17). The situation is sometimes worse when it comes to traditional leadership because it is normally for life, and not based on terms of office. Potential chiefs bribe kingmakers, seek support from their personal or societal gods and make all sacrifices to get power. One wonders how such acquisition of power can be said to have come from God. In spite of its shortfalls, democracy is still the most appropriate form of government. Ghana cannot be governed by a monarch because of the ethnic plurality. There is no way that all the people in Ghana will agree to come under the leadership of one king. Military rule is not a good option because it is often associated with injustice, dictatorship, human rights abuse and bloodshed, among others. The modern Ghanaian society differs completely from Plato's society in which he found monarchical rule as the best form of government. The researcher supports the continuation of a democratic form of government in Ghana.

However, in the opinion of the researcher, Paul's idea that political power comes from God cannot be applied without any contextual translation and differentiation in pluralistic contexts and pluriversal discourses. The Roman model of the state is something completely different from the modern states, making it very difficult to maintain the Pauline paradigm in a contemporary state. In fact, if God is really the one who appoints and rules through every leader, then God is not doing a good job in Ghana, given the sociopolitical situation discussed in chapter four. The political theology proposed by this study advocates for the recognition of the fact that many people have acquired power through various means (both ethical and unethical means). Again, since not all political leaders are Christians, one should not expect that the society would be run like the church. In the researcher's opinion, the religious plurality in Ghana requires interfaith dialogue to find solutions to the leadership challenges. Christians are encouraged to work together with people of other faiths to know how best society can be transformed through the exercise of political power.

5.2.1.3 Should Christians avoid politics?

In the preceding section, malpractices such as political propaganda, lies, vote buying, and election rigging were mentioned as not uncommon in the Ghanaian political landscape. The study also

noted that some politicians seek assistance from evil sources to acquire power. This raises the question of whether or not Christians should participate in the political activities of their country. In the view of the researcher, the fact that political activities sometimes include anti-Christian practices should not make Christians exempt themselves from political activities in society. Christians are part of society and whatever goes on affects them as well. Christians are not exempted from the bad roads, lack of electricity, economic inequality and any other sociopolitical challenges that affect the society. For this reason, they need to take an active part in politics and set examples for non-Christians. That is the sense in which they can really be the light and salt of the world (Matt. 5). One can agree with Boyo (2021:172) that "For the church to dissociate itself from the governance operations of sociopolitical affairs is a refusal to bring the power of the gospel into confrontation with the ever-increasing abuse of power and corruption exemplified by the political regimes." There are many examples from the Bible and church history to support Christian participation in politics. Chapter 2 of this study saw Prophet Elijah confronting Ahab for his evil deed (1 Kings 1 Kings 21:1-16), Jeremiah rebuking Israel's leaders (Jer. 22:1-9) and Amos prophesying doom over the leaders of his society because of the unjust treatment of the poor (Amos 5:1-27). More importantly, the same chapter examined Jesus's active involvement in the politics of his day. In Luke 4:18-19, Jesus revealed the focus of his ministry as people suffering various forms of bondage and oppression which include economic oppression (poverty), physical oppression (injustice and oppressive government) and demonic oppression. Among others, chapter three also examined Augustine's two cities, Aquinas' political thoughts, Martin Luther's political ideologies, Wesley's engagement with the public space, and Moltmann's political activities to prove the need for Christians to be active participants in the political processes of their societies.

Many of the issues that these personalities addressed in their societies are present in contemporary Ghana. The church can contribute to the quest for solutions through active participation in the country's political system. Rather than considering it as a worldly system that must be avoided, Christians must consider politics as a system they have to take responsibility for and as a means for transforming society. Christians are part of the society and have the responsibility to inculcate biblical governance principles that will promote just and righteous governance in the society. Here, Augustine's (section 3.4.2) assertion that the society is occupied predominantly by fallen human beings should remind the church that things work differently in the society than in the church. Cognizant of this fact, the church should not abandon politics, but must rather use it as an

opportunity to participate in eth *Missio Dei* and hence transform the world. In this light, the church should see its role in politics from a missionary perspective whereby Christian politicians live out exemplary lives and provide a biblical model of justice and righteousness for the world. "In this way the church will be influencing the society from within, thus becoming salt by identifying with and yet being distinct from the society" (Boyo 2021:173). Thus, Christians must recognize the appropriate authority vested into the governments of this world (and, naturally, other authority structures) while at the same time recognizing the greater authority of God. Augustine's doctrine of two cities (cf. section 3.4.3) is applicable here. The doctrine requires the Christian politician to demonstrate to the world that there is a greater authority under whose sovereign will leaders rule. The recognition of this higher authority prepares leaders to be accountable in their leadership (see section 5.2.1.5 for more on this). Finally, in all that they do politically, Christians must strive to promote peaceful co-existence with all people and harmonious living. They must explore co-existence beyond their immediate political party lines. This requires submission to the ruling authority, which according to Augustine (section 3.4.3), typifies one's ultimate submission to God.

Political leadership is expected to affect the life of the society in many ways. The next section considers this issue further.

5.2.1.4 The communal benefit of leadership

The communal benefit of political and religious leadership was evident in the biblical and historical perspectives of leadership (examined in Chapters 2 and 3 respectively). For example, Jesus taught his disciples to lead through service to society (section 2.9.2). Aquinas also argues that political choices and actions need to be governed by the principles of love and the common good (section 3.5.3). Exercising political or religious power for the common good of the people in the society means addressing the needs of all the people no matter their status, race, religion gender, or age. The common good includes protecting life, preserving society, improving standards of living and promoting peaceful co-existence, among others. The need to rule for the benefit of all is underlined in the following assertion by Busia (cited in Anane-Agyei 2014:37): "the ultimate goal of politics is the creation of conditions, which will give every individual the opportunity to be the best he can as a human being and as a member of a community." The services rendered must, for example, lead to the provision of good roads, access to power supply, access to potable

water, access to affordable and quality health facilities, access to education, and other amenities. Given this understanding, the quality of one's rule must be judged by the quality of the lives of the citizenry, the psychological well-being of the citizenry as well as "the degree of cooperation, harmony and brotherhoodness [and sisterhoodness] in our community life as a nation" (Busia cited in Anane-Agyei 2014:104). The leader's arm must be all-embracing, ensuring that the poor are catered for and not marginalized, the weak are supported and not left behind and the voiceless are heard (Adeyemo 2006:546). The leader is expected to fight against injustice, human rights abuse, racism, sexual exploitation and socio-economic and political discrimination or segregation, and protect the weak from oppression and exploitation. A unifier and a peace-builder, the leader must appreciate the unity and common identity of the human race.

The communal benefit that must accompany one's exercise of political power needs to be discussed further to provide an antidote to corruption and misappropriation of state resources prevalent in contemporary Ghana. Here, the study derives lessons from Ahab's exploitative and oppressive use of his political power to unlawfully and mercilessly murder Naboth to take over his family land (1 Kings 21:1-16). First, political leaders should not use their power of influence to their own advantage. Corruptive practices result simply from the use of public authority for private gains. This is the reason why Plato opposed the private ownership of properties by leaders. He argues that leaders can easily be influenced by wealth to rule for themselves and not for the benefit of the people in their community. The researcher does not subscribe to this idea of barring political leaders from owning private properties. They have families to cater for and having their own properties can enhance their ability to fulfill this responsibility. However, there is a need to check how leaders acquire properties. Leaders ought to declare their assets at the time of assuming power and after their term of office for scrutiny.

Second, Christians should use their prophetic voice to speak against corruption in the society. According to Boyo (2021:173), for the church to retain its prophetic voice, it must "be at the forefront in condemning and attacking sin and evil … by reprimanding wrongdoers and not heaping general negative comments upon the government." The political protests of Elijah, Jeremiah and Amos against injustice and corruption should encourage Christians to confront antisocial practices in the society. One needs discernment in the process and must be ready to pay the price for standing for the truth.

Third, Christians must offer themselves to serve in political positions and use their Christian values to transform society (as argued earlier). They should serve as pillars of righteousness against the evil in society, by insisting on the right thing and exposing evil without fear or favor. In all, the leader's selfless leadership must contribute significantly to the socioeconomic progress and transformation of the society. To summarize, the formulation and implementation of political strategies need to be informed by their contribution to addressing the challenges of society. Political authority, therefore, needs to emancipate people from slavery, rather than enslave them.

Leadership without accountability may lead to abuse of power. In chapter four of this study, the point was made that many leaders in Ghana are not adequately accounting for their stewardship of power. Therefore, it is important to consider the issues of accountability in leadership. The section below is meant for this.

5.2.1.5 The Principle of Accountability

The principle of accountability is important in leadership because political power does not originate from the leader (Lawanson 2006:1073). Fundamentally, leaders are granted power by followers (the electorates). The concept of accountability requires judicious, frank and honest use of power. Leaders must give accounts of their leadership to their subjects on a regular basis. In the traditional political setting, this is normally done at traditional festivals. The leaders also make projections for the ensuing year after accounting for their stewardship of power. The accountability regarding traditional leadership is meant to establish a relationship of trust between leader and followers and to avoid the wrath of the gods and the ancestors on whose seats the chief/king sits. It also fosters interpersonal relationships and encourages the subjects to work harder to increase their productivity.

In Ghana's centralized democratic setting, accountability of one's power comes during the State of the Nation's Address (in the case of the President) and during some social gatherings (in the case of parliamentarians), during speeches and prize-given days (in the case of heads of primary and secondary education), and others. While this is a good practice, it does not allow the subjects to ask questions and to probe issues that they find unclear. Also, the leaders chose to speak about what they wanted their subjects to know. They do not give an account of every aspect of their activities. Going forward, leaders must set special days aside to meet their subjects on the issue of

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accountability alone. On that occasion, they should give accounts of every aspect of their leadership and give adequate time for interactions with their subjects. The principle of accountability reminds leaders that they are leaders because there are subjects under them. Leadership exists only in the context of a group of people. Without followers, there is no leader. Therefore, leaders must consider their followers as an important part of their lives and hence treat their followers as people who have given them the power to rule over them. If that is the case, then there should be broad consultation during decision-making. This will help to facilitate grassroots participation in the process, make things clearer to the subjects, and then restore and enhance public trust and patriotism.

Therefore, political leaders are encouraged to stop the use of political authority for private gains, the exploitation and oppression of people by political leaders, the mismanagement and misappropriation of state funds by those in authority, and the use of human sacrifice to retain political power. These do not show proper stewardship of power and do not in any way contribute to the development of the nation. Ghanaian leaders are further encouraged to use their power in accordance with the purpose for which they have been given their positions so that they may not be found wanting on the day of accountability.

Another aspect of leadership that is crucial to succession is mentoring. The mentoring role of the leader needs emphasis in modern society where many leaders feel insecure when they see someone around them with leadership potential. The mentoring responsibility of leaders is examined briefly below.

5.2.1.6 The Mentoring Responsibility of Leaders

Great leaders are more concerned about raising young leaders than maintaining their own position (Madimbo 2020:348; Aboagye-Mensah 2020:51). Such leaders do not consider the rise of potential leaders as a threat to their position. They welcome and train potential leaders to take over from them. Thus, successful leadership requires the generating of new leaders. One of the most important functions/tasks of a leader is to ensure responsible succession (Madimbo 2020:348). In view of this, the leader needs to identify the critical issues of leadership in his/her area of jurisdiction and figure out the leadership needs within his/her so that proper and adequate measures can be put in place to address them. One such need is mentorship. In Mark 10:35-45, which was

studied in chapter two, Jesus played his mentoring role by consciously and carefully teaching his disciples about the Christian model of leadership. He taught them both in words and in practice. Even though the disciples were not running a country, nor striving to become politicians in the Roman Empire, Jesus' mentoring role serves as a paradigm for contemporary leaders to mentor future leaders both in word and in practice. To effectively fulfil this mentoring responsibility, contemporary Ghanaian leaders should acknowledge that they cannot do everything; they should be ready to hand over power to other people after they have done their part. There is an Akan saying, "A human being came to do his/her part and not to do everything." This means that no one can do all that needs to be done. Once one has done his/her part, there is the need to give way for others to also do their part.

Mentoring involves an accomplished and well-respected person (the mentor) coaching and instructing a less experienced person (the mentee) who is eager to learn and grow in a particular area of leadership. Therefore, Ghanaian leaders are required to live above reproach to qualify as good mentors. The leader has to identify potential leaders and develop them for the future. They must identify mentees and establish a relationship with them, and then, having identified their potential and gifts, guide these mentees through education, advice and counselling to nurture and develop their potential and gifts. The upcoming leaders must also avail themselves of being mentored by experienced ones. And going forward, the attitude of some leaders always desiring to be in the helms of affairs, and hence refusing to train others must stop.

5.2.1.7 Leadership failure and its remedy

In the previous chapter, leadership failure was seen as a key contributor to Ghana's political challenges. Given this fact, a political theology for contemporary Ghana cannot be holistic and effective without considering leadership failure. The subject of leadership failure is important because it does not only affect the individual (leader) but also causes the failure of teams, societies, organizations and institutions. Of the various approaches to leadership, the transformational leadership model is the most common in the Ghanaian political landscape. This leadership theory emphasizes the leader's ability to cause a change in individuals and social systems. This leadership model has four main foci: Intellectual stimulation (the leader's role in encouraging innovative and creative thinking among his/her followers to challenge the status quo and bring new experiences

and growth) and individual consideration (the leader's ability to build positive relationships with every follower and to help them realize their potentials) (Sendjaya 2015:183). The other two foci are inspirational motivation (the leader's role in motivating followers to be committed to the organization's/state's vision) and idealized influence (the leader's ability to model expectations and actions for employees, thereby earning their trust and respect) (Sendjaya 2015:183). This leadership theory usually leads to the perception of the leader as a superhuman who has extraordinary leadership ability to turn situations around. While this view is not completely wrong, it sometimes leads to leadership failure if not checked. There is, therefore, the need for serious scrutiny to ensure checks and balances. The purpose of this section is to examine the heroic leadership model and how leadership failure may be addressed.

5.2.1.7 The Heroic Approach to Leadership

Most Ghanaians consider their leaders as people with extraordinary abilities to turn things around as the solution to the country's woes. However, this is not usually the case. What, then, should the public know about leadership, especially the heroic view of leadership? Fourie's *Why Leaders Fail and What it Teaches Us About Leadership* serves as a useful resource for answering this question. Two factors informed the researcher's decision to engage this resource. First, the resource is a very recent publication and so covers contemporary trends in leadership. Secondly, the author works at the University of Pretoria's Albert Luthuli Centre for Responsible Leadership which focuses on leadership, making the author's contribution to the current discussion vital. Given the common Ghanaian perception of leaders as heroes with extraordinary skills, extreme charisma and unmatchable abilities, the study focuses on the heroic view of leadership. This model considers the leader as a hero who is naturally endowed with supreme intelligence, and so always comes up with brilliant ideas and directives which when implemented would inevitably bring success. The heroic approach to leadership is not an unfounded idea. Evidence exists in many organizations and societies for the success of leaders with heroic qualities. Such leaders normally use their extraordinary qualities to influence and inspire their followers to work toward the shared goal of the group. Nonetheless, having heroic qualities is not a guarantee for successful leadership.

Fourie (2023; e-version) identifies the following three elements of heroic leadership. The first perspective is that leaders with charismatic qualities are always the best and most effective. The

second element of the heroic bias is the assumption that good and successful leaders are people with exceptional power and influence. More often than not, the leader's exceptional influence is attributed to his/her charismatic qualities. With this understanding, the leader, not the followers, is considered as the one who "determines the force and flow of influence" (Fourie 2023:np). The third element is the leader's ability to turn difficult situations around in favor of his/her followers. This element of heroic leadership became prominent in the COVID-19 era when societies looked up to their leaders to act in the turbulence to restore their nations to normalcy. In some cases, this element of heroic leadership means maintaining the status quo amid difficulties. The heroic leadership model, though has its strengths, sometimes promotes "excessive leader agency" which hinders the organization's chance of achieving better results (Fourie 2023:np).

With the heroic leadership philosophy, many people in Ghana vote based on the charismatic features of candidates. There is a common saying that many people vote based on the physical features of the candidates. With the heroic view of leadership, many leaders have become "untouchable." In the previous chapter, it was noted that corruption in the political arena is not usually dealt with effectively. This situation is not only due to the corrupt nature of Ghana's judiciary but also because of the misconception that leaders are "untouchable." In religious circles, a lot of people are abused and not dealt with because the culprits are considered heroes who never make mistakes. People follow weird/strange instructions from their religious leaders and eventually become objects of exploitation and abuse. Given the popular Ghanaian misconception that leaders are infallible, further analysis of the heroic view of leadership is necessary.

Fourie (2023:np) argues that the common expectation of leadership infallibility is misguided. The assumption that leaders are infallible makes most subjects fail to recognize the failures of their leaders or to realize their leaders' failures only when it is too late. Fourie (2023:np) argues (convincingly, in the researcher's view) that heroic bias carries the seed of its own destruction, meaning, heroic leaders' own abilities and features somehow contribute to their failure. His argument is organized according to five dimensions of leadership, namely, leaders' personality, leaders' influence, leaders' bias towards the ingroup, leaders' relationship with their organization's culture, and how leaders handle risk.

Before considering the areas in which leaders fail, there is a need to deal with the concepts of "power" and "influence" in the context of leadership. While both power and influence can alter the actions and behavior of followers, power uses force whereas influence is persuasion. Influence must result from "the interaction between a deeply collective social process and the agency of the leader" rather than the use of force to cause people to act in a certain way (Fourie 2023:np). Power is a potential influence; without power, a leader has no influence. Yet, the leader needs to know the limit of their power, or else they will abuse it.

An unguarded use of power makes leaders impose their will on their followers, which eventually leads to their failure because it makes them consider themselves perfect in all respects and hence refuse to listen to advice. Fourie (2023:np) argues that "contrary to our expectations of how leaders obtain and exert influence, the creation and practice of influence is not a leader-centric endeavor but contains a deeply collective dimension." Unfortunately, the social dimension of the influencing process is not seen in many societies and institutions because the leader is usually considered as the most prototypical group member—that is, the most important, distinctive, noticeable person in the group. Such a notion tends to breed individualistic tendencies and feel-centeredness on the part of the leader who then easily abuses his/her political power to his/her advantage. Therefore, leaders must not overestimate their influence. Under ideal conditions, the leader's tendency to abuse his/her power is checked by the followers' idiosyncrasies and the structure of the organization in which he/she operates. Followers' guidance, advice, and support also shape the leader's yield of power. Similarly, organizational structures place a limit on the extent to which the leader can act. This means that the leader's influence is collective rather than individualistic and leader-centric. Yet, leadership failure is common partly because these checks and balances are not effectively implemented, perhaps due to the heroic approach to leadership.

In what ways do leaders fail? Fourie outlines pragmatic failure, ethical failure, moral failure and legal failure as the four kinds of leadership failure. Pragmatic failure occurs when the wrong means is chosen to achieve a goal. For example, a pragmatic failure occurs when one chooses to walk to one's neighbor staying about 200 kilometers away rather than going by car. Pragmatic failure also relates to such complex issues as determining the right means by which a failing organization can be revived. When an organization fails because its scope and objectives lack clarity, the failure is a pragmatic one. Ethical failure occurs when an organization fails because it fails to adhere to its

own set of standards. The causes of this failure include not only failure to adhere to the organization's technical safety and compliance standards but also failure to remain true to its core identity. For a developing country like Ghana, the overemphasis on the importation of foreign goods to the extent of collapsing the local industries may be attributed to ethical failure.

