

Paul's Concept of Grace in Ephesians 2:5 Concerning Covid-19 Pandemic Vaccination in a Post-Pandemic Nigeria Context

LAWAL, Owolabi Joseph PhD

Lecturer in Old Testament

Department of Religious Studies

Federal University of Kashere, Gombe State

+2348034950299

josephowolabilawal@gmail.com

&

Babalola Jacobs, Akintoye PhD

Lecturer in Christian Ethics

Department of Religious Studies

Federal University of Kashere, Gombe State

+2348036087177

revdrbabalolajacob2006@gmail.co

Abstract

Scholars like Martin Luther and Justin S Holcomb among others have written volumes on Grace in the New Testament, portraying Paul as an apostle of Grace. Consequently, not very much has been written on the doctrine of grace in a post-pandemic era. Therefore, the paper is interested in Paul's concept of Grace in Ephesians 2:5 and also, examined the outbreak of pandemics in Africa. The covid19 Pandemic is a global and social phenomenon. Since the World Health Organization (WHO) declared the COVID-19 outbreak a pandemic back in March 2020, the virus has claimed more than 2.5 million lives globally. The pandemic has impacted almost every corner of life, causing global economies to stall, changing the way we work and interact with our loved ones, and stretching healthcare systems to the limit. The Nigerian government have been forced to implement harsh restrictions on human activity to curb the spread of the virus. The paper

employs a documentation method for data gathering. Primary data is sourced from the Bible and relevant commentaries, while secondary data is sourced from the existing published works on the COVID-19 pandemic and vaccination in Nigeria. Therefore, the paper makes recommendations for the Church cum Christians to follow the guidelines and medical protocols on vaccination despite holding on to the belief in the doctrine of grace as espoused by Paul.

Keywords: Paul's concept of grace in Ephesians 2:5, COVID-19 Pandemic, Vaccination, Post Pandemic era in Nigeria

Introduction

Grace means different things to different people during the Pandemic Era, this is true for those who understand the importance of grace in the face of COVID-19 in Nigeria. In light of the above statement, this paper shall examine the concept of grace in this Pauline epistle (Ephesians 2:5). Grace is simply defined as "undeserved love". In the Bible, we see grace as God's faithful love that moves him to forgive sins and protect us. It is his kind attitude toward sinners like us. It's not something in us. It's not a gift given to us in the sense of being something that's planted in us that somehow helps us gain a better standing with the Lord. Grace is a quality of God himself.¹

Grace is an essential element of Christian theological reflection. Primarily, the divine attribute or trait labelled "grace" refers to God's disposition and activity concerning Creation in general and toward human beings in particular. From the first chapters of Genesis to the last chapters of Revelation, Scripture bears witness to the fact that God creates things "good" and gives good things. God's grace is especially manifest in the divine promises and other gifts described in the Bible and realized over time. At the same time, the Scriptures show that human beings—made in the image of God—have a history of devaluing, forgetting, and even abusing those things that God has graciously given. Part of Christianity's doctrinal development, therefore, consists of attempts to describe the scope and sequence of God's

gracious regard and activity on behalf of a humanity prone to sin and rebellion.² Many scholars or authors have adopted Martin Luther's theology on the efficacy of "God's Grace". This is because Luther made the meaning and interpretation of grace simple and clear. Martin Luther's theology, therefore, can be fundamentally construed as the development of his thought regarding the nature of grace, the nature of God's favour and blessing bestowed upon undeserving human beings.³ The many dimensions of Luther's biblical teaching and theological reflection have, in the background a desire to understand God's grace most fully revealed in Jesus Christ. As such, Luther's concepts of the righteousness of God, justification by faith, the bound will, the distinction between law and gospel, the new obedience, the "happy exchange," and many related concepts are, at heart, attempts to describe what it is to have a God of grace.⁴

Most interpreters have rightly understood that in Luther's view, to have a gracious God means to have a God who does not require human beings to fulfil a set of prerequisites to receive God's gift in Christ or to reciprocate God's giving to continue receiving Christ and his benefits. For Luther, to have a God of grace means to believe and trust that through Jesus Christ, God has already met all prerequisites and fulfilled all reciprocations.⁵ On this point, Luther found himself breaking new ground (or recovering lost ground) in the understanding of divine grace. Luther "broke" with those theological forebears who taught that divine grace was, in one way or another, partly dependent on human willing and doing.⁶ For Luther, God graciously wills and works "all in all." Nevertheless, when Luther's many descriptions of what it is to "have a gracious God" are analyzed, a more nuanced understanding of the relationship between the One giving the gift and the ones receiving it begins to reveal itself. For Luther, faith—that gracious means through which God graciously bestows the righteousness of Christ—creates a dynamic rather than static experience of possessing and being possessed of a God of grace. Indeed, scrutinizing Luther's writings for descriptions of the *experience* of *sola gratia* continues to be a promising direction for future Luther research.⁷

