

EXPLORING PROSPERITY AS UNDERSTOOD IN INDIGENOUS CHURCHES TODAY
AND ITS RELATION TO BIBLICAL TEACHING

BY

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this thesis is my original work and that it has not been presented to any other university or institution for an academic credit.

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APPROVAL

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this study to my wife and our three children, for their sacrificial support, love, friendship and encouragement.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I express my gratitude to God for being an inspiration that enabled me to write and complete this work. His providence in terms of good health, finances, moral and intellectual support have indeed brought me this far. I am sincerely grateful to my wife, Esther and our children for all their moral support and prayers of encouragement.

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

BT	Biblical Teaching.
BTP	Biblical teaching on prosperity.
CPG	Concept of Prosperity Gospel.
CPT	Concept of Prosperity Teaching.
EAK	Evangelical Alliance of Kenya.
FIG.	Figure.
IC	Indigenous churches.
KJV	King James Version.
NACOSTI	National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation.
NC	Nairobi County.
NCCK	National Council of Churches of Kenya.
NIV	New International Version.
NKJV	New King James Version.
PG	Prosperity Gospel.
PGP	Prosperity Gospel Preaching.
PGT	Prosperity Gospel Theology.
PT	Prosperity Teaching.
SCU	Scott Christian University.
TAB.	Table.

ABSTRACT

Prosperity is a subject that is found both in the Old and New Testaments. Today, we have preachers who major in prosperity teaching as they propagate it. Some of these preachers are found among the indigenous churches both in the West and in Africa. In Kenya today, especially in Nairobi County, this kind of teaching is common and has a lot of impacts on people. In the year 2016, the government of Kenya, through the Attorney General's office gave directives to scrutinize churches in general and order them to provide annual returns to the government. This was intensified when an indigenous church leader was caught by the media in a clip that showed how he extorted money from the public who came to "his" church. This study aimed at exploring prosperity as taught among indigenous churches and its relation to biblical teaching. It focused on three selected churches in Nairobi County. As such, the study explored possible reasons why prosperity teachers engage in such preaching. This research employed both qualitative and quantitative design that aimed at identifying the underlying motives and desires through use of interviews and questionnaires. The target population was: Maximum Miracle Center (MMC), Sanctuary of Truth Center (STC) and Jesus Jubilation Center (JJC), which were a case study that represent the larger population of indigenous churches in Nairobi County. The sampling procedure was purposive and depended on the researcher's interests or judgment. Data was collected through questionnaires and information was acquired on the respondents' motivation, feelings, attitudes and beliefs. Moreover, the researcher integrated both library and field research. In conclusion, most of the respondents understood prosperity is being successful in all areas of life while a minority said that it was an incomplete gospel. Besides, 95.8% of the respondents agreed that not all prosperity teaching upholds what the Bible teaches on prosperity. Therefore, church leaders should undergo biblical studies training to ensure proper biblical interpretation to their congregants and effective leadership generally. Above all, ministers among indigenous churches after training should ensure that their teaching on prosperity is coherent with the biblical teaching on prosperity.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

The area of this study was exploring prosperity as understood in indigenous churches today and its relation to biblical teaching. It focused on selected indigenous churches in Nairobi County. In most of the indigenous churches in Nairobi County, preachers focus on teaching perfect health and obtaining wealth to their congregants. This being the case, followers seek a condition of general well-being through being compliant to these teachings, so that they may at least become healthy and wealthy. Consequently, teaching on prosperity has grown roots in major towns in Kenya and Nairobi County is no exception. Over the years, teaching on prosperity has become so prevalent in churches such that it has been dubbed “Prosperity Gospel,” because concentration of it seems to have taken the attention that preaching of the good news deserves.

The researcher was told a story about members of a particular church in Nairobi who left their local assembly after being fleeced of almost all their family property and finances, and joined one of the mainstream churches in town. The reasoning behind this decision to shift to a mainstream church was that there is controlled giving and accountability as opposed to the indigenous church that focused on ‘prosperity gospel.’

Kenneth Mbugua criticizing prosperity gospel writes, “Prosperity gospel is a dangerous lie wrapped in a covering of religion. Those affected by it are being led away from

God's good news to a man-centered deception."¹ It is clear that the proponents and recipients of prosperity gospel do not share the same opinion.

The Bible gives us clear guidelines on how to become wealthy as Christians. It is important to follow these guidelines when teaching on prosperity. This requires proper biblical interpretation. Thompson writes, "Some preachers are always talking about money, but they are talking money out of your pocket! Certainly, you should give to churches and ministries. In fact, you can't receive without giving. But some preachers are not doing right with this message of prosperity."²

The Bible is not silent as far as prosperity for God's children is concerned. As we shall see in chapter two of this thesis, both the Old and New Testament talk about it. As a matter of fact, it is God's idea that all his people be prosperous since that is one of his promises to his people according to Deuteronomy 8:18 and Mathew 6:33.

Background of the study

According to Mugenda and Mugenda, "The background of the problem enables the reader to have an idea of what is happening regarding the area under investigation."³ In this case, the area under exploration was prosperity teaching. Indigenous churches are "Churches suited to local culture and led by local Christians and are self-supporting, self-governing, self-

¹ Maura Michael , Mbewe Conrad, Mbugua Kenneth, Piper John & Grudem Wayne, *Prosperity? Seeking the True Gospel*. Karen, Nairobi: The Gospel Coalition publishers, 2015. pg. 2.

² Leroy Thompson., *Money Cometh! To the Body of Christ*. Darrow, Louisiana: Ever Increasing Word Ministries Publishers, 1999. , 47.

³ Olive Mugenda & Abel Mugenda., *Research Methods: Quantitative & Qualitative Approaches*. Nairobi, Kenya: Acts Press, 2003. pg. 212.

propagating and self-theologizing.”⁴

Due to the concentration of teaching on prosperity in Nairobi City, some Christians have been convinced that it is the preacher who gives them ability to have wealth. However, true prosperity comes from the Lord. Solomon says in Proverbs 10:22, “The blessings of the Lord make rich and add no sorrows with it.” Consequently, Christians should come to the knowledge that every form of prosperity has their roots in God and his word.

Since teaching on prosperity is so common, the researcher felt that there was need to carry out a study about it and come up with recommendations thereafter. Teaching on prosperity based on proper biblical interpretation would be more impactful on a believer’s spirituality. Moreover, there is need to study the implications of teaching on prosperity as preached and understood among the leaders in indigenous churches.

Maura, Mbugua and Piper say, “Many prosperity gospel preachers even want us to believe that blessings come from anointing oil, falling backward or through holy water. Some have now gone as far as selling brooms and salt with which they claim demons are swept away and Christians are preserved from attacks.”⁵

When prosperity preachers emphasize material needs, they do not lead people to repentance because their message does not put people in awe of the glory of God. From this selected biblical passage, the researcher believes that the concept of prosperity teaching for Christians is clear. It is with the above understanding and explanation that this research was done.

⁴ Gehman Jason, *Doing African Christian Theology*. Nairobi, Kenya: Evangel Publishing House, 1987. pg. 8.

⁵Maura Michael, Mbugua Kenneth & Piper John, *Gaining the World, Losing the Soul: How the Prosperity Gospel Distorts the Good News*. Nairobi, Kenya: Africa Christians Textbooks. pg. 18.

Statement of the Problem

Congregants seem to gravitate towards indigenous churches' teaching on prosperity. That notwithstanding, contemporary urban challenges such as accommodation, unemployment, increased cost of living and better healthcare exert economic pressure on the residents of Nairobi City. As a result, the congregants tend to go and seek solution to these challenges in the indigenous churches, which offer them promises of wealth and breakthroughs via teaching on prosperity. For example, a flier advertising prosperity in Nairobi City read:

Presentation of Covenant Day of Prosperity; (Operation bye-bye to misfortune, debts, joblessness and inability to pay rents; God will be terminating all financial crisis, discomforts, bankruptcy, dryness, lacks, poverty and disappointments; Come along with your identity cards, passports, C.V's, ATM cards, business cards, personal company letter-heads, sample products from your products, title deeds/land or property documents for speedy development, driving license or any other documents of identification to be prayed upon for release of special favor)". It also included images of money inside a sack, a car, and a house. Finally, at the bottom of the flier was the writing, "It shall be a moment of favor and the release of power to get **WEALTH**."⁶

Nairobi City being the capital of Kenya, is a hub where every kind of preaching and doctrines are dominant. Consequently, the indigenous churches are common in the city and its environs. The study focused on three selected indigenous churches in Nairobi County.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to explore prosperity as understood by leaders of indigenous churches today and its relation to biblical teaching. It focused on selected indigenous churches in Nairobi County.

⁶An Indigenous Church Flier, 2016.

Objectives of the Study

In accordance with Mugenda and Mugenda, “Research objectives determine the data collection and analysis procedures to be used. It is therefore important for the objectives to be clear, unambiguous and brief.”⁷ The study was guided by the following objectives:

1. To explore teaching on prosperity as understood in the selected indigenous churches in Nairobi County.
2. To explain the Biblical teaching on prosperity.
3. To relate biblical teaching on prosperity and prosperity as understood in the selected indigenous churches.

Research Questions

Keith F. Punch observes that:

General research questions are of great value in the organization of the research. Their purpose is to organize the research by providing it with direction and coherence. They also give delimitation to the study by providing boundaries. They keep the researcher from deviating from the study and give focus to needed data for the research.

Ultimately, each research question needs to be phrased at such a level of specificity that we can see what data we will require in order to answer it.⁸

The researcher designed a questionnaire that was based on the objectives and research questions and administered to the respondents during the actual data collection process.

Moreover, the researcher administered interview questions to leaders of the three selected indigenous churches. Further, the researcher used both closed-ended and open-ended questions for data collection.

⁷Olive Mugenda, & Abel Mugenda., *Research Methods: Quantitative & Qualitative Approaches*. Nairobi, Kenya: Acts Press, 2003. pg. 213.

⁸ Keith Punch., *Developing Effective Research Proposals*. California, USA: Sage Publications, 2008. pg. 25.

Research Questions.

1. What is the understanding of teaching on prosperity among the leaders of indigenous churches?
2. What is the biblical teaching on prosperity?
3. To what extent does the teaching on prosperity among the three indigenous churches align with biblical teaching?

Significance of the Study

According to K.F. Punch, “Significance of the study refers to the benefits to be derived from the study and who and how readers will benefit after the findings are reported. While the topic and its context will determine a study’s significance, there are three general areas for the significance and contribution of a study.”⁹

The study was mainly informative and beneficial for the church about the discrepancy between biblical teaching on prosperity and prosperity as understood by the leaders of indigenous churches. Moreover, the study is useful in teaching Contextual Christian theology and Contemporary Issues in Theology in the African context.

Justification of the study

The study gave the right approach that preachers should use as far as teaching on prosperity is concerned. This serves as a corrective doctrinal measure, which is of great benefit to the indigenous preachers and their members in relation to the teaching on prosperity.

⁹Keith Punch., *Developing Effective Research Proposals*. California, USA: Sage Publications, 2008. pg. 69.

Scope of the Study

First, the research was done in Nairobi County because it is the target point of indigenous churches. Second, because of the high population in it due to rural-urban migration, indigenous preachers target this population. Third, it is where social, economic and financial pressures are. Fourth, Nairobi City being the capital city attracts people from all the tribes represented in Kenya. Therefore, many churches have a mixed congregation unlike rural areas, which might be represented only by a single tribe. Thus, according to the researcher, the scope of the study contributed to the success of this document because it gave a projection of the particular area that was actually to be considered for study.

Limitations of the Study

According to Mugenda and Mugenda, “Limitations involve challenges that may negatively affect the research.”¹⁰ The researcher encountered some difficulties during the data collection process. Such difficulties included: First, some of the respondents of the selected indigenous churches were not willing to take the interview and consequently the administration of questionnaires was hampered. Nevertheless, the researcher selected other indigenous churches that expressed willingness to be interviewed. Second, due to other responsibilities, some of the respondents took too long to complete the questionnaires. Besides, the researcher had to wait for long hours in order to meet other respondents.

¹⁰ Olive Mugenda, & Abel Mugenda., *Research Methods: Quantitative & Qualitative Approaches*. Nairobi, Kenya: Acts Press, 2003. pg. 215.

Assumptions of the Study

Assumptions, according to Mugenda and Mugenda, are: “Important facts that are presumed to be true but not actually verified.”¹¹ This study assumed that the respondents provided data as required. It further assumed that interviewees of the selected indigenous churches were not to be skeptical about the study but were willing to provide sensitive information.

Definition of Significant Terms and Acronyms

For the entire research work, the researcher defined terms that might assume a unique meaning and which might be new and significant for the readers to know. The following terms were significant in the study:

1. **Prosperity:** According to A to Z English dictionary, prosperity is defined as: “A state of being prosperous; advance or gain in anything good or desirable; Successful progress in any business or enterprise; attainment of the object desired; good fortune; success; as commercial prosperity; national prosperity.”¹²
2. **Prosperity Teaching (PT):** This is an “Umbrella term for a group of ideas that is popular among charismatic preachers in the evangelical tradition that equate Christian faith with material, and particularly financial success.”¹³
3. **Prosperity Gospel (PG):** This is:

A religious teaching that is dominant among some Christian movements who believe that good physical health, wealth, and financial well-being are

¹¹Olive Mugenda, & Abel Mugenda., *Research Methods: Quantitative & Qualitative Approaches*. Nairobi, Kenya: Acts Press, 2003. pg. 215

¹² A to Z English Dictionary.

¹³ Jones David and Woodbridge Russell, *Health, Wealth & Happiness: Has the Prosperity Gospel Overshadowed the Gospel of Christ?* Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publication, 2011 pg. 12.

direct indicators of faith in God. Additionally, they assert that such physical well-being is enhanced through motivational preaching and material donations to the movements and their leaders.¹⁴

4. **Prosperity Theology (PT):** This is a “Religious belief among some Christians, who hold that financial blessing and physical well-being are always the will of God for them, and that faith, positive speech, and donations to religious causes will increase one’s material wealth.”¹⁵

5. **Indigenous Churches (IC):** These are “Churches suited to local culture and led by local Christians and are self-supporting, self-governing, self-propagating and self-theologizing.”¹⁶ As far as indigenous churches are concerned, Gehman says,

The two main protestant strategies that were proposed for the creation of indigenous churches are: a. indigenization (this is where foreign missionaries create well-organized churches and then hand them over to local converts). b. Indigeneity (this is where missionaries do not create churches, but simply help local converts to develop their own spiritual gifts and leadership abilities and gradually develop their own churches. As such, missionaries provided pastoral care only).¹⁷

Based on the above quote, the researcher tends to have similar opinion with Gehman.

¹⁴ Jones David and Woodbridge Russell, *Health, Wealth & Happiness: Has the Prosperity Gospel Overshadowed the Gospel of Christ?* Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publication, 2011. Pg. 12.

¹⁵ Josh and Aaron, <https://people.howstuffworks.com/prosperity-gospel2.htm>- accessed on 20th December, 2018.

¹⁶ Gehman Jason., *Doing African Christian Theology*. Nairobi, Kenya: Evangel Publishing House, 1987. pg. 8.

¹⁷ Ibid. pg. 8.

Summary

This chapter has provided the background of the study and stipulated the statement of the problem on which the research was based and supported by the purpose of the study.

Moreover, it has raised the questions of the study in relation to the objectives. Besides, it has discussed the significance of the study featuring its significance, to whom it was important and to whom it would benefit on its completion. It has also underscored the limitations, scope and assumptions thereof. Finally, it has defined some of the significant terms that were used in the study.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

In pursuit of looking into what other authors and writers have said about teaching on prosperity, the researcher explored the following: Historical background of indigenous churches; Features of indigenous churches; History of prosperity teaching; Growth and development of prosperity teaching; Old Testament perspective on prosperity; New Testament perspective on prosperity; A focus on health and wealth; Biblical exegesis of selected passages; Biblical teaching on giving and prosperity; Implications according to Biblical teaching; Effects of prosperity as understood by indigenous churches and conceptual framework.

Historical Background of Indigenous Churches

From the theoretical philosophical view, Rodney Stark attempted to raise four theoretical models that could partially or wholly contribute to formation of any indigenous church. Consequently, “The foundation of an indigenous church in any society can hence be around one or more of these theories.”¹⁸ These theories represent the rationale to the founding of indigenous churches.

The first model according to his view is the **Psycho- physiological Model**. Here, the founder passes through intense torture that is caused by both physical and psychological pain, from which the person develops a movement in order to get a solution to the problem. As such, people polarize around such a person as he seeks a self-psychological therapy that his

¹⁸ Rodney Stark and William Bainbridge, *A Theory of Religion*. London: Peterlang Pub. 1996. pg. 155.

followers later on embrace and imitate.

The second theory is **Entrepreneurial Model**. In this, the founder acts as an entrepreneur who tries to develop a religion that in his or her opinion will target many potential followers. It is often based on the founder's experience especially from the previous religions. It is thus vivid that the objective of the founder may not be purely spiritual but dominated by some material gains which many times remain a secret that is not made known to the followers.

The third theory is **Social Model**. In this case, a movement is founded by a social imposition in which members minimize their emotional ties with nonmembers while maximize and intensify such bonds with certain members of the group only. Nonmembers to the movement are thus not considered. This predicament enhances formation of movements based on their shared dogmas (belief systems) and enchantments yet combined by their own emotions.

