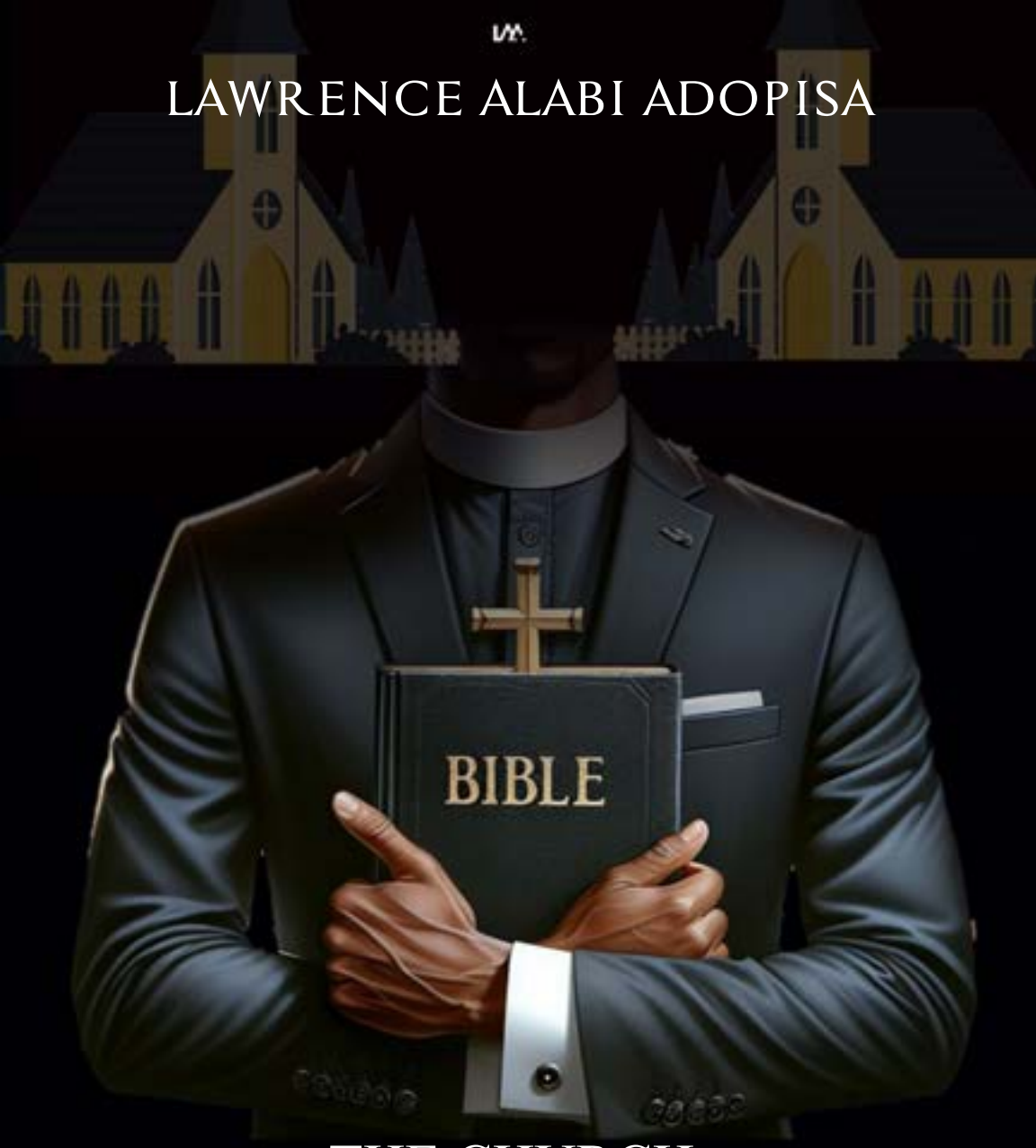
LAWRENCE ALABI ADOPISA



THE CHURCH SCANDALS

A PATH TO REDEMPTION

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THIS BOOK IS DEDICATED TO EVERY FAITHFUL SERVANTS OF THE LIVING GOD



INTRODUCTION

In an age where the church was once regarded as the pillar of truth and righteousness, it is with a heavy heart that we now witness its painful deviation from the path of its divine calling. The church, which was intended to be a beacon of light in a dark world, has increasingly embraced the temptations and distractions of this life. What was meant to be a sanctuary of truth, love, and service to God has been tainted by the pursuit of worldly lusts, the rise of false prophets, and a misguided focus on materialism and personal gain.

"The Church Scandals" seeks to shed light on these troubling trends within the body of Christ. It examines how the sacred purpose of the church has been overshadowed by the very forces it was meant to resist. From the infiltration of false teachings to the prioritization of wealth and fame over spiritual growth, the church today stands at a crossroads, grappling with its identity and mission.

But this book is not merely a critique; it is a call to action. Amid the scandals and corruption, there remains a path to redemption. There is hope for

those who are willing to return to the original foundation of the church—the truth of God's word, the humility of Christ's example, and a renewed commitment to the Great Commission. "The Church Scandals" not only exposes the current state of the church but also offers practical steps and spiritual insights to guide the faithful back to the truth and purpose for which the church was established.

As we journey through the pages of this book, I invite you to reflect on your own relationship with the church and your role in restoring it to its rightful place as a light to the nations. Let us confront the uncomfortable realities of today, acknowledge the scandals, and together, seek the way back to a church that reflects the glory of God and fulfills His eternal purpose. May this book serve as both a warning and a guide, pointing us toward the way out of this darkness and back into the light of truth.

PART ONE

THE CHURCH OF CHRIST

"...and upon this rock I will build my church and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."



CHAPTER ONE

The Meaning Of The Church

...Matthew 18: 20 For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.

When most people hear the word "church," they likely think of a building, whether it's a grand structure or a modest one where believers gather. However, in its true sense, the church is far more than just a physical building.

The early Christians didn't have church buildings as we know them today. In fact, first-century believers were often persecuted and, as a result, met in secret, typically in homes. As Christianity spread, dedicated buildings for worship were eventually established, which became the churches we are familiar with today. Therefore, the church is not defined by buildings, but by the people who make up the body of Christ. Fellowship, worship, and ministry are carried out by people, not structures. While church buildings serve to support the activities of God's people, they do not define the

church itself.

Let's remember the gatherings of the faithful, such as those in the temple to serve God, the believers meeting in the upper room, or the gathering at the house of Cornelius (Acts 10:4). All of these were churches of God without a formal building.

A church consists of two or more people coming together in the name of Christ to serve God, worship, study His word, or pray. As Matthew 18:20 reminds us, "For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them."

WHAT DOES THE CHURCH DO?

The church is not a building, but a body of believers with a specific nature and purpose. These biblical roles or ministries of the church are foundational to it. What are these roles? They are many, but key to any church are found in worship, edification and evangelism.

Worship

Worship is God-centered and Christ-centered. It is not about entertaining Christians with flashy displays or presentations, but about expressing our love by worshiping our Creator. It is the profound expression of reverence, adoration, and submission to God. It signifies acknowledgment of His sovereignty, omnipotence and love. It is a sincere recognition of God's attributes and a humble surrender to his will, fostering a deep spiritual connection with Christ being at the center. **Any church which fails to recognize Christ in worship is out of God's site.**

Edification

The church is expected to be an edifying body which will serve as a hub for believers with a shared faith in Christ. Through regular gatherings, worship services and events, believers forge connections that extend beyond the walls of a physical building of gathering. The sense of connection creates a supportive environment where individuals can find encouragement, empathy, support (physical and spiritual) and fellowship. We can see this in the book of Acts 2: 42

Acts 2: 42 And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers. 43 And fear came upon every soul: and many wonders and signs were done by the apostles. 44 And all that believed were together, and had all things common; 45 And sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need. 46 And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, {from…: or, at home} 47 Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.

The church should also edify the body through the provision spiritual guidance. Leaders and mentors within the church offer counsel, share wisdom, and provide a moral compass for individuals navigating the challenges of life. Through teachings, sermons, and pastoral care, the church guides its members in their spiritual journey, aiding in their personal

growth and understanding of faith. To this end, churches are tasked with a variety of ministries such as Bible study, continuing education in related areas, praying for one another, acts of genuine hospitality and more.

Apostle Paul, being the most revered writer of the New Testament ensures to put up a letter to believers whom he had previously worshipped with. Even in some difficult times while in prison, he never hesitate to checkup on the faring of the church. This is a true spirit of edification which the church must ensure at all times. In many places, many believers are being abandoned and neglected and by this, their faith grows cold. The church must be an edification center at all times.