Paul's Concept of Grace in Ephesians 2:5

This section examined the relevance and significance of grace in Paul's thought and how this can be applied during the pandemic in Nigeria, and to access Paul's discourse of Christians' hope on the grace of God as in the main text of this work. Grace can be such a forceful thought for Paul that he sometimes anthropomorphizes it. Hence in most of his writings during an emotional defence of his apostleship even though he had persecuted the church, he now enjoyed the grace of God, Paul follows it up by saying 'yet not I but the grace of God that was with me. According to Paul we do not ourselves live, in the face of the Covid-19 Pandemic in Nigeria, God does. Our sins completely neutralized the technical immunity we possessed by Adam, but the grace of God according to Paul qualified us to be saved and alive. Sin completely separated us from God, both spiritual, and in our eternal destiny. And yet the trespasses which Paul mentioned in verse 1 which is dead were not enough to stop God from making us alive and not consumed by any deadly diseases. Interestingly, we are made alive 'together with Christ. This includes the idea again that Jesus is alive. Now looking at the content of the passage below Paul's choice of words are very clear.

χάριτί ἐστε σῳσθαι. *by grace (not by merit) are ye partakers of the Messianic salvation!* an impassioned (hence expressed in the second person), parenthetical reminding the readers of the *divine basis* of the salvation which had accrued to them, designated by **συνεζωποίησε**; a reminding, which was very natural for the apostle in general (for its tenor was the sum of his doctrine and the constant echo of his own experience, 1 Corinthians 15:10), and more especially here, where he represents the quickening of believers as accomplished with the making alive of Christ, which could not but repel even the most distant thought of personal merit. In connection with the possession of the Messianic bliss is designated as an already accomplished fact, although it was before the Parousia (Colossians 3:3 f.) merely a possession in hope (Romans 8:24), and the final realization was yet future (Romans 5:10)⁸.

Ephesians 2:5. **καὶ ὄντας ἡμᾶς νεκροὺς τοῖς παραπτώμασιν**: *even when we were dead by our trespasses*. The condition of death in which we are by nature is now reaffirmed, and in a still more emphatic way than in Ephesians 2:1. The **καὶ** is not the copula, simply attaching one statement to another (Mey.), nor a mere repetition of the **καὶ** of the opening verse, nor = “also,” “also us” collectively (which would require **καὶ ἡμᾶς**), but the ascensive **καὶ**.⁹ It qualifies the **ὄντας** (while the **νεκροὺς** is thrown emphatically forward) and heightens the sense of the *greatness* of the Divine power—as a power operating on us when we were yet held fast in the state of inexorable death. The **τοῖς** defines the trespasses as those already mentioned in connection with that state of death, and so has much the sense of “our”. **συνεζ ωποποίησεν τῷ Χριστῷ**: *quickened us together with the Christ*. Some authorities insert **ἐν** before **τῷ Χριστῷ**; which is favoured so far by Lachm. and gets a place in the margin with WH and RV. But the mass of authorities omits it. The **συν-**, therefore, of the compound verb refers to the **Χριστῷ**, and the idea expressed is that of fellowship with Him, not the fellowship or comprehension of Jew and Gentile alike in the Divine act of quickening. Here again, the article probably designates Christ in His official relation to us. The *quickening* here in view is understood by some to refer to the first act in the raising of the dead at the great day; the following verbs **συνήγειρεν**, **συνεκάθισεν** being similarly understood in the literal sense, as referring proleptically to events that belong to the ultimate future.¹⁰ Thus the *standing* rather than the moral condition is supposed to be primarily in view, the idea being that when Christ was raised from the dead we also as members of His body were raised in principle with Him so that the resurrection of the future which we await will be simply the application to the individual of what was accomplished once for all for the whole of His members then. It must be admitted that the analogous passage in Colossians 2:12-13, which associates the *quickening* with the forgiveness of trespasses and the blotting out of the hand-writing of ordinances, on the whole favours that interpretation. Looking, however, to the express and particular description of the worldly walk and the conversation in the lusts of the flesh, which is given in Ephesians 2:2-3, and which seems to explain

