

Communal Living in Acts 2:42-47 as a Paradigm for Socio-Economic Liberation in Nigeria

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Abstract

The Nigeria without doubt is blessed with human and natural endowment enlivened with diverse cultural heritage for its sustenance. However, the same nation blessed with rich diverse cultural heritage, human and natural endowment is daily confronted with variety of challenges which include: poverty, unemployment, hardship, corruption, insecurity, poor basic amenities, misappropriation of public funds, abuse of power, discrimination, economic sabotage and other societal vices such as cyber-crime, kidnapping, drug abuse, drug trafficking, armed robbery, terrorism, etc. While these issues persist in the Nigerian society, the stability of the nation's socio-economic, political and religious spheres is daily threatened and the reality of the nation is on the verge of collapse without hope of survival for the future generation. Against this backdrop, this paper centres on communal living in Acts 2:42-47 as a paradigm for socio-economic liberation in the Nigerian society. What is communal living? What is the African perspective on communal living? What are the socio-economic situations in the Nigerian society? How did the early church manage their socio-economic affairs which led to exponential growth of the Church in the New Testament times? Moreover, how can Acts 2:42-47 be appropriated in the Nigerian socio-economic spheres for liberation and stability of the Nigerian polity? This is the thrust of this paper. The paper employs a contextualized reading and liberationist approach and maintains that the widespread suffering, hunger, hardship and poverty being experienced by Nigerians and

other socio-economic problems prevalent in the Nigerian society could be abated through communal living as exemplified in Acts 2:42-47. The paper recommends communal living, good governance, zero tolerance to class system, fair and equal distribution of shared resources and provision of basic amenities to Nigerians.

I. Introduction

The African continent generally and the Nigerian nation particularly is blessed with immense natural and human resources. However, poverty, corruption, insecurity, weak leadership, banditry, incessant agitations for independence, economic sabotage and other societal vices such as cultism, sexual abuse, cyber-crime, kidnapping, drug abuse, drug trafficking, armed robbery is a living reality in most African nations, Nigeria inclusive. Similarly, provision of basic amenities such as good road, water, electricity, internet facilities, hospitals, schools, markets among others are on the brink and human capital development, employment opportunities for the eligible are not readily guaranteed with respect to the Nigerian nation. Regrettably, when job spaces are made available, oftentimes, only the rich and their unqualified relations get the opportunity while the poor continue to depend on divine intervention. The constant prevalence of poverty, corruption, and the absence of social and economic levels in most African nations and in Nigeria have resulted to waves of insurgencies, conflicts, hardship, protest, wars, terrorism among others within the African countries. For instance, the activities of the Al-Shabab in Somalia, the Hutus in Rwanda, Boko Haram in Nigeria, movement for the survival of Ogoni people (MOSOP), the Niger Delta People's Volunteer Force, the Niger Delta militants and the Indigenous people of Biafra (IPOB) all in the south-south and south-east respectively and many others are glaring effects of the socio-economic barriers created by the rich against the poor. One may ask, what are the major reasons for the prevalence of these groups in the African nations and in Nigeria? What are they asking for? The answer may not be farfetched. They may simply be advocating for good governance, equitable distribution of the nation's resources, justice, fairness, eradication of all socio-economic barriers created by the rich against the poor among others.

Against this background, this paper centres on communal living in Acts 2:42-47 as a paradigm for socio-economic liberation in the Nigerian society. The paper discusses what communal living is all about and the African perspective on communal living using the Ikwerre example. It discusses communalism in the book of Acts and unearths the socio-economic issues in biblical times with particular reference to the early Church of the New Testament (Acts 2:42-47), showing how the early church managed their socio-economic affairs which led to exponential growth of the Church in the Apostolic times. After examining the socio-economic situations in the contemporary Nigerian society, the paper contextually considers how Acts 2:42-47 can be appropriated in Nigeria for socio-economic liberation and stability of the Nigerian polity. Through a contextualized reading and liberationist approach, the paper maintains that the widespread suffering, poverty, hardship among other menace in the Nigerian society and other socio-economic problems prevalent in the Nigerian nation could be assuaged by appropriating the concept of communal living as exemplified in Acts 2:42-47 in all spheres of the nation's

polity. The paper recommends communal living, good governance, zero tolerance to social stratification, fairness, justice and equal distribution of the nation's resources and basic amenities to all Nigerians.

