

**A PAPER PRESENTED AT THE GOSPEL ADVANCEMENT  
LEADERSHIP INITIATIVE (GALI) SEMINAR ON THE TOPIC  
“FAITH AND UNITY IN DIVERSITY (UNITED WE STAND,  
DIVIDED WE FALL)” AT THE NIGERIA BIBLE  
TRANSLATION TRUST (NBTT) JOS (30<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER TO 1<sup>ST</sup>  
NOVEMBER, 2008)  
BY REV(DR) P.H. BAMAIYI**

I count it a great honour to make this presentation in this seminar organized by **GOSPEL ADVANCEMENT LEADERSHIP INITIATIVE (GALI)** holding here at the Nigeria Bible Translation Trust, Jos. I have been asked to speak on “**Faith and Unity in Diversity (United we Stand, Divided we Fall)**”.

Permit me as a teacher to begin by defining our key terms as follows:

1. **Faith:** the word faith comes from the latin ‘fedes’ meaning “trust and belief”. In our context faith has to do with the totality of our belief and trust in the finished work of Christ on Calvary and in whose steps we are called upon to walk. To put it more bluntly our faith is Christianity. Christianity is being like Christ in all facets and dimensions of life.
2. **Unity:** the word unity comes from the latin ‘unitas’ literally meaning “one”. It is the state or condition of being one. In our context it is the harmonization of our beliefs, opinions, interests, feelings and goals into one as Christians for the furtherance of God’s Kingdom on earth.
3. **Diversity:** the word diversity comes from the latin word ‘diversitas or diversus’ which speaks of variety.

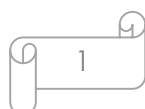
Therefore, Faith and Unity in Diversity implies that though we come from various ethnic and social backgrounds but as Christians we must see ourselves as one and relate to each other as members of the same family in order to achieve God’s purpose on earth and in particular in our country as it concerns the political and economic situation of the country.

I would like to divide our discussion into 4 subheadings:

1. Faith
2. Unity In Diversity
3. United We Stand, Divided We Fall
4. Nigeria: the way forward

### **FAITH**

The Christian faith is a faith that is based on the finished work of Christ on the cross of cavalry. This faith holds to the scriptures as the final authority in all matters of faith and conduct. Faith, is an attitude of the entire self, including both will and intellect, directed towards a person, an idea, or—as in the case of religious faith—a divine being. Modern Christian theologians agree in emphasizing the total existential character of faith, thus distinguishing it from the popular conception of faith that identifies it with belief as opposed to knowledge. Faith indeed includes belief but goes far beyond it, and in the history of theology the distinction has more often been drawn between faith and works than between faith and knowledge. This distinction was



powerfully expressed by the apostle Paul, who argued that the sinful human being cannot achieve salvation through good works, but only through faith in the free grace of God. In this view, forcefully revived by Martin Luther at the time of the Reformation, good works are consequences of faith. The faithful relation to God enables the believer to transcend limitations and bring forth good works.

The apostle James said in James 2:17-26 “Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone. Yea, a man may say Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works. Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe and tremble. But wilt thou know O vain man, that faith without works is dead? Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar? Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect. And the scripture was fulfilled which saith Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God. Ye see then how that by works a man is justified and not by faith only. Likewise also was not Rahab the harlot justified by works, when she had received the messengers, and had sent them out another way? For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also”.KJV.

For us as Christians to impact the politics and economy of this nation positively we must possess great faith and this great faith is seen in our works. Let me discuss the characteristics of men who possess great faith as summarized in Hebrews 11(Heroes of Faith):