what is said in Ephesians 2:1 of the state of being “dead by trespasses and sins”; and having regard also to the application to the moral life which is made in the second half of the Epistle, most interpreters understand the *quickenings* here affirmed to be that of regeneration—the communication of spiritual life, *by grace have ye been saved*. So, the Revised Version, while the American Version is content with “are ye saved”. The idea is that they were saved and continued to be so. The **χάριτι** is put emphatically first “by grace it is that ye have been saved”. The parenthetical mention of *grace* is in place.¹¹

Ephesians 2:5. **Καὶ**, *even*) This is connected with *you, when you were*, Ephesians 2:1, both, Jews and Gentiles. *hath quickened together with Christ; by grace, ye are saved*) Quickening precedes the “raising” [Ephesians 2:6], and ch. Ephesians 1:20; the raising up presupposes life. We were made alive at the time when Christ was made alive; comp. 2 Corinthians 5:15, concerning the death of Christ, and so of the other steps. But when *faith* is received, all those things are applied to man by God, and they are considered ratified by man. The apostle, enumerating this very order of salvation, shows that *grace* is the beginning and the end in this and the eighth verse, and sometimes he uses indiscriminately the first and second person, on account of the equal footing of the Jews and Gentiles. Hence, He is the fountainhead, Ephesians 2:6-10.¹² Paul's theology of Grace is clearly explained in Ephesians 2:5 'Made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions it is by grace you have been saved. Paul specifically emphasized that even when we were dead in sin yet his grace saved us. The construction here in "God, who is rich in mercy on account of the great love which he bears unto us, even being dead in sin, hath quickened us when we were in sin, but that he loved us then, and made provision for our salvation. Paul's mind uses full of the subject of salvation by grace, and he throws in this passage.

A short background of the Covid-19 Pandemic in Nigeria

On 31 December 2019, WHO was informed of cases of pneumonia of unknown cause in Wuhan City, China. A novel coronavirus was identified as the cause by Chinese authorities on 7 January 2020 and was temporarily named “2019-nCoV”. Coronaviruses

(CoV) are a large family of viruses that cause illnesses ranging from the common cold to more severe diseases. A novel coronavirus is a new strain that has not been previously identified in humans. The new virus was subsequently named the "COVID-19 virus". On 30 January 2020, Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, WHO Director-General declared the novel coronavirus outbreak a public health emergency of international concern (PHEIC), WHO's the highest level of alarm. At that time there were 98 cases and no deaths in 18 countries outside China.¹³

On 11 March 2020, the rapid increase in the number of cases outside China led the WHO Director-General to announce that the outbreak could be characterized as a pandemic. By then more than 118 000 cases had been reported in 114 countries, and 4291 deaths had been recorded.

By mid-March 2020, the WHO European Region had become the epicentre of the epidemic, reporting over 40% of globally confirmed cases. As of 28 April 2020, 63% of global mortality from the virus was from the Region. Since the first cases were reported, WHO has worked around the clock to support countries to prepare and respond to the COVID-19 pandemic. In the words of Dr Hans Henri P. Kluge, WHO Regional Director for Europe, "Through transparent knowledge-sharing, tailored support on the ground, and steadfast solidarity, we will beat COVID-19."¹⁴

Post-Pandemic Era in Nigeria

It is interesting to note that the Covid-19 pandemic is still cascading and mutating in Nigeria therefore the issue of post-pandemic may not be very visible for now. Because we are still receiving daily reports of infection and death from Covid-19 on daily basis. Though, am not pessimistic about the end of this deadly virus in Nigeria and Africa at large. But practical observation and experience show that effects are visible and realistic. The COVID-19 pandemic is a wake-up call to policymakers as the unusual and unprecedented nature of the crisis has made it impossible for citizens to rely on foreign healthcare services and more difficult to solicit international support given the competing demand for medical supplies and equipment. A more integrated

response spanning several sectors—including the health, finance, and trade sectors—is required to address structural issues that make the country less resilient to shocks and limit its range of policy responses. In the long term, tougher decisions need to be made, including but not limited to diversifying the country's revenue base away from oil exports and improving investments in the healthcare sector in ensuring that the economy can recover quickly from difficult conditions in the future.¹⁵

A year and a half since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, the global economy is poised to stage its most robust post-recession recovery in 80 years.

