

# Fighting Corruption for Sustainable Development: Role of the Church

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**Abstract:** *Corruption is a disease that plagues every sector of society. The church is tasked with the responsibility of inculcating morality and guiding moral behavior. Not surprising then that there are many calls to have the church take a firm stand on corruption. Over the years the go-to solution has been to ignore corruption and wish it away. This is no longer tenable seeing that the pandemic is on the increase plaguing nearly every institution and government. Religion provides the language through which ethics can be spoken and ethical behavior nurtured. This paper seeks to demystify the role of the church in fighting corruption.*

**Keywords:** Corruption, Church, Morality, Leadership, Sustainable Development

## 1. Introduction

Globally, institutions and governments suffer numerous setbacks due to the insidious effects of corruption (Onongha, 2014). Corruption continues through time and space in all societies Orji Kaufmann & Vicente, (2011) destroying every sector of society. Caiden et. Al (2001) note that corruption is shapeless, colorless, odorless, collusive, secret stealthy, and shameless, qualities it maintains even behind closed doors. They further connote that it leaves no physical mark but is forever impressed on the minds, memories, and perception of its victims. Corruption has been a major issue in the debates on policy and research on the quality of state institutions Kaufmann & Vicente, (2011) his scenario has particularly been the case in the context of developing countries where the corruption pandemic takes a crude and illegal form (Jere, 2018). The victims of corruption do not know what is happening until the deed is long done and cancer has begun to spread Larmour (2013).

The word corruption was originally used to denote a damaging impurity, some kind of intrusion or distortion that prevented something from being as it should; a foreign element in a chemical compound or a batch of seeds, stones in a packet of rice, talcum powder in cocaine, decay in meat or vegetables (Larmour, 2013). Caiden et. Al (2001) describes corruption as something spoiled: something sound that has been made defective, debased, and tainted; something that has been pushed off course into a worse or inferior form. The authors go further to state that; Whoever corrupts sets out to make something impure and less capable, an adverse departure from an expected course. Corruption is a term that encompasses many different forms of misuse of power or misuse of office (Larmour, 2013). Based on this definition we can say that corruption is anything that prevents the proper function of government systems. In one of its publications, the world bank defines corruption as the abuse of public or corporate office for private gain (Aguilar et al., 2000). Myint (2000), indicates that corrupt behaviors include bribery, extortion, fraud, embezzlement, nepotism, cronyism, appropriation of public assets and property for private use, and influence peddling (cited in Jere, 2018). The Holman Bible Dictionary describes corruption as the term used to denote a change from good to bad/ decay in human society. It goes further to state that the state of corruption goes against the eternal nature of God (Romans 8:21, 1 Peter 1:4, 1 corinthians 15:42-57). other parts in the Bible where

the nature of corruptions is describes are

### 1.1 Perception of corruption

The Ethics and Anti Corruption Commission (EACC) in Kenya reported that 79.3% of Kenya thought corruption was high in 2016, compared to 73.9% in 2015 (Khalid & Thompson, 2019). People give numerous reasons why they engage in corruption; ranging from individual poverty to systemic issues. Caiden et al., (2001) explain two extremes of corruption. One extreme particularly in the poor developing countries anything goes in the conduct of normal business. Corruption has been found commonplace in their daily operations and has been institutionalized as a norm. The ropes are taught to younger generations so when they finally begin to conduct business by themselves they will clearly understand the loops and hoops. The people become accustomed to it that they no longer see it as the vice that it is and they cannot imagine how to conduct business without it. Those who rebel against corruption in such a society fight a losing battle because they are the minority. Any person from the outside who tries to fight it or raise awareness against it is met with surprise because they have seen so many battles end in vain. Eventually, the situation gets so bad that the system and its people crumble because of the rot. Such a situation can lead to uncertainty, lack of trust in the system, civil unrest, or a revolt against the government. An example of a country where citizens were not able to handle the rot anymore in Egypt. In 2011 the Egyptians revolted against the then-president Hosni Mubarak because of corruption among other issues (Aljazeera, 2016.). Venezuela is currently going through a difficult time. Many of its citizens have fled to foreign countries and the international community continues to impose sanctions on it as a way to deter it from deteriorating further into corruption.