The fourth is **Normal Revelation Model**. In this, the founder opts to interpret an ordinary natural phenomenon as supernatural. As such, they may peg their own creativity in inventing the movement to that of deity. Most of the indigenous churches usually take this model. Therefore, the three selected indigenous churches may fall among any of the four theoretical models mentioned above.

Features of Indigenous Churches

Indigenous churches are “Churches suited to local culture and led by local Christians and are self-supporting, self-governing, self-propagating and self-theologizing.” These churches have been applied to all new faiths that have arisen worldwide over the past several centuries. They are characterized by several shared traits. “They offer innovative religious

responses to the conditions of the modern world, even though most of them represent themselves as rooted in ancient traditions. Besides, they are usually regarded as “Countercultural,” i.e. they are perceived by others and by themselves to be alternatives to the mainstream religions of Western society, especially Christianity in its normative forms.”¹⁹

Additionally, these movements are often highly eclectic, pluralistic, and syncretistic. As such, they freely combine doctrines and practices from diverse sources within their belief systems. These churches are usually found by charismatic and sometimes highly authoritarian leaders who are thought to have extra-ordinary powers or insight. Many indigenous churches are tightly organized and often make great demands on the loyalty and commitment of their followers and sometimes establish themselves as substitutes for the family and other conventional social groupings. Further, they have arisen to address specific needs that many people cannot satisfy through more traditional religious organizations or through modern secularism. Finally, they are also products of and responses to modernity, pluralism, and the scientific worldview.

Factors that affect most people’s decision to join indigenous churches include marriage, social status, association, convenient location of a church and friendship networks among others.²⁰ In Kenya, though almost all the indigenous churches are registered at the office of the Attorney General as required by the law, only a few are registered with national church councils such as National Council of Churches of Kenya (NCCCK) or Evangelical Alliance of Kenya (EAK).

¹⁹Young and Holland, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/new-religious-movement> accessed on 4th February 2019.

²⁰ Ibid.

History of Prosperity Teaching

As an organized movement, the teaching on prosperity has only existed for about one hundred years, from the early nineteenth century up through the present time. In its modern form, the prosperity teaching can be traced to the thought of E.W. Kenyon (1867- 1948), an evangelist, pastor, and founder of Bethel Bible Institute in Spencer, Massachusetts.

As pertains to the above subject, Jones and Woodbridge write:

Even though Kenyon's writings reveal a level of critique against New Thought philosophy, they also demonstrate that, consciously or not, he incorporated New Thought teachings into his theological system. This is evidenced by his advocacy of positive confession theology, his defiant view of the atonement, and his elevation of human beings, as well as his explicit teachings on health and wealth.²¹

Prosperity is neither wrong nor sinful. However, many preachers in town who propagate it do so with a wrong approach. Josh and Aaron say:

The prosperity teaching did not come out of thin air. It is the result of more than a century of self-help movement and spiritual revivals coalescing into a shiny new form of American-made Christianity. Its root goes back to the "New Thought" movement of mid-19th century American popular with non-religious thinkers like Ralph Waldo Emerson, which taught that the individual could exercise power over the material world with his thoughts. Besides, one popular New Thought writer taught his followers to 'see yourself in a prosperous condition'. Affirm that you will before long be in a prosperous condition.²²

Additionally, in 1885, a New Thought group in Boston defined its purpose as,

To promote interest in and the practice of a true philosophy and way of life and happiness; to show that through right thinking, one's loftiest ideals may be brought into present realization; and to advance intelligent and systematic treatment of disease by spiritual and mental methods.²³

²¹ Jones David and Woodbridge Russell, *Health, Wealth & Happiness: Has the Prosperity Gospel Overshadowed the Gospel of Christ?* Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publication, 2011. pgs. 50-51.

²² Josh and Aaron, <http://people.howstuffworks.com/prosperity-gospel2.htm> accessed on 4th February 2019.

²³ Ibid.

Thus, the teaching on prosperity is built upon a quasi-Christian heresy known as the “New Thought Movement, an ideology that gained popularity in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century.”²⁴

Growth and Development of Prosperity Teaching

David J. and Russell W. say, “Despite its departure from the historic Christian Message, the prosperity gospel continues to grow exponentially around the globe. This is due to the self-centered bent of the prosperity message.”²⁵ Today, America’s most prominent export is not goods and services, but a movement called ‘prosperity gospel.’ The movement goes by different names, ranging from the slightly pejorative (Health and Wealth or Name It and Claim It) to the vaguely descriptive (Faith or Word of Faith) to the blunt shorthand, the prosperity gospel. This movement began in America and rapidly spread across the globe. Interestingly, to many of its followers, it is Christianity!

The doctrine of prosperity theology emphasizes the importance of personal empowerment, proposing that it is God’s will for his people to be happy. It is based on interpretations of the Bible that are mainstream in Judaism (with respect to the Hebrew Bible) though less so in Christianity. The atonement is interpreted to include the alleviation of sickness and poverty, which are viewed as curses to be broken by faith. This is believed to be achieved through donations of money, visualization, and positive confession.

It was during the healing revivals of the 1950’s that prosperity theology first came to prominence in the USA although commentators have linked the origins of its theology to the New Thought Movement which began in the 19th century. Steve and Robert write:

²⁴ Jones David, and Woodbridge Russell, *Health, Wealth & Happiness: Has the Prosperity Gospel Overshadowed the Gospel of Christ?* Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publication, 2011. pg. 18.

²⁵Ibid. pg. 27.

The prosperity teaching later figured prominently in the Word of Faith Movement and 1980's televangelism. In the 1990's and 2000's, it was adopted by influential leaders in the Pentecostal and charismatic movements in the USA and has spread throughout the world.²⁶

Bowler, an author, introduces many of the major figures and features from the movement's slow but sure development in the twentieth century. She then shows how teaching on prosperity represents not merely a theological movement but a transformation of popular religious imagination that has not yet ended. Finally, she tries to point out the major themes of the prosperity gospel movement which are faith, wealth, health and victory. Today, in almost every Christian nation, there are new religious movements that propagate teaching on prosperity. These movements use what is visible to both quantify and qualify the invisible. Consequently, they radically overturn orthodox Christianity. In this way, it is nothing less than a false gospel that must be rebuked and repudiated.

“Prosperity teaching came to Africa in late 1980's and gradually grew in many of the indigenous churches. In Kenya especially, it began to spread rapidly from mid-1990's and became at the peak in early 2000's.”²⁷ Today, in Nairobi County, the teaching is common in almost every indigenous church.

Biblical Exegesis of Selected Passages

Since determining the meaning of a text is complex, first, it is necessary that we interpret the Bible so that we may understand the meaning and significance of what the author intended to communicate. Second, it is also necessary to enable one to arrive at the most likely understanding of the biblical text. Hence, out of correct biblical interpretation, one can

²⁶ Steve and Robert, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/prosperity_theology- accessed on 21st December 2018.

²⁷ Maura Michael, Mbugua Kenneth & Piper John, *Gaining the World, Losing the Soul: How the Prosperity Gospel Distorts the Good News*. Nairobi, Kenya: Africa Christians Textbooks. pg. 25.

discern God’s message, avoid erroneous conclusions and apply the biblical message to life.

The contextual principle of biblical interpretation for example, means that we should interpret the text from the context while the grammatical principle means that one needs to study words in their original languages such as Greek, Latin and Hebrew.

Related Passages

The researcher used New International Version (NIV) Study Bible for the selected passages.

A. Old Testament.

i. Exodus 36:3b-7

And the people continued to bring freewill offerings morning after morning. So all the skilled craftsmen who were doing all the work on the sanctuary left their work and said to Moses, “The people are bringing more than enough for doing the work the Lord commanded to be done.” Then Moses gave an order and they sent this word throughout the camp: “No man or woman is to make anything else as an offering for the sanctuary.” And so the people were restrained from bringing more, because what they already had was more than enough to do all the work.²⁸

Themes.

Giving willingly.

- Offerings.

The Hebrew word for offerings is ‘*korban*’ and is a noun that when translated means contribution, donation, gift or oblation. Thus, freewill offerings were offerings that the Israelites contributed, donated, gave or obliterated to the sanctuary.

- Giving.

The Hebrew word for giving is ‘*Yahab.*’ It is a noun that when translated means to bestow a gift. As such, the Israelites bestowed gifts in the sanctuary until it was

²⁸ New International Version Study Bible.

more than enough.

- Willing.

The Hebrew word for willing is '*Abah.*' It is an adjective that when translated means prepared, ready, set, prompt and bound. Hence the Israelites were always prepared, ready, set, prompted and bound as far as supporting the work of God in the sanctuary was concerned.

Based on the above explained themes, the sanctuary of God was always prosperous.

- ii. Deuteronomy 8: 10-14, 18.

When you have eaten and are satisfied, praise the Lord your God for the good land he has given you. Be careful that you do not forget the Lord your God, failing to observe his commands, his laws and his decrees that I am giving you this day. Otherwise, when you eat and are satisfied, when you build fine houses and settle down, and when your herds and flocks grow large and your silver and gold increase and all you have is multiplied, then your heart will become proud and you will forget the Lord your God, who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery...But remember the Lord your God, for it is he who gives you the ability to produce wealth, and so confirms his covenant, which he swore to your forefathers, as it is today.²⁹

Wealth.

The Latin word for wealth is '*divitiae.*' It is a noun that when translated means riches, affluence and estate. When the Israelites had been blessed with riches and had acquired estates and became prosperous, they were to remember God through worship because he is the one who gave them power to acquire them.

From the study of these related verses, first, the people gave as a remembrance of God's goodness to them, the Lord took care of them, provided what they needed and in return, the people gave as a sign of not forgetting the provider. Second, the people gave to

²⁹ New International Version Study Bible.

demonstrate their sincere gratitude; they gave willingly.

The people thus hearkened to Moses' exhortation to the Israelites to remember what God had done for them in the past years. Otherwise, there was a possibility of them forgetting God and his works for them after they had been prosperous. As such, they were not to forget him at all since he was the one who would give them the power and ability to possess wealth in the Promised Land. Here, we see that the source of prosperity for the Israelites, and for us even today is God only.

B) New Testament.

i. Luke 6:38

“Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you.”³⁰

Give.

The Greek root of the word “give” is *prothes*, which when translated means to offer according to ones' ability. According to A to Z English dictionary, “give” is defined as “To bestow without receiving a return; to confer without compensation; to impart, as a possession; to grant, as authority; to yield up or allow.”³¹ In the above text, the context is that Jesus taught how to be prosperous, by teaching us to imitate God in forgiving and giving to others as he has forgiven us and given us in abundance what we have. The understanding of prosperity in this passage is that when Christians give, God shall reward them abundantly with more than what they have actually given.

³⁰New International Version Study Bible.

³¹ A to Z English Dictionary.

ii. 2 Corinthians 9:6-7.

Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously. Each man should give what he has decided to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.³²

Sowing generously, reaping bountifully.

- Sow

The Greek root word for sow is '*speiro*.' It is a verb that when translated means to spread and to scatter. Thus, Apostle Paul teaches the believers at Corinth that whoever spreads and scatters seeds shall also get the same measure consequently.

- Reap

The Greek word for reap is '*therizo*.' It is a verb that means to harvest, mow, cull and pick. As such, Apostle Paul taught the Corinthian church that whatever they sowed is what they should have expected to reap.

- Generously

The Greek word for generously is '*gennaiodora*.' It is an adjective that when translated means liberal giving. As such when Christians give liberally, they become prosperous.

When sowing is done generously and the harvest is generous, it seems appropriate to conclude that a cycle of sowing and reaping can be maintained by a generous attitude. It is no surprise then that the Apostle Paul admonished the Corinthian church to be cheerful givers. The point is clear that whoever sows sparingly will reap sparingly and whoever sows generously will reap generously. This is God's promise to Christians. When Christians are

³² New International Version Study Bible.

obedient to the principle of sowing and reaping in accordance with God's word, especially when the giving is done towards helping the poor, they shall indeed be prosperous.

Biblical Teaching on Giving and Prosperity

Much of the orientation towards money and wealth in the New Testament carries forward Old Testament assumptions about the subject. First is the assumption that God is the creator and owner of all things. Second, God's creatures are not owners but only stewards of material things, even when one has worked for them and earned them in one sense. Third, we find in the Old Testament, the conviction that human beings are fallen, and that internal battles with things like greed are ongoing. Fourth, in light of many warnings in the Bible, about wealth, a believer must be wary and take a cautious approach to the issue of money and possessions. In view of this, Gonzalez writes:

All our sources indicate that the core of the preaching, both of Jesus and of his early followers was the Kingdom of God. Such preaching had both political and economic implications. On the political side, it is clear that anyone proclaiming the coming Kingdom of God is at least by implication criticizing the present kingdom. On the other hand, it is the economic side of the preaching of the Kingdom that interests us. In the Gospel narratives, the preaching of the Kingdom does indeed have a strong economic or socioeconomic component. It relates to both the justice that the Kingdom requires and the need for drastic action in view of its impending reality.³³

One of the major economic factors in Jesus' time was fishing that took place at the Sea of Galilee. This provided an additional source of food and income for people. This is in line with what the Bible records in Proverbs 10:4-5, "Lazy hands make a man poor, but diligent hands bring wealth. He who gathers crops in summer is a wise son but he who sleeps during harvest is a disgraceful son." Thus, prosperity can come as a result of work. Similarly, believers should be encouraged today to work so as to be prosperous.

³³ Gonzalez Justo, *Faith and Wealth: A History of Early Christians Ideas on the Origin, Significance, and Use of Money*. Eugene, Oregon: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2002. Pg.75.

An aspect of teaching on prosperity that makes it attractive to many believers is that it contains elements of biblical truth. Historically speaking, this has been a mark of nearly all false teaching and heresy; few would accept teaching that was clearly unbiblical. Pertaining to this, Jones and Woodbridge write, “Within evangelical circles, the degree to which the prosperity gospel has retained elements of biblical truth is generally the degree to which it has been adopted by Bible-believing Christians.”³⁴ The demand of Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount is fundamental to any understanding of his attitude to all earthly goods, as Mathew 6:33 says, “But seek first the Kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be yours as well.”³⁵

Hengel observes, “The imminence of the kingdom of God demands freedom over possessions, the renunciation of all care, complete trust in the goodness and providence of the heavenly Father. Thus, service of God and of mammon is mutually exclusive.”³⁶

Moreover, Jesus’ tactic of eternal investments is rooted in a key insight about human nature. In Mathew 6:21, Jesus taught, “Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.” As Hartgrove says, “It may sound simple, but it is an important aspect since we care about the things we invest in, and the shape of our investments reveals the shape of our hearts.”³⁷

According to Jones and Woodbridge:

³⁴ Jones David, and Woodbridge Russell, *Health, Wealth & Happiness: Has the Prosperity Gospel Overshadowed the Gospel of Christ?* Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publication, 2011. pg. 123.

³⁵ New International Version Study Bible.

³⁶ Hengel, Martin, *Property and Riches in the Early Church*. London, UK: Fortress Press, 1980. Pg. 24.

³⁷ Hartgrove Wilson, *God’s Economy, Redefining the Health & Wealth Gospel*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishers, 2009. pg. 110.

A biblical survey has revealed three major economic themes in scripture. First, according to the creation narrative, labor is good. Through laboring, people functionally bear God's image and meet their material needs. Second, the Lord's followers are to minister to the poor. This idea is seen in the Hebrew law and is a major emphasis in the gospels. To care for the poor is Christ-like and a manifestation of the authenticity of one's relationship with the Lord. Third, wealth can be a spiritual stumbling block. While material goods are not inherently evil, wealth is surely one of the greatest idols that people pursue. Members of the community of faith must watch carefully for this spiritual pitfall.³⁸

Besides, Grudem says, "Money is fundamentally good because it is a human invention that sets us apart from the animal kingdom and enables us to subdue the earth by producing from the earth goods and services that bring benefit to others."³⁹ Nevertheless, in many of our pulpits today, the preaching is centered on worldly achievement and material prosperity such as houses, cars, success in business, money, health, and happiness. On a similar note, Maura writes:

Such preaching is in direct conflict with the word of God from Genesis through to the gospels and epistles. Our preaching should lead sinners to call upon the name of the Lord. It should lead people to cry out for mercy and salvation through the Lord Jesus Christ in repentance and faith, depending upon the promises of God and looking forward to a future inheritance.⁴⁰

Further, Jones and Woodbridge observe:

Insisting on a tie between material and spiritual wealth is to espouse prosperity teaching; connecting material poverty and spiritual poverty is to be guilty of the error of Job's friends; linking material poverty with spiritual wealth makes one as an ascetic; and, finally, connecting material wealth and spiritual poverty is to be guilty of materialism.⁴¹

³⁸ Jones David and Woodbridge Russell, *Health, Wealth & Happiness: Has the Prosperity Gospel Overshadowed the Gospel of Christ?* Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publication, 2011. pg.138.

³⁹ Maura Michael, Mbewe Conrad, Mbugua Kenneth, Piper John & Grudem Wayne, *Prosperity? Seeking the True Gospel*. Karen, Nairobi: The Gospel Coalition publishers, 2015. pg. 123.

