

Jesus' Responses to Power Tussle in Mark 10:35-40 and the Recent Nigerian Presidential Party Primaries in Comparative Context

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Abstract

And the two sons of Zebedee, namely James and John went to request for positions of honour in Jesus' coming kingdom, the same way a Vice President went to inform his boss of his desire to take over from him in 2023. On the other hand, the Vice President's political godfather and presidential hopeful would remark that none of his sons is grown enough to declare for president. The resultant effect of the foregoing drama will be a sharp division within the disciples and the ruling party's camp; with arguments and counter arguments being laid down for the latter that the Vice President was not right to have declared for that office, or he was, knowing fully that his godfather was equally eyeing the same position. This is going to become a tug of war, if the situation is not properly handled by Jesus and the Nigerian president. The two leaders' responses are therefore going to ensure that their camp remains united and not broken. This paper thus, seek to use the approach of Jesus and the Nigerian President in handling the issue of power tussle to address the problem of conflict in succession from different aspects of national life, be it the monarchy, church, government, education and family. The work adoptshisto-critical and comparative method of enquiry as well as made use of the media and other relevant literature to carry out the research.

Key Words: Jesus, Nigerian President, power, tussle & Godfather

Introduction

The request of the sons of Zebedee (James and John) and the backlash they got from their fellow disciples coincides with the recent build up to the Nigerian presidential party primaries. The story of the build up to recent presidential primaries is nothing short of power tussle in succession, where certain top party chieftains saw themselves as deserving of the office of the president, after spending so much, risking so much and bearing so much on the account of the Buhari's emergence as president in 2015. For instance, Bola Ahmed Tinubu claimed to have singlehandedly gone to Buhari in Daura (Kastina) to make him consider another option of contesting for president when the former lost again a third time in his presidential ambition and then gave up ever contesting. Not only that, he claimed to singlehandedly sponsored the election of Buhari and also suggested Osibanjo as his vice. Rotimi Amaechi, the minister for transportation also picked the APC presidential form on the account of being the Apc presidential campaign coordinator during

Buhari's emergence as president twice. Others included Ahmed Lawan, the senate president, Dave Umahi, Tunde Bakare among others. They now saw the office of the president, not as the platform to serve the people of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, but as a gift for being loyalists of the president.

The same could be seen among the disciples, where James and John were bold enough to request for positions of honour in Christ's kingdom, with reasons being advanced by scholars that it is because they were part of the three inner circles of Christ's disciples (Simon Peter, James and John) (Kaminouchi, 2003), while some suggesting that since Mathew recorded that it was the mother that made the request, then it could be due to the wealthy influence of the Zebedee family and their father marrying Salome, Mary's sister and mother of Jesus Christ that made them think they could use their status to get whatever they wanted from Jesus (Kgatle, 2015). From the foregoing, it seems that the two camps (the disciples and the APC) all felt special in their

own rights and so reasoned that power sharing or succession was their own portion to get since they have been instrumental in one way or the other to their masters in the time they needed them most. This became a tussle that must be put to rest.

This paper therefore examined from existing literature on leadership or power tussle/succession in the Christian perspective and the Nigerian political space before venturing into the comparative enquiry on Jesus responses to power tussle in Mark 10:35-40 and the recent Nigerian presidential party primaries in comparative context and then draw out the necessary recommendations/conclusions.

Literature Review

This section reviews power tussle from the Christian perspective with considerable attention paid to the Old Testament and the church, especially citing few examples from the Nigerian experience before looking at leadership tussle from the Nigerian political space, citing the issue of the Akintola and Awolowo South-Western crisis.

