



# REBIRTH *of* VISION

*So that Christ Apostolic Church may survive, ... and do exploits*

JOHN O. B. AGBAJE

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## Rebirth of Vision

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ISBN: 978-978-947-434-9

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## **ABSTRACT**

A mission was conceived and born in power, with unusual unction for all-dimensional exploits, with an expectation of being the instrument of God to show its generation the pathway and prepare its world, particularly those in the continent of Africa and immediate surroundings for the pursuits of excellence and inheritance of a kingdom. But a wounded and enraged enemy vowed hot revenge, got fully reinforced and secured unguarded openings by which all that matter would be streamed into the drain. Against jeopardising trends, against forces of retrogression, spiritual myopia and putrefaction that have resulted from and which have come to define a generation of divided and bickering family, there must be a redefinition of focus, a reclaim of inheritance through *Rebirth of Vision!*

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### **The Use of the Term 'Church':**

1. *Church* – This is a reference to the universal Body of Christ of all ages and places or a reference to the term on a generic note
2. *church or mission* – This is a reference to a denomination, Christ Apostolic Church or any other one that may or may not be specifically mentioned
3. *churches* - This will be more than one congregation of CAC, the entire church together or those of other denominations, depending on the context.

# QUESTION, RESPONSE AND A DECLARATION

**“CAN THESE BONES LIVE?”**

(EZEKIEL 37V3)

I have for several years kept close company of those who are deeply burdened by the gulf that hangs between where we are and are supposed to be. I have on occasions expressed doubts about the probability and apprehension at the improbability of our getting it right again by chance. I see CAC, our beloved mission, drifting almost irresistibly to a point where even the situation we nag about today will be a ‘glorious’ history of the coming generation; in a short time hence.

Whatever it will require or mean for us to be revived and restored again has since been smuggled out of the category of a joke. As I behold the ‘bones’ on service and meeting days and whenever I get involved, and a bell still rings, albeit faintly, from that throne that all is not lost, I do not pretend to know better than Ezekiel whose only answer to a clear-cut question of whether or not the bones can live again was, at best, evasive. And, if there is any reason by which anyone may nurse or express optimism, it will just be because it has happened before and can happen again.

Therefore, going by the covenants of God with the fathers and prophecies that had gone forth, going by the fact that the door of mercy has not been shut against us as a people as if to seal our fate, going by the fact that the ‘bones’ are still intact and, finally, going by the fact that the same God who did it before is not only alive but is very eager for a show of power, may we all declare it, believe it and mean it; that the bones of CAC will rise again to fulfil the beckon of destiny.

**Yes, the Bones Shall Rise Again,**

**As a Mighty Army**

*Of*

**THE LORD GOD OF HOSTS!**



# OVERVIEW

## FOREWORD

When Prophet Ezekiel was summoned to a solitary valley to proclaim a message of restoration to a people that were not only deaf but dead and forgotten, he charted a course that similarly ‘mad’ fellows would trail in situations and generations to come. We know that true prophets are lone rangers who do not need anyone to appraise, let alone approve their course of action. Those who criticise them take nothing from them and their mandate while those who sing their praise and embrace their messages add nothing, either. Once the One who commissioned them blows the whistle, it will not matter if every other person sees raw lunacy and a sort of rigorous dancing to drumbeats which only they can hear.

Or, what else could be left for anyone who spied a gaze on the drama of Prophet Ezekiel in the valley of dry bones other than to hurriedly summon his relatives to the scene so that they would bundle and rush him to asylum before his madness would break loose and ‘enter the market place’? That was one occasion when the faith of the man himself, though a well-tutored and rare-bred prophet that knew the power of God to be without bounds, was going to be stretched to its limit. He was ordered to prophesy to a dead people who had become a heap of dried, disjointed, and scattered bones in a mass grave.