⁴⁰Ibid. pg. 34.

⁴¹ Jones David and Woodbridge Russell, *Health, Wealth & Happiness: Has the Prosperity Gospel Overshadowed the Gospel of Christ?* Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publication, 2011. pg.139.

The above information can be illustrated and summarized in a diagram as shown

below:

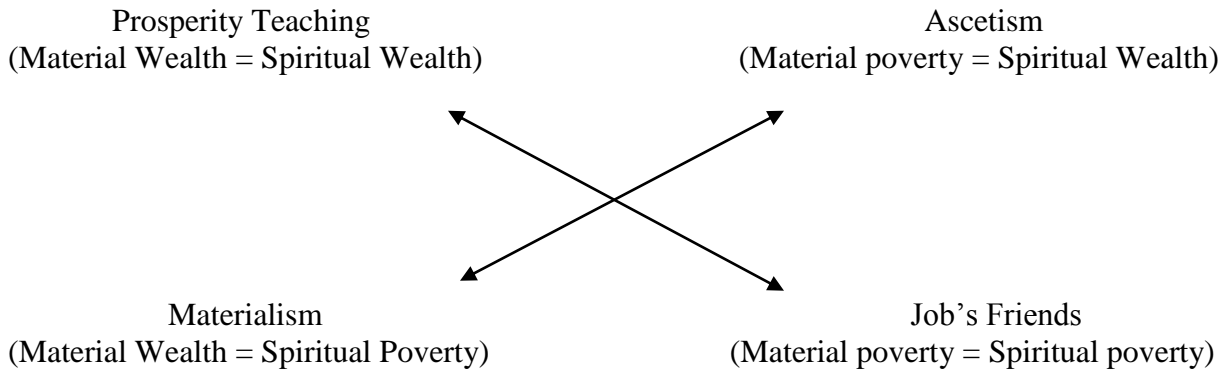


Fig. 2.1 Poverty and Wealth Diagram.

There are four possible ways in which to connect material wealth/poverty and spiritual wealth/poverty. First, material wealth can be connected to spiritual wealth. Second, and conversely, there may be a tie between material poverty and spiritual poverty. See the arrow above pointing at prosperity teaching and Job's friends. Third, material poverty may be connected to spiritual wealth. Fourth, the opposite of this would be to posit a tie between material wealth and spiritual poverty. See the arrow above pointing at materialism and ascetism. Thus, the historical record has shown that to insist upon a requisite connection in any of these relational dynamics leads to a departure from orthodox theology and in light of the above, Witherington writes:

There is a balance to what is being said in the New Testament. Despite the opinions of many of the church fathers, the New Testament does not urge us all to ascetism. Nor does it suggest that material poverty is inherently a more spiritual condition than wealth, though clearly there are fewer material encumbrances and stumbling blocks to a healthy relationship with God for the poor.⁴²

In accordance with the researcher's exegesis on giving and prosperity in the selected passages, Christians can be prosperous if they obey and uphold the biblical principles that are

⁴²Witherington Blair, *Jesus and Money*. Grand Rapids, MI: SPCK Publishers, 2010. pg. 143.

outlined in God's word. Additionally, biblical training will enhance proper hermeneutics among the ministers in indigenous churches and hence they will avoid eisegesis (reading into the text) from scriptures that talk to us about giving and prosperity. The biblical teaching is that for Christians to be prosperous, they should give willingly, cheerfully, expectantly, and in the best way possible.

Old Testament Perspective on Prosperity

In the Old Testament, as in the New, money is never considered as something which is important. On the contrary, our goods and money ought to be considered as a part of the world created by God, and therefore a gift of God. Crawford says in his book, "The Old Testament suggests that money, like all our goods, is a part of the blessings of God, given to those who are faithful and obedient to Him."⁴³

In the book of Genesis, God spoke to Abraham and promised to bless him and make him into a great nation, (Genesis 12:1ff). When Abraham obeyed, he got blessed and became prosperous. Deuteronomy chapter 8:1 gives us some specific directions for being in the will of God. If you are in the will of God, you will be financially blessed. Thompson says: "You have to be a doer of God's commandments to receive God's blessing."⁴⁴

Moreover, in Deuteronomy 8:18, God anticipates us to remember him in everything and be obedient to his word, thus, he will confirm his covenant with us, give us ability to produce wealth and so we will be prosperous. The riches promised here are the signs of the blessing and faithfulness of God, and the people must remember that these things still belong to God. As such, prosperity was a promise from God. However, Thompson says, "Prosperity

⁴³Crawford John , *Your Money and God*. Dodoma, Tanzania: Central Tanganyika Press, 1974. pg. 23.

⁴⁴ Leroy Thompson., *Money Cometh! To the Body of Christ*. Darrow, Louisiana: Ever Increasing Word Ministries, 1999. pg. 5.

doesn't just have to do with money. There are many people with plenty of money, and they are still not prosperous. But people with plenty of money who know the will of God and who are in the will of God are prosperous.”⁴⁵

In Proverbs 13:21, the Bible says that prosperity is the reward of the righteous and in Isaiah 1:19, God told the Israelites through the prophet Isaiah that if they were willing and obedient, they would eat the good of the land. The underlying factors in this verse are willingness and obedience which many in the body of Christ today do not uphold. Thompson writes, “We have been redeemed from poverty, and we are blessed right now. But we must also have our minds cleansed from poverty so we can come into prosperity.”⁴⁶ Additionally, Jones and Woodbridge write:

Although economic aspects of the law address a variety of issues, ranging from the rest and labor to usury and philanthropy, all of the legislation related to wealth and poverty seems to be oriented toward achieving the same goals. The first of these goals is promoting the creation ideal of laboring and resting (i.e., trusting) in the Lord in order to meet material needs. While the fall resulted in a curse on the ground and on humanity, it did not diminish the pre-fall responsibility of people to labor in order to meet material needs.⁴⁷

Referring to the Old Testament, Crawford writes:

Once the people of Israel were settled in Palestine, leaving the nomadic life for an agricultural life, their ideas of wealth changed. Many passages in the wisdom books (mainly Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Job) indicate that the person who lives wisely, who bases his life on the principles of life which he has from God, of which he has been able to test the value, is going to live a prosperous life.⁴⁸

⁴⁵Leroy Thompson., *Money Cometh! To the Body of Christ*. Darrow, Louisiana: Ever Increasing Word Ministries, 1999. pg. 27.

⁴⁶Ibid. pg.28.

⁴⁷ Jones David and Woodbridge Russell, *Health, Wealth & Happiness: Has the Prosperity Gospel Overshadowed the Gospel of Christ?* Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publication, 2011. pg. 128.

⁴⁸ Crawford John, *Your Money and God*. Dodoma, Tanzania: Central Tanganyika Press, 1974. pg. 24.

Besides, the same contain many materials related to economics. The creation ideal of laboring in order to meet material needs is still frequently mentioned in them. For example, Proverbs 10:4 and 28:19 say respectively, “the hands of the diligent make one rich,” and “Whoever works his land will have plenty of bread.”⁴⁹ Again, prosperity was as a result of hard work.

As a matter of fact, prosperity in the Old Testament was generally attached to the obedience of God’s word that is either written or spoken by the prophets. For instance, in 1Kings 17:1-16, when Elijah had ordered a drought in Samaria for three and a half years, God instructed him to go and drink from a brook. When the brook dried up, God further instructed him to go to Zarephath, where a widow would feed him. As such, because the widow obeyed God’s word that Prophet Elijah spoke to her, her flour and oil was not used up. This means that she had abundance. A similar case applies to the widow in 2 Kings 4:1-7. When she obeyed God’s word through Elisha, she had enough of oil to pay her debts, sell others and live on the remaining. Thus prosperity came as a result of being obedient to God’s word through the prophets.

The Bible talks about how Job was blessed and prosperous (Job 1:1-3). When Satan tempted him, his three friends paid him a visit and began to preach to him about losing his social status as the greatest man of the east and losing his wealth. However, amidst all the challenges, Job did not sin but held on to God. Even though he faced temptations he had actually lived in prosperity because he kept his covenant with God.

Finally, prosperity comes as a result of paying tithes in the house of God according to Malachi 3:10-12. The truth of the matter is that Christians who withhold their tithes from

⁴⁹ New International Version Study Bible.

paying it are generally struggling. In light of this Thompson writes, “People who are tithers are not broke at all, but they might not be where they want to be financially. They need to know that God wants to bless and prosper them even more, so they can do more for him.”⁵⁰

Nevertheless, as far as prosperity in the Old Testament is concerned, the prophets such as Amos denounced the rich people who oppressed the poor who lived among them. As Hengel observes:

The right to property was in principle subordinated to the obligation to care for the weaker members of society. The prophet Amos, in the 8th century B.C, attacks with unsurpassable sharpness, the subjection and exploitation of the poor by the rich landowners and royal officials in the northern kingdom.⁵¹

New Testament Perspective on Prosperity

In the New Testament, there are many instances where prosperity is talked about. In the KJV, 3 John 2 records, “Beloved, I wish above all things that though mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth.”⁵² Many teachers on prosperity assume that this verse talks about material prosperity but it really does not. They take it out of context since the prosperity that it refers to is that of spiritual well-being. This is what Jesus referred to in Mathew, 6:33 when he said, “Seek first the Kingdom of God and its righteousness and all these things shall be added to us.” The concept is that our spiritual well-being as Christians should come first as opposed to all else that we may be in need of in life. This is God’s perspective of prosperity. To lay more emphasis on this, Thompson writes,

⁵⁰ Leroy Thompson., *Money Cometh! To the Body of Christ*. Darrow, Louisiana: Ever Increasing Word Ministries, 1999. pg. 42.

⁵¹ Hengel, Martin, *Property and Riches in the Early Church*. London, UK: Fortress Press, 1980. Pg. 8

⁵² King James Version Study Bible.

I can prove from the Bible that people who believe the Lord are established and prosperous, and people who don't believe the Lord are not established or prosperous and they don't prosper. For example, the rich man in Luke 16 was financially rich, but he was not rich toward God. In other words, he didn't prosper God's way.⁵³

God is the God of abundance, but this world's abundance is received by going after prosperity by methods other than God's.⁵⁴ That is the kind of prosperity that Ecclesiastes 5:10 talks about: "He who loves silver shall not be satisfied with silver; nor he who loves abundance with increase: this is also vanity."

The parable of the 'rich fool' in Luke 12:17-21, in an answer to a man who wanted Jesus to settle a family quarrel about money, shows us the thought of Jesus. Crawford writes, "The basic meaning of life is not found in more money, and one cannot find a direction for life by looking for riches."⁵⁵

In the gospel of Mark 8:36, Jesus taught and asked that what it shall profit a man if he gains the whole world yet forfeits his soul? Scholars describe such a situation as an 'Apocalyptic contrast.' Simply defined, this is a predicament where one is rich toward earthly affairs but not rich toward God or his kingdom. As Christ taught in Mathew chapter 6:20, true treasure is the one kept in heaven where moths cannot destroy, and thieves cannot break in and steal.

Moreover, in 2 Corinthians 8:9, Paul says, "For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that you by his poverty

⁵³ Hengel Martin., *Property and Riches in the Early Church*. London, UK: Fortress Press, 1980. pg. 116.

⁵⁴ Leroy Thompson., *Money Cometh! To the Body of Christ*. Darrow, Louisiana: Ever Increasing Word Ministries, 1999. pg. 257.

⁵⁵ Crawford John, *Your Money and God*. Dodoma, Tanzania: Central Tanganyika Press, 1974. pg. 30.

might become rich.”⁵⁶ Prosperity teachers use this verse to proclaim that Christ died so that we could be wealthy! “But if you read the chapter in context, you will discover that it is about Christians giving to others. Interestingly, the Christians that Paul was asking the Corinthians to emulate in their sacrificial giving were themselves very poor.”⁵⁷ In many passages in his epistles to various churches, the Apostle Paul admonishes the believers to be obedient to God’s word since by so doing, they would prosper.

Christians ought to use their possessions to show the world that God and his kingdom are more important than the teaching of the world. From the above content, the biblical teaching and references to prosperity is systematic and clear. However, some of the preachers in the indigenous churches do not necessarily take heed of them.

In the Early church, otherwise referred to as apostolic church, we realize a dimension of prosperity. In Acts 2:44, the Bible says: “All the believers were together and had everything in common. Selling their possessions and goods, they gave to anyone as he had need.” Here, the kind of fellowship that the believers had was so strong that none of them lacked anything whenever he or she was in need. Additionally, St. Luke records in Acts 4:32-35:

All believers were one in heart and mind. Consequently, no one claimed that any of their possessions was their own, but they shared everything they had. Moreover, from time to time, those who owned lands or houses sold them brought the money from the sales to the apostles who distributed it to anyone as he had need.⁵⁸

The text explains how the early church dealt with needy Christians. When a needy situation was recognized, it was immediately addressed since the believers were prosperous.

⁵⁶ New International Version Study Bible.

⁵⁷ Maura Michael, Mbugua Kenneth & Piper John, *Gaining the World, Losing the Soul: How the Prosperity Gospel Distorts the Good News*. Nairobi, Kenya: Africa Christians Textbooks. pgs. 36-37.

⁵⁸ New International Version Study Bible.

Witherington observes, “One suspects that this is a social practice the earliest Christians were keen on because of their earlier teaching of Jesus himself, including his identification with the disadvantaged and the poor.”⁵⁹ It is as well quite significant to note that nothing is said about the transfer of ownership of property from disciples to the apostles as, for example, followers transferred property to their leaders in the contemporary community. Neither is there any evidence of the control or ownership of all property by the community.

In Acts chapter 6:1-7, the wealth in the church resulted to a paradigm shift in the ministry of the apostles. As such, they delegated the ministry of tables to seven men who were filled with the Holy Spirit and wisdom and gave their attention to prayer and ministry of the word. This chapter, however, reflects a time later than that suggested in Acts 2-5, a time when there were both Aramaic and Greek speaking widows in the community. Apparently, by that time, there had developed a regular or daily distribution of food for the widows, and only the Greek speaking ones were being neglected. Indeed, this seems to have been a problem created in part by the continued growth of the community, hence the need to assign the seven to the task of making certain that there was no one in need in the community. The chapter further deals with more specific issue of widows, and not needs in general in the community. In fact, taking care of widows was one of the major Jewish concerns addressed in the Old Testament, in a world where widows could own little or nothing and so were rarely able to support themselves.

In early Christianity and the New Testament, the ‘documentation of the preaching on which the church was founded was strong and thus the earliest source of Christian history, were only marginally affected by theories, which gave their stamp to later Christian natural

⁵⁹ Witherington, Blair, *Jesus and Money*. Grand Rapids, MI: SPCK Publishers, 2010. pg. 103.

law theory about property. As Hengel writes,

A conjunction of the primitive Christian ethos and the universal ideal of antiquity were most likely to come about where a New Testament author- like Luke- introduced his Greek rhetorical training as a writer and stylized certain phenomena of early Christianity in accordance with the tradition in which he had been educated.⁶⁰

A Focus on Health and Wealth

While teachers on prosperity focus on a wide range of subjects, the core of their message is material prosperity. As such, several of them are on record as teaching that neither Jesus nor his disciples were poor. One of the proponents argued that since the soldiers at the foot of the cross were scrambling over what he believes to be Jesus' expensive robe, Jesus must have been quite wealthy. But Gonzalez writes:

Wealth in itself is not evil, but it is very dangerous. Indeed, it is like a poisonous snake, which will twist round the hand and bite; unless one knows how to lay hold of it without danger by the point of the tail. Riches, in order to be overcome, have to be despised. It is not simply a matter of not allowing oneself to be ruled by them and then continuing along merry way. Thus, to manage wealth wisely, one must give it up knowing that one is thus purchasing eternal life.⁶¹

One of the most characteristics of prosperity teachers is their seeming fixation with the act of giving. Followers of the prosperity teaching are urged to give generously and are confronted with such pious statement as, "True prosperity is the ability to use God's power to meet the needs of mankind in any realm of life," and, "We have been called to finance the gospel to the world."⁶² While at face value these statements sound to be praiseworthy, a closer examination of the theology behind them reveals that the prosperity teaching's emphasis on

⁶⁰ Hengel Martin, *Property and Riches in the Early Church*. London, UK: Fortress Press, 1980. pg. 8

⁶¹ Gonzalez Justo, *Faith and Wealth: A History of Early Christians Ideas on the Origin, Significance, and Use of Money*. Eugene, Oregon: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2002. Pgs. 115-116.