The other extreme according to Caiden et al., (2001) is usually found in more established democracies. Countries that have experienced corruption in the past and are not shy to admit its presence in the present. As a result, they have made institutional arrangements to reduce the possibility and opportunity for corrupt practices. This is backed up by effect law reinforcement and models of expected conduct. They welcome help from outside and are constantly striving to improve anti-corruption strategies already being implemented. An understanding of these two scenarios

Volume 10 Issue 2, February 2021

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implies that Corruption needs to be understood in terms of its opposite: the condition of soundness or health that either has subsequently degenerated into corruption or at least provides a standard against which the corruption can be identified” (Philp, 1997, as sighted in Caiden et al 2001). Without this understanding of what should be, society will continue to rot in this vice.

## 1.2 Why are people corrupt?

Corruption is not a new phenomenon. There is large disruptive corruption and petty trivial corruption. Transactions of corruption may be rare or frequent, between equals and non-equals (Askeland & Schmidt, 2015a), but all the same, corruption is corruption. There are many reasons why people engage in corrupt practices. Askeland & Schmidt (2015) further categorize the factors that contribute to corruption as follows:

Askeland & Schmidt propose **Psychological factors** as one of the reasons people engage in corruption. They explain that there are people who are soft and upright while there are others who are unkind and devious and do not care about anyone but themselves. The latter is likely to take advantage of the former without the former revenging initially. This might eventually change when the victims get worn by the abuse. They are likely to return the acts of corruption so that they can also enjoy the benefits that come with it or so that they can end the suffering that they experience in its course. This is common to human character and unless one grounded, and upright, they are likely to engage in corruption in one way or another to protect themselves from the devious individuals. A common phrase that is used in Kenya to support this kind of thinking is ‘*Nchi ya kitu Kidogo*’ meaning that unless you engage in corruption you are likely not to receive services properly and efficiently.

**Ideological factors:** These are factors based on the skewed understanding that the end justifies the means, even though those means include corrupt acts. Other ideologies propose that everything is divinely determined, including corruption and as a result humans can do very little about it. Some people think that they are above the law or they think that certain professions allow corruption either due to their stringent nature and constant interaction with *mwananchi* or because of ‘meager’ pay. Such a profession in Kenya is the police. There are many people who believe that the police get rich quickly because of corruption and because of the nature of their job they cannot evade it (Ayed, n.d.). Takowski (1998 p 48(Askeland & Schmidt, 2015a) proposes that success is rarely due to hard work but mainly due to lack and connections that one has. This is the very argument that many people give in defense of the corrupt nature of the police force in Kenya.

Corruption is external by nature. It is rarely an intrinsic thing but something that is caught in the course of interacting with other individuals. Because no society is an island the interaction with other people brings along new behavior and practices as there is an exchange of ideas and learning that takes place. In such a manner corruption crosses borders from one community to another and from one country to another. For example, many people in foreign countries

engaging in corruption open over-seas accounts to hide their loot. That is a practice that many Kenyan leaders are quickly adopting. We can therefore say that this is learned behavior from the foreigner because a decade ago this was not as common as it is today.

Askeland & Schmidt, (2015) further note that people engage in corruption for economic reasons. Economics is based on the foundations of scarcity. People are constantly trying to bridge the gap between what they have and what they do not have. Entrepreneurs try to squeeze as much profit from the consumers. Also, the buyers of raw materials try to buy them at the least possible amount they can to maximize profits. As a result, we have an emergence of the black market which essentially is corruption. The gap between the rich and the poor continues to broaden as the rich continue to use whatever is in their means to exploit the poor and maximize their profits. In the recent past, we have had major scandals in Kenya, we have had the maize scandal, the NYS scandals, the Dams scandal just to mention a few of the scandals that have cost taxpayers billions of shillings. all the perpetrators engaged in corruption for economic gain.

The political arena is another hotbed for corruption. Politicians are usually powerful and highly influential. Corruption somehow seeks out influential people and key decision-makers(Askeland & Schmidt, 2015a). The public office is usually unrepresentative and many political leaders only want to benefit themselves and those who helped to bring them to power(Temple, 2012) rarely have the good of the people at heart. Their leadership positions give them leeway to act as they please.