I do not pretend to be a prophet in the conventional sense of the term. Even if I do, anyone will easily detect the fraud and self-aggrandisement of an attempt to equate myself with Ezekiel of the Bible. Yet, if all that there is of prophets and their prophecies is to probe into the mind of God, catch His heartbeats and then convey His message to the people, the

burden of this work will have found its definition. I, therefore, do not shy away from a confession that it is into spiritual stunt and ‘strange’ anointing of this Old Testament prophet that I seek to tap as I beam the torch on the power of God that is hibernating and craving for a repeat of the 1930s.

Though the locations differ, though we are not decayed corpses or dried bones in the physical sense, the spiritual connections between us and the dry bones of Israel in the abandoned valley cannot be outwitted. Indeed, barring the direct intervention of God, whatever expectation that anyone; prophet, clergy or layman may nurse for the bones of Christ Apostolic Church to take on the flesh of revival that will dwarf its years of dreariness may only be, at best, a dreamland aspiration or a sheer attempt to play a cheap trick on human sensibility. The grounds we have lost as a mission through decades of drifting betray the distance we have traversed since we began to veer off the track to arrive at where we are today.

Yet, there is always another side to every story, just as there is a factor to every fact that can arrest natural sequence and render the best of human logic stupid. This is what we term a miracle in popular parlance. Though there is a perspective of bones, fresh or dried, which we have erroneously paraded as members who fill the valleys of our well-decked sanctuaries, our altars, our Prayer Mountains, our revival grounds or wherever they are located, and to which no mortal has a clue, we can catch a more compelling revelation from the vantage of Him who inhabits the highest realm.

We may then lay our fears to rest and revive our hopes as we fix our gaze on God who rules and overrules in the affairs of men. We should then be ready to tap into whatever He may have in His plan to turn our story around. The breaking forth

of His power in pursuit of His agenda in our midst will heal our backsliding, pour fresh anointing upon our altars, provoke awareness of His presence, spark revival fire, prompt evangelism and bring about the conversion of hardened sinners within and outside the walls of our sanctuaries. It will promote righteousness and pour unmeasured grace upon us and, through us, upon the universal Church. This will be our lot as we rally to a clarion call and begin a transit from the valley of tepidity to the mountain of exploits of the 'horsemen'.

*JOBA (31 May 2023)*

### **SYNOPSIS**

**The enemy weighed on the oversights at the foundations to perforate the vessel of the church and blur pristine vision with inventions and diversions which we may no longer ignore as the church repositions for the promised end-time exploits.**

#### ***The enemy weighed on the oversights at the foundations...***

Satan is a vicious and resolute fighter who will waste no moment to convert an inch of opportunity to several miles of advantage. The fact that the Christian education department that we, as a mission, instituted at the onset was a gross mismatch to the power that our evangelists wielded at revival grounds was all he needed. We have heard so much about the explosion that accompanied the early move of God in the church and how people were delivered from demonic powers at the open-air revival campaigns. But going by what people of my age bracket grew up to know of the mission, members were not sufficiently exposed to the kind of teachings they needed to live victoriously in their solitary corners and on daily basis. Thus, the demons that

were dislodged at the revival grounds soon sneaked their way back to secure hiding places in the sins and compromises of a people whose faith was either half-baked or not baked at all.

***...to perforate the vessel of the church and blur pristine vision..***

In any warfare, the incursion of the enemy into the opposing camp is always with dire consequences. The platform we provided for the enemy has vitiated corporate anointing and blurred the pathway by which the church would have conquered her world, beginning with its nation and continent for Jesus Christ. And while God would not have envisaged anything short of His sweeping moves across Africa going by the amount of power and anointing He bestowed on the ministry of Joseph Ayo Babalola, a global vision would soon be grounded. This has resulted in the confinement of the mission to the Yoruba race with only a negligible percentage of non-Yorubas in all the places it has spread its tentacles in over nine decades of her evangelical campaigns. It is not enough for anyone to claim that God sent Apostle Babalola only to the Yoruba race as He had sent several others to different races or locations. After all, the salvation primarily packaged for the people and nation of Israel in the ministry of Jesus Christ (Matthew 1v21, John 1v11) is what has been extended to our part of the world by which God has raised several children to father Abraham, even out of erstwhile ‘stones’.