⁶² Maura Michael, Mbugua Kenneth & Piper John, *Gaining the World, Losing the Soul: How the Prosperity Gospel Distorts the Good News*. Nairobi, Kenya: Africa Christians Textbooks. pgs. 36-37.

giving is built on nothing but philanthropic and faulty motives. Jesus taught his disciples in Luke 6:35, “Lend, expecting nothing in return,” however, prosperity preachers teach their followers to lend because they will get a return. They say, “Give to the ministry; plant a financial seed and God will give you a return on the act of faith.”⁶³ While giving a lecture on Theology and the interpretation of the Bible course at Scott Christian University in a Masters class, Agnes Makau said, “When anything else is added to the gospel, the sufficiency of Christ is compromised.”⁶⁴

Our spiritual lives are linked to the material conditions of our lives. As such, when we feel like we don’t need much materially; we often have trouble remembering why we even need God in the first place. But Hybels writes:

The money that we earn is not really our money. It is God’s money which he has merely entrusted to our management. That is why it is so important that we become better informed about financial matters and wiser in the handlings of our earnings. We are not free to squander God’s money through undisciplined, self-centered spending or through careless or lack of knowledge. Rather, we are called to be responsible, disciplined, and godly in the handling of our finances, closing our eyes and ears to the messages of an irresponsible society and making our financial decisions on the basis of sound biblical principles⁶⁵

One of the proponents of prosperity teaching says, “As long as you are in God’s service, sickness, disease, affliction and any such evil shall not and cannot have dominion over you.”⁶⁶ However, in critique of this statement, sometimes believers may encounter

⁶³ Jones David and Woodbridge Russell, *Health, Wealth & Happiness: Has the Prosperity Gospel Overshadowed the Gospel of Christ?* Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publication, 2011 pg. 66.

⁶⁴ Makau Agnes., *Class Notes on Theology and the Interpretation of the Bible*. SCU, Machakos, Kenya, 2018.

⁶⁵ Hybels Bill., *Christians in the Market Place: Making Your Faith Work on the Job*. Wheaton, Illinois: Victor Books, 1996. pg. 89.

⁶⁶Oyedepo David., *Keys to Divine Health*. Lagos, Nigeria: Dominion Publishing House, 2010. pg. 22.

sickness as a result of a test of faith as in the case of Job. As much as he served God fervently, he still faced afflictions, which were permitted by God himself!

Implications According to Biblical Teaching

According to the above biblical teaching on giving and prosperity, Christians should give willingly, cheerfully and with joy in order to be prosperous- for God loves such givers. Additionally, Christians should give continually, whether passing through or facing challenges that may prove to test their faith. This is opposed to what some proponents of prosperity teaching say to their congregants- “that they should never expect any challenge as long as they are serving God,” as was seen above.

Moreover, Christians should always learn to give their best to God. Finally, giving should be done according to ones’ ability because when that is done, it is in God’s will and he promises blessings and prosperity in return to the giver.

Situations that call for giving to God include: regular offerings during church services, which one should do his or her best to have as they go for worship; when there is need to accomplish certain projects in church, e.g. sanctuary building; thanksgiving to God; first fruits, etc.

The Bible gives clear teaching as far as the subject of giving in order to be prosperous is concerned. However, Mbugua writes, “Today’s famous exponents of the prosperity teaching live in mansions, own fleets of luxurious cars, and travel in personal jets. Those not as famous seek to attain those heights and in the meantime make a great show of their prosperity.”⁶⁷ As managers of the created order, Christians are to faithfully steward that which

⁶⁷ Maura Michael, Mbewe Conrad, Mbugua Kenneth, Piper John & Grudem Wayne, *Prosperity? Seeking the True Gospel*. Karen, Nairobi: The Gospel Coalition publishers, 2015. pg. 55.

has been entrusted to them by the Lord. As such, one aspect of managing God's resources is giving.

In many places throughout scripture, God warns us not to become so caught up in temporal financial concerns that we forget to be rich toward him according to Luke 12:21. But he calls upon the saints to make regular and generous monetary investments in the work of his Kingdom, both as a demonstration of our willingness to be obedient to him, and as a practical, tangible means of helping to expand the influence of his church throughout the community and the world. In light of this, Hybels writes:

We all anticipate a home in heaven for eternity. We all have been given spiritual gifts that we must develop and use for God's glory. And we are called to give our financial resources for the ministry of the church. Churches that are supported by isolated handful 'givers' are evidence of the lack of understanding many Christians have of their responsibility, and of God's command to give.⁶⁸

On the same platform, Munala writes concerning the grace of giving:

This is a gift of the Spirit to minister one's material substance regularly and generously to the church. While all are expected to give and share materially within the church, there are those especially gifted with the ability and resources to give. The givers need not be wealthy. In fact, many exercise faith to receive from the Lord what they in turn give to the church. They may even give out of their need and trust God for more.⁶⁹

Therefore, Christians need not to give because they are wealthy, but that when they give whatever they have according to their ability, then they will be prosperous. Jones and Woodbridge suggest several motivations that the Bible provides, as opposed to giving in order to "buy" prosperity from God:

⁶⁸ Hybels Bill., *Christians in the Market Place: Making Your Faith Work on the Job*. Wheaton, Illinois: Victor Books, 1996. pg. 89.

⁶⁹ Munala Mare., *Healing in His Wings: Messages of Faith, Hope and Restoration*. Nairobi, Kenya: Business Forms and Systems Ltd, 2001. pg.37.

a) Giving is an act of obedience: Christians are obligated to give from that which they have been entrusted. In the Old Testament, God established a particular system of giving under the Law of Moses called tithing. This system comprised various tithes that entailed giving a tenth of one's material increase, including agricultural products, livestock, grain, wine, oil, and other material goods. Hybels echoes the Apostle Paul in his epistle to the Corinthians and writes:

We are called to give on a regular basis according to the established weekly cycle. 1 Corinthians 16:2 says, 'On the first day of every week, each one of you should set a sum of money in keeping with his income, saving it up, so that when I come no collections will have to be made.' Not only does this enable the ministry of the church to continue undaunted by financial insecurity, but it allows us to regularly show our appreciation for God and the work he has done in our lives.⁷⁰

Similarly, "Both Justin in c.150 and Tertullian in c. 200, who were early church fathers, gave a similar picture of the custom of the communities in Rome and Carthage at their services."⁷¹ Hence, when we give obediently, we shall be prosperous.

b) Giving demonstrates love: In the words of Christ, the first and greatest commandment is love... and the second is like it- love, according to Mathew 22:37, 39. Hence one of the ways that believers can manifest such love is to give their possessions for God's work, thereby meeting the material needs of others. Gonzalez observes that "Love from a common understanding could refer to the inner disposition of goodwill or fellowship towards other members of the group."⁷² Thus, if Christians give lovingly, they shall be prosperous.

⁷⁰ Hybels Bill., *Christians in the Market Place: Making Your Faith Work on the Job*. Wheaton, Illinois: Victor Books, 1996. pg. 89.

⁷¹ Hengel Martin, *Property and Riches in the Early Church*. London, UK: Fortress Press, 1980. pg. 67.

⁷² Gonzalez Justo, *Faith and Wealth: A History of Early Christians Ideas on the Origin, Significance, and Use of Money*. Eugene, Oregon: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2002. pgs. 82-83.

- c) Giving brings glory to God: Christians ought to use their possessions to show the world that God and his kingdom are more important than the things of this world. As such, when believers give generously to help others, people will glorify God in response. A case for this is echoed in the lifestyle of believers in Acts 2:47 where believers glorified God and enjoyed the favor of one another after they ministered to the needs of everyone. As a result, the church became prosperous.
- d) Giving is a result of the gospel: A proper understanding of the gospel will motivate Christians to give in order to fulfill the Great Commission. Ministers who are called into the mission field need to be supported and sustained by the money that is given in local assemblies in support of mission work. In the epistles, the Apostle Paul many times encourages the saints in various local churches to give in order to facilitate and enhance the ministry. In Romans 10:14-15, Apostle Paul wrote,

How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them? And how can they preach unless they are sent...?⁷³

When Christians give for the gospel work, there develops an inner joy and that brings prosperity.

- e) Giving results in reward: At face value, rewards as motivations may appear selfish, but scripture provides this motivation. Jesus Christ will judge every believer for faithful stewardship at the judgment seat, according to 1Corinthians 3:12-15 and 2 Corinthians 5:10. Rewards will be distributed to those who faithfully managed what God gave them, including their gifts, time, and possessions. When Christians shall be rewarded in heaven based on their service on earth, they shall be prosperous.

⁷³ New International Version Study Bible.

The selected indigenous churches practice the above mentioned motivations except giving as an act of obedience since some members feel pressurized or coaxed to do so.

Effects of Prosperity as understood by Indigenous Churches

The teaching on prosperity lays emphasis on the attainment of wealth, health, and general success in life. This emphasis is so great that even the secular media have taken notice of it. On 10th February 2019, one of the members of parliament in the Republic of Kenya told the *Sunday Nation* with respect to prosperity teachers and the question of how church members give to them: “They should not be given a *carte blanche* to con unsuspecting believers. I have seen a number of churches where the wife of the bishop is the pastor, while their daughter or son is the treasurer. Such are in the business of fleecing the faithful. My Bill seeks to end all that.”⁷⁴

Hence, “The proposed law which aims at weeding out rogue pastors and churches would just be a way of enhancing existing laws and regulations on the operations of religious organizations in the country...continued the legislature.”⁷⁵ In light of this, Jones and Woodbridge suggest the following as some of the effects of prosperity as understood by leaders indigenous churches:

- a) Skewed prayer: God consistently warns us not to focus on temporary honor and blessings that only lasts as long as this life. Rather, he points us toward his eternal blessings that he promised and gave us in Jesus Christ. “The prosperity teaching has changed the way people pray. Many prayers today are focused on earthly rather than spiritual things. Often, these materialistic prayers are based on Bible verses which

⁷⁴ Justus Wanga, *Nation Media Group* - 10th February 2019.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*

have been taken completely out of context.”⁷⁶ In fact, if you pray for spiritual things today, you may discover that some church members will start to complain! However, in Colossians 1:9-14, we see that priority is given to spiritual prosperity:

For this reason, since the day we heard about you, we have not stopped praying for you and asking God to fill you with the knowledge of his will through all spiritual wisdom and understanding. And we pray this in order that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and may please him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God, being strengthened with all power according to his glorious might so that you may have great endurance and patience, and joyfully giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in his inheritance of the saints in the kingdom of light. For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.”⁷⁷

Prosperity teachers often note that: “We have not because we ask not,” and make reference to James 4:2. They encourage believers to pray for personal success in all areas of life. “Certainly, personal success is not an inherently inappropriate prayer request, but the prosperity teachers’ overemphasis on people turns prayer into a tool that believers can use to obtain their desires from God.”⁷⁸

Moreover, within prosperity theology, people, rather than God- become the focal point of prayer. Curiously, prosperity preachers often ignore the second half of James’ teaching on prayer, which reads, “You ask and do not receive, because you ask wrongly, to spend it on your passions,” as per James 4:3. However, God does not answer selfish requests that do not honor his name!

⁷⁶ Maura Michael, Mbugua Kenneth & Piper John, *Gaining the World, Losing the Soul: How the Prosperity Gospel Distorts the Good News*. Nairobi, Kenya: Africa Christians Textbooks. pgs. 20-21.

⁷⁷The New International Version Study Bible.

⁷⁸ Jones David and Woodbridge Russell, *Health, Wealth & Happiness: Has the Prosperity Gospel Overshadowed the Gospel of Christ?* Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publication, 2011. pg. 96.

Prosperity preachers encourage their congregants to base prayers on misunderstood promises and pray them for the wrong motives. The promise that Christians can ask anything of the Father, and he will give it to them is found in several places in the gospels. It is one of the incredible promise in the Bible and is much better than the proponents of teaching on prosperity realize.

- b) Mind control: As pertains to the right thinking about money, Thompson writes, “Humility is part of ‘right thinking about money.’ You have got to think properly about money if you want God to give it to you.”⁷⁹ The teaching on prosperity encourages believers to make positive verbal and mental confessions concerning objects of personal desire. In accordance with them, the faithful should focus their thoughts and words on increased finances, better health, success at the workplace and beneficial personal relationships. From a biblical point of view, there is nothing wrong with desiring prosperity, but if personal flourishing begins to consume one’s thoughts, such desires become idolatrous. Indeed, Christians should desire personal success, but such a desire cannot be the ultimate goal of a believer’s life.
- c) Budget driven: A budget, according to Gregg is:

A plan for spending that is balanced by anticipated revenue. It is a proactive, financial strategy that addresses operational expenses, salaries and ministry objectives while ending the fiscal year with a net income rather than a deficit. Without a budget, it is impossible to provide disciplined controls that ensure the integrity of the leadership while maintaining fiscal health for the organization.⁸⁰

⁷⁹ Leroy Thompson., *Money Cometh! To the Body of Christ*. Darrow, Louisiana: Ever Increasing Word Ministries, 1999. pg.66.

⁸⁰ Johnson Gregg., *Ethics for Church Leaders: Principles of Integrity for Pastors and Lay Leaders in the Local Church*. (Nairobi, Kenya: 2007.) pg. 37.

Unfortunately, most teachers of prosperity do not have a budget within which they operate. As such, they collect tithes and offerings from their congregants but do not record them. At the end of the year, all the finances that were collected are spent but without any record of the expenditure whatsoever! With regards to this, Gorman writes,

Every church should set up and operate on a budget. Not only is it a useful management tool, but a budget can help you to teach on stewardship. By preparing and presenting a budget, your people learn where the money goes and what it accomplishes.⁸¹

Finally, as a general feature, most indigenous churches are driven by finances.

In lights of this, Warren writes,

Nothing else ever seems quite as important as finances. While good stewardship and cash flow are essential for a healthy church, finances must not be controlling issue. The greater issue is what God wants the church to do. Churches do not exist to make a profit. The bottom line in any church should not be ‘how much did we save’ but ‘who was saved?’ Many churches are usually driven by faith in their early years and by finances in later years.⁸²

d) Emphasis on Abrahamic Covenant: Researcher Edward Pousson best states the

prosperity view on the application of the Abrahamic covenant when he writes,

“Christians are Abraham’s spiritual children and heirs to the blessings of faith. This Abrahamic inheritance is unpacked primarily in terms of material entitlements.”⁸³ In

Genesis 12:1-3, God promised Abraham to make him a great nation, to bless him, and to make his name great. Theologians refer to this event as the Abrahamic covenant,

⁸¹Gorman Marvin., *Called to Victory: How to Succeed as a Pastor*. Metairie, Louisiana: 2003. pg. 96.

⁸²Rick Warren., *The Purpose Driven Church: Growth Without Compromising Your Message and Mission*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishers, 1995 pg. 78.

⁸³Jones David and Woodbridge Russell, *Health, Wealth & Happiness: Has the Prosperity Gospel Overshadowed the Gospel of Christ?* Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publication, 2011. pgs. 92-93.

and it is a foundational component of orthodox Christian theology. While it is good that prosperity theologians recognize that much of scripture records the fulfillment of the Abrahamic covenant, many teachers of prosperity hold to an unorthodox, incorrect view of the Abrahamic covenant itself, especially the modern application of the covenant. In other words, in accordance with the teaching on prosperity, the primary purpose of the Abrahamic covenant was for God to bless Abraham materially and to make him successful. Thus, they reason that since Christians are now Abraham's spiritual children, they consequently have inherited the material blessings of the covenant. Additionally, this is fueled by the fact that the church is the 'New Israel.'

- e) Poor hermeneutics: The method of Bible interpretation of many within the prosperity movement is incorrect. In discussing the prosperity teachers, theologian Ken Sarles writes,

Their method of interpreting the biblical text is highly subjective and arbitrary. They quote many Bible verses without attention to grammatical indicators, semantic nuances, or literary and historical context. The result is a set of ideas and principles based on distortion of textual meaning.⁸⁴

Moreover, a survey of the volumes of literature produced by teachers of prosperity yields several examples of such misinterpretation. In 3 John 2, the apostle John writes, "Beloved, I pray that you may prosper in all things and be in health, just as your soul prospers."⁸⁵ Prosperity teachers interpret this verse to mean that God wants all believers to "prosper in all things!" Jones and Woodbridge assert that those who use 3 John 2 to support the teaching on prosperity commit two crucial errors; the

⁸⁴ Jones David and Woodbridge Russell, *Health, Wealth & Happiness: Has the Prosperity Gospel Overshadowed the Gospel of Christ?* Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publication, 2011. pg. 99.

⁸⁵ NKJV Study Bible.

first is contextual and the second is grammatical errors. Contextually, one should note that John's purpose in writing the verse was not to teach doctrine; rather, he was simply opening his letter with a greeting. Therefore, the claim that the verse teaches the doctrine of prosperity ought not to be upheld. Second, the Greek term translated "prosperity," which is used only four times in scripture, does not connote prosperity in terms of the sense of gaining material possessions. Rather, the word means "to grant a prosperous expedition and expeditious journey," or "to lead by a direct and easy way."⁸⁶ The NIV wording reads, "Dear friend, I pray that you may enjoy good health and that all may go well with you, even as your soul is getting along well."⁸⁷

- f) Emphasis on giving: One of the most misused concepts in the Bible has been sowing and reaping. "The problem with the preachers of prosperity is not that they expect reaping to follow sowing, but that their idea of gain is far too small. They think of temporary gain when they are offered permanent gain."⁸⁸

They focus on unsatisfying benefits and miss a deeply satisfying blessing. They preach of monetary treasure when a priceless gift is before them. Additionally, teaching on prosperity promotes a love for money, while the Bible is clear about the dangers of this approach to money. A lot of what is called practicing the sowing and reaping principle is merely a cover-up for the love of money. However, no matter how we label it, if we only focus on material things, we can only expect material benefits and not spiritual ones. If we love money, as God has specifically warned against the

⁸⁶ Jones David and Woodbridge Russell, *Health, Wealth & Happiness: Has the Prosperity Gospel Overshadowed the Gospel of Christ?* Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publication, 2011. pg. 100.