Socio-cultural issues may also be labels as communalism. This entails behavior where we want to look out for the good of the people with whom we belong to the same family or community. As a result, civic good is lacking and anybody who tries to whistleblow is labeled treacherous and a traitor(Askeland & Schmidt, 2015b). Social-cultural issues have plagued Kenya in many ways. In fact when corruption scandals are mentioned members of the same community are likely to appear more often than not. this can be evidence by the recently released report by the director of public prosecution(*The Ethnic Language of Corruption in Kenya - Daily Nation*, 2019.)

## 2. Effects of Corruption

It is difficult to measure the effects it has on the economy with precision but it devastating. It leads to economic stagnation or deterioration due to misappropriation and waste of resources(Du Plessis & Breed, 2013). In Kenya, for example, we have lost billions of shillings in various scandals involving government funds that were meant for development projects that would benefit many people. The Elgeyo Marakwet Dam is just one in a series of scandals that have rocked Kenya over the last few years. The scandal involving top government officials has robbed Kenya’s development arena of Kshs 21 Billion that would have gone into ensuring the livelihoods of the Elgeyo Marakwet and surrounding community improves(Mugambi, 2019). Corruption also scares away potential donors who are afraid

the money they give will be misappropriated (Nwaomah 2006).

Due to corruption the social fabric of the community also suffers. Corruption leads to poverty, sickness, low life expectancy, and unequal distribution of national wealth (Hagger, 2000 as cited by Nwaomah 2006). Theft and misappropriation of public funds leave the government crippled and unable to provide for the social amenities of the people. As a result facilities such as hospitals are ill-equipped Mackey et al., (2016) note that corruption is the biggest roadblock to improving health infrastructure in developing countries. Infrastructure such as the transport system leaves a lot to be desired. Corruption reduces the public confidence of the government and political leaders. Due to the numerous scandals, the public always casts doubt and is suspicious of government agenda even where there warrants no suspicion.

The bible teaches us about the negative effects of corruption. Ezekiel 22:12 People who live in you accept bribes to shed blood. You take interest and profit on a loan and brutally extort your neighbors. You have forgotten Me.” This is the declaration of the Lord God.

Proverbs 17:23 A wicked man secretly takes a bribe to subvert the course of justice.

Exodus 23: 8 You must not take a bribe, for a bribe blinds the clear-sighted and corrupts the words of the righteous.

From the three biblical verses above we see that corruption deters the course of justice. there can never be justice, equity, and fairness in the face of corruption.

### 3. Fighting Corruption

A decade ago the push to fight corruption was not as high as it is today. Caiden et al., (2001) note that corruption seems to have increased, and seemingly people have gained more understanding of how it affects the development process. Fighting corruption is the responsibility of every institution and individual. It is not a responsibility solely reserved for the government. As former president of Nigeria Olusegun Obasanjo (29 May 1999 – 29 May 2000) rightly noted the main problems that predispose us to corruption are moral, ethical, attitudinal failure, and disorientation. Obasanjo further states that the church is an institution that provides the moral and ethical standards for us as believers and Man by himself cannot get rid of corruption from the world, he needs the assistance of God (Eby, 2017). Since the fight against corruption is a moral issue then we cannot ignore the very institutions that play a major role in inculcating morality, love and a sense of responsibility which all lack in corrupt conduct.

The fight against corruption in Kenya has been quite elusive. There are many unresolved cases and as if we have no laws to deter corrupt individuals. Corruption scandals continue to erupt left, right and center. More disappointing are the high-caliber politicians and leaders mentioned as perpetrators. With morality and caution being thrown to the wind, the church must come in to restore and rebuild the moral fabric

as this is the only way the war against corruption will be won. Kenya's Anti-corruption watch recognizes the power of the word of God in the fight against corruption. The Ethics and Anti Corruption Commission Launched a Bible study guide christened ‘*Integrity: A weapon against corruption*’ on 26th September 2018. The Commission said that the guide was designed to inspire Kenyans to Act and Believe that the country can be freed from corruption, and also to trigger every member of the society to make their contribution in the fight against corruption (“EACC,” n.d.).