Moral failure has to do with actions that "fall short of corresponding to reasonable discourse-based norms that should be valid for everybody" and "that everybody could potentially agree to without force" (Fourie and Horne cited in Fourie 2023:np). An example will be the use of deception (such as false scales) by a company to market its products or the use of fraudulent means in the financial space. Legal failure occurs when an organization acts outset the rules and regulations governing it. No organization operates without a legal framework. It is expected that, unless this framework is revised, all operations in the organization should conform to it.

All these leadership failures, associated with all leadership models but more especially with the heroic model, are found in Ghana in many forms. In the next section, the study offers strategies for avoiding leadership failure.

5.2.1.8 Remedy for leadership failure

5.2.1.8.1 Accepting the leader's fallibility

Leaders must accept that they are fallible (capability of being wrong) (Roberto 2019:100). Even though leaders are deemed to be the best people in the group, with the necessary experience, understanding and competence, they are fallible because of human imperfection. The fallibility of leaders, especially in Ghana/Africa, is evident in the state of affairs in most contemporary Ghanaian/African societies. No leader, regardless of one's charismatic features and abilities, is free from mistakes. A key step in dealing with a leadership crisis is for leaders to accept their fallibility and work toward addressing this challenge. Leaders need not ignore their weaknesses; they need to be aware of their weaknesses and strive to avoid being brought down by these weaknesses.

One may argue that admitting mistakes may sometimes undermine followers' competence-based trust in their leader (Sendjaya 2015:65). Yet, it has many positive results. Accepting the fallibility of leaders would reduce the followers' expectations of the leader and hence, enhance their agency.

The followers' awareness of their leader's fallibility will also motivate them to be active in the decision-making and also lead them to avoid unrealistic expectations (Roberto 2019:100). By accepting their own fallibility, leaders are urged to encourage the participation of their followers in the governing process and to plan with them. Thus, the leader's acceptance of his vulnerability promotes "support and collaboration" (Sendjaya 2015:65). When leaders portray themselves as flawless, they imply that they can do it all by themselves. In addition, the leader's acceptance of his/her fallibility promotes psychological safety and encourages others to talk about their mistakes in pursuit of innovative ways of addressing them (Roberto 2019:100). Furthermore, when the leader shares his/her imperfection, the followers easily identify with him/her and builds solidarity with him/her. Finally, voluntarily disclosing a weakness prevents others from inventing one for the leader and allows the leader to be open to new learning and opportunities (Sendjaya 2015:65).

5.2.1.8.2 Accepting the leader's boundedness

More so, leaders need to embrace their own boundedness/limitations/finitude (McManus and Perruci 2015:218). Leaders are not infinite; they are finite beings with their own limitations. Unlike God who acts sovereignly, the human leader acts within some limits. The leader is not an independent but an expansive agency. Rather, he/she is bound by the identity, preferences, values and expectations of the group they lead. The leader has to act in a certain way to appeal to the followers to continue to invest their power in him/her. Similarly, leaders are bound by their organization's goal, vision and policies. Leaders who desire to succeed must acknowledge this fact and then behave accordingly. To be successful, the way the leader thinks or acts is not only shaped by their character traits and abilities but also by the expectations of their followers or organization.

Leaders who embrace their limitations ask the right questions, involve the right people and create the right environment for success. By embracing their boundedness (and not shying away from it), leaders not only stand a better chance of being more realistic about their potential influence but are also more likely to recognize their leadership as existing in a specific context comprising specific followers, groups, and institutions that have specific identities, values, and aspirations, in a specific setting. This enhances creativity, innovation and pragmatism, all of which contribute to the realization of the goal of the group, society or organization. Finally, embracing one's

boundedness is a sign of respect for one's followers, a way of appreciating them better and an indication of one's readiness to involve the followers in governance.

5.2.1.8.3 Cultivating realistic self-perception

Also, leaders need to cultivate a realistic self-perception (Fourie 2023:np; Popper 2001:16). One of the causes of leadership failure is leaders' overestimation of their personalities and abilities. Leaders need to guard against being influenced negatively by their personality traits. Fourie (2023:np) is right to say "Overly charismatic, charming, and self-confident leaders are sometimes subclinical narcissists. Overly rational, calculating and objective leaders could be subclinical psychopaths, and some overly strategic and confident leaders exhibit the signs of Machiavellianism."

Cultivating a realistic self-perception helps leaders cultivate an environment of inclusion and acceptance (Popper 2001:16). Also, having realistic self-perception requires humility, one of the hallmarks of successful leadership. A leader with the right self-perception is not only humble but ready to accept input from his/her followers.

5.2.1.8.4 Political education

Aquinas (in section 3.5.3) rightly notes that governance is no child's play. It is something that requires mature minds. The metaphor of the father's leadership in the family was used to illustrate this point. Political maturity, in Aquinas' thought, means knowing the ultimate good in life and taking the right steps to achieve it for society. It is immaturity that makes some leaders follow their worldly passions and personal ambitions, thus following secondary aims and leading the wrong way. The political situation in contemporary Ghana is characterized by political immaturity on the part of many people in governance (see Chapter 4). Therefore, political education has something to offer to address leadership failure in contemporary Ghana.

There is a need to educate the general public, but more especially those in leadership and those who aspire to be leaders, on principles of leadership. The leadership training/workshop must be led by experts in leadership and it must be done devoid of sentiments. Objectivity must be the hallmark of such education. To achieve the purpose of this program, political leaders must do away with the "I-know-all" posture and be ready to learn irrespective of their position. The country may

also consider adding the concept of leadership to the educational curriculum as a compulsory course undertaken in the Basic schools. Such political education must be practical whereby participants are allowed to lead in "small" ways to acquire adequate skills before they are made to lead in "bigger" ways.

Educating the masses on their political rights and how they should go about their political responsibilities will improve our electoral system and the factors that are considered during elections. When the public is well educated, politics will no longer be about the use of false promises, good appearances, political sentiments, and ethnic or religious affiliation to attain power, but it will be about the demonstration of political expertise in addressing issues of communal concern. This way, the nation can attain sustainable development.

5.2.1.8.5 Servant leadership

Power in Ghanaian politics is usually associated with the negative exercise of authority by individuals who take advantage of the vulnerability of some citizens to exploit and oppress them. Politicians seem to forget their promises to the electorate, the moment they assume power. Many politicians easily become corrupted by power as evident in the numerous cases of political corruption in the country as well as various cases of abuse of political power where leaders lord it over their subjects (Boyo 2021:182). Because of the advantages and privileges they enjoy as leaders, most Ghanaian politicians do all they can to retain their power. Our political leaders refuse to serve; they actually wait to be served by others. This model of leadership is not biblical and normally results in a leadership crisis. To remedy this situation, there is a need to project and promote a servant leadership model at all levels of leadership.

Contrary to the worldly leadership model of the leader waiting to be served, Christian leadership is about service to God and humanity. Thus, Augustine (section 3.4.3) rightly argues that life in the city of God is all about service. Therefore, Christian leaders need to demonstrate their preparedness to live in this city (of God) eternally by leading selflessly in humility and service. The biblical data gleaned in Chapter 2 also underlines that a leader's status is a measure of the magnitude of service rendered to society. Jesus epitomized this principle by exercising power in meekness and death on the cross, to reveal his "power as constructive power, self-giving and service that bring others into being" (Asante 1999:74). Authority, from Jesus' example, is simply

selfless, other-centered and sacrificial service to God and humanity. Greenleaf (2002:27) asserts that: "The servant-leader is servant first. It begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve. Then conscious choice brings one to aspire to lead." Thus, leadership is not about position, titles and lordship but rather about service in humility.

Ghanaian political leaders must learn from Jesus's paradigm, seeing their position as a privilege to serve rather than an opportunity to exploit their subjects. Like Jesus, who condescended, incarnated and lived among humans, serving them and not letting them serve him, political leaders must come to the level of the ordinary Ghanaian and serve the society. The service perspective of leadership is not new to the traditional Ghanaian worldview. The Akan word for "minister" is *soafoɔ* (literally, the one who carries something). The designation of the leader as *soafoɔ* underscores the responsibilities that the leader carries on their shoulder to address the needs of their subjects, a concept that echoes the Messiah's concern for the burdens of his subjects (cf. Isa. 9:6). The expression "the government will be on his shoulders" (in Isa. 9:6) is a Hebrew idiom meaning "to carry the burdens of the people in the kingdom." The climax of this burden-carrying activity was his crucifixion on the cross, an event that made him carry the sin of the world. Leadership must, therefore, not be perceived as a position of prestige and privileges but as a position of responsibility that requires one to show genuine care and compassion for their followers through service. By accepting leadership positions, a person becomes the primary bearer of society's burdens. This does not mean that only the leader must care for the needs of the society. Rather, it means the leader must lead the crusade for improved living standards in society.

Finally, servant leadership is "supportive, with authority at the bottom of the pyramid and followers being served by the leader and subject to the nurturing oversight of the leader," as opposed to worldly leadership which is "suppressive with authority [concentrated] at the top of the hierarchy and followers being lorded over and dictated to by those in authority" (Estep 2005:46; see diagram below). This principle derives from Jesus' teaching about leadership in Mark 10:35-45.

Gentile/worldly model of leadership   *Servant model of leadership*
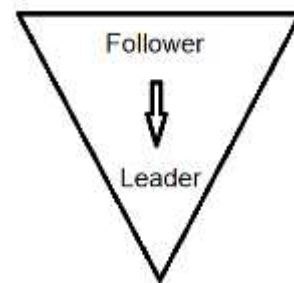
Fig. 5.2: Leadership models

This model of leadership checks the abuse of power because it prevents the leader from dictating to the subjects. In Ghana, the servant leadership model has the potential to make the ordinary person the greatest possible benefit from the political activities that go on.

5.2.1.8.6 Maintaining moral integrity

Leadership failure can also be checked by maintaining moral integrity (Aboagye-Mensah 2020:50; Estep 2005:50). Earlier, the study identified moral failure as one of the key failures in leadership. Augustine (section 3.4.3.1) also identifies the lack of moral integrity as a major cause of political problems in many societies. Integrity can elevate or demote a leader. A leader with charisma without integrity is bound to fail. On this Clinton (cited in Ayandokun 2021:62) writes, "At the heart of any assessment of biblical qualification for leadership lies the concept of integrity, that is, uncompromising adherence to [a] code of moral, artistic, or other values that reveals itself in sincerity, honesty, and candor and avoids deception or artificiality. The God-given capacity to lead has two parts: giftedness and character. Integrity is at the heart of character." The researcher thinks that such social cankers as corruption, bribery, exploitation and oppression can be dealt with if leaders in Ghana act with integrity. Yet, it must be said that character alone is not enough; one has to combine other requirements for successful leadership to be able to succeed. For example, character cannot be a substitute for competence.

Going forward, there is the need to deliberately and consistently make efforts to change the attitude, behavior and thinking of leaders toward their followers and the state. The Ghanaian leadership culture needs to be changed "through a combination of leadership modelling, civic

education (formal and informal), rewarding good behavior, strict enforcement of laws and sanctions against deviants, all aimed at creating patriotism, non-xenophobic nationalism" and others (Adei 2018:13). To attain a holistic growth, the appointment of leaders in Ghana should be guided by the prospective leader's level of integrity, and competence, rather than mere charisma, and commitment to the ruling party. By so doing Ghana can win the fight against poor leadership. In conclusion, rather than seeing leaders as heroes with exceptional and charismatic qualities to influence and maintain their followers while retaining the ability to act in the midst of turbulent times to turn around without fail, one must appreciate that every human being has limitations and hence can fail at any time. It is important for leaders to identify their own failures and to work toward managing them. This way, leaders stand a better chance of succeeding and followers stand a better chance of benefiting from their leaders.

Leaders will struggle to succeed if they have no vision. Therefore, the next section examines the issue of vision in leadership.

5.2.1.9 The Visionary Quality of Leadership

The success of every institution and society depends largely on the vision of the leaders (Madimbo 2020:346). Every nation or organization needs a clear vision and a development agenda to progress (Adei 2018:14). Ghana's chances of surmounting her political problems depend on its ability to identify the country's challenges that lie ahead and strategically formulate and implement a comprehensive and sustainable plan for human resource development following the overall national development agenda (Safo-Kantanka 2021:450). In preparation for the formulation of the national development agenda, leaders in Ghana need to know how things really are as opposed to how things appear to be. If they consider the shadow in Plato's analogy of the cave (in section 3.2.4) as the reality and do not seek the reality, it will be impossible for them to provide solutions to the country's problems. This calls for an honest, deliberate and all-inclusive analysis of the country's political situation. In such a consultative meeting, participants must avoid the blame game, or else they cannot unravel the true state of the nation let alone proffering solutions to her challenges. Having diagnosed the country's problems the formulation of the agenda then follows.

The formulation of this national development plan should be done through consultation with all major stakeholders of the nation, including political parties, various ministries, religious bodies,

Non-Governmental Organizations, traditional leaders, and trade unions, among others. The national development agenda spells out what should be done, how it should be done and when it should be done. For example, the agenda may propose that Ghana uses 10 percent of its resources from 2025 to 2030 to construct roads and railways, 8 percent to improve school infrastructure, 9 percent to improve health facilities, 13 percent to build factories, 8 percent to improve power supply and so on. The study proposes a 50-year national development plan divided into short-term, medium term and long-term goals.

The agenda must bind all political parties that come into power to follow and implement it. Such a plan should be inspired and informed by the desire to offer every citizen, the best opportunity that a country can offer its citizens for full happiness and a fulfilling life. The plan must be developed, promoted and executed in the context of peaceful co-existence of all the different people groups in the country. It must deal adequately with socio-economic inequality in Ghana, especially between the northern and southern sectors, environmental stewardship, proper waste management system, effective and appropriate education system, health delivery and other areas relevant to the development of the nation.

5.2.1.10 The Principle of Political Inclusiveness

Even though it is not a perfect system, democracy which was introduced by colonial masters is now accepted and practiced by contemporary Ghana. Democracy depends on the participation and representation of all citizens in a state's democratic institutions, activities and processes. The key features of democracy are freedom of assembly and association; property rights; freedom of religion and speech, citizenship; voting rights and the right to life and liberty, among others. Democracy is characterized by the politics of inclusion, consensus building, bipartisanship and compromise (Gyekye 2011:3). Therefore, a political system that does not provide enough space for inclusion cannot be regarded as true democracy.

The pluralistic nature of Ghana particularly in diversity in ethnic groups, dialects spoken, religious affiliations, cultures, and political traditions offers the country a better opportunity to develop through the politics of inclusion. Political inclusiveness refers to "the state of politics in which the ruling party recognizes that the governing process can be best enhanced by tapping all the skills in the country regardless of their sources" (Asante 2007:78). The Ghanaian traditional worldview

values political diversity and interdependence in governance. That is why in the traditional setting the chief governs together with his council of elders. No traditional ruler rules on a case without adequate consultation with the members of his council.

The need for political inclusiveness is expressed in the Akan philosophical utterances "Wisdom is not the preserve of one person", "Two heads are better than one" and "One person does not rule a nation/state." This means that it is not just one specific person who can be said to be wise or for that matter, wisdom is the preserve of members of one particular political party. The utterance underlines that members of the non-ruling parties may have equally good, if not better, ideas and arguments to offer. Therefore, one should not consider his/her ideas and arguments as the best and final without considering other opinions. Furthermore, these utterances enjoin leaders to willingly accept criticism and give due consideration to suggestions rather than being dogmatic about their own views. In addition, the utterances underscore the need to provide alternatives for electorates to exercise their God-given free will. The provision of alternatives can only be made possible through a multi-party political system. Therefore, the multi-party democratic system is more suitable for the Ghanaian context than a one-party system. The need to encourage the multi-party democratic model as opposed to a one-party system highlights that collective wisdom is greater than that of an individual. There is a need for inclusiveness because each one has the capacity to spawn ideas, demonstrate wisdom, and make some useful contribution with respect to governance.

Political inclusiveness thrives on bipartisan politics (Gyekye 2011:4). Also known as nonpartisanship, bipartisanship is a political situation, in which opposing political parties find common ground through compromise (Harbridge 2015:20). Ghana's political history shows that the strict adherence of member of both the ruling and opposition parties to their political ideologies makes it difficult to achieve bipartisanship (Gyekye 2011:4). Such factors as ideological rigidity, mental rigidity and conservativeness in political orientation makes consensus build a challenge in Ghana's governance system. Former President John Agyekum Kuffour referred to the situation as "excessive political partisanship" which he noted hinders the country's development (Gyekye 2011:5). There is no doubt that in a multi-party democratic system, there would be political partisanship informed by the ideologies and political programs held by the different political parties. This, however, becomes problematic if such affiliations to political ideologies and programs increase to the extent of hindering national development. Such "excessive political

partisanship", Gyekye (2011:5) notes "is not a logical or necessary feature or consequence of the multiparty system of politics." It is political partisanship that makes members of a political party refuse to change or modify their opinions or positions even in the face of convincing reasons for them to do so. Political partisanship breeds political exclusion and hinders political unity, negotiation, compromise and reconciliation.

Political inclusiveness and bipartisanship are necessary for dealing with the winner-takes-all syndrome in contemporary Ghanaian politics. The winner-takes-all (or "state capture") refers to "the partisan monopolization of state resources, facilities and opportunities," and "the exclusion of political opponents from national governance" (Gyampo 2015:65). This attitude begins right after the declaration of national election results. Members of the victorious party, right from the period of power transition, gather all political and economic resources and opportunities as they consolidate power. In Ghana, the symptoms of the winner-takes-all politics include "compulsory retirements; dismissals; termination of appointments; cancellations and withholding of entitlements; forcible ejections from duty-post accommodation; wanton seizure of state vehicles and property in the care of political opponents by party apparatchiks without recourse to due process of law; reckless abrogation of contracts; and wanton persecution of certain real and perceived political opponents" (Gyampo 2015:65). The period of political transition and the first few days after the transition are characterized aggression, political victimization and recrimination against political opponents and their businesses. When it comes to political appointments and the award of contracts, the winner-takes-all syndrome ensures that only people affiliated with the ruling party benefit. Another side of this political canker is the abandonment of projects which were started by previous governments. The ruling government, with the quest to claim all glory for itself, prefers to start a project in its name than to continue an ongoing project by the previous government. This together with nepotistic tendencies retard national development.

Both the biblical and Ghanaian traditional perspectives on politics (espoused earlier in this study) contradict the winner-takes-all political system that prevails in Ghana today. The lack of serious checks on the winners makes the government too powerful. The majority caucus says "The minority may have their say but the majority will always have their way" (Safo-Kantanka 2021:261). This political attitude does not promote inclusiveness and development. Interestingly, the composition of the 8th parliament of Ghana's Fourth Republic underlines the need for the

country's political leaders to work together for the benefit of the country. Of the 275 parliamentary seats in Ghana, the ruling NPP and the opposition NDC had 137 each and 1 seat was won by an independent candidate. There is, therefore, technically no party with a majority of parliamentarians. The speaker of parliament is a member of the opposition NDC.