Power tussle from the Christian Perspective

Usue (2006) in his article on Leadership in Africa and in the Old Testament: A transcendental perspective, extensively discusses the leadership tussle involving five characters, which are Miriam, Aaron, Moses, his wife and the Yahweh, the God of Israel according to Numbers 12:1-16. This is where the author describes Miriam as a jealous, excessive ambitious, proud and crafty as some of her drawbacks to her leadership ability. She finds fault with Moses for marrying a foreign woman and bringing her into the camp. This in her perception is inappropriate, making Moses unfit for the position he holds. This, she did by conniving with his weak, timid, indecision, and lack of self-esteem Aaron of a brother to oppose Moses and his leadership. This made Yahweh to intervene in the crisis and served as an arbiter between Moses on the one side and Miriam and Aaron on the other side of the leadership tussle (cf Nm 12:4-16). He acted in defense of Moses and punished the leading accuser, Miriam.

There is also the issue of power tussle between Saul and David. The former wanted to hand over his kingdom to his son Jonathan but it

seems God had already taken His kingdom and handed it over to his servant David. The height of the power tussle is seen when a group of Israelite women sang a song of accolade for David, when he defeated the Philistine, Goliath by singing that "Saul killed his thousands and David his ten thousand". This did not go down well with Saul, and he intensified efforts to kill David (Leadership Tussle: its Implications for the growth of Churches, n.d).

More so, leadership tussle was also witnessed in the life of Adonijah, the son of David over Solomon his brother. While David was still alive, Adonijah wanted to maneuver his way to take over the helm of events as king, but David intervened. Not also forgetting Absalom's craftiness and his failed coup attempt to take away power from his father, David. Although the author touched on this issue closely at hand, yet he does not fully address Jesus' responses to power tussle in Mark 10:35-40 and the recent Nigerian presidential party primaries in comparative context. This is the gap that we are filling here.

In the Nigerian churches today, power tussle can be likened to the famous Christ Apostolic Church (CAC) crisis of 1989, which lingered down to 2010 as covered by Adeoti, in his article on the Origin, Nature and Trajectory of the Leadership Tussle in the Christ Apostolic Church, Nigeria: 1989-2010 recounts the challenges which led to the crises that shook the entire foundation of the church in 1989. The paper went on to identify some of the challenges affecting the church from the beginning and traced its unfortunate events to doctrinal matters, structural deficiencies, organizational and leadership failures culminating in the scuffle that engulfed the church in 1989. It also talks about the beginning of the church in the second decade of the 20th century when Apostle Joseph Ayodele Babalola had a divine mandate from God.

The paper argues that the bone of the church arose out of vices such as corruption, insubordination, leadership ineptitude and disunity that assailed its rank and file. It also adds that the emergence of charismatic prophets and evangelists coupled with the establishment of parallel ministries and administrations within the parent church by these powerful and prominent individuals with massive

followership, enormous wealth and influence tended to bring down the supreme authority of the once-united body. Apparently, all attempts to restore order and sanity and make the opposing forces toe the part of peace and redeem the battered image of the church proved abortive. This is a situation that cumulatively led to a crisis of unimaginable proportion which divided the church into two irreconcilable camps: the Interim and Forum Administrations which development had compromised the leadership and unity of the church.

The paper concludes that inordinate ambition of the leaders, worldliness, love for power, positions, greed and avarice, among other vices, have been the nemesis of the CAC, hence the desired unity has continued to elude the church. As a way out of logjam, the paper ended with suggestions that provisional council be set up to midwife a single leadership structure that would take care of all interest groups within a united CAC and that the two warring factions should be encouraged to start joint programmes that would bring their members together with a view to forging unity and concord among them. This current paper is out to fill in the gap created which is on power tussle, a lacuna not covered in the aforementioned research.

Another power tussle within the Nigerian church is the Lagos Diocese of the church of Nigeria, Anglican Communion, where some members alleged that the Bishop of the Diocese, Adebola Ademowo wanted to impose his successor on the church just to cover his financial misappropriation. This is not to forget the power tussle in the Assemblies of God church, which generated a lot of controversy, resulting in the splitting of the church into two factions, namely; the Chidi Okoroafor faction and the Paul Emeka faction. After the ruling of the Assemblies of God Council that Paul Emeka be suspended and the eventual installment of Chidi Okoroafor, the former felt cheated and took the matter to the court of law.

