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Editorial

One of the pressing questions that reverberates often in African Christianity is: What is an (African) Christian family? Family is very important to the traditional Africans. Raising a family is not just a social and cultural demand that has to be meant, but also a conditional for eschatological redemption or salvation. For the African Christian, the place of family cannot also be over-emphasised. Thus, prayers for the family in all its ramifications occupy the central stage in personal and intercession sessions. Although African Christians have for a long time contended with the notions of the Christian family in general, there is a progressive acceptance of its monogynous union based on heterosexuality. However, Western values and globalisation forces have continued to shape Christian family discourses and practices. Sex and sexuality issues have been escalated and mediated so much so that Christian 'theology' of family, sexuality, and sex has to contend with the throes of globalisation.

This volume, which is a product of the 2023 conference on the theme: Christian Family and Sexuality in Contemporary Society, critically reflects the tensions, challenges, and theological prospects of a Christian family. In the lead article, Professor Knoetze departs from the general conception of the Christian family based on Christ's salvation. Although he points out that family is a contested issue in Africa, he argues that a radical conception of the Christian family should centre around relationality, forging a missional relationship with the Trinitarian God. This is in contrast with the soteriological conception of family that has blurred the missional prospects that understanding family can birth for a long time.

Adu-Gyamfi's article also radically takes on the traditional conception of sex as a purely private issue, and attempts to strike a balance between it and the sexual revolution that theology of sexuality has to contend with. Coming from a heteronormative perspective, Adu-Gyamfi strongly maintains conservative theological stand on sexuality. He argues that the biblical

understanding of sexuality cannot be traded with the offering of the over-sexualised world.

On her own, Ayo-Oladayo explores the significance and nexus between language education and family development. She points out that effective communication in the family is a sine qua non for cohesion, unity, and progress. In addition to fostering cultural understanding, supporting cognitive growth, and fostering stronger family ties, it also improves communication abilities. Oladapo and Adererele examine the positive impacts of social change, particularly technological advancement, on the family. They opine that despite the advantages derived from modern communications devices, Christian theological understanding of the family should be countenanced and appropriated by Christian families.

Odesola and Odesola reflect on the significance of sex education in the church. Although sex education has not been a major interest in missional and catechetical teaching, they suggest that contemporary challenges make it imperative for the church to be interested in sex education. Otun's article introduces a philosophical dimension to sexuality discourse. Otun views the relegation of reason in choice- and decision-making processes as unacceptable and recommends a balanced deployment of both reason and faith in sexuality matters. Gombi re-examines the accounts of Genesis and contemporary sexual expressions. In the Genesis creation stories, an explanation of the nature of sexuality takes a central, climactic positioning and is given as a fundamental fact of creation. The excessive amount of material given to sexuality highlights its relevance in the Hebrew Bible within the cosmic context of the creation narratives. The foundation for the rest of the biblical narrative and discourse on human sexuality is provided by the profound depiction of God's original plan for human sexuality at the beginning of the canon, which also captures the core ideas of sexuality. Salifu enumerates the negative effects of street hawking, such as rape, unplanned pregnancies, and violence. He recommends that the state and social institutions should intervene to stem the corrosive tide of street hawking in Nigeria.

Biar explores the disagreement between 'pre-modernism' and postmodernism. He argues that the different positions these schools of thought hold have created serious tension in how to understand human sexuality. The recognition of feeling over reason and the relativistic contours that encircle the arguments of postmodernism, modernism, and premodernism all have impact on Christian notion of sexuality. He, however, maintains that the Bible still reserves the best model of sexual appreciation in contemporary society. For Kosoluware, the negative influences of postmodernism should be frontally addressed by contemporary African Christians. It is essential that the Church in Africa rise to the challenge through teaching, counseling and intentional preaching of the gospel. Atteh examines Christian moral victory, and points out the tensions that have characterised its different interpretations. He opines that the best approach to the theological issue is to insist that the victory believers have over the flesh nature is both positional and progressive, encompassing both the divine and the human responsibilities. Asaolu tackles the increasing cases of marital infidelity in society. Articulating the causes and effects of marital infidelity, Asaolu recommends that couples act in such a way that their actions could conform with Kantian categorical imperative. Finally, Ajao makes a case for sex education as a part of socialisation in the family. He notes that it is no longer possible to hold the view that sex talk is a taboo. Therefore, there should be a conscious approach to addressing sexuality issues.

