

UNEMPLOYMENT AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN 2 THESSALONIANS 3:6-12: THE ROLE OF THE CHURCH IN NIGERIA

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Abstract

Unemployment is a disturbing factor that poses serious economic and security challenge in Nigeria. The idea of self-employment which has developed into the concept of entrepreneurship is universally accepted as the antidote to unemployment. What is more disturbing is the relative silence or idleness of the Church in engaging the populace in self-empowerment schemes. Greater resources are expended in seed-sowing, prayers, deliverance, crusades and other activities of faith, thereby shying away from entrepreneurial pragmatism. The objective of this study was to set out what should be the pragmatic approach of the Church in reducing unemployment through promoting entrepreneurship programmes. Also, the posture the Church would take in relation to members who abhor work was considered. The research adopted exegetical method due to the involvement of a biblical text-pericope. It recommended that the Church in Nigeria should be at the fore-front of self-employment crusade by initiating attractive entrepreneurial activities as well as employ anti-welfare measures for those who would not work.

Introduction

The problem of unemployment has doubtless assumed a universal phenomenon today. It has become a subject of economic and political debates in many nations of the world, including Nigeria. Globally, economists have advanced the concept of entrepreneurship as a veritable and reliable index in curbing the phenomenal rise of unemployment rate in many parts of the world. Sostre (2010) believed that unemployment is the biggest challenge for any economy and could be eradicated by entrepreneurship. He pointed out that entrepreneurship is an essential component of any economy that is triggered by the growing urge among people to have their own business. Ashvini (2011) highlighted the importance of entrepreneurship when he observed that entrepreneurs not only create local jobs but also bring prosperity around the world by developing and selling products and services which probably were not needed before.

Business Dictionary defined entrepreneurship as “the capacity and willingness to develop, organize and manage a business venture along with any of its risks in order to make a profit” ([www.businessdictionary.com](http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition)>definition). In other words, it is “the practice of beginning a new trade or reviving an existing business, for capitalizing on fresh opportunities” ([www.benefit.net](http://www.benefit.net/Business)>Business). Anyanwu (2015) had noted that

“entrepreneurship includes the individual’s identification and allocation of resources to create value through the identification of unmet needs.” The character of entrepreneurial spirit therefore, is innovation and risk-taking, which forms an essential part of a nation’s ability to succeed in an ever-changing and increasingly competitive global marketplace ([www.businessdictionary.com](http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/)>definition).

In Nigeria, there are government and private sector initiatives which are geared towards developing the entrepreneurial industry of the nation. Some of the government programmes aimed at providing entrepreneurial skills, aid and facilities include National Directorate of Employment (NDE), Small and Medium Enterprise Development Agency of Nigeria (SMEDAN), Center for Entrepreneurship Research and Development (CEDR), FADAMA Agricultural Project, etc. Despite the efforts of government and private organizations, the unemployment misfortune of the country has persisted due to, in the researcher’s supposition, the low involvement of the Church in the area of entrepreneurship education and development.

Undeniably, the Church is one of the highest employers of labour in Nigeria through employment of pastoral and administrative staff, academic staff (for mission schools), medical staff (for mission hospitals) and other paid-employments for some other establishments. However, the worrisome nature of unemployment situation in the country demands that the Church should apply a more pragmatic approach in developing the entrepreneurial skills of her unemployed members. The aim of this research therefore is to set out what could be the role of the Church in promoting entrepreneurship thereby curbing unemployment.

The study text, 2 Thessalonians 3:6-12 is a discourse on idleness. Paul’s first letter to the Christian community at Thessalonica had emphasized on the imminence of the *parousia* (the second coming of Christ). The effect of that letter and a certain pseudopigraphical writing delivered to the Thessalonian Christians spurred negative and fearful reactions among the brethren. Some of them abandoned their livelihoods and started depending on other members for their daily sustenance. Paul frowned at this idle practice and issued strict orders to curb the anomaly.

This research employed the science of exegesis as its methodology. Exegesis is the practice of discovering the meaning of a text in its original cultural, historical, literary and theological contexts (Reid, Linder, Shelley & Stout, 1990). It involves determining the boundary of a chosen text-pericope and the exact wordings of the text. While this method may be applied in the study of any ancient text, it is particularly useful and mainly used in biblical studies. Exegetical method follows a systematic process in order to relate the ancient book to the modern world.