This built up event led to the loss of lives and destruction of properties (Assemblies of God Church worsens as members clash in Enugu, n.d). Reports continue that the crisis worsened even as the Abuja District of Assemblies of God church was rocked in leadership crisis over who is the District

Superintendent of the church. It took the intervention of the Police Division, Wuse, Zone 5, Accra Road, Abuja to restore peace and order after summons from neighbourhood of the church (Abiaziem, n.d). The next review will look at power tussle from the Nigerian political space as discussed previously from scholars in line with the topic under review.

Power tussle from the Nigerian political space

Bankole and Olaniyi (2014) in their article on Leadership Crisis and Corruption in Nigerian Public Sector: Implications for Socio-Economic Development of Nigeria talks about a country richly endowed with human and material resources critical for national development and yet cannot find its rightful place among the comity of nations. The major reason for the stagnation of her socio-economic development in Nigeria according to the authors is leadership crisis and corruption. That, since independence, the successive Nigerian government is replete of clueless, parochial, uninspiring, attitudinal debauchery and selfish leaders (Ikyernum, 2022).

The main aim of their paper rest in the fact that leadership crisis and corruption were interwoven and it is against this background that it explored the leadership failures and corrupt tendencies of the leadership class especially at the national level in Nigeria since 1960 and its implication for socio-economic development. The paper concludes that for Nigeria to experience sustainable socio-economic development, responsible, credible and true leaders who will build strong and transparent institutions as well as leaders who are dedicated to how history will remember them for transforming the society rather than accumulation of private wealth must emerge to implant the act of good and selfless governance in Nigeria. The paper however does not sufficiently address the issue of Jesus responses to power tussle in Mark 10:35-40 and the recent Nigerian presidential party primaries in comparative context, a gap created that this paper intends to fill.

Covering an important power tussle from the Nigerian political space in history is the one between S.L Akintola and Obafemi Awolowo, an article well written by Ojo (2016). The author

stress that the rift between the duo was the outcome of Chief Obafemi Awolowo's reluctance to hand over to Ladoke Akintola as Premier of Western Nigeria following the former's resolve to contest the 1959 federal elections into the Central Legislature. He quickly adds that while scholars have almost over exaggerated the other causes of the Akintola–Awolowo leadership or power tussle, there is paucity of literature, or at best parried accounts, on the epicentre of the crisis – Akintola's political interface with Northern Nigeria political leaders.

His paper therefore intended to fill this gap by attempting a reinterpretation of some of the factors that may have influenced the political differences between Akintola and NPC leaders. The historical method of data analysis was employed in the analysis of the primary and secondary classes of data obtained for the study. In his re-interpretation, Ojo opines that since 1962, in most quarters, Chief Samuel Ladoke Akintola was being dubbed as 'Afonja' or 'Judas'. But his paper on the contrary shows that it was not so. That up to 15th December, 1959 when Akintola assumed office as Western Nigeria Premier, he and Chief Obafemi Awolowo were political allies. Although, following his election to the Central Legislature in Lagos in 1951 and emergence as Leader of the Opposition in the Federal House of Representatives in 1952 as well as his participation in the National Government (formed in 1957), Akintola became the 'Western Nigerian Ambassador' to Lagos. His more than eight years of political interaction with the 'Northern Nigerian Ambassador' to Lagos, Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa and other NPC leaders, led to the establishment of a corridor of political differences between him and NPC leaders.

Also, according to the author, the virtual disappearance of the Yoruba and the prominence of the Igbos at the federal level thus became a very good political stick with which Akintola used to beat chief Awolowo, having failed in all his efforts to convince the Action Group Leader that the Yoruba would continue to be drawers of water and hewers of wood in the Commonwealth of Nigeria except they closed ranks with the NPC. Thus, Chief Awolowo dismissed Akintola as “an agent of the NPC

within the fold of the Action Group” and “Afonja incarnate”. Apparently, the NPC–led Federal Government gave tacit support to Akintola hence the declaration of a State of Emergency in Western Nigeria in May 1962 and Balewa's refusal to do same following unprecedented political violence in the Region in 1965. The above details between the Akintola-Awolowo feud however do not sufficiently address the issue of Jesus' responses to power tussle in Mark 10:35-40 and the recent Nigerian presidential party primaries in comparative context, a gap created that this paper intends to fill. The Request of James and John in Mark 10:35-45 and the APC Presidential Primaries in Comparative Context