Evangelism

Evangelism is also a key role of the church. This means reaching out to a lost world with the Good News about Jesus. Since people often have questions or doubts about Christ and Christianity, knowing the truth and being able to defend it (apologetics) is also part of the role of the church. But beyond evangelism in the sense of reaching out with the gospel, the church must also express compassion and mercy tangibly by helping others.

Romans 10:14 How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?

God's desire for everyone is to be saved, and in order to bring the word of salvation to every mankind, the church is obligated with evangelism, preaching the gospel of Jesus Christ to everyone in all places of the world until everyone hears it. *Matthew 28:19 Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the*

Holy Ghost: {teach…: or, make disciples, or, Christians of all nations} 20 Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.

Church as God's conduit to the World.

For a world filed with darkness and sin, the church stands as a beacon of light, serving as God's conduit to instill essential virtues that shape individuals and communities. Beyond its role as a place of worship, the church acts as a transformative force, imparting values such as good morals, love, compassion, diligence, and truth to its believers.

The Foundation of Good Morals:

Central to the teachings of the church is the cultivation of good morals. Rooted in religious principles, these morals provide a moral compass for individuals, guiding them in making ethical decisions and fostering a sense of integrity. The Ten Commandments and the biblical teachings of Christ form the cornerstone, emphasizing virtues like honesty, humility, and self-discipline.

Love as the Guiding Force:

The essence of Christian teachings revolves around the concept of love. The church emphasizes the unifying power of love, encouraging believers to extend compassion not only to fellow members but to all humanity. This unconditional love serves as a powerful force for social cohesion, fostering empathy and understanding across diverse communities.

Compassion for a Broken World:

The church also serves as a conduit for compassion. Inspired by the teachings of Jesus Christ, believers are called to extend a helping hand to

the less fortunate, demonstrating kindness and empathy. Acts of charity, community service, and outreach programs become tangible expressions of the church's commitment to compassion, working towards healing a broken world.

Diligence in Service:

The church instills a sense of diligence in its followers, encouraging them to serve others with dedication and commitment. Through volunteer work, community projects, and supporting those in need, believers actively contribute to the betterment of society.

Diligence becomes a virtue that transcends personal gain, focusing on the well-being of others and the broader community. Christ fumes against laziness and idleness, the commandment of Christ becomes the foundation of believer's diligence in the society. Philippians 2:14 Do all things without murmurings and disputings: 2:15 That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world;

Upholding Truth in a World of Distortions:

In a world where truth can be elusive, the church becomes a projection of unwavering truth. Rooted in the teachings of scripture, the church provides a moral compass against the currents of deception and falsehood. Believers are encouraged to seek and uphold truth, fostering a society built on honesty, transparency, and accountability.

The church, as God's conduit of good morals, love, compassion, diligence, and truth, plays a pivotal role in shaping individuals who, in turn, contribute to the flourishing of a just and compassionate society. By imparting these timeless virtues, the church serves as a transformative force that extends far beyond its physical walls, positively impacting the world at large.

Through the collective efforts of believers, the church remains a beacon of hope and a source of inspiration for those striving to live a life aligned with God's principles.

If a church fails to fulfill any of these key roles – worship, edification, evangelism and conduit of God in the world, – then the church is not functioning as God intends.

There are times when churches face challenges and struggles to one degree or another, but a healthy church seeks to overcome such challenges in a way that honors God and His intentions for His Church



Chapter TWO

Upon this Rock

Matthew16: 18 And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

Whom do men say I am?...

Jesus came by the coast of Caeserea philippi after the ministration with the multitude in order to have a keen conversation with His disciples. He asked his disciples, saying **Whom do men say I am?...** and Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the son of the living God. This is a test question that must be put to everyone who desires to be admitted into the assembly of the lord, a question for anyone who wants to join the church "what does Christ mean to you?", a question to ask anyone who wants to work for the lord as servant in the vineyard, "what do you think of Jesus?" your purpose of being a member of the body of Christ without being right with the man who is the sole purpose. If you do not begin with the truth about Jesus, that he is the messiah and the son of God, you will

not definitely go correctly with Him.

The church does not exist on itself, and anyone cannot just identify him/herself with the church without prior knowledge of it. The testimony of peter unveils the true understanding of the person of Christ and His importance in the church. The understanding we must have is Christ is revealed as the root, then the church, the outer growth. First Christ, the builder; then the church, his building. The most important question is not, to which part of the church do you belong? It is rather; do you belong to Jesus Christ, who is the son of the living God? This must be decided by that other of question, "who do you say that Jesus is?" if you know Christ, if you rest in Christ, if Christ is to you "the way, the truth, and the life"(John 14:6), if Christ is your hope of glory, then your connection to the true church is clear and certain.

…flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my father which is in heaven

Upon the testimony of peter of whom Christ is, Christ revealed it was not just the flesh and blood, it was not human philosophy, or psychology or theology or natural human thought that reveals it but God in heaven. This is a testament that we can never truly understand whom Christ is and His purpose for the church except it is revealed by God himself , not by reading the scripture alone or studying other people's written understanding about Christ but through the revelation of the spirit of God. *John 14: 25 These things have I spoken unto you, being yet present with you. 26 But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.*

Whatever we must do or become as a church must be an approval and a revelation from God the father through Christ. Many has formed a group and membership with the pivotal representation of the church , but when divinely discerned it was not as a result of divine revelation from God or showcasing Christ as the true foundation. By this, many have been enslaved and denied the true salvation they desire and deserve.

In one of my conversation with my dad many years back, he told me the story of a pastor whom they met coincidentally at an occasion. From their conversation, the pastor emphatically said that he established his ministry mainly for the purpose of his own family to serve as a means of financial stability for his home.

Imagine a gathering of such whose foundation is not Christ and whose revelation is from his belly. The members who are to see Christ will only see a pastor who is hungry for money. Such are those who offer money and go extra length to get gift in other to function just as the truly sent servants. Acts 8: 18 And when Simon saw that through laying on of the apostles' hands the Holy Ghost was given, he offered them money, 19 Saying, Give me also this power, that on whomsoever I lay hands, he may receive the Holy Ghost. 20 But Peter said unto him, Thy money perish with thee, because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money.

and **upon this rock** I will build my church;

Many people have made an assertion of Jesus building the church on peter, even when his name actually means rock. This is actually not the true picture of the meaning of the word of Jesus. The revelation of God through peter is a rock which serves as the foundational Conner stone on which the

church must stand and this rock is Christ being the messiah and the son of the living God.

Any church that is short of Christ is full of the devil, for any gathering called church and named with Christ must make him the foundation on which it must be built. This guarantees the full manifestation of the power and grace of God among the people. When Christ is made as the rock of the foundation of any gathering called church, such will stand firm and resist any kind of storm the devil might wage against it.

Remember the storm on the sea

The gathering of the disciples paint a vivid picture of the church, while on the sea, the storm came and troubled the peace of the ship and the people aboard, the disciples thought they could prevail as a body, the more they tried, the more they lose it. In all this, Christ was sleeping. **A*nything we thought we can do all by our own without Christ as a church will always result in failure no matter how hard we try.***

They were wise enough to call on Christ the rock and strength of the church, and at the command of Christ, the storm seized and peace was restored. The confidence of the disciples was not deeply rooted in the faith they should have in God, but only depend on their canal knowledge. ***The church will continue to experience different storm of life without any solution if Christ is not revealed as He should.***

…I will build my church

There are many gathering called church and there are many ministries named after Christ for the general expectation of God's kingdom expan-

sion, but the truth is, many are not actually a church or gathering Christ himself recognize.

It must be clearly stated that it is Christ that builds the church not man, I have seen and heard many say " I own this church", "I build this church myself ", "this church only exist through my sweat and blood" and so on, many churches and ministries are even named after the pioneering pastor. This self-acclaimed builder of the church does not belong to Christ the true builder and the gathering with whom he/she is boastful of are not the sheep Christ died for. When we ascribe the glory due to God through Christ who is the true builder and foundation of the church to ourselves, then we are not working for Christ as a servant in the vineyard but for ourselves, we are not showcasing Christ but our ego, we are not winning souls to the kingdom but winning people to ourselves for financial and fame gain.