What is Communal Living?

Communal living expresses a lifestyle where a group of people live together sharing space, land, ecosystem, and other amenities. Obineche and Anukam (2022) avers that the concept of communal living is wide and all-encompassing that it touches every aspect of human life. They note that it cuts across both situations of joy and sorrow and is concerned with the ways people interrelate with other people in their life situations. This is entrenched to help in proper ordering of the society. The assertion above is premised on the fact that man is a social being and cannot live a meaningful life without interacting with his fellow beings. Obineche and Anukam (2022) further citing the work of Madukwe and Madukwe, contend that communal life implies concern for people and their welfare. They maintain that it can be compared to an extended family structure where everyone in the community is connected to one another and looks out for one another. In other words, in a real situation of communal living, everyone is responsible for looking out for one another and endures each other's burdens. Interestingly, there is a sense of care and support for one another in a communal society. The rich assist the poor so that nobody dies from want while their next-door neighbor lives in opulence. Communal living therefore is mutual assistance for one another in all situations for peaceful harmonious living. It bridges the gap between the rich and the poor in any given society. It makes the community to be a life giving or living principles that promotes and nurtures the spirit of togetherness, solidarity and community consciousness. This is important because life is meaningful when there is interaction with fellow human beings (Obineche and Anukam, 2022). Bosch (2021) adds that communal living fosters a sense of community, mutual support, togetherness, interdependence as individuals learn to communicate, resolve conflicts, support one another and also promote sustainable and meaningful way of life. Communal living is an antidote against poverty, hunger, hardship, class system and their likes. This is premised on the fact that in communalism, what one person owns belongs to all the community (Adelakun, 2010). Having presented a succinct understanding of what communal living is all about; the next inquiry is on the Africans worldview on communal living. What is the Africans perception on communal living? The next section will bring answers to these questions using the Ikwerre people as an example.

Africans' Perspective on Communal Living (The Ikwerre Example)

In the African worldview, there is the idea known as ubuntu. Although the expression is very difficult to render in English language, however, it conveys the thought that a person is a person through other persons. It sustains the idea that as human beings, we need other human beings to exist. Moreover, it speaks of the fact that we are created to complement each other. We are created for a delicate network of relationship, of interdependence with fellow human beings. This implies that as human beings, we need other human beings to learn how to be human and humane, for no human being comes fully formed into the world. On the other hand, we would not know how to talk, to walk, to think, to eat as human beings unless we learn how to do so from

other human beings (Tutu, 2011). Ubuntu from the African traditional stand point makes so much emphasis on the idea of “we” and “us” as against the western individualistic concept of “I” and “me” and ensures that these concepts are entrenched in the African minds right from childhood, so that as they grow, they know that they belong to and must function within the community in which they are rooted (Elleh, 2016). Ubuntu stresses on the corporate existence of Africans in which the individual says, “I am because we are, and since we are, therefore I am” (Mbiti, 1969). In the words of Francis (2009), Ubuntu is not only an African concept that is derived from the Bantu languages of East, Central and Southern Africa, but also a cultural worldview which emphasis the meaning and crux of what it means to be human. He maintains that the essence of Ubuntu is to promote a culture of peace, unity, generosity, care, compassion, tolerance, peaceful co-existence and mutual improvement. This idea of ubuntu, communal living and complementary relationship between human beings is not new to the Africans but from time immemorial has been lived by Africans. Africans share life in common, they celebrate childbirth, marriage, age grade, puberty and naming ceremony together and also share certain things in common such as farmland, shrines, streams, market habitations among others (Kunuba, 2015).

