

**Waste Pollution and Waste Management in Aba:
A Religio- Ethical Response**

By

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Abstract

The amount of waste generated daily in Aba has been on the increase due to increase in human population, poor town planning and urbanization. Wastes are indiscriminately dumped in the streets, roads, highways, and markets or even burned in open fires instead of incinerating plants. This act results to pollution which can cause hygienically and environmental problems. The research adopted descriptive and analytical methodology. The study highlighted the neglect of religious ethics and environmental ethics. The study observed improper waste disposal and management practices and inadequate waste disposal facilities and irrational behavior of some dwellers that led to environmental waste pollution. The study therefore recommended that public enlightenment programmes to inculcate attitudinal change should be organized in Aba. Religious ethics on the environment should be taught to the adherents of religions. The researcher concluded that the knowledge and imbibing of sound religious ethical code and conduct will help in reduction of waste and proper management of waste in Aba.

Introduction

The amount of waste generated daily has been on the increase due to the increasing human population, poor town planning and urbanization. Waste materials are generated from manufacturing processes, industries and municipal solid wastes (MSW). Municipal solid waste is defined as organic waste, durable goods, non durable goods, containers and packaging, food scraps and inorganic wastes from residential, commercial more especially the various markets in Aba and industrial sites.

The management of these wastes is one of the major environmental challenges and concerns in the world today. Humans and their various activities with avid changes in their lifestyles and consumption patterns have led to increasing dimension in solid waste generation. The need for waste management becomes a necessity of life. Waste managers should employ their wealth of knowledge and expertise in handling of solid, liquid, gaseous and radioactive wastes. Waste is monthly dumped in the streets, roads, highways or even burned in open fires instead of incinerating plants. This act results to pollution which can cause hygienically and environmental problems.

For improving on this situation, waste management concepts have to be designed. Waste pollution of the environment is a threat to human health that requires great attention through public enlightenment and education, Educating waste managers and custodians will help in improving the efficiency of the waste management system and reduce the possibility of incurring health hazards and environmental risks. Indiscriminate dumping of waste and improper management can result to serious health problems such as ill health, pollution of air, soil and water. In the same vein improper waste management and disposal pose threats to dwellers in proximity to waste dumps and waste receptacles. Education and awareness in the area of waste management is important in order to impart attitudinal change among Aba urban dwellers. (Ogwueleka, 2009, p 174).

The purpose of waste management is to provide sanitary living conditions that will reduce the amount of waste that are produced in the society. So

the role of a sustainable waste management is to reduce the amount of waste that is discharged into the environment by reducing the amount of waste generated.

Ethically, the beauty of any environment is predicated on the good sanitary condition. When an environment is clean, the inhabitants maintain healthy living but when an environment is dirty the lives of citizenry are threatened and ravaged by sicknesses and diseases. Religious ethics abhors destruction of the environment through waste pollution. The religious ethical maxim is "cleanliness is next to godliness". God cannot be associated with dirty environment. Human action is always the critical element in environmental waste pollution. Visitors to the city of Aba are always faced with a dirty polluted environment. The stench from the decomposed waste pollutes the air. Investors cannot settle to do business in an unhealthy environment. The dwellers are prone to diseases related to poor hygiene such as acute upper respiratory tract infections, diarrhea. Measles, shigella, dysentery, malaria, Lassa fever, typhoid fever, cholera and viral hepatitis A to mention but a few (Cunningham 2002, p 58) However, despite the efforts of the government at making Aba environs clean, some dwellers seem to be careless about their environment. Instead of using the refuse receptacles, they prefer dumping wastes at places they considered convenient to them. People seem not to be aware of the interrelatedness of dirty environment and diseases.

Against this background, the study intends to examine the religio-ethical implications of waste pollution and management in Aba, so that the residents can imbibe the culture of proper waste disposal and in turn ensure healthy environment for the people and business to thrive because there is no salvation outside the environment.

Definition of Concepts

The researcher briefly explained relevant terms to this discourse for clearer understanding of such terms as waste, pollution, waste management and religious ethics.