This volume is a coterie of discourses on sex, sexuality and family. The burning issues raised from multidisciplinary perspectives enrich the volume and provide a critical resource for further engagement. However, the ideas are solely the responsibility of the authors rather than the editorial board of the journal.

Benson Ohihon Igbion
Editor-in-Chief

SEXUALITY AND POSTMODERNISM: EXPLORING COMPLEXITIES OF ROMANTIC FREEDOM

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Abstract

Postmodernists appear to be relativists. They seem to talk about one thing and mean something different. Often, postmodernists seemingly talk about human rights to protect their values while violating the rights of others to refuse such values. Sexuality is one of the areas of disagreement between postmodernism and other traditions. This article will, therefore, explore ways in which differing views on sexual norms threaten the family as the fundamental unit of society.

Introduction

We often feel disgusted and angry when we see other people engage in behaviours that we consider unacceptable. The ones we disapprove of their behaviours also feel angry towards us for disagreeing with them. Human sexuality is one example of things that people disagree over. Some people understand sexual norms in one way, and others see it in another way. Sometimes, each side would wonder why the other side failed to see what seems obvious. The explanation for all this seems to be the influence of traditions in people's thoughts and beliefs.

Schools of thought and traditions are shaped by scientific models in the West (Baird, 2016). This is why people who disagree over values often use scientific research as justification for their beliefs and practices. For example, 'The law in the United States beginning in the late nineteenth century played an important role in the creation of a homosexual identity, a role that tracked the discourses of science and medicine that so interested Foucault in *The History of Sexuality*' (Ball, 2002, p. 375). This scientific research,

however, is sometimes combined with lobbying (Biar, 2014). In other words, the research is not value-free in matters to do with ethics.

Scientific research in these traditions has fixed methodological ways of arriving at conclusions. A premodern scientific researcher, for instance, is expected to investigate matters in ways that lead to objective reality. Essences and forms of beings define this objective reality. The conclusion must reflect this understanding of reality. A modern researcher must also investigate matters in a fixed order. But the postmodern researcher must master jumping around in order to arrive at a well-argued or crafted subjective conclusion. Mostly, the role of subjective self guides the conclusion of postmodern researchers. Postmodern researchers project the image of the self on reality as a whole. Since each person would have his or her understanding of reality, reality can rarely be objective.

To further illustrate the above scientific influence, it is important to mention that the premodern tradition is shaped by Greek science, which focuses on the objective reality of forms that define beings and ideals. It is teleological in its worldview. Unlike the premodern tradition, the modern tradition is shaped by the mechanistic science of cause and effect. Modernists understand the universe in terms of the fixed mechanical order of matter. They reject teleology by arguing that there is no purpose connected to the existence of beings and ideals (Griffin, 2007; Mickey, 2008). On its part, the postmodern tradition is shaped by organic science, in which things are believed to be connected to one another. It focuses on the interrelationships of beings. These interrelationships are defined by how things develop historically and are intertwined. These interrelationships are subjective in nature. They are not defined by the objective reality of forms and ideals.

The above-mentioned schools of thought and traditions, including premodernism, modernism and postmodernism, have significant influences on people's beliefs and behaviours. Each has a foundation of thinking, even though one claims to disengage from

foundationalism (Griffin, 2007; Mickey, 2008). Premodernism, on the one hand, stresses the importance of unchanging substance, while postmodernism, on the other hand, focuses on changing processes. For example, adherents to premodernism would argue based on the foundation of reality. God, to them, is the foundation of all beings. The nature of things are understood from the standpoint of God.