***...with inventions and diversions...***

Since the early days of the church and till today, intense activities, even though some of them now moribund; have continued. They are crowded into our weekly and monthly routines without any vision as to how they are to lift the quality

of peoples' lives or further the cause of the cross. Let us for once ignore whatever the posters and billboards may be saying and face facts. Several of our church programmes and in several places are already ahead of their best and do not have what it takes to meet the intricate challenges of today. Also, you will find many of the patronising folks doing so to fulfil all righteousness; or in keeping with family tradition for those who are fortunate to have it or, worse still, to avoid embarrassing questions from their pastors. Moreover, it may be because they do not have alternatives to religious fervour which is not only active in most men but which can also be too compelling to ignore.

*...which we may no longer ignore...*

There is no how things will be left the way they are except we have struck a dark bargain and taken sides against heaven and its Inhabitant. We do not need to pretend that all is well with the drift and the tepidity, with the lackadaisical mien of our pulpits and the damning complacency of our pews. We need to recall that whatever has caused and sustained our operating in factions since these decades remains an overbearing reality. Therefore, rather than pretending that all is well, rather than limiting our search for whatever may be no more than a superficial reunion of the factions. This is possible for surface display even while the hearts and minds shelter sediments of the grudge. We must identify our only one enemy and rise with resolve, with unity of purpose that cannot be defeated against him, his selfish agenda and intransigence of those who will not let go of whatever may need to be surrendered for our collective triumph.

*...as the church repositions for the promised end-time exploits.*

Though this work dwells a bit on the intricacies, the myriad and depth of our challenges as a mission, it also carves a sharp focus on the power of the Almighty by which the challenges can become history. Let everyone reading this book be brought into the awareness of what God is about to do in our days and be ready to play his part which will begin from genuine repentance to being enlisted as a disciple and a soldier of the cross. In time, we will regain the lost grounds, recapture the lost glory and bring back the days of our founding fathers who found favour with God and obtained the promises we are about to tap into. We will break the grip of sin before it inflicts further damage and that may frustrate the plans of God for us. Righteousness will regain the throne at church altars, within the hierarchies and then within individuals and families that constitute our assemblies. We will be revisited by God with a season of refreshing to swap our decades of dryness, failures and spiritual barrenness. These will be our sure rewards as we step into partnership with God in preparation for our generation for the ultimate triumph of the Cross in the world and the rapture of the saints.

### **EXTRACTS**

*“Just as Satan stands with all his ploys to defeat the plan and purpose of God in the Church and the world at large, there is no limit to the power that God can wield to turn a situation that has been rendered most hopeless around.”*

“The progression and conclusion of this slot are very simple. Those who dwelt on the fancies of Egypt and kept no focus on the land of Canaan would never have been instruments of God in taking any of the Israelites there. Similarly, if anyone loses the vision of heaven, he is not likely to be able to chart a course for

anyone to get there”

*“We will need to cast our mind back to the call of Apostle Joseph Ayo Babalola and ask what exactly was in the mind of God when He mobilised the members of the then Faith Tabernacle into prayer for a visitation of His power in our land.”*

“...At six, I was already one of the drummers of the only drum to which the entire congregation danced during church services. But as far as I can recall, there were no exposures to or contact with the kind of Bible teaching by which we were to grow and become responsible Christian adults”

*“After all, no one can give what he does not have. Since many of the ministers we commission to our pulpits lack genuine testimony of salvation and exposure to sound doctrines of the Bible apart from the certificates from the seminaries, no miracle will lift the spiritual standard of our members.”*

“Most of our assemblies have pre-programmed routines for services and for nearly 95% of the times and places of worship; no ‘interruption’ is anticipated from, or experienced by the Holy Spirit. From one Sunday service to another, and from the beginning of one year to the end of another decade, it is the same liturgy, presided over by the same kind of ministers, preaching the same dreary sermons...”