It is Christ, who can build us to the best we can be, this was significantly seen in the life of peter that after confessing Christ as the messiah and son of God suddenly becomes a tool of Satan. *Matthew 16:21 From that time forth began Jesus to shew unto his disciples, how that he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day. 22 Then Peter took him, and began to rebuke him, saying, Be it far from thee, Lord: this shall not be unto thee. 23 But he turned, and said unto Peter,* ***Get thee behind me, Satan:*** *thou art an offence unto me: for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men.*

In His mercy, Christ builds up Peter to become the outspoken apostle on the day of Pentecost despite denying Christ three times. It begins with self-denial, carrying one's cross and following Christ steady, followed by

His prayer to the father for us to end the race well in other to attain the crown prepared for us. Matthew 16: 24 Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.

Christ told Peter pointedly,

"Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren."

Peter said to him, ***"Lord, I am ready to go with thee, both into prison, and to death."***

Jesus said, ***"I tell thee, Peter, the cock shall not crow this day, before that thou shalt thrice deny that thou knowest me."(Luke 22:31-34)***

Peter thought His confidence was enough, he thought it is only by mouth confession, but when the real trials of life came, he denied Christ, if not the prayers of Christ.

Many churches, ministries are like peter today, they started with Christ but cut off with Him along the way. They thought their human power, material resources, canal knowledge and earthly influence is sufficient enough to take them far in the journey, but if Christ does not build them up as He wills according to His purpose, such will be overpowered by the gates of hell.

In the process of God building the church, He keeps constant check on the church through the Holy Spirit, this He does by commending, reprov-

ing, and providing timely instruction. The church is never left alone in this world, just like a farmer will not abandon his seeds after planting but prune it, water it and provide everything needed for growth till harvest. An example of such is Christ message to the seven churches in the book of revelation, His message is a typical representation of several churches we have today.

The church at Ephesus:

The once charismatic church

Revelation 2:1 Unto the angel of the church of Ephesus write; These things saith he that holdeth the seven stars in his right hand, who walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks; 2 I know thy works, and thy labour, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil: and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars: 3 And hast borne, and hast patience, and for my name's sake hast laboured, and hast not fainted. ***4 Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love.***

The church at Ephesus started well with the vibrancy, enthusiasm, grace and power of the Holy Spirit, but along the way became cold and lost the love for the kingdom, they lost their momentum and drifted away from the lord and the works they are committed to do. Such is the case of many churches today, they started well with great passion for the kingdom, they could do anything, surrender anything, and fight for the propagation of the gospel of Christ, but now they are so cold and gradually losing the presence of God.

Christ warned them of the impeding danger: ***"…5 Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent."***

The church at Smyrna:

The persecuted Church

8 And unto the angel of the church in Smyrna write; These things saith the first and the last, which was dead, and is alive; 9 I know thy works, and tribulation, and poverty, (but thou art rich) and I know the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews, and are not, but are the synagogue of Satan. ***10 Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.***

This church received Christ's commendation, great encouragement and an insight of what is about to happen. The church had already been experiencing the threat and persecution of the devil, Christ's message came as a timely comfort which gives more strength to their faith. Nevertheless, they are reminded of the many more persecution to come. This is not to make them shiver in fear but to grow their faith when such persecution comes.

Sadly today, many churches, when faced with persecution grow cold and begin to lose faith thinking God is not able to save and deliver, some churches even pray never to experience persecution, when it should have been their emblem of being a soldier of Christ.

The church in Pergamos:

The compromising church

12 And to the angel of the church in Pergamos write; These things saith he which hath the sharp sword with two edges; 13 I know thy works, and where thou dwellest, even where Satan's seat is: and thou holdest fast my name, and hast not denied my faith, even in those days wherein Antipas was my faithful martyr, who was slain among you, where Satan dwelleth. 14 But I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balac to cast a stumblingblock before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication.

One of the Satan's favorite tactics is to weaken the church through compromise. He used the ***"the doctrine of Balaam" and "the doctrine of the Nicolaitans"*** to dilute the teachings of the Pergamos church. There are many churches today who have established several doctrines for themselves in other to strike a balance between the church and the world without clear understanding that it is the trick of the devil. Many believers have lost their way from the truth of God's word and the doctrine of Christ Jesus. Satan has not given upon that strategy, he still works to corrupt the church and Christians and Christian families through compromise. In today's society, compromise goes by the name innocent word of "tolerance." Everyone and everything is tolerable except for the absolute truth claims of Christianity. Churches and believers find themselves pressured to conform to worldly values. The solution is to "hold fast to Christ.

The church in Thyatira:

The church filled with immoralities

18 And unto the angel of the church in Thyatira write; These things saith the Son of God, who hath his eyes like unto a flame of fire, and his feet are like fine brass; 19 I know thy works, and charity, and service, and faith, and thy patience, and thy works; and the last to be more than the first. 20 Notwithstanding I have a few things against thee, because thou sufferest that woman Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols.

The church in Thyatire was steadfast, generous with others, and loving. Its members worked long and hard for the lord. But because of the church's devotion, Satan placed a target on its back. Satan uses an immoral individual to infiltrate their camp. Before long, sexual immorality and spiritual impurity consumed the church.

Many churches have succumbed to the same deception, many self-acclaimed apostles and prophets are creeping into churches with deceptive teachings, prophesies and revelations which does not originate from God. Satan is alive and well and will do anything to keep Christians from remaining faithful to the end. Today's Christians and churches feel pressured to be relevant and all-inclusive regarding spiritual and moral boundaries.

The church in Sardis:

The prideful church

Revelation 3:1 And unto the angel of the church in Sardis write; These things saith he that hath the seven Spirits of God, and the seven stars; I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead.

The church in Sardis maintained spiritual practices and, on the surface, appeared to be vibrant. However, it died spiritually because pride set in. just like a beautiful tomb which has a glamorous outward appearance but is full of dead men bones that suffer decay.

Just like the church in Sardis are many churches today, they appear with beautiful cathedrals/auditoriums , fancy interiors, they have all resources needed, money is not their problem for they all have in abundance , but they are dying spiritually, because of pride and lack of the truth of God's word. We can avoid a similar fate by following the Apostle Paul's instruction: ***"Examine yourself as to whether you are in the faith. Test yourself"(2 Corinthians 13:5)***

The church in Philadelphia:

The faithful church

7 And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write; These things

saith he that is holy, he that is true, he that hath the key of David, he that openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth; 8 I know thy works: behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it: for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name.

The church in Philadelphia is one of only two that received Christ's unfettered praise. Although the church wasn't particularly influential or powerful, its members remained faithful to the lord and His word while leveraging the ministry opportunity afforded by their location.
This is the expectation of Christ from every of His churches, working diligently according to the purpose and principles of Christ.

The church of the Laodiceans:

The lukewarm church

14 And unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write; These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God; {of the Laodiceans: or, in Laodicea} 15 I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot.

Of all the places in the scripture where God uses harsh language to address His people. Christ stem words to the church in Laodicea are unparalleled. This letter is the only one of the seven that says nothing positive about the church it addresses. Christ accuses the church of compromise, pitifulness, and ungodliness.

The Laodicea church is more likely the same with today's church, instead of pointing people to Christ; they are characterized by self-absorption and

ineffectiveness. Only repentance can restore such churches.

The letters of Christ to the seven churches describe His act in building the church in other for it to become the best He wants it to be. **Christ is still in the business of building**, only the willing church will be able to prevail in the end.

Any church that is void of Christ's building is dead.



Chapter THREE

The Gates of Hell

Matthew16: 18 And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and ***the gates of hell*** *shall not prevail against it.*

Gates are defensive structures, barriers meant to keep something out or confine something within. Gates are also a pathway to a confined house, city or a nation. A city or a house may have a main gate which is the primary access point to such house or city, but on several occasion there can be mini gates erected which can also give access to whatever is confined within.

In the context of the words of Christ to the disciples, Matthew16: 18 And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. The gates of hell signify innocent pathways that pose as though a channel to the kingdom of God but are literarily the way to hell.

Hell in this context signifies the kingdom of Satan and all its power and

might. The forces of darkness that fight against the will and purpose of God on earth, it is also the aboard of all sinners and the likes who rejected the supremacy and kingdom reign of God through His spirit and Christ Jesus His beloved son.

The main gate to hell is SIN and not believing Christ is the son of God that has come to die for the sin of mankind, resurrected the third day and ascended to the right hand of God. ***John 3: 16 For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.*** As gate is the strength and fortification of a city, so also SIN is the strength of hell by which it prevails over the righteous. If sin is overcome, hell has no more power of dominance. Adam fell through the sin of disobedience and the generation of mankind became citizens of hell. It took the death of Christ on the cross to redeem man from the shackles of sin and make us citizens of the kingdom of the living God.