⁸⁷ *The New International Version Study Bible.*

⁸⁸ Maura Michael, Mbugua Kenneth & Piper John, *Gaining the World, Losing the Soul: How the Prosperity Gospel Distorts the Good News.* Nairobi, Kenya: Africa Christians Textbooks. pg. 43.

same in 1 Timothy 6:10-11, we may get some fleeting pleasures and temporary benefits. But as money cannot satisfy our souls or heal our hearts, in the end, this sowing will reap sadness and death. Finally, “The prosperity teaching’s idea of sowing and reaping denies the Bible by suggesting that God has no problem with being replaced by idols. As such, when we use the Bible to justify our selfish and idolatrous pursuit of money, we make God to be the willing supplier of our favorite idol.”⁸⁹ However, God’s wrath burns against people who put his beautiful glory in second place to pursue other gods. Interestingly, in Philippians 3:7-8, the very things that the prosperity preachers encourage us to come to God for are the things that the Apostle Paul has given up in order to have God!

- g) Untrained church founders and ministers: Michael, Ken and John observe, “The falsehood of the teaching on prosperity is rooted in misinterpretation of the Bible. The word of God has been twisted, both unintentionally and intentionally, and the result is a deceptive man-made message.”⁹⁰ The misinterpretation of the Bible is due to the fact that some of the church founders and ministers of the indigenous churches are basically not trained. Alongside this, those who teach on prosperity are generally opposed to theological or biblical training. As such, they pose that such training suppresses the Holy Spirit and therefore limit his operation and function to ‘theological stuff.’ Several preachers of indigenous churches would rather just preach without any formal theological or biblical training whatsoever. After all, some of them command a large following in spite of not having attended any training at all and that

⁸⁹Maura Michael, Mbugua Kenneth & Piper John, *Gaining the World, Losing the Soul: How the Prosperity Gospel Distorts the Good News*. Nairobi, Kenya: Africa Christians Textbooks. pg. 44.

⁹⁰Ibid. pg. 35.

makes them look down upon biblical training. Actually, some say that they have been trained from the school of the ‘Holy Spirit.’

According to the data, the factors that affect the selected indigenous churches are mind control and emphasis on giving.

Conceptual Framework

Mugenda and Mugenda define conceptual framework as:

A researcher’s conceptualization of relationships between variables in the research, by showing the relationship graphically or diagrammatically. Moreover, it is done for the purpose of helping the reader to see the proposed relationships quickly. It is therefore a hypothesized model in order to identify the concepts under study and their relationships.⁹¹

In this study, the researcher has categorized the definition of variables into independent, dependent and intervening. The independent variable was biblical teaching on prosperity since it affects the mode in which prosperity is understood. Biblical teaching on prosperity was an independent variable because the researcher used it as a standard measure to determine whether churches do it in the right way or not. The dependent variable was churches’ understanding on prosperity because it changes with the effects of biblical teaching on prosperity as the independent variable. The intervening variables in this study were biblical interpretation, response to poverty and biblical training. The above information can be summarized in the conceptual framework as shown in the figure below:

⁹¹Olive Mugenda & Abel Mugenda., *Research Methods: Quantitative & Qualitative Approaches*. Nairobi, Kenya: Acts Press, 2003. pg. 11.

Intervening Variables.

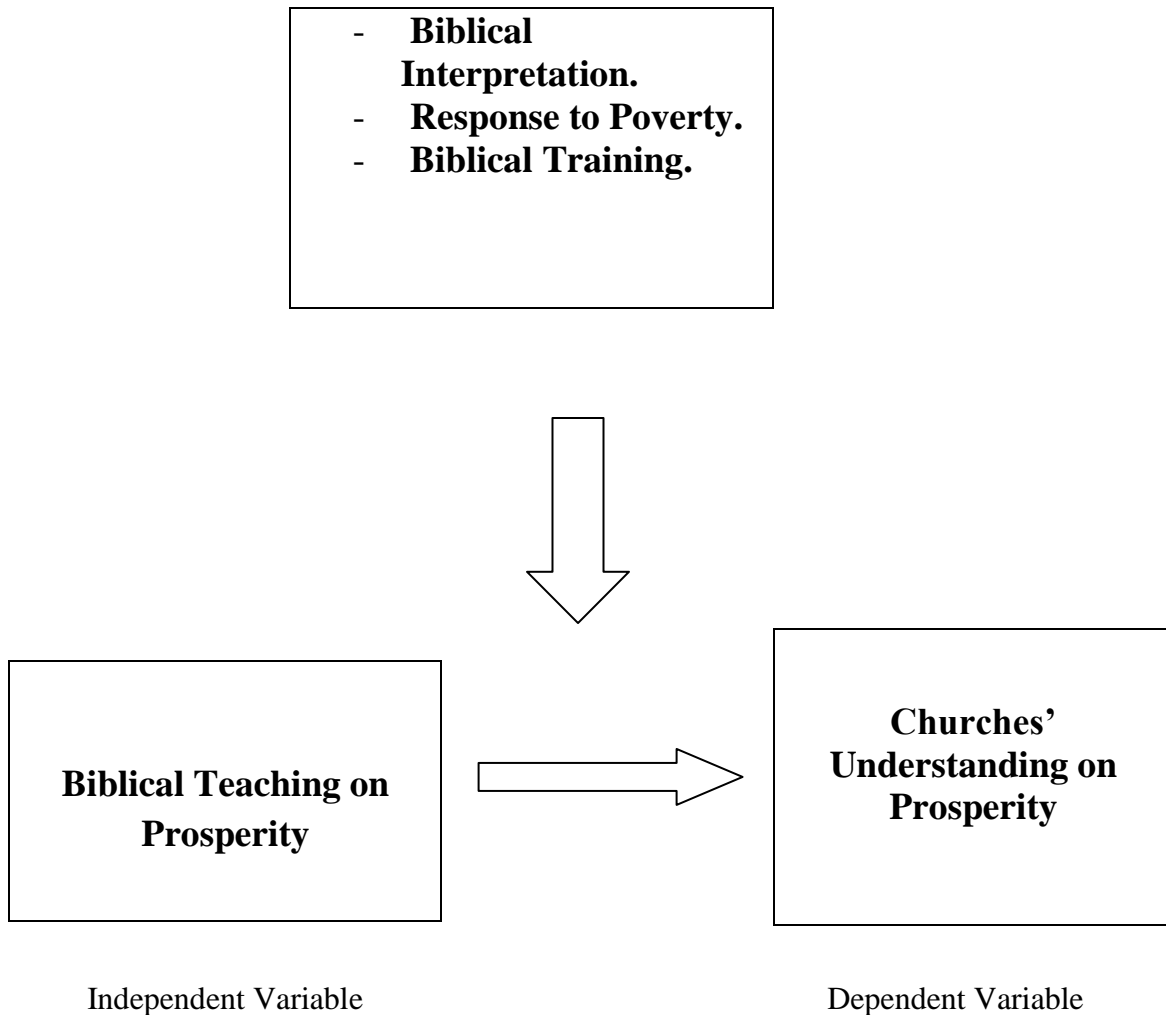


Fig.2.2 Conceptual Framework Diagram.

It is therefore the responsibility of indigenous church leaders to ensure that the gospel is preached in light of the scriptures. Such an approach will ensure that there is coherence between churches' understanding on prosperity (dependent variable) and biblical teaching on prosperity (independent variable). The conceptual framework is the guide that facilitates the study.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

This chapter discusses research methods that the researcher utilized in carrying out the study. According to Mugenda and Mugenda, “Research methodology is the procedure which is followed in carrying out a study.”⁹²

Besides, Leady describes research methodology as, “The framework in which facts are placed in order to extract meaning from them. It directs the researcher into answers to the issues that he or she is concerned about. Further, it deals with research methods to be utilized in a study and also justifies briefly on the reasons for choosing the methods.”⁹³

Finally, C. Kothari defines research methodology as, “The scientific way in which a research problem is systematically solved.”⁹⁴ Thus, it involves various steps. In this study, areas discussed included research design, population, sample and sampling procedure, methods of data collection, validity and reliability, methods of data analysis and ethical considerations.

⁹² Olive Mugenda., & Abel Mugenda., *Research Methods: Quantitative & Qualitative Approaches*. Nairobi, Kenya: Acts Press, 2003. pg. 41.

⁹³ Leady David, *Practical Research: Planning & Design (5th Ed.)* New York, USA: Macmillan Publishing Company, 2003. pg. 41.

⁹⁴ Kothari Collins, *Research Methodology: Methods and Techniques*. New Delhi: New Age International Publishers, 2000 pg. 8.

Research Design

A research design is the set of methods and procedures that are used in collecting and analyzing measures of the variables that are specified in the problem research. C.R. Kothari defines research design as:

The arrangement of the conditions involved in the collection and analysis of data such that there exists relevance to the research purpose. As such, it answers the questions of what, where, when, how much, and through what means a research study comprises a research design. It outlines what the researcher will do from writing down the hypothesis to analyzing of the data.⁹⁵

Robson observes that:

Research designs can be divided into two. These are qualitative and quantitative. Qualitative research is basically explorative. It is used to get an understanding of underlying reasons, opinions, and motivations. As such, it provides insights into the problem and helps to develop ideas or hypotheses for potential quantitative research. It can further be divided into descriptive, experimental, explanatory, observation, and case study. Quantitative research however, stresses objective measurements as well as the statistical, mathematical, or numerical data analysis that are collected via polls, questionnaires, and surveys, or by manipulating pre-existing statistical data by use of computational techniques.⁹⁶

C. Robson defines a case study as, “A strategy for doing research, which involves an empirical investigation of a particular contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, using multiple sources of evidence.”⁹⁷

Besides, Basha and Harter assert that, “There is a survey research design which is non-experimental descriptive research method. Surveys are used when collecting data that cannot be directly observed. A researcher is capable of collecting large amounts of data from a large

⁹⁵Kothari Collins, *Research Methodology: Methods and Techniques*. New Delhi: New Age International Publishers, 2008. pg. 31.

⁹⁶ Robson Colin, *Real World Research*. New York, USA: Blackwood Publishers, 2002. pg. 103.

⁹⁷ Ibid. pg.103.

population using questionnaires.”⁹⁸

C.R. Kothari asserts that quantitative research measures the quantity or the amount and B.L. Berg is of the opinion that it may be the easiest way to organize and analyze data because the data can be computerized and entered into a database. As a result, data can then be analyzed by packaged statistical program.

Use of Qualitative and Quantitative Methods for the Study

The nature of the topic under study determined the researcher’s use of qualitative and quantitative research approaches. “Qualitative research aims at identifying the underlying motives and desires using interviews.”⁹⁹ Additionally, Mugenda and Mugenda observe that, “Qualitative research recognizes that anybody is capable of constructing knowledge. Therefore, the disadvantaged groups, the poor and voiceless, are capable of authoring knowledge if given a chance.”¹⁰⁰ By the use of qualitative research, the researcher played the role of providing an opportunity to preachers of indigenous churches to improve on the manner in which they teach prosperity in Nairobi County both now and in the future.

Quantitative research is used to quantify the problem by way of generating numerical data that can be translated into useable statistics. As such, it is used to quantify attitudes, opinions, behaviors, and other defined variables and to generalize results from a larger sample population. It uses measurable data to formulate facts and discover trends or patterns in research. Quantitative data collection techniques are more structured and include various forms of survey such as paper surveys, face-to-face interviews, online polls, telephone

⁹⁸ Basha & Harter, *Research Designs*. 1980. pg. 54.

⁹⁹ Kothari Collins, *Research Methodology: Methods and Techniques*. New Delhi: New Age International Publishers, 2008 pg. 3.

¹⁰⁰ Olive Mugenda & Abel Mugenda., *Research Methods: Quantitative & Qualitative Approaches*. (Nairobi, Kenya: Acts Press, 2003.) pg. 201.

surveys, and systematic observations. By use of quantitative research, the researcher was able to get one-on-one with the pastors of the selected churches and obtain data from them.

Population of Study

In this study, the population was indigenous churches in Nairobi County. This is because the area of study which is prosperity is more profound in indigenous churches than in other evangelical churches. Nairobi County was selected because most of the indigenous churches begin from there before they spread to other parts in Kenya. Moreover, Nairobi County is the place with the most diversified population and is also an economic hub where most indigenous churches find their operations effective. The researcher used non-probability design, specifically purposive sampling.

In the study, Maximum Miracle center (MMC) was selected because it is located at the central business district (CBD) where most business operations are held. As such, it attracts many people who are both members and non-members of the church who go in for worship. The founder began to minister during lunch hours along some particular streets at the city center for about seven years before he officially launched out to start Sunday worship services. The reason for this was that he personally did not have financial ability to either purchase and own a premise for worship or hire a building on a monthly basis. However, God miraculously opened a door and now he owns premises at the city centre. The second selected church was Sanctuary of Truth Center, (STC). This is because the founder in his personal testimonies claimed to have resisted God's call into his life for eleven years as he did secular job in a company but eventually gave in to it. He said that the call became so heavy in his spirit and made a covenant with God that he would not do anything else apart from serving him. Besides, he had been brought up in a poor polygamous home and in a cultic

denomination called “Legio Maria.” Due to these factors, he thus wanted to witness God’s prosperity upon his life as he serves him (God). The third selected church is Jesus Jubilation Center (JJC). This is because the founder in his personal testimonies claimed to have been raised up from a poor background at the village and after his secondary school education came to the city. As such, he has a first-hand experience in poverty yet currently, he is witnessing God taking him out of such a life through service to him (God).

The researcher was once residing in the neighborhood with one of the members of the above-mentioned selected indigenous churches. At one point in their conversations, a member of one of the churches said: “I cannot drop my membership in that church for anything! This is the source of prosperity in life since our leader was commissioned to go and liberate people from poverty! I had rather stay in the house than attend a church service elsewhere, he continued.” Besides this, the researcher has interacted with some of the long term members of the selected indigenous churches and got relatively similar remarks from them.

Sample and Sampling Procedure

The researcher investigated the three selected churches and determined the following: The first selected church had five (5) pastors and twenty (20) leaders. The second selected church had three (3) pastors and fifteen (15) leaders while the third selected church had two (2) pastors and fifteen (15) leaders. The total number of pastors in the three churches was ten (10) while the total number of departmental leaders was forty (40.) Thus the researcher applied purposive sampling and went for the three (3) senior pastors of each selected church.

To select the respondents, first, the researcher used extreme case sampling as it gave the research rich information on teaching on prosperity. Second, the researcher applied maximum variation sampling. This was useful in order to balance the gender so as to have

four (4) men and four (4) women. As such, the researcher visited these selected churches and worked out a possible plan of meeting with the pastors for interview.

The study targeted twenty-seven (27) respondents. Nine (9) respondents were from each indigenous church. In every church, the study included one (1) pastor and eight (8) members who are departmental leaders with twenty-five (25) years of age and above. Amongst the respondents in each church, the study focused on four (4) men and four (4) women. Out of the many pastors in each selected church, the researcher targeted only the founder of each church since they are the visionary or founding ministers. Since the selected churches had many members who are leaders, the researcher selected leaders who had served for at least five years to obtain the respondents. To achieve this, the researcher liaised with the pastors to bring the respondents on board. As such, the number of respondents varied according to the ratio of men to women leaders in each church. The pastors were interviewed while departmental leaders were issued with questionnaires to fill.

Data Collection

The study employed interviews with pastors because they (pastors) had much information of the churches which can be best presented. As such, the researcher used interview guide schedule to focus on the objectives of the study. Moreover, data collection technique was use of questionnaires. However, there were no available literature written by the leaders of these movements about the topic and so there was no analysis to be done as had been earlier proposed.

The researcher therefore sought maximum cooperation from the respondents in the three selected indigenous churches before the interview and administration of questionnaire was conducted. This implied that the information that was collected would provide a wider

concept of prosperity as understood in indigenous churches.

Methods of Data Analysis

The researcher revisited the objectives of the study in order to reaffirm the relevance of the data collected and to identify any gaps. The information collected through questionnaires and interviews were edited for accuracy. No information was discarded but all were serialized. The data obtained was coded into specific categories and reduced into manageable summary. Thematic and contextual analysis on qualitative primary data was conducted before integrating the information with the secondary data gathered through literature review. The data was sorted in response to the research questions and objectives. The themes in the outcome were thus interpreted and presented accordingly. Finally, the researcher drew conclusions from the outcomes and made recommendations for further studies.

Validity and Reliability of the Study

In accordance with Mugenda & Mugenda, “Reliability measures the degree at which a research instrument can present consistent results after several trials.”¹⁰¹ The researcher utilized the equivalent-form technique to ensure the dependability of an instrument or procedure to obtain the correct data. On the other hand, “Validity is the accuracy and meaningfulness of inferences, which are based on the research results.”¹⁰² Moreover, the researcher used external validity. This implied that the selected sample being the three indigenous churches represented the target population being all indigenous churches in Nairobi County. As a result, the research findings were declared valid.

¹⁰¹ Olive Mugenda & Abel Mugenda., *Research Methods: Quantitative & Qualitative Approaches*. Nairobi, Kenya: Acts Press, 2003. pg. 99.

¹⁰² Ibid. pg. 95.