President Akuffo-Addo (cited in Knott 2020: Online article), referring to the results of the parliamentary elections, stated that Ghanaians want the NPP and the NDC to work together: "The Ghanaian people through the results [of the elections] have made it loud and clear that the two parties, the NPP and NDC, must work together, especially in parliament, for the good of the country." The President's assertion and the situation in the current parliament could serve as a good basis for our national conversation on political inclusiveness. However, there is always a glaring disconnection between the political rhetoric of bipartisanship and taking practical steps to produce a roadmap to achieving it. Therefore, as usual, no concrete steps have been taken toward bipartisanship even in the present situation of a "hung" parliament.

Political inclusion may be expressed through the appointment of qualified persons "from other political parties, openly acknowledging and implementing the policies of another party where those policies have the effect of addressing the particular problem the nation faces" (Asante 2007:78). Therefore, the various parties (especially the NPP and the NDC) should work together for the betterment of the country. It also implies members of parliament must look beyond the interest of their parties and work in harmony toward the well-being of the populace. Inclusive leadership is essential for national development because it promotes interpersonal relationships and mutual care and benefits between leaders and their followers (Adapa and Sheridah 2017:68). For the sake of responsiveness and political accountability this study is not calling for an inclusive system where people are made to participate in the governance process simply because of the desire to bring members of the various parties on board. Rather, emphasis must be placed upon track record, patriotism, compatibility (ability to work in a team), qualities, capabilities, and character. This is important because, at the end of the day, failure will be attributed to the ruling political party and not the various parties from which people were picked to form the government. There is also the need for public political education for people to appreciate the need for inclusive governance and how it works. People need to think, live and pursue goals that are not specifically

the prescribed political goals of the party that they belong to. Though this will not be easy, that is the way we must go to ensure sustainable and inclusive development.

Aside from the political structure of a nation, the education system also plays a key role in sociopolitical and moral transformation. In cognizance of this fact, the next section proposes what kind of education model Ghana should adopt to achieve sustainable development.

5.3 Theology of Education

The creation of humankind in the image of God—including moral, intellectual, creative, spiritual, and political aspects—was highlighted in chapter two when we studied Genesis 1:26-27. Proper stewardship of the divine image in humankind requires proper nurturing, use and development through any ethically sound available means. Of interest to this section is the development of human intellectual capacity through education. The discussions in Chapter 4 indicated that Ghana's education system has not been effective in catalyzing national development. Based on this fact, the present section formulates a theology of education to address the challenges inherent in the current education model. A brief historical overview of Ghana's education system is first given before the main issues in the theological formulation.

5.3.1 A Brief Overview of Ghana's Education System

This section outlines the development of Ghana's education system from pre-colonial times to the post-colonial era. Ghanaians had their own traditional patterns of learning before the arrival of their colonial masters. This indigenous system of education provided the needed moral standards and cultural values relevant to individual and communal life. Before colonization, Ghanaians passed on knowledge, skills, mode of behavior and belief to their young ones mainly through practical means (Busia 1969:13). The young males learnt hunting and farming from their father through an informal apprenticeship which comprised listening, watching and practicing (doing). The women gave their female children practical knowledge about how to manage the home. The traditional form of education was more practical than theoretical.

A unique feature of the Ghanaian indigenous education system was that each person was taught how to lead the society in one way or the other (Opuni-Frimpong 2022:113). Aside from the general leadership training, there was special leadership education for potential chiefs, priests,

queen mothers, and kings. The Ghanaian traditional form of education was based on the African communal sense of life (Busia 1969:17). The primary motivation for one's education was to acquire knowledge and skills to help oneself and others. The apprentice was trained not only to cater for the needs of his/her people group but also to consider the wider community. In other words, traditional education seeks to produce skilled individuals who place the interest of society above their personal interests. Therefore, the traditional system of education was meant to raise adults who could contribute to the development of their societies.

The colonization of Ghana led to the introduction of Western education which gave no attention to the traditional learning patterns (Opuni-Frimpong 2022:115). The Westerners assumed that Ghanaians were ignorant, without any knowledge and so needed superior learned teachers to impart knowledge to them (Opuni-Frimpong 2022:115). The pedagogical model introduced by the colonial masters was, therefore, oppressive just as their rule was oppressive (Opuni-Frimpong 2022:115). The initial purpose of the education system was to raise people to help the colonizers in the administration of the nation (Safo-Kantanka 2021:431). Consequently, Ghana's premier university, the University of Ghana, was established with a focus on liberal arts to produce clerical and administrative support staff for the colonial rulers. In those days, the brutalities that manual workers faced at the hands of colonial masters made Ghanaians develop a love for white-collar jobs and a dislike for jobs that depended mainly on skills rather than certificates. Consequently, people attended school intending to earn certificates and have recognition in society rather than acquiring practical skills for addressing societal needs. The love for white-collar jobs has since been with Ghanaians up to date.

Prior to Ghana's independence the industrial sector, a byproduct of the colonial economic structures, was small and contributed very little to economic growth. After independence Nkrumah's government, considering industrialization as a key factor in modernization and national development, rolled out an extensive program that emphasized import substitution (that is, the replacement of foreign imports with domestic production) which aimed at transforming the industrial structure and reducing Ghana's dependence on foreign economies for goods (Ackah, Adjasi and Turkson 2014:1). The shift from dependence on imported goods to the use of domestic goods was meant to stabilize the local currency, build the local economy and break the vicious circle of poverty. Nkrumah's industrialization agenda necessitated the establishment of the Kumasi

College of Technology (now the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology) to raise people with technological expertise to build the nation (Safo-Kantanka 2021:431). Later, the University of Cape Coast was established to produce professional teachers for the second-cycle institutions. Polytechnic education was also introduced to train middle-level technicians in various fields. With time, many other public and private universities, Colleges of Education and others were established to enhance human resource development in the country.

Ghana's education system has gone through various reforms each of which has a unique contribution to the overall development of education in the country. Today, there is Free Compulsory Basic Education available to all Ghanaians and so the illiteracy rate is comparatively low. The ruling NPP government has also introduced the Free Senior High School Policy as its flagship program. While this is a welcome development, the impact of Ghana's education system on the country's development is minimal. Despite the different reforms, Ghana's education system still does not provide adequate practical skill acquisition and problem-solving techniques for national development. Consequently, most of the graduates produced by Ghana's education system remain unemployed if they are not absorbed by the public sector or private enterprises. They lack the skills to identify and solve societal problems on their own as a means of employment. The education system seems to create social waste considering the huge investment made by both the private and public sectors in educating those involved. This situation has turned many unemployed graduates into criminals, thereby increasing social vices or criminal activities in the country. Tornyezuku (2017:18) notes that as unemployment worsens the economic situation of the youth, they are highly motivated to take up criminal activities to make money.

To address this issue, the present section formulates a more relevant and sustainable policy for Ghana's education system that is not only culturally sensitive but also biblically and historically grounded. Such a policy must aim at producing well-educated citizens with adequate practical skills required for an industrial revolution driven by science, technology and innovation.

5.3.2 Foundation and Purpose of Education

5.3.2.1 Theocentric Education Philosophy

Earlier, the point was made that education is needed to develop the mental faculty that God has endowed humankind with. Since both the human intellectual ability and the means of developing it are God-given, there is the need to make God central to any kind of education system a country adopts. In other words, education must be primarily theocentric (God-centered) and secondarily anthropocentric (human-centered). Thus, Ghana's education philosophy must, first of all, be biblically grounded, meaning that the ideas and concepts taught in any subject should resonate with biblical principles. Implementing this idea in a pluralistic society like Ghana will not be easy. The church needs to be strategic in its role in ensuring the implementation of sound biblical principles in education. Since Ghana is a religiously pluralistic community, the church should negotiate inclusively the best policies for the country. The church should lead the campaign of making education a tool to transform society. This must start from the church where the church has absolute control over the content and pedagogical tradition used. Christian education policymakers are encouraged to make a strong and convincing case for the theocentric dimension of education and persuade others to embrace it.

The theocentric principle of education requires serious scrutiny of teaching materials of any immoral material. The stakeholders of education should see to it that teaching resources do not contain any morally destructive material. In addition, parents need to supervise their children's use of social media to prevent them from becoming corrupted by immoral materials as they try to acquire knowledge. To achieve this, Christians must be active (working together with other relevant stakeholders) in the formulation of the national education curricula and policies. Should Christians refuse to involve themselves in the process, people of other religious orientations would spearhead the national debate and in the end, inject their philosophies, which may stand at variance with biblical/theological principles, into the education system. God looks up to the 71.3% of Ghanaians who profess to be Christians to take the initiative with all relevant groupings—religious and non-religious—to ensure the best possible inclusive education system for all that can transform the society.

The theocentric nature of education relates to education's role in enhancing moral transformation, which is discussed in the next section.

5.3.2.2 Education and Moral Transformation

According to Augustine (2019:91), sin hinders the effectiveness of human political power. Therefore, Ghana's political challenges cannot be surmounted without the moral transformation of her citizenry. Religion has the responsibility of facilitating this moral transformation. However, moral transformation cannot be achieved only by the efforts of religious bodies. The national education policy needs to cater for the moral needs of the people. Ghana's education system must develop the human soul and heart of embodied persons; not abstractly but concretely for all in pursuit of moral transformation. This requires a conscious effort to train people to be God-fearing so that they can combat evil wherever they serve. Jesus's interactions with his disciples, regarding leadership (examined in chapter two), was a form of education that was geared toward the transformation of their souls and heart. The moral-transformative effect of education was also noted in our discussion on Platonic education philosophy (see section 3.2.1.4). For Plato, education should enlighten people about the effects of evil on society and thus encourage them to willingly abide by the laws of the lands. Wesley also shares this view when he argues that education must lead people toward perfection (section 3.7.3.5). His concept of holiness and perfection is based on the proposition that one's personal transformation through a biblically grounded and contextually relevant system of education must necessarily yield social holiness/perfection that (among other things) makes one humble, open to criticisms, peaceful, meek, and loving, among others. One is, therefore, not properly educated if he/she gets angry simply because he/she has been criticized (Amu cited in Laryea 2017:131). As a matter of fact, education must encourage self-control, selfless service, and other-centeredness as well as comprehension and wisdom. Thus, the effectiveness of Ghana's education system must be evaluated by its ability to curb crime and lawlessness and raise skilled people who are ready to render sacrificial services to their society.

The transformative effect of education must also yield community-mindedness. The education system must not aim at simply raising intellectuals; it must aim at raising intellectuals who really care for their society. Instilling community-mindedness and consciousness in students is an effective means for curbing the incidence of bribery, corruption, mismanagement and

misappropriation of state funds and resources because community-mindedness and consciousness are about other-centeredness as opposed to self-centeredness. Thus, Busia (cited in Anane-Agyei 2014:104) asserts that "the best test of an educated man is the width and depth of his heart; the extent of the circle of men and women for whom he feels an active sympathy; the kind of sympathy which makes him do something for others to alleviate suffering, or correct wrongs, or extend opportunities for others to live happier, nobler lives." Therefore, Ghana's education must, therefore, go beyond the impartation of knowledge of certain facts or the acquisition of basic competencies in literacy and numeracy to cause a change in students' social, attitudinal, emotional, and psychological make-up, and perception of life. Students must be trained in conduct and formed in character for their private and public lives.

The transformative character of education is also noted in goal 4 of The United Nations' 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development as follows: The education system of a country must equip learners with knowledge and expertise that will enhance "sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development." Education must also broaden people's horizons and encourage them to accept and embrace all manner of people without discrimination. Therefore, even though one's religious conviction may be unfavorable to such issues as transgenderism, and LGBTIQA+ there should be no discrimination against such people. The nation's education system should train people to respect and tolerate those of different sexual and religious orientations. From the Christian perspective, one may consider transgenderism and LGBTIQA+ as unbiblical and unchristian (depending on one's denomination). But even in that case, one is not permitted to discriminate against or be intolerant of these groups. Apart from not discriminating against such groups, Christians will have to go further and seriously ask other Christian religious groupings why various groups in the Christian church also differs on perspectives and are thus divided on the issues. That sensitivity must not be ignored and must be managed responsibly in our societies.

This will not only help maintain unity in the Ghanaian pluralistic setting but will also help to achieve the fourth aspiration of *Agenda 2063,* namely "By 2020 all guns will be silenced. By 2063, all conflicts emanating from ethnic, religious, cultural diversity and all forms of social exclusion will have been eliminated" (African Union 2015:38). Thus, through education, people must realize

that their existence is closely linked with the existence and progress of other people in the society, whether poor or rich, male or female, weak or strong. In our study of Jeremiah 22:1-9 and Amos 5, God (through the prophets) rebuked the political leaders of Israel for knowing what is right and expected of them and failing to do, namely, protecting the poor against oppression and exploitation, and promoting justice and righteousness in the society. This means that God expects leaders to protect the vulnerable and to provide for their needs. The realization of this goal requires having the interest of the community at heart. This moral transformation, where people relinquish their selfish desires and embrace communal interests, can be achieved through education. The education system may expose students to leadership principles that address the needs of the voiceless and the marginalized.

Finally, there is the need to consciously develop the education system in such a way that it will make people cherish their own people and culture. This will help reduce the Ghanaian taste for foreign goods, and hence, eventually boost the local economy. This step will reverse the effects of early European missionary strategies that ended up making Ghanaians despise their own culture because they were made to think that the European culture was superior to their culture. The missionaries had good intentions but their approach was not suitable for the task. It is, therefore, important now to integrate in the Ghanaian context their good intention with cultural sensitivities. In the age of globalization, there is no way that a country can develop without interacting with other nations. Such interactions will definitely lead to the exchange of cultures. Therefore, a better contextually-sensitive approach requires embracing relevant aspects of foreign culture and not rejecting everything foreign. In the process of integration, Ghanaians should be made to appreciate the country's cultural heritage and promote it. The era where the educated segregated themselves from the uneducated (that is during the colonial era) has passed; the era where people found it prestigious to bear foreign names and eat foreign food because of the notion that they were superior to indigenous names and food simply because they came from a foreign land must come to an end. Therefore, the country's education philosophy must help the educated to appreciate indigenous products and culture and to appreciate the relevant role performed by the uneducated. More importantly, the link between education and societal development implies that education must provide the needed human resources for communal interest. The next section considers this issue.

5.3.2.3 Education and Human Resource Development

The socio-economic development of a country is determined largely by increased productivity in crop production, forestry products, animal husbandry, and minerals; the development of infrastructure such as roads, railways, water and air transport systems; the establishment of industries and trade relations with other nations. All these indicators of socio-economic development depend on the education system which trains people to work toward achieving these goals. The development of the society depends on the level of education of its citizenry. Ghana cannot achieve sustainable socio-economic development without quality education that yields "Well educated citizens and skills revolution underpinned by science, technology and innovation…" (African Union 2015:12).

To serve as a vehicle for the socio-economic development of society, education must have four distinct goals toward the development of human power resources; namely, economic, civic, humanistic, and equity promotion. Each of these goals must be understood in both the personal and communal senses. Education fosters the development of useful skills, which are beneficial for both the individual's career advancement and society's ability to improve and sustain socio-economic development and compete in a globalized economy. Education enhances the development of civic skills, which are important for both the individual's ability to participate meaningfully in political and civil society as well as for society as a whole to gain from informed and active citizens. Education fosters the development of human talents and interests, which benefits both the individual by enabling personal flourishing and society as a whole because knowledge expansion and the advancement of human achievement are worthwhile endeavors in and of themselves. Education can promote equity and greater social inclusion; the lack of education, and the poor or unfair distribution of education, may promote injustice and greater social exclusion.

For Ghana's education system to contribute effectively to the country's development, there is a need to adopt a pedagogical approach that will deal adequately with the inadequacies identified earlier. The following are aspects of pedagogical changes required for effective and holistic education.

5.3.3 Education Delivery (pedagogy, facilities and curriculum)

5.3.3.1 Problem-based learning approach

Ghana's education system has less impact on national development because it does not train people to become problem solvers. The use of the rote learning pedagogical model (which requires students to memorize data based on repetition) as the primary method of teaching and learning in Ghanaian schools is a key reason why graduates lack practical skills. This system enhances students' ability to memorize and quickly remember basic facts and helps them to develop foundational knowledge of a topic. The rote learning model cannot effectively produce graduates with practical, creative and productive skills needed for solving the problems of society because it is a surface learning style rather than an in-depth processing of knowledge. If Ghana is to get the type of repositioning and transformation needed to realize the aspirations of *Agenda 2063,* the country has to adopt a pragmatic approach to teaching and learning that would produce the skilled labor needed to fill technical and administrative positions in society for sustainable development.

To avert the situation, the study proposes the adoption of the problem-based learning (PBL) approach at all levels of education in Ghana. The PBL is a student-centered pedagogical model in which students learn through facilitated problem-solving. Wesley alludes to this pedagogical approach when he says education ought to equip students with the skills necessary to solve problems in the real world, not just impart knowledge (section 3.7.3.5). In this problem-solving model, the motivation to solve a problem becomes the motivation to learn. Here, learning goes beyond simply following the teacher's instruction alone to include making students think independently and creatively to discover and invent new ways of addressing problems (Ango and Rutoro 2020:147). The PBL is informed by this fact: Since human beings are endowed with creative abilities their learning process must draw out the creativity in them. It is, therefore, imperative for Ghana to adopt the PBL model to encourage students to acquire critical thinking skills which include problem-solving skills, research skills, questioning skills, reasoning skills, creative skills as well as creativity, and innovation. Knowledge has to be applied to real-life issues in order to transform lives. Amu argues that "The eventual aim of education is to develop the critical sense, as a man [or a woman] without critical sense is uneducated" (cited in Laryea

2017:106). These quotes allude to the fact that education and skill development are inseparably intertwined.

The use of the PBL may be new to many teachers in Ghana. It requires creativity and innovation on the part of the teacher to ask the right probing questions that will prompt deeper thinking and analysis from the student. Teachers are encouraged to use the question-and-answer pedagogy, asking penetrating questions that require one to think deeper and arrive at a purely intellectual understanding of societal challenges and what possible approaches may yield their solutions. The student must be compelled to soar beyond the realm of sense knowledge to reach heights of pure reason (Amu cited in Laryea 2017:107). This will help students nurture thinking skills to help students actualize their full potential and contribute effectively to national development (Ango and Rutoro 2020:147). By developing these skills, graduates would be able to use what they have learned to find gainful employment and, if possible, to employ others, thereby lowering the rate of unemployment in the community. This will help reduce brain drain and make the country a center where the best and brightest graduates in Africa and other parts of the world converge to enhance the industrial revolution.