1. They are men of conscience: Abel’s conscience will not allow him to offer an inferior offering to God so he offered a more excellent sacrifice to God than Cain. Great men of faith are men who never go against their conscience. Men who have made lasting impacts in leadership positions worldwide have been men guided by their conscience. In a country like ours where to maim and kill in the name of politics has become the order of the day we need these rare species of politicians who will be guided by their conscience to always do what is right. In a country plagued by the cancer of endemic corruption we need men with clean hands to arise and take over positions of leadership to move the nation forward.
2. They are men of vision: these heroes of faith had visions of a better country whose builder and maker is God. Visionless leaders don’t know where they are going and hence cannot take their followers anywhere. Men of vision know where they are going and are not ready to stop until they get there and they will not settle for anything than the exact vision they have seen.
3. They are men who have discovered their potentials: Little David as a teenager who killed a Bear and a Lion discovered that God has put in him the potential to be a giant killer. No wonder he approached the giant Goliath without any fear in the name of the Lord and the giant with one piece of stone dropped death before David. There is potential for greatness in every one of us. There is a man in every boy and there is a woman in every girl. In the dateless past at a time when there was no time everything existed in God in the potential state since God Himself is Omni-Potent(All-Potential). All we now have in the universe proceeded from God. The God of all potential has endowed man with almost limitless potentials but on average man uses only 10% of his brain potentials at the end of his life on earth! The potential to be great leaders is in us!
4. They are men of diligence: the heroes of faith were diligent in all they did. Pr 22:29 “Seest thou a man diligent in his business? he shall stand before kings; he shall not stand before mean men”.KJV. Our young men must learn the lesson of faith that there is dignity in labour and that skillful hardwork pays.
5. They are men who never give up: one of the things that challenges me most about these heroes of faith is their persevering faith even unto the end. They believed in their mission and never gave up even in the face of death! Its rare to find Nigerians who will be ready to die for a cause they believed in! It is also rare to find Nigerians who will be ready to keep trying after several apparent failures. The attitude of most Nigerians show that they have given up already on this country. I heard a professor present a lecture recently in one of our ‘ivory towers’ in which he painted a very bleak and hopeless

picture of Nigeria and concluded that it was too late for Nigeria to change for the better. While I agree that many things have gone wrong in this nation, I believe that there is still great hope for this nation. I am an incurable optimist in the greatness of this nation! Let us not give up on Nigeria. Some men of character who have contested and lost elections, please come back and contest again. If you lose, keep contesting until you win. Imagine what would have been the story of U.S.A. without a persevering Abraham Lincoln. The story of Abraham Lincoln is one of the most fascinating testimonies of a man who never gave up.

- He had less than 1 year of formal education and failed miserably in business in **1831**
- He was defeated for the legislature in **1832**
- He lost his job in **1832**
- He was elected to the legislature in **1834**
- He suffered the death of his sweetheart in **1834**
- He suffered a nervous breakdown in **1836**
- He was defeated for Speaker of the State Legislature in **1838**
- Only one of his four sons lived past the age of 18 in **1842**
- He was defeated for nomination for congress in **1843**
- He was elected to congress in **1846**
- He was rejected for the position of Land Officer in **1849**
- He was defeated for the Senate in **1854**
- He was defeated for the nomination for Vice-President of the United States in **1856**
- He again was defeated for the Senate in **1858**
- **He was elected President of the United States in 1860.**

**This man who never gave up went on to become one of the greatest Presidents of the United States and the most quoted of all-Abraham Lincoln.**

These characteristics of faith should be possessed by all who aspire to be leaders with a difference as the greatest need of our country at the dawn of a new millennium and indeed other third world countries is leadership, because with true leaders every mountain becomes surmountable!

## **UNITY IN DIVERSITY**

In Genesis 11: 1-9 we read “And the whole earth was of one language, and of one speech. And it came to pass, as they journeyed from the east, that they found a plain in the land of Shinar; and they dwelt there. And they said one to another, Go to let us make brick, and burn them throughly. And they had brick for stone, and slime had they for mortar. And they said Go to let us build us a city and a tower, whose top may reach unto heaven; and let us make us a name, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth. And the LORD came down to see the city and the tower, which the children of men builded. And the LORD said Behold, the people is one, and they have all one language; and this they begin to do and now nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined to do. Go to let us go down and there confound their language, that they may not understand one another's speech. So the LORD scattered them abroad from thence upon the face of all the earth: and they left off building the city. Therefore is the name of it called Babel; because the LORD did there confound the language of all the earth: and from thence did the LORD scatter them abroad upon the face of all the earth”.KJV.

Here we see a people so united in their goal contrary to the will and command of God to “multiply and replenish the earth” that God said if they are not stopped, nothing will be impossible for them which they have imagined to do. God had to cause a division among the people by scattering their language that they stopped understanding each other and could build no more. There is great power in unity. No wonder Jesus had to pray for unity among Christians “Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe

on me through their word; That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me". John 17:20-23.KJV.

Unity in diversity is a dire need in a country like Nigeria. Nigeria is known for having a high proportion of languages in comparison to other African countries. Of an estimated 2,058 languages in Africa, over 500 are thought to be spoken in Nigeria, a country with an estimated population of about 140million and 774 officially recognized local government areas and 36 states and a federal capital territory. The official language is English (first taken to Nigeria by European traders before colonization), used in educational, governmental, business, the media, and other official domains, but multilingualism is common among Nigerians through daily interaction and trade.