In Nigeria, the Q2'21 GDP growth indicates a relatively modest economic recovery, considering the substantial contraction in 2020. However, the seemingly impressive performance or big leap is "masked", driven by three major factors: intervention policy, reopening of the domestic and global economy and the base year effects.¹⁶

The intervention policy of the government may have started to yield expected impacts across key sectors. In 2020, on the back of the covid-19 shocks, the Federal Government of Nigeria announced an N500 billion (0.3% of GDP) COVID-19 intervention fund included in the revised budget to channel resources to additional health-related current and capital spending while the Central Bank made a liquidity injection of 3.6 trillion (2.4% of GDP) into the banking system.

Similarly, countries across the globe are gradually removing stringent covid-19 rules and opening their economies on the back of increased vaccination. According to The New York Times covid-19 vaccination tracker, more than 5.18 billion vaccine doses have been administered worldwide, equal to 67 doses for every 100 people. As economies open, Nigeria, like many other countries, inches closer to its pre-pandemic growth level. This is evidenced in Q2'21 GDP, with the trade sector emerging as one of the fastest-growing sectors (22.49%), driven by a combination of improved cross-border trade and the reopening of the country's land border.¹⁷

Lastly, the Q2'21 growth is significantly linked to the base effect. A base effect is a form of distortion in growth figures resulting from abnormally high or low levels in the corresponding year-ago

period. A base effect can make it difficult to assess growth levels over time accurately. With a sharp contraction of -6.1% in Q2'20, Q2'21 is not surprising and is expected to wane in the year's second half.¹⁸

Vaccination - The emergence of the covid-19 delta variant constitutes a major pressure point in the Nigerian economy. While another lockdown is not in sight, the low rate of vaccination remains a major risk. According to the report, only 1.2% of the Nigerian population had received at least one dose of vaccine, below regional peers such as Senegal (6.2%), Cote d'Ivoire (4.4%) and Ghana (2.8%).¹⁹

The policy environment is still characterised by heterodox policy changes. A major policy within the monetary landscape that constitutes a risk for businesses is the uncertain foreign exchange environment. Despite the CBN's FX unification drive, the exchange rate premium (NAFEX-parallel market) stands at c.26%, with the attendant FX backlog estimated at \$ 2 billion.²⁰

Nigeria's inflation rate showed a moderate decline to 17.38% from 17.75% recorded in June 2020. Nigeria's headline inflation peaked at 18.17% in March 2021, driven by inherent structural factors, including heightened security tensions in many parts of the country and deteriorating public infrastructure. The inflation rate remains above the Central Bank's 6-9% target, implying a key pressure point for consumers and investors.²¹

Rising insecurity and unemployment constitute key risks to the Nigerian economy. The World Bank recently estimated that over 11 million more Nigerians are expected to fall into poverty during 2020-22 due to the impact of Covid. With 86.9 million Nigerians currently living in severe poverty and unemployment at 33%, strategic effort geared towards job creation and creating an enabling environment for businesses is required.

Similarly, the investment climate is pressured, underpinned by heightened insecurity across the country. Heightened insecurity continues to significantly weigh on the investment climate, dragging down economic growth and job creation in the economy.²²

General Observations: Despite the theories and many preventive measures the Nigerian government put up to explain the Covid-19

pandemic, there is a need to explore Covid-19 in the light of God's grace to provide a strong hope for Christians and to follow the best guidance available about how our actions can prevent the pandemic's spread.²³ Though, Christians do not comprehend hope arbitrarily, rather they understand the grace of God in terms of confident expectation in God. Though, some Christians perceived Covid-19 as a consequence of sin as a result of the transgression of Adam and Evil so humanity has been living a life of thorns, thistles, agony, trials, toil and sweat. As a direct consequence of sin, humankind is subjected to frustration. God is still at work despite the existential absurdity of life lived under the sun with its characteristics of problems of disintegration, frustration, decay and pain. Perhaps, some Nigerians are yet to acknowledge the reality of Covid-19, to give it the due attention it demands despite the overwhelming evidence around many objections that have often been raised against the Covid-19 pandemic in Nigeria.²⁴ To some Nigerians, there is no need to claim that there is no Covid-19 epidemic but they are contented to believe that it is more political than physical and medical. Finally, on this, Paul now makes it clear that Christians were but half saved not saved from the outpouring of God's wrath on the day of the Judgement. He also made it clear that Christians are living in the interim, living in between the times. i.e. present hardship and future glory.²⁵