Regarding the adoption of this more practical and less theoretical pedagogical model that promotes skill development, the School of Medical and Health Sciences at the University of Development Studies (Tamale-Ghana) needs to be commended. After almost a decade of planning, the University of Development Studies, in September 2006, adopted the PBL in the training of medical doctors and other health professionals (Ameade and Amalba 2015:114). Their training, unlike the approach used by other schools, is focused on equipping students with the necessary medical skills required to address the health needs of society. In addition to the classroom work, their students undertake community service for three weeks every year where they visit various communities, interact with the people and then find out what their needs are. Their report given on this trip informs the school's pedagogy. A careful analysis shows that medical professionals trained at the University of Development Studies are usually more competent, confident, and skilled than professionals from other universities. Other schools are encouraged to learn from the example set by the University of Development Studies and revise their pedagogies to be problem-based. This view of education and the use of the PBL pedagogical model are rooted in the education system developed and promoted by Plato (cf. section 3.2.5).

The PBL pedagogy requires the use of practical equipment which many educational institutions may lack presently. There is, therefore, the need for the government to equip teachers and schools with adequate resources required to implement the PBL. The next section considers this issue further.

5.3.3.2 Provision of Teaching and Learning Facilities

To promote quality education, there is the need to have adequate equipment for practical work. Relevant, up-to-date teaching materials that address real-life situations must be used. Ghana's education system has far too long been characterized by a high teacher-pupil ratio, a lack of relevant resources, and a shortage of textbooks, chalk, lesson notebooks and classrooms. Up to date, some schools run the shift system. There are places where students study under trees after travelling on foot for more than eleven kilometers to school. Many schools teach ICT without computers or computer laboratories. Science equipment are lacking is in most schools, especially at the basic level which gives foundations to people. Teachers keep representing equipment with their two-dimensional drawings on the board and ask students to imagine what these items look like. In such a context, it is very difficult (if not impossible) for students to connect what they learn to real-world problems.

In line with the first aspiration of Agenda 2063, at least 70 percent of all high school graduates are expected to pursue technical and vocational education at the tertiary level, "70 percent of them graduating in the sciences, technology and innovation programs, to lay the foundation for competitive economies built upon human capital to complement the African continent's rich endowments in natural resources" (African Union 2015:31). The aim is to produce graduates who can harness and manage the vast resources available in the country. Therefore, there is a need for the government to invest in the logistics needed for technical, practical and vocational education. Government expenditure on education should prioritize technical and vocational education.

Technological advancement in the 20th and 21st centuries and the recent COVID-19 pandemic have brought online education into prominence. There is a need to invest in the infrastructure required to promote effective and relevant e-learning. Flexibility, increased course variety, reduced costs, and enhanced time management skills are some of the factors that have popularized online learning (Jamilah and Fahyuni 2022:500). Despite its popularity especially in the post-covid-19 era, online

education has its own challenges. Unethical use of the digital space, lack of access to electricity, high cost of internet data, impersonation of students, ineffective mentoring and monitoring and lack of physical interactions are examples of challenges that come with online learning (Jamilah and Fahyuni 2022:500-502; Takalani 2008:52-63). Therefore, various stakeholders in education must formulate and implement suitable and sustainable policies that would ensure quality and ethical education in the virtual space. In this regard, there is a need to ensure a constant power supply and the extension of the national grid to all parts of the country so that no one is deprived of accessing education in the digital environment. Also, the government must work with network providers to ensure accessible and affordable internet facilities everywhere. The current hybrid model of distance education, where lecturers meet students at distant learning centers and teach them face-to-face, may be a solution to some of the challenges associated with purely online distance education that requires no physical meeting(s). Yet, this model is not also a perfect system. There is a need for consultation on the way forward for the nation's education in the digital space. The national development plan should determine the timeframe for the preparatory stage toward the full implementation of e-learning in the country (if that is the direction in which the nation wants to go). It is important to add that e-learning should only be used for programs that can be studied effectively without physical meetings. Programs that require traditional physical meetings must continue to run that way.

The success of any education policy partly depends on appropriate student-teacher relationships. The right relationship, which the researcher refers to as the "liberative pedagogy", is considered briefly below.

5.3.3.3 Liberative Pedagogy

Whether traditional face-to-face or online mode of education, the relationship between students and their teachers is crucial to the effectiveness of the teaching and learning process. The effectiveness of the lecturer-student relationship is normally better in the traditional mode of education than in the virtual setting. However, as indicated earlier, the virtual mode is a legitimate mode of education that may be considered for some good reasons. The present section intends to propose a teaching methodology that would enhance the lecturer-student relationship and hence liberate students from being perceived as empty objects to be banked with knowledge.

Earlier, the point was made that the colonial education pedagogy was the "banking system" where the student's mind is considered as an empty slate to be filled with knowledge. After independence, this pedagogical tradition has continued to date; teachers consider themselves as full of knowledge which they need to transfer to their students. Consequently, students sit in class and are completely unable to relate what they learn to something they might have observed in their environment. In other words, students always find what they are taught alienated from their everyday experiences. Freire (1997:53) considers education as oppressive when the teacher considers him/herself as the subject and the student as the object. He, therefore, argues that "education must begin with the solution of the teacher-student contradiction, by reconciling the poles of the contradiction, so that both are simultaneously teachers and students" (Freire 1997:53). This "oppressive" pedagogical approach needs to be reversed by developing and implementing a "liberation pedagogy."

It is important how one reconciles the two parties—the teacher and the student—in this liberative process. More often than not, in the traditional classroom setting, people justify the unequal methods of teacher-student exchange on the basis of the teacher's expertise in a particular subject area. Given this fact, one might believe that downplaying the authority that a teacher accrues from her/his position in the classroom is the most conducive manner to achieve the reconciliation of these poles. Maher (2002:87) discourages the use of such an approach, arguing that it runs counter to liberative pedagogy's goals for at least the following two reasons. First, downplaying the teacher's authority can result in the negation of his/her teaching responsibility. Second, liberative pedagogy is meant to empower both the teacher and the student, rather than disempower the teacher. It is also not right for students to resist the authority of their teachers as that will mean responding to oppression with oppression (Maher 2002:87). Maher (2002:87) encourages the teacher to begin the reconciliation process through "invitational interaction" which begins with the creation of a conducive atmosphere that both acknowledges the teacher-student divide and facilitates ultimate reconciliation. The teacher does this by first, clearly indicating their teaching tradition both to themselves and their students and second, demonstrating humility as well as their own vulnerability.

The liberative pedagogical approach to teaching and learning will serve to correct the misconception that students are empty-headed and need to have their minds filled by the teacher. This system acknowledges and respects the pre-existing knowledge that the student might have

about the subject matter taught, and by so doing, prevents education from becoming "banking" (Freire 1997:53). In the "banking" system knowledge is considered as a gift from learned teacher to an ignorant student, thereby making students, depositories and teachers depositors (Freire 1997:53). In the liberative pedagogy, both the teacher and the students are subjects who relate as subject-subject and co-creators of knowledge. "The students—no longer docile listeners— are now critical co-investigators in dialogue with the teacher. The teacher presents the material to the students for their consideration, and re-considers [her/his] earlier considerations as the students express their own" (Freire 1997:62). Thus, both the teacher and the student discover new things for themselves through the teaching and learning process. The teacher must humbly accept this fact and then consider him/herself as a being "in the process of becoming" (Freire 1997:65). The teacher teaches the student using the pre-existing knowledge the student has as a foundation. The students are to be helped to relate what they are taught with what they have learnt from their environment before encountering their teacher. In addition, the teacher must serve as a good model for the students. For this reason, teachers must be mature, committed, faithful, and above reproach. They must establish a mentoring relationship with their students and show interest in the wellbeing of the students, even beyond the classroom. This is the kind of teaching approach that Ghana needs.

5.3.3.4 Educational Curriculum Reforms

Apart from changes in the pedagogical approach, there is a need to revise the curriculum of Ghana's education system. Ghana, like other Sub-Saharan African countries, inherited educational curricula from their colonial masters. Consequently, in most African countries, the education curriculum was and still is modelled after Western and North American systems (Busia 1969:43). Ghanaian policymakers on education have not given serious attention to the educational needs of Ghana based on local problems and cultures. This is true for all sectors of Ghana's education; namely, primary, secondary and higher education.

Ghana's educational curriculum must give room for the use of traditional folklore including proverbs, folktales, riddles, stories, and jokes. The use of Ghanaian drama, songs and dance as means of injecting Ghanaian traditional wisdom into the educational process should be encouraged. However, only relevant aspects of the Ghanaian heritage should be included in the educational system. Being relevant in this context means not only being culturally sensitive but

also religiously appropriate contextually meaningful and suitable for addressing the current needs of society. An aspect of the Ghanaian heritage that is relevant for teaching today may be irrelevant tomorrow due to changing times. Similarly, a given academic program may lose its relevance with time. Therefore, during its periodic review, courses, aspects of courses, programs or aspects of the traditional heritage that are no longer relevant to society must be identified and replaced.

In this regard, a popular song taught and used for teaching Ghanaian basic schools needs examination. The song goes like this:[5]

Dabi mekɔɔ wuram	One day I went to the farm
Mekɔhuu samane	I saw a ghost
Samane keseɛ	A great ghost
Na mesuro oo	I was so much afraid
Na mesuro papa	I was greatly terrified
Ɔpomaa ne tuo	It clocked its gun
Me nso mepomaa me deɛ	I also clocked my gun
Ɔde hwɛɛ me so	It pointed the gun at me
Me nso mede hwɛɛ ne so	I also pointed the gun at it
Ateka ateka, ate poo	One-one draw, we shot each other

This song was composed for early childhood training in the context where hunting and farming were the main occupations of many Ghanaians. It draws on the forest setting where a farmer goes to the forest for hunting and meets all sorts of wild creatures. On this very day, the hunter met a great ghost which terrified him. To worsen the situation the ghost cocked his gun ready to shoot the hunter. The hunter did likewise and both shot each other. This song is normally sung in pairs with each pupil's finger pointing at the other and finally "shooting" him/her to fall down. With

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[5] The Bono-Twi orthography has been used in writing the Akan version.

this song, the pupil's mind is filled with hunting imagery which, in reality, is not a common occupation in contemporary Ghana. Today, only a few people go on hunting. Therefore, the child develops skills that have very low relevance for modern society.

Given the current technological and scientific advancement and the needs of Ghanaian society, the researcher believes that this song is no longer suitable for training pupils in Ghana. It was good for training hunters but not suitable for training entrepreneurs, bankers, pilots, engineers, teachers and doctors, among others. The above example underlines that some aspects of Ghanaian pedagogy are outmoded and need to be replaced. The curriculum must be culturally sensitive; yet, only relevant aspects of the Ghanaian culture should be considered for students to exercise an intelligent and constructive impact on society. It is in this light that the Minister of Education proposes the adoption of an "assertive curriculum, a curriculum that empowers the African child to ask questions and challenge the status quo respectfully within the [Ghanaian] tradition context (Adutwum cited by Nartey 2022: online article).

Instead of using the above song which looks irrelevant in modern Ghana Moses Kwaku Oppong's song entitled "*Ohia ma adwendwene*" (which shows how the lack of something leads to creativity) may be used to encourage creativity among pupils. The song depicts two animal characters, a tortoise and a mona monkey, as two close friends. Upon the death of the latter's mother, he sent the vulture to inform the former about the bereavement. When the tortoise heard the sad news, he expressed his condolences and told the vulture to tell the monkey that he (the tortoise) would attend the final funeral rites. Aware that the tortoise had no wings to fly to the monkey's abode to attend the funeral, the vulture mocked the tortoise, but the tortoise had a plan to deal with his lack of wings to fly. He told the vulture to come back to his house on the day of the funeral and pick a certain sack which he would place in a specified area, give it to the monkey, and inform him that the tortoise was on the way coming. On the day of the funeral, the vulture went to the tortoise's house and picked up the sack as arranged. He sent it to the monkey and told the monkey what the tortoise had said. The monkey wondered how the tortoise could attend the funeral. After opening the sack, he found the tortoise in it. The tortoise came out of the sack and joined in the celebration. Every attendee marveled at how the tortoise had overcome his lack of wings. The tortoise's lack of wings to fly made it invent a way to get to the destination.

Oppong's song has great lessons for Ghana's socio-economic development. The country's lack of certain resources should serve to bring out the creativity and innovation needed for nation-building. The case of the United Arab Emirates (UAE) may serve as a good example for Ghana. Naturally, the UAE lacks portable water. The available water is too salty for domestic use and the climate is such that the rain hardly falls naturally. In such a situation, there are two possibilities, namely, to rely on external assistance for the provision of water or to innovatively or to creatively remove the saltiness of the water and use it. Through innovation and experimentation, the UAE has developed the technology to distil the water to remove its salty content and make it available for the populace. They have also developed the technology (referred to as cloud seeding) that helps them to induce the formation of condensed clouds and the subsequent falling of rain.

Ghana's creative abilities became evident in the heat of the COVID-19 pandemic when the country's borders were closed. After closing her borders, Ghana was required to produce her own nose mask to suppress the spread of the virus. Since the borders were closed and no importation could be made, the local industry produced the nose masks and other equipment that were required to handle the pandemic. The "other people will provide, so let us wait for them" mentality which has slowed Ghana's development vanished immediately. Now everyone knew that it would be disastrous to rely on the importation of these items. If this pandemic had not come, who knows how long it would have taken Ghana to know that her own local industries could produce the needed noise mask. The study proposed that reforms in the country's educational curriculum should enhance creativity through, for example, the development and promotion of the *Ohia-ma-adwendwene* philosophy.

Another area that needs consideration is the mode of assessment in the various educational facilities. The next section attends to this issue.

5.3.4 Mode of Aassessment

5.3.4.1 Cumulative and Practical-Oriented Assessment

As noted earlier, the rote learning system is the most dominant approach to teaching and learning in Ghanaian schools. In this system, students are assessed based on how much knowledge they have stored in memory. Examination questions are predominantly content-based questions that

require students to reproduce what they have been taught. Students who are able to memorize their notes are considered more brilliant than the skilled ones who can creatively use their hands (Safo-Kantanka 2021:449). Consequently, there is a "chew, pour, pass and forget" phenomenon in Ghana where students learn for examination purposes and not for innovation and creativity. A key disadvantage of this method is that it does not promote critical thinking and analytical skills. This kind of assessment technique makes the student a passive receiver of information rather than an active processor of data. The "chew, pour, pass and forget" not only discourages creativity and innovation but also contradicts the traditional Ghanaian system of learning which involves observation, questioning and practice. At the same time, it does not enhance the development of the divine image in humankind. God's desire for the development of intellectual, creative and innovative aspects of humankind is underlined by the environment in which he placed the first human pairs.

There is therefore the need to change the mode of assessing students. In line with this thought the University of Ghana's first female Vice-chancellor, Professor Nana Aba Appiah Amfo, asserts that "We should be less focused on assessing students based on memory, and more on application" (cited in Bonney 2023: online article). Focusing more on application means challenging students to become "critical thinkers, technologically adept, humane, culturally sensitive and ready to provide leadership for the nation and continent" (Bonney 2023: online article). The same view was expressed by Adutwum (cited by Nartey 2022: online article) in his assertion that "we have tamed the children, we just want them to write down what we tell them. On the day of exams, they should put down what we have told them and at the end of the day, we say you are the best student the country has ever known. That kind of education system will not transform Ghana." Both educationists underline Ghana's failure to produce students with high-quality education that produces graduates to meet the demands of the ever-changing global, social, economic and technological environment because of the inappropriate mode of assessing students. Adutwum notes that the Ghanaian child is "tamed" to think only within the box and reproduce what has been taught without application. He rightly notes further that such a restrictive educational system cannot transform society because one cannot memorize his/her way out of poverty; to deal with poverty, for example, one must think critically, be innovative and practical.

The mode of assessment must include practical application of the knowledge acquired. Each person must be assessed in a way that brings out the best in the person. Since real-life issues require practical skill to address, there is the need to have practical experience constituting a greater percentage of the overall marks than the theory aspect.[6] This will encourage students to take the practical lessons seriously. To increase the practical expertise of students, there is a need to include a compulsory vacation industrial attachment to the educational curriculum at the secondary and tertiary levels of education. The report from the attachment must constitute part of the overall grade. Also, the assessment of students must be done cumulatively. In the view of the researcher, it is not fair to assess many years of one's education with, for example, a three-hour examination. In this case, one will automatically fail the exams if he/she falls sick and is unable to write the final exams. That would be painful, unfair and a waste of time studying and preparing for the exams. The situation can be addressed by strengthening the cumulative assessment of students whereby the final exam constitutes a small percentage of the overall marks for grading. The universities are charged to play a leading role in the industrial revolution required to develop the economy. The government is urged to support people whole opt for technical and vocational education at the tertiary level. Again, attention must be given to the training of females in the male-dominated technical and vocational fields.

5.3.4.2 A New Perspective On Illiteracy

For a long time, most Ghanaians consider themselves intellectuals simply because they have attained formal education. The introduction of Western education, right from the onset, segregated Africans into the educated and the non-educated. In contemporary Ghanaian society, many people who have acquired some level of formal education often look down upon those with no formal education. People use their certificates as evidence of their civility and their higher social status. Those who possess educational certificates are highly respected in the society. Consequently, Ghanaians' love for certificates instead of employable skills must stop. This explains why Ghana has many professors of Mechanical Engineering who cannot even change the engine oil of their cars let alone change the plugs. They learnt concepts theoretically and transferred theoretical

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[6] The enormous success of Artificial Intelligence and the applications—such as ChatGTP—that students now use to write their assignments is an incredible difficult new education challenge. The researcher cannot take on this subject in this study because it is extremely wide-ranging and all educational institutions are scrambling to try to get policies in place to curb its incredible powerful applications.

knowledge to their students without much practical engagement. These professors fell comfortable because people hail them for possessing so much theoretical knowledge.

Such a view of the "educated" and the "uneducated" is contextually unacceptable. Traditionally, Ghanaians recognize one's education based on the person's ability to address the needs of the society. The "educated" are expected, for example, to produce traditional cloth or sandals, to produce food to feed the community and to provide items for domestic use. The educated are not the ones with "big" certificates but the ones who contribute to the well-being of society. Busia (cited in 2014:102) expresses the same thought when he says "An intellectual is a person who has learnt to use his brain; who applies his mind to problems and ideas and tries to understand them. Many illiterates are intellectuals." Thus, education that produces people with theoretical knowledge without any practical skills is not worth its salt. Strictly speaking, educated people who lack adequate practical skills are 'illiterate intellectuals' in that their intellectual abilities have no practical ramifications and hence are less impactful to society. Thus, people must cherish practical skills rather than the mere possession of intellectual knowledge without any expertise in solving practical problems. Also, the best student is not necessarily the one who excels in theoretical or academic examinations.

To conclude on the issue of education, it is important to state that even though education is central to societal transformation, it must not be assumed that putting more effort into it will automatically yield positive results. For example, as noted earlier, corruption and other anti-social behavior keep rising even as Ghana's literacy rate rises. Again, an education policy may look good on paper but may not yield the envisioned socio-economic and moral development. Again, the politicization of education is a threat to the success of the implementation of an education plan. With this, the study proceeds to consider the issue of work.

5.4 Theology of Work

In Chapter four, the issues of poverty, negative work ethics, corruption in the public sector and the negative influences of the prosperity theology on people's attitude toward work were noted. Since Ghana cannot attain the socio-economic aspirations envisaged in *Agenda 2063* without a change in people's attitude toward work, the present section formulates a theology of work for contemporary Ghanaian society to promote a positive work attitude and efficiency.