This section will draw comparison between what went on in Mark 10:45 between Jesus disciples and that of the recent drama in the camp of the All Progressive Congress. Attention would be paid to power tussle among the disciples based on kinship reasons (Mark 10:35), self-interest, ambition reasons, (Mark 10:45), competition reasons (Mark 10:41) and lordship misconception reasons (Mark 10:42).

Kinship reasons

Mark 10:35 reads;

Και προσπορευονται
αὐτῷ Ἰάκωβος
καὶ Ἰωάννης οἱ υἱοὶ Ζεβεδαίου
λέγοντες αὐτῷ Διδάσκαλε,
θέλομεν ἵνα ὅ ἐάν αἱ τήσωμέν σε
ποιήσῃμιν

James and John, the two sons of Zebedee, came up to him saying, Master, we desire that you should do for us whatever we ask.

The confidence with which these two disciples walked up to the Master to make this request begs for the question of kinship. Kaminouchi Alberto De Mingo (2003) perceives that it could be due to the position of these two disciples in terms of rank and power. He quotes two factors converging in James and John that makes them special disciples in terms of rank and power; one is their leading position in the group of twelve and their privileged position in the patriarchal structure. Taking these factors into account, their request is understandable.

In another response, Kgatele (2016)

suggests that it could be due to kinship ties. That, the father of James and John was a very influential man who at the same time married Salome, the sister of Mary (the mother of Jesus Christ) thereby making these two disciples cousins to Jesus Christ. He further reiterates that Zebedee who was the father of James and John was a very wealthy fisherman due to Mark's gospel making reference to him as one having hired servants (Mk 1:20cf). And going by his economic status and influence, seeing also that he was an in-law to Jesus could have warranted this bold request made by the two apostles (Kgatle, 2015).

Looking at the claim above about Salome, there is actually no evidence in the New Testament linking Salome (Mary's sister) to be the wife of Zebedee who is the father of James and John. But if this argument is anything to go by, then it could be based on the external and internal evidence on the notion of kinship. The external evidence according to Malina (1986) and Hutchison (2009) confirms that kinship and politics were the most fundamental structures of the ancient Mediterranean world; while other social institutions such as economics, education and religion were embedded in them. Kinship refers to familiar or social relationship. The two primary expressions of this value system were in the family structure and both the public and the private relationships bestowed favours on recipients in society. Thus, James and John being aware of this kinship structure that carries with it patronage for positions of honour could have been the motivation.

The internal evidence even records in Matthew's version that it was their mother who was the one behind this request. This may simply imply that they were simply taking advantage of the family ties which they had with Jesus (through Salome, the sister of Mary) and at the same time, relied on their father's influence as a wealthy fisherman for their bargain for places of honour in Christ's kingdom. This could have been one of their reasons.

Coming to the recently concluded presidential primaries of the Nigerian ruling party, kinship ties seems to have also played a role in the build up to the elections. This is not owing to family or in-law ties as in the case of Jesus and the family of Zebedee, but political

and religious kinship ties because both Bola Ahmed Tinubu and President Buhari are all Muslims and based on the religious factor in a country like Nigeria, it can be reckoned as kinship ties. Thus, Tinubu went to Buhari to ask him to contest for Nigeria's president again, after losing out on the presidency for the third time and in return for his support, offer him the presidency when he finally leaves office. This is what he said;

...If not me that led the war front, Buhari wouldn't have emerged. He contested first, second and third time, but lost. He even said on television that he won't contest again. ...But I went to his home in Kastina. I told him you would contest and win... (Ufuoma, 2022).

The statement indicates that there seem to have been a kinship understanding and agreement between the former head of state and this Lagos party leader to hand over power to the latter when the former finally leaves office.