In the northern part of the country is the predominant Hausa-Fulani who are predominantly Muslim in practice and culture and the remaining over 250 ethnic groups referred to as minority tribes in the north due to the fact that they individually account for a small percentage of the population as compared with the Hausa-Fulani ethnic group.

## NIGERIA FACTS AND FIGURES

### BASIC FACTS

<b>Official name</b>	Federal Republic of Nigeria
<b>Capital</b>	Abuja
<b>Area</b>	923,768 sq km 356,669 sq mi

### PEOPLE

<b>Population</b>	131,859,730 (2006 estimate)
<b>Population growth</b>	
Population growth rate	2.38 percent (2006 estimate)
Projected population in 2025	206,165,946 (2006 estimate)
Projected population in 2050	356,523,597 (2006 estimate)

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**Population density**

145 persons per sq km (2006 estimate)

375 persons per sq mi (2006 estimate)

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**Urban/rural distribution**

Share urban

47 percent (2003 estimate)

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Share rural

53 percent (2003 estimate)

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**Largest cities, with population**

Lagos

13,427,000 (2000 estimate)

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Ibadan

1,731,000 (2000 estimate)

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Ogbomosho

711,900 (1995 estimate)

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Kano

657,300 (1995 estimate)

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Oshogbo

465,000 (1995 estimate)

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**Ethnic groups**

Hausa, Fulani, Yoruba, and Igbos

71 percent

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NOTE: The Hausa and Fulani live mostly in the north, the Yoruba in the southwest, and the Igbos in the southeast.

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Other groups

29 percent

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## Languages

English (official), Hausa, Yoruba, Igbo, Fulfulde, other indigenous languages

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## Religious affiliations

Muslim 50 percent

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Christian 40 percent

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Indigenous beliefs 10 percent

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## HEALTH AND EDUCATION

### Life expectancy

Total 47.1 years (2006 estimate)

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Female 47.7 years (2006 estimate)

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Male 46.5 years (2006 estimate)

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**Infant mortality rate** 97 deaths per 1,000 live births (2006 estimate)

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**Population per physician** 3,715 people (2004)

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**Population per hospital bed** 599 people (1990)

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### Literacy rate

Total 70.7 percent (2005 estimate)

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Female 63.8 percent (2005 estimate)

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Male	77.8 percent (2005 estimate)
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<b>Education expenditure as a share of gross national product (GNP)</b>	0.7 percent (1999-2000)
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<b>Number of years of compulsory schooling</b>	9 years (2002-2003)
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<b>Number of students per teacher, primary school</b>	42 students per teacher (2002-2003)
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## GOVERNMENT

### Form of government

Federal Republic; An elected president took office on 29 May 1999, ending 15 years of military rule in Nigeria.

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<b>Head of state</b>	President
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<b>Head of government</b>	President
Legislature	Bicameral legislature

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	House of Representatives: 360 members
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	Senate: 109 senators
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<b>Voting qualifications</b>	Universal at age 18
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<b>Constitution</b>	5 May 1999
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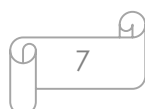
<b>Highest court</b>	Supreme Court
Armed forces	Army, Navy, Air Force

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Total number of military personnel	78,500 (2004)
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Military expenditures as a share of gross domestic product (GDP)	1.8 percent (2003)
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<b>First-level political divisions</b>	36 states and 1 federal capital territory
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## ECONOMY

<b>Gross domestic product (GDP, in U.S.\$)</b>	\$72.1 billion (2004)
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<b>GDP per capita (U.S.\$)</b>	\$560 (2004)
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### **GDP by economic sector**

Agriculture, forestry, fishing	16.6 percent (2004)
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Industry	56.9 percent (2004)
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Services	26.5 percent (2004)
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### **Employment**

Number of workers	46,716,497 (2004)
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### **Workforce share of economic sector**

Agriculture, forestry, fishing	3 percent (1995)
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Industry	22 percent (1995)
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Services	75 percent (1995)
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Unemployment rate	3.2 percent (1997)
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### **National budget (U.S.\$)**

Total revenue \$11,408 million (1995 estimate)

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Total expenditure \$11,722 million (1995 estimate)