## 4. The Church and Corruption

### 4.1 What is the Church

The word church is translated from the Greek word *Ekkslesia* which means ‘called out’. According to the Holman’s Bible Dictionary, this term had two meanings before the emergence of the Christian. First, the Greek term which means ‘called out’ was commonly used to indicate an *assembly of citizens* of a Greek city and is so used in (Acts 19:32-39). When the early Christians understood themselves as constituting a church, no doubt exists that they perceived themselves as *called out* by God in Jesus Christ for a *special purpose* and that their status as a privileged one in Jesus Christ (Ephesians 2:19), (*The Church Jesus Built*, 2010). The second is translated from the Hebrew word ‘*qalal*’ which simply an assembly responding to Gods call, For example, an assembly of prophets 1 Samuel 19:20, Numbers 22:4 (*The Church Jesus Built*, 2010) The preeminent characteristic of the church in the New Testament is devotion to Jesus Christ as Lord. He established the church under His authority (Matthew 16:13-20) and created the foundation for its existence in His redeeming death and demonstration of God's power in His resurrection. Holmans Bible Directory:

*Members of the church were called on to demonstrate the power of Christ's redemption in their own lives by exemplary conduct, embracing every area of life (Romans 12:1-13:7; Colossians 3:12-4:1). The overcoming of sins in the lives of Christians was a witness to the redeeming power of Christ in action in the community (Galatians 5:22-26), and the sins to which the communities were prone were clearly identified and challenged (Galatians 5:19-21). The Christians were expected to adopt a new lifestyle that was appropriate to their commitment to Christ (Ephesians 4:17-24).*

The organization of the early churches was not governed by a plan rigidly followed by the church. The guiding principle was that the church was the body of Christ with a mission to accomplish, and the church felt free to respond to the leading of the Holy Spirit in developing a structure that would contribute to its fulfilling its responsibilities (Romans 12:1-8; 1 Corinthians 12:4-11; Ephesians 4:11-16).

The church has no age limit, gender tribe, race, or nationality. All people professing Christianity and who surrender to the guidance and power of the holy spirit belong to the church. Since being able to surrender to the guidance of the Holy Spirit is for the called-out ones, we can

say that the church is divinely determined. It is a community devoid of boundaries (Nwaomah, 2006). Further, the bible stipulates the A Corrupt free life 1 John 3:3 And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself just as He is pure

#### 4.2 Role of the church

With more people becoming aware of the devastating effects of corruption there are more calls to stop the cancer of corruption. The fact that religious people are assumed to be less corrupt than non-religious people leads to more calls to the church to join the fight against corruption (Marquette, 2012). Further, because the church is expected to live up to its testimony and its ministry Vorster, (2013) Former Chief Executive of Transparency international, David Nussbaum connoted that a belief in hell meant less corruption (Nussbaum 2006:14 as quoted by (Marquette, 2012) Corruption is usually hidden in nature and might go unnoticed or undetected. The church and other partners must find means to deal with it before it deteriorates into uncontrollable magnitude. The solution to corruption for many years has been to ignore it (Caiden et al., 2001) but now a time has come when this strategy is no longer tenable and corruption has to be fought from all fronts.

Paldam (2001) as quoted by Marquette (2010, p15) in his analysis on the impact of culture and corruption found that countries that are predominantly Christian are somewhat less corrupt than those that are predominantly non-Christian, taking into account the level of development. The basic mission of the church is to instill the principles of a Christ-like life to the world, through actions and preachings. In this light Matthew 5:13-16 indicates that the church is the salt of the earth and the light of the earth. As a light, the church ought to shine a light on the immoral behavior, guide on to the right path and be an example to be emulated by all and sundry. Luke 4:18 talks about spreading the gospel and setting the captives free. In this case, those who are captives of corrupt thinking and practices. These two verses guide the church on how to remain relevant and stand out in a world that is choking from the effects of corruption. Christians refer to God as the father and they strive to align their thoughts to His thoughts. God is always at the forefront of fighting corruption Genesis 6:13 God decided to wipe out the whole earth because everyone in it was corrupt. The church should emulate this 'zero tolerance to corruption' attitude.