5.4.1 Work as Self-Affirmation

First of all, work forms an intrinsic part of human life; therefore, work defines our humanness. It is a natural activity of humans; that is, human beings are by nature working beings. Just as the Creator is a Worker (Gen. 1 and 2), so are human beings created as workers to rule other creation (Stott 2006:218-219; Tanimu-Saminaka 2019:74; Hughes 2007:67). God showed his working character by creating, designing, fashioning, engineering and crafting the universe. The connection between God's work and human work is evident in the use of the same Hebrew word *mela'khah* for God's creative activities (Gen. 2:2) and human's work (Ex. 20:9-10) (Tanimu-Saminaka 2019:74). Work, then, "is a good thing for human beings not only because of it facilitates the positive transformation of the society, but also because through it one "achieves fulfilment as a human being, and indeed, in a sense, becomes 'more a human being'" (Paul II as cited in Stott 2006:220; see also Tanimu-Saminaka 2019:74). Of all God's creation, it is only human beings can work; humans must be thankful to God for that.

God made work an intrinsic part of humankind so that by working, they can recreate themselves and their society as they work (Kudadjie and Aboagye-Mensah 1992:109). It is, therefore, not ethically acceptable to be lazy. Being idle (instead of being active) or being destructive (instead of being creative) contradicts the nature and purpose of human life. Nobody should be idle, everybody should be engaged in one industry or the other. This does not, however, mean that a child, a sick person a retired person is not human because they are not working. The child will have the opportunity to serve when they grow; the sick person will serve when they get better and the retired person may engage in active service even if unpaid for it. There is nothing wrong with retiring completely from work after one has served society enough and now needs to reserve the rest of his energy for daily non-commercial activities. It is wiser to retire than to continue working and die earlier. However, anybody who is in the working range should try as much as possible to be engaged.

5.4.2 Work as a Divine Command

Again, work is—from a theological perspective—primarily a divine command (Agang 2020:82; Kudadjie and Aboagye-Mensah 1992:107) and to some extent human initiative (given that it serves to fulfill who human beings are). That is why Paul could say those who are capable but unwilling

to work should not eat (2 Thess. 3:10-12). Labor, as ordained by God, is meant to improve human lives (ASB 2016:144). For this reason, "Wealth creation without work [or without the rendering of services] is unacceptable in God's divine plan" (ASB 2016:144). This fact is illustrated in God's provision of manna for the Israelites during their wilderness wanderings. Immediately they entered the Promised Land, the manna ceased falling, underscoring the need to work to earn their living.

The ceasing of the fall of the manna just after the Israelites settled in the land of Canaan and were able to work to meet their food needs was meant to teach the people that even though YHWH is the God of providence, he requires humankind to work and earn their living. God did not provide manna for people who could work but were unwilling to work; he provided manna for people whose circumstances in the desert made them unable to cultivate crops to meet their needs. Ghanaians, in response to God's command to work, are traditionally hardworking. Ghanaians traditionally celebrate work because it determines the dignity of the community and its social, political, and economic identity. The Ghanaian culture frowns on laziness because, as the saying goes, "the only result of laziness is poverty." Everyone is expected to work to have a sense of belonging and to participate in sustaining the life of the community. One's harvest determines the person's economic status and so everyone is determined to work hard. This encourages people to work very hard to cater for their family and others in society.

There is, however, the get-rich-quick attitude that has recently become popular among contemporary Ghanaian youth due to peer influence and exposure to external cultures. Many contemporary Ghanaian youth who want to become billionaires overnight without engaging in any productive venture are unethical and must stop. As noted in Chapter 4, some Christian pastors also contribute to this by their claim that they can miraculously command money into people's accounts. Prosperity preachers also contribute to this attitude when they preach that donation to the church or a church leader will make one rich without labor. They teach the followers that material prosperity depends on divine intervention rather than hard work. Consequently, people pray all day without working, they move from prayer meeting to prayer meeting throughout the week and expect riches through miracles. These pastoral practices discourage people from fulfilling the God-given mandate to work. As people seek miraculous financial breakthroughs apart from diligent industry and never get it, they sometimes resort to the use of such unethical means as cheating, stealing, exploitation, oppression, bribery, corruption, forgery and embezzlement to

acquire wealth. The theology of work espoused by this study contradicts both the get-rich-quick-mentality and the idea that one can become rich by simply donating money to the church. It emphasizes that people must be ready to work hard under divine guidance if they desire to be rich.

Going forward, Ghanaians must recover the spirit of diligence and hard work, and actively engage in godly industry under the guidance of God. This will not only reduce the country's unemployment rate but will also reduce the level of poverty in the society. Here, it must be emphasized that it is not theologically correct to consider poverty as a requirement to enter into the Kingdom of God. Such a notion is not backed by the overall teaching of the Bible. Therefore, rather than waiting for work to come to us, we must apply our entrepreneurial creativity and practical expertise to create jobs for ourselves. We should always look for (ethical) ways in which we can offer services to create a new earth with improved human and ecological life.

5.4.3 Work as a God-glorifying activity

Even though people must be encouraged to engage in gainful employment, it is not every kind of work that is permitted. The work that is worth undertaking is that which glorifies God (Agang 2020:88). This point serves to correct the erroneous dichotomization of work into sacred and secular. Before God, there is nothing like secular or sacred work; all works are sacred when undertaken to the glory of God. Going to the market to sell goods is no less sacred than preaching the gospel in the church. The God-glorifying purpose of work implies that work is a form of worship, and therefore relates to every aspect of human life, including human-divine, human-human and human-environment relationships (Kudadjie and Aboagye-Mensah 1992:105; Stott 2006:220). If work is a form of worship, then it must not only meet one's socio-economic needs but also their spiritual needs. In the contemporary Ghanaian society where economy values are controlling personal and community priorities, the worship-centered perspective of work is needed to guard people from having misplaced priorities in the world of work.

The proposition that Christians can engage only in commercial activities that glorify God contradicts such practices as engagement in betting activities, illegal mining activities, the use of chemicals for fishing, and the unhealthy use of agrochemicals for farming, among contemporary Ghanaian Christians (and non-Christians). These activities are not worth undertaking no matter how lucrative they may be because they end up causing serious devastating effects on the

individual, the society and the environment. Wealth creation, as is argued later, must be done only through ethical means so as to attract God's blessings. God may not bless one's economic activity if it will end up destroying lives and the environment.

The above work ethic is illustrative in the example below. A young man was earning a lot of money working at a guest house serving food to customers. A corporate merger between the canteen and the bar brought additional responsibility to him, that is, selling alcohol to people and providing pornographic movies for guest room televisions. The conflict between his work and his Christian principles resulted in an ethical and economic crisis for this man. The man decided to leave his lucrative work with his integrity, and spiritual and mental health intact rather than partaking in the alcohol and pornographic trade. This is the kind of work ethic that Ghana needs. This does not, however, mean all liquor shops should be closed in the country. There are good reasons for why people may use liquor. His religious conviction should keep him away from the pornographic trade. The point is that ethical principles are important at the workplace.

Work must not only be productive and fruitful but also transformative (Hughes 2007:68). This leads to the next aspect of our theology of work, namely, the role of work in community development.

5.4.4 Work as Service to the Community

In addition, work is not only meant for the fulfilment of the worker but also for the benefit of others (ASB 2016:144). Work must go beyond the production of things for our basic needs to the production of things that serve other people and other creatures. Max (paraphrased in Hughes 2007:68) argues that it is not simply working to meet our own needs to make humans distinct; "but free labor, production that is excess, surpassing our needs, and creating something more than the mere reproduction of ourselves." It is in this sense that work is considered a divine calling to serve God and society. Naboth's example of cultivating crops for the benefit of his family (1 Kings 21:1-16) and other such examples show that the productivity of the soil, which was the main occupation in ancient Israel, was meant to serve the needs of the community. God's instruction to Israel to share their produce with the poor, the alien, the widow and the orphan also attests to the need for a communal perspective on the benefit of work. Therefore, work must be perceived beyond the means to success and happiness to include the fact that it is a call to society's common interest. As

a form of service, work is not necessarily "paid employment"; it may be done without any remuneration. For example, one may care for the environment, offer counselling or work for the church without demanding remuneration. Work may, therefore, be defined as the "purposeful activity involving mental, emotional or physical energy, or all three, whether remunerated or not" (Stevens cited in Tanimu-Saminaka 2019:74).

Therefore, the worth of one's work must not be judged based on how lucrative it is but by how much it serves the common interest of the community. Hence, when choosing a vocation, one does not only consider their capabilities and inclinations but also the possibilities of serving the interest of the community through the vocation in question. This means the choice of vocation must be guided by the love of God and for neighbor. The love fact limits the number of permissible vocations from the Christian perspective. One has to be sensitive about the impact of their work on other human beings and the environment. For example, it is unethical for one's work to destroy the environment and thus, threaten human existence.

The overall cultural, socio-economic, political, and spiritual development the society is a combination of the impacts of the work of all the people in the society. "It is by the devoted day-by-day service of many ordinary and unnoticed citizens that the nation achieves greatness" (Busia cited in Anane-Agyei 2014:134). The farmer produces food for the community, the mechanic fixes the equipment for farming and the cars used to transport food to other places, the teacher trains the children of both the farmer and the mechanic and the physician addresses the health needs of the people in the community with the energy obtained after eating the food the farmer produced. Each one's work (whether office work or manual work, whether physically or mentally oriented, whether it makes one's hand dirty or not) is important and must be respected as such. As Agang (2020:87) puts it, "No one should have to endure discrimination because of their work" because "no type of work is inferior to any other." Knowing that one's work contributes to communal wellbeing gives the worker a sense of satisfaction and belonging, and a motivation to work harder (Stott 2006:222). Given the importance of everybody's work for the overall progress of society, it stands to reason that decisions about labor must only be taken after a broad consultation of all the stakeholders involved, rather than just the management team or the governing body. Work is good. Yet, there is the need to rest. The next section deals with this.

5.4.5 The Principle of Rest

Earlier, the nature of work was discussed within the context of creation. It was noted that God created humankind as a working being. The fact that human industry serves as the means of providing human existential needs was also noted. Given these facts, there is a high probability that some people would become slaves to work. The purpose of this section is to deal with such a tendency by arguing for the need to rest after working. Even though hard work enhances one's chance of becoming financially prosperous and idleness makes one poor, the finitude of humankind places some limitations on what they can do. The theology of work reminds human beings of the finitude as opposed to God's infinitude. Humans can only work as long as they have life and strength, unlike God who is immortal and never grows weary. Unfortunately, some Ghanaians, with the belief that hard work can give them an economic breakthrough, overwork themselves with a negative overall effect on their lives. From the theological perspective, such attitude should stop because God did not intend work to be all-consuming; people must take enough rest after working enough (Gen. 2:3; Exod. 20:9-11).

Theologically, the principle of rest underlines the concept of divine providence (ASB 2016:143). The principles that guided the gathering of manna by Israel (in Exod. 16) illustrate this point. God instructed the people to gather just as much as they needed for the day and then come the following morning to gather for that day. They were to gather their daily need of manna and not hoard any of it for the following day, or else it would get rotten. However, on the sixth day, the day before the Sabbath, they were to gather twice the daily amount so that they would keep half of it for the Sabbath when no manna fell for gathering. The principle surrounding the gathering of the manna teaches at least two principles. First, it teaches people to develop a one-day-at-a-time mentality, a principle that Jesus taught in the Sermon on the Mount when he asked the disciples to pray for their daily bread and later when he told them to let each day think about itself (Matt. 6:34). The one-day-at-a-time mentality not only helps people to appreciate rest but also makes people value their life more than wealth so that we are not distracted by worries and anxiety (Matt. 6:26b-27).

Secondly, God used the manna-gathering principle to teach Israel that in his economy, the provision of people's needs depends on his gracious providence rather than their struggles. Thus, even though they did not go out to the field on the Sabbath to gather any manna, God provided for

their needs. The Sabbath economy, therefore, contradicts the Egyptian economy in which Israel worked daily, without rest, before having their daily provisions. The need to work and the need to rest are both underscored here. Taking rest, therefore, honors God and underscores his providence. Taking rest is God-honoring because it offers us the opportunity to build our social life through interactions with others and spiritual life by engaging in spiritual disciplines like prayer, solitude, studying of the Bible and fasting, among others (ASB 2016:144; Hughes 2007:13-14). The concept of rest also means that work is not the sum and purpose of human life. To conclude, the Sabbatical principle must be central in the church's effort to restore the world to the Christian model of work which improves human life rather than destroys it. The principle is not the strict adherence to a six-day work and a day's rest. The Sabbath principle is about having enough rest after work. The principle of rest is meant to deal with any tendency of idolization of work. It emphasizes the need to value human life more than wealth (Hughes 2007:12). It is actually the precondition of all other work and its true meaning. It teaches people to say "enough is enough."

What ethical transformation, with regard to work, will catalyze Ghana's development? The next section addresses this question.

5.4.7 Toward Improved Work Ethics

The Ghanaian attitude to work is the first area that needs transformation if Ghana is to achieve sustainable development. Here, there are three main areas to consider—the *Aban-adwuma* mentalit, the mental and cultural transformation.

5.4.7.1 Reversing the Aban-Adwuma (government-business) mentality

According to Adei (2018:13), most Ghanaians (including political leaders) consider Ghana as "the proverbial community goat whom no one cares about." Worse still, the country has become "*sono nam*" (elephant meat) "which everybody goes out to cut a piece for their enjoyment with no conscience as they think there is plenty to go around" (Adei 2018:13). What Adei describes above is what the study refers to as the *Aban-adwuma* (government-business) mentality, a kind of society's negative perception of the individual's workplace, where people consider the public work as belonging to the government and so offer their least efforts. The most prevalent ailment in many government institutions in Ghana is lateness. Even the supervisors, who are meant to serve as a

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check on the subordinate staff, exhibit this behavior, and as a result, many managers lack the moral courage to monitor subordinate employees' tardiness. People go to work late and so are not able to achieve the best that they can. Pilfering is also not uncommon in the workplace. Some employees, perceiving their workplace as their "gold mine", steal such items as electric switches, chairs, vehicle parts, tools, and equipment from their workplace. In addition, some Ghanaian workers will not carry out their duties without receiving bribes from their clients and still others use government resources for their private benefits. Yet, the same people, when employed in the private sector, work better and obtain a high yield. Obviously, the *Aban-adwuma* mentality costs the nation a lot of resources and militates against development. Contrary to the *Aban-adwuma* attitude to work, Paul exhorts believers to do every work wholeheartedly as if they were doing it for God (Col. 3:23). This attitude can be dealt with if people now see work as a divine calling that must be fulfilled in the service of the community and to the glory God.

The progress of society depends on both the government and the output of everybody's work. Therefore, for Ghana to develop, there is the need for deliberate and consistent efforts to change the public attitude, behavior and mindset about work. Whether the policeman keeping watch to ensure peace and safety in the society; the farmer in his/her fields, clearing, sowing, harvesting; the head potter carrying people's load from the shop to the lorry station; the shop keeper in his/she shop serving customers with goods; the bank cashier working late to close his/her daily accounts; the invigilator ensuring that examinations are written without intimidation and according to laid down principles, the man/woman working in the factory so that orders may be fulfilled; the driver conveying goods or people from place to place; the technician, laborer, or government official performing different roles at different posts; the parliamentarian debating in parliament to scrutinize proposed policies, the lawyer and judge in the courts; the doctor in his/her consulting room, or the nurse at the patient's bedside; everyone must work must do their best whether supervised or not, whether in the public sector or in the private sector. The following quote by Amu (cited in Laryea 2017:133-134) sums it up: "Everybody is talking of the need for a better and happier state of things, expecting the other person to change his [or her] ways and work for this better and happier state. It is not a one-man [or woman] business, it is a worldwide change, individual change of heart, attitude and outlook. I must change, you must change, the other man [or woman] must change."

5.4.7.2 Dealing with the culture of favoritism in the workplace

In section 4.3.2.4.2.2 the effects of cronyism and nepotism on development were examined. Using the police as an example, the study showed that the social environment in which people work in Ghana promotes corruption and other antisocial practices that hinder socio-economic development. Obviously, there is a need for attitudinal change in terms of the social context in which people work. People profess to be law-loving but practically oppose the enforcement of the law due to the prioritization of their social relations with others. The citizenry needs to show political maturity by appreciating and carrying out their civic responsibilities and discharging them willingly and diligently.

In addition, Ghanaians must overcome an inferiority complex because it prevents them from discovering their own greatness (Gifford 2004:126). There is the need to develop the "I can do mentality" and offer our best in all that we do. More so, the "Village mentality" which prevents people from living the modern way needs to be overcome (Otabil cited in Gifford 2004:127). It is the "village mentality" that makes the country continue to live by the same old method even when time changes demand a change in way of life. The reliance on rainfall for agricultural purposes and the use of labor-intensive methods of production rather than using machines in 21st-century Ghana fall under this category. Things have changed and the country must adjust itself to the technological developments. Finally, there is the need to overcome superstition, fetishism and idolatry as these cannot bring about development.

In conclusion, Ghanaian society can be changed through a combination of ethical leadership, informal and formal civic education, rewarding moral behaviour, strict enforcement of laws and sanctions against social deviants, and the strengthening of state institutions. Such change must definitely affect people's perception of wealth. The next section says more about this.

5.5 Theology of Wealth

In chapter four, the study noted that many Ghanaians have wrong notions about wealth and its purpose. Since one's attitude toward material things informs the person's relationship with God, with other humans and with the environment, it is important to address misconceptions about

wealth and give a framework for the proper use of wealth for a stainable development. The purpose of this section is to formulate a theology of material wealth for that purpose.

5.5.1 The Owner of Wealth

The theology of wealth is founded on the premise that God is the Creator and Owner of all material resources (cf. Gen. 1:1; 1 Chron. 29:10-16; Psa. 24:1-2; 50:10; Hag. 2:8). There is nothing inherently evil with riches. The Bible often consider wealth as a divine gift and a sign of divine blessings on those who love him or walk with God (Psa. 112:1-3). In this regard, the examples of Abraham (Gen. 13:1-2), Isaac (Gen. 26:12-13), Job (Job 1; 1-3; 42:10-12) and Solomon (2 Chron. 9:13-22) can be cited. One may argue that it is his/her own strength that was used to acquire riches and so it does not belong to anyone. Such a person should be reminded that the wisdom and strength, even his/her very life that contributed to his/her wealth creation are all gifts from God. Again, many people are wiser and stronger and yet are not able to make it in life. This means God's grace is involved in the journey to success. Wealth is not an end in itself; it points to the owner who graciously blesses people with it.

Since God is the real owner of riches, it follows that human beings are simply trustees or managers of what belongs to God. For this reason, wealth must be used in accordance with the will of God. Also, the fact that wealth ultimately belongs to God means human beings will account for the way they used God's riches (Luke 12:48; Rom. 14:12). Therefore, Ghana needs to be reminded that God will ask her about how the abundant resources were used and why they were used the way they were used. In other words, Ghanaians (especially political leaders) will account for how they harnessed these resources and what they used the income from them for. It is, therefore, imperative that everyone who is connected to the management of these resources takes caution about the use of the revenue realized for their country.