Mugenda and Mugenda observe that, “Interview questions need pre-testing by selecting a sample similar to the sample which the researcher plans to study. By testing of an instrument, the researcher is able to assess the clarity and ease in using it. The researcher is further capable of assessing the time taken to administer the instrument.”¹⁰³ All interviews were done by use of a structured questionnaire. Besides that, the researcher integrated both library and field research to compile the thesis.

Ethical Considerations

The researcher, with the help of Scott Christian University, School of Theology, post graduate department, sought permission from National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI) to help carry out the research. In accordance with Mugenda and Mugenda, “The research should seek authority from relevant government agencies.”¹⁰⁴

Moreover, the researcher observed the confidentiality of the selected churches. Codes and numbers were used in the study in place of names of the participants. The data that was collected was only used for the purpose of the research. Consequently, only the researcher, Scott Christian University supervisors, and National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI) gained accessibility to the document. Finally, the research report was handed over to the faculty of the School of Theology, Scott Christian University library and National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI).

¹⁰³Olive Mugenda & Abel Mugenda., *Research Methods: Quantitative & Qualitative Approaches*. Nairobi, Kenya: Acts Press, 2003 pg. 95.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid. pg. 132.

Summary

In this chapter, the researcher has discussed the methodology that was utilized during the study. The aspects shown include research design, target population, the sample and sampling procedure, instruments, validity and reliability. Ethical considerations have also been stated. Thus, the chapter has described how the researcher conducted the study in order to explore prosperity as understood among the indigenous churches in Nairobi County. Further, the data collection from the field utilized questions using individual interviews and questionnaires. Finally, the results were presented, analyzed, interpreted and recommendations were later made.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

In this chapter, the researcher explored prosperity as understood in churches today and its relation to biblical teaching, focusing on selected indigenous churches in Nairobi County. Further, the researcher presented the data collected in an attempt to answer the research questions. The three questions that the research sought to answer were: What is the understanding of prosperity teaching among the adherents of indigenous churches? What is the biblical teaching on prosperity? And, to what extent does the teaching on prosperity among the three indigenous churches align with biblical teaching?

Data Presentation, Analysis and Interpretation

The researcher had twelve (12) interview questions for the pastors of the three selected churches. The researcher coded the churches and their pastors as follows: The first selected church had code No. A. The pastor had code No. 01; the second selected church had code No. B. The pastor had code No. 02 while the third selected church had code No. C. The pastor had code No. 03. A personal interview was conducted, and responses were obtained as follows:

When asked to explain their background briefly and the vision they had for their churches, interviewee no. 01 said he is married to one wife and blessed with two children. He further said that the church is evangelistic in nature and that one of their objectives is to outreach souls. This, he said, is achieved by conducting crusades in various places across the nation. He added that another objective for their church is to recruit more pastors to enhance the fulfilling

of the church's mandate. He said that they now have many branches nationally and internationally.

Interviewee no. 02 said that he is born-again and that he loves the Lord. He added that he is the second-born out of thirteen children and that the Lord saved him in May 1994 while he was seventeen years old. However, he was brought up in a cultic denomination. He used to work as a mechanical engineer in a company when the Lord called him to ministry, but he struggled and denied that call for eleven years. Nevertheless, he finally accepted and began the church. He is the senior pastor of the church with five branches now under his oversight. His vision is to reach the unreached with the gospel; to transform the community and their church to remain a place of the word of God that gives people direction. Interviewee no. 03 said that he is a pastor by calling for eighteen years now. His vision is to equip saints for the work of the ministry through seminars and conferences.

When asked about their mode of ministry, interviewee no. 01 said that he is a part-time minister while interviewees no. 02 and 03 said that they are full-time ministers. In response to the question about whether they had any biblical or theological training, interviewees no. 01 and 03 had at least a diploma and bachelor's in theology respectively from Kenya, while interviewee no. 02 had a diploma in theology from South Korea.

When asked about what led to the planting of their churches at those particular places, interviewee no. 01 said that they were in a rental premises and were always being put under pressure when time elapsed. Thus, they made it a prayer item to God to bless them with their own premises within the city center. Additionally, he said that the centrality of the location was also another factor that prompted them to plant the church there. Interviewees no. 02 and 03 simply said that it was God's divine leading and direction.

In response to the question about the duration they had done ministry in their respective locations, interviewee no. 01 said twenty-three years while interviewees no. 02 and 03 had each served for twelve years. When asked whether they were aware about prosperity, they all answered 'yes.' Responding to the question of their view on teaching on prosperity, interviewee no. 01 said that it is a positive teaching since it removes church members from the curse of poverty. He added that it is biblical because Jesus Christ also taught about it.

Interviewee no. 02 said that real prosperity is when somebody is rich in the heart, i.e. living by the promises of God and operating in the gifts and fruit of the Holy Spirit while interviewee no. 03 said that teaching on prosperity is biblical because God, through his word enlightens his people to understand that they are prosperous. He however cautioned that 'anything else is man-made' and not the right teaching.

Themes

a) Prosperity.

All the interviewees were aware that there is prosperity. Hence, they gave various opinions as far as it (prosperity) is concerned. Interviewee No. 01 for instance said that it is a positive teaching; No. 02 said that it is richness in the heart while No.03 said that it is biblical since God enlightens his people through it.

Responding to the question about their understanding of the biblical teaching on prosperity, interviewee no. 01 said that there is prosperity of the soul and physical prosperity. Referring to the story of the rich man and Lazarus, he said that he understood that poverty is bad and is a curse and a spirit. He finally referred to the story of Job and said that if prosperity is bad, then God himself would not have restored Job by blessing him with much wealth thereafter. Interviewee no. 02 however said that when the inner man is strong, the outer man is

stronger. Hence, it is being strong or rich in the things of God. Interviewee no. 03 said that God desires his people to understand they are prospered and that they should not chase any other thing as per Mathew 6:33 which says that we should seek first the kingdom of God and its righteousness and everything else shall be added to us. Consequently, there is some coherence between biblical teaching on prosperity and prosperity as understood in the three selected indigenous churches.

When asked about some of the results that they have witnessed out of teaching on prosperity, interviewee no. 01 said that from what he had experienced, members who take the message seriously and follow the teaching of the word of God have had their lives transformed. He added that some members of the church had come out of rental houses and built their own homes and had since bought their personal cars. Lastly, he said that through giving, Christians lend to God and are later blessed. Interviewee no. 02 however said that he had witnessed churches and families breaking because some pastors ask members to give out huge sums of money and valuable property in order for God to bless them, thus leaving the families without anything! Interviewee no. 03 similarly said that people have lost property in terms of “planting seed.” He also said that people have been brain-washed from the truth but Jesus said that you shall know the truth and the truth shall set you free. Lastly, he said that the church has been destabilized since members hop from one church to another in search of good health and wealth. This showed that there is a discrepancy between biblical teaching on prosperity and prosperity as understood by the interviewees of the selected indigenous churches.

b) Life transformation.

The interviewees' opinions about the results they had witnessed out of teaching on prosperity were different. For example, interviewee No. 01 gave a positive response, saying that he had witnessed people's lives being transformed. However, interviewees Nos. 02 and 03 said that they had witnessed family separations and loss of property to prosperity preachers respectively.

Finally, when asked whether they would change anything in the church about teaching on prosperity in Nairobi County, interviewee no. 01 said 'no' and that he would encourage the it. He added that through the teaching, people will not be idle but work and that when people work, the city and the nation will prosper. Interviewee no. 02 said 'yes' and explained that the church should go back to the basic biblical teaching, that is trusting in God's promises. Interviewee no. 03 said that if he had an opportunity, he would train pastors to teach the true doctrines concerning prosperity because the Bible says in Mathew 6:33 that we should seek the kingdom of God and its righteousness first and then all other things will follow us. He added that pastors themselves should be conscious about their call and yield to the Holy Spirit always.

c) Biblical Teaching

Interviewee No. 01 said that when people are taught prosperity, they will work and be prosperous. No.02 said that people should go back to the basic biblical teaching. No.03 similarly said that given the opportunity, he would teach people the true doctrines about prosperity. Thus, N0s. 02 and 03 had similar viewpoints.

Besides the interviews, the researcher administered questionnaires to twenty-four (24) respondents in the three selected indigenous churches. The respondents were specifically four

male and four female departmental leaders above twenty-five years of age in each selected indigenous church. The researcher coded:

- a. the respondents of the first selected church as, A01 to A08.
- b. the respondents of the second selected church as, B01 to B08.
- c. the respondents of the third selected church as, C01 to C08.

The following data were received from the field research:

Q1. Duration of church membership.

Responding to the above question, respondents had been members within the following period of time:

a) Respondents of the first selected church said:

No. A01 and C06 had been a member for 24 years,

No. A02 had been a member for 19 years,

No. A03 and C01 did not respond,

No A04, B07 and C02 had been a member for 12,

Nos. A08 and B06 had been a member for 10 years,

Nos. A05 and B04 had been a member for 9 years,

No. A06 had been a member for 20 years and

No. A07 had been a member for 15 years.

Nos. B01, B05, B08, C03, C05, C07 and C08 had been members for 5 years,

No. B02 had been a member for 6 years,

No. B03 had been a member for 21 years,

No. C04 had been a member for 16 years.

The above data was tabulated as shown below:

Duration of membership	Numerical Frequency	Percentage (%) frequency
0-10 years	13	54.16%
11-20 years	6	25%
Over 20 years	3	12.5%
No response	2	8.34%
Total No. of respondents	24	

Tab. 4.1: Duration of church membership.

As pertains to the duration of church membership in their respective churches, the following respondents had been members for at least 10 years: nos. A04, A05, A08, B01, B02, B04, B05, B06, B08, C03, C05, C07, C08. That gave a percentage frequency of 54.16%. Respondents Nos. A02, A07, B07, C04, C02 and C04 which represent 25% had been members between 11 and 20 years. Respondents Nos. A01, B03 and C06 which represent 12.5% had been members for over 20 years while nos. A03 and C01 which represent 8.34% did not respond.

From the data above, it can be concluded that most of respondents had been members of their respective churches for more than five years. Therefore, they were more likely to give accurate information based on the research questions.

Q2a. Possession of Biblical Studies training.

Responding to the above question, the following were found out:

Nos. A01, A02, A04, A06, A07, B01, B02, B05, B07, C01, C02, C04, C06 and C07 said 'Yes' while,

Nos. A05, A08, B03, B04, B06, B08, C03, C05 and C08 said 'No'

No. A03- Did not respond.

The above data is shown on the table below:

Possession of Biblical Studies training	Numerical Frequency	Percentage (%) Frequency
Yes	14	58.33%
No	9	37.5%
No response	1	4.17%
Total No. of respondents	24	

Tab. 4.2 Possession of Biblical Studies training.

In response to the question of possession of biblical studies training, interviewees no. 01, 02 and 03 were trained. Besides, respondent nos. A01, A02, A04, A06, A07, B01, B02, B05, B07, C01, C02, C03, C06 and C07 which represent 58.33% of the respondents were equally trained. Respondents nos. A05, A08, B03, B04, B06, B08, C03, C05 and C08 which represent 37.5% were not trained. Respondent no. A03 which represent 4.17% did not respond. The numerical frequency was 14, 9 and 1 respectively. The total no. of respondents was 24.

The above data shows that while more than half of the respondents had biblical studies training, some however are not trained. Thus, this may have a negative influence on the latter in their various leadership departments in the church.

b. Level of Biblical Studies Training.

Responding to the above question, respondents said:

Nos. A01, A02 and C02 had a diploma,

Nos. A04, A06, A07, B02, B07, C01, C06 and C07 had certificates

No. B01, B05 and C04- Indicated ‘other’ trainings (lower than diploma).

The data above is tabulated as shown below:

Level of training	Numerical Frequency	Percentage (%) Frequency
Diploma	3	21.5%
Certificate	8	57%
Other	3	21.5%
Total No. of respondents	14	

Tab. 4.3 Level of Biblical Studies Training

On the same platform of training, respondents, interviewees Nos. 01, 02 and 03 all had a diploma in theology. Similarly, respondents Nos. A01, A02 and C02 which represent 21.5% of the respondents had trained up to diploma level; Respondents Nos. A04, A06, A07, B02, B07, C01, C06 and C07 which represent 57% had certificates while respondents Nos. B01, B05 and C04 which represent 21.5% had other trainings which were lower than certificate level. The numerical frequency was 3, 8 and 3 respectively. The total number of respondents was 14. Since biblical training is an intervening variable in the conceptual framework, the researcher suggests further training for the respondents.

From the above data, it was noticed that some of the respondents had biblical studies training while only three had advanced to diploma level. Three others had ‘other’ biblical training that were lower than certificate level.

Q3a. Awareness of teaching on prosperity.

Responding to the above question:

All the respondents of church No. A said ‘Yes’

All the respondents of church No. B said 'Yes' except No. B01 who said 'No'

All the respondents of church No. C said 'Yes' except No. C03 who said 'No'

The data above is shown on the table below:

Awareness of teaching on prosperity	Numerical Frequency	Percentage (%) Frequency
Yes	22	91.7%
No	2	8.3%
Total No. of respondents	24	

Tab. 4.4 Awareness of teaching on prosperity.

When asked whether they were aware of teaching on prosperity, all the three interviewees said 'Yes.' Similarly, all the respondents which represent 91.7% said 'Yes' to the same question while only respondents Nos. B01 and C03 from the second and third selected churches which represent 8.3% said 'No'. The numerical frequency was 22 and 2 respectively. The total number of respondents was 24.

The data above shows that even though over 90% of the respondents were aware about prosperity teaching in their respective churches, 8% were not. The data above responds to research question No. 1 in chapter one that sought the understanding of prosperity teaching among the adherents of indigenous churches. According to the researcher, this means that the subject should continue to be taught in the right biblical approach.

b. Meaning of teaching on prosperity to the respondent.

Responding to the above question, respondents of Church A, B and C gave the following suggestions:

Nos. A01, B02, and C06- Financial success.

Nos. A02, A05 and A07; B05, B06; C02 and C05- Spiritual Success

Nos. A04, A06 and A08; B03, B07, B08; C04, C06 and C07- Success in all areas of a believer's life.

No. A03 –It is hearsay

No. B04- Incomplete gospel.

No. C01- It is kingdom investment.

The above data is shown on the table below:

Meaning of teaching on prosperity	Numerical Frequency	Percentage (%) Frequency
Financial success	3	13.63%
Spiritual success	7	31.8%
Success in all areas of a believer's life	9	40.91%
An incomplete gospel	1	4.55%
Kingdom investment	1	4.55%
Hearsay	1	4.55%
Total No. of respondents	22	

Tab. 4.5 Meaning of teaching on prosperity.

Responding to what teaching on prosperity meant to them, respondents nos. A01, B02 and C06 which represent 13.63% cited financial success. This response met objective No. 1 in chapter one and is consistent with what some authors say in the literature review in chapter two. Respondents Nos. A02, A05, A07, B05 and B06, which represent 31.8% cited spiritual success. This is also in line with some authors as quoted in the literature review. Besides, respondents Nos. A04, A06, A08, B03 , B07, B08, C04, C06 and C07 which represent

40.91% said that it means being successful in all areas of a believer's life, i.e. spiritually, financially, socially, and economically. Again, this is consistent with what some authors suggested in the literature review. Finally, respondent No.C01 which represents 4.55% said it means investing in the kingdom; respondent No. B04 which represent another 4.55% said that it is an incomplete gospel while respondent No. A03 4.55% cited that it is hearsay. The numerical frequency was 3, 7, 9, 1, 1 and 1 respectively. The total No. of respondents was 22. All these statements are consistent with what various authors said in the literature review.

d) Success.

Most of the respondents felt that teaching on prosperity means either financial success, spiritual success or success in all areas of a believer's life. However, one respondent said it is an incomplete gospel, another said it is hearsay while another said it is kingdom investment. According to the researcher, it means general well being or success in all areas if a Christian's life as some respondents understood it to be. This is in line with what the bible says in Exodus 23:25.

Q4. Practices witnessed that attract prosperity.

Responding to the above question, respondents gave the following suggestions:

Nos. A01, A02, A04, A05, A06, A07, A08; B01, B02, B03, B05, B06, B07, B08; C01, C03, C04 , C05, C06, C07 and C08. - Sowing seed, special offering, thanksgiving offering, miracle offering and tithe.

Nos. A03- Cited Not Applicable.

Nos. B04- Other (Being in the word of God).

No. C02 -No response.

The data above is shown on the table below:

Practices that attract prosperity	Numerical frequency	Percentage (%) frequency
Sowing seed	7	29.16%
Special offering	7	29.16%
Thanksgiving offering	8	33.33%
Miracle offering	3	12.5%
Tithe	17	70.83%
Other (begins in God's word)	3	12.5%
No response	1	4.16%
Not Applicable (N/A)	1	4.16%
Total No. of respondents	24	

Tab. 4.6 Practices witnessed that attract prosperity.