For corruption to occur, the perpetrator must forego norms and ethics that govern harmonious coexistence, and brotherly it is expected to be at the forefront of the fight against corruption. The church as an institution provides moral, ethical, and attitudinal guidance that perpetrators of corruption lack or ignore.

The following are suggested ways that the church can use to fight corruption:

##### a) Exemplary moral leadership

The church as an institution has been embroiled in its share of corruption scandals. There are churches or church leaders involved in land grabbing, taking or giving bribes, and conning unsuspecting followers by asking them to plant

monetary 'seeds' and performing fake or staged miracles. With such a calibre of religious leaders, the church loses its moral authority to speak and fight against corruption. Many churches accept donations from leaders who have been accused of corruption on several occasions. They happily give them time in the middle of church service to talk to their followers. This paints the impression that anything is acceptable in the church. We mentioned earlier that the church is to stand out of the world, it is the light of the world. By condoning and not openly condemning such leaders the church acts in a conforming role than a transforming one yet the bible clearly states that we should not conform to the standards of the world (Romans 12:2). In Mathew 21:12-13, Jesus teaches that his house (the church) is not a den of thieves. By encouraging such behavior, the church fails in its purpose of emulating Christ as the leader.

In 1 Corinthians 11:1 Paul urges the Corinthian church to emulate Christ. He also Cautions the Roman Church against being a stumbling block to other people (Romans 12-13). Church leaders cannot afford to be corrupt or imply that they support corruption because they may unknowingly encourage their members to engage in such acts. Also, some people may use this as an excuse to engaging in corruption claiming that if men of God cannot restrain themselves, who are we?

##### b) Transformative leadership

Caldwell (2012) defines transformative leadership as an ethically based leadership model that integrates a commitment to values and outcomes by optimizing the long-term interests of stakeholders and society and honoring the moral duties owed by organizations to their stakeholders. Based on this definition the church has a responsibility to ensure that individuals and organizations are influenced to honor their values and hold up their moral responsibility.

Transformative leadership entails inculcating a strong work ethic. Like many cultures do, the Bible encourages hard work. 2 Thessalonians 3:10 states that those who do not want to work should not eat. Unfortunately many corrupt people, especially public officials, purpose to get rich with minimum effort. They plan and scheme on how to get easy money into their pocket. Many people entering the political arena join with the agenda of enriching themselves. The political godfathers also support candidates whose reign they will benefit from. Once a candidate clinches the seat the godfathers expect some form of kickback for the support they rendered (Temple, 2012). It is the responsibility of the church to mold people to understand the value of hard work. A society that does not encourage its youth to work and dishonors labor encourages them to steal (Nwaomah, 2006).

##### c) Inculcate Discipline

God has prescribed a way of life for his people which he desires that they follow. Discipline has an essential place in the lives of those who profess Christianity. Discipline refers to the process by which one learns a way of life. In inculcating discipline there has to be a master who knows the way of the line (discipline) and an apprentice (Disciple) who is learning the way of life from the master (*Discipline - Holman Bible Dictionary - Bible Dictionary*, n.d.). Jesus Christ had a master-disciple relationship where he taught

them the laws of God, how to pray, and general lessons in Christian living. In Mathew 28:18-20, He (Christ) gives authority to His disciples to teach the new believers everything he had taught them. This great responsibility is held by the church today. The church is to teach the disciples to live in observance of the law. To observe means to know and live by what you know in this case the knowledge of Christ. Nwaomah (2006) indicates that the church is a custodian of morality and must hold its members to absolute morality. He further states that To do this the church must first equip the members with the knowledge on the expected moral conduct. The church should then hold each member accountable for his work. That means that any member who is mentioned or convicted of corruption should be caused without favoritism of social class or status because God shows no favoritism (Acts 10:34).