Today, there are many mini gates of hell that fight against the church. Ignorantly, many churches and believers have fallen prey to its power and are on their way to hell.

The Gate of false teachers

Matthew 7:15 Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. 16 Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? 17 Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. 18 A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. 19 Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. 20 Wherefore by their

fruits ye shall know them.

In today's religious world, false teachers are like dangerous gates that threaten the Church. Jesus warned about this, knowing it could harm believers and the true teachings of Christ. It's crucial to recognize and challenge these lies to keep the Church safe.

False teachers pretend to offer truth but actually spread misleading ideas that stray from what Christ and His gospel is really about. They take advantage of people seeking spiritual guidance, leading them away from genuine faith.

These false teachings come in many forms, from leaders promising wealth, to prophets claiming to have special messages from God. They twist the words of the Bible to fit their own agendas, tricking people into following them.

The truth about false Teachers, Prophets, Pastors and Leaders.

Every false teacher, prophets or minister are of the world. They originate from the world system and they do not come from God neither are they inspired by the spirit of God. *1John 4: 4-5 Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world. 5 They are of the world: therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them.*

Their inspiration primarily comes from their surroundings, often influenced by the spirits that govern the world. False prophets or teachers diverge from heavenly wisdom, focusing solely on improving one's life in the present world rather than preparing for God's kingdom.

These deceivers attract large crowds by catering to worldly desires, encouraging conformity to earthly pleasures instead of godly principles. They assure followers that worldly values align with spiritual truth. (Matthew 5:12, Luke 6:22-24, 26)

People often recoil from messages of holiness, victory over sin, and the impending judgment of God, preferring teachings that align with worldly comforts. False prophets, on the other hand, gain acceptance even from sinners and compromise-prone individuals, as they promote ideologies that conforms to worldly norms.

False teachers prioritize worldly concerns, discussing topics like signs, wonders, financial prosperity, dominating your world and material success to entice followers. However, those who stand firm in God's word and adhere to Christ's teachings may face disapproval from the world for opposing its values.

One tricky thing about false teachers is that they mix some truth with their lies, making it hard to see the deception. They use social media and the internet to reach a wide audience, making it even more challenging to tell what's real.

In today's digital world, it's more important than ever to be careful and stick to what Jesus taught. We must be wise and not fall for false teachings. By staying true to the real message of the Gospel and praying for guidance, we can protect the Church from harm.

Just like Jesus prayed for His followers to be safe from deceit, we need to pray and stand together against false teachers. With faith and wisdom, we can keep the Church strong and true to its beliefs, even in the face of

deception.

By Their Fruit

Matthew 7: 15 Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. 16 Ye shall know them by their fruits.

Judge them by the fruit they bear, not the gifts they display. A person's fruit reflects their inner life more accurately than their talents or actions. The fruit of one's life serves as a gauge of their authenticity in relation to God. When assessing a prophet, teacher, or pastor, consider whether they exemplify the character of Christ and display the fruits of the Spirit outlined in Galatians 5:21. Do they live in accordance with righteousness and God's principles? As Romans 14:17 states, the kingdom of God is not about outward appearances or superficial acts.

Gifts can be imitated, but genuine fruit cannot be faked. (Bro. Gbile Akani)

In order to test a spirit, look for fruit rather than gift. Focus on observing genuine character traits rather than relying solely on prophecies, miraculous deeds, or charitable acts. True discernment comes from evaluating the fruits of a person's life, not merely their actions or spiritual gifts.

Leaders in God's work should be appointed based on the quality of their character, as demonstrated in their lives, rather than solely on their charismatic abilities or outward deeds (Exodus 18:21; Acts 6:3).

When evaluating someone who claims to be a prophet, evangelist, found-

er, overseer, or called by God, consider the fruits evident in their life. Upon careful examination, you may detect signs of immorality, love of money, greed, or other ungodly traits lingering within them. Question the source of their anointing if they have not been delivered from sin. A person's character and their relationship with Christ serve as clear indicators of their true spiritual condition (1Timothy 3:1-8).

God judges us based on the fruit we bear in our lives. Unfortunately, some individuals enter the ministry not for the purpose of serving others or advancing God's kingdom, but rather to secure personal wealth and comfort in this life, neglecting the importance of preparing for eternity.

The Gate of false Doctrines

False doctrines are a big problem for Christ's doctrines and his church. Jesus warned us about these misleading ideas, which can seem true but actually lead people away from the right path. Knowing what Jesus really taught is crucial to spotting and fighting against these dangerous ideas.

At the heart of Christ's teachings lies a message of love, compassion, and redemption. His doctrine emphasizes the importance of faith, humility, and obedience to God's will. Central to His message is the concept of salvation through grace, attained by acknowledging Him as the Son of God and following His commandments.

The true doctrine of Christ upholds the sacredness of Scripture as the inspired Word of God, serving as the ultimate authority in matters of faith and practice. It emphasizes the necessity of a personal relationship with God, characterized by prayer, repentance, and spiritual growth. Christ's

doctrine promotes unity among believers, transcending cultural, racial, and societal divides.

However, amidst the purity of Christ's teachings, false doctrines seek to distort, manipulate, and deceive. It presents a counterfeit version of truth, appealing to human desires, intellect, and emotions. False doctrines often emerge from a blend of half-truths, misinterpretations, and outright lies, leading individuals away from the path of righteousness.

One of the most cunning aspects of false doctrines is their ability to **masquerade as genuine spiritual enlightenment.** They may promise prosperity, enlightenment, or exclusive access to divine revelation and opening of some kinds of spiritual portals and dimensions of the spirit, preying on the vulnerable and the earnest seekers of truth. False prophets and charismatic leaders often propagate these doctrines, exploiting their influence to amass wealth, power, and control.

In the digital age, false doctrines increase rapidly through various mediums, including social media, self-help books, and online forums. The anonymity and accessibility of the internet provide fertile ground for the dissemination of misleading information, making it challenging for believers to discern truth from falsehood.

To safeguard against the gate of false doctrines, the church must remain vigilant and steadfast in its adherence to the true doctrine of Christ. This requires a commitment to biblical literacy, critical thinking, and discernment guided by the Holy Spirit. Believers must test every teaching against the standard of Scripture, refusing to be swayed by persuasive charismatic personalities irrespective of whomever that is preaching it.

Additionally, fostering a culture of accountability and mentorship within the church can help protect members from falling prey to false doctrines. By encouraging open dialogue, asking challenging questions, and seeking guidance from mature believers and trusted spiritual leaders, individuals can navigate the complexities of modern spirituality with wisdom and discernment.

The Gate of Prosperity Gospel

The prosperity gospel, also known as the "health and wealth" gospel, is a theological belief system that teaches material prosperity and physical well-being as the will of God for all believers. It suggests that faith, positive speech, and monetary donations to religious causes will lead to financial blessings and a life of abundance. This teaching has gained ground across various Christian denominations, particularly in charismatic and Pentecostal circles.

While the desire for prosperity and blessings is not inherently wrong, the distortion of biblical principles and the elevation of material gain to the status of divine favor pose significant challenges to the integrity of the Christian faith. Here are some reasons why the prosperity gospel can be considered a gate of hell fighting against the church in this generation, as Christ prayed against:

Distortion of Scripture: The prosperity gospel often single out verses from the Bible, taken out of context, to support its claims of wealth and health. Scriptures are manipulated to fit a narrative of financial prosperity, ignoring the broader themes of selflessness, stewardship, handwork and the sovereignty of God.

Focus on Materialism: By placing undue emphasis on material blessings, the prosperity gospel detracts from the true message of Christianity – salvation through Jesus Christ, contentment and the call to love God and neighbor. It fosters a culture of self-centeredness, where faith becomes a means to achieve personal gain rather than a relationship with God.

Exploitation of Vulnerable People: The prosperity gospel often preys on the vulnerable – the poor, and the sick, promising them prosperity in exchange for financial contributions or unwavering faith. This exploitation not only perpetuates inequality but also undermines the dignity of those seeking hope and solace in their time of need.

Failure to Address Suffering: In the Christian faith we have the understanding of suffering and the promise of redemption through Christ's sacrificial death. However, the prosperity gospel glaze over the reality of suffering, attributing it to lack of faith or sin. This simplistic theology fails to provide comfort and support to those experiencing hardship and adversity.

False Promises and Disillusionment: Believers who subscribe to the prosperity gospel often find themselves disillusioned when their prayers for wealth and health go unanswered. The failure to attain the promised blessings can lead to feelings of guilt, inadequacy, and even a crisis of faith, as individuals question their worthiness or God's faithfulness.

