**PHI 943-32: Orthodoxy and Orthopraxis (Spring 2024)**

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Assignment #3

Omega Graduate School

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**HIV/AIDS causes poverty Experienced by women & children.**

* **Expedition to a Site:**
* **Describe the setting**

In my past and current experience working with people living with HIV/AIDS, the pandemic is one of the most common contributors to poverty in rural Kenya. The disease weakens the body and causes stigma, discrimination, and disintegration of the victims from society. There are strong bi-directional linkages between HIV/AIDS and poverty in resource-poor settings. The long-time experience with HIV/AIDS is that it is both a manifestation of poverty conditions that exist, taking hold where livelihoods are unsustainable, and the result of the epidemic's impact on social and economic conditions. Observation of families and individuals affected and infected with HIV/AIDS indicates that poverty is at the same time a cause and an outcome of the disease, and poverty is also both a cause and a result of HIV/AIDS. The struggle to speak up for and on behalf of others amid the poverty crisis.

**May I ask what inspired this experience of yours?**

As a pastor, I once had a conversation with a woman who was hesitant to attend church due to previous experiences of discrimination against her and her sister, as they are both HIV positive. Moved by her story, I asked if others in similar situations could benefit from a support group. She agreed to connect me with others, and the first meeting brought together around 100 people. This experience was especially meaningful to me as I recently lost my sister-in-law to the pandemic. It also she**ds** that light on the vulnerability of widowed mothers who may resort to risky behavior to provide for their children, highlighting the importance of addressing the issue of HIV/AIDS. HIV/AIDS causes poverty by reducing productivity and increasing medical care costs. Poor households often exhaust their savings and sell their assets to pay for treatment, which further exacerbates their financial struggles. The loss of physical labor can be particularly devastating for smallholder farmers and those in the informal and rural sectors. According to UNAIDS at https://www.unaids.org/sites/default/files/media\_asset/2019\_women-and-hiv\_en.pdf,

* **HIV/AIDS in young women**

In my research on poverty in rural Kenya and HIV/AIDS, according to the Ministry of Health in Kenya, according to PLoS ONE 2023, “KENPHIA identified 57 HIV-positive children, translating to an HIV prevalence of 0.7% (95% CI: 0.4%–1.0%)

The Kenyan Ministry of Health claims that HIV can affect young women and girls more than other demographic groups because of their disproportionate exposure to violence, poverty, and injustice. HIV prevalence is nearly twice as high in young women as it is in young men (2.1% versus 1.2%). HIV-related stigma is still a major problem.

* **HIV/AIDS in children**

There are an estimated 138,900 (95% CI: 84,000–193,800) HIV cases among children in Kenya. According to research findings, HIV/AIDS mostly affects women & children, meaning that HIV prevalence remained unchanged for a short period and caused poverty, mostly in rural Kenya, causing children to drop out of school and mostly girls get more exposure to the pandemic, causing more crisis of poverty from one person to of another and so poverty levels increases over time

* **My Initial reaction**

Having learned about poverty in women and girls that's been causing infection with HIV/AIDS, I reacted with the thought that I created a Non-Government organization by the name of Sufficient Organization (NGO), founded on 2 Corinthians 12:7-9 The Thorn in the Flesh: HIV/AIDS is a thorn in the flesh.

I decided to use this experience because it is so relevant right now, not only in our culture but among my family and friends. HIV/AIDS slows economic growth and poses a significant challenge to sustainable development in many countries. The disease has a significant impact on the labor force, productivity, and the economy as a whole. HIV/AIDS hinders the development of human capital, which is essential for economic growth and sustainable development. The loss of human capital can have a significant impact on economic growth. Applied orthopraxy in this study creates a creative, humanistic, and interdisciplinary specialization that seeks to improve the quality of people’s lives.

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* **T**he reason it provokes reflection about my God, myself, and the ministry is that HIV/AIDS, like Paul's thorn in the flesh (2 Cor 12-7-9), incited me because it is a permanent fixture in society.

**The Thorn in the Flesh:**

* + In verse 7, Paul speaks of a “thorn in the flesh” that was given to him. This metaphorical thorn represents some form of suffering or difficulty that he faced.
  + The exact nature of this thorn is not explicitly revealed, but it was intended to keep Paul humble. God allowed it to prevent Paul from becoming prideful due to the extraordinary revelations he had received (2 Corinthians 12:6).