Almost everything in the African traditional society is celebrated. These include chieftaincy coronation, puberty as well as death and funeral. As a result of these, anything that threatens her corporate existence attracts some level of resistance which often results in either external or internal conflicts that interrupts the peace of the traditional society (Otto, Adeyini and Egwuatu, 2021). Africans do not see themselves as individuals living in isolation or independently, but rather as people living in an enclosed community interdependently, with communal obligations. The web of interdependence and inter-relatedness is intrinsic in the African hierarchy of beings (Agbakwuo, 2013). In the same vein, in the Ikwerre traditional society, there are proverbs, expressions and sayings which connotes values of communal living among the people. Expressions such as egbe beru, igo beru, nkesi ibeya ebela, nku kwaa ya (Let the eagle perch and let the kite perch, anyone that prevents the other from perching, let its wings break), ozha nye gha nwenea (don't forget your brother), ighwe bu ikne (the group is might) amply demonstrates lifestyles of the Ikwerre people (Nwobueze 2025). In the Ikwerre traditional society as in other African society, a spirit of co-operation, love, and solidarity characterize the life of the people. Communal life for the Ikwerre does not only have physical implication but also spiritual. It is beyond man and his visible environment. It is a communion of both the living and the dead. Importantly, one must not offend the departed elders. They must be invited during meals. They must be greeted each morning. Their participation is most obvious among the people. Other activities that showcase communal living among the Ikwerre people is the fact that during farming season two or more nursing mothers could leave their babies for the last among them that was delivered of a new baby. The purpose is to see that these babies are taken care particularly in the area of breast feeding till their mothers are back (Amolo and Egbule, 2014). The sense of communality is also expressed through other physical activities such as Oyega ewu, okuko nu nkita (giving goat, fowl or dog to take care of), Ogba Ngwetaa. Nnorum (2022) citing Wotogbe-Weneka remarks that Ogba Ngwetaa is a system of cooperative farming whereby there exist a reciprocal exchange of labour visit to help

one another in the farm from time to time, until the farming season is over. The process as such helps to finish farm before time and encourages team work. It reechoes the idea of communalism whereby whatever happens to the individual happens to the whole group and whatever happens to the whole group happens to the individual.

Socio-Economic situations in Nigeria

As previously stated, Nigeria without doubt is blessed with human and natural endowment enlivened with diverse cultural heritage for its sustenance. However, the country is daily confronted with variety of challenges which include: poverty, unemployment, hardship, corruption, insecurity, poor basic amenities, misappropriation of public funds, abuse of power, discrimination, economic sabotage and other societal vices such as cyber-crime, kidnapping, drug abuse, drug trafficking, armed robbery, terrorism, etc. Unemployment which is a state of not having a job or work to earn a living is a major issue most youth in the Nigerian clime are struggling with. It is important to state that people who cannot earn a living are susceptible to social vices such as armed robbery, drug abuse, kidnapping for ransom, banditry, killing for ritual purposes, internet fraud, illicit sex and so on. Apart from these social vices, they look at themselves as second class citizens unable to contribute to the development of the society. On the other hand, the state of unemployment can lead to depression, low self-esteem, frustration and even death (Amadi-Nche, 2020).