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**Monetary unit** 1 naira (N), consisting of 100 kobo

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**Agriculture**

Palm oil, peanut oil, rubber, cocoa, cotton, sorghum, millet, maize (corn), yams, cassava, timber, and livestock

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**Mining**

Petroleum, natural gas, coal, tin, columbite, limestone, iron ore, lead, zinc, gypsum, barite, kaolin

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**Manufacturing**

Food products, brewed beverages, refined petroleum, iron and steel, motor vehicles, textiles, footwear, pulp and paper

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**Major exports**

Petroleum, cacao beans, rubber, shrimp

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**Major imports**

Machinery and transportation equipment, manufactured goods (mostly iron and steel, textiles, and paper products), chemicals, food products

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**Major trade partners for exports**

United States, Spain, Brazil, France, and India

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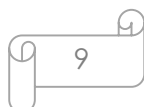
**Major trade partners for imports**

United Kingdom, United States, China, Germany, and France

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**ENERGY, COMMUNICATIONS, AND TRANSPORTATION**

**Electricity production**



Electricity from thermal sources	47.91 percent (2003 estimate)
Electricity from hydroelectric sources	52.09 percent (2003 estimate)
Electricity from nuclear sources	0 percent (2003 estimate)
Electricity from geothermal, solar, and wind sources	0 percent (2003 estimate)
<b>Number of radios per 1,000 people</b>	226 (1997)
<b>Number of telephones per 1,000 people</b>	8 (2004)
<b>Number of televisions per 1,000 people</b>	66 (2000 estimate)
<b>Number of Internet hosts per 10,000 people</b>	0.09 (2003)
<b>Daily newspaper circulation per 1,000 people</b>	24 (1996)
<b>Number of motor vehicles per 1,000 people</b>	12 (1997)
<b>Paved road as a share of total roads</b>	31 percent (1999)

**Note**

Figures may not total 100 percent due to rounding.

Faced with the reality of an overwhelming population of the Hausa-Fulani ethnic group who are bent on controlling the lives of the so-called minority tribes how can we forge ahead successfully without being slaves in our own nation and how can we prevent our children from suffering tomorrow? Let me make a few suggestions:

1. Let us revive our interest in education. It is one of our strongest weapons.
2. Let us encourage interaction between our children and younger ones in spite of tribal affiliation as long as we are Christians in this country

3. Let us be our brother's keeper by showing genuine Christian love and forgetting our differences and holding to what we have in common
4. Let us promote a culture of strategic and calculative communication among all the so-called minority tribes
5. Let us work on and generate data of Christians in particular professional fields and in politics and streamline how they can raise others to take over from them. Mentorship is crucial to bridging the generational gap we are having. Developing a GALI website in this respect will be essential.
6. Let us set up implementation committees in every state to follow up on the aims and objectives of GALI and the above suggestions and periodically report progress or otherwise to the national body
7. I suggest a retreat for all clergymen and all in leadership positions from the minorities to sensitize them on political and economic consciousness so that they in turn can sensitize and win their congregations over for the massive transformation of this nation for the better.



## UNITED WE STAND, DIVIDED WE FALL

**THE MOTTO, UNITED WE STAND, DIVIDED WE FALL** of the July 1942 flag-cover campaign of the United States, has been in popular use since the time of the American Revolution. It originated in the fourth verse of a 1768 patriotic ballad, *The Liberty Song*, by John Dickinson.

During the Civil War, the phrase became a rallying cry for the Union cause. By the early 20th century, labor unions had taken up the slogan as a call for solidarity in the struggle for better working conditions.

In World War II, United We Stand invoked not just American patriotism but unity among the Allied nations, as expressed by Queen Wilhelmina of the Netherlands in her address to the U.S. Congress on August 5, 1942: "United we stand, and united we will achieve victory."

Most recently, in the aftermath of the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, the phrase United We Stand reemerged along with the flag as Americans confronted a new national crisis.

