

**SECONDING THE MOTION OF THE THIRD SESSION OF THE
FOURTH SYNOD OF THE DIOCESE OF ABA NGWA NORTH
THIS FRIDAY 12TH OF OCTOBER, 2018, AT ST. STEPHEN'S
ANGLICAN CHURCH UMUOBASI AMAVO,
BY ONYEBUCHI EMEMANKA ESQ.**

I sincerely express my heartfelt appreciation to the President of this Synod and Diocesan, Rt. Rev'd Nathan C.O. Kanu (Ph.D JP) and Mama Aba Ngwa North, Princess Mrs. Odionyenfe Kanu (BS.c JP), the President of the Women Ministry, for considering me worthy to carry out this important ecclesiastical task which I thought was meant for the Clerics. May the Lord God Almighty grant great prosperity to your episcopacy in Jesus Name, Amen.

My respected fathers in God that constitute the House of Clergy; the honourable Synod delegates who form the House of Laity; men and brethren and all other guests present in this final session of the fourth Synod, I greet you all.

I take this assignment very seriously. While growing up, my late Dad, Godwin Uruakpa Ememanka, a devoted Anglican was always captivated by the Synod of our old Aba Diocese. Together with my late Mum Susan Ahunna Ememanka, they never missed the Synod. So as a child, the significance of the Synod became embedded in me. Therefore to stand here today speaking at a Synod is indeed very significant for me.

We have all listened attentively to the presentation of the Synod Motion from an erudite speaker. His work indeed has shortened the stress of my own assignment. Nonetheless, before I second the motion, it is pertinent to briefly express my thought in the light of the given subject.

“EVIL TRIUMPHS WHEN GOOD MEN DO NOTHING”

The origin of this saying is a bit controversial. It is traced mainly to Edmund Burke, the 17th Century English Congressman, philosopher and great writer. HE was an Irish man born in Dublin. He was also an Anglican. His father was a lawyer. He was a pragmatic politician who believed that people must walk their talk.

Nigeria is indeed one of the most religious countries in the world considering the number of Churches that litter the country. Nigerians generally are very religious people as almost every street within the urban areas, villages and hamlets in Nigeria today plays host to a church. Millions of Nigerians pledge allegiance to one Christian denomination or another. The Sunday services are filled to full capacity, some running three or more sessions.

In spite of all these, corruption, injustice, immorality, bloodshed, materialism and all other forms of ungodliness remain rampant and on the increase. It is actually disheartening to experience the astronomical rate of social degradation and naked prevalence of unprintable vices in our society.

In the light of all these, what is more disturbing is the near silence or even active acquiesces of the church and other faith based agencies in the depravity, wantonness, impurity and licentious decadence.

It is quite unfortunate to point out here that the Church that was commissioned to change the world and its evil systems to the glory of God, is not just silent or saying very little but has almost become complicit in the unholy acts.

The biblical Micah, whose name means "Who is like YAHWEH" was a prophet who prophesied from approximately 737 - 659 BC, in Judah and was a contemporary of the prophets Isaiah, Amos and Hosea. HE fearlessly prophesied the future of Jerusalem and Samaria, the destruction and then future restoration of the Judean state, and rebuked the people of Judah for dishonesty and idolatry (Micah 3:19-22).

Archbishop Desmond Tutu was once quoted to have said that if you are neutral in situations of injustice, you have chosen the side of the oppressor.

In the prophecy of Micah, three influential classes in the Kingdom of Judah were specifically referred to, namely:

1. The princes - i.e. ruling class, the Judges and the Magistrates. These are functions usually exercised by members of the royal family or the elites.
2. The Priest - i.e members of the Jewish Priesthood, taking part in the services of the temple, and also in teaching the people the way of God.
3. The Prophets - These are men who claim to possess a desire to work for God, who were trained in the schools of the prophets, who became a very numerous class in the land, and took an important part in the education of the community.

In these three classes we saw the most influential men in the land; men who by virtue of their positions, ought to have exerted the wisest and most salutary influence upon the people. But instead of this, the very opposite was actually the case. They who should have been "the salt of the earth" became "the salt which had lost its saltiness" (Matt 5:13).

The Princes, instead of righteously administering the law, sought their own enrichment. The Prophets also were utterly materialistic. The Priests as well taught for hire. Not only did Prophet Micah speak out against the people who ought to be ambassadors of God, and condemners of injustice, immorality, corruption etc, in the society, he also declared punishment. Night will set. Darkness will be more prominent than light. According to the book of Revelation, because they were neither hot nor cold, Christ would vomit them out of His mouth.

The ministers of God's gospel, and in fact, the entire church of this present time must not only speak against injustice but should take appropriate practical steps to provide alternative remedies to the numerous vices in our society. The church leaders and organizations can help turn many Nigerians away from what appears to be an incredibly high sense of devotion to the cult of material success towards the spiritual values of truth, justice, holiness and purity. Christian leaders can use the message of the cross to promote modest and an austere lifestyle that will challenge the crass materialism and extreme economic liberation of our age which is responsible for the worsening plight

of the poor in our country and elsewhere. The church itself must reassess the current high emphasis on money and materialism. While the church needs money to sustain its operations, our church leaders must remember that their calling is not material but spiritual. This excess reliance on money robs the church of that moral power to look people straight in the eye and speak against evil. And to those of us who profess, or claim to profess Christ, we must take the lead in condemning evil wherever it is seen. Indeed we must do more than mere condemnation, we must take proactive and practical steps to confront evil in our personal lives, in the church, in our businesses, in politics etc.

This nation needs Christian leaders and groups of austere disposition who would spearhead a moral revolution and an ethical re-orientation for a nation and its people that have been brought low in the course of a protracted midnight of debauchery.

Christianity in Nigeria must go beyond believing in Christ to becoming like Christ, which is a more practical way of correcting the prevalent evils in our society today.

Standing on the above submissions, I Onyebuchi Ememanka Esq, without any hesitation of any sort, second the motion: that "Evil triumph when good men do nothing, and that doing nothing to correct evil is another way of encouraging the evil. That the high level of injustice, immorality, bloodshed, materialism and all other forms of ungodliness in our society today have continued unabated, irrespective of giving numerical strength of churches and moral agencies, is due to the failure of the church to provide practical alternatives to these vices".

Therefore, the church and all other moral agencies in Nigeria should rise and go beyond verbal condemnation of the evil and provide practical Godly alternative if we must enjoy the peaceful, united, and Godly society we all hope and pray for.

God bless you all.