Promotion of "Miracle Money": This is the belief that believers can receive unexpected financial windfalls or blessings directly from God without any legitimate means of income. False prophets, teachers, and

preachers promote the idea that individuals can become rich overnight through divine intervention, often accompanied by extravagant testimonies of miraculous bank deposits or unexpected financial gains.

This "miracle money" directly contradicts the biblical principle that God blesses the works of our hands (Deuteronomy 28:12). Instead of encouraging diligence, hard work, and responsible stewardship of resources, it fosters a mindset of passivity and entitlement, where individuals expect God to provide for their financial needs without any effort on their part.

The promotion of "miracle money" by false prophets and preachers exploits the desperation and vulnerability of believers who are struggling financially. By offering false hope and quick fixes, these individuals deceive unsuspecting followers into sowing seeds of faith – often in the form of monetary donations – with the promise of supernatural wealth and prosperity.

The prevalence of "miracle money" testimonies within prosperity gospel circles undermines the credibility of the Christian faith and erodes trust in genuine acts of divine provision. Many believers and non-believers have witnessed the manipulation and exploitation perpetuated by those who claim to represent God's kingdom on earth and this has brought a bad image to the body of Christ.

In light of these challenges, it is imperative for the church to address the influence of the prosperity gospel and uphold the true teachings of Christ. This requires a commitment to sound biblical interpretation, social justice, and compassionate ministry that prioritizes the needs of the oppressed. Christ's prayer for the protection of His church against the gates of hell serves as a reminder of the ongoing spiritual battle faced by believers.

As such, it is incumbent upon the church to remain vigilant against false teachings and to proclaim the gospel of grace, humility, and sacrificial love – values that stand in stark contrast to the empty promises of prosperity gospel theology.

In confronting the gate of prosperity gospel, the church can fulfill its mission of bearing witness to the transformative power of the gospel and being a beacon of hope in a world plagued by greed. By staying true to the teachings of Christ and embodying his love and compassion, the church can overcome the challenges posed by the gates of hell and advance the kingdom of God on earth.

The Gate of Immoralities

Immorality refers to actions that defy the ethical principles laid out in God's teachings. It manifests both on a personal level, impacting individuals, and on a societal level, influencing the collective conscience. It encompasses more than just sexual misconduct; it comes in many forms by which it operates in the church today and the most saddening thing is little or nothing is being done to caution the effect of this widespread cancer in the body of Christ.

When we witness such immoralities, whether in someone else or ourselves or in the church, it should deeply sadden us. We should mourn, feeling the pain as if wearing a black armband around our hearts, not as something to gossip about, but as a sign of our genuine sorrow.

In our churches today and among believers, immoral behavior is already manifesting in various forms, posing significant challenges to the integrity

and mission of the Church. These forms of immorality, though diverse, often intersect and contribute to an environment where the principles of Christ's teachings are compromised. Here are some prevalent forms of immorality seen in churches today:

Sexual Immorality: This includes adultery, premarital sex, pornography consumption, and sexual abuse. Despite the clear biblical teachings on sexual purity and fidelity, instances of sexual immorality among church members, leaders, and clergy are unfortunately not uncommon. The misuse of power and trust in cases of sexual abuse within religious institutions can cause irreparable harm to individuals and tarnish the reputation of the Church.

It is further more disgusting that many minsters, preachers, prophets and leaders who are expected to be role models to the younger generation and babies in Christ are also cut in the web of immoralities. Many have secretly turned their members to sex objects. Rather than grieving over it even if they fall into the temptation and at one time, they rather celebrate it and continue in the same sin. Those who many hold as "daughters in the lord" are actually their sex partners who consistently worm their beds. Some have even been employed as interpreters, personal assistants, personal chef, and praise leaders among others.

At one point we experience many high ranking ministers being exposed by their supposed sex partners, news on the internet and media houses flop around, instead to investigate diligently, we rather conclude it is a means to destroy the image of the minister of God and the ministry he has built for years. We prefer the crowd than the salvation of the minister; we prefer our name not to be destroyed at the expense of the name of Christ. Many hide under the umbrella of "the grace of God is sufficient", **but can**

we continue in sin and the grace of God abound? We thought we are protecting the image of the church but the truth is, we are only nurturing the cancer that will eventually put an end to the body of Christ. **Instead of having a gathering of saint, we will only have crowds of sinners bearing name after Christ.**

Many ladies/Christian sisters who are victims of such find it difficult to voice out and break free from the shackles of sin they are in, many of them have been hypnotized with fear and threat to their life either physically or spiritually, many wish to speak to the public but the public shut their voices, many have lost their lives while trying to reveal the truth to the world and the leaders in the community of Christ. The church leaders need more to do than fold hands and continue to celebrate largest number of auditoriums built, or largest number of crowd attending crusades. **The church is dying but we knew not.**

Apostle Paul as a leader of the church in his time…

In 1 Corinthians 5:1-2, the Apostle Paul brings attention to a troubling issue within the Corinthian church, stating, “It is actually reported that there is sexual immorality among you, and such sexual immorality as is not even named among the Gentiles. And you are puffed up, and have not rather mourned, that he who has done this deed might be taken away from among you.”

From this passage, it’s evident that Paul was deeply concerned about the presence of sexual immorality within the church community. He continues in 1 Corinthians 5:6, admonishing them, “Your boasting is not good. Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump?”

Paul, known as the apostle of grace, unapologetically expressed the need to address sexual immorality within the church, including acts such as fornication, adultery, and homosexuality. He warns that allowing such behaviors to go unchecked will lead to contamination of the entire church body.

In verses 9-11 of the same chapter, Paul instructs the Corinthians not to associate with sexually immoral individuals within the church, clarifying that he is referring to those who claim to be brothers and sisters in Christ. Yet, it has become commonplace in many churches to witness individuals openly practicing such sins while holding positions of leadership, thereby perpetuating the spread of moral corruption.

The question arises: why do church leaders who embrace Paul's teachings on grace often overlook his instructions regarding dealing with sexual immorality within the church? Has God changed his stance on the importance of holiness and moral purity within his body?

Paul's words in 1 Corinthians 5:13 are clear: "Remove the wicked person from among you." Yet, individuals persisting in such sins are sometimes allowed to maintain leadership roles, leading to further contamination of the church body due to the lack of qualifications or standards for leadership.

In Galatians 5:19-21 and 1 Corinthians 6:9-11, Paul reiterates that those who continue in a lifestyle of sin, including sexual immorality, will not inherit the kingdom of God. This is because habitual sin is indicative of an unredeemed nature, contrary to the transformative work of the Holy Spirit in the life of a believer.

Paul urges believers to flee from sexual immorality in 1 Corinthians 6:18,

emphasizing its seriousness as a sin against one's own body. He reminds them that through Christ, they have been cleansed, sanctified, and justified; indicating that practicing such sins should be a thing of the past for those who have experienced the saving grace of Jesus Christ.

Proverbs 1:10 my son, if sinners entice thee, consent thou not. As a believer, if any man or woman in the church or even a minster of God entices you to do what the Scripture has categorically stated to sin, flee from such person no matter how great they may be in the society or how powerful their self-acclaimed anointing may be.

Financial Immorality: Mismanagement of church funds, embezzlement, and lavish spending by church leaders can constitute forms of financial immorality. When financial resources intended for the advancement of God's Kingdom are misused for personal gain or extravagant lifestyles, it undermines the trust and credibility of the Church in the eyes of its members and the wider community.

Spiritual Abuse: This occurs when leaders manipulate, control, or exploit their authority over congregants for personal or selfish purposes. Spiritual abuse can take various forms, including authoritarian leadership styles, coercion in decision-making processes, and the imposition of rigid doctrines that stifle individual autonomy and spiritual growth. Such abusive practices distort the true essence of Christianity, which emphasizes love, freedom, and respect for human dignity.

Hypocrisy and Double Standards: When there is a glaring disconnect between the professed beliefs and the actions of church members or leaders, it fosters an environment of hypocrisy. Double standards in moral conduct, where certain sins are condemned in others while overlooked or

excused in oneself, this undermine the credibility of the Church's witness to the world. Hypocrisy not only damages the reputation of the Church but also hinders genuine spiritual transformation and discipleship.

Lack of Accountability and Transparency: Failure to uphold accountability and transparency mechanisms within church leadership structures can enable and perpetuate various forms of immorality. When leaders operate without adequate oversight and accountability, it creates opportunities for abuse of power, cover-ups of wrongdoing, and the perpetuation of a culture of secrecy and impunity.