It should be obvious to all now that none of the minority tribes in Nigeria, can come out alone and single-handedly win elections without the help of the other ethnic groups. What has made us loose in many respects especially here in the north is because we allowed ourselves to be fragmented hence we could not speak with one voice to be heard. Our strength is in our unity. United We Stand But Divided We Fall. This reminds me of the story of some people who were travelling from where I currently stay Mubi, Adamawa State to Cameroon via the Sahuda road and they came across a gang of robbers who stopped their vehicle and asked them to lie down. One of the gentlemen saw an opportunity to defeat the robbers since they were not all having weapons. He quickly ran and grabbed the gang leader who was with the machine gun and pinned him to the ground with all his might and cried out to his fellow passengers "please, come and help me, I have gotten him..." But nobody came. How sad it was that none of the passengers came to help this man, if they did, they would have defeated the robbers that day! Because nobody came to his aid, that gallant gentleman paid dearly for his courage against the robbers who gathered around him and overpowered him! That is exactly what we do to each other when we refuse to unite and stand by each other in time of need. The time has come to forget political party affiliations and all sentiments and work for the cause of Christ and the progress of Nigeria. Remember it is only "When the righteous are in authority the people rejoice but when

the wicked beareth rule the people mourn". Proverbs 29:2.KJV. It does not matter how good an unbeliever is, the Bible refer to them as wicked and said categorically that when they are in power the people mourn.

## **NIGERIA: THE WAY FORWARD**

Is God still interested in Nigeria? Does God care about the plight of the minorities especially in northern Nigeria and the Niger-Delta who are like sheep without a shepherd? Is God in Politics and human Government?

Right from the beginning of time there had always existed a relationship between God and man, the heaven and the earth, the religious and the secular. God made heaven his abode and the earth His Footstool. "Thus saith the LORD, The heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool: where is the house that ye build unto me? and where is the place of my rest?" Isaiah 66:1.KJV.

We are fearfully and wonderfully made by God. Psalm 139:14b. God made us so special that:

1. Although the human body is made from Iron, Salt, Iodine, Phosphorus, lime, Calcium and other chemicals whose entire cost today may not be more than Ten thousand naira (N10,000), science has not been able to combine these elements to produce a living human cell
2. He endowed man with attributes having created him in His own image, which could have made him not only a knowing, thinking and creative person but also an immortal one, before the fall in the garden of Eden. Man had a spirit, soul and body. Indeed the statistics of man's bodily equipment alone so far discovered by science is staggering. Man's body... *has 263 bones; 600 muscles; 970 miles of blood vessels; 400 cups on the tongue for taste; 20,000 hairs in the ears to tune to all sounds...10 million nerves and branches...20 million miles that suck food as it goes through the intestines; 600 million air cells to the lungs that inhale 2,400 gallons of air daily; and a telephone system that relays to the brain instantly any known sound,taste,sight,touch or smell. The heart beats 4,200 times an hour and pumps 12 tons of blood daily* (Dake, 1991,p.618).
3. God also created man as an intelligent being, equipped with articulate speech or oral language setting him above other creations. In fact man had the privilege of naming the animals and naming the human being made from him-the woman.

With all these endowment God intended for man to exercise Divine rule here on earth but man was deceived by satan and came the fall ending the dispensation of **Innocence (Incipient theocracy)**. Other ages or dispensations that follow include, **age of conscience or mortality**(Genesis 3:22-24); **Beginning of civilization and age of human Government**(Genesis 4); **the dispensation of promise and patriarchal Government**(Genesis 12 to Exodus 12:37); **Theocracy and dispensation of law**(Exodus 13 to Deuteronomy); **Government by Judges and Military Chieftains**(Judges to 2Samuel); **True kingship or Monarchy**(2Samuel to 2Chronicles); **Post Babylonian system of Government**(2Chronicles, Jeremiah, Malachi, etc); **Inter-Testament Governments; Human Government after Pentecost under the dispensation of Grace**. Man has consistently failed in all these ages and dispensations but yet God has also found righteous men who pleased him in all ages as the scripture declares "nevertheless he left not himself without witness..."Acts 14:17.

Nigeria needs these "witnesses" now more than ever who will use their godly endowments for the progress of the nation and sacrifice all it takes for a brighter future for the nation. I seize this opportunity to tell every Nigerian at home and in the diaspora that there is hope for the future. Oppression will not last forever. "Weeping may endure for a night but joy cometh in the morning." Psalm 30:5.

May I conclude this message by saying there are three categories of people on earth:

1. Those who don't know what is happening
2. Those who watch things happen
3. **Those who make things happen**

May we make a glorious new Nigeria happen by being of one mind and purpose as Christians in this country in spite of our Diversity for United We Stand But Divided We Fall.

Thank you for listening and God Bless Nigeria.



Rev(Dr) P.H. Bamaiyi  
08060924570

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