Self-interest and Ambition reasons (Mark 10:37)

οἱ δὲ εἶπαν αὐτῷ Δόξη μῖν ἵνα
εἴς σου ἐκ δεξιῶν καὶ
εἴς ἐξ ἄριστερῶν
καθίσωμεν ἐν τῇ δόξῃ σου

...they said to him, "Grant us that we may sit, one on your right hand and the other on your left, in your glory.

The most crucial point of this request by James and John is "sitting on the right and left hands in Jesus' glory. When these two mentioned left and right, what were they actually referring to in the world of that time? This is because, one of the usages of the pair 'right/left' in the Hebrew Bible as well as in other cultures to express metaphorically the contrast between good and evil, fortune and misfortune, wisdom and foolishness, salvation and condemnation. In Eccl. 10.2 it reads; "A wise man's heart inclines him towards the right, but a fool's heart towards the left." Matthew applies the contraposition between "right" and "left" to the imagery of the last judgment in his parable of sheep and goats:

“and he will place the sheep at his right hand, but the goats at the left” (25.33). “Right” is here equivalent of salvation and 'left' of damnation.

Another text in which the contraposition 'right/left' is used in an eschatological context is found in the Testament of Abraham, where it is written:

The two angels on the right hand and on the left, these are they that write down the sins and the righteousness, the one on the right hand writes down the righteousness, and the one on the left the sins (11, cf. 12) (Qtd in Kaminouchi 2003)

This usage of 'right/left' is, indeed, not exclusive to the Bible: according to Plato, the souls destined to happiness in the Elysian Fields take the way to the right, and the souls sentenced to the damnation in the Tartarus the road to the left (Republic 10.614C)(Qtd in Kaminouchi 2003). However, from the text (Mk 10:37), it does not in any way imply that James and John asked for fortune and misfortune, or good and evil. They both asked for something desirable, something that is devoid of evil. To establish this is to critically examine some other biblical passages that make reference to “left” and “right”. In the Second Book of Samuel, King David is described as being surrounded by his people, and it is said that 'all the mighty men were on his right hand and on his left (2 Sam. 16.6)'. In 2 Samuel 20:25, it written:

...the next day, which was the new moon, the king, after purifying himself as the custom was, came to the feast; and when his son Jonathan had seated himself on his right side and Abner, the commander of the army, on his left

Thus; the passages quoted above allows one to state that the places on the right hand and on the left represent the first and second positions of honor in the hierarchical structure that surrounds a king or a person of authority. Therefore, the two brothers in Mk 10.37 are asking for places of honour, besides Jesus, as if he were a royal figure. In the brothers' request, their conception of the glory of Jesus is to be viewed as a pyramidal structure of power, with

Jesus at its pinnacle, and the brothers assigned respectively to the second and third positions in its chain of command (Marie-Joseph, 1966). We therefore conclude here that their request was selfish. They could only think of themselves, not minding the welfare of the other ten. To them, that was their idea of leadership; that, it is all about the desire to occupy places of honour.

For more clarifications from the preceding paragraph, Elmer (2006) notes that throughout the Mediterranean world, people at banquets were usually seated according to their social rank; prominent members of the community thus received honor at banquets. Such preferential seating also characterized community assemblies and, in the Jewish community, synagogues. In synagogues the best seats were on the bema, the raised platform, where synagogues had them. In some synagogues, many people may have sat on the floor (Jas 2:3); in such synagogues, those who sat on benches around the walls had better seats. Thus, it can be deduced here that the kind of cultural background James and John and the other ten apostles came from must have influenced their desire to request for places of honour in Christ's kingdom.