**Purpose of the Throne**

* + The purpose of this thorn was twofold:
    - To prevent Paul from exalting himself: the surpassing greatness of the revelations could have led to spiritual pride. The thorn served as a counterbalance to keep Paul humble.
    - To rely on God’s grace: Paul implored the Lord three times to remove the thorn, but God’s response was, “My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness” (2 Corinthians 12:9).
    - God’s grace, found in salvation through Christ, was enough to sustain Paul even in his weakness.
      * + Paul learned that when he was weak, he was strong because God’s power worked through him (2 Corinthians 12:10).

**Boasting in Weakness:**

* + Rather than boasting about his strengths, Paul chose to boast about his weaknesses. Why? Because it allowed the power of Christ to dwell in him (2 Corinthians 12:9-10).
  + Paul recognized that his limitations made room for God’s strength to shine. His weaknesses became opportunities for God’s glory.

**The lesson for me, them, and every one of us is:**

* + **Humility**: God’s goal for us is humility. Like Paul, we should recognize our weaknesses and depend on God’s grace.
    - **Strength in Weakness**: When we acknowledge our insufficiency, we open ourselves to God’s power working through us.
    - **God’s Grace**: God’s grace sustains us even in challenging circumstances

**2. Excavation of Site Strata** What layers of issues are present in the selected event?

Holistic wellness active activities for the whole body, mind, soul, and spirit as for Spiritual & Financial

* **For Spiritual Nourishment**

Therefore, as the founder of Grace Sufficient Organization (GSO) and an NGO, I make sure that we are very present in their lives. As a Christian organization, we've been caring for their body, soul, and spirit by:

* **Giving love**- Love is a debt to be paid. Romans 13:8: Let no debt remain outstanding, except the continuing debt to love one another.
* **Giving hope:** Hope gives them the strength to see tomorrow. Romans 15:13 ~ May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope
* **Encouraging:** Their hope and assurance of renewal every single day, but those who hope in the LORD will renew their strength." (Isaiah 40:31). Counseling and encouraging them to go public is the beginning of ending the stigma and discrimination that affects their well-being and their whole lives, most of them being women and girls with only a handful of men.

**We will reinforce what we are already doing in Head, Heart, and Hands:** exploring art education for the individual and community” (Virkkunen, Ellen 2021). The Head, Heart, and Hands (HHH) approach to education is a holistic and transformative approach to education (Singleton, 2015). “It is holistic due to the interconnected parts of the approach working together as a whole because of its use of the body (hands), mind (head), and emotions (heart) to create deeper learning and meaning for the students. This approach also engages heart students in transformative learning requirements, as its goal is to allow students to learn deeply and expand their worldviews and knowledge through the head (Singleton, 2015).”

**Current Financial activities**

They are currently graduating from table banking, which is microfinance credit; we also teach beadwork and vegetable gardening. The system thinking of learning using the:

Head learning; heart-affective; hands-on learning:

**2. Excavation of Site Strata** (**What layers of issues are present in the selected event?)**

* **Setting:**

As the founder and visionary, my goal is to bring about an act of emergency to train people on various ways to achieve financial stability through microfinance credit enterprises through sustainable means. To do this, I plan to implement the three domains of learning, which are cognitive, affective, and psychomotor. that aims to reduce poverty by addressing the head thinking' straight’ or ‘right’ as the orthodoxy heart for the orthopathy and hands orthopraxis of the community.

* **Role/s: (functions or skills used or needed)**

I think training and education are essential to achieving this goal. Before applying the ideas, people must first acquire knowledge and comprehension and then form emotional bonds with them. The ultimate objective is to bring these three domains into harmony because doing so will produce fruitful outcomes. I am committed to providing the tools and support needed to help my community sustainably attain financial stability using

* **Head Learning**- (**Orthodoxy):** Cognitive Learning is a way that you can help someone's cognitive development by providing him/her with choices and prompting him/her to make thoughtful decisions (2 Cor. 10:5). The fruit of such thinking should be a blessing for everyday life. Thinking Christianly is part of the ‘science of living blessedly forever’.
* **Heart-affective-** (orthopathy) As Micah said, ‘He has shown you, O man, what is good. And what does the Lord require of you? To walk humbly with your God, do justice, show mercy, and exercise humility**”** (Mi. 6:8)., learning has to start from head to heart, as this learning relates to the learner's interests, attitudes, and motivations.
* **Hands-on learning**:(or orthopraxis), according to the research and the course resources, is a theology of good work. Orthopraxy is not limited to the deft execution of ministerial tasks such as leading Bible studies, interceding for the sick, and administering justice. This misunderstanding has seduced many development activities to aspire to ministerial duties to be ‘doing ministry’. Teaching people to fish is an example of hands-on learning and development, as this psychomotor domain concentrates on motor skills and hand-eye coordination development, which requires more of:

**Capacity Building, Empowerment,** **Participation, self-reliance, and Sustainability**

**Capacity Building:** By taking a holistic approach to capacity building, you can focus on developing and strengthening the skills, instincts, abilities, and resources of individuals to help them thrive in all aspects of their lives. Remember to utilize evidence-based best practices and applied research to enhance your efforts and build upon existing infrastructure to maximize local capabilities. Best of luck in pursuing your goal!