Adherents to postmodernism reject foundational thinking in favour of developmental processes. They rarely consider God to have supreme powers. He only 'affects creatures by persuasion from within, not by coercion or determination' (Daley, 2016, p. 280). In this case, God never represents objective reality because He is not the foundation of reality and does not have the supreme authority other than a modified one 'yielding only limited creative and providential power to influence others' (Daley, 2016, p. 280). An individual in postmodernism is the mirror of reality, as mentioned earlier. Modernism is closer to premodernism in that it rarely rejects foundational thinking. Adherents to modernism believe in a static order of matter. Nonetheless, modernism is different from the two traditions in that it relies on mechanical science in which only cause and effect define the the existence of entities and their functioning.

The schools of thought and traditions greatly affect how different people see issues today. One tradition tends to replace the previous one but does not eliminate it (Baird, 2016). For example, modernism seems to have eliminated premodernism, but adherents to premodernism still exist. The same is true of modernism and postmodernism. What happens is that the previous tradition is weakened by the new one (Biar, 2022). That is, Premodern understanding of sexual norms and family is weakened by modernism's understanding of the same. However, adherents to premodernism still maintain their views and beliefs in the norms of human sexuality and its relation to family and society. Postmodernism, which is dominant today, has weakened understandings of norms of human sexuality and its relation to the family. Nevertheless, adherents to the weakened two traditions are still maintaining their views on the norms of human sexuality and its

importance concerning family and society.

The differences as mentioned above are the ones that make each side feel disgusted and angry when seeing the other side behaving in ways that they regard unacceptable in matters to do with human sexuality and its relation to the family. Given this fact, this article will explore ways in which differing views on the norms of human sexuality threaten or promote the family as the fundamental unit of society. This will be done concerning postmodernism since it is today's dominant tradition. Other traditions will be explained about their adherents who disagree with the ethos of postmodernism on human sexuality and the family.

Feeling over Reasoning

Postmodernism glorifies feeling over reasoning. It mainly focuses on individual consciousness. This means that an individual is the mirror of reality through his or her consciousness. What being is does not reveal itself through underlying substance or essence but through one's self-consciousness in the world (Hegel & Findlay, 1977). This individual consciousness involves reflection and feeling that define an individual and his or her reality. How an individual understands reality through self-consciousness might not be the same way that other individuals understand it - nevertheless, each understanding of reality counts.

Romanticism contributed to beliefs and practices in postmodernism. Ideas of the Romantic Movement are not different from postmodernist ideas today. Adherents to Romanticism believe in feeling or emotion above reasoning. They are even suspicious of science, let alone religion. They also reject the glorification of the past above the present time. Romantics value visual arts as the representation of reality. That means an individual is the mirror of reality about the creative spirit. They emphasize on the need for intense aesthetic feeling and experience. Aesthetic experience, according to Romantics, is realised through creativity. They would consider creativity as the representation of the Ultimate Being. In other words,

adherents to Romanticism would think of God as the ultimate manifestation of creativity.

Most of what postmodernists apply to their thinking and practice today comes from either the writing of Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel or post-Hegelian thinkers. Post-Hegelian thinkers like Arthur Schopenhauer believe that the will rather than reason is what matters in understanding reality. This is because individual consciousness is a microcosm of the absolute spirit. Schopenhauer, in his famous book *The World as Will and Representation*, considers the will as the representation of reality and the world as a phenomenon or mere appearance. According to post-Hegelian thinkers, the human mind is real because it has ideas that are representations of the world. Rene Descartes is the exact opposite of Schopenhauer because he believes in reason or intellect as reality (Baird, 2016). Idealists' or romantics' promotion of the will or feeling over reason is what postmodernists value today.

Since the will is the projection of the reality of an individual's consciousness, then it means that an individual or any force outside an individual cannot oppose the desires of the will. Doing so would be to negate the world (Baird, 2016). The individual, in this case, is the foundation of reality. For this reason, postmodernists would often tell anyone questioning what they do that the way they see things is just different. For example, a postmodernist may tell one that a mango tree is a tamarin tree. If I insist that it is mango, he would say it is how I look at it. The way he looks at it is that it is Tamarin. Since an individual is the mirror of reality, then he is the mirror of his reality, and I am the mirror of my reality. Reality in this case is subjective.