It is not wrong to be ambitious, but when one seeks a position in order to gratify oneself only, it becomes worldly and wrong, except if such a person seeks for positions of influence for the good of all. In this scenario, there are indications that James and John were simply bent on craving for positions of influence, for titles and ranks for their own benefits. May be their motivation for this request might have been following Jesus' promise in Mathew 19:28 that:

..Assuredly, I say to you, that in the regeneration, when the son of man sits on the throne of his glory, you who have followed me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

Thus, James and John must have concluded that, if Christ would rise again, he would be a king and his apostles would be his co-rulers. And one of these would be the peer of the realm, and the other next to him, just like Joseph in Pharaoh's court and Daniel in Darius' Babylon. Myers (1988), however offers a third

perspective which is built on the notion that James and John would have been thinking of a messianic kingdom inaugurated by Jesus upon his arrival at Jerusalem. C. Myers thinks that James and John were expecting “some kind of Messianic coup” and that they wanted the first places in a revolutionary government presided over by Jesus, and that, in effect, they were lobbying for the “first and second cabinet positions” (Myers, 1988).

At the political level, we would agree with Myers (1988) that the request made by these two disciples were tailored towards some sort of earthly government but at a historical level, Myers's idea cannot be argued without difficulty. And at the level of the text, it is clearly unsustainable because there is no hint in Mark's plot that such a revolutionary coup is about to take place. Readers have no clues to make them interpret the brothers' request is part of a revolutionary scenario. All we can say here is that this request was based on a self-interest and ambition that the disciples had. James and John must have concluded that, when Christ's Kingdom comes, he must be a king, his apostles would be peers. And one of them would be the peer of the realm, and the other next to him.

Coming to the ruling party's leader's power tussle, the man gave an outburst that after assuring president Buhari of victory, he told him that it will be the turn of the Yorubas after he wins the presidency. The statement reads;

But I went to his home in Katsina. I told him you would contest and win, but you won't joke with the matters of the Yorubas. Since he has emerged, I have not been appointed minister. I didn't get contract...this time, it's Yoruba turn and in Yorubaland, it's my tenure (Ufuoma, 2022)

The above statement by Bolaji Ahmed Tinubu was not owing to the fact that he was helping Buhari to win the presidential election, so that Nigeria will be better and he (Buhari) would set up a good and solid economy, educational, healthcare and electoral reforms in place that will produce future leaders in a free and fair election, neither did he promise to support Buhari for presidency without a clause attached to it. No, but why he was supporting Buhari for

president was because of his own selfish interest. (The turn of the Yoruba) and he being a Yoruba man, implies that it is his turn. But wait, who told Bola Ahmed Tinubu that the office of the presidency of the federal republic of Nigeria is just an ethnic agenda, where one ethnic group hands over to another ethnic group? Or that it was meant for an individual reward for delivering the job of campaigning for someone to win a presidency? This was nothing short of selfish ambition reasons exemplified by James and John, the sons of Zebedee.

Competition reasons (Mark 10:41)

Και ἀκούσαντες οἱ δέκα ἠρξάντο ἀγανακτεῖν περὶ Ἰάκωβου καὶ Ἰωάννης

And when the ten heard it, they began to be greatly displeased with James and John.

Many scholars like Moeser (2002), Elmer (2006) Craig & John (2016) among others suggest that the Ten became angry at James and John because of their own ambitious desire for prominence beside Jesus. In fact M.C, Mario puts it that it is not that the disciples had misunderstood Jesus' passion prediction, but more due to the fact that the brothers had sought positions of authority that would have placed the two ahead of others and over the rest of them. The sons of Zebedee were not the only ambitious disciples; all of them were thirsty for power.

Craig & John (2016) gives this external evidence that rivalry and competition for honour were common and expected in ancient Mediterranean society. Therefore it will not be out of place to suggest that the other ten were angry not because the sons of Zebedee misunderstood Jesus' teachings but on the fact that they also wished to occupy such positions but were now angry that their wishes were about to be taken over by others.