The research therefore studied how Paul addressed the problem of idleness in the Thessalonian Church and the challenge of his apostolic charge to the Church in solving the unemployment problem in Nigeria.

TEXTUAL STUDY OF 2 THESSALONIANS 3:6-12

The task of biblical exegesis is to project us into the ancient biblical world through the pages of scripture. However, the words of the scripture are foreign words. Therefore, sound

exegetical begins with the languages (Erickson, 2013). Here, the Greek text of the Bible passage is given. The researcher's English translation follows immediately.

Greek Text [Nestle-Aland Version]

6. Παραγγέλλομεν δὲ ὑμῖν, ἀδελφοί, ἐν ὀνόματι τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ χριστοῦ, στέλλεσθαι ὑμᾶς ἀπὸ παντὸς ἀδελφοῦ ἀτάκτως περιπατοῦντος, καὶ μὴ κατὰ τὴν παράδοσιν ἣν παρέλαβοςαν παρ' ἡμῶν. 7. Αὐτοὶ γὰρ οἴδατε πῶς δεῖ μιμεῖσθαι ἡμᾶς· ὅτι οὐκ ἠτακτήσαμεν ἐν ὑμῖν, 8. οὐδὲ δωρεὰν ἄρτον ἐφάγομεν παρά τινος, ἀλλ' ἐν κόπῳ καὶ μόχθῳ, νύκτα καὶ ἡμέραν ἐργαζόμενοι, πρὸς τὸ μὴ ἐπιβαρῆσαι τίνα ὑμῶν· 9. οὐχ ὅτι οὐκ ἔχομεν ἐξουσίαν, ἀλλ' ἵνα ἑαυτοὺς τύπον δώμεν ὑμῖν εἰς τὸ μιμεῖσθαι ἡμᾶς. 10. Καὶ γὰρ ὅτε ἦμεν πρὸς ὑμᾶς, τοῦτο παρηγγέλλομεν ὑμῖν ὅτι εἴ τις οὐ θέλει ἐργάζεσθαι, μηδὲ ἐσθιέτω. 11. Ἀκούομεν γὰρ τινὰς περιπατοῦντας ἐν ὑμῖν ἀτάκτως, μηδὲν ἐργαζομένους, ἀλλὰ περιεργαζομένους. 12. Τοῖς δὲ τοιούτοις παραγγέλλομεν καὶ παρακαλοῦμεν διὰ τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ χριστοῦ, ἵνα μετὰ ἡσυχίας ἐργαζόμενοι τὸν ἑαυτῶν ἄρτον ἐσθίωσιν.

English Translation

6. Now we warn you, brothers, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you withdraw from every brother that is walking idly, and not according to the tradition that you received from us. 7. for you yourselves know how you ought to imitate us, because we were not idle among you; 8. Nor did we eat bread from anyone without payment, but in labour and toil, we were working night and day, in order not to be burdensome to any of you. 9. Not that we do not have the right, but that we might offer ourselves to you as an example, in order to imitate us. 10. For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that if anyone is not willing to work, neither let him eat. 11. Indeed we hear that some among you are walking idly, not walking at all, but being busybodies. 12. Now, to such we warn and exhort by our Lord Jesus Christ that they work with quietness that they might eat their own bread.

Textual Observation

There is a minor variation that occurred in verse 6 of the text above over the word *παρέλαβοςαν*, *parelabosan* ("they received") which is the third person plural of first aorist indicative active of *παραλαμβάνω*, *paralambanoo* ("to receive"). This reading is supported by the original hand of codex Sinaiticus manuscript, Alexandrinus and original hand of codex Bezae Claromontanus (which reads *ελαβον*, *elabon*). It is also supported by minuscules 33, 88, 1827, 1845 and 379_{AD} evidence from Basil the great. The second variant, *παρέλαβον* (*parelabon*, "they were receiving") is supported by the corrected versions of Sinaiticus and Bezae Claromontanus as well as other uncial and minuscule witnesses. This variant also enjoys the support of the majority reading of Byzantine manuscripts and also the majority reading of lectionaries in the Synaxarion and in the Menologion. Evidence from Church fathers like Origen, Chrysostom, etc likewise supports this reading. The third variant uses the first or the second variants. It is supported by a group of manuscripts from the Old Latin or *Itala* version, the vulgate, Syriac peshitta, Coptic sahidic and Church fathers Cyprain, Lucifer, Augustine. The fourth variant reads *παρέλαβεν* (*parelaben*, "he was receiving") and is accepted by minuscules 5, 76, 218, 234,