Subjectivity defines ethical matters in the postmodernist world. In postmodernism, no one has the right to tell another what an ethical thing is or ought to be. Generally, 'Postmodernism posits that truth is relative and that moral codes can never be seen as fixed codes' (Vorster, 2009, p. 508). They believe that we all understand ethics in our ways. For instance, postmodernists would argue that an individual decides what sexual partner he or she should have. Nobody

should tell them that same-sex marriage is not normal or immoral because no one has the right to decide what is normal or abnormal, what is moral or immoral.

Someone cannot also use God as the basis of ethical decision-making in postmodernism because God is no longer the foundation of reality. An individual's will or consciousness is the foundation of reality. It is for this reason that some people talk of sexual ethics for gays and lesbians. It is an ethic that 'does not rely on a codified regime of sexual acts; instead, such an ethic is based on a process of self-definition and self-transformation as lesbians and gay men reflect and elaborate on the ethical meaning of their otherwise socially marginalised sexual practices' (Ball, 2002, p. 373). In the same way, no one can tell postmodernists that family is vital in marriage because they believe that an individual and his or her will is what matters. The Bible does not count either in decision-making in postmodernism because an individual will represents the absolute spirit.

Postmodernists like Andrew North Whitehead put emphasis on subjective aims. This is the reason why they can resist outside direction. They also reject anything that claims purpose attached to one's activities and motivations. The goal of subjective aim is the completion of an event. Events could be defined by an individual, or such individual can find himself or herself in an event. The subjective aim is what postmodernists believe to cause satisfaction in an individual. This satisfaction is generally an aesthetic one. One can see an event as a unity of experience. Postmodernists regard evil as the conflict of the opposite. That is why they are satisfied by the unity of events. The opposites that come together are considered reasonable by postmodernists because there is less focus on the intrinsic good or good in itself. It is the feeling that matters.

Because feeling is the one that matters most to postmodernists, they regard God as the feeling being who provides the initial subjective aims. This is part of process theology. The process philosophy of postmodernists is the one that results in process theology. It is the process of self-definition and transformation. Ultimately, 'This process of self-definition and self-transformation

has led to the emergence of a gay and lesbian sexual ethic with a normative content based on the values of openness, mutuality, and pleasure in sexual relations' (Ball, 2002, p. 373). God, for postmodernists, is like any other being in events. Because of this, process theologians care less about the future Kingdom of God. They seem to have little appreciation of Eschatology. They believe in the present God's Kingdom in this world. Process theologians rarely mention the judgement of God against sinners. Most of them regard Jesus merely as the man of love.

Love and Postmodernism

Since postmodernists consider Jesus to be the man of love, love forms the centre of their teaching and thinking. Love is also the centre of teaching and thinking in other Christian traditions because the Bible emphasises it (Corinthians 13:13). The difference is that postmodernist love seems to have no one way of understanding it. It is the love that changes with the changing worldviews of the lovers. Jesus, to the postmodernists, also changes according to how an individual would like him to be. For this reason, postmodern love appears incoherent. This seeming incoherence of love is in line with the postmodernists' conception of diversity.

Premodernism and modernism value coherence in behaviours and other things humans participate in as rational beings. Love in these two traditions would be understood in one way, not many relative ways, since it is like a substance, not a process. Unlike these two traditions, postmodernism undermines the principle of coherence in favour of diversity.

Universality is also rejected in postmodernism in support of particularity and difference (Baird, 2016). Because it rejects universality, postmodernism emphasises individual self-consciousness in the understanding of reality and whatever humans engage in. It is partly for this reason that postmodernists value constant change in society. They use art to exhibit their feeling, demonstrating individual self-consciousness that changes along

constant self-identification and transformation. Love is considered a part of art that is guided by creativity. Postmodernists maintain that the work of art is an expression of the creativity of individuals considered mirrors of reality.

Most importantly, 'Postmodern art favours reflexivity and self-consciousness, fragmentation and discontinuity, ambiguity, simultaneity, and an emphasis on the de-structured, de-centered, dehumanized subject' (Jain, 2018, p. 384). A society in which reality and truth depend on an individual's self-realisation can hardly remain static in anything. The reasoning would not have any bearing in such a society because it could prevent progress in self-realisation. Emotion is what matters in this situation.