This is the same scenario that happened in the just concluded ruling party's presidential primaries where the Vice President to the President to inform him about his desire to contest for the presidency. In reaction to the said declaration, Tinubu's camp felt betrayed, owing to the fact that Osibanjo is much aware that his principal, Bola Ahmed Tinubu is nursing the

same ambition of the presidency in the upcoming election in 2023, yet he declared his intent. This was no longer his earlier outburst that it was the turn of the Yorubas,'no', which going by that assertion, Osibanjo is equally qualified. It was actually about his turn alone. In his indignation and furiousness, he responded thus, "I have no son grown enough to contest for presidency"(Olokor et al, 2022). In another outburst he reiterated that he singlehandedly made Vice President YemiOsinbajoBuhari's running mate. He said Buhari had offered him a running mate ticket, but some blocs within the party rejected it owing to the Muslim-Muslim ticket. He also said that when he was asked to submit three names for running mate, he penciled down Yemi Cardoso, Wale Edun and YemiOsinbajo. And added that he was the one that later settled for Osinbajo as running mate, (Olokor, 2022).

So, from the foregoing, it is important to ask that, sinceOsinbajo first declared to run for the office of the presidency, what Tinubu is going to do. Will he let the sleeping dog lie and decide to throw his weight behind his son, whom he singlehandedly made Vice President? It was never going to be. He also has to compete for the same office. No matter what it takes, he has to also contest because the presidency slot is his birthright and no one can take it away from him. Punch newspaper reported that barely hours after Osinbajo's declaration, Tinubu also met with governors of the APC at the Kebbi State Governor's Lodge in Abuja, demanding for their support to contest for the presidency (Qtdin Olokor et al, 2022).

Jesus' Responses to Power Tussle in Mark 10:35-40 and the Recent Nigerian Presidential Party Primaries in Comparative Context

Now that we have seen how the ruling party's presidential primaries played out just like the event in the New Testament where James and John, the two sons of Zebedee were in a lock for power sharing/tussle, this part will state the actual response of the two leaders (Jesus and the Nigerian President whom the issue of leadership and power tussle occurred.

Jesus' response goes thus;

...Ye know not what ye ask: can ye

drink of the cup that I drink of? and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with? (Mark 10:38)
...Οὐκοῖδατε τί αἰτεῖσθε. δύνασθε πειντὸ ποτήριον ὃ ἐγὼ πίνω ἢ τὸ βάπτισμα ἐγὼ βαπτίζομαι βαπτίσθῆναι

When the apostles replied him after he posed the question of drinking the cup he drinks and be baptized with the baptism that he is baptized with, he told them that look; "Ye shall indeed drink of the cup that I drink of; and with the baptism that I am baptized withal shall ye be baptized. But to sit on my right hand and on my left hand is not mine to give; but it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared"(Mark 10:39-40).

This implies that his disciples might be qualified, given their positions as disciples to obtain special favourslike prominent positions from Christ. For they even left everything and followed him on his mission for the lost. They sacrificed their benefits of being together with their family and business and followed him. But then, getting a share of power in His kingdom is not in his capacity to give. By saying this, Jesus was able to calm the worries in His disciples' camp. He made them to understand that it was not in His capacity to do that, but a privilege that can only be granted by God the father (Ikyernum, 2022). God in this statement affirms a universal agreement and not a one man affair. It is a matter of destiny and not kinship ties. It is a matter of the Will of the Almighty and not the will of man. It is not the craving for positions that would guarantee a fellow such a privilege, neither is it the ability to even use kinship influence to get (Sanner, 1979).

Also, the above statement could mean leadership appointment is neither based on favouritism or sectionalism. For James and John thought that since they belonged to the three inner circle of Christ, comprising of Peter, James and John, they could ask for special favours and they would be granted unto them. On many occasions, it is proven that Christ selected them for special assignments. For instance, they were all present at Simon's house when Jesus cured Simon's mother-in-law (Mark 1:29-31). Both James and John became members of the Twelve under the nickname

Boanerges, 'Sons of Thunder' (Mark 3:17). They were also there when he raised Jairus' daughter back to life (Mark 5:37). When He got transfigured (Mark 9:2), they were also with him when he was in the Garden of Gethsemane, on the night of his betrayer, (Mark 14:3).