Furthermore, even though God is the source of riches, not all people will be blessed materially. It is not true that all believers will be blessed materially. The Old Testament economy, for example, promised wealth to God's people (Deut. 28:8, 12) and at the same time, acknowledged that there will always be poor people among the Israelites and so commanded the care of the poor (Deut. 15:11). People should, therefore, do their part and allow God's will to prevail in their lives. At the same time, it is also not true that one has to be poor to enter the Kingdom of God. The study of the

Beatitudes (in chapter two) revealed that being spiritually poor commends one before God but being materially poor does not necessarily commend one before God unless one is spiritually poor as well. To be poor in spirit does not mean accepting material poverty as a necessary condition for Jesus' disciples; rather, it means finding one's wealth in God and believing that God would provide for the needy (Exod. 22:25-27; Isa. 61:1).

Having established that all wealth is owned by God, the study proceeds to examine some biblical principles regarding the acquisition and stewardship of wealth.

5.5.2 The acquisition of wealth

God approves the acquisition of wealth because it is how humans can live and help others. However, it must be stated at the onset that wealth is not a measure of spirituality or faith as prosperity preachers would want us to believe. This theology is rooted in the assumption that the outward display of wealth determines one's spirituality. To address the limitations of prosperity theology with particular reference to the acquisition of wealth, this section outlines key biblical principles underlying wealth acquisition. The practice of gambling will be evaluated in the light of these principles because it has become a major economic activity among contemporary Ghana youth for various reasons. In Chapter four, it was noted that Ghana's high unemployment rate is the reason why many of its youth undertake gambling activities. Other people gamble because they are lured into it by advertisements or by testimonies from other people that raise their hopes of becoming billionaires overnight. For others, gambling is a form of fun and entertainment. Today, soccer betting is the most popular form of gambling in Ghana. It must be admitted that the Bible does not explicitly talk about the issue of gambling. This makes people argue that it is not immoral; if it were, the Bible would have explicitly condemned it. The concept of gambling centers on the acquisition of wealth, the right attitude to wealth, and the right effect of wealth on one's relationships and attitudes toward others, all of which the Bible addresses. Therefore, even though the Bible is silent about gambling, some biblical teachings can be noted and applied to the practice.

First, the Bible teaches Christians to rely on God's divine will, omnipotence and providence in all their life, services and endeavors (cf. Matt. 6:25-34; 10:29–30). One's economic activities, acquisition and use of wealth must be guided by this principle. Gambling and its associated belief in luck/chance contradict dependence on God's providence and divine arrangement for work and

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reward. Thus, Asante (1999:64) rightly argues that gambling is improper because it "makes chance or luck the determining factor of human decisions." Humans are expected to be responsible creatures whose actions are guided by God's providence and not random chance. Gambling goes against the fundamental idea that people should work to support themselves (Prov. 14:23; Eph. 4:28; 2 Thess. 3:10).

In addition, the Bible emphasizes the love for one's neighbor and the need to seek others' interests as an important principle that must guide social and economic relations (Matt. 22:35-40). Gambling contradicts this principle of communal interest and fellowship by seeking only personal interest (Kudadjie and Aboagye-Mensah 1992:129). Gamblers do not care about the plight of others who lost and had their money put together to pay the winner(s). To use other people's failure as the means of becoming successful is unethical (Matt. 6:24–25). Neither should one exploit others to become rich. As Asante (1999:65) notes "Gambling feeds to the spirit of acquisitive greed (*cupiditas*) in human", that is, "the desire to get a very great deal for every little outlay at the expense of others." Thus, gambling fosters selfishness and greed as the gambler aims at winning and taking the money from losers. It is unethical for us to measure our success against other people's failure. This attitude does not promote love for God and neighbor.

Again, gambling promotes indiscipline and reckless living, all of which are unbiblical. People get money from gambling without any hard work, and so spend it carelessly. There are a number of young people in Ghana who have acquired wealth through gambling and as a result of their wealth have developed indiscipline behaviors such as alcoholism, sexual immorality, and drug abuse, among others. Many young Ghanaians have become school dropouts due to the benefits they derive from the betting industry. They live extravagantly as evident in the posh cars they use, the expensive attire they wear and so on. The biblical principle of stewardship of wealth demands simple and modest living. Those who lose constantly may end up becoming impoverished and seek quick but unchristian means of acquiring wealth such as armed robbery, drug trafficking, bribery and corruption, among others.

Further still, the Bible disapproves of the acquisition of wealth through dishonest means (easy gains) or means that are detrimental to one's neighbor. It is unethical to gain riches when one has not invested work or service or sacrifice that has the same value as what has been received (unless

it is a gift) (Kudadjie and Aboagye-Mensah 1992:96). In other words, it is unbiblical to earn money through easy gains (cf. Matt. 25:14-30; especially vv. 26-30). The prohibition of cheating and charging unreasonably high interests are meant to teach God's people to seek wealth only through honest and harmless ways (Exod. 22:25; Deut. 25:13-16; Luke 3:9-14; 1 Cor. 6:9-10) (Kudadjie and Aboagye-Mensah 1992:129). Gambling is unacceptable because it is a dishonest way of acquiring riches.

Finally, gambling encourages covetousness and materialism, which the Bible forbids (Exod. 20:17; Ezek. 33:31; Matt. 6:24–25; Luke 12:15). Gambling makes one develop the love to acquire and accumulate wealth even when others are suffering. One's attitude toward wealth and poverty is informed by the person's view of eternal treasures (Adei 2006:788). Therefore, by corrupting people to become materialistic, gambling makes people prioritize earthly treasures over heavenly ones, and then develop a get-rich-quick attitude which the Bible speaks against (Prov. 28:22). Gambling, therefore, militates against the biblical teaching that human beings should work for a living.

Gambling stands condemned when judged in the light of the above teachings regarding wealth acquisition. The act cannot be justified even if the proceeds are given to charity because for Christians the end does not justify the means. It is morally wrong to raise funds through an immoral means for a good cause. The church is, therefore, encouraged to develop teaching materials on this subject and ensure that regular teachings are given to their members. In this regard, the Methodist Church Ghana (MCG) must be commended for declaring its position against this antisocial practice. The church's Constitution and Standing Orders state, "Members shall avoid all forms of gambling, including betting, sweepstakes, pools and raffles" as contradicting Christian principles of wealth (MCG 2000:119). The various churches in the country are encouraged to join the fight again gambling and other unethical means of wealth acquisition in contemporary Ghana.

The above principles also apply to people involved in mining activities who continue to acquire wealth by means which end up polluting water bodies, the air and foodstuffs. The miner's lack of interest in the effect of their activities on the mining communities is a clear indication of selfishness. Applying chemicals to crops and harvesting them for the market with residues of the chemicals is equally unethical and must stop. Internet fraud, *sakawa,* ritual murder, bribery, fraud,

and cheating (such as the use of false scales and measures in selling) are also condemned in the light of the biblical revelation given above. To sum up, wealth must be acquired honestly, without causing harm to others and through means that promote the wellbeing of society. The teleological ethics of the end justifies the means and has no place in biblical ethics. Biblical ethics is deontological, that is, the end is good only when the means is also good. Therefore, it is not only how wealth is used that matters but also how it is acquired. To end, both the church and the state should work together to promote hard work and business integrity.

5.5.3 The Stewardship of Wealth

Earlier, it was noted that human beings are stewards of the wealth in their possession. In this section, the study outlines some key principles that must guide this stewardship of wealth; these principles are simplicity, generosity and contentment. To place the discussion in the right perspective, the section begins with a brief outline of the dangers associated with material possessions.

5.5.3.1 The Dangers Associated with Wealth

Even though wealth is not inherently evil, there are a number of dangers associated with its possession/accumulation. This section outlines a few of these dangers to guide the public as they seek to acquire wealth. First, craving for more riches may negatively affect one's relationship with God (Kudadjie and Aboagye-Mensah 1992:100). The reason is that as people acquire more riches, they are tempted to attribute their material prosperity to their own abilities and wisdom (or their gods) instead of acknowledging God as the true source of riches (Deut. 8:17-18; Hos. 2:8). Such a person may begin to trust and find security in their wealth as the rich fool did instead of trusting in God (Psa. 52:7; Luke 12:16-21). Such a person will then serve God and Mammon simultaneously and end up having divided loyalty (Matt. 6:24).

Secondly, wealth can endanger one's moral and spiritual health by making one materialistic (Stott 2006:314-315; Kudadjie and Aboagye-Mensah 1992:101). Materialism is not simply the possession of material wealth but the unhealthy obsession with it (Stott 2006:314). A lot of people think that possessing a lot of wealth will make all their issues go away. But that does not happen because human wants are unlimited. Therefore, no one can get all the things they desire to have.

But even if one were to get all that they desire, they will continue to desire other things which were not part of their initial desires. This is the reason why even those who can afford expensive amenities still find their lives to be unsatisfying. The unending quest to add more wealth to what one already has can make one become so completely absorbed in material things, he/she tends to ignore the Kingdom of God and its righteousness, and eventually becomes spiritually fruitless. This is the reason why it is difficult for a number of wealthy people to remain committed to God (Luke 18:18-30).

Thirdly, material wealth can sometimes make people erroneously determine their quality of life in terms of their material possessions (Kudadjie and Aboagye-Mensah 1992:101). From the biblical worldview, the worthy of human life is rooted in the divine image that human beings bear and not in one's material possessions. The very life a person enjoys is far more precious and worthy than any amount of wealth. Human life is priceless and so Jesus said it benefits a person nothing if they gain the whole world and lose their soul (Luke 12:15ff; Mark 8:36-37). Material wealth is transient in nature; it can be lost or destroyed at any time and leave one frustrated and broken (Matt. 6:19-21) (Stott 2006:315). A person can die and leave riches behind. It is, therefore, unwise to determine the value of a person's life which has eternal value with wealth which has no eternal significance.

Fourthly, material possessions may have a negative impact on one's socio-economic relations (Kudadjie and Aboagye-Mensah 1992:102). For example, one love for money may lead him/her to pay unfair wages to or refuse to pay his/her employees. The love for riches also leads to covetousness, cheating, exploitation and oppression, all of which destroy human relations. One may also destroy the environment in the quest for money if he/she does not control his/her desire for money. Also, material possessions can damage human-to-human relationships by injecting pride into the wealthy and consequently making him/her despise others (Stott 2006:314). Material possessions and luxurious lifestyles, more often than not, go together to make the rich non-sensitive to the plight of the needy in society (Luke 16:19-31).

The foregoing discourse shows clearly that even though material possession is not inherently evil, it can have some serious negative impact on a person. The above negative warning about wealth prepares the reader for the positive instructions which follow.

5.5.3.2 The Principle of Modesty/Simplicity

The first step toward a proper stewardship of one's passion is modesty/simplicity. God wants his people to live modestly, avoiding extravagance and luxury. Christ's life and ministry epitomized humility, simplicity and modesty and served as a paradigm for Christians, irrespective of the needs of others. The principle of modesty is incompatible with the careless use of money—that is, the use of money on things that one does not really need. An extravagant lifestyle must be avoided not only to enhance one's chances of having a surplus to share with others but also because it leads to a corrupt life (Stott 2006:317). There is a need to guard against waste.

However, modesty is not incompatible with careful enjoyment of life. The 1980 Lausanne Movement's International Consultation on Simple Lifestyle urges us to "resolve to renounce waste and oppose extravagance in personal living, clothing and housing, travel and church buildings" (cited in African Evangelical Fellowship 1980:21). The Consultation distinguished a modest lifestyle from asceticism by adding that "We also accept the distinction between necessities and luxuries, creative hobbies and empty status symbols, modesty and vanity, occasional celebrations and normal routine, and between the service of God and slavery to fashion" (cited in African Evangelical Fellowship 1980:21). Therefore, one should not refuse to attend to life necessities in the name of modesty. For example, it is wrong not to provide for one's family on the basis of living modestly. It is unethical to avoid paying taxes, school fees, medical bills, electricity bills, church contributions, and other basic things. All these are important and must be catered for.

Nonetheless, modest living requires one not to go beyond their means. For example, borrowing to buy an expensive car that one cannot afford to use, borrowing to have a "big" marriage ceremony which could have been organized modestly without nullifying its essence and purpose, going for a loan to organize extravagant funerals and incurring debts or sending one's children to a school where one cannot afford to pay for the fees. In Ghana, the cost of organizing funerals is so high that some families end up selling their properties to defray their debt. The extravagant way of organizing weddings in contemporary Ghana is the most important reason why a lot of the youth are not married. Standing Order 750(4) of the MCG reads: "Members shall avoid extravagant expenditure on Baptisms, weddings, funerals and similar occasions, and especially upon intoxicating liquor at such times, and they shall not impose such expenditure upon their relatives

or others out of respect for what is customary" (MCG 2000:119). This statement must be interpreted against the background of situations where the debt incurred in organizing events like funerals and weddings is distributed among family members. People go for loans for funerals and weddings and end up being impoverished.

5.5.3.3 The Principle of Contentment

The principle of contentment is also very important in dealing with the dangers associated with the desire for wealth. It has been noted earlier that there is no amount of wealth that one will possess and may not desire for more. The desire for more wealth may lead to the idolization of riches. The antidote to this problem is contentment—the ability to say "enough is enough" as opposed to the love of money which makes one crave more and more riches. The subject of contentment is illustrated in the Beatitudes which were examined in Chapter 2. In the Beatitudes, one learns the need to be content regardless of their circumstances. Therefore, contentment does not mean having it all and then saying "I have had enough." Rather, it is valuing what you have and considering that as enough for you. One learns from the beatitudes that the key to happiness is not how much wealth one has accumulated but one's ability to feel content wherever they are in life. Contentment frees one from the love of money and the obsessive quest for wealth and helps the person to set his/her priorities right.

Paul develops Jesus' principle of contentment further in 1 Timothy 6:6-9 where he uses the word "contentment" with "godliness" to contrast the Christian attitude toward wealth to the worldly attitude towards riches. Here, Paul argues that one gains greatly when one combines godliness with contentment (v. 6). This gain is, however, not financial gain but spiritual gain (which may yield financial gain as well). Paul contrasts contentment and covetousness and argues that without contentment humans will worship wealth and finally ruin their life (v. 9). In this text, the word contentment refers to "an inward self-sufficiency, as opposed to the lack or the desire of outward things" (Vincent 2009:275). Thus, contentment has to do with the sense of sufficiency, and inner serenity (Stott 2006:316).

A person may experience dissatisfaction after perceiving a gap in their life or when they wish certain circumstances were different. Similarly, a person might purchase a multi-dollar mansion that gives them short-lived excitement or buy a nice car that would make them happy only for a

few days. In that case, contentment reminds the person: "We brought nothing into the world, and we can take nothing out of it" (v. 7 NIV). Another person may lose their job or live in a mud house and yet have inner peace and satisfaction (due to his/her relationship with God), acknowledging that life "is a pilgrimage between two moments of nakedness, namely birth and burial" (Stott 2006:316). Thus, the level of one's contentment does not depend on one's wealth but on one's relationship with God.

Finally, being content does not prevent one from making improvements. Rather, contentment makes one understand that the only path one can take is acceptance when they have no power to change things at that moment. It is contentment that will make one seek riches only through ethical means. More so, it is contentment that can make one generous even when he/she does not have too much. The next section deals with the subject of generosity.

5.5.3.4 The Principle of Generosity

Under normal circumstances, judicious spending of money may lead to increased wealth. As noted earlier, an increase in wealth has the tendency to destroy Christian virtues such as humility, patience, and loyalty to God and encourages selfishness and pride. Therefore, for one not to accumulate wealth while others are suffering or in order not to idolize wealth, one has to give as much as he/she can. The principle of sharing wealth is based on the fact that material resources, like spiritual resources, are meant for the common good of the society (1 Cor. 12:7); therefore, it is unethical to accumulate wealth while others lack the basic necessities of life. Jesus' earthly ministry—which comprised preaching the gospel to the needy, mending and consoling the wounded and bereaved, releasing the captives, and freeing the sick—serves as an example of the social aspect of the Christian faith.

Wesley (in section 3.7.2.3) argues that an increase in wealth hinders the development of Christian virtues. Having more wealth blinds one from the need to seek heavenly treasures. Therefore, it is wrong to accumulate wealth while others are suffering in society. This view of wealth draws on the following words of Basil of Caesarea (cited in Wolterstorff 2010:62): "That bread which you keep belongs to the hungry; that coat which you preserve in your wardrobe, to the naked; those shoes which are rotting in your possession, to the shoeless; that gold which you have hidden in the ground, to the needy. Wherefore as often as you are able to help others and refuse, so often you do

them wrong." Caesarea's words are echoed in Luther's teaching that political activities must always be motivated by love (section 3.6.1). This love is the believer's response to God's love toward humanity. Thus, God's love toward sinful humanity should motivate leaders to develop neighborly love that seeks the wellbeing of the entire society. Given this understanding, every individual and the church need to ask: "What are we doing to feed the hungry and help the poor? What are we doing to secure justice for the poor? What are we doing to uphold the cause of the needy?" (Alcorn 2011:255).

Thus, the quest for justification before God must be accompanied by the quest for sociopolitical justice. One should agree with Moltmann (section 3.8.3) that the answer to the question of pain cannot be based only on the gift of faith of those suffering without the church and state taking pragmatic steps to tackle the root causes of these challenges. God suffers with humanity and so, expects humanity to work toward reducing the plight of the suffering. Therefore, every Christian is urged to join the fight against poverty, discrimination, human rights violations, violence, abuse of children, and oppression. Christians must engage proactively in addressing some of these issues through wealth creation and sharing of resources.

Wealth distribution is not, however, meant to make all people possess the same amount of wealth. Such equality is not realistic. The purpose of distributing wealth is to ensure that everyone has at least what is needed to sustain life. Paul developed this thought when he encouraged the sharing of resources so that there will be equality, not that all will have the same amount of wealth, but that: "The one who gathered much did not have too much, and the one who gathered little did not have too little" (2 Cor. 8:15 NIV). Therefore, the wealthy in the society are encouraged to cater for the needs of the poor. They are to create employment opportunities to absorb those who are able to find jobs or start their own enterprises due to lack of funds.

Generosity is not new in the Ghanaian context; it is a core part of the Ghanaian culture. The Ghana communal worldview of life gives a good foundation for developing interdependence, interconnectedness, sharing and solidarity. Traditionally, Ghanaians hold the view that one does not need to be wealthy before showing generosity. The Ghanaian communal view of the ownership of wealth is expressed in the saying "If there is money in a town, it belongs to the whole community." This means that the value of wealth is found in the generosity of the owner.

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Consequently, people freely share the little that they have with others. One's act of generosity defines his/her humanity. The Bono people would say "ɔyɛ nipa sɛ" ("he/her is a real human") to describe a generous person. Being generous is one of the steps toward building a flourishing society. The Ghanaian culture teaches that one cannot flourish in a society in which many people live in abject poverty.