The glorification of emotion at the expense of reason in postmodernism has its roots in romanticism. As Jain (2018) points out, 'emotion and freedom are certainly the focal point of romanticism' (p. 384). He argues that 'Any list of particular characteristics of the literature of romanticism includes subjectivity and an emphasis on individualism; spontaneity; freedom from rules; solitary life rather than life in society; the beliefs that imagination is superior to reason and devotion to beauty; love of and worship of nature; and fascination with the past, especially the myths and mysticism of the middle ages' (Jain, 2018, p. 384). Given the fact that an individual's emotion is above reasoning in postmodernism, it follows that love is essentially an expression of subjective emotion. It is subjective in that it is guided by an individual who is believed to be the mirror of reality through self-consciousness. Regulating love or defining it in one normative way could be unacceptable to postmodernists because they regard everything as relative and that every individual defines his or her norms and truth (Farhan, 2019).

True love in postmodernism is the romantic one. In romantic love, one should not question another in whatever he or she does or follows. Questioning what one does is a sign of hatred and repression in postmodernism. True lover, to them, accepts a person as he or she is. Individuals who have the same emotional attachment are the ones who fall in love. It does not matter whether they are from the same or

different sexes. They can also break up anytime they deem right without anybody questioning their reasons for breaking up. Enguix and Roca (2015) describe this kind of love and its nature of the relationship as 'consisting of abandonment when the necessary dose of passion or communication is no longer given' (p. 8).

Government regulations and religious laws that prevent people from deciding for themselves on who to love and who to break up with are considered repressive and are denounced by postmodernists. People who believe in religious norms, including the norms of marriage between a male and a female, are considered as being cultural-sterile because they allow themselves to be conditioned by religion to the point where they cannot create meanings for themselves (Farhan, 2019). Postmodernists are supposed to be cultural-liberate who should be creative in defining their own reality and norms. They argue that 'there are different realities within a person and no single reality that remains with him throughout his life and protects his personal unity exists' (Forghani, Keshtiaray & Yousefy, 2015, p. 101).

The postmodernist love is a romantic one, as mentioned above. This type of love rejects ideals of social ties popular in traditional societies. As Roca and Enguix (2015, p. 4) point out: "The emergence of romantic love, framed in the context of the bourgeoisie and industrial revolutions disrupted and revolutionised the basis of the previous loving model". With the increasing dissolution of the social ties that structured traditional societies, in capitalist contexts people were becoming increasingly individualised, that is, they saw themselves as unique, different from the others, and that too, as we said, was to favour the perception of loving romance as something unique, personal and not transferable. In turn, marriage, definitively and inseparably linked to love, became increasingly private, losing its social function and meaning and becoming the answer to a new desire for intimacy.

It is mostly for the above reason that some people now claim unquestionable right to marry whoever they choose without paying attention to what a society considers normal or abnormal.

Romantic love structures its feeling in a way that is different from the one guided by the universal love (Roca & Enguix, 2015). Because of this, romantic lovers would argue that 'The desire to demonstrate the universality of one type or model of love (romantic love) by authors who emphasise the bio-neurological basis of the loving feeling may well also be attempting to stigmatise, pathologise and/or de-legitimise other possible formulas of love and to establish, at the same time, a single hegemonic and standardised model' (Roca & Enguix, 2015, p. 3). To them, love is specific to individual lovers.

Biblical or agape love would differ from the romantic one in that it is universal. In romantic love, it seems questioning people's behaviours implies lack of love. In agapeic love, nonetheless, one corrects a person he or she loves. For example, Jesus who loves each one of us more than any human being could love had to correct people's behaviours if he believed such behaviours were contrary to God's will. He would urge them to repent from their sins.

Romantic love rejects universality because it is 'a device invented in Western Europe over the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries whose reach spread globally in an almost hegemonic way throughout the twentieth century, thanks largely to the invaluable help of the "media" in the context of the emergence of the consumer society' (Roca & Enguix, 2015, p. 4). What is invented would sometimes have limitations in that it would lack some natural ideals. It lacks natural ideals in that the minds and wills of finite inventors guide it. The universal love would be natural in that the mind guides it and will of an infinite Being.