*“Through years of observation, I have established a portentous trend, which is not limited to CAC alone, of how those who are visited with power by God have always fallen into the temptation of undermining the place and authority of the Bible, either in their personal life or in the conduct of their ministry. This alone will explain how and why some of those who tapped into the*

*anointing of Apostle Joseph Babalola may have made a shipwreck of their callings.”*

“Because they are not sufficiently taught to give, members of the church do not give as they should. Because they do not give as they should, they do not receive as they should. Because they do not receive as they should, they do not have as they should. And because they do not have, they just cannot give as they should.”

*“The blunt truth is that no one can do exploit for God who is not a true disciple. No one can ever be relevant in the programme of God who is not a true disciple. And by the time we go on and on, we soon discover that we can confidently affirm that no one may expect to make it to heaven at last who is not a true disciple of Jesus Christ.”*

“I have consistently maintained that whatever the Church is doing today will be a waste except it is contributing something to the efforts of the global community of Christians to reach the very last soul with the gospel irrespective of where he may be, following which the trumpet will sound to evacuate us from the sinking ship of this world”

*“Thus, I wish to state that the factions that had fought it out in various courts over the years are not the real parties at war. Those that have paraded themselves before unbelieving judges at times too numerous to count are not the combatants. If anything, the opposing teams are only stooges of the powers at war in the higher realms over the fate of this church.”*



# CHAPTER 1

## THE ROOT OF THE ROT

**I**t does not require anything more than a mere passage of time for all institutions run by man; whether in ancient or modern days, in religious, secular or even commercial spheres to wreck a vision and defeat the original purpose, either as ordained by God or conceptualised by the founder(s). Derailing from a course does not call for any effort whatsoever. All that is required is simply to let go, to take things at a minimal level. Also, those who should safeguard the sanctity of a vision and pin its pursuit and pattern on a predefined course will only need to cross their legs and fold their arms as events flow with the tides. In a short while, retrospection will reveal how plans had failed and courses had drifted. At the same time, we know how a failure of any magnitude can always be dressed in the robes of success while it is only a candid appraisal that will detect the miscarriage of a vision and its underlying fraud.

Permit me to launch into a major concern of this work on

a rather blunt note. I suppose it will be hard for any or all the warring leaders of the church to beat their chests and claim to have been fighting the battle of the Lord with all the ruses that have been seen on display since the turbulent years erupted upon us. Even if that is what was proposed by intention or communicated in various claims and counterclaims, the actions that have been pursued, the weapons of the flesh that have been displayed in the fight and the results we have seen thus far have made the points louder and clearer than whatever the mouths or any press release may be saying.

We know that the truth has no other version. We know, too, that even if a tree is falsely labelled, the fruits will expose its true nature. We also know, in flagrant disregard of all that we may find in the open scriptures, how cases have continued to climb on the back of each other in several courts, and before unbelieving juries as the leadership of the church cast restraints aside to wash its dirty linen in the glare of the public.

For instance, the website of a warring faction at a time, even though it is said to be under construction, posted six items on its news segment and devoted five of them, under *Church Crisis*, to advertise a forgery case the government was pursuing against the leadership of a rival faction. One may just ask what exactly the sponsors of this intend to reap from blackmailing fellow ministers of the same mission, especially through the internet with such a potently global reach. It is all a result of bottled-up rancour against each other by which the leaders could no longer sit together and dialogue, even for the fun of it. We have also heard at a time how a minister of one faction will almost be brought under a curse if he is found in the company of ministers of rival factions.

There is so much bitterness among the leaders, especially

those at the forefront of this battle who sometimes do not even bother to pretend to anyone, anymore, that they are running their Christian race to the same destination in the end. We were not only divided, it seems our leaders derive pleasure in the division. This may be the only explanation as to why the situation was sustained for this long and no faction was known to be fully prepared to concede, raise cries to heaven and then back them up with meaningful action that may begin to heal our wounds and bring true reconciliation.