Poverty, a state of lack which includes lack of food, shelter, clothing and the necessities of life is another societal menace in Nigeria. Danfulani and Atowoju (2012) opine that poverty is the condition of having insufficient resources or income. In its most extreme form, poverty is lack of basic human needs, such as adequate and nutritious food, clothing, housing, clean water, education, sanitation and healthcare services. They note that poverty takes diverse forms in the world. It could be financial, emotional, mental, spiritual, and physical or lack of knowledge extreme. In addition, they aver that poverty can cause terrible suffering and death, even modest levels of poverty can prevent people from realizing many of their desires. Uboroye and Johnson (2024) remarks that a poor person needs money to survive and keep life moving. They add that a person living in poverty can easily be a security risk from various point of view in that such a person can effortlessly be employed to carryout acts of violence against people unknown to them as long as the acts will enable them have money to take care of the necessities of life. Although, poverty is a global problem ravaging humanity and most nations of the world, there is hardly any country in the world that is not grappling with the issue of poverty. Kunhiyop (2008) remarks that “as the rest of the world is progressing, getting richer and enjoying a better standard of living, Africa, Nigeria inclusive is deteriorating rapidly. The population grows poorer, hungrier, and sicker. Yet in the midst of suffering, a few individuals accumulate immense wealth”. Manus (2017) adds that “the major cause for the deplorable conditions in African nations is the near absence of social and economic level ground in all the constituent nations. He notes that despite the huge foreign financial assistance to most African nations, many of the citizens in sub-Saharan and southern African nations are yet to see any remarkable improvement in their living conditions”. While the poor in the Nigerian clime are getting poorer, the rich are getting richer by all means available. Although Wotogbe-Weneka

(2011) and Adelokun (2012) avers that in order to tackle the problem of poverty, various nations, different institutions and agencies, concerned individuals and groups of the world have coined terminologies with which they hope to confront the challenge posed by poverty. Consequently, terms like “Poverty Alleviation”, “Poverty Eradication” like Nigeria’s National Poverty Eradication Programme (NAPEP) was established in 2003, “Fight Against Poverty”, “Poverty Reduction”, “Poverty Confrontation”, “the Green Revolution (GR), the National Directorate of Employment (NDE), and the Directorate for Food, Roads and Rural Infrastructure (DFRRI) and of recent SURE-P, N-POWER among others were established in the Nigerian clime to tackle the problem of poverty and other socio-economic problems. One may ask, has these programs help to reduce poverty in the Nigerian clime? Has the needed result been seen? The answer is on the negative because the country still has a large proportion of unemployed persons and the poor in the various geo-political zones and crime rate are on the increase. In view of this fact, what pragmatic approach could be employed to see that poverty and other socio-economic menace is curtailed for the liberation of the Nigerian space? The next section will address this and many other sundry issues.

Historical background of Acts of the Apostle

The Acts of the Apostles is described as the second volume of the gospel of Luke. It is sometimes called “A History of Christian Origins” (McCain, 1996). The book is the earliest sketch of the origin, growth and spread of the Christian church.

It shows the foremost Apostolic miracles, the first apostolic sermon, the first rise of church organization and the first persecution. Others are the first martyr; the first gentile convert and the European Church (Nwigwe, 1998). Most of the introductory explanation in the gospel of Luke applies to the Acts of the Apostles. The book begins with an inscription to the same Theophilus, whom the Evangelist addressed in his gospel. Furthermore, Acts of the Apostles is a book in the New Testament which expresses the life, works and ministry of Jesus Christ through the Apostles preaching and deeds in the early church after the impartation of the promised Holy Spirit on them. Thus, it has been called the gospel of the Spirit (Guthrie, 1970). In the words of Barclay (2006), apart from the Pauline epistles, information about the beginning, growth, persecution and expansion of the early church would have been impossible without the writing of Acts of the Apostles. Although the book does not state the name of the author however traditional view holds that Luke the physician and author of the gospel of Luke is the author. Biblical references to this assertion are Col. 4:14, Phil. 24, 2 Tim. 4:11. From these scriptures, it is expedient to note that Luke was a Gentile physician and that he was one of Paul’s most treasured assistants and most loyal companion during his last imprisonment. The purpose of Luke in Acts of Apostles is both historical and apologetic. Historically, Luke’s objective was to proclaim the good news of what God has done for the world through Jesus Christ. On the other hand, the purpose of Luke was to prove that Christianity is not politically dangerous. He does this by citing favourable judgements of governors, magistrates, and other authorities in various parts of the Roman Empire. In his gospel, Luke mentions that the governor Pontius Pilate had three times declared that Jesus was not guilty of sedition. Luke 23:4, 14,22 and in Acts he emphasizes that similar charges against Christians could not be sustained for instance, Acts 16:39; 17:6-9;18:12-17;19:37-41;23:29;25:25;26:31-32. Consequently, Luke emphasizes that Christianity is not

politically dangerous; apparently his purpose is to win sympathy and remove any prejudice against the Christian religion (Nwigwe, 1998).