#### d) Non-conformity

The book of Acts majorly talks about the conduct of the early church and encourages men to rise above the standard of the world and live by the standards of the master Jesus Christ even when it attracts suffering. We see astounding examples in Acts 5:1-11 when Ananias and Saphira held back some of the proceeds that they had sold to help the needy. Even though the plot belonged to them they held back some money and lied about it. In the end, because of this corrupt act, they received the ultimate punishment. Death. It did not matter whether they were Christians. What mattered is that they were corrupt and had sinned so they were cut out immediately. In acts 8:18-20, we read about the sorcerer Simon who tried to buy the power of the Holy Spirit. It would have been a tempting offer for the disciples to receive the money and lie that he had received the power but instead, the response of Peter is one that all Christian leaders should learn from and emulate, to use it as a response to corrupt individuals Verse 19: But Peter said to him, "May your money be destroyed along with you because you thought you could buy the [free] gift of God with money!

#### e) Evade prosperity gospel

Many churches today thrive on the prosperity gospel. Preachers ask people to give them money so that they can pray for their prosperity. This money is usually christened 'seed money' where an individual who wants certain blessings plants a monetary seed that will yield the blessing. Essien, (2018) notes that the prosperity gospel was the onset of the failure of the church to demonstrate its foundational mandate of showing people the way of God. God's desire for His people is for them to work hard and enjoy the fruits of their labor (wealth) Ecclesiastes 5:19. The prosperity gospel implies that the fruits come from the seed and not from the labor. The teachings on how to get rich should be channeled towards proper guidance and Christian ethics towards hard work and not on prosperity because of seed money. That way Christians will understand and appreciate that prosperity comes only through hard work and not through 'seed planting'. It will lift the burden of looking for more money to plant a bigger seed thus creating the potential for corruption.

#### f) Advocacy

The Prophet Micah of the Bible is a man who lived an exemplary life at a time when a significant population of the elite community then was composed of corrupt people. He was an advocate for the poor at a time when leaders were using the name of God to enrich themselves (Micah 3:11). At this time corruption was both grand and petty and the Israelites were advised not to trust anyone but God (Micah 5:7). Micah passed God's message to the people of Israel without favor or partiality. As part of advocacy, the church leaders should sensitize their members on the problem of corruption and the effects it has on society. The church should also enlighten the members on the role they should play in fighting corruption.

#### g) Communality

Some African practices encourage corruption-related behavior like nepotism and tribalism. Communality is an African value that encourages strong ties between family members and kinsmen and advocates for giving priority to a family member (Falako, 2017.). This type of communality ties people to their kinsmen even when they ascend to power. They feel a sense of obligation to ensure that the kinsmen get the best share of the 'cake' even though they may not always be deserving. As a result, a lot of favoritism is experienced. The church can debunk some of these beliefs and encourage those in power to use merit rather than favor because God who is the epitome is impartial (Romans 2:11) this will ensure, for example, that when people apply for jobs they will be hired on merit and not because of who they know. As a result, the dispensation of duty will be professional and accountable because there are no godfathers (Askeland & Schmidt, 2015b)

#### h) Refuse to honor Corruption

The church leaders should decide equivocally not to honor corruption. Corruption is honored when corrupt people are honored by the church. Some churches want to give leadership positions in the church to wealthy people, even those with questionable sources of wealth while others readily accept donations from leaders embroiled in corruption scandals. Such examples can be seen in (Mbaka & Mbugua, 2019) By so doing other members are guided to think that wealth is more desirable than moral character. The church should deter people from acquiring wealth illegally and encouraging repentance as John advised in the book of Luke 3:9-14.

#### i) Sustainable leadership

Sustainable leadership is a model that seeks to meet the economic, environmental, social needs of the present while preparing to meet future challenges. Paul demonstrated an outstanding example of sustainable leadership as he mentored Timothy to follow in his footsteps. In his letter to Timothy (2 Timothy 2:2) Paul advises Timothy 'And what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, commit to faithful men who will be able to teach others also'. by this, he meant passing down to others the leadership skills and other knowledge that he had learned from Paul. every church leader must strive to be a sustainable leader, that is, equipping future generations with ethical leadership skills. This can be done through mentoring and delegation of duty just as Paul practiced with his young

disciple Timothy. he proudly calls him my son (2 Timothy 2:1)

The church in its quest to assist in transforming the corrupt behavior of individuals should be aware that good intentions are never enough. Even with the best intentions to change can be elusive and unsustainable. Therefore the church must remain consistent and continue to soldier on with zeal. As Galatians 6:9 So let us not get tired of doing what is good. At just the right time we will reap a harvest of blessing if we don't give up.