1. Waste

Waste is unavoidable by-product of most human activities, and it includes all items that people no longer have any use for and intend to get rid of or have already discarded (Oyeniya 2011, p 5)

Udoessien (2003) defines waste as substance that is semi solid or liquid unwanted by a particular individual or group of people at a particular time and place (p.194). Waste are substances produced in our daily activities ranging from consumption, recreational and production which are unwanted and no longer useful to us.

Teme (2008, p. 20) says waste refer to any substance or article that is required to be disposed of as being broken, worn out, contaminated, or otherwise spoiled.

2. Pollution

Pollution is the “release of potentially harmful substances into the environment”. (Uchegbu 2002, p. 47). Durrenberger (1973) defines pollution “as the alteration of the physical, chemical, or biological properties of water air, or a discharge of any substance into water or air that adversely affect the users (p. 182).

Santra (2003) asserts that pollution means the presence of undesirable substance in any segment of environment, primarily due to human activity, discharging by-products which are harmful to man and other organisms (p. 185)

Furthermore, Udoessien (2003) defines pollution as the unacceptable state of the environment resulting from man’s direct or indirect activities and due to the generation, release and/ or eventual addition of contaminants, until a concentration or level is reached which is toxic, harmful or a nuisance to life or man, animal or plants in the affected environment (p. 194).

3. Waste Management

Waste management refers to the act to maintain acceptable environmental quality, sound public health and creation of aesthetic value.

Waste management is the collection, transport, processing, recycling or disposal and monitoring of waste materials. The purpose of waste management is to provide sanitary living conditions to reduce the amount of waste that enters or leaves the society and encourage the reuse of waste within the society.

Solid waste management is a polite term for garbage management. The congregation of humans in communities and societies depicts that waste will continue to be generated. Agricultural wastes, commercial and household wastes in large quantity prompting for effective ways to manage in order to avoid the pollution of the environment. Solid wastes are all discarded, solid and semi- solid wastes, including garbage, trash, refuse, paper, rubbish, ashes, construction and demolition wastes, discarded home appliances, manure, vegetable or semi- solid wastes and other substances or material resulting from various community activities. (Ramachar, et al 2012 p. 7).

Solid wastes generated from Aba urban dwellers and various markets and industries are usually bulky, posing great challenge to the society in form of blocked drainage, littering of streets, air and water pollution and health related diseases. In order to ensure a proper collection, transportation, treatment, recycling and disposal of solid wastes, the issue of efficient service delivering in solid wastes management is unavoidable. According to Eberinwa (2010) the needs for proper solid waste management are to preserve the activities of the environment and ensure favorable living and working conditions for man, to avoid pollution by not directly or indirectly altering the physical, biological and thermal properties of any part of the environment by allowing such refuse to accumulate in excessive or dangerous amount or to create a condition which is hazardous to public health and safety or welfare to animals and plants, and to try to reduce the incidence of epidemics of available diseases, which often results from

failure or delay in disposing wastes. Ilonya (2011) adds that the component of solid waste management includes solid waste generation, solid waste evacuation and solid waste disposal.

4. Religious Ethics

Ayantayo (2009) defines religious ethics as ethics related to religious beliefs and practices, religious beliefs are evident in religious doctrine, dogma, creed, conviction and principles while religious practices encompass various religious activities, such as worship, fellowship, communion, prayer, offering and alms giving to mention but a few.

Religious ethics according to Singer in Nwankwo (2017) is conception of right conduct and good living that are derived from or influenced by religious belief.

Environmental Ethics and Religio- Ethical World Views

Philosophers, Religious ethicists and environmental ethicists have adopted ethical positions with regard to nature. Religious of the world have ethical principles on the environment and nature. Environmental ethics has been approached through anthropocentrism, animal liberation rights, biocentrism and ecocentrism. These schools of environmental ethics disagree mainly on the scope of the duty humans have towards other creatures.

Furthermore, from an anthropocentric (human centered) point of view, humans have a moral duty only towards one another, any duty which seems to be towards other species or entities is only an indirect duty towards other people. There is no ethical implication in the relationship between humans and nature.

Animal liberation/ right theory asserts that the notion of rights and duties should be extended to the animal and biological kingdom. The supporters of animal rights argue that, like humans, some non human animals have consciousness of self awareness and a capability of reasoning. Therefore they have rights that precede other interests. Biocentrism recognizes the

intrinsic value of life and living beings, regardless of their instrumental value for humankind. It maintains that all life forms are moral entities to which humans should accord equal moral consideration.