Socio-Economic life of the Early Church

Acts of the Apostles chapter 2:42-47 emphasizes on the socio-economic and religious situation of the early Christian community in Jerusalem. Adelakun (2012) writing on the status of the city of Jerusalem in the first century asserts that Jerusalem in the first century was not a viable commercial centre, as such, there were no significant business ventures that would yield income for the residents of the city, except the business connected with the temple worship which in actual sense of commercial venture was trifling. Hence there was poverty and hardship generally among the residents of the city. It was under this circumstance that the early Christian church thrived. Ogunrinade and Atoi (2017), on the other hand remarks that the Christian community in Jerusalem in the first century was made up of the economically advantaged and economically disadvantaged persons, that is to say that both high and low social class individuals made up the Christian community in Jerusalem in the first century. Adelakun (2012) affirms this thought by asserting that some of the early believers were not only poor but people of low status (proletarians). He maintains that there was a mixture of poor and rich men. Poor men like the apostles, the slaves or ordinary people and rich men like Barnabas, Ananias and Saphira who had plots of land in Judea or elsewhere. Interestingly, the former were many while the latter were few. In the argument of Onwu (2016), he maintains that the early church was composed mainly of the despised, the poor and the humble. It was the poor situation of the early church that resonated the charity among the early believers. It was also probably because of the presence of the poor people in the early church that the issue of poverty and wealth was a major concern in earliest Christianity. Remarking on the socio-economic condition of the early Christian community, Diara (2008) writes “it appears that majority of the Christians were poor. Those who made rich offerings were rare, more numerous were those who had to be assisted by the Christian community”.

Communal Living in the Book of Acts 2:42-47

Ogunrinade and Atoi (2017) writing on Acts of the Apostles chapter 2:42-47 remarks that the text reveals the concept of communal living or communalism. They note that communal living or communalism in Acts 2:42-47 stresses that the economic wealth or possessions of one person belongs to every individual member of the community. The objective of this system is to foster unity and the motives is the fulfillment of the basic material needs of the individual believers in the Christian community. In their remarks, the unity of the ekklesia (church) in this regard is expected to go beyond spiritual concerns to the physical needs of all members of the group. The essence is to ensure that no one is deficient in daily needs to satisfy the fundamental requirements of life. Owing to the fact that the formative period of the early Christian church in Jerusalem was enmeshed with economic hardship; poverty among others as discussed earlier, the early church devised a workable means to meet the daily material needs of everyone in the Christian community in other to conquer poverty and sustain the unity of the Christian community. In other to achieve the objective of conquering poverty, sustaining the unity of the church and break the socio-economic barriers within

the early Christian community, the rich among them who had property and other goods sold them and laid the proceeds at the feet of the apostles to accommodate the poor among them (2:44). This development enabled the apostles the opportunity to face their evangelistic assignment of making Christ known to the whole nations. Had it been that the problem of poverty continued they would not have had time for teaching and preaching. Tidball (1983) asserts that the sales of property and goods by the rich early Christians (2:44; 4:32) does not imply that members of the church lost their rights to possess property; but that whatever one had could be shared with others and there was no room for claim of ownership when other members were suffering. Amolo and Egbule (2014) adds that the early Christians through their deeds acknowledged that Jesus Christ owns both them and their property (4:32), they sold off property to meet needs as they arose (4:34-35) and opened their homes as meeting places for fellow Christians (2:46). These actions do not reflect ascetic ideal, as in some Greek and Jewish sects, but instead the practice of radically valuing people over possessions. Olubitan (2019) aver that right from inception, the church has been an institution whose members carter for the needs of one another. He alludes that from the apostolic age, people within the church usually share among themselves (Acts 4). Hence there was no needy among them because they lived by the principle of sharing. Obineche and Ihenacho (2013) notes that although the early church faced persecution from the Roman authorities, in other to retain her mandate and for the actualization of the wholistic freedom and liberation of mankind, they embarked on the highest level of social ministry by which the physical needs of every member was met and that sustained the spirit, the faith and the community of believers. This made the early church a sharing church, having an intense feeling of responsibility for each other thus confirming the words of Barclay (2006) that a real Christian community cannot bear too much when others have too little and Yordy (1970) that one of the pieces of evidence of the reality of our relationship with God and of our experience in Christ is a new concern for brother, for his loneliness, his temptations, his anxieties and his financial needs. The later remarks that mutual aid is an expression of normal Christian day to day experience and an integral expression of Christianity. He notes that one way to express love for one another is willingness to help demonstrate our concern and love for the people.

