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**WEALTH WITHOUT TRACE: CAUSES, EFFECTS AND SOLUTION**

Wealth is an abundance of valuable possessions or money and it has always been the desire of every one to be wealthy. To achieve this, so many people believe in hard work and planning while some are merely lucky. Our society is another reason people are becoming desperate to be wealthy. Wealth is seen as a symbol of success regardless of the source. Only the rich are well placed in the scheme of things. This syndrome penetrated every group in the society including the places of worship. To select leaders in Churches of Mosques, level of connections and wealth of potential candidates are given higher consideration. This unfair treatment permeated our society and degenerated to the point that poverty became a sin. Who wants to be a sinner? None.

Whilst the elderly were struggling to fulfil all the requirements of good living, the youth especially males had a different approach to address the situation. To them, there is no reason to be poor. They must be wealthy at all cost with little or no regard to integrity and Godliness. This new trend created tension and insecurity in the society as anybody may fall victim of their pranks all because of money. Different groups started springing up with nefarious vision. We started hearing name like; Yahoo boys, Badoo boys, One Million boys etc. Father of it all is Armed Robbery which has become rampant among youth that would want to make quick money. Some really made money while some wasted their lives in the process. All these because of money.

Before now, it was difficult for people to be rich without a verifiable source. That was when family names mattered and good conduct had equitable reward. Then, no child would acquire an asset with value beyond his or her level of income without explaining to the parents how he or she came about it. That was when we placed priority on needs above mere wants. We respected our values even at the expense of some of our desires. Life was meaningful and logical. This was the situation till late 90s when young men and women living abroad started returning home with inexplicable assets and unconsciously oppressing the home based. This generated a lot of pressure among the youth due to their inability to compete with the returnees. There is a popular saying that “when desirable is not available, the available becomes desirable”. This pushed our youths into all sort of nefarious activities in a bid to meeting up with their rich peers. In effect, cases of armed robbery started rising, the youth became fetish in order to fortify their yahoo fraudulent schemes and other unprintable activities. As a result, we started having men and women with wealth without trace in our society.

**CAUSES**

*Insensitivity of government:*  The government’s failure to make provision for the welfare of the citizenries contributed a lot to the decadence of the society. Our youth that leave school find it difficult to be employed except one is from a well-connected family and government does not have any arrangement to absorb the potential challenges this youth. Hence, they are left to fend for themselves. Therefore, it is easy for devil to minister to them because “an idle hand is the workshop of devil”.

*Parental upbringing:* Some parents also failed in their responsibility in the area of proper training that would have served as a repelling force when those pressures come. The children are not culturally groomed. They are given impression that “their destiny is in their own hands”. Therefore, they became “sheep without shepherd” that can easily be manipulated by peer group.

*Poor Law enforcement apparatus:* Level of corruption in the society has rendered all guiding rules inoperative. There are regulations that regulate conducts of people in the society but most unscrupulous elements pay their ways without any repercussion thereby exposing the society to financial loss through the activities of fraudsters.

*Undue recognition:* Our society is so gullible that we welcome and celebrate these unworthy characters in our midst thereby encouraging the ungodly way of life.

**EFFECTS**

The implications of all the aforementioned dastardly acts are not far-fetched as we all feel the pain every day. The following are just the few;

*National embarrassment:*  Nigeria became the world best in fraudulent activities. So many people from various nations fell victims and huge amounts money were carted away on regular basis by our youth through the so called on line business activities with fraudulent motive. This really caused embarrassment to the nation to the extent that people all over the world relate with Nigerians with caution. They embarrass us at the port of entry into most European countries because every Nigerian became a suspect.

*Insecurity:* Some of the activities of this devilish people involve killings of fellow human being for either money ritual or fortification of their power. The environment because insecure and does attract investment into the country. This is a double jeopardy for the nation.

*Corruption:* These youths believe that whatever money can not do can never be done. Money became the only weapon to enjoy life and everybody wanted to belong to the high class in the society. This created a situation of “following the bandwagon”. People started taking bribes and any form of inducements gratification to finance the unmerited class they created for themselves.

*Laziness:* Most youth would not want engage in any legitimate work again when you can just sit down in the comfort of your room with a laptop and after few minutes of interactions with your prey millions of Naira would start dropping into your account.

**SOLUTIONS**

The situation is not irredeemable. Everybody just need to rise with full determination to deal with the menace ravaging our youths. Everybody has roles to play as highlighted below;

*Parental guidance and monitoring:* There is a popular saying that “if you don’t train them, don’t blame them”. The parents interact with these youths right from childhood when habits were being developed. Keen observation and guidance would go a long way in putting them on the right track. Parents also need to monitor them as they are growing into adulthood, know their friends and advise them on any troubling issues that may mount pressure on them. The parents should try to be the role model to the children. With such upbringing it would be difficult for the children to derail.

*Government Welfare Program:* There is need for government institute aprogram that can guarantee the wellbeing of people as well as basic amenities that would make life easy. So much money is earmarked for this every year but we end up seeing little or nothing implemented. Government needs to sit up and be ready to respond to people’s need. Otherwise, all identified vices will continues to pervade our society and destroy the future of our Nation.

*Leadership:* All Leaders in various settings including Churches and Mosques should also take responsibility in mentoring our youths. Put them on the right path and support them in achieving their dreams. Let them see the bigger picture on the path of honour. Let them know that crime does not pay.

In conclusion, if we can decide to turn a new leaf and address all identified gaps, there would be peace in our society, there would be peace in our Nation and there would be peace in the world because Wealth without trace brings shame and not Fame.