The Eco centrists advocate that environmental ethics should give due consideration to ecosystem, including their non- living natural objects. Forests, lakes, wetlands, hills, and so on are valuable in their own right and deserve moral consideration. Eco centrism expands the definition of what is a moral entity to include nature as a whole.

Moreover, the separation between worldly living and religion is the main root of environmental crisis. Scholars argue that religion helps to shape our attitudes towards nature and other human beings. Religious values and ethical beliefs form behavior towards others, including our relationship with all creatures alike. It is believed that environmental crisis is a religious or moral crisis and returning to religious traditions is the answer. Therefore, the time is more propitious to investigate the potential solutions of a particular religion toward mitigating the environmental crisis by developing more comprehensive environmental ethics for the earth community. Buddhism teaches that the idea of separateness is an illusion. The health of the whole is inseparably linked to the health of the parts and the health of the parts is inseparably linked to the health of the whole. This means that caring for the environment begins with caring for oneself.

Buddhist practice makes one feel that one's existence is no more important than any one's else. If one treats nature as a friend and teacher, one can be in harmony with other creatures and can appreciate the interconnectedness of all that lives. Buddhism teaches people to live simply and appreciate the natural cycle of life. Craving and greed only bring unhappiness, since demands for material possession can never be satisfied and people will always demand more, so threatening the environment. This is why a Buddhist solution to the environmental crisis begins with the individual (www.arcworld.org). Cleanliness was highly commended by Buddha both in the person and in the environment.

Hinduism believes that all living beings are sacred because they are parts of God and should be treated with respect and compassion. Perhaps, this explains why most Hindus are vegetarians because of their belief in sanctity of life. Even trees, rivers, and mountains are believed to have souls and should be honored and cared for. Consequently Hindus revere sacred rivers, mountains, forests, and animals and love to be close to nature. A Hindu sees the desecration of the land as pollution because environment is accepted as divine, earth is perceived as sacred mother. African Traditional Religion or African Indigenous religion is generally regarded to be intrinsically environmentally centered. This belief deifies religion and environment. The traditional African ecology is inseparably linked with traditional religion. Environmental protection is sanctioned by the creator God and the ancestors of the land. The breaking of any taboo incurs the anger of the ancestors (living dead), this made people conscious of good morals.

In Africa indigenous religion, much of the ritual is general toward pleasing or appeasing the spirits, the adherents are intent on attracting the blessings of good spirit and warding off destruction from evil spirit. Cosmic phenomena like eclipses and cataclysmic occurrence like thunder blast and earthquake are given a moral meaning even the very simple matter of cutting down a tree, or digging a foundation for a building demands the appropriate ritual to recognize the right of the spirit-world. This approach to the numinous is also holistic. There is no cutting off of the human from the natural world. Environment is not regarded as a raw material for human consumption, to be manipulated in whatever way people choose. Rather it is spirit dominated and saturated and as such must be respected. The environmental ethics of indigenous religion of Africa provide element for a contemporary environmental model or living in harmony with the natural world. It recognizes the importance of all life, including the life of all the organisms on the earth. It tends to preserve biological integrity within natural communities. It enhances mutual respect, reciprocity and caring with an urge to consider fellow beings alive and self and conscious

as human beings. A very central belief which seems consistent across African religious cultures and tradition is that the earth is a living conscious being that must be treated with and loving care. The adherents distinguish between their religious and secular life. Sacredness and profanity are separated, natural resources are seen as asset belonging to the community, and meant to be used according to human needs and preserve for posterity. Natural resource like water, forest and land are source of livelihood that met everyone's needs but were not meant for destruction. They were to be treated as renewable resources, various communities established links between their own continuity, protection of the environment and the presence of gods. The recognition of ancestor as living dead who relates with the community was paramount protection and respect was to be accorded to those areas where the spirits, gods and goddesses of the communities abode. Some economic value oriented trees, animals and birds were set apart for special protection as a "totem" of the community such protection was ensured through various myths and symbols built around them. The belief in spirit and the ancestor are fundamental beliefs. Kayode (1984) observed that the Mende people of Sierra Leone identify nature spirits as associated with river, hill, bushes and so on, such spirits are believed to be recognizable in anthropomorphic terms because they possess well marked human tastes, emotions and passions (p.20). Onuoha (2018, p12) agrees that African societies believes in spirits, that was why the early anthropologist who visited Africa brandished African religion an animistic religion. Africans believe that spirits live in trees, caves, hills and mountains, they also believe that shrines are the abode of the spirits. The belief in spirit among African people helps in instilling fear in the people thus engendering order and sanctity among the people.