Common sense would often align with the natural things in life. Invented ideas would conflict with common sense in most cases. If we use common sense, then we would argue that no parent would allow his or her child to taste fire in the name of giving such a child unhindered freedom. Agapeic love makes one person protect another from danger. Dangers often come from poor judgements and misguided decisions. Misguided decisions are mostly aided by emotional feelings that come from untamed desires of all kinds.

Permitting an individual that you love to immerse himself or herself in misguided decisions and practices is the opposite of true love. Unconditional love comes from the choice to help a person without any payback. It does not imply allowing an individual you love to get involved in sinful or unnatural practices.

The Bible as Premodern Book

Contextualisation has become the corrupter of biblical meanings in the postmodernist world. Since the Bible does not complain when one misuses it, its meanings are being manipulated to suit one's worldview. It is getting uncontrollably relative to know what the Bible really is when it suits the self-definition of an individual who considers himself or herself the mirror of reality.

Proper contextualisation considers the message of the Bible and what it meant initially to the people that the message under consideration was intended before the meaning is applied to current audiences' situations. Current audiences must also know where their values differ from the biblical ones so that they do not force the Bible to agree with such values as if the initial message was the same with their current understanding of values. It must also be established whether the original communicator of the biblical passage under consideration understood the will of God the way we understand it in our local contexts today.

If a reader or a preacher considers the above steps carefully before contextualising a biblical message, then he or she can hardly miss the fact that the Bible is a premodern Book. Its foundation of truth is not an individual. It is God Himself. God, in the premodern worldview, is above every being (Baird, 2016). All other beings are ranked below God in the order of importance, starting from angels to stones. A being below another aims at becoming like the one ranked above it. Falling downwards in ranking implies the privation of the nature of such being. This was what happened to Satan when he wanted to surpass God in a rebellious manner.

The nature of a being is essential in connection to its likeness. For example, a mango fruit is like a mango tree when it is green. It cannot easily fall from the mango. When another being removes it by force to eat, the taste would be sour in a manner that resembles the mango tree. But when it decides to lose its nature, which looks like the mango tree and becomes yellow and sweet, it falls off from the mango tree. Any other being that picks it to eat would enjoy the taste. The sweet taste manifests the loss of the mango's original nature.

The same applies to human beings. We are created in the image of God when it comes to our reasoning capacity (Genesis 1:26). When we glorify emotion over reasoning, then we have lost our nature as beings that are created in the image of God. We can fall downwards to join animals lower than us in reasoning capacity. Also, when we consider ourselves as foundations of reality, we fall downwards and join Satan, who considers himself the mirror of his own reality. Moreover, when we choose anything unnatural to how we are created, then we fall even below Satan because Satan still maintains his nature as a fallen angel.

A premodern worldview is also communion in nature. Beings that share the same substance are considered one kind in ranking (Genesis 1:25). For example, human beings share the nature of humanness. Therefore, they are one group occupying the same space in ranking. The intellectual capacities of human beings are the same, regardless of physiological differences (Genesis 1:26-27). The intellectual capacity makes humankind rule over living physical beings in the same way that God rules over physical and non-physical beings (Genesis 1:26).

Physiological differences exist to maintain the existence of humans and other animals that have been created with the ability to procreate (Genesis 1:20-28). Other beings such as stones are the same physiologically because they multiply in different ways. A rock can never decide to mate with another rock in order to give birth to a little rock that can grow up to become a mature rock. Such capacity is given only to beings that procreate. A being that procreates loses its nature

when it considers otherwise.

The feeling for erotic love is part of the natural design that is connected to procreation. Believing that love is for 'pleasure and self-realisation rather than that of reproduction and social obligations (Roca & Enguix, 2015, p. 6) is a privation of the reproductive nature of beings like humans. Stones do not have erotic feelings because they are not designed to mate for reproduction. Even trees and vegetations of various kinds that have been designed to procreate in different ways than other beings do not have erotic feelings (Genesis 1:11-12).