But unknown to them, Jesus was never in the same line of thought with them. For him "whosoever shall do the will of God, the same is his brother, and sister, and mother (Mark 3:35). This is the reply he gave when his family came looking for him as he was teaching the multitude in a house. His kind of kingdom was not the one of making some special and others minor. For him, it has to be grace, not favour or self-seeking, which secures promotion into the kingdom of God (Sanner, 1979). He never preferred of it to be more favourable to His own kinsmen, at the expense of others. If Jesus was a leader in the political circles, he would never elevate family at the expense of others. He would never share power, grant appointments, jobs and positions to only members of his family and relations or in order to return a favour. He would not give only juicy posts to his fellow tribesmen and women, the tribe of Judah. But His aim would be to equally give the one that deserves a chance.

On the other hand, when the ruling party's presidential primaries and the issue of power tussle became so hot, the President decided not to take sides with no one, although knowing fully that Tinubu, Osinbajo Amaechi, Emiefele, Ahmed Lawan and others were all loyal party members who worked hard to make him President He was going to stand by his earlier statement that "I belong to no one but I belong to everybody". Although in the heat of the power tussle, Tinubu thought the presidency was trying to shortchange him and hand over power to an undisclosed person, hence his outburst in the earlier statement. However, this statement released from president Buhari restored calmness in the party's camp. Part of it reads that the president told governors of the ruling party-controlled northern states that he had no preferred presidential aspirant in the ruling party and the party should 'allow the delegates to decide' its presidential candidate (Yusuf, 2022). In another statement, it reads thus: President Muhammadu Buhari, on Monday afternoon cleared all doubts about where he

stands on the choice of a presidential candidate, declaring before the party's 14 governors of northern states that he has "no preferred candidate," and has "anointed no one", and is determined to ensure that "there shall be no imposition of any candidate on the party." (Yusuf, 2022).

The president stood on his words and ensured that primaries be conducted, where every presidential contender was given the chance to test their popularity and Bola Ahmed Tinubu won the election, he even wrote an open letter to the president, appreciating him for being neutral as premised in his words that he belongs to nobody but for everybody, thereby putting to rest the outburst of betrayal, backstabbing and power manipulation.

Conclusion

Going by the responses of Jesus Christ and the Nigerian President on power tussle/succession, it is obvious that their responses are a model for any sector struggling to get it right in terms of leadership/power succession. Whether in the family, church, educational sector or any societal association that gathers to elect a new leader, kinship or family ties or wealth influence should never be the basis for considering a leader. The will of the subjects should rather be considered and the principle of merit be put in place to ensure transparency and credibility. Just like Jesus Christ and the Nigerian President demonstrated, there should be no imposition of leadership on the people; for such will only breed strife, hatred and result to violence and loss of innocent souls just to get to power.

Recommendations

The following recommendations should be strictly adhered to by these categories;

- i. Family Will which is written for inheritance should reflect neutrality and transparency at all cost in order to avoid unending family strife and rivalry when the head is no more.
- ii. The heads of families should be aware that giving too much attention and preferment of properties and assets to a wife or child over the others in sharing of family inheritance all in the name of tradition or position will rather create a big issue thereafter. For there is no law that forbids

- equality and equity in sharing of inheritance.
- iii. The Church leadership should come up with a succession plan that will ensure transparency and merit in transition, such that when the leader; be it the general overseer, the superintendent or whatever of the church has retired or is no more alive, there will be no hitch in succession.
 - iv. The issue of kinship ties, where the wife or son or daughter of the founder or leader of the church is made to take over the leadership of the church even though he or she does not merit the position should be highly prohibited.
 - v. Appointment of Principals, Vice Chancellors, Rectors or Provost into educational institutions should be based on who merits it most and not on kinship or tribal and religious reasons.
 - vi. Societal monarchy or traditional leadership settings should be given to whoever that deserves it. The new leader to be chosen should reflect the yearnings of the people and the common man.
 - vii. There should be no imposition of leaders as situations like this often leads to bloodshed or incessant court cases when the right thing is not done.
 - viii. At the political level, the conduct of primaries should not be based on the turn of a particular tribe or race (interest) but on the principle of fairness and justice.
 - ix. Power attainment in Nigeria's highest office should not be based on who has the highest resources and influence but on merit.

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