Islamic religion opines that the utilization of the natural resources is the right and privilege of all people and all species. Hence, human should take every precaution to ensure the intrigues and rights of all others since they are equal partners on earth. Therefore, human should not abuse, misuse or distort the natural resources as each generation is entitled to own them in

an absolute sense. The right to utilize and harness natural resources which God (Allah) had granted man involves an obligation on human's part to conserve them both quantitatively and qualitatively. Man has no right to cause degradation of the environment and distort its intrinsic suitability for human life and settlement nor has he the right to exploit or use natural resources unwisely in such a way as to spoil the food basis and other sources of subsistence for living beings or to destruction and defilement. The Islamic world view considers man as an instrument of God's will to whom everything belongs.

The Religion of Islam attaches the greatest importance to the conservation as a whole. For the environment and all the living beings within it are created by God. Humans have been entrusted with conserving and developing the environment. The conservation of the environment is therefore not only a human obligation but also a religious obligation. One of the most important aspect of protecting the environment and ecology is the conservation of trees, forests, woodland, countryside and all the living creatures whose habitats are in such areas.

A further significant principle of Islam that relate to the environment is the prohibition concerning thoughtless consumption, that is, wastefulness and extravagance. Wastefulness is not only the thoughtless consumption of natural resources, but disrespect towards God, the creator and owner of all the bounties. For this reason drinking and eating of licit food is encouraged but wasting of food is forbidden. Islam considers cleanliness to be the fundamentals of belief. It thus makes a direct connection between belief and cleanliness. Muslims should scrupulously avoid doing anything to upset or disturb others in any place or in any circumstances.

To pollute or dirty the city in which one lives or the town or village, waters, air or environment at large and to scatter rubbish, refuse and wastes is both a sin and extremely discourteous. It is lack of thought both for oneself and for others. For thoughtful people know that others will be disturbed by any place they have dirtied, and the bounties of nature will be spoiled. Muslims are aware that it is an attribute of the believer and a sign of maturity not to

live scattered nutshells, bottles, cans, wrappers and bits of paper and other wastes in the streets, picnic areas or to do anything that will disturb other people or even the animals. Islamic values and ethics are considered unalterable, accurate, and Muslims are obliged to obey what God has ordered. The environment is God's creation and to protect it is to preserve its values as a sign of the creator. The component parts of nature are entities in continuous praise of their creator (Allah). More so, all the laws of nature are made by the creator and based on the concept of the absolute continuity of existence. The Quran acknowledges that human kind is not the only community to live in this world. Therefore, Islamic environmental ethic is based on the concept that all human relationships are established on justice and equity. The environment is not the service of the present generation alone, rather, it is the gift of God to all the ages, past, present and future. The environment is God's creation and to protect it is to preserve its values as a sign of the creator.

Judaism teaches care for the "earth" in order to preserve that which God has created. Psalms 24:1 noted that the "earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof". This is a dramatic assertion of god's ownership of the land. Any act that damages the earth is an offence against the property of God. The Jewish concept of 'Baltashchit' which means "do not destroy" forbids needless destruction. Judaism emphasizes the need to preserve the natural resources and generate new ones for future generations. Humans are encouraged to fill and to tend the land and to become the earth's stewards. Judaism abhors exploitation of the land and natural resources or nature. Ecology needs to be corrected with human justice. There is an increasing consciousness about human responsibility in relation to the natural world. Christianity has strongly influenced the philosophical perspective in contemporary western society, even among those who are not religious adherents. It is difficult if not possible to evaluate western values and behaviors without assessing the historical contributions of these pervasive and powerful traditions (Ignacimuthu 2010 p. 39). Christianity presents the view that each part of the environment is something precious to God and

God is pleased with the results of his creative handiwork. God values all of his creation, the individual members of creation as well as the underlying processes and relations among them. So honoring the creation and environment is invariably an honor to God.