1962 and Church fathers Basil and Ps-Oecumenius. The fifth variant, *παρελαβετε* (*parelabete*, “you were receiving”) is adopted by codex Vaticanus, uncial 010 (Greek text), and some minuscules (327, 436, 442, 1611, 2005, 2495), versions (Syriac, Coptic, gothic, Armenian) and Church fathers (Origen, Ps-Jerome, etc.). The weight of evidence supporting the first variant gives it slight preference over the rest as the superior reading, although there is a considerable degree of doubt.

Historical Study of the Text

Second Thessalonians is generally attributed to Paul and there are no indications among the writings of the early Church fathers who lived during and after Paul’s lifetime that anyone questioned the authenticity of Pauline authorship of this letter. In fact, several Church fathers recognized Pauline authorship of this epistle in their writings (Walvoord and Zuck, 1983). However, some scholars have denied that Paul wrote this letter because it differs in some respects from First Thessalonians. They attribute the similarities it shares with First Thessalonians to imitation. However, Second Thessalonians is most likely written by Paul considering the swift flow of apocalyptic thought from 1 Thess. 4-5. The differences are no greater than one would expect in two separate letters dealing with such a broad topic (Keener, 1993). Most commentators today accept it as Pauline.

Second Thessalonians is closely linked with the first epistle. Richards (1987) suggested it was written between three or four months of the other while Walvoord and Zuck (1983) opined a 12 month gap. This would place the date of composition in the early AD 50s and supposedly the third of Paul’s canonical writings (assuming Galatians was his first).

According to Walvoord and Zuck (1983), almost all conservative scholars believe that 2 Thessalonians was written from Corinth. The basis for this conclusion was that Paul, Silas and Timothy mentioned in the opening salutation of the letter, were present together in Corinth (Acts 18:5). Whereas there is a scholarly consensus that 1 Thessalonians was written from Corinth, and since the topics treated in the second epistle were borne out of the prevalent issues in the first, Corinth seems the logical site of composition.

Paul’s first letter to the Christians in Thessalonica did not immediately solve all their problems (Wiersbe, 1996). The letter discussed major subjects such as encouragement in persecutions and expectation of the day of the Lord. In fact, the persecution grew worse and some believers thought that they were living in the time of the Great Tribulation. Their fears increased, following the receipt of a letter claiming to be from Paul, stating that the Day of the Lord had already arrived. The resultant effect was confusion and deep fear. Since the Lord’s coming was so imminent, some of the believers decided to quit their jobs and spent their time waiting for the Lord. They considered their secular concerns as inconsistent with a due preparation for such an important and awful event (Clarke, 1997). This meant that the working members were under the extra burden of providing welfare for their idle fellows. In an urgent bid to correct this misapprehension, Paul felt constrained to write them a second letter, in which he commended them for their growth, corrected their doctrinal error about the Day of the Lord, and warned them against idleness (Walvoord and Zuck, 1983).

Warning against Idleness

In verses 6, 10-12, Paul issued a stern warning against idle Christians. He asked the Church to withdraw (στέλλεσθαι, *stellesthai*) from every idle fellow who refused to follow his apostolic tradition. Keener (1993) had suggested that the origin of this group of idlers in the Church might be the “Greco-Roman aristocratic disdain for manual labour”. Some of the idle persons may have been genuinely converted, but they are yet to overcome their old lifestyle. The word “*stellesthai*” also mean “to avoid” or “abstain from associating with” (Strong, 2006). It was a command rather than an advice. In his previous letter, the apostle had asked the Church to warn those who were idle (1 Thess. 5:14). Apparently the paraenesis had not been obeyed. Now, he had to prescribe a sterner discipline. Paul therefore, was asking the Church not to include an idle member (someone who abhors work) in their welfare list. The goal of such measure is that the person may be ashamed and learn to work (2 Thess. 3:14). No Christian who is able but unwilling to work should be maintained by others who labour on his behalf (Walvoord and Zuck, 1983).