#### 4.3 Where will the church begin?

A start has to be made somewhere, the initial steps taken and consolidated, the momentum generated, and optimism stimulated. The task seems overwhelming yet is feasible, with workable strategies and tactics available. A host of suitable institutional mechanisms can be quickly assembled (Caiden et al., 2001). To know where to begin, the church must first understand the nature of corruption it wishes to deal with and come up with appropriate solutions for that particular form of corruption. This may be somewhat challenging because corruption is usually carried out in secret. To aid this, the church needs to realize and bring to the forefront the fact that God did not create a corrupt world. It is a man who has corrupted the world Genesis 6:11-13. The foundation of the fight against corruption is understanding God's mind on issues related to corruption. Genesis 1:31a (NTL) states Then God looked at everything he had created and it was very good. So god did not create a corrupt world or corruption.

### 5. Challenges of fighting corruption

Even with all the will in the world, corruption is still very difficult to control. One clear thing is that people have an idea of what they need to do about corruption. It is just that they lack the will, fortitude, resolution, and stamina to fight it (Caiden et al., 2001). For example, people are generally not against certain acts of corruption that benefit them or those around them. Some people appear to have changed from their corrupt ways but this may be only superficial because behind closed doors they continue with their old ways. For a long time in Kenya, Political goodwill to fight corruption has been a miss. If anything the political arena is almost synonymous with corruption as many of the major scandals involve politicians (Ayaga, 2014.; Kajilwa, 2018.; Ombati, 2017.; *Omollo*, 2019.). The fight against corruption would be more successful if all partners had that the same agenda, that is, of eliminating corruption.

### 6. Conclusion

Every society has cultural features that encourage and foster corruption. In this paper, we have discussed communalism as one of those features. The church has the mandate to handle such issues with utmost delicacy because issues of family and the community are very sensitive. God and his followers are a family and members of the church are a community. Sometimes the members call each other brother and sister. The church should strike a balance and guide appropriate on issues of commonality because apart from the

God family and Christian community, we really cannot separate individuals from their Kin.

Genesis 6:5 states 'When the Lord saw that man's wickedness was widespread on the earth and that every scheme his mind thought of was nothing but evil all the time' and Romans 3:23 states 'For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God'. These two verses show that corruption is in the nature of man. The church must therefore be in total surrender to the guidance of the Holy Spirit so that it can discern right from wrong (Proverbs 23:26). Since we have found that corruption is not always practiced openly the church has a responsibility of discerning what is right from what is almost right'. An example is Mathew 4:6 and said to Him, "If You are the Son of God, throw Yourself down. For it is written: He will give His angels orders concerning you, and they will support you with their hands so that you will not strike your foot against a stone." In this verse, Satan quoted the Bible accurately, but the application was wrong, and had Christ not seen through the, he would have sinned. The church deals with these situations daily and to be able to overcome and lead others to overcome them it needs to rely on a higher power.

The church must embark on a journey of advocacy against corruption. The clergy must move away from dwelling on prosperity gospel to include messages of anti-corruption in the preaching (Jere, 2018). This is a more proactive approach to the fight against corruption as it appeals to the heart of man. The church must also emphasize the uncompromised gospel of truth. Ministers of the gospel should be empowered psychologically and economically. Improper care of ministers retards their delivery of the message (Jere, 2018). The role of the church in fighting corruption for sustainable development is crucial. Like the slogan for sustainable development 'leave no one behind' states the church should ensure that the anti-corruption messages reach everyone regardless of the position they hold in the society. The church should also play its role confidently and be the light of the world in the fight against corruption.

The church should take the forefront as one of the most influential institutions in the society as it is the only facet of society that can paint the opposite of corruption as it lives up to its mission of spreading the gospel of Christ who was lived without sin and no deceit was found in His mouth (1 Peter 2:22).

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