The Bible sees environment as God's self revelation and self- witnessing. Environment is an avenue through which God is speaking to his people daily and should be treated as sacred, with love, reverence and affection. The Christian religion presents the land and the earth as the specific blessings of God to humans (Gen. 12:1-7, 15:7-18). The earth is given to till, keep, possess, cherish, to work and to enjoy, to guard and to preserve, to care and to nourish. The environment is showcased as something God loves, cares for, adorns and enriches and it is the responsibility of humans to work at it with sense of preservation.

The earth is never thought of as rebellious or recalcitrant, never as needing to be conquered or subjugated. Humans are appointed as stewards and representative of God to take good care of the earth (Genesis 1:26-28). This stewardship positions humankind in harmony with environment, standing before God and ultimately responsible to God for their management of human affairs and of environment. Even though the human is separated from the rest of creation by being created in God's own image (Genesis 1:27), human dependence on natural world, and the interdependence of the elements within the natural world itself are not overlooked (Genesis 1:29-30) (Ignacimuthu p.51). Furthermore, in the Taoist perspective, the question arises on how should human relate to the environment? To understand the Taoist conceptions of environment, one must start with the notion of Tao. Using a mystical and poetical language, Tao gives the rich but at times amorphous representation of how environment works. The Tao is a Chinese philosophical concept which is nameless, intangible, empty, simple, all pervasive, eternal, life sustaining and nourishing. Tao stands for the ultimate reality or environment. It is not anything like creator God in Christianity or Judaism, rather it is a depersonalized concept of environment. Tao by virtue of its infinity rejects

all names. Tao nourishes, sustains and transforms beings. Man, being a member of beings, is without exception eternally linked to Tao as well as everything else.

Tao, being all embracing is impartial. Everything is treated on equal basis and footing. Human receives no special attention or status from Tao. Everything is part of the rhythm of environment.

Humans and the environment are inherently connected whole and that other beings, animated or otherwise, are ontologically as well as axiological equal, the question of how humans should behave or act towards his natural surroundings is readily answerable. Things simply work in accordance with the laws of environment. Anyone who tries to do things violating the laws of the environment is doomed to failure. So there is the need to act in accordance with natural environment.

Christian Theology of The Environment

The wanton destruction of species, degradation of the environment, ecological crisis and exploitation of nature led Christian theologians, ethicists and environmentalists to formulate a Bible based and ecologically friendly theology known as Christian theology of the environment.

Gnanakan (1996) applied Biblical texts in both Old and New Testament to reconstruct a proper theology of environment based on equality of all creations, relationship, care, stewardship and restoration and future renewal of creation through the sacrifice of Jesus. He suggests a theo centric relationship, eco-justice and equity between humans and non- humans. He enjoins the church to give proper attention to this issue by action instead of theory. He concludes that the church as ambassadors of Christ should be stewards of His creation.

Abe (2010) argues that humans though charged with the responsibility to take care of the earth sinned against the environment with pollution and degradation. He opines that despite this failure, God in his divine design intervened to ensure the sustenance of His elect people through the vicissitude of the wilderness episode and eventual settlement in the

promise land. He (God) did all that was necessary to create steward environments which protected his elect people from disease and mortality. The people of God enjoyed good health, security and deliverance in their domain. He beckoned on theologians and religious leaders in privilege positions to educate, sensitize and charge both the government and the entire citizenry of the nation with the crucial need to realize conducive environments for appreciable developments.

Olanisebe (2010) opines that God's intention as regards dominion and subjugation in Genesis 1:28 is for the elements of the environment to serve as sources of food for human consumption and resources for human's prosperity and general well being. He concludes that it will be an irony, if instruction is given for the destruction of the environment that is intended to serve as food and to supply strength and vitality to human.

Thus to subdue the earth should not be misconstrued as exploitation, but rather as God's stewards, men have to take good care of God's creation and what God has entrusted to them by using and maintaining the environment in such a way that the earth, plant life, animal life and human beings can co-exist in a harmonious relationship that promotes God's intention in man's relationship to the environment which is stewardship instead of disrespect or abuse of the environment.