The word ἀτάκτως (*ataktos*) which occurred in verses 6 and 11 signifies “disorderly” “unruly” “idle” “with slackness” (like soldiers not keeping rank). It was especially a military term which Paul employed to refer to those in the Church who refused to work, but are busybodies (περιεργαζομαι, *periergazomai*, “to work all around” “meddle”). In 1 Thessalonians 5:14, the apostle also used the word to describe certain Church members who manifested an insubordinate spirit, whether by “excitability or officiousness or idleness” (Vine, 1985). The author also used the term in explaining the example set by him and his fellow missionaries, in working for their bread while they were at Thessalonica so as not to burden the saints: “for you yourselves know how you ought to imitate us, because we were not idle among you” (2 Thess. 3:7).

Paul said that those who are idle are busybodies (*periergazomai*) which means “to waste one’s labour” or “to meddle with other people’s business”. Vine (1985) noted that the statement involving *periergazomai* in 2 Thess. 3:11 could be interpreted as “some who are not busied in their own business, but are over-busied in that of others”. Keener (1993) had opined that this group of people may have pursued a philosophic, particularly cynic lifestyle, who would spend most of the day in the market places of Greek cities. Interestingly, this practice was a common feature in Thessalonica (Acts 17:5). Paul the apostle thereby instructed the Church to withdraw (*stellesthai*) from brethren who exhibit idle (*ataktos*) and busybody (*periergazomai*) behaviours. He insisted that such attitudes are inconsistent with correct Christian profession and practice.

2 Thessalonians 3:10 reveals that Paul had earlier handed down a tradition (παράδοσιν, *paradosin* = apostolic teaching or instruction) to the Christian assembly at Thessalonica concerning the dignity of labour: “For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that if anyone is not willing to work, neither let him eat.” Likewise in the first epistle, he asked that those who are idle should be warned (1 Thess. 5:14). Walvoord and Zuck (1983) rightly stated that “the individuals in view were not those who could not work, but those who would not work”. They have lost the right to be supported by other Christians out of a sense of charity. One may therefore conclude that the Thessalonians had a penchant for idleness. Eschatological tensions only added fuel to the fire of laziness. Merriam-Webster Dictionary’s definition of idleness as “an inclination not to do work or

engage in activities” supports this stance. Hence, willful disengagement from work as well as the uncertainty of the *Parousia* were the basic factors responsible for idleness among the Thessalonian Christians.

The Problem of Unemployment

National Bureau of Statistics (2016) defined unemployment as the proportion of the force that is available for work but did not work for at least thirty-nine hours in the week preceding survey period. Investopedia sees it as a phenomenon that occurs when a person who is actively searching for employment is unable to find work (<http://www.investopedia.com>). The most frequent measure of unemployment is the unemployment rate, which is the number of unemployed people divided by the number of people in the labour force (<http://www.investopedia.com>).

Official figures from the National Bureau of Statistics puts the figure of unemployment rate at 38% and youth unemployment rate at 65% as at September 2016. By implication, over 80 million Nigerians are unemployed (Noko, 2016). Unemployment is a phenomenon commonly associated with the youth because they are the most affected segment of the society. Therefore in this research, both unemployment and youth unemployment would be used interchangeably.

The adverse effect of youth unemployment in the national polity cannot be overrated. Idle minds have indeed become devil’s workshop in the Nigerian social space. Some of the problems created by idleness/unemployment include: armed robbery, cyber crimes, advanced free fraud, kidnapping, militancy, terrorism, ritual-killing, cultism, gangsterism, drug abuse, and so on.

In a study concerning unemployment in Africa, Okonkwo (2005) in Noko (2016) identified three major factors of unemployment: the educational system, the choice of technology (which can either be labour intensive or capital intensive) and inadequate attention to agriculture. Noko (2016) also listed poor education system as one of the major causes of unemployment in Nigeria, which leads to (1) poor knowledge of the course of study (2) poor or no skills for available jobs, and (3) poor creative and analytical skills to create jobs on their own. He prescribed reformation of the educational system as one of the solutions to unemployment in Nigeria. According to him, educational reforms will lead to (1) increased graduate skills to make them problem-solvers, entrepreneurs and innovators (2) concentration on practical knowledge rather than theoretical knowledge (3) giving students opportunities to go into business and vocations while still in school, and (4) encouraging young people to develop their talents and vocational passions.