About the practices that the respondents had witnessed practiced in their churches so as to attract prosperity in people's lives, respondents Nos. A01, A04, A06, A07, B06, C06, and C08, which represent 29.16% cited sowing seed; respondents nos. A01, A04, A07, B02, B07, C06, and C07 which represent another 29.16% selected special offering. Respondents Nos. A01, A04, A07, B03, B07, C01, C06, and C08 which represents 33.33% noted thanksgiving offering. Respondents nos. A01, A04, and A07 which represent 12.5% cited miracle offering while respondents Nos. A01, A02, A04, A05, A06, A07, A08, B01, B03, B05, B07, B08, C01, C03, C04, C05, and C06 which represents 70.83% selected tithe. Further, respondent nos. A04, B04, and C08 which represents 12.49% noted God's word as "other" practices while respondent No. C02 which represents 4.16% did not respond; similarly, respondent No. A03 which represents another 4.16% cited not applicable (N/A) as

their response. The numerical frequency was 7, 7, 8, 3, 17, 3, 1 and 1 respectively. The total No. of respondents was 24.

The above data shows that most of the respondents indicated tithing as a practice that attracts prosperity, (70.83%). This is in agreement with the biblical teaching because when Christians tithe, they are obedient to God's word as is recorded in Malachi 3:8-12 and Deuteronomy 8:18. Thus, this answers research question No. 2 and 3 in chapter one.

e) Giving.

Most of the respondents said that paying tithe is one of the practices that can attract prosperity in a Christian's life. Others indicated various types of offerings such as thanksgiving, miracle and special offerings while others indicated sowing seed. According to the researcher, all the responses were right but being obedient to God's word should be inclusive as the Bible records in Deuteronomy 8:18 and Isaiah 1:19.

Q5. Respondents' views on how a Christian can be prosperous.

Responding to the above question, respondents gave the following views:

Nos. A01, A02, A04, A05, A06, A07; B03, B04, B05, B06, B07, B08; C01, C02, C03, C04, C05, and C06.- Living a righteous/ upright life.

No. A03-None.

No A08 – Planting good seed and giving good offerings and tithe.

No. B01- No response.

Nos. B02 and C07- Working hard in our jobs.

No. C08-Spoilt Questionnaire.

The data above can be tabulated as shown below:

Views on how a Christian can be prosperous	Numerical Frequency	Percentage (%) frequency
Planting good seed and giving good offering and tithe.	1	4.17%
Living a righteous/upright life.	18	75%
Working hard in our jobs.	2	8.33%
None	1	4.17%
No response	1	4.17%
Spoilt questionnaire	1	4.17%
Total No. of respondents	24	

Tab. 4.7 Respondents' views on how a Christian can be prosperous.

Giving their views on the biblical understanding on how a Christian can be prosperous; respondent No. A08 which represents 4.17% cited planting good seed and giving good offering and tithe. Respondents Nos. A01, A02, A04, A05, A06, A07, B03, B04, B05, B06, B07, B08, C01, C02, C03, C04, C05, and C06 which represents 75% cited living a righteous/ upright life. Indeed, this factor meets objective No. 2 in chapter one. Besides, respondent No. B01 which represents 4.17% did not respond while respondent No.C08 which represents 4.17% spoilt their questionnaire based on the question. The numerical frequency was 1, 18, 2, 1, 1, and 1 respectively. The total No. of respondents was 24.

The data above shows that most of the respondents indicated living righteous/upright lives (75%) as a view on how Christians can be prosperous. Again, this is consistent with what the Bible teaches in Mathew 6:33. This responds to research questions No. 2 and 3 in chapter one respectively.

f) Righteousness and Work.

Most of the respondents cited living righteous/upright lives as a view on how Christians can be prosperous. Some respondents cited hard work while only one respondent cited giving. According to the researcher, the biblical teaching is that believers have to live holy lives and also work because God promised to bless the work of our hands.

Q6. Agreement with the statements using the scale provided.

Statement	Strongly agree	Agree	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Don't know	N/A	No response
Prosperity is biblical.	70.83%	25%	0%	4.17%	0%	0%	0%
Not all teaching on prosperity upholds what the bible teaches on prosperity.	58.33%	37.5%	4.17%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Recipients of the teaching on prosperity benefit from it.	25%	41.67%	12.5%	16.67%	0%	0%	4.17%
The greatest need of humanity is to overcome sin.	41.67%	25%	0%	25%	0%	8.33%	0%
The greatest need of humanity is to obtain good health and have wealth.	29.17%	16.67%	16.67%	16.67%	8.33%	8.33%	4.17%
The main goal of	79.17%	20.83%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

humanity should be		%					
eternal life.							

Tab.4.8 Agreement with the statement in the scale.

The total number of respondents to this question was 24. In terms of agreement with the statements in the scale provided, 17 respondents that represent 70.83% strongly agreed that prosperity is biblical. These were: A02, A03, A04, A05, A06, A07, A08, B02, B04, B05, B06, B07, B08, C01, C04, C05, and C06. 6 respondents which represent 25% agreed. These were: A01, B01, B03, C02, C07 and C08. 1 respondent which represents 4.17% disagreed. This was respondent No. C03. Additionally, 14 respondents which represent 58.33% strongly agreed that not all prosperity teaching upholds what the bible teaches on prosperity. These were: A01, A03, A04, A06, A08, B02, B04, B05, B07 B08, C01, C02, C04, and C05. Moreover, 9 respondents which represent 37.5% agreed. These were: A02, A05, A07, B01, B03, B06, C03, C06, and C07. 1 respondent which represents 4.17% strongly disagreed. This was No. C08. Thus, the respondents who strongly agreed and those who simply agreed met objective no. 3 in chapter one. Besides, another 6 respondents which represents 25% strongly agreed that recipients of the teaching on prosperity benefit from it. These were: A01, A04, A06, A07, B07, and C02. 10 respondents which represent 41.67% agreed. These were: A05, B05, B06, C01, C03, C04, C05, C06, C07, and C08. Further, 3 respondents which represent 12.5% strongly disagreed. These were A03, B02, and B03. 4 respondents which represent 16.67% disagreed. These were: A02, A08, B04 and B08. 1 respondent which represents 4.17% did not respond. This was No. B01. Further 10 respondents which represent 41.67% strongly agreed that the greatest need of humanity is to overcome sin. These were: A01, A04, A07, A08, B01, B04, B06, B07, C02, and C04. 6 respondents which represent 25%

agreed. These were: A02, A05, A06, B02, C03, and C05. Similarly, 6 other respondents which represent 25% disagreed. These were: B03, B05, B08, C01, C06, and C08. Besides, 2 respondents which represent 8.33% noted that the question was not applicable (N/A) to them. These were: A03 and C07. On the same platform, 7 respondents which represent 29.17% strongly agreed that the greatest need of humanity is to obtain good health and have wealth. These were: A05, B01, B06, C02, C04, C05 and C06. Besides, 4 respondents agreed. These were: A04, A07, B07 and C07. On the same note, another 4 respondents which represents 16.67% strongly disagreed. These were: A08, B05, B08, and C01. 4 other respondents which represent 16.67% disagreed. These were: A01, A02, B02, and B04. 2 respondents which represent 8.33% did not know. These were: B03 and C08. Another 2 respondents which represent 8.33% cited not applicable (N/A). These were: A03 and C03. The remaining 1 respondent which represents 4.17% did not respond. This was No. A06. Finally, 19 respondents which represent 79.17% strongly agreed that the main goal of humanity should be to attain eternal life. These were: A01, A03, A04, A05, A06, A07, A08, B01, B02, B03, B04, B06, B07, B08, C01, C02, C03, C04, and C05. However, 5 respondents which represent 20.83% simply agreed with the statement. These were: A02, B05, C06, C07 and C08.

From the data above, majority of the respondents who strongly agreed plus those who simply agreed (95.83%) were in agreement that teaching on prosperity is biblical. This is in response to research question no.3 and met objective no.3 as well. On the same note, another 95.83% (total percentage of those who strongly agreed plus those who agreed) of the respondents were in agreement that not all teaching on prosperity upholds what the Bible teaches on prosperity. This response met objective no. 3 of the study that sought to relate the biblical teaching on prosperity and prosperity as understood in indigenous churches.

However, there was a discrepancy about the response to the statement that the greatest need of humanity is to obtain good health and have enough wealth. As such, 45.84% were in agreement while 33.34% did not agree. Thus, the former response was not consistent with what the Bible teaches. This responds to research question no. 3. Finally, all the respondents (100%) were in agreement with the statement that the main goal of humanity should be eternal life. This answers research question no.3 and met objective no. 3 of the study as well.

g) Eternal life.

Majority of the respondents said that prosperity is biblical. Similarly, some respondents said that the greatest need of humanity is to overcome sin. A smaller number of the respondents however said that the greatest need of humanity is to obtain good health and have wealth. Most of the respondents again cited having eternal life as being the main goal of humanity. According to the researcher however, the biblical teaching is that Christians should overcome sin and be prosperous as they pursue the walk of faith whose main objective is eternal life. Thus, there should be a balance in the four areas.

Relationship between Biblical Teaching on Prosperity and Prosperity as Understood by Indigenous Churches

According to the analysis of field data, the researcher noted few similarities, but sterling differences between biblical teaching on prosperity and prosperity as generally understood by pastors and their leaders in indigenous churches. The researcher opted to give various themes in order to explain the relationship.

Themes

a) Spirituality.

First, the biblical teaching on prosperity according Mathew 6:33 is that believers

should first seek the kingdom of God and its righteousness and all the other things shall be added to them. According to the data from the indigenous churches, interviewee No. 01 understood teaching on prosperity as positive and biblical and that when the soul prospers, then one can also prosper materially. Interviewee No.02 understood it as being rich towards spiritual things. Interviewee No. 03 understood it as a biblical thing since God enlightens his people through it to understand that they are prosperous through his promises and that they should not chase other worldly things according to Mathew 6:33. This response was coherent with the biblical teaching.

b) Success.

Second, some of the respondents of the three selected indigenous churches understood the meaning of prosperity in various dimensions. For example, from the field data, 13.63% understood it as financial success. 31.8% understood it as spiritual success. 40.91% understood it as being successful in all areas of a believer's life. 4.55% understood it as an incomplete gospel. Another 4.55% understood it as kingdom investment while the remaining 4.55% understood it as hearsay. Thus, there are some commonalities but also some inconsistencies between the biblical teaching on prosperity and prosperity as understood by some of the respondents in the selected indigenous churches.

c) Tithing.

Third, the biblical teaching on practices that can attract prosperity in the lives of believers is about bringing the whole tithe into the storehouse of God according to Malachi 3:10. Besides, Isaiah 1:19 says that if we are obedient to God, we shall eat the good of the land. In 2 Corinthians 6:9, Apostle Paul admonishes the Christians at Corinth to give cheerfully and willingly. According to the data on the practices witnessed that attract

prosperity in Christians' lives, 29.16% cited sowing seed and giving special offerings; 33.33% noted thanksgiving offering; 12.5% selected miracle offering while 70.83% selected tithing; 12.49% noted obedience to God's word. Thus, since most of the respondents in the selected churches indicated tithing, other offerings and some noted obedience to God's word, this is in agreement with the biblical teaching because when Christians tithe, they obey God's word.

d) Righteousness and Work.

Fourth, the biblical teaching on how a Christian can be prosperous is recorded in Proverbs 10:4 that says, "Lazy hands make a man poor, but diligent hands bring wealth." 1Thessalonians 4:11-12 and 2 Thessalonians 3:10, Apostle Paul encourages Christians to work so that they do not have to depend on anybody and that he who is idle should not eat. From the field data, the respondents gave the following views on how a Christian can be prosperous: 4.17% cited planting good seed and giving good offerings and tithe; 75% noted living a righteous/upright life; 8.33% said working hard in our jobs. Thus, most of the respondents were in agreement with what the Bible says in Proverbs 21:21.

e) Obedience and Wealth.

Fifth, the biblical teaching in Deuteronomy 8:18 is that we should remember the Lord God for he is the one who gives us ability to produce wealth. Similarly, in Mathew 19:16, Jesus' teaching and advice to the rich young man shows that prosperity is biblical. From the field data, the responses to research question no.3 met objective no.3 because over 70% of the respondents strongly agreed that prosperity is biblical. Thus, to a large extent, these responses were in agreement with what the Bible teaches.

f) Eternal life.

Sixth, the biblical teaching for the greatest need of humanity is recorded in John 3:16 that says, “For God so loved the world that he gave us his only begotten Son that whosoever believes in him shall not perish but have everlasting life.” From the field data, there was a discrepancy about the responses to the statement that the greatest need of humanity is to obtain good health and have wealth. In response, 29.17% strongly agreed. Those who agreed were 16.67%. Those who strongly disagreed were 16.67% while those who disagreed were also 16.67%. Thus, some of the responses were not consistent with what the Bible teaches. This answers research question no. 3. In addition, 79.17% of the respondents strongly agreed with the statement that the main goal of humanity should be eternal life. Further, 20.83% agreed. In conclusion, since a bigger percentage of the respondents strongly agreed with the statement that the main goal of humanity should be eternal life, this is opposed to only about 30% who strongly agreed that the greatest need of humanity is to obtain good health and have enough wealth. Thus, to a larger extent those who agreed with the first statement were in line with what the Bible teaches while those who strongly disagreed with the latter statement were not in line with what the Bible teaches on prosperity.

g) Doctrine and Promises.

Finally, responding to the question about changing anything as far as teaching on prosperity is concerned in the church in Nairobi County, interviewee No. 01 said ‘No’ and that he would encourage it. Interviewee No. 02 said ‘Yes’ and explained that the church should go back to the basic biblical teaching which is trusting in God’s promises. Interviewee No. 03 said that given the opportunity, he would train pastors to teach the doctrines concerning prosperity in line with Mathew 6:33.

Summary of Observations

In summary, the study targeted twenty-seven (27) respondents. Nine respondents were from each indigenous church. In every church, the study included one pastor (the founder of the ministry,) and eight members who are departmental leaders with twenty-five years of age and above. The leaders targeted were those who had been in that particular ministry for at least five years. Moreover, the study focused four ladies and four men in each church. The researcher employed both interviews and administration of questionnaires to the respondents in the study. The pastors were personally interviewed while the departmental leaders were issued with questionnaires. Among the three selected indigenous churches, there was a discrepancy in one of them between biblical teaching on prosperity as the independent variable and churches' understanding on prosperity as the dependent variable. Biblical interpretation, and lack of biblical studies training as intervening variables did not apply to them since the pastors are all trained. However, response to poverty being another intervening variable was noted among the interviewees and the departmental leaders and subsequently this extended to other members too.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

This study sought to explore prosperity as understood in churches today and its relation to biblical teaching. It focused on three selected indigenous churches in Nairobi County. It was an attempt to draw a conceptual framework on the biblical teaching on prosperity and churches' teaching on prosperity. Thus, this chapter summarizes the findings and shows the connection between the variables in chapter two. As such, it gives a description of the theological implication and gives recommendations on the right approach on how churches should carry out their teaching on prosperity.

Summary

First, according to the researcher, even though most Christians fall prey to heretical prosperity teachers and are fleeced of their money and property, it is not out of ignorance or lack of information, rather, they are aware of it but still keep on being influenced by such teachers. This is seen to be the trend in most of churches that teach on prosperity and the situation seems not to be addressed either by the government or national church governing councils.

Second, the concept of understanding the teachings on health and wealth varies from one church to another. The Bible records that true prosperity is the reward of Christians who live righteously and faithfully. Both in the Old and New Testaments, as the researcher indicated in the literature review, prosperity was a blessing from God, and not from any other source as some teachers tend to convince their congregants to believe. When the concept of

health and wealth is well grasped by Christians, they will indeed live a life of general well being. Additionally, when church leaders balance their teaching on prosperity, it will create an impression that health and wealth go together with salvation and are inseparable.

Third, biblical knowledge and training is of utmost importance among church leaders since it will influence the congregants' understanding on prosperity. As such, an integrated biblical teaching on Christian life will be realized when church leaders train. Consequently, such an approach will curtail the spread of quack teachers on prosperity as most authors had earlier observed in the literature review. According to the researcher however, pastors should do the teaching on prosperity in light of what is recorded in the bible about it. As such, it is upon them to study the bible and other extra biblical books on prosperity so as to be sound on this subject. Above all else, they should be conscious about their call and yield to the Holy Spirit always.

Fourth, Giving, according to the researcher is a practice that attracts prosperity and it exists in various forms such as tithing, first fruit, thanksgiving, etc. Additionally, there are also other forms of contemporary giving and practices done by indigenous churches such as seed planting and miracle offering. As the researcher had previously observed giving should be done willingly, cheerfully, and in accordance with one's ability for the purposes of evangelism and missions, social concern and in support of God's work generally. Even though some authors criticized some of the contemporary modes of giving in the literature review, they are indeed practiced by most of the indigenous churches in Nairobi County. According to the researcher however, pastors should feel obligated to continuously teach particularly on the subject of tithing to their congregants. When this is done, and its concept properly grasped by

congregants, most indigenous churches will be financially stable and will not be in a financial crisis.

According to the findings of this researcher, the teaching on prosperity varies in the selected indigenous churches in Nairobi County. However, there is a paradox in the Christian circles that as much as some of the saints are genuinely in the mission field and are being persecuted for the sake of Christ, some teach prosperity for personal material gain! As far as the kingdom of God is concerned, teaching on prosperity should draw people to God rather than send them away. As a matter of fact, some Christians who have been fleeced of their property and finances have resentfully walked out of the church since they were promised goodies that never came by after a long period of waiting. When given the right approach, many Christians can indeed be prosperous as they find value in what they are taught.