**Empowerment:** One of the most important ways to reduce poverty through empowerment is to give microcredit to the underprivileged, particularly to women and young people living in rural Kenya**.** Microloans are among the most well-liked new technological instruments for reducing poverty and promoting economic growth. I will create an account for their financial stability to borrow from. The idea is to loan small amounts of money to farmers or villages so these people can obtain the things they need to improve their economic rewards. **[Addae-Korankye](https://www.mdpi.com/1911-8074/15/9/393" \l "B2-jrfm-15-00393)** ([**2020**](https://www.mdpi.com/1911-8074/15/9/393#B2-jrfm-15-00393)) explained that access to food and income-generating projects could make poor people self-sufficient. Access to land and inputs could improve the food security of the people

**Participation:** We will require meaningful participation that needs specific attention, more investment, and an open debate on some political constraints.

**Self-reliance:** As in microfinance programs, we should empower poor women, they should do so in these three positive ways: first by reducing the economic dependency of women and enhancing autonomy, second, by making women more assertive of their rights, and finally, by raising women’s prestige and status in society (Adero, L. A., Kariuki, G. M. 2020)

* Design: (Capabilities used/limitations surfaced; or those of others)

Capabilities (God-given Abilities)

* **Well Equipped with Skill & Knowledge:** As I work on my research, I have been able to connect with an old friend we used to attend at the same church who has been successful in microfinance as a business to help the poor. They borrow and pay back with minimal interest. So the plans are to integrate with them to visit their groups as we learn from their system. This is planned to take off in June. As a microfinance institution, we will frequently provide financial training to women, which helps them make prudent financial decisions that are geared towards empowering them. The study from research (Lornah Achieng Adero, [G. Kariuk](https://www.semanticscholar.org/author/G.-Kariuki/6445803)i 2020) recommended that microfinance institutions should develop credit policies geared
* **Pastor-** As a pastor, I am a community leader who is responsible and accountable to God for the flock entrusted to me. **Ezekiel 34:15 (KJV):** “I will feed my flock, and I will cause them to lie down, says the Lord GOD. Lying down means that His flocks are relaxed without anything worrying them.
  + The church and the government agencies linked together could win the fight against poverty, which causes stigma, discrimination, and disintegration.
* **Good News for the Poor (Luke 4:18):** Bible Commentary for the New Baptist Covenant by Darrell Gwaltney Aug 16, 2007 Opinion: I quote: This “good news” finds its particular expression in the word it brings to the poor. Jesus says he will “bring good news to the poor.” This focus on the poor appears 10 more times in Luke. In each case, the text calls attention to Jesus’ ministry to the poor. The poor are blessed (Luke 6:20).
* **The poor are the subject of the good news:** Jesus’ ministry emphasized caring for the poor and oppressed, bringing hope and healing to those in need (Luke 4:14-22; Matthew 11:5-7).
* **We should invite them to our circles**: They are invited to the banquet when other guests do not appear (14:13; 14:21). The poor, such as Lazarus, receive special attention and favor (16:20, 22). Jesus challenges the rich man to give away his wealth to the poor to demonstrate faithfulness (18:22). Zacchaeus’ immediate response to Jesus is to give his money to the poor (19:8).
* **Limitations (Temperaments)**
* Positive responses can be a challenge to helping communities achieve social change. In my cultural experiences, especially in Western Kenya, some of the tribes believe that poverty is a curse; some believe that they were born poor and nothing can change that.
* Others believe that they have been bewitched and the witch doctor doesn't live anymore so they are stuck in their poverty condition
* **Strengthen (Virtues)**
* The word of God carries power and authority, says John 8:32 “Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.” God has given me wisdom, humility, and a desire to help people even when confronting wrongs. I hope that I reflect God in my virtues and use His strength.
* I think God has given me a friendly personality that gets along with a lot of people. This friendly acceptance allows me to persuade or convince people in a non-threatening way.
* **Weaknesses (Vises)**
* **Financial difficulties**: the greatest challenge is finding the resources to meet the expectations of the poor for their well-being. I want to do more, change more lives, and see happy families. I feel like a failure when asked for help that I am not able to offer. But am learning how to develop a regular donor platform
* **God/spirituality**: I thank God that I always have the grace to follow up, encourage, and have a word that keeps them going God’s call on my life has been prompting me to stand up for them. I need to trust God in challenges and follow His lead, and He has proven Himself faithful even to the end when standing up for the poor that He has placed in my life, Here are scriptures to support the social change that affects the community of the poor
* View of God, Biblical Truths, and Principles: (Questioned)