However, unemployment can either be voluntary or involuntary. Voluntary unemployment happens when one chooses not to work because he or she has means of support apart from employment. On the other hand, involuntary employment is when persons who are eligible and willing to work at the prevailing rate of pay are unable to find work (Anyanwa, 2005 in Noko, 2016).

The problem of the Thessalonian Church was the problem of voluntary unemployment. The people willfully disengaged from their jobs and became burdensome dependants upon the fewer working population of the Church. Paul challenged his Thessalonian converts to emulate the entrepreneurial spirit of his apostolic team.

Paul's Entrepreneurial Example

In 2 Thessalonians 3:7-9, Paul urged the Christians in Thessalonica to imitate (μιμεομαι, *mimeomai*) his example and that of his co-labourers that worked with him during their missionary enterprise in the city. According to Michaelis in Kittel (1974, p.659), the meaning of *mimeomai* in pseudopigrapha includes both "imitating exemplary men" and "imitating God". In the Pauline epistles, *mimeomai* possesses the same meaning. In 2 Thess. 3:7-9, it is used in the sense of striving to live out the teachings of the apostles and this implies recognition of the authority of the teachings of the apostles of Christ (Onwu, 2004, p.205).

The Greek word translated "imitate" or "follow" (*mimeomai*) was not foreign to Paul as Rudolf Bultmann (1964, p.328) would claim. Admittedly, *mimeomai* (noun=*mimetes*) is quite few in Paul's letters but it occupies a prominent position in Paul's paraenesis (Onwu, 2004, p.205). The word occurred about eight times in Paul's central epistles and the verbal form is used twice in 2 Thess. 3:7 and 3:9.

Paul practiced *tupocratic* leadership. He presented himself as an example that his congregation should follow. An exemplary leader follows the principle of "do as I do" as against "do as I say". Nwaoga and Ugwoke (2011, p.179) noted that leaders are made by hard work. They not only point to a task, but also undertake the task for the follower to learn and imitate. The exemplary lifestyle to be imitated was that Paul and his missionary companions provided for their own material needs by working with their hands night and day in order not to burden the persecuted Christian community. Although the missionaries had the right to be financially chargeable (*epibareo*) to the congregation, they were however guided by the desire to give them an example (*tupos*) to follow (*mimeomai*). Paul believed that he practiced the best form of leadership and anyone who would not follow his example was not worthy of charity.

Entrepreneurship in Nigeria

It is believed that Nigeria's economic decline since the 1980s has created a hostile environment that is unfavourable to entrepreneurial success (<https://www.proshareng.com/.../Entrepreneurship-in-Nigeria/16321>). One of the factors responsible for entrepreneurial ineffectiveness in Nigeria is the poor state of infrastructure, exemplified by inadequate power supply and other basic amenities, thereby stifling entrepreneurial activities. Furthermore, getting venture capital to finance entrepreneurial endeavour is another challenge to entrepreneurship in Nigeria. Bamkole (2007) re-echoed these facts when he identified inaccessibility to markets, infrastructure and finance as the biggest challenges that would confront any prospective entrepreneur in Nigeria.

Be that as it may, a particular school of thought believed that since the mid-1980s, there has been an increased commitment from government towards entrepreneurship development especially after the introduction of the Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) in 1986 (<https://www.projectwriters.ng>). In addition to this is the establishment of National Directorate of Employment (NDE), National Open Apprenticeship Scheme (NOAS) and the Small and Medium Scale Enterprise Development Agency in Nigeria (SMEDAN). This school of thought believed that,

Fundamentally, the Nigerian government promotes entrepreneurial culture through initiatives that build business confidence, positive attitude, pride in success, support and encouragement of new ideas, social responsibility, providing technological supports, encouraging inter-firm linkages and promotion of research and development (<https://www.projectwriters.ng>).

For instance, in the early 2000, the Center for Entrepreneurship Development (CED) was established in the universities and entrepreneurship studies were introduced into the curriculum as a mandatory course. The objective was to teach and encourage students of higher institutions to acquire entrepreneurial, innovative and management skills. The result has been largely positive. However, more would be achieved if the Church, as an influential institution/movement in the society, would throw her weight behind entrepreneurship education and development. Ituma (2008) believed that “if Christianity sponsors the activities that produce youths with sound manliness, Christianity will not only contribute to the development of the society but also to the sustainability of Christian religion” (p.33).