Divisiveness and Conflict: Internal strife, gossip, slander, and un-forgiveness among church members contribute to a toxic atmosphere that undermines the unity and effectiveness of the Church. When conflicts are not addressed biblically and lovingly, they can escalate, causing division and discord within the body of believers. Such relational breakdowns hinder the Church's ability to fulfill its mandate of proclaiming the Gospel and demonstrating God's love to the world.

Addressing these forms of immorality requires a concerted effort from both individual believers and church communities. It involves cultivating a culture of accountability, humility, and genuine repentance, where sin is acknowledged, confronted, and overcome through the power of Christ's redeeming grace.

PART TWO

THE CHURCH SCANDALS

"...and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."

FIRST HAND TESTIMONIES

Molested At A Young Age By A "Man Of God"

I was a teenager with a deep zeal for the things of God. My parents raised me in the way of the Lord, instilling strong values and faith. Although I was playful and stubborn, I never engaged in immorality or sinful acts.

A new pastor was transferred to our town. He was young, vibrant, and seemingly spiritual—dedicated to the church's service as far as anyone could tell. He build us up, thought us the scripture, how to pray, fast and even little of music.

Although his wife was late as sat then, but later got married to a single mother. They came together with three other children then.

Aside from our parents, the ministers of God were the people we respected the most. We honored them and trusted their words, viewing them as God's representatives. At that age, we lacked the spiritual maturity to discern who was truly a man of God.

There was a day he called me an on the girls that came with him privately to his office. He claimed the purpose of the meeting was to ensure we were still virgins, emphasizing that a woman's dignity is her glory.

The pastor would touch our breast and private parts, claiming to verify our virginity. He also instructed them to return for another check the following month.

At the time, I was naïve and unaware of the true nature of what was happening. Since these actions came from a "Man of God." We believed he was doing the right thing. None of us had the courage to tell our parents.

There was a time his wife traveled to the a distant town from us and him alone would be at home. We the choir would frequently visit the mission house to help clean and tidy up. This was a common practice in our church, a way to serve God and care for His household.

On weekends, we would gather at the mission house to clean, along with the church premises. These moments often felt like family gatherings, reflecting the spirit of love and unity we associated with the early church.

One day, the pastor informed me it was time for another virginity test. As usual, I obeyed and went to his office. However, this time was different. Upon my arrival, he locked the door, closed the windows and removed his cloths. Then, he forced himself on me. I cried out of pain as he violated me, leaving me physically and emotionally broken. That day, I lost my virginity.

I went home crying and with bitterness of heart. I told my parents and showed them the bloodstains on my body. Instead of comforting me, I was scolded and beaten. “How could you have been so careless?” they said. “After all, you are known for your stubbornness.” But I told them the pastor did it to me. Rather than believe me, they beat me even harder. “How could you lie against an innocent man of God who means well for everyone?” their words rang in my ears.

My parents didn’t believe me until one of us from the choir got pregnant, and the matter escalated.

I thank God for sustaining me through that ordeal at such a tender age. Now, I am married with kids, and the best I can do to ensure my children or others don’t experience what I went through is to keep track of my kids, listen to whatever they want to say, and pray for God’s protection. There are still many wolves like such in our society today perpetrating same evil but with a different device and means

The Testimony of My Ordeal: A Warning to Save Others

I grew up with a passion for God, burning with zeal to serve Him and live according to His purpose. From a young age, I heard the unmistakable call of the Lord, and I yielded to it wholeheartedly. My journey began with my enrollment in seminary school, where I immersed myself in learning, prayer, and preparation for the work ahead. After graduation, I knew I needed guidance, someone to mentor me, to groom and ground me in ministry.

I found that mentor in a man highly revered in ministry, a senior minister whose name was spoken with honor across the state. He was celebrated for his youthful vibrancy, the rapid growth of his church, and the undeniable evidence of God's grace upon his life. His sermons were powerful, and his ministry was marked by signs and wonders. To everyone around, he was the embodiment of a man of God, a vessel of divine power.

I joined his team of disciples, eager to serve and learn under his leadership. I worked diligently, supporting the ministry and following his guidance with unwavering commitment. For a time, it felt like I was in the perfect place, growing in faith and maturity under a leader who seemed to carry God's presence.

But no one truly knows the heart of another except God. Behind the pulpit, beyond the public image, lies the truth only visible to those closes enough to see it.

One fateful day, my perception of him—and my faith in him as a disciple changed forever.

He called me into his office after a service, his tone warm and inviting. He began by commending me for my hard work and dedication, praying over

me that I would grow to be great in ministry just as he had. I felt encouraged and grateful. But then, his demeanor shifted, and the conversation took a direction I could never have anticipated.

He began to speak about the demands of ministry. “Prayers alone are not enough,” he said. “Fasting alone is not enough. There are other things a man of God must do to remain relevant and succeed in this society.”

At first, I thought it was another piece of wisdom from his years of experience. But as he continued, I realized this was something entirely different. He leaned in closer, lowering his voice as if sharing a sacred secret. “If you want to see visions, to know the problems of people and every detail of their lives—even if you are not naturally gifted in that area—it is possible,” he said. “It is a long procedure, but it requires diligence. I can teach you.”

I was intrigued but cautious. “What do you mean, sir?” I asked, my curiosity made my spirit uneasy.

He smiled, as if pleased by my interest. “There is a first step,” he said. “It will test your seriousness and readiness to go deeper. If you pass it, I will guide you through the rest of the process.”

I nodded, unsure of what to expect. Then he gave me the task.

“Go to the market and buy a specific soup (name withheld),” he instructed. “When you bring it home, recite these Psalms over it at midnight and use the soup to bath while saying some words of prayer. This will usher you into the dimension of consistently seeing visions.”

I froze. My spirit recoiled immediately. I knew the Word of God, and this did not align with it. This wasn’t prayer, fasting, or anything remotely connected to the gospel of Christ. This was something else entirely—something I knew was dangerous.

I looked at him, struggling to mask the alarm on my face. “Sir, what you’re asking… is this biblical?” I asked cautiously.

He chuckled, brushing off my concern. “My son, you must understand that

the ministry is spiritual warfare. Not everything is black and white. Do this and you'll see for yourself?"

In that moment, I realized the man I had revered as a mentor and spiritual guide was not who I thought he was. His "truth" was far from the gospel I had committed my life to.

That night, I prayed fervently for God's leading. I knew I had to make a decision: stay and risk compromising my faith, or leave and trust God to guide me elsewhere.

The next morning, I made my choice. I packed my things and left the church and his discipleship behind. It wasn't easy—he was still celebrated as a true man of God, and my departure raised questions. But I couldn't stay under his leadership, knowing what I knew.

Today, he remains a respected figure in one of the major cities in south-western of Nigeria today, his ministry thriving, his reputation untarnished in the eyes of many. But I share this story as a warning to others.

Not everything that glitters is gold. Not every man who performs signs and wonders is truly sent by God. Be discerning. Test every spirit. The enemy is subtle and often disguises himself as an angel of light.

To those in ministry or under the mentorship of others, I urge you to remain rooted in the Word of God. Do not let curiosity lead you astray. Remember that true power comes from the Holy Spirit—not from shortcuts, rituals, or anything outside the gospel of Christ.

May this testimony save someone from walking a dangerous path. Stay vigilant, stay prayerful, and let God alone be your guide.

The Cost of Trusting Man over God

After becoming self-employed and building a peaceful life with my wife and children, I thought I had found my purpose. My wife, who was also employed, was my constant pillar of support. Together, we lived a life of contentment and harmony. But as time passed, I felt a stirring deep within my soul—a call to serve God and spread His word.

Answering the call, I began preaching the gospel of Christ from a humble space I could afford. It wasn't much, but it was enough to begin my ministry. Slowly, people started listening, and the word of God began to touch lives.

However, as my ministry grew, so did the voices around me. Friends, family, and even strangers began telling me I needed a mentor—a spiritual father to guide me and make my ministry more accepted in society. At first, I resisted, believing my calling and the Holy Spirit's guidance were enough. But the pressure grew, and I started to wonder if perhaps they were right.

Eventually, I decided to search for a mentor. My journey led me to a renowned bishop in Abuja, a man of great influence with a thriving ministry and a reputable school. He seemed to embody the success and spiritual depth I sought.