I suppose that no one who has the mind of God will be at peace with the situation confronting our beloved mission, Christ Apostolic Church. It is as a result of this that we have witnessed several efforts by those who are burdened to initiate and pursue an end to the acrimonies. I know some groups that have been praying, that had sought and are still seeking one level of engagement or the other in partnering with God to bring us together again. This work highly commends and seeks to build on the efforts of such people as it highlights our systemic decay and resultant institutional challenges with suggested solutions. After all, it has been said that a problem properly defined is half solved.

### **ON THE HISTORY OF CHRIST APOSTOLIC CHURCH**

This is not an effort to rewrite the history of CAC or any aspect of that history to which reference will be made. Any recourse to history will be a hint of what may have derailed our course to the point of splitting into factions. The history of the church has already been narrated by more competent and better-informed authors through their works. Foremost among such are Pa (Elder) J. A. Ademakinwa, a founding member of the Faith Tabernacle movement who witnessed its

activities and Pastor J. A. Medayese, another pioneering member and former General Superintendent of the mission whom I grew up to know in person and the ministry.

There are other works by Pastor E. H. L. Olushey, our former president, Pastor J. Adeware Alokun, an early erudite member of the church, Professor Bunmi Osun, a professor of Christian Religious Studies and Apostle Moses O. Idowu, a research scholar on the history of the Church in Nigeria, already with several publications. Permit me to reserve a special reference to the work of Dr Abi Olowe, *Great Revivals, Great Revivalist – Joseph Ayo Babalola* as a sweeping summary of the history of the birth, calling and ministry of Apostle Joseph Babalola. I found his treatise on the subject of revival in the first chapter and his concluding remarks of the book to be particularly in harmony with the spirit of this work, which is to rebirth the revival of the 1930s through repentance and focussed prayers; to stir us to earnestly yearn for a great visitation and demonstration of the power of God in our days.

I do not need to shy away from the fact that, even with the height of my concern and resolve to dig to the bottom of issues, I do not know everything. Neither will I claim to have every perspective there may be to every story concerning events that have led us to where we are today. Therefore, it will not suddenly become a big issue that not all the points raised in this work may be said to be absolute truth against which there are no alternative versions. It may also be that analysis of a scenario or event has not captured all the perspectives that may relate to it. In all matters of history, no author may lay claim to the absolute authority of all the issues involved. Whatever viewpoint he advances and the conclusion he sponsors will depend on where he has sourced his facts.

Even though efforts were invested to dig into facts as they relate to the development of the church in the recent decades in this work, such efforts and honesty with which they are pursued in themselves may not guarantee the absolute accuracy of all points to be raised. What will matter, therefore, and be required of every reader is for him to detach such inaccuracy, in case any is noted, from intention to misinform as some authors have been tempted to do, even by deliberate design. Therefore, whatever conclusion we will draw from any narrative on our need for corporate survival through repentance and revival will become more important than the accuracy or inaccuracy of historical analysis.

#### **A DELICATE BALANCE**

First, there are those to whom honour is due and to whom it must be ascribed, especially as I consider myself of a much lower age and far less spiritual worth to call such people to question. This is not just a confession of humility but that which upholds the counsel of the Bible, that: *“Rebuke not an elder, but intreat him as a father...”* (1 Timothy 5v1). God has not appointed anyone, whoever he may be, to function as an umpire in the Church, with a mandate to question the works of other people or censure their motives. No one may claim to be driven by zeal for the triumph of good and right, with the inspiration he wants his readers to trace to God while ignoring or violating the instructions of the same God.

Therefore, it is not the scope of this work to explain what may have gone right or wrong with our revered fathers, dead or alive. Neither will I be tempted to dabble into the bargain they had with God concerning their callings which came to define their personal and ministerial profiles. For instance, I

have stumbled upon instances that suggested that whatever may be adjudged to be right or wrong with any or many of our fathers may be because those who pass comments were never brought into the full picture of the exact situation that confronted and compelled them to take the courses they chose. We are proud of the fact that many of our fathers served God to the best of their knowledge and the greatest of their varying abilities, even with the most sublime devotion and the purest of motives<sup>1</sup>. And, just as several historical records have testified, we do not nurse a speck of doubt that many of them will stand very tall on the day of reckoning.