Ghanaian hospitality and generosity are evident in everyday life. For example, people cook and invite others to dine with them. Every morning, people visit their neighbors to find out how they are faring and whether they are in need of anything. Both the greeting and the response underline a communal sense because the visitor does not ask about the neighbor's wellbeing alone but about the wellbeing of the entire family of the neighbor. This Ghanaian principle of solidarity finds its expression in the following morning and afternoon greeting and response by the Shona people of Zimbabwe: *Mangwani, marara sei?* (Good morning, did you sleep well?), *Ndarara, kana mararawo* (I slept well if you slept well); *Marara sei?* (How has your day been?), *Ndarara, kana mararawo* (My day has been good if your day has been good). These greetings underscore that a person cannot enjoy good health or prosperity without others enjoying the same. That is true human flourishing in communal rather than individualistic terms. Therefore, from a Ghanaian Christian perspective, authentic spirituality demonstrates itself in generosity toward the needy. If so, then a person cannot profess to be a Christian and be tight-fisted.

A proper stewardship of wealth without environmental stewardship will end up drawing the country back. Therefore, having considered some biblical principles on wealth creation and spending, the study proceeds to outline key environmental ethics for ensuring sustainable development.

5.6 Theology of Land and the Environment

As indicated in Chapter Four, Ghana is endowed with natural resources like minerals, timber and many more which can make the continent rich, if properly harnessed. Unfortunately, the unethical means of harnessing these resources yield serious environmental and human problems which contribute to the woes of the country. The blessings of natural resources have turned into a curse for the continent in that the harnessing of their resources creates more problems than intended to solve. Taking gold, for instance, the mining of gold has many negative implications for human

health and the environment. There is obviously a lack of proper stewardship of the ecology. The next section, therefore, formulates environmental stewardship for Ghana.

5.6.1 Land Tenure Reforms

In Chapter 4, the various challenges associated with Ghana's current land tenure system where most of the lands are owned by traditional authorities were outlined. The effects of these challenges on national development require reforms which are briefly outlined below. It must be stated that the researcher respects the customs and traditions of the Ghanaian people. However, certain areas with respect to land tenure need to be modified in order to facilitate the desired development of the country. This does not mean one is disrespecting our traditional authorities; neither does it mean depriving traditional ruler of their power. Like Safo-Kantanka (2021:78), the researcher believes that the current tradition on land not only hinders development but also is structured mainly for the advantage of the occupants of stools and skins. Most of the developed countries abandoned the feudal system which Ghana is currently practicing many years ago and this opened the door of development for them (Safo-Kantanka 2021:78).

Given the challenges associated with the current land turner system, it may be proper for nature to reconsider the existing system to see how best it can be modified to enhance development. Here, the Aborigines Rights Protection Society's opposition to the Land Bill of 1897 serves as a good example for contemporary Ghanaians to fight for land tenure reforms. The Lands Bill was intended to place all unsold Gold Coast land under the authority of the British Crown. The Aborigines Right Protection Society "ensured that the land properly belonged to the indigenes even though the Whiteman was ruling over us" (Safo-Kantanka 2021:79). It saved Ghanaians from losing their ownership of land to the colonial masters. Having fought against a colonial policy that threatened its land tenure system, the country should rethink the current situation where "our traditional leaders us to ransom in our access to land for development" (Safo-Kantanka 2021:79). There is a need for a new intervention and Ghanaian lawmakers must not ignore this problem which militates against the country's development. Here, one agrees with Safo-Kantanka (2021:79) that the land reforms being advocated for must restore at least part of the political authority which colonialization deprived traditional leaders of. This will require the re-organization of the local government system.

The chiefs/kings should consider that the various tribal wars that led to the acquisition of lands for the stools and skins involved the entire community, both royals and non-royals. Therefore, the "stool" lands do not belong to the royals only. The situation whereby chiefs enjoy almost all the income from the sale of land must be checked. The needed reforms must be arrived at through deliberations by all major stakeholders such as the traditional authorities, the government, the church, investors and "ordinary" citizens, among others.

5.6.2 Environmental Stewardship

Environmental stewardship has to do with protecting the environment through recycling, preservation, regeneration, and restoration. Any person whose activity affects the land is responsible for its proper management. The principle of love (espoused by Wesley; see Chapter Four) and the Ghanaian traditional holistic view of sin, salvation and the cosmos will form the basis for the environmental ethics/stewardship espoused in this section. In this study, Wesley emphasised the love for God and neighbour as the right response from the person who has been saved through the gracious act of God. Wesley considers grace as God's love at work in his creation. The researcher contends that the love for God and neighbor should further extend to all creation. A person who has experienced divine grace needs to love God's creation and maintain it to the glory of God. Christian love is, therefore, theocentric (toward God), anthropocentric (toward humankind) and ecocentric (toward the ecology). Moltmann's doctrine of perichoretic love (espoused in section 3.8.3) also serves as a useful foundation for formulating a theology of the environment. Moltmann argues that since God himself relates to all creation perichoretically, human beings who bear God's image have the responsibility of relating to non-humans ethically. Using God's love as a model, humans ought to promote environmental sustainability.

Christians need to respect and guard God's creation because God made it, loves it, considers it good and has a covenant with it. To love one's neighbor means seeking the neighbor's welfare. Since human life depends on other creations, the love for creation is a demonstration of one's concern for the welfare of the neighbor. Therefore, there cannot be authentic neighborly love without the love for creation. Thus, the believer's response to God's love must yield a new kind of ecological ethic that considers the welfare of others.

Here, Wesley's and van Huyssteen's special emphasis on the *imago Dei* comes into focus. These scholars extend the doctrine of the *imago Dei* to cover all created beings. They consider humans as the primary bearers of God's image and other creations as secondary bearers. Among all creation, it is the *homo-sapiens* that have actualized their status as bearers of divine image. This view is theologically significant for developing the theology that even though human beings are the primary focus in terms of God's salvific mission, the final redemption will include the redemption of the whole creation (Rom. 8:18, 21). The idea that non-*homo sapiens* also carry God's image underlines God's love for all creation. This love must be replicated by humans in every activity they undertake.

Traditionally, Ghanaians hold a communal sense of both sin and salvation. The concept of sin goes beyond the individual to include other people in the community as well as the environment. Similarly, salvation in the Ghanaian context (which corresponds to the Hebrew concept of *Shalom*) comprises the ideas of peace, harmony, wholeness, completeness, prosperity, welfare and tranquility. Thus, from the Ghanaian Christian perspective, salivation goes beyond the restoration of divine-human and human-human relationships to include the restoration of human-environment relationships. All these three relationships must be excellent before one can talk of salvation. This concept prepares the Ghanaian to appreciate the theology of the salvation of the entire creation. The seasonal flooding in some parts of Ghana, the changing rainfall patterns and thus the limited supply of fresh water, increasing economic hardship and the increasing incidence of diseases such as malaria show that Ghana is far from attaining human flourishing. The salvation of the people should manifest in an improved life in the holistic sense. Given the above understanding, one personal holiness should necessarily lead to proper divine-human, human-human, and human-environment relationships.

Based on the foregoing discourse, the study deduces general principles for environmental care and then follows it up with principles specifically meant to ensure responsible mining and farming.

5.6.2.1 General Framework for Environmental Care

The general framework for environmental stewardship can be outlined as follows. First, the land and the environment are God's and human beings have been appointed as trustees (Asante 1999:81). Human beings were given the stewardship responsibility when God created the first

human pair and charged them to multiply and take dominion over the earth (Gen. 1:28). Later, he planted a garden and handed it over to them to work and take care of it (2:8, 15). Taking care of it means being a steward of it.

The second point is that human stewardship of the environment should be characterized by caring, preservation and respect rather than destruction and exploitation (Asante 1999:81). Ghana continues to experience climate change in various forms, including rising temperatures, decreasing rainfall totals, increasing sea levels and high incidence of weather extremes and disasters (Asante and Amuakwa-Mensah 2015:79). The climate change brings a number of health challenges, disrupts agricultural activities—by affecting key elements of food production including soil, water and biodiversity—and causes flood in some parts of the country (Asante and Amuakwa-Mensah 2015:79). To avert the situation, Ghana needs to make conscious efforts at preserving the environment. The success of this step depends on the collective effort of all the citizenry. This means that whether one is farming or mining, whether one is fishing or building, one has to ask whether his/her activity is positively contributing to the preservation and renewal of the land. Indiscriminate cutting down of trees, surface mining, illegal fishing and fishing with chemicals, clearing the bush around water bodies to get space for farming, bush burning and putting up buildings on lands reserved for drainage are but a few examples of practices that contradict the principle of environmental stewardship. There is a need to replace trees that have been cut for commercial and domestic purposes as the country attempts to reforest deforested areas.

Thirdly, stewardship of the environment also requires efficient use of resources, taking deliberate and effective measures to reduce waste and its negative impact on the environment (Osei-Owusu et al. 2022:257). The effective use of resources requires "sacrifices" such as opting to travel with public transport rather than going in a private vehicle (Ezra, Conradie and Kilonzo 2022: e-version). There is also the need to change our consumption pattern in order not to put pressure on certain resources (Ezra, Conradie and Kilonzo 2022:np). Consumerism needs to be checked because it tends to promote economic inequality—"both in terms of the conspicuous consumption of the affluent and the aspirations of the poor" (Ezra, Conradie and Kilonzo 2022:np). Interestingly, those who are to make the sacrifices are usually the decision makers and so they find it difficult to make decisions that would reduce their comfort (Ezra, Conradie and Kilonzo 2022:np). Political figures are urged to set examples by reducing their travels and the number of

cars that accompany them on their journeys. This will not only reduce air pollution but will also save the country a lot of money. On the issue of the irresponsible disposal of waste, a holistic approach should be adopted; where the government, the traditional authorities, the church and the non-governmental organizations team up to launch a campaign against this anti-social behaviour. Littering in the environment must be checked. People must be encouraged to keep the areas around their homes, farms and offices clean. Everybody must also be a watchdog, identifying polluted areas for communal labour and then reporting people when they act irresponsibly. This calls not only for public education but also for the establishment of proper and efficient waste-management systems in Ghana.

Fourthly, in order to reduce the over-dependence on and the exploitation of natural resources, Ghana should consider the use of alternative sources of energy, such as solar, hydropower, biomass, biofuel, wind, and solar energy (Rogers, Takase and Afrifa. 2022:1). National development depends on available and reliable source of power (Rogers, Takase and Afrifa. 2022:2). Yet, improper use of energy can also decline the development of the state. Ghana's potential to benefit from the available energy sources would be enhanced if a well-planned and all-inclusive policy on energy is drawn and implemented effectively. Such a step will reduce the use of petrol, oil and coal and hence reduce air pollution. In this regard, the use of a fluorescent bulb as opposed to an incandescent bulb, turning off light and electric gadgets when not in use should become the norm, not an option.

Fifthly, the nation should enforce the laws governing the environment without fear or favour. Ghanaians are entitled to environmental conditions that promote good health and wellbeing. This cannot be achieved without implementing policies to protect the environment from (over)exploitation (Botchway 2021:7-8). As Ghana strives to protect and improve her environment, the era of protecting people who flout state laws on the basis of their socio-economic status, political affiliation and ethnic group should give way to a new era where the principle of equality before the law is strictly enforced. Nobody should be pardoned no matter the person's position or political or ethnic affiliation. This will serve as a deterrent to others who plan to destroy the environment to fulfil their parochial interests.

With the above general framework, the study now zeros into mining and farming activities. The study acknowledges that mining and farming activities are indispensable to the Ghanaian economy. The purpose of this section is not to ban the harnessing of natural resources but to suggest ways in which mining and farming can be more responsible and sustainable.

5.6.2.2 Responsible Mining

The guiding principles centre on workplace safety, environmental management and community development.

5.6.2.2.1 Workplace Safety

The mining sector is full of risks, including body pollution by mercury and other chemicals, injury, inhaling poisonous gas, being trapped under the earth and death (Mantey et al. 2020:2; Tijani 2022:online article) Therefore, mining companies must take steps to promote health and safety. They must improve working conditions in the mines, train their workers to reduce risk in the workplace and respond swiftly in emergencies. Workers must be provided with Personal Protective Equipment (PPEs), Safety signages and First Aid and Emergency Response Equipment to increase the Health and Safety Capacity of the mines. In addition, mining companies must undertake risk assessments to identify the numerous hazards inherent in their operations, prioritize these risks, and establish controls to mitigate the risks. More so, miners must be given safety training and in-service training on safety issues to help them avoid certain dangers at the workplace (Minerals and Mining Policy of Ghana 2014:35).

5.6.2.1.2 Environmental Management

Responsible and ethical mining requires environmental management and ecosystem restoration. Each mining company must provide an environmental management plan to the government for assessment and approval. This plan must indicate activities and control measures that would be used to avoid or minimize environmental impact throughout the operation of the company. Employees must also be trained in environmental management, ecological restoration and ecosystem health, waste management, land rehabilitation and reclamation planning so that they will have adequate knowledge about the impact of their activities on the environment and also contribute to finding solutions to these challenges (Minerals and Mining Policy of Ghana 2014:35).

At all cost, miners should protect the mining communities from water, air and land pollution. Deep mining should be the norm so that the biodiversity is not so much affected by the mining activities. Should surface mining be done, the miners should take effective steps to reclaim the land as soon as possible.

5.6.2.1.3 Community Development

The mining companies need to recognize the importance of a harmonious relationship with the community where they operate for the survival and success of their project. For this reason, they must engage the mining communities before making major decisions that affect the inhabitants of the communities. It is recommended that a joint Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) be signed between the miners and the communities, outlining the roles and responsibilities of each party. The mining companies should invest in the socio-economic development of the mining areas as well as human resource development of the youth in these areas (Minerals and Mining Policy of Ghana 2014:35).

5.6.2.2 Responsible Farming

5.6.2.2.1 Responsible use of agrochemicals

The environmental stewardship advocated by this thesis requires good agricultural practices. In chapter four, the study discussed the irresponsible use of agrochemicals that results in serious health and environmental challenges. The use of banned agrochemicals, the refusal to use PPE during the spraying of crops with agrochemicals, improper disposal and storage of agrochemicals and others were noted as contributing to the challenges associated with the use of agrochemicals for farming in Ghana. The following recommended practices are given to address the above and other factors (Gleaned from Biswas et al. 2014; Osei-Owusu et al. 2022; NPASP 2012). First, only legitimate agrochemical products should be used. The use of illegally imported agrochemicals risks the lives of the farmers and consumers. The Environmental Protection Agency should regularly review the permitted and banned agrochemicals and make the list public to enable everyone to be a watchdog in society. People who import banned agrochemicals should be prosecuted and given deterring punishments such as lengthy imprisonment, huge fines, and suspension of importing companies.

Secondly, all farmers must use appropriate PPE when applying agrochemicals (Biswas et al. 2014:33). The basic PPE consists of gum boots, gloves, long cotton pants, and a long-sleeved shirt. The use of goggles or a respiration mask depends on the product and formulation. The governments, retailers, and agricultural officers are charged to work collaboratively to ensure PPE is available and farmers are well educated about the need to use PPE and how it should be used. In Chapter 4, it was discovered that the lack of education endangers the lives of farmers and the entire population and environment. Therefore, there should be public education on the harmful effects of the improper use of agrochemicals. This should be coupled with intensive monitoring and supervision of farmers' use of agrochemicals. The church must complement the efforts of the government in this mass education exercise. The church must develop a theology that will guide Christian farmers to desist from unethical application of agrochemicals in farming.

Thirdly, farmers are advised to store their products wisely to prevent accidental exposure to agrochemicals (Osei-Owusu et al. 2022:255-257; NPASP 2012:31). Preferably, the chemicals should be stored in a well-ventilated room with limited access. Farmers must have a plan for handling spills and preventing contamination. The Ghana Health Service should initiate a program to routinely conduct samples of farmers for pesticide residues.

Fourthly, farmers must use agrochemicals in accordance with the instructions on their labels (NPASP 2012:30). Retailers and Agricultural extension officers are required to explain the instructions to farmers since most of them cannot read and understand the instructions on their own. Key areas to cover include how long farmers should wait between the last spray, re-entering the field, and harvesting; the amount of the chemical to use and when in the life cycle of the crop it should be used; the potential effect of the use of each chemical on human health and to the environment. The Food and Drugs Authority should regularly test food crops on the Ghanaian market to ascertain whether or not they contain residues of chemicals.

Fifthly, farmers should avoid walking through spray mist when applying agrochemicals and also minimize contact in general (Osei-Owusu et al. 2022:257). Spraying should be avoided on sunny days as that can result in dehydration; spraying in the morning and/or evening should be preferred.

Sixthly, farmers should dispose of empty pesticide containers properly; they should not be disposed of into water bodies or left on the farm as some farmers currently do in Ghana (see

Chapter 4). The Ghana Food and Drugs Authority may work out container management systems to ensure the responsible disposal of empty pesticide containers.

5.6.2.2.2 Organic Farming

This section is meant to address the issue of challenges related to agricultural practices. It is meant specifically to project organic farming as a better alternative to traditional farming which makes use of agrochemicals with health implications. A sustainable approach to agriculture—such as organic farming which uses no chemical agrochemicals, and Integrated Pest Management (IPM), which reduces the use of chemicals, are alternatives to dependence on chemicals (Northern Presbyterian Agricultural Services and Partners 2012:7). Organic farming refers to the approach to farming which uses biological fertilizers, made primarily from plant and animal waste, and nitrogen-fixing cover crops to provide the nutritional needs of crops (Northern Presbyterian Agricultural Services and Partners 2012:7). This model of farming emerged as a response to the detrimental effects that the conventional system of farming has on human and the environment due to its over-reliance on the application of synthetic fertilizers and chemical pesticides.

Though a relatively new method of farming in Ghana, a number of people are patronizing organic farm produce because of the health and ecological benefits associated with the practice. In Ghana, like other parts of the world, biological, cultural, and genetic techniques are also applied to control pests. Biological control is based on the principle of natural enemies of pests where predatory insects (e.g., ladybugs) or parasitoids (e.g., certain wasps) are kept to attack insect pests. For example, the bacteria *Bacillus Thuringiensis* may be used to control caterpillar pests. Where pest cycles are disrupted with cultural controls, crop rotation, intercropping, and planting trap plants may be used (Singh and Nath 2020:np). Traditional plant breeding may also be used to produce various crop varieties that are resistant to particular pests. Genetic control against pests and plant diseases is achieved by the planting of genetically diverse crops. If preventative measures are ineffective, insecticides made from natural plant extracts, natural soap, minerals, or plant extracts like neem can be used. Mineral-based inorganic pesticides like sulfur and copper may be used as well.

There are many benefits one can derive from organically cultivated crops. Organic farming protects the long-term fertility of the soil as it helps maintain high soil organic matter content and

fosters social and biological activities (Singh and Nath 2020:np). Crops produced through organic farming are more nutritious and free from pollution by pesticides. It protects the land against erosion, "decreases nitrate leaching into groundwater and surface water, and recycles animal wastes back into the farm" improves the natural resource base of the soil and protects crops from pest invasion (Singh and Nath 2020:np; Adamchak: online article). Thus, organic farming provides cleaner water and maintains soil fertility. Unlike, the traditional farming approach, which leads to climate change, organic farming effectively regulates non-renewable sources of energy, and slows climate change by reducing carbon emissions.