When I attended his church for the first time, I was captivated by the grandeur and the powerful atmosphere of worship. After the service, I approached him, shared my story, and expressed my desire for mentorship. To my relief, he accepted my request—but with one condition: I had to become a regular member of his church if I truly wanted to be his disciple.

The bishop's offer seemed like an extraordinary blessing—a divine confirmation that I was on the right path. When he suggested that my wife and I resign from our jobs to join his ministry full-time, it felt like an invitation

of love and purpose. He promised us free accommodation, a steady income, and the stability that so many in ministry long for.
I prayed about it, and though there was a flicker of doubt in my heart, I chose to ignore it. My wife and I talked it through, weighing the pros and cons. We eventually agreed—it seemed like the logical next step for our lives and ministry. We resigned from our jobs and stepped into what we believed was a higher calling.
But almost immediately, things began to unravel.
The promised accommodation turned out to be far from ideal—a cramped, poorly maintained space that barely accommodated our family. The job roles we were given consumed all our time and energy, leaving little room for family, personal prayer, or even the original ministry God had laid on my heart. I became a driver of one of the buses of the ministry and my wife became a teacher in the school built within the ministry.

Worse still, the bishop's leadership style was nothing like the nurturing mentorship I had imagined. He was domineering, quick to criticize, and made decisions that often seemed more self-serving than Christ-centered. His promises of love and support began to feel like manipulation, and I realized I had traded my God-given mandate for the approval of man.
The weight of my decision bore heavily on me. My wife, though supportive, also began to feel the strain. Our children were affected too, as the once-peaceful home we had built was replaced with stress and uncertainty.
The cracks in the bishop's promises became too glaring to ignore. I had approached him out of trust, believing in his spiritual authority and mentorship, but his actions betrayed a darker truth. When I brought up the unfulfilled promises and the irregularities I observed in the ministry, I was met not with understanding or explanation but with hostility.
At first, it was subtle—a cold shoulder, dismissive words—but soon, the attacks became overt. Threats, intimidation, and even physical confronta-

tions began to occur. My wife and I found ourselves trapped in a storm we never anticipated.

Life turned miserable. The once comfortable home we had built crumbled under the weight of unpaid debts. We couldn't afford three square meals a day. Our children, once vibrant and healthy, fell sick more often than not. It felt as though darkness had enveloped every aspect of our lives.

I tried to leave the ministry, thinking it might be the key to freedom, but every step toward escape brought greater hardship. I cried out to God for clarity, praying fervently to understand where I had gone wrong. It was in those quiet moments of despair that the truth hit me: I had strayed from God's path by placing my trust in man.

Desperate for answers, I sought out others who had left the bishop's ministry. Their stories were chilling. Many spoke of lives ruined—people reduced to perpetual servitude under the guise of discipleship, unable to fulfill their God-given purposes. Leaving, they warned, was almost impossible, as the bishop held a grip that went beyond the physical.

The final wake-up call came during a clash with his bodyguard, who swore to shoot me during a heated argument. Later, I learned from the bishop's driver that the bishop had laughed off the incident, saying, "Leave him alone. He hasn't even spent five hundred thousand naira or a million to make a charm. He will punish me soon enough." Those words struck me like lightning. It dawned on me: I had entrusted my life and ministry to a man who served not God, but his own dark agenda.

Shortly after, my son suffered a severe injury during a church service. As I rushed him to the hospital, watching him bleed and cry in pain, I realized I could no longer allow my family to suffer under this oppression. By God's grace, my son recovered, and with renewed determination, I made up my mind: I would leave, no matter the cost.

I abandoned everything—the bishop's jobs, the house, the ministry's resources, even the identity I had built within his church. Starting over was

excruciating. The life I had before joining the ministry, with all its struggles, now seemed like paradise compared to what I endured under his rule. But through it all, I held onto one truth: God had called me, and His calling was irrevocable. Slowly but surely, I began rebuilding my life and ministry from scratch. The road was long and painful, but I was finally free.

Today, I stand as a testimony to the power of God's redemption. I have learned that it is better to obey the voice of God than to yield to the manipulations of men. True fulfillment comes only from staying faithful to His calling, no matter how small or humble it may seem.

Not All Visions Come From God

During my secondary school days, I followed my friend to Offa in Kwara State Nigeria. There was a man who owned a shop in Offa Polytechnic and was very popular for selling electronics at the time. He had a friend who lived with him and was identified as a prophet.

One day, my friend asked me if I had gone to this prophet to look into my destiny. I replied, "How?" She said he would light a candle and tell you everything about your life, from the day you were born, without missing any details. I told her I don't go to prophets and that my mom had taught me never to seek prayers from them.

At that time, my friend was yet to marry. The prophet told her that in the future, either her husband would die or one of her children would die, and that she should pick one. He asked her to think about it. I asked her what her reply was, and she said she didn't say anything. I told her she had accepted a wrong fate by remaining silent. I explained that she should have canceled it in the name of Jesus. According to her, the prophet told her that if her husband died, it would be dangerous, but if her child died, she could have another child later.

Not long after, the prophet told her to perform a sacrifice. She was instructed to buy a small coffin, white cloth, and a plantain tree, wrap the plantain tree in the white cloth, and bury it at midnight. She did as he instructed which symbolized burying the child that would supposedly die in the future. I was angry and told her this could have dangerous implications for her life.

Some time after my friend carried out the sacrifice; the prophet approached me and asked why I had never come to him to check my destiny. I told him I wasn't interested in such things. Then he asked me to check his tongue. Lo and behold, there were some incisions on it. He claimed that with these incisions, whatever he told anyone would come to pass, and whatever he asked anyone to do, they would surely do it. He admitted it was a means for him to make money.

I challenged him, asking why he still called himself a minister of God. He explained that while he once received a call from God, he also had a shrine in his village. At Offa, he said, whatever he declared always came to pass. Eventually, my friend got married and had a child, but the child died, and she never conceived again. Her husband sent her packing, and she never remarried.

Over time, every three months, the prophet would tell me he was going home to renew his power because the one he had was becoming weak. To others, he would claim he was visiting his parents. On one of these trips, he traveled back home but never returned. We later learned that he had died in his shrine, burned alive along with the shrine itself.

The Test Of Leadership

I am the governor of a gospel music organization in one of the states in Nigeria. I see my role as more than a title; it is a calling from God. My mission is to uphold integrity, transparency, and discipline while

leading the members to reflect the love of Christ. I believe we are not just an organization but a part of the body of Christ.

One day, my leadership faces a challenge I do not expect.

It starts with a few members. Their actions, small at first, grow into open misconduct. Their behavior threatens the harmony and mission of the organization. I know I cannot ignore it.

The rules of the organization are clear, and discipline is necessary to restore order. After praying and consulting with the leadership team, I decide to discipline them. I handle the matter with love, believing that correction is an act of care. But instead of repentance, I face rebellion.

What begins as small complaints becomes outright defiance. The disciplined members write petitions against me, accusing me of unfair treatment. They gather support from others who feel the same. Soon, the situation turns into a lawsuit.

The betrayal hurts deeply. I act out of love and a desire to protect the organization, but my actions bring hostility. The legal battle affects me emotionally and spiritually. I fall into depression, and my daily activities slow down.

During this time, I question myself. Did I make a mistake as a leader? Was I too strict? The burden feels heavy, and I turn to prayer for strength. Even in prayer, I struggle with the pain of betrayal and the weight of responsibility.

What hurts more is the behavior of those I trust the most. Some leaders, whom I hold in high esteem, compromise their integrity because of jealousy and hatred. I wonder how believers can act this way, even though we are called to reflect the character of Christ.

The national executives hear about the situation and come to my state to investigate. I explain everything, showing my actions and intentions. After looking at the facts, they see the truth.

The executives correct the erring members and make it clear that their

actions are against the rules and against Christ's teachings. Their involvement resolves the matter, but the experience leaves a mark on me.
As I think about what happened, I realize a hard truth: not everyone who claims to follow Christ shows His character. Pride, jealousy, and rebellion take over for some, and they fail to show humility and submission.
The situation teaches me important lessons about leadership and faith. I understand that leading in the body of Christ is not about pleasing people but about obeying God, even when it is difficult.
Now, I am stronger and more determined to lead with integrity. I know leadership is not about avoiding challenges but about facing them with courage.
I encourage everyone to reflect Christ's character in all they do. Discipline is not rejection but a way to restore love and order. Let us remain humble, teachable, and united as one body in Christ.