Besides, one of the best defenses against the teachings on prosperity is a holistic understanding of scriptural teaching on wealth and poverty. God created people who have material needs, and they have the desire and the ability to meet those needs. Interestingly, the Old Testament economic laws are upon the ideals of laboring and resting and preventing God's people from wealth and poverty related sins. Jesus Christ did not give any detailed systematic or economic plan as far as wealth, health and poverty is concerned. Rather, in the gospels, his example and teachings on wealth and poverty are wide-ranging and their spiritual impact is what is usually emphasized. Lastly, there are number requisite connections between material wealth/poverty and spiritual wealth/poverty in accordance with the literature review.

For example, Deuteronomy 8:18 says that "Remember the lord your God for he is the one who gives you ability to produce wealth," and Isaiah 1:19 says, "If you are willing and

obedient, you will eat the good of the land." This means that if a Christian is disobedient, he or she cannot eat the good of the land and so he prosperous. In the New Testament, Mathew 6:33 says, "Seek first the kingdom of God and its righteousness and all that we want shall be added to us." This Means that if we seek other things first apart from God's kingdom, then we are not acting in line with God's word and that may lead to spiritual poverty.

With the objectives of the study having been met and in light of the above summary, the researcher made some recommendations as far as the research was concerned.

Recommendations

1. Health and Wealth

There was division on the understanding of health and wealth among the respondents as most of them felt that the greatest need of humanity in life is to receive eternal life and inherit the kingdom of God. It is the opinion of this researcher that these respondents only addressed the spiritual need and omitted the needs of the body and soul. The Bible says that prosperity is the reward of the righteous; again, God told the Israelites through the prophet Isaiah that if they were willing and obedient, they would eat the good of the land which includes having good health and wealth. Moreover, in Deuteronomy 8:18, God anticipates us to remember him in everything and be obedient to his word, thus, he will confirm his covenant with us, give us ability to produce wealth and so we will be prosperous. The riches promised here are the signs of the blessing and faithfulness of God, and the people must remember that these things still belong to God.

Therefore, Prosperity is a blessing from God and God did bless his people with material and general wellbeing. The researcher recommends biblical teaching on an integrated Christian life and that means it includes having health and wealth. When this is done, congregants will have confidence in the walk of faith and have a positive attitude about the

message of having good health and obtaining wealth and how this wellbeing is related to their giving or sowing into the expansion of God's kingdom. Hopefully, incidents like the one that happened in Nairobi where members of a church in Nairobi left their local assembly after being fleeced of almost all their family property and finances and joined one of the mainstream churches in town will be avoided. This story as told by a friend further stated that, the reasoning behind this decision to shift was that there is controlled giving and accountability in the mainstream churches as opposed to indigenous churches and especially the ones who teach most about health and wealth.

From this study, as much as most respondents sounded spiritual, believers also need to live a life of general wellbeing even after salvation as Christians. This being the case then, the researcher recommends that church leaders should balance their teaching on health and wealth as the bible teaches, so that there is an understanding that health and wealth is not separate from salvation, it should be an integrated way of Christian life.

2. Biblical Knowledge

All the respondents in this study were the founding pastors and departmental leaders and they had some form of biblical training. Their understanding of prosperity mirrors the biblical teaching on prosperity. It seems their biblical training influenced their understanding of prosperity. Most of the respondents referred to Mathew 6: 33 which they understood to mean first, that people should accept salvation and second, health and wealth will follow them. Additionally, some cited the story of the rich man and Lazarus in Luke 16:19 implying that the rich man lacked the pursuit of the kingdom of God and his righteousness. Instead, he focused on wealth and thus his life was imbalanced. These respondents agreed with the biblical view that God warns us not to become so caught up in temporal financial concerns

that we forget to be rich toward him. God calls upon the saints to make regular and generous monetary investments in the work of his Kingdom, both as a demonstration of our willingness to be obedient to him, and as a practical, tangible means of helping to expand the influence of his church throughout the community and the world.

Therefore, if Christians understand the biblical view of health and wealth, they should not have a conflict between being saved and enjoying health and wealth. As such, the researcher recommends that pastors should use the biblical knowledge that they have so that they, through teaching may influence the laity. Through the correct biblical teaching, the laity will not fall into coercive giving or sowing. Also, the laity will avoid being fleeced or taken advantage of by any heretical teaching.

3. Giving

As the researcher noted from the study, giving is a practice that exists in various forms. Examples of the biblical forms of giving were tithe, offering, and thanksgiving. The other forms of contemporary practices were seed sowing, miracle offering, and special offering. Thus, Christians are obligated to give in order to expand the kingdom of God in terms of evangelism, sanctuary construction, helping the needy and supporting God's work whenever called upon. The researcher therefore recommends that Christians should give willingly, cheerfully, and according to their ability as they express their gratitude to God, since that is the biblical teaching as far as the subject of giving is concerned. It should be noted however, that not all who give according to the above will have good health and wealth but only those whom God shall will to reward as per his (God's) sovereignty.

4. Model for Funding Indigenous Churches

According to the researcher and based on the findings, indigenous churches should seek for funding from donors and well-wishers who have God's work at heart. Such sources of income will ensure churches' financial stability. This approach will lessen the propagation of teaching on prosperity in churches and enhance orthodox teaching, which is based on the Bible. The researcher recommends so because the reason why most indigenous churches generally teach on financial prosperity is that they may acquire finances which are essential for sustenance and smooth running of the church by way of meeting monthly recurrent expenditure in the city. Others however, will simply propagate "prosperity teaching" as a lifestyle in order to get more money for running their churches. Interestingly, the more they propagate it and get money, the more they would want to get! This is a wrong attitude and corresponds to what Apostle Paul speaks to Timothy about the love of money in the last days, which should be avoided.

5. Further Research

According to the researcher, the area under study which was "Exploring Prosperity as Understood in Indigenous Churches Today and its Relation to Biblical Teaching," has not yet been exhausted. Consequently, the researcher recommends further research on the laity's perspective of prosperity in indigenous churches in the future.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

WORK PLAN AND TIME FRAME FOR THE RESEARCH

The table below is a presentation of the researcher's time frame for the entire research, beginning from 30th September, 2018 to 31st May, 2019.

DATE	TASKS/ACTIVITIES TO BE COMPLETED
15 th Aug. to 15 th September, 2018	Submission of thesis topic and purpose statement to departmental head for approval and for assignment of a supervisor and an advisor.
By 30 th September, 2018	Chapter one completed in consultation with supervisor and advisor.
By 15 th October, 2018.	Chapter two completed and submitted to the supervisor.
By 20 th October, 2018.	Chapter three completed and submitted to supervisor.
By 30 th October, 2018.	Full proposal submitted to supervisor, and proposal defense scheduled.
By 30 th November, 2018.	Final proposal defense conducted before faculty panel and PG students.
By December, 2018.	Proposal corrections completed and field work begun.
By 10 th February, 2019.	Research completed with data collected, entered and coded.
By 28 th February, 2019.	Chapters four and five completed and submitted to supervisor
By 15 th March, 2019.	Corrections made, and full thesis submitted to supervisor and advisor, and, with their approval, final defense scheduled.
By 30 th April, 2019	Final defense given before panel of faculty members.
By 31 st May, 2019	Error-free document submitted for signing and binding.

APPENDIX B

INTERVIEW SCHEDULED WITH THE PASTORS OF THE SELECTED INDIGENOUS CHURCHES

Hello! My name is Richard. I'm a post graduate student at Scott Christian University, Machakos, in the school of theology. I intend to obtain information about prosperity as understood by leaders of indigenous churches in Nairobi County. The data collected will help me as a student to write a thesis as required by the university. All responses will be treated with the highest confidentiality possible and no person or church will be identified in the report whatsoever. Thank you.

Interview Questions.

1. Could you please tell me a little bit about yourself and the vision you have for your church?
2. Are you part-time or full-time minister?.....
3. In which part of Nairobi County is your church located?.....
4. Do you have any biblical or theological training?.....
5. What is your level of training?.....
6. What led to the planting of this church at this place?
.....
.....
7. For how long have you done ministry there? (Please indicate the number of years)
8. Have you heard about prosperity?.....

9. What is your view on teaching on prosperity?.....
.....
.....
10. What is your understanding of the biblical teaching on prosperity?
.....
.....
11. What are some of the results that you have witnessed as a result of
teaching on prosperity?
.....
.....
12. Would you change anything in the church about teaching on prosperity
in Nairobi County?
.....
.....

Thank you for taking your time for the interview.

APPENDIX C

Questionnaire

Hello! My name is Richard. I'm a post graduate student at Scott Christian University, Machakos, in the school of theology. I intend to obtain information about prosperity as understood by leaders of indigenous churches in Nairobi County. The data collected will help me as a student to write a thesis as required by the university. All responses will be treated with the highest confidentiality possible and no person or church will be identified in the report whatsoever. Thank you.

Please tick where applicable:

1. For how long have you been a member in your church? (Please indicate the number of years).....
2. a. Do you have any biblical or training? () Yes. () No.
b. If yes, please indicate your level.
() Certificate.
() Diploma.
() Other (Please specify).....
3. a) Have you heard of teaching on prosperity? () Yes. () No.
b) If yes, what does it mean to you?
.....
.....
4. Select practices you have witnessed practiced in your church to attract prosperity in people's lives from the list below:
a. Sowing seed.

- b. Special offering
 - c. Thanksgiving offering.
 - d. Miracle offering.
 - e. Tithe
 - f. Other. (Please indicate.).....
5. According to your understanding of the Bible, how can a Christian be prosperous, (have good health and wealth) in this world? Select the most correct answer from the list below.
- a. Planting good seed and giving good offerings and tithe.
 - b. Living a righteous/upright life.
 - c. Working hard in our jobs.
6. Using the scale provided below, to what extent do you agree with the following statements: (Please tick appropriately)

Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Don't Know	N/A
Prosperity is biblical.						
Prosperity is not taught in light of both Old and New Testament perspectives.						
Not all teaching on prosperity upholds what the Bible teaches on prosperity.						

Recipients of prosperity teaching benefit from it.						
The greatest need of humanity is to overcome sin.						
The greatest need of humanity is to obtain good health and wealth.						
The main goal of humanity should be eternal life.						

Thank you for taking time to fill the questionnaire.

APPENDIX D

BUDGET ESTIMATES FOR THE STUDY

Activity	Item Breakdown	Item Cost (Ksh.)	Total Cost (Ksh.)
Data Collection.	i. Printing of questionnaires.....	6 @ 10	60
	ii. Photocopy of questionnaires.....	40 x 45	1800
	iii. Printing of cover letters.....	3 @ 10	30
	iv. Lunch and snacks.....	7000	7000
	v. Transportation.....	18000	18000
	vi. Internet.....	5000	5000
	vii. NACOSTI permit fee.....	1000	1000
	viii. Printing and binding of thesis documents.....	15000	15000
	ix. Miscellaneous.....	4110	4110
	Total		52000

APPENDIX E

COVER LETTER FOR REQUISITION TO CONDUCT INTERVIEW

**Scott Christian University,
P.o. Box 49-90100,
Machakos, Kenya.
Date.....**

**The senior Pastor,
.....,
P.o.Box.....
Nairobi.**

Dear Sir/ Madam,

REF: REQUISITION TO CONDUCT AN ACADEMIC INTERVIEW.

My name is Richard Owuor. I'm a post graduate student at Scott Christian University in the school of theology. Based on the above reference, I intend to obtain information about indigenous churches' teaching on prosperity in Nairobi County.

Consequently, your church has been selected to be one of the respondents for this study. The data collected will help me as a student to write a thesis as required by the university. Moreover, all responses will be treated with the highest confidentiality possible and no person or church will be identified in the report whatsoever. Thank you.

Yours Faithfully,

Richard Owuor.

APPENDIX F

SCANNED LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION FROM SCOTT CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY TO NACOSTI



Scott Christian
UNIVERSITY

DIRECTOR GENERAL /CEO

NACOSTI

P.O BOX 30623-00100

NAIROBI

11th March 2019

Dear Sir/Madam

**RE: PERMISSION FOR RICHARD O. OWUOR REGISTRATION NUMBER
MAT/004/2016 TO CONDUCT FIELD RESEARCH**

Mr Owuor is a student in the Master of Arts in Theology at Scott Christian University, a private chartered university, accredited by the Commission for University Education (CUE) agency. Mr. Owuor enrolled into this programme in 2016 and he successfully completed his course work. In addition to his coursework, he successfully defended his thesis proposal, his thesis topic is:

*Exploring Prosperity as Taught in Churches Today and Its Relation to Biblical Teaching:
A Case Study of Selected Indigenous Churches in Nairobi County.*

In view of the foregoing, I kindly request your office to grant him permission to go to the field and conduct research for this important academic exercise.

Thanks in advance for your assistance.

Yours faithfully,

Dr. Jonathan Mwanja
Dean school of Theology



APPENDIX G

SCANNED BANK SLIP FOR NACOSTI PERMIT FEE PAYMENT

KCB BANK

CREDIT ADVICE
CASH DEPOSIT

KCB GARDEN CITY

Account AT KCB KIPANDE HOUSE

ACCOUNT DETAILS

A/C NO: 1104162547
A/C REF: 005241970364
NAT COMM FOR SCI, TECH AND INNOV
Current Pay as you Go account

20 MAR 2019
GARDEN CITY

We have credited your above account with 1,000.00 KES

Kenya Shillings ONE THOUSAND ONLY

CASH PAID IN BY: RICHARD O OWUOR Signature: *[Signature]*

Transaction Number: TT19079HKDND at 13:59:21 On 20/03/2019

Thank you for banking with us. You were served by: MIRIAM SYOMBUA KILILU

*** Advice not valid unless Transaction Number is shown ***

Small vertical text on the left edge: www.kcbgroup.com

**APPENDIX I
SCANNED LETTER OF AUTHORIZATION FROM NACOSTI
TO CONDUCT FIELD RESEARCH**



**NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE,
TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION**

Telephone: +254-20-2213471,
2241349,3310571,2219420
Fax: +254-20-318245,318249
Email: dg@nacosti.go.ke
Website: www.nacosti.go.ke
When replying please quote

NACOSTI, Upper Kabete
Off Waiyaki Way
P. O. Box 30623-00100
NAIROBI-KENYA

Ref: No. **NACOSTI/P/19/55975/29092**

Date: **11th April 2019**

Richard Ouma Owuor
Scott Christian University
P.O. Box 49-90100
MACHAKOS.

RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION

Following your application for authority to carry out research on *“Exploring prosperity as taught in churches today and its relation to Biblical teaching: A case study of selected indigenous churches in Nairobi County.”* I am pleased to inform you that you have been authorized to undertake research in **Nairobi County** for the period ending **10th April, 2020.**

You are advised to report to **the County Commissioner and the County Director of Education, Nairobi County** before embarking on the research project.

Kindly note that, as an applicant who has been licensed under the Science, Technology and Innovation Act, 2013 to conduct research in Kenya, you shall deposit **a copy** of the final research report to the Commission within **one year** of completion. The soft copy of the same should be submitted through the Online Research Information System.


**BONIFACE WANYAMA
FOR: DIRECTOR-GENERAL/CEO**

Copy to:

The County Commissioner
Nairobi County.

The County Director of Education
Nairobi County.


APPENDIX J



SCANNED PERMIT TO CONDUCT FIELD RESEARCH

THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT:
MR. RICHARD OUMA OWUOR
of SCOTT CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY,
7456-200 Nairobi, has been permitted to
conduct research in Nairobi County

on the topic: EXPLORING PROSPERITY
AS TAUGHT IN CHURCHES TODAY AND
ITS RELATION TO BIBLICAL TEACHING:A
CASE STUDY OF SELECTED INDIGENOUS
CHURCHES IN NAIROBI COUNTY.

for the period ending:
10th April,2020


Applicant's
Signature



Director General
National Commission for Science,
Technology & Innovation

THE SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION ACT, 2013

The Grant of Research Licenses is guided by the Science, Technology and Innovation (Research Licensing) Regulations, 2014.

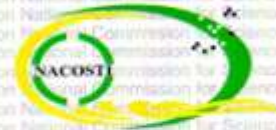
CONDITIONS

- 1. The License is valid for the proposed research, location and specified period.**
- 2. The License and any rights thereunder are non-transferable.**
- 3. The Licensee shall inform the County Governor before commencement of the research.**
- 4. Excavation, filming and collection of specimens are subject to further necessary clearance from relevant Government Agencies.**
- 5. The License does not give authority to transfer research materials.**
- 6. NACOSTI may monitor and evaluate the licensed research project.**
- 7. The Licensee shall submit one hard copy and upload a soft copy of their final report within one year of completion of the research.**
- 8. NACOSTI reserves the right to modify the conditions of the License including cancellation without prior notice.**

National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation
P.O. Box 30623 - 00100, Nairobi, Kenya
TEL: 020 400 7000, 0713 788787, 0735 404245
Email: dg@nacosti.go.ke, registry@nacosti.go.ke
Website: www.nacosti.go.ke



REPUBLIC OF KENYA



National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation

RESEARCH LICENSE

Serial No.A 23959

CONDITIONS: see back page