Ango (2010) adumbrates that concept of creation and redemption are two important concept that defines man's relationship with God and the understanding of which determines human's response to God's commands, especially in relation to the environment. The bible teaches that the universe including all matter had a beginning and came into existence through the will of the eternal God. Man as the steward of God's creation is responsible to implement the implication of the present phase of redemption in the creation by responsible interaction already caused by man's sinful action in the environment and to avoid and if possible, prevent further damage to the environment.

In the same vein, Iyede (2010) argues that from the examination of Deut. 20:19-20 and its relevance in addressing the issue of global warning which

is a great damage to the balance in the ecosystem that affects the atmospheric temperature. He outlined six (6) points:

- a) That Deuteronomy has a strong interest in balancing ecological system.
- b) That tree preservation is not only sociological but ecologically significant.
- c) That Deuteronomy was not written from scientific point of view but theological, yet contains instructions that are globally relevant to environment issues.
- d) That tree preservation is one way of reducing the atmospheric temperature by assimilating the carbon dioxide.
- e) That presenting war is harmful both to humankind and environment especially in the destruction of natural environment, example is the case of Hiroshima.
- f) Government effort should be complemented by tree planting and developing of green cities.

Enioghae (2010) argues that in Genesis account of creation, flesh food were not part of God's original providence. Both Adam and Eve and indeed the entire animal kingdom were to subsist on fruits and vegetables. There was no need for livestock industry in order to meet the need for meat consumption. God's intention was that the human race should subsist wholly upon the production of the earth (fruits and vegetables)

Genesis 1:29 is a critical text in the understanding of human beings diet before the fall. The record of creation closes with another divine utterance which regulates in broad and general terms the relation of human and animal to the vegetable world. It is obvious that the plants are destined for food to man and beast. It would be appropriate to interfere that at the beginning both humans and animals were to eat vegetables (vegetarians). There was no painful destruction of life by humans and animals in order to satisfy dietetic need. It is human activity that inflicts harsh and often irreversible damage on the environment and on critical resources. If not

checked, many of the current practices put at serious risk the future that everyone wish for human society, the plant and animal kingdoms. There is the need to be good stewards of creation at least for self preservation. The Scripture is clear that the creator Himself would ultimately "... destroy those who destroy the earth" (Revelation 11:18).

Abodurin (2010) comments, that the survival of humans depend on the resources of the environment. It is the duty of the humans to protect the environment from destruction. What a precious privilege of the Israelites having Jehovah walking in their midst. What a punitive purity of conduct and refined delicacy in their personal and domestic habits, if he was in their midst to secure victory over their enemies, he was also there to demand cleanliness and holiness of life. The reason for such ritual cleansing is given. Yahweh walked in the midst of the camp to protect his people and to deliver their enemies into their hands. The camp was therefore to be kept holy lest Yahweh depart. Great care had to be taken to cover human excrement. This was both a prescription of hygiene and cultic of religious requirement. This is the theological valve of anti-pollution laws.

Adelakun (2010) reflects on the environmental problems in Nigeria. He claims that Nigeria has been blessed with good land, weather, water and various mineral resources such as crude oil, gold, agricultural products and so on. These resources instead of being blessings are causing more troubles than pleasure for humans. Matthew 6:10b that is part of Jesus prayer is re-read in a way that it exposes the will of the creator of the earth for human and how to take care of the environment. If God's will is done in heaven, then heaven is orderly, peaceful and suitable for living. Jesus wanted the earth to be like heaven, for that is the intention of God who created it, anything against this is a sin against him. This implies that Christians should refute the idea that after all, the world is passing away and it is not in need of salvation.

The earth should be seen as their "father's" property. If others are polluting the environment, Christians should not but rather preserve and conserve it. The danger of climate change has been highlighted by scientists and doing

the will of God on earth requires a total obedience to his laws. Obeying his laws will include obeying his laws on environment.