The Bible condemns any practice that goes against the created order in the nature of beings. This is because evil comes from the privation of created nature (Baird, 2016). As shown in the example of the mango tree above, a being is connected to its substance's nature until it disengages from its original nature. It may still be referred to as its substance, but the privation of its nature would make it a corrupted element in the substance. Premodern thinkers like Augustine and Thomas Aquinas argue along this line of reasoning regarding the problem of evil. The corrupted nature of love would fall into the privation that produces evil.

Given the above sketch of premodern worldview in relation to the Bible, it follows that it should be considered a premodern Book before contextualising it. The true contextualisation of the Bible should maintain God as the foundation of truth and goodness. For this reason, understanding of love should not be based on individual self-realisation. It is part of communion life. For this reason, Jesus tells us that we should love God and our neighbours like ourselves (Mark 12:29-31). This is agapeic love. Erotic love is for procreation and the multiplication of species of the same substance to fill the earth (Genesis 1:20-28). Interpreting the Bible in line with an individual as the mirror of reality is a privation in itself.

Differing Views on Sexual Norms and Their Impacts on the Family

The family is the primary unit of society. It comes from putting

together two people (Genesis 1:27). They then expand through their reproduction (Genesis 1:28). Reproduction comes from erotic love between male and female (Genesis 1:27).

Sexual norms that deviate from the above-mentioned order affect procreation, and lack of procreation affects family formation. Deviation from the created order and norms comes from a deficiency in adhering to natural and communally agreed-upon directions. Postmodernism seems to aid misunderstanding among family members because it encourages individual self-definition. This individual self-definition would lead to rebellious attitudes to the point where individuals can willingly generate privations to their natures.

Many differing views of sexual norms exist in the postmodernist world. These views are as many as individuals who consider themselves mirrors of reality. However, postmodernists share some main views. Roca and Enguix (2015) have summarised some of these views in their introduction to the book they edited. This book is entitled, *Rethinking Romantic Love: Discussions, Imaginaries and Practices*. This section of the article will draw briefly from the summary in the introduction of the aforementioned book. The views will be sketched in line with how they affect the family as the fundamental unit of society.

The postmodernists consider love to be a private affair between two individuals. The social role popular in premodern marriages has been rendered less important. This affects the family because those who fall in love from two families disregard guidance from their parents. Rebellion in the family may result in social disorder, which may affect the nation as a whole because individuals pay less attention to systems that guide them in decision-making. Emotions become the driving force in how people behave in their families and society.

The other view of sexual norms in the postmodernist world is that it has nothing to do with reproduction. As Roca and Enguix (2015) point out, 'the romantic couple would also become the place of pleasure and self-realisation rather than that of reproduction and

social obligations' (p. 6). The main reason for disregard to reproduction is that the couple should 'spend more time together without the obligation to care for their children as well as an increased interdependence of married couples because individual emancipation within the extended family will no longer be possible.' This belief affects the formation of future families in that children that are supposed to be born as future families cannot be born.

Love is seen as temporal in the postmodernist world. For them, 'Durability is no longer a maxim of love, but the emotional involvement of the spouses' (Roca & Enguix, 2015, p. 8). This is problematic to the family in some ways. One of these problems is that children of divorced couples would often feel dissatisfied in life. They are emotionally tortured when a stepparent mistreats them. If emotional stability is what postmodernists aim at, then they should understand that durable marriage is crucial in life.

Conclusion

This paper sets out to explain the complexities involved in postmodernists' understanding of sexual norms and family. The aim was to comprehend how this understanding of sexual norms affects the family as a fundamental unit of society. The explored literature shows that sexual norms in postmodernism are determined by an individual who considers himself or herself the mirror of reality. The family and society do not count much in the decisions that individuals make. Reason rarely counts in decisions that individuals make in postmodernism. What counts is emotion. Because of this, their love is the romantic one. Agapeic love matters less, even among Christians. These views of sexual norms affect current families in the sense that order is lost. It also affects the formation of future families because reproduction is not seen as important. Sexual matters have been disconnected from social obligation. They are highly relative to individuals. Relativism in postmodernism comes from believing in an individual as the mirror of reality. Yet, these individuals are relativists who consider their own rights less relative.

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