**2 Corinthians 12:7-9 as my ministry name Grae Sufficient means to me, means that** our human weaknesses continually open the way for more of the Lord's power and grace to shine through us. Paul learned to delight in his troubles and weaknesses because they brought the blessings of God to rest upon his life. This word rest in verse 9 conveys the image of Christ's power spreading over Paul like a tent. **Joel 3:10 “**Beat your plowshares into swords And your pruning hooks into spears; Let the weak say, ‘I am strong.’ ”

**View of God, Biblical Truths, and Principles: (Questioned)**

We must be willing and bold in our actual sharing of the [gospel](https://www.gotquestions.org/gospel-message.html). Proclaim the message of salvation through Jesus Christ to our friends and family ([Romans 10:9–10](https://www.bibleref.com/Romans/10/Romans-10-9.html)). Always be prepared to speak for our faith (1 Peter 3:15), doing so with gentleness and respect. There is no substitute for personally sharing the gospel: “Faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word about Christ” ([Romans 10:17](https://www.bibleref.com/Romans/10/Romans-10-17.html)).

In addition to praying and sharing our faith, we must also live godly Christian lives in front of our friends and family members so they can see the change God has made in us ([1 Peter 3:1–2](https://www.bibleref.com/1-Peter/3/1-Peter-3-1.html)).

**3. Extraction of Artifacts:**

* Because of some self-beliefs that I mentioned above, some believe they will live and die poor because they have been bewitched or cursed, and the knowledge I have about God and His relation to humanity is that He created man to have dominion and authority, He created us in his image and likeness so we can carry his anointing to change any situation that stands in our way. I will therefore not judge or condemn them but share the mind of God through the scripture (John 8:32), “Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.”
* Young women and men believe that they will never have a family because of the essence of getting married

How I distill my operational belief in the event is by I have trained and encouraging them to believe that it is possible to start a family and to live a happy life with children. I refer those willing to start a family to see health providers who advise them well on how to conceive and carry a healthy baby who is free from HIV infection through birth. **Gen 1:27 So God created man in His image**; in the image of God, He created him; male and female, He created them. Then God blessed them, and God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living -thing that moves on the earth.”

The roots of this operational belief are in respecting the people living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHAS), because they are sisters, daughters, nieces, and mothers, and the list keeps going; they are our neighbors, they didn't change AIDS, it was an accident

The consequences of this belief in my relationship with God, my relationships with others, and my ministry are that we all have sinned and fallen short of God's glory if we sit and watch the suffering of his people, who are created in His image and likeness. **James 4:17 I**f anyone then knows what good they ought to do and doesn’t do it, it is a sin for them.

**4. Examination /Exegesis of Artifacts** (Evaluating Operational Belief using the Sources of Theology)

* **Proverbs 22:9**: “Whoever has a bountiful eye will be blessed, for he shares his bread with the poor.”
* **Proverbs 14:31**: “Whoever oppresses a poor man insults his Maker, but he who is generous to the needy honors him.”
* **Deuteronomy 15:11**: “For there will never cease to be poor in the land. . Therefore, command you, ‘You shall open wide your hand to your brother, to the needy and to the poor, in your land.’”
* **Proverbs 28:27**: “Whoever gives to the poor will not want, but he who hides his eyes will get many a curse.”
* **Galatians 2:10**: Only they asked us to remember the poor, the very thing I was eager to do.”
* **Proverbs 14:21**: “Whoever despises his neighbor is a sinner, but blessed is he who is generous to the poor.”
* **Acts 20:35**: “In all things I have shown you that by working hard in this way we must help the weak and remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he himself said, ‘It is more blessed to give than to receive.’”:
* **Matthew 19:21**: Jesus said, “If you want to be perfect, go, sell your possessions,s and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me.”
* **Luke 12:33-34**: “Sell your possessions and give to the poor. Provide purses for yourselves that will not wear out, a treasure in heaven that will never fail, where no thief comes near and no moth destroys. For where your treasure is, there your heart will also be.”
* **Luke 14:12-14**: Jesus advised, “When you give a luncheon or dinner, do not invite your friends, your brothers or sisters, your relatives, or your rich neighbors; if you do, they may invite you back, and so you will be repaid. But when you give a banquet, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, and the blind, and you will be blessed. Although they cannot repay you, you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous.”
* Proverbs 31:8-9 Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves, for the rights of all who are destitute. Speak up and judge fairly, and defend the rights of the poor and needy.
* Proverbs 3:27 Do not withhold good from those to whom it is due when it is in your power to act.