The other side of this coin of appreciation relates to how we will manage a delicate balance of avoiding whatever may seem to drag the high office of our leaders in the mud on the one hand and the need to say it, just as it is, on the other. It then means that while we seek to tread within the limit of our limited knowledge, while we are careful to uphold the sanctity of the church offices and shield the officers from damning comments, we do not shy away from having to expose the roots of our rots. I hold in esteem all those who have occupied the cockpit of our journeying as a mission through the turbulence of the last few decades to where we are today. Despite this, we still have to agree that we may not be able to find a very gentle way of cleaning a septic tank.

We know that in a wider world, one can be guilty of the

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<sup>1</sup> This is most especially as it concerns the trio of Pastor (Oba) Isaac B. Akinyele, the Olubadan of Ibadan, Pastor David O. Odubanjo and also to the youngest of them and the anchor man of this mission, Apostle Joseph Ayo Babalola. I have noted with great delight that of all the historical accounts of CAC I have read to date by various authors, none has had a trace of any blame to the door step of any of these except for the revelation of how they employed all their ability, resources and resourcefulness to serve the Lord.

abuse of his right to free speech. Someone has said that no one has the right to use all his rights. However, we cannot but agree to the fact that in the congregation of the saints and among those who are running the race to heaven, we may reappraise such socially expedient injunctions and play the games a bit differently. This is because we are not aware of any need to check on which opinions we are or are not allowed to hold or express in the assembly of the saints. This supposition dwells on and derives from the fact that we are dealing with God who does not have an iota of respect for whatever any man may be or be up to.

The Bible is splattered with instances where God dished out rebukes to address either the waywardness or failure of His people. A prophet who was no more than an ordinary subject of a kingdom would challenge his king as a mouthpiece of God as we have of Nathan and David and also in the many confrontations of Elijah with Ahab's dynasty. Or, how would the Bible have managed to smuggle the portions of Uriah and census sagas during the reign of King David into its records as if to cast dark stains on the most glorious career of the best king that Israel has ever had?

It is the same culture that prevailed into the New Testament Church when some brethren accused Peter, even wrongly, of mingling with the Gentiles and Paul also had to withstand his dissembling at another time. This is even though both King David and Apostle Peter carried unquestionable anointing and profiles, the former to be the warlord and the best king of Israel to date and the latter a clear leader of the early Church.

Judging by the seriousness of the issues on hand and how they impact our delicate race to heaven, the Bible will be more

disposed to our laying issues on the table, especially if that is the only way by which we may expect to break forth. After all, no one is expected to wear a mask in dealing with God who sees even beyond that which may be known by or unknown to any man (Hebrews 4v13). Therefore, whatever mud that the frankness of this work may splash on the psyche of anyone will never compare to the setback that treatment of issues with kid gloves will pose to our collective destiny as a mission, especially at this stage of our history. It will be sufficient to make it clear that no person or a group of persons is a target of intrusive references that may be traced to this work.

The option of separating issues from personalities and offices from their holders will always be a preferred one. This is more because physical confrontation or antagonism, mild or wild as it may be, will be a weapon of the flesh that is doomed to fail in a spiritual battle. The work addresses the decay of a system with no focus whatsoever on or reference to whoever might have played whatever role over time to land us where we are now. Its grand opinion dwells on the fact that there is probably no individual or a group of persons that may directly be held responsible for the problem of the church.

The work focuses on our weak administrative structure and its loose controls which may have been exploited by whoever anyone may be tempted to point accusing fingers to. Take our split into factions for instance. It involves multidimensional and intricately woven issues which did not just burst upon us from the outer world when they finally did in the late eighties and early nineteen-nineties. Seed of discord had been sown and watered and its sprouting had continued unchecked even by the successive administration of the church in times past.