The Role of the Church in curbing Unemployment through Entrepreneurship

The ever-growing Nigerian population resulting in ever-increasing unemployment rate especially among youths has become a serious challenge that cannot be left for the government alone to handle. There is very inadequate number of available or sustainable jobs on offer to cater for the labour needs of the intimidating population of young Nigerians. The Church should take a significant step into the socio-economic space and provide succour to the unemployed segment of the populace. Ononogbu (2010) posited that “youth unemployment is a valid part of the Church’s social ministry” but has not received adequate attention in the areas of policy formulation and entrepreneurship programmes, especially at the national level of Church governance. He made this observation by drawing analysis from the official documents of three selected denominations, namely: Assemblies of God Church, Nigeria, Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) and The Roman Catholic Church in Nigeria (pp. 121-123). Ituma (2009) had made a similar remark by advancing the concept of the Church as a living organism, thereby necessitating an all-round growth, development and expansion “as against a closed system conscious of geo-cultural boundaries” (p.28). He pointed out that the significance of Jesus’ commission of the disciples and by extension, the Church, was to restore order, peace and development in human habitat (p.37). He further explained that:

The commission is therefore a focus on humanity and ecology. When the Church becomes conscious of this idea it enables her to resist every temptation that tends to put a cleavage between her and the affairs of the society. The Church is to act in the society and on the society so that divine peace and development would become very experiential in the fabrics of the society (pp. 37-38).

Admittedly, some Churches have already started making some marks in enterprise development. For example, in 2015, the Diocese on the Niger has established Niger Business School and Niger School of Skill Acquisition “to train and raise future business champions and individuals with skills to fit in the labour market in the state and the nation at large” (Nwokolo, 2015, p.39). The Diocese has also established a microfinance bank

which accelerates easy accessibility to loans and start-up capital for prospective entrepreneurs.

Having noted these and other efforts of the Church in promoting entrepreneurship, much gap remains to be filled. This research therefore recommends that:

- The Church should set up platforms and programmes that will encourage hard work and dignity of labour (2 Thess. 3:12), such as skill acquisition training/competitions, artistic/scientific creativity exhibitions, etc. Like the Thessalonians, there are youths who ought to be gainfully engaged to a sustainable business but has opted for voluntary unemployment. Such persons depend on sports betting and ponzi schemes (like the crashed MMM) for livelihood. For the fact that some of these schemes have provided employment to the proprietors, operators and agents, this research does not advocate that the Church should discourage such businesses, but rather that the participants (those who invest) in them should not depend on them as a means of livelihood or invest a substantial amount of their savings in them. Living only by such means creates room for idleness and busybody behavior.
- The Church should provide and sustain training/loan schemes for people who would like to learn a profitable art or start a business venture.
- The Church should not provide welfare for any member that is able but unwilling to work (2 Thess. 3:14). Where paid employment is not available, the Christian should take advantage of training and loan scheme established by the Church in order to cater for his own needs.
- The Church should establish formal vocational and technical training institutes to equip the teeming young population with the entrepreneurial needs of the time.
- The Church should establish microfinance banks for easy accessibility of start-up loans for entrepreneurs.
- The Church should encourage the formation of trade groups along vocational lines (e.g. traders' union, electrical/electronic union, event organizers, designers, bakers, etc). This would provide a free mentorship platform for those that would like to venture in any of these businesses.
- The Church should seriously consider venturing/investing in sectors of the economy that enhance individual skills and human capacity development such as agriculture, mass media and sports. These would be major sources of training, employment, and revenue both for the people and the Church.
- The Church should rigorously engage in the formation of cooperative societies through which entrepreneurs can access funding from government.
- The Church should engage the expertise of professional members who would help her formulate sustainable policies and programmes for youth empowerment and self-employment.

Conclusion

Unemployment is a phenomenon that can be demystified by a robust entrepreneurial economy. If the bandwagon is driven by the Church, the impact will be felt in the entire

nation and beyond. Nigeria has one of the fastest growing populations in the world and there is urgent need to take urgent but sustainable steps to avert a national crisis similar to that created by idle fellows in Thessalonica, who were peddling confusion in the Church. Idleness is one of the major factors responsible for youth malevolence and restiveness in any society. A popular Jewish proverb states that “he who does not teach his son a trade teaches him to be a thief.” It implies that the best strategy to take away crimes from the society is not through force but jobs. This is a challenge the Nigerian Church must accept and surmount.

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