**4. Expound its significance:** As I reflect on the interaction between the sources of theology and my growing philosophy of ministry, I am reminded of the importance of helping the poor and marginalized in our society. The Bible is replete with examples of God's concern for the poor and His call for us to care for them.

* One of the key sources of my theology is the book of James, which emphasizes the importance of caring for the poor and needy. James 2:14-17 says, "What good is it, my brothers and my sisters if someone claims to have faith but has no deeds? Can such faith save them? Suppose a brother or sister is without clothes and daily food. If one of you says to them, 'Go in peace; keep warm and well fed,' but does nothing about their physical needs, what good is it? In a similar vein, faith is meaningless by itself if it is not accompanied by action.
* Another source of my theology is the Parable of the Good Samaritan found in Luke 10:25-37. In this parable, Jesus teaches us that we are to love our neighbors as ourselves and that our neighbors include even those who are different from us or considered outcasts. The good Samaritan goes out of his way to help a stranger who has been beaten and left for dead. Jesus tells us to go and do likewise.
* The authority of Scripture has shown itself in practical ways as I have put these teachings into action. I have volunteered at local food banks and homeless shelters, donated to charities that help the poor and have tried to be more aware of the needs of those around me. The life of Mother Teresa, who devoted herself to helping the underprivileged and marginalized in India, has also served as an inspiration to me.

In summary, my growing philosophy of ministry is centered on the biblical teachings of caring for the poor and marginalized in our society. As I continue to learn and grow, I am reminded of the words of Jesus in Matthew 25:40, "Truly, I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me."

**6. Exhibit/Discovery: Personal Application**

The very first thing I want to do before the end of 2024 is to initially create a microfinance credit union where they can borrow and pay with minimal interest for small businesses. Am contemplating in my heart to seek partners who can also be interested stakeholders in our investments. This is a big deal for me, and it gets me excited.

Overall, the course I completed has been incredibly impactful in helping me achieve my professional, educational, and personal goals. It has taught me how to make the world a better place for everyone by bringing religion and society together. With the knowledge and abilities I now possess, I can make a genuine difference in the lives of people affected by HIV/AIDS, particularly women and girls who are particularly vulnerable to the disease.

I am determined to use my knowledge and abilities to improve society because this course has inspired me. I think that to create a more fair and just world, it is imperative to recognize the significance of love and compassion. I am determined to work towards this goal by creating a program that provides support and assistance to women and girls affected by HIV/AIDS. This program will offer educational and vocational training, counseling, and medical care to help these individuals overcome the challenges they face. I am passionate about this initiative because I believe that every person deserves to live a life free from suffering and discrimination. By offering support and assistance to these individuals, I hope to make a positive impact on their lives and the lives of their families. My ultimate goal is to create a community that is inclusive, compassionate, and supportive, where everyone is treated with dignity and respect. In conclusion, I am grateful for the opportunity to have completed this course, which has taught me the importance of love, compassion, and selflessness. I strongly believe that by applying these principles, we can create a better world for everyone. I am enthusiastic about the opportunities that lie ahead, and I am determined to significantly improve the lives of people impacted by HIV/AIDS.

Finally, according to Chidinma Precious, B.A. (1st Class Honors), M.A., Ph.D., of the University of Nigeria | UNN Department of Religion, and his team of researchers of 'Understanding Compassion in the Gospel of Matthew (Matthew 14:13-21),' compassion is a highly valued virtue. Continues to argue that it is the quality of feeling deep sympathy and sorrow for another who is bereaved. Compassion is a necessary virtue in the church's mission mandate and the social relationships of Christians. Genuine compassion was evident in Jesus' ministry activities. Jesus' selfless efforts to restore humanity's broken relationship with God, I believe, drove His acts of love, words, and thoughts. The gospels, on the other hand, show how genuine compassion characterized Jesus' earthly ministry and drove him to share in humanity's suffering. As a result, he demonstrated genuine compassion by acting to lessen the suffering's agony. They explain the gospel as Jesus demonstrated genuine compassion by preaching the good news of the kingdom, forgiving sins, healing the sick, feeding the hungry, casting out demons, raising the dead, and giving his life as a ransom for the remission of the sins of others. Matthew 14:14 recounts the narrative of how Jesus reacted when he saw the multitude that left their cities and followed him with their diverse ailments.

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