The Silent Sniper

In the early days of a Pentecostal church in this nation, its roots were deep and strong, nourished by the power of the Holy Spirit. People were drawn not just by the sound of fervent prayers or the vibrant preaching of the Word but by the unmistakable signs and wonders that followed. The sick were healed, the oppressed set free, and hearts were transformed. The church was a living, breathing testimony to the grace of the Gospel.

As the years passed, the church's influence grew far and wide. It became a beacon of hope, its light reaching even the darkest corners. But with growth came new challenges. Slowly, subtly, the focus began to shift. The unrelenting pursuit of God was replaced by the pursuit of wealth. Messages on holiness and obedience to the Holy Spirit were diluted, giving way

to teachings of prosperity and financial breakthroughs.
The leadership at the central level began to impose stringent financial demands on the local churches it was first called development fund, later seed of blessing to build a higher academic institution. Each pastor was tasked with remitting a fixed sum annually, regardless of their congregation's capacity. The directive was cloaked in spiritual language—"expanding the kingdom of God"—but for many, it felt more like a noose tightening around their necks.
Local ministers, once vibrant in their faith, found themselves overwhelmed. Some struggled to meet the financial quotas, sacrificing personal well-being and even their families to comply. Others were labeled failures, demoted, or unceremoniously retired for "lack of growth." No longer judged by their spiritual fruit, they were measured by monetary output and numbers.

Through this, many became depressed and many died in the process, leaving behind orphans and widows who are never catered for by the church. The church continually builds high grade schools out of tithe and offering and special donations from members which their children cannot even afford.
This is a silent sniper killing and silencing the move of the spirit of God in the church. When the church began to emulate the world, the gate of hell is already wining.
May God save His church from misplaced priorities.

The Test of Faith

My husband was called by God into the ministry to preach the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. With faith and obedience, we launched into the work, trusting God's promises. Though the journey was far from

smooth—we often struggled to grow our congregation and faced challenges—our love for God only deepened, and our faith soared higher each day.
One day, a man well-known and influential in the city approached my husband. He offered to help our ministry flourish. My husband was taken aback, as this man practiced a different religion. Calmly, the man explained that he had assisted other ministers, some of whom we held in high regard as fathers of faith.
"I can take you to certain places," he said, his voice persuasive yet unsettling. "It doesn't matter whether it's a church, mosque, or shrine. They all work together. You'll see your ministry thrive—faster, larger, more prosperous. Many prominent ministers have walked this path."
The weight of his words stunned us. What he offered was nothing less than a pact with darkness—a shortcut powered by ungodly means. My husband and I exchanged a glance, our hearts heavy. How could so many, whom we once admired, have traded the truth of the gospel for such deceit?
With unwavering conviction, my husband declined. "We serve the Lord Jesus Christ, and His principles are non-negotiable," he said firmly. "Better to walk in obedience with little than to gain the world through disobedience."
The man left, his offer rejected, but the encounter left us both shaken and resolute. That day, we chose again to trust God's timing and provisions, no matter how small they seemed. The work of the Lord must be done His way—untainted by worldly compromise.
And in that decision, we found peace, knowing that in God's kingdom, faithfulness is greater than fame, and obedience is the true measure of success.

A Call to Intercede:
A Vision of Hope and Concern for Church Leaders

In a vision, I found myself in an unfamiliar village, one unlike any place I've known in this world. As I stood there, a white coaster bus approached and stopped not far from where I was standing. From the bus emerged two individuals—a husband and wife—who I instantly recognized as highly respected General Overseers of one of the thriving Pentecostal churches in Nigeria.

Seeing such spirit-filled leaders so close, without the usual protocols, was both surprising and humbling. In my heart, I thought, this is the best opportunity to receive my share of grace from these servants of God.

I approached them, knelt down, and asked for their prayers.

What followed left me deeply shaken. The only words the man of God prayed for me were:

"Even if we fail, you will not fail."

When I woke up, those words echoed in my spirit and filled me with concern. How could such a prayer come from someone so grounded in faith and ministry? It was a sobering reminder of the relentless attacks and challenges church leaders face. It revealed a need for collective intercession for those God has called to lead His people.

Church leaders bear tremendous spiritual responsibility. They are not only shepherds to the flock but also targets of intense opposition from the enemy. Satan is determined to bring them down at all costs, knowing that their failure can lead to widespread discouragement and disillusionment within the body of Christ.

This vision emphasized that their success in the journey of faith is as criti-

cal as our own. Their fall should never be a cause for celebration or gossip but a call to prayer and action. I believe this vision is a clarion call for all believers to stand in the gap for ministers of the Gospel, whether they serve through preaching, music, drama, or any other ministry. Let us lift them up in prayer, asking God to strengthen their faith, guard their hearts, and empower them to finish their race well. Their failure is not our joy, and their fall should never be our triumph. As much as we seek not to fail in our own walk with Christ, we must also labor in prayer to ensure that they do not fail.

May we commit ourselves to this divine mandate, standing together as one body, interceding for the men and women who have devoted their lives to advancing the Kingdom of God.

A Prayer for Our Leaders

Heavenly Father, we lift up all church leaders and ministers to you. Strengthen them in their faith, protect them from the snares of the enemy, and give them the grace to finish their race with joy. May they stand firm in your truth, and may their ministries bear fruit for your glory. We ask this in Jesus' name. Amen.



Conclusion

As we draw the curtain on The Church Scandals, it is evident that the anomalies within the body of Christ have become a grave concern, threatening the purity and power of the gospel. These scandals, rooted in greed, deception, and spiritual manipulation, not only negate the principles of Christ but also stand as a stark warning to believers to remain vigilant in these perilous times.

However, amidst this darkness, there is hope—hope that lies in the unchanging truth of God's Word and the guiding presence of the Holy Spirit. It is imperative that every believer develops an intimate relationship with Christ, one that transcends mere rituals and religious observances. The Holy Spirit is our safeguard, illuminating the path of righteousness, exposing the agents of darkness, and empowering us to discern truth from deception.

It is crucial to understand that signs and wonders, miracles, and prophecies do not validate a man as a true servant of God. Jesus Himself warned in Matthew 7:22-23: "Many will say to me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name and in your name drive out demons and in your

name perform many miracles?' Then I will tell them plainly, 'I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!'" True servants of God are marked not by outward displays of power but by their unwavering commitment to holiness, humility, and obedience to Christ.

That said, we must also acknowledge that God still has true men and women of faith who have not compromised their calling for the fleeting pleasures of this world. These faithful servants stand as beacons of light in a dark world, demonstrating what it means to live and minister according to the tenets of Christ's gospel.

As we navigate the end times, we must remember that our salvation is personal. It is not tied to the charisma of a preacher, the grandeur of a church, or the influence of religious institutions. Instead, it is anchored in a life wholly surrendered to Christ, nurtured by prayer, grounded in Scripture, and sustained by the Holy Spirit.

Let this book serve as a clarion call to return to the simplicity and purity of the gospel. Let it remind us that while wolves may arise in sheep's clothing, the Good Shepherd will never leave nor forsake His flock. Stay watchful, stay prayerful, and above all, remain in Christ, for He alone is the author and finisher of our faith.

May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with us all as we strive to live in truth, love, and unwavering faith. Amen.

HAVE YOU BEEN SAVED IN CHRIST?

Dear beloved, the best thing that can ever happen to you is to give your life to Christ; in Him you have peace, joy, happiness and a hope of eternity after the end of this world.

He is calling you to surrender to Him today for he said “Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and i will give you rest. “(Matthew 11:28).

If you wish to give your life to Christ now say after me...

Lord Jesus Christ, i believe you are the son of God. That you love me, came into the world, died on the cross and rose again for the forgiveness of my sin. Please forgive me and come into my life. Please fill me with your Holy Spirit and help me to follow you as lord of my life. Thank you for saving me and giving me eternal life. In your name i pray. Amen.

Congratulations beloved, you are now redeemed. For questions, prayers and follow-up, please feel free to contact me on the links bellow.

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God bless you

JESUS CHRIST IS COMING SOON, WILL HE MEET YOU STILL FAITHFUL?

ABOUT THE BOOK

The Church Scandals uncovers the troubling deviations within the body of Christ that undermines the true gospel, from deception and greed to misuse of gifts. Amidst these challenges, the book offers hope, affirming that true servants of God still uphold their faith without compromise. it calls believers to cultivate personal relationship with Christ through the Holy Spirit.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Lawrence Alabi Adopisa is the convener of Brighter Life Ministry. A ministry God has been using for a decade to enrich lives with daily devotionals and other Godly articles. Lawrence is a digital evangelist, preacher, teacher, motivator and counselor.