Recommendations

Having summarized the findings above, the researcher now wishes to recommend the following constructive and objective measures for the Nigerian community:

- The paper recommends that since it is becoming difficult for the scientists and the Nigerian government to forecast the life span of this deadly disease it is, therefore, advisable for the Government to use this crisis as an opportunity to invest in education so that people should be educative and have a clear knowledge of the Covid-19 and other relevant infections.
- It is also advisable that Nigerians should not capitalise on new means of grace to abuse the preventives where necessary in order to avoid the wide spread of the virus.

- It is also advisable that Nigerians should cultivate an attitude of love and commitment to the welfare of society and make our environment clean to avoid unforeseen diseases.
- It is recommended that our distorted values should be revived because Godly values and morality are missing in our society.

Nigerian Christians should use this new means of grace to move closer to God and use the same grace for the betterment of our future

Conclusion

The paper emphasized the relevance of the grace of God as explained by Apostle Paul and the crises the pandemic Covid-19 caused to humanity. Christians in Nigeria should realize that God never and will never guarantee a community of believers' immunity to this pandemic but are promised sufficient grace in the face of any tribulation. In the light of sufficient grace of God, therefore, this deadly pandemic or any other related or subsequent diseases are seen to have a meaningful and positive purpose in the execution of God's eternal plan. As a consequence of Paul's understanding in the above passage, he emphasized that "we are saved by his grace not by our righteousness. God is at work in the lives of the believers, he works in all things for their good including the negative things of this life.

Endnotes

1. Komonchak Joseph et al (eds), *The New Dictionary of Theology*. (Dublin: Gill and Macmillan 1990.),437.
2. Ryrie, Charles C. *The Grace of God*. (Chicago: Moody Press, 1963),10–11.
3. George Wolfgang Forell, *Faith Active in Love: An Investigation of the Principles Underlying Luther's Social Ethics* (Minneapolis: Augsburg,1954), 120
4. Martin Luther, *On whether One can Flee from A Deadly Plague* (1527), In Luther's Works, vol,43, ed. Gustav K. Wiencke, (Philadelphia: Fortress,1968), 120
5. Heiko A, Oberman, *Luther: Man Between God and the Prophet*. (New York: Image Books, 1992), 313

6. Martin Luther, "Sermon on the Mount—Discourse Six", III.11, quoted in *"This Holy Mystery: A United Methodist Understanding of Holy Communion"*
7. Jarrett A, Carty, *God and Government: Martin Luther's Political Thought*, (Montreal: McGill-Queens University Press, 2017), 32
8. John Murray, *The Epistle to Ephesians in the New International Commentary on the New Testament*, Eerdmans 1959-65: single-bound, two-volume edition, 1968
9. Richard Brennan, *The Means of Grace* (Benziger: Brothers Inc. 1894), 25
10. Merriam-Webster's *Encyclopedia of World Religions* (Merriam-Webster 1999, ISBN 978-0-87779-044-0), 386
11. Deal W. Hudson, "Grace Alone" (England: Intervarsity Press, 1994), 36
12. Bonner, Gerald "Pelagius theologian". *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. (Texas: Oxford University Press, 2012), 22
13. Jack Hoad, *The Baptist*, (London, Grace Publications, 1986), 32.
14. [Nigeria in Times of COVID-19: Laying Foundations for a Strong Recovery](#) 18. Asaju D Post-Pandemic Church and the Youth, (Lagos: Advent Cable Network Nigeria, 2021), n.p,
15. Umanah V.S and M.L Okwueze *A Reflection on Coronavirus Pandemic and its Implication for Religion* (Abuja: Exodus Publishers, 2021), .55
16. Wright N.T *God and the Pandemic: A Christian Reflection on the Coronavirus Aftermath*, (Michigan: Zondervan Publishers, 2020), 35
17. Anne Soy, *Coronavirus in Africa: Five Reasons why Covid-19 has been less deadly than elsewhere* (October 8, 2020). <https://www.bbc.com/news>, (accessed on January 12th, 2022)
18. Mendez R, "Africa Suffers Worst Surge in Covid-19 Cases as Delta Variant Spurs Third Wave Pandemic, CNBC, Retrieved on January, 12th 2022.
19. "Third wave sweeps across Africa as covid-19 vaccine imports dried up" Retrieved from the Guardian on the 9th March 2021
20. Oyedokun I.M "Influence of coronavirus disease (COVID-19) on spiritual well-being and insecurity among Nigeria Citizens" *African journal of social work*, vol. 11 No. 3 (2021), 235-23.
21. Louise Pasteur Invention, Achievement, & Facts- Britannica accessed July 27th 2022, <https://www.britannica.com>
22. Oyedokun I.M "Influence of coronavirus disease (COVID-19) on spiritual well-being and insecurity among Nigeria Citizens"
23. Sandra Dixon "Activating Faith During the COVID-19 Pandemic Era" *The Canadian Counselling and Psychological Association*, vol, 2 No .4 (2021) 233-235.
24. Longman T, *Dictionary of Biblical Imagery: An Encyclopedic Exploration of the Images, Symbols, Motifs, Metaphors, Figures of Speech and Literary Patterns of the Bible*. Ryken ed. (Illinois: IVP Academic, 1998), 832.
25. Longman T, *Dictionary of Biblical Imagery*, 833