As we shall see later, some of the issues confronting us are



even older than many of us who are searching for a solution to them now. They have grown wild and creepy over the years and are deeply entrenched beyond whatever anyone may want to water down or wish away. While many may not know everything about the cause and depth of our challenges, we are all witnesses to how they have arrested the progression by which the national (and continental) evangelical agenda would have been pursued to fruition on the platform of the Christ Apostolic Church, and how this would have, in turn, dictated political transformation of Nigeria. This is the cause of our fears and tears, the yearning of our hearts and the supplication with which we are invading the throne of grace through whatever prayer movement that this work will give birth to.

### **THE CHURCH AND FORCES OF CORRUPTION**

On a rather sad note, no one may deny the fact that it is not only our beloved mission that is battling with the challenges of this rebellious age as many denominations with similar mandates are also enmeshed in fierce contention against dark forces. We hear stories, sometimes those that are more disturbing than events that petrify us in CAC, involving other churches or ministries in which no true child of God will take pleasure either in their occurrences or in their broadcast. We, therefore, do not pretend that there are things that are happenings in CAC that are strange to the experience of other churches. In every church institution, as presided over and run by human beings, we will always find those who are either in sympathy or alliance with Satan and there is no limit to which they can be used to inject venom of corruption and derail a purpose, especially once they manage to grab sensitive positions that offer them the leverage.

But all the above cannot be anything more than one side of the story of our falling and failing in CAC. We have the other side, a different version of the story and that which is much more compelling. **Just as Satan stands with all his ploys to defeat the plan and purpose of God in the Church and the world at large, there is no limit to the power that God can wield to turn a situation that has been rendered most hopeless around.** It is based on this that we will continue to nurse our hope for the church and its people such that, at the end of the day, we will bounce back and respond to the beckon of glorious destiny.

Pastor J. O. Babayemi, the former Chairman of Itire District Coordinating Council in Lagos who was my assembly pastor at CAC, Oke-Igbala, Ketu, also in Lagos, gave a hint in 1992 when the problems of the church were just beginning to swell out of control. He said that the evil spirits which our founding fathers confronted and outwitted during their epoch-defining revival campaigns, especially at the inception of the church, are those that have regrouped and reinforced against us. That comment was a tweak that awakened my consciousness to the fact that, after all, demons do not die and may only be dislodged or suppressed till they can stage a counterattack, especially if sufficient caution is lacking.

This may be seen in a wider world by those who have grown the outlook of their Christianity beyond the narrow window of their church buildings. They will attest to the trauma of the Church in several places today, especially with the new waves of persecution confronting her on a global scale. For decades, intercessors toiled day and night and prayed communism with its tight grip on Russia and east of Europe to a standstill. Then the walls began to fall, first in

1989 in Berlin, Germany and by the end of 1991; the monstrous ideology lost its grip on many nations which swam their passage to the atmosphere of religious freedom. We do not know, though it is unlikely, whether the intercessors slowed down or got lured away from the altars after thanksgiving for a feat well accomplished.

What followed was Islamic terrorism that reared its head to become a major challenge of global dimension with its more vicious and deadlier attacks and just at about the time that the Church would have rolled out the drums of celebration for seeing the end of communism. For instance, since the declaration of war by Osama bin Laden of the Al-Qaeda terror group on the religion, values systems and interests of the west, the world has not been the same. Or, who is it that can project into the realm of the spirit and will disconnect the spirits that fuelled communism for decades from those that are now borrowing the mask of religion to foment troubles?

The sad truth that the mainstream media is censored to cover up but which cannot be covered is that the combatant frontiers of Islam, just like the ideology of Communism, have the Church and the Christians as the primary targets of their brutality<sup>2</sup>. For instance, North Korea which retains the ideology of communism in its strictest form is now reputed as the worst place on the surface of the earth for anyone to be a Christian. Imprisonment and wanton infliction of pains, callous torture and reckless execution of Christians at