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THEME: Strengthening Research and Innovations for Climate Adaptation and Sustainable Development

Decolonizing and Reassembling the Voice of John's Gospel in a time of Ecological Crisis

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Abstract

The effects of ecological problems being faced by earth's habitants have recently been described as "… an ecological Armageddon."[1] The impacts of climate change are already being felt. In particular, the harmful effects of climate change have resulted in an unprecedented ecological crisis in recent times that have not only affected countries across the globe but also threatened the existence of planet earth. Whereas climate change is as a result of human misuse of the natural world and whereas many schools of thought are arguing for ecological and climate change adaptation[2], this paper argues that it is not too late to reverse the effects of human activity on the ecology. In aligning itself with multi-sectoral approaches being sought for an eco-friendly existence, this paper faults John's Gospel and the Bible by extension for the way in which it has colonized the ecosystem. Furthermore, it adds a biblical voice into the whole debate by retrieving the voice of the Johannine Jesus in the backdrop of an ecological crisis. Johannine Jesus is presented as the saviour of the "whole world" (Jn 4:42) and this world can be saved. Towards this end, the paper employs a postcolonial biblical criticism and comparative analysis to reveal the usefulness of John's gospel in eco-friendly discourse which offers biblical conceptualizations for mitigating effects of climate change. The findings of this paper with express certainty function to assist in capacity building among stakeholders by presenting the Johannine Jesus' model for a balanced ecosystem.

Key words: Bible, biblical, climate change, ecology, environment, Jesus, John's gospel postcolonial