Contextualized Reading of Acts 2:42-47 for Socio-economic Liberation in Nigeria

Communal living as exemplified in Acts 2:42-47 emphasizes more on corporate existence rather than individual alone. It focuses on the provision of the necessities of life, and basic amenities not just for an individual or members of his family or enclave but for the benefit of the whole masses. The thrust of communal living is on “we” and not “I”. Thus, it can be implied from Acts 2:42-47 that if any attempt to reduce or alleviate poverty and conquer other social vices prevalent in the Nigerian clime will succeed, there must be concerted efforts by all Nigerians especially the rich to emulate the communal life of the early Christians in the first century church and make it work. The communal life of the early Christians helped the early church to alleviate poverty to the extent that there was no needy person among the Christian community. The communal life of the early church attracted the Jews, Greeks and Roman citizens to the fold of Christ. It was devoid of class or social stratification. In other to alleviate poverty and reduce other

socio-economic menace in the Nigerian society, Nigerians and her leaders must de-emphasize self in their daily living and governance, speak less on the “I” syndrome and focus on corporate existence; by so doing, the Nigerian nation will experience exponential growth in her socio-economic landscape as evidenced in the early church. Additionally, Nigerians and her leaders must emphasize more on the ideology, which stresses on the people. Thus, the Nigerian government must create employment opportunities in the Nigerian nation and make employment accessible to both the rich and poor in the nation. In other words, employment opportunities must not be lopsided, reserved for family ties, friends, or based on favoritism or tribalism among others rather it should be based on merit. Besides, in order to achieve socio-economic liberation in the Nigerian space, projects, bills, investments and policies must not be to the detriment of the Nigerian populace and betterment of an individual rather perceived projects, proposed bills, policies and laws established in the Nigerian nation must be for the promotion of the wellbeing of the people and not for selfish interest and it must not be for the betterment of one geo-political zone particularly the zone of the ruling class to the detriment of other zones but for the various zones that make up the federation.

In order to promote communal living, Nigerians and her leaders must see to the need of the common people, make laws that will better the lives of the people and themselves too and not to centre their strength, energy and the resources of the masses on themselves, their immediate families and the likes. On the other hand, government officials in the Nigerian space and public office holders must execute projects that is people oriented, that is projects that will benefit the people and not themselves only. Furthermore, rather than use tax payers’ money to personally access health care facilities and other amenities abroad as is common in the Nigerian clime among politicians and top office holders while the poor masses who voted them are not able to access primary health care facilities and other amenities in their local environments, in the spirit of communal living, Nigerian leaders and public office holders should build medical facilities in the Nigerian clime to enable teeming population in the Nigeria nation to access quality healthcare delivery. Moreover, they should train medical personnel to man such facilities and also use them to stem dilapidation of the facilities and to forestall the mass exodus of medical personnel from the country. Similarly, rather than use public fund or their own salary as acclaimed to send their children to schools abroad where there is no strike, they should ameliorate the plight of Nigerians by providing basic amenities such as quality educational system, build schools, good roads, provide accessible loans for students, farmers and small business owners. The Nigerian government should be proactive and active in putting up security measures to stem the rate of killing, destruction of lives and properties in the polity. Rather than wait until significant number of persons are killed, burnt or kidnapped as was witnessed in Riyom community, plateau state and other states of the federation, the government whether they are affected or not should put up security measures to bring to an end the incessant destruction of lives and properties as carried out by herdsmen and bandits.