5.7 Implications of the Political Theology for Human Flourishing in Ghana

Having formulated a contextual political theology for Ghana the study now proceeds to consider how the findings and the theology formulated can inform the Ghanaian perception about human flourishing. After proposing a holistic approach to human flourishing, the section then considers what the church and the state are expected to do to move Ghana into a state of flouring, based on the theological formulation given in this chapter.

5.7.1 A Holistic Approach Human Flourishing

The findings from Chapter Four highlight wrong notions of human flourishing among Ghanaians. The use of corruptive means to make wealth, the murder for money rituals, the harvesting of crops polluted with agrochemicals for market and the numerous illegal mining activities that pollute water bodies, the air and cases of deforestation are a few commercial activities that people undertake intending to attain happiness in life. For such people, happiness or flourishing is taken to mean having enough wealth to spend on oneself and family. This notion of human flourishing has been corrected in this chapter by drawing attention to its inadequacies.

One scholar whose voice cannot be ignored in our discussions on human flourishing is Miroslav Volf who is the Founder and Director of the Yale Center for Faith and Culture and Henry B. Wright Professor of Theology at Yale University Divinity School. Volf has published influential books on Trinitarian theology, reconciliation, public theology and Islam. Volf (2017) tackles the important issue of how religion and society have interacted in the past and how they offer visions for human flourishing in the age of globalization through societal renewal and reform. He, however, notes

that both religion and globalization may malfunction, even though they both constitute the most effective motivation for morality. He notes that globalization may negatively affect one's love for God and for neighbor. He further notes that even though religion can promote political pluralism, respect and reconciliation, it may also result in exploitation, coercion and insecurity (Volf 2011:3-37).

Volf (2017:ix) defines flourishing as "Life going well, life led well, life feeling right." All these three conditions must be met before one's life can be considered flourishing. He uses "flourishing" interchangeably with "the good life" and "life worth living" (Volf 2017:ix). Volf (2017:ix; see also Volf 2015) links flourishing with the life of the plant that thrives well because of the good environment in which it is situated (cf. Psa. 1:3; 23:2; Ezek. 17:3). Volf's definition is a holistic one which can serve to correct misconceptions about flourishing in the Ghanaian society.

In what follows the study outlines key aspects of human flourishing to correct the misconceptions about this concept among contemporary Ghanaians.

The researcher's definition of human flourishing, incorporating the important dimensions that Volf argues for with the researcher's own contextual exploration of and for the Ghanaian context, is as follows: Human flourishing is holistic and complete goodness in human life, not momentarily but lasting, which encompasses, among other things, physical, moral/spiritual, health and psychological wellbeing both for individuals and the society. This means that a society that is socio-economically endowed but morally weak, is not flourishing. Similarly, the tendency of a society to flourish depends on the conditions of the citizenry. In order words, a society in which individuals do not enjoy holistic wellbeing cannot flourish. True human flourishing must benefit the entire society by promoting peace, security, love, health, peaceful co-existence, harmony, interdependence, and joy. This means that policymakers should have the wellbeing of the citizens at heart when formulating and implementing policies.

The above definition and the discussions in this chapter affirm most of the facts about human flourishing discussed in Chapters 2 and 3 of the study. The following outline is given as a summary.

- Human flourishing must be rooted in one's relationship with God. Therefore, the first step toward flourishing requires the acknowledgement of one's sinful state and the need for salvation. When this relationship is established, it must inform one's relationship with other human beings and with the environment. The social relation must be characterized by acts of justice, mercy and righteousness.

- Human flourishing requires diligent industry to multiply the resources that God has provided in the environment. Work is to be considered as a God-given task for individual and communal benefits and to the glory of God. It is not a curse or a necessary evil but an activity that is intrinsically tied to our humanness.

- Human flourishing is all-inclusive and non-discriminatory. No one should be left behind if a society is to flourish. Therefore, policies aimed at making a nation flourish must cover all aspects of life and all manner of people.

- Human flourishing is not only theocentric and anthropocentric but also biocentric. Without a life-supporting or inhabitable environment, a society cannot flourish. There is, therefore, the need to be ecologically sensitive in the quest to flourish. This is a key reason why the study condemns illegal mining activities and unethical agricultural practices in contemporary Ghana.

- Human flourishing involves positive emotions, not mere feelings (Volf 2015: eversion). Even in the face of suffering, life can flourish because flourishing depends on one's perception of the reality of life.

5.7.2 Implications for the Church and the State

In this section, the study focuses on the responsibility of the church and the state in promoting biblical work ethics toward achieving a flourishing society. The section emphasizes two areas, moral transformation and work, though other areas are also highlighted. The reason is that these two are central to the overall political theology formulated and to the overall attempt to attain a flourishing Ghana.

5.7.7.2.1 The Role of the Church

Ghana cannot flourish without the church contributing to the discussion about work and other political issues in the country. The church is tasked to encourage its members to be actively involved in the political activities in the country. The nation cannot flourish without the contribution of Christians in its political space. Biblical leadership principles need to be formulated and promoted based primarily (but not exclusively) on the servant-leadership model. The church must also lead the campaign for transforming the education system of the country. Here, the transformative effect of education and the impact that education is expected to have on societal development must feature prominently in the church's agenda.

The church needs to affirm the importance of work through its teaching and preaching ministry. God's interest in the attitude of believers at their workplaces needs to be emphasized. Everyone must be encouraged to engage him/herself in one form of vocation or the other. Laziness is incompatible with Christianity. The get-rich-quick mentality must be refuted prophetically. Through its preaching and teaching ministry, the church can produce morally mature individuals to handle the nation's economy with great care and concern. This step is very important because most of the economic crises the country faces are due to the lack of integrity and morality on the part of workers which manifests itself in corruption, bribery, loitering, and lateness, with their inevitable poor work output. Church leaders are also urged to listen to the concerns of their followers in relation to the world of work. This will inform its actions toward reducing the plight of both the unemployed and the employed. In addition, the church is encouraged to support people with working capital to begin their own enterprises.

By its nature, the church cannot take a low view of the challenges people go through because of unemployment. There is a need for the church to work with other groups, institutions and individuals to address the problems of unemployment. Already the many churches in Ghana employ a lot of people through their education and health facilities. Many churches also offer entrepreneurial training in various vocations and projects. The church is encouraged to do even more as the unemployment rate keeps skyrocketing. The church may guide its members about employment avenues and how they can access them. Offering career counselling to its members

is also a step in the right direction. The church is also encouraged to give pastoral counselling to those who are depressed, humiliated and oppressed due to unemployment.

Furthermore, the church can consider is to scrutinize the government's economic policies and give constructive proposals to make such policies more realistic and relevant to the people. The church must speak against policies that make foreign companies which operate in Ghana bring all their employees from outside the country instead of employing Ghanaians. Ghanaians must benefit from the operations of foreign companies engaged in such activities as mining, road construction, building construction and others. The church should also speak prophetically against compatriots who make huge profits and accrue riches while underpaying their employees. There are some companies which pay their worker less than the minimum wage, and do not provide any health or pension benefits; others pay a small salary and add huge allowances in order to pay less tax and this leads to fewer retirement benefits. The wide gap between the salaries of company executives and that of the ordinary worker is also something that the church should speak against (Agang 2020:94). The church should speak to these and other related issues.

In addition, the church should address the government on issues of work. Issues about the welfare of workers should not only be left to the trade union alone (Agang 2020:93). The government must question why its policies allow Ghana's natural resources to be sent outside the country for processing instead of processing them in the country to add value and to create employment for nationals. The processing of Ghana's cocoa and oil outside the country needs much attention in this regard. The church must also call for justice and fair wages from the government as poor remuneration contributes to negative work attitudes. Government policies that contribute to unemployment and inequalities or weaken the economy and hurt the poor must be condemned.

5.7.7.2.2 The Role of the Government

The state is a key stakeholder when it comes to the issue of human flourishing. The resources of the state are entrusted to the care and management of the government. Therefore, the government has a key responsibility in the nation's quest to flourish. The state must take care of the education, health and leadership needs of the people. State resources should be used fairly and honestly towards improving the lives of the citizenry. The political and educational reforms espoused in this chapter should be taken seriously by the state.

For Ghana to flourish, the government must ensure that the supervisory bodies are doing their work well. One of the reasons why the public sector performs relatively poorly is because of a lack of effective supervision and management. People who put up any negative attitude toward work must be dealt with in accordance with the labour law. There is a need to improve the country's public transportation system so that workers can get to work early without much delay in traffic. Due to the poor transportation system, people set off for work very early, travel for many hours and get to work late, already tired and irritated. The government may provide transportation for workers in order to have improved punctuality, psychological wellbeing and ensure high productivity (Kudadjie and Aboagye-Mensah 1992:114).

The government should also spearhead the move to improve the conditions of service and the remuneration of workers. The Akan proverb "We do not blow the horn with an empty stomach" underlines that workers can be more effective if their conditions of service are improved. More employment opportunities need to be created to absorb the youth who, because of lack of employment, engage in all sorts of anti-social activities. Another area that the government can consider is to institute a welfare scheme for workers in the form of subsidized medical services for self and dependants, house ownership schemes, soft loans for the payment of fees, scholarships for the wards of workers and subsidized the clearing of certain goods imported by workers.

The government is encouraged to invest in agriculture to ensure food security in the country. Ghana is blessed with a vast and fertile land with human resources available for cultivation. The country's fortunes can easily turn around if deliberate efforts are made to develop the agricultural sector. In this regard, the government is expected to improve the road network connecting farm areas to the cities; the government can provide a ready market for crops to reduce post-harvest losses. The country can practice all-year-round farming to boost production if irrigation facilities are provided. In addition, farmers must be supported with grants and loans as well as welfare schemes to enable them to cater for their families. It is the researcher's conviction that these and other efforts by the church and the state will facilitate Ghana's development.

5.8 Conclusion

This chapter has achieved the main purpose of the study, namely, the formulation of a contextual political theology for Ghanaian society. The formulation was based on such areas as governance

and nation-building, education, work, wealth and the environment. The main conclusion from this chapter is that the holistic development of a society requires the participation of all its citizenry. This means that the citizenry must also be equipped with the skills required to contribute to society's development. The study found education as the means of making people skillful for national development. It was on the basis of this that educational reforms were suggested to deal with the inefficiencies of the current education system in Ghana. For this to happen, Ghana's leadership must use its resources judiciously toward the provision of the basic infrastructural, and technological needs required for development. Since total development cannot occur in a morally weak society, the church is charged to speak prophetically to issues of morality such as corruption, bribery, favoritism, armed robbery, gambling, and indiscriminate sex, among others. In doing this, the church needs to be evangelical, emphasizing the Lordship of Christ, the transforming power of the Holy Spirit, the authority of Scripture, and social ministries among others. With this holistic approach to development, Ghana can attain a flourishing status. The study now proceeds to the concluding chapter.

CHAPTER SIX

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

6.1 Summary of research findings

The overriding purpose of this research was to formulate a contextual political theology for the Ghanaian community based on historical, biblical and Ghanaian sociopolitical worldview, and then deduce implications for the concept of human flourishing in the Ghanaian context. To achieve this purpose, there was the need to establish the biblical/theological basis for political theology; obtain historical data on the church's engagement with public issues; and examine the current political situation in Ghana to provide the conceptual framework for the theological formulation.

After the introductory chapter that outlined the research problem, research questions, objectives, and scope of the study, among others, the study proceeded to examine the concepts of political theology and human flourishing from a biblical-theological perspective. The first research objective (that is, providing a biblical context for the study) was achieved in chapter two through a text-immanent reading of selected biblical passages (including Gen. 1:26-28; 3:1-15; 1 Kgs 21:1-16; Jer. 22:1-9; Amos 5:1-7, 16-24; Matt. 5:1–12; Luke 4:18-19; Mark 10:35-37, 42-45; Rom. 13:1-7 and 1 John 3:16–18). The chapter brought to the fore both God's concern for the poor, the sick, and the social outcasts and his desire to have all categories of people integrated into the sociopolitical decisions of society. The responsibility of leaders to ensure justice, peace and equity in the society was central in the biblical data. The chapter also presented human flourishing as rooted in God, as holistic and communal in effect and as environmentally sensitive.

To achieve the second objective of the study—namely, placing the study in the right historical context—the third chapter examined the various ways in which selected scholars have developed their political theology in light of their sociopolitical milieu. A careful analysis of the works of Plato, Aristotle, Augustine, Thomas Aquinas, Martin Luther, John Wesley and Jürgen Moltmann highlighted the need for Christians to confront their societies with their faith to ensure justice, equity, and provide for the needy and the marginalized. The chapter also stressed the need for a holistic education that focuses on the needs of society and produces graduates to address these

needs. The communal sense of life was also promoted by this chapter as it underscored the importance of such virtues as hospitality, interdependence, and solidarity, among others.

The purpose of chapter four was to achieve the third research objective; namely, to determine the prevailing sociopolitical situation in contemporary Ghana. The study found the key political challenges of contemporary Ghana including poverty, corruption, incompetent and ineffective leadership, land acquisition challenges, ecological problems, and an ineffective education system. The most popular Christian response to socio-economic challenges in Ghana, prosperity theology, was evaluated and found to be theologically unsound and culturally insensitive despite some positive contributions it makes to the (numerical) growth of the church and societal development.

The study reached its climax in Chapter Five where it considered the question of how one might formulate a political theology to address the needs of contemporary Ghana. The theological formulation was based on the biblical theology, historical theology and the sociopolitical situation of Ghana examined earlier in the study. The crux of the political theology formulated is founded on honest and wholehearted selfless service of every citizen, an improved education system that produces graduates with the requisite skills to address Ghana's societal needs, a proper and ethical means of harnessing natural resources for the common good of the society, the respect for and protection of human dignity and rights, the promotion of cultural transformation, and the promotion of spiritually/morally maturity. Being biblically grounded, historically informed and genuinely contextual, the theological formulation adequately fills the research gap identified in the preliminary literature review (in Chapter 1).

The formulation of contextual political theology for Ghana was meant to correct wrong notions about human flourishing. To this end, the researcher formulated a working definition of human flourishing as a holistic and complete goodness in the physical, moral/spiritual, health and psychological wellbeing of both the individual and the society. This holistic definition serves to correct wrong notions about human flourishing in contemporary Ghana and hence promote peace, security, love, health, peaceful co-existence, harmony, interdependence, and joy among all people. This view of human flourishing contradicts all human activities that destroy the environment; hence, the concept of human flourishing espoused in the study serves to remedy Ghana's environmental problems. It also implies that a society that is socio-economically developed by

morally underdeveloped is far from flourishing. This calls for a relook at the definition of human and societal development.

In all, the outcome of the study confirms the hypothesis that a political theology that is biblically grounded, historically informed and genuinely contextual within the Ghanaian traditional worldview and culture is relevant to addressing Ghana's political challenges and correcting wrong notions about human flourishing.

6.2 Conclusions

Of the many conclusions deducible from the study, the following are outstanding. First of all, theological formulations for the Ghanaian context must make use of aspects of the Ghanaian worldviews and thought forms that touch on concrete issues rather than depending predominantly upon Western theological traditions that may not speak directly to Ghanaian concerns. This is to ensure that the Christian faith is adequately contextualized and made relevant for the Ghanaian community. The contextualization of the Christian faith is non-negotiable if Christianity is to thrive well in any given society.

Secondly, all human beings are political animals created in accordance with the political nature of God. There is, therefore, the need to fulfil the human desire for politics through active participation in the political activities of the society. Given this fact, the church must prepare its members to take up political appointments and through such positions transform the society by standing for justice and righteousness, shining as the light and preserving Christian virtues as the salt of the world.

Thirdly, the Ghanaian church needs to emphasize a holistic view of human flourishing. This is important in the Ghanaian context where wrong notions about human flourishing make some people search for wealth through unethical means and yet aim at working toward their flourishing and that of the society. The church needs to develop and promote the concept of human flourishing with emphasis on its theocentric, anthropocentric and biocentric dimensions. This will ensure the holistic development of the nation.

Fourthly, there is the need for cultural transformation, a change in people's attitude toward wealth and work to address the get-rich-quick mentality and to deal with cultural factors that hinder

Ghana's development. Achieving this requires contributions from traditional authorities, the church and the state.

Fifthly, holistic development requires collective effort. Therefore, the state and various religious bodies need to team up to find lasting solutions to Ghana's problems. In the process, there is the need for mutual respect and tolerance, or else the interfaith dialogue required for peaceful coexistence of various religious traditions cannot be successful.

Sixthly, sociopolitical development cannot be achieved without technological advancement. The state is, therefore, encouraged to invest in technology geared toward enhancing the economy of the nation.

6.3 Contributions of the Research to Scholarship

The study has contributed to knowledge in the following ways. At the beginning of the study, the lack of contextualized political theology for Ghanaian society was identified as a major academic gap. This study has filled this gap by formulating a political theology that is not only biblically and historically grounded but also contextually sensitive. The study has provided a very strong foundation for future researchers who may wish to study the subjects of political theology and human flourishing further. This is very important, especially in the Ghanaian context where the subjects of political theology and human flourishing have not received much scholarly attention.

Furthermore, the study contributes to the quest for solutions for Ghana's environmental, educational, leadership and socio-economic challenges. The attention given to such issues as *sakawa*, sports betting, use of agrochemicals and illegal mining activities makes this work unique among recent studies.

Another contribution of this study is its detailed study of at least ten major biblical texts that have a huge influence on the biblical understanding of political theology and human flourishing. The study has helped to unearth major truths about the subject matter which hitherto had not been applied to the Ghanaian context.

Ethically, the study has given adequate guidelines for Ghanaian Christians to live their lives as people called into a new Kingdom whose citizens serve selflessly and think not only about

themselves but also about others. The importance of the Ghanaian communal sense of life is key to achieving this ethical standard. The findings from the study have the potential to bring about theological, ethical and spiritual renewals that will yield improved God-human, human-human and human-environment relations.

6.4 Suggestions for Further Studies

No research project is exhaustive on the subject matter it studied. There are, therefore, uncovered areas that future researchers can consider. A few of such areas are outlined below. Firstly, the thesis focused on selected biblical texts as representatives of what the entire Bible teaches about political theology and human flourishing. In reality, the passages examined do not give a full biblical perspective of the subject. In view of this, more extensive work that deals with all major texts related to the subject can be conducted in the future.

Secondly, this study used secondary data from books, commentaries, theses/dissertations, and journal articles among others. Thus, the study lacks a quantitative component, that is, empirical data. It is recommended that future researchers use empirical data collection methods (such as questionnaires, interviews, and focus group discussions) to conduct this same study in order to give another perspective on the subject matter.

In addition, future researchers can consider political theology from a denominational perspective, for example, from a Pentecostal or Orthodox perspective. This will provide a more focused look at the subject matter and provide a more contextualized solution within the denomination in question.

Another possible fruitful study could be to investigate the impact of Christian songs in shaping the sociopolitical life of Ghana. Here, Christian hymns and/or choruses can be studied from a sociopolitical perspective, especially as used during political campaigns and rallies.

Finally, a historical survey of church-state relations in Ghana within a specific timeframe can be considered by future researchers. Such a study would unearth facts that would shape the church's future engagement with the state.

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