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Anne Soy, Coronavirus in Africa: Five Reasons why Covid-19 has been less deadly than elsewhere (October 8, 2020). <https://www.bbc.com/news>
- Asaju D Post-Pandemic Church and the Youth, Lagos: Advent Cable Network Nigeria, 2021
- Bonner, Gerald "[Pelagius theologian](#)". Oxford Dictionary of National Biography. Texas: Oxford University Press. 2012
- [Coronavirus disease \(COVID-19\): Vaccines safety https://www.who.int › news- room › q-a-detail › coronavirus. Accessed on the 14th of December, 2021.](#)
- George Wolfgang Forell, Faith Active in Love: An Investigation of the Principles Underlying Luther's Social Ethics Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1954
- Heiko A, Oberman, Luther: Man Between God and the Prophet. New York: Image Books, 1992
- Jack Hoad, The Baptist, London, Grace Publications, 1986.
- Jarrett A, Carty, God and Government: Martin Luther's Political Thought, Montreal: McGill-Queens University Press, 2017
- Komonchak Joseph et al (eds), The New Dictionary of Theology. Dublin: Gill and Macmillan 1990.
- Longman T, Dictionary of Biblical Imagery: An Encyclopedic Exploration of the Images, Symbols, Motifs, Metaphors, Figures of Speech and Literary Patterns of the Bible. Ryken ed. Illinois: IVP Academic, 1998
- Martin Luther, On whether One can Flee from A Deadly Plague (1527), In Luther's Works, vol,43, ed. Gustav K. Wiencke, Philadelphia: Fortress, 1968
- Martin Luther, "Sermon on the Mount—Discourse Six", III.11, quoted in "[This Holy Mystery: A United Methodist Understanding of Holy Communion](#)"
- [Merriam-Webster's Encyclopedia of World Religions](#) Merriam-Webster 1999, [ISBN 978-0-87779-044-0](#)

Mendez R, "Africa Suffers Worst Surge in Covid-19 Cases as Delta Variant Spurs Third Wave Pandemic, CNBC, Retrieved on January, 12th 2022

[Nigeria in Times of COVID-19: Laying Foundations for a Strong Recovery](#)

Oyedokun I.M “Influence of coronavirus disease (COVID-19) on spiritual well-being and insecurity among Nigeria Citizens” *African journal of social work*, vol. 11 No. 3 2021

[Richard Brennan, The Means of Grace](#) Benziger: Brothers Inc. 1894

Roetzel, Calvin J., PhD. *The HarperCollins Bible Dictionary*, HarperCollins, 1996

Ryrie, Charles C. *The Grace of God*. Chicago: Moody Press, 1963

The third wave sweeps across Africa as covid-19 vaccine imports dried up" Retrieved from the Guardian on the 9th March 2021

Umanah V.S and M.L Okwueze “A Reflection on Coronavirus Pandemic and its Implication for Religion” in P. Onwoechi ed. *Perspective on Religion, Morality and Society in Contemporary pluralistic Nigeria: Essay in Honour of Prof Cyril Okechukwu Imo*, Abuja: Exodus Publishers, 2021

Wright N.T *God and the Pandemic: A Christian Reflection on the Coronavirus and its Aftermath*, Michigan: Zondervan Publishers, 2020.