In the spirit of communal living, the bitter experiences of most Nigerians in the Nigerian banking institutions calls for positive change. Nigeria is a home for several banks. The primary purpose of the banking institutions is to ease financial transaction such as deposits/withdrawal of money, obtaining loans among others. Regrettably, the

situation in the Nigeria space when transactions are to be carried out particularly with effect to withdrawal of money is unbelievable. Most times the response from the cashier is “there is no money”, “we are out of cash” or “we can only pay the sum of five thousand naira” or “at most ten thousand naira”. Although, recently there seems to be an improvement. Oftentimes the latter is possible if the customer is able to tip the counter attendant. However, a close walk from the banking hall arrayed with five to ten Automated Teller Machines (ATM) without money to the closest street, one will see several points of service (POS) operators with huge sum of money ready to dispense any amount provided that the customer is willing to pay the equivalent charges meanwhile such money is not accessible in the banks. Who provides the money to POS operators? Who are the owners of the many points of service outlets even close to banking stations in the Nigerian nations? It is not an exaggeration to state that most of the POS are either agents of the banks or owned by managers of the banks. While these agents do business for most of the managers, they get paid either weekly or monthly while the managers get their interest. On the other hand, some of the POS operators claim to buy these moneys from banks, refueling stations among others, and they transact with high rate to make their profits. In this way, the rich take advantage of their positions to impoverish the poor. Rather than engage in debilitating acts, institutions saddled with the responsibility to provide essential services to the masses are encouraged to do their services without strangling or attempting to strangulate the masses. The essence of communal living as exemplified in Acts 2:42-47 is to benefit not just an individual but everyone in the community. On this note the alleged reselling of tickets at inflated prices by Air peace airline which caused rift between Senator Adams Oshiomole, former Edo State Governor and current senator representing Edo North at the Murtala Muhammed Airport, Lagos on Wednesday 11th June, 2025 is condemnable. The senator accused the Airline of manipulating boarding procedures to cash in on desperate travelers, noting that some passengers who had bought tickets for as low as one hundred and forty-six thousand naira online were told to purchase new ones at over one hundred thousand naira extra for the next available flight. This was done because the airline shut its boarding gates prematurely as early as 6:05am to enable them resell the same seat to walk in customers willing to pay inflated, last-minute prices ranging from two hundred to three hundred thousand naira. Gutierrez (1973) remarks that Christianity must be a force for liberation especially in all societies plagued by exploitation, discrimination and violence. He adds that the church has a duty not only to preach salvation but also to work towards eradicating poverty, human rights abuses and systemic oppression.

II. Conclusion

This article has examined communal living in Acts 2:42-47 and related it as a paradigm for socio-economic liberation in the Nigerian society. It is our submission in this paper that lessons can be learned from the life of the early church in their promotion of love, care, corporate existence, cooperation, mutual living all aimed at eradicating poverty, supporting and sustaining human dignity and strengthening the existence and unity of the church. The paper submits that Nigerians and her leaders at various levels should emulate the life and pattern of the early church in alleviating poverty and conquering other socio-economic challenges in the Nigerian clime by being selfless,

accommodating, loving, purpose driven and people oriented in the promulgation of laws and policies. The paper maintains that if any attempt to reduce or alleviate poverty and conquer other socio-economic vices common in the Nigerian clime will succeed, there must be concerted efforts by all Nigerians especially the rich to emulate the communal life of the early Christians in the first century church and make it work. Accordingly, Nigerians and her leaders are not to be individualistic, tribalistic, exploitative or nepotistic but are called upon to imbibe the spirit of communal living in all aspect of human endeavours. Communal living the papers posit will promote socio-economic liberation, foster sustainable development and reduce to a considerable extent most forms of societal menace.

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