Ademola (2010) admits that both humans and earth are part of God's creation that are deeply interlinked realities. God placed humans in the garden and told them to till and care for it. This is an act of stewardship. Stewardship of God's creation is implicit in the image of God and explicit in their commandment "we bless and keep God's creation and he blesses and keeps us". The capability and responsibility to affect, modify and control many aspects of the ecosystem is stewardship. As responsible caretakers of God's creation, Christians must use the earth, the atmosphere, the land and the water so as to maintain their purity and to conserve and renew their system as intended by God. The earth is not a commodity to be bought and sold to fulfill greed and exploitation. The people of God, as part of their obedience to the Lord of the earth must restore earth-keeping as a part of the stewardship of his creation. If God is the creator of everything, then God is the owner of all things. "The earth is the Lord's and everything in it, the world and all who live in it". (Psalm 24:1). This means that the environment belongs to God. The rivers of water, the ocean, the fields and the mountains and even the air belong to God. Christians are stewards of God's creation. God gave humanity the responsibility of being the ruler under God's sovereign supervision. It was the steward's responsibility to take care of and even improve the assets, which belonged to the master that was left under his care. Since humans have been appointed as stewards of God's earth, it is their responsibility to take care of it in the best way by protecting and preserving it. If humans especially Christians help to keep the environment clean, they will be reversing the work of Satan. Therefore, the Christian attitude towards the environment is protection from further injury, rebuilding and restoration of that which has been damaged and destroyed.

Collins (1995) comments on the pollution of the world and injustices that the present generation are inflicting on the future generation. According to him, people whose life span the second half of the 20th century will be

among the most despised and cursed generation in the history of humankind. The reason why they would be hated by the future generation is simple. Historically, they are part of the most destructive phase of human history.

This emphatic statement reveals the extent of damage and maltreatment of the earth in which human lives, juxtaposed with the social well beings of future generation of human beings who will inherit the earth. For the affluent, it is not enough to handover money and property to children and grandchildren without thinking about their future. There is need to live on earth an inheritance that is in a healthy condition. There must be care for the earth and social justice to the generations born and unborn. The protection of environment has become a necessity for the survival of human beings. If humans degrade the environment without real consideration of the future, invariably, the future will be bleak and there will be no sustainable development.

Ignacimuthu (2010) opines that the effect of environmental degradation is being felt all over the world through climate change, global warming, natural calamities and loss of biodiversity and so on. Environmental spirituality is on the realization of the intrinsic worth of the environment and the understanding that the environment is the heart of focus of our intellectual moral, aesthetic, psychological and spiritual lives. Environmental spirituality forbids humans abuse of natural resources, it prompts humans to act, to form nature clubs and to motivate people to work for clean and healthy environment. It makes human to respect, appreciate, protect and regenerate the environment. It evolves a love for nature and enables humans to use the gift of nature judiciously by avoiding waste and destruction.

Recommendations

1. The maintenance of environmental quality by avoiding waste pollution should be the concerted activities of all individuals, local communities,

trade unions, industries, government and nongovernmental organizations

2. Religious ethics should be applied by Aba inhabitants in order to enhance attitudinal change in waste management.
3. Attitudinal change could be achieved through public enlightenment in mass media, seminars, and workshops in the streets, parks, markets, schools, individual estates, churches and mosques.
4. Ethics of the environment should be enforced in Aba in order to salvage the environment from waste pollution.
5. Abia State Environmental protection Agency (ASEPA) should properly co-ordinate and protect the Aba urban environment in order to secure quality environment, adequate for good health and well being.
6. Religious ethics should be taught in churches, mosques, shrines to enable adherents of religions to imbibe the right attitude as stewards of the environment.

Conclusion

Improper disposal and mismanagement of waste enhance environmental pollution, environmental degradation, destruction of the ecosystems and a breeding place for rodents, rats, flies and vermin. The beauty of an environment lies on its good sanitary condition.

This is so because when an environment is clean, the lives of the citizenry are not threatened by illness and disease. But Aba presented a different scenario with dirty environment saddled with indiscriminate dumping of waste, poor sanitation, blocked drains, uncontrolled waste disposal and improper waste management. Waste pollution will continue if there are no attitudinal change both on the part of urban dwellers and environmental agents that are responsible for waste management. Environmental ethics is relevant in human decisions and activities. The knowledge, application and imbibing of sound religious ethical code of conduct will help in reduction of waste and proper management of waste in Aba.

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