

True Religious Piety and Its Social Implications an Analysis of Calvin's Thought

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Abstract : Despite the positive contributions that religion has impacted human society, religious discrimination and violence also have been growing globally with extreme negative effects on human life and social relationships. Believers in religious extremism are motivated by a sense of exhibiting true religious piety in which case they do not only withhold their practical benevolence from those who do not belong to their faith but they even seek the elimination of other adherents from human existence. This phenomenon has a very high magnitude in Nigeria over the years, which deserves more research for the purpose of finding sustainable solutions to the problem. Calvin believed that true religious piety must, among other things, be categorized in personal and corporate positive social actions that esteem human needs irrespective of ethnic, ideological and belief differences. It is therefore appropriate to pose the following questions: Should true religious piety be seen in terms of how the actions of adherents positively impact human society? Could Calvin's idea on this issue be very significant and helpful in the context of the Nigerian situation? In answering these questions, this research will limit its investigation to Calvin's Institutes and some of his Commentaries. The goal of this research is to offer an instructive orientation to the readers that will help in building a more tolerable, peaceful, and a free and virtuous society.

Keywords : Calvin, human good, religious piety, virtuous society

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