

“THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE 2024 UMC GENERAL CONFERENCE DECISIONS CONCERNING HOMOSEXUALITY/LGBTQ TO LOCAL CHURCHES IN AFRICA.”

THE BOOK OF REVELATION (2: 1 -7) – A POSTCOLONIAL APPROACH

**GOD – CHRISTIANITY AND EMPIRE – with Bishop John – a Non – Compromising Disciple
of Jesus Christ.**

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Presenter: Rev. Dr . Israel Kamudzandu (PH.D)

Revelation 2: 1-17

- **To the Church in Ephesus**
- **2** “To the angel of the church in Ephesus write:
- These are the words of him who holds the seven stars in his right hand and walks among the seven golden lampstands. ² I know your deeds, your hard work, and your perseverance. I know that you cannot tolerate wicked people, that you have tested those who claim to be apostles but are not and have found them false. ³ You have persevered and have endured hardships for my name and have not grown weary.
- ⁴ Yet I hold this against you: You have forsaken the love you had at first.⁵ Consider how far you have fallen! Repent and do the things you did at first. If you do not repent, I will come to you and remove your lampstand from its place. ⁶ But you have this in your favor: You hate the practices of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate.
- ⁷ Whoever has ears, let them hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To the one who is victorious, I will give the right to eat from the tree of life, which is in the paradise of God.

THEOLOGICAL, GOSPLE AND FAITH ISSUES OF A CHURCH IN AN EMPIRE/COLONIAL PREDICAMENT

- **ANCIENT AND CONTEMPORARY MEANING OF THE MESSAGE TO 7 CHURCHES –**
Then and Now – Refuse Compromising your faith for money and power.
- **CHURCH HISTORY AND MESSAGE OF MESSAGES TO 7 CONGREGATIONS:**
Submission and cooperation with the Empire and loss of Faith, spirituality, and obedience to God – gods of The Roman Empire provide comfort.
- **Problems of Each of the Seven Churches: Ephesus – Smyrna – Pergamum – Thyatira – Sardis – Philadelphia – and Laodicea :** (the main point of Revelation 2-3 when contextually, globally and heard faithfully today in Africa, is to listen for the Holy Spirit and to hear God addressing our own church's Spiritual, Religious and Christian context. Africa is no longer a mission field but a harbinger of authentic faith, morality, ethics, and social justice. Clergy leaders and African lay Christians should not apologize for being postcolonial Christians.

Warnings to Christians from God Then and Now (5 Major Sins)

- **The Prophetic Book of Revelation cautions Christians against five Sins:**
 - a. **Assimilation to the Empire;**
 - b. **Accommodation to the Empire;**
 - c. **Compromise to the values and ideals of the Empire;**
 - d. **Complacency** (failure to draw a non – negotiable line)
 - e. **Affluence** due to Globalization.

How does the Christian Church in Postcolonial Africa hold on to Faith and Spirituality in God and Jesus Christ?

NOW TO THE 2024 UMC GENERAL CONFERENCE

- **COLONIAL MISSIONARIES AND POLITICAL COLONIZATION**: The North Carolina General Conference manifested the power of colonization and Africa's Inability to resist and confront the Center (USA)
- **Presence of Hidden and Public Transcript**: The exclusion of African delegates was intentionally planned and orchestrated by some African Leaders who benefited financially from the Empire (USA) - Appalling Silence of African UMC Leaders: The Empire's policy of divide and conquer was on full display so much that even kindergarten kids could read and be shocked by the colonial mindset still residing in African leaders and their delegates.
- **Re – Scramble, Re-Partition, Re -Conquest, and Re - Re-Colonization of African UMC**: Westerners (USA showed the world that Africa cannot manage itself – it is still a “Dark Continent – A continent behind God's brain,” – leaders are puppets of the Western World (Africa must say no to colonization, scramble and partition)

WHAT IS THE PROBLEM OF AFRICAN AND GLOBAL UMC (HOMOSEXUALITY OR COLONIZATION)

- **Homosexuals, Bisexuals, and Heterosexuals are not the Problem but Clergy leaders in the UMC are the major problems:** (theological and research-based argument/hypothesis: African UMC and its leaders have not yet defined themselves as liberated from complexities of colonization and colonialism.
- **Theological But Not African Articulated Theology and Faith Statement:**
- **Genesis 2 (Man and Woman were naked and not ashamed (25):**
Sincere/Authentic sexual interaction carries no shame – in God's name - sex is wholly good for man and woman. Sexual attraction, desire, and engagement are part of God's Sovereign plan – even Song of Songs echoes poetic celebrations that undergird God's ordination of sex as a good gift (but is sex the problem)?
- Where does this leave and move us to be relevant in our location?

Implications of the 2024 General Conference to the 21st African Church

- **Our Own God versus Gods Foreign to Africa:** For **their gods** are **not** as **our God** (see *Deuteronomy 32: 31*) –
- **Missing Link in the Great Commission (Matthew 28: 16 -20):** Cultural, ethical, and moral collapse terrorizes our beloved African Continent as well as the Church – African Church leaders must rediscover the *Spirit/epistemology of UBUNTU* – and its practices and teach it side by side with Scripture (Matthew 28: 16 – 20).
- **African Christian Theological and Faith Statement is Urgent:** Bishops must lead as Christians instead of politicians – they must evangelize the political worldview instead of the political powers to evangelize them.

Implications (cont.)

- **Emancipation From Both Mental and Ecclesial Slavery**: Africa must free itself from Colonial, missionary, and imperial slave mindset – and be a Church on its own - regionalization is a form of colonization and African Bishops must resist it and disaffiliate themselves from USA colonial tragedy.
- **Local/Lay People Must Claim their Christian Faith**: Wesleyanism is not a clergy-centered organization, but it is a lay movement – faithful African disciples of Jesus in Africa must challenge corrupt African Bishops and clergy who have succumbed to the Theologies of the Empire (see Luke 4: 1-13).
- **Decolonization of the African Mindset**: The Church in Africa must be transparent to its citizens – and embark on a ministry of decolonizing the mind for the full liberation of mind, heart, and soul (failure to free one's mind means failure to think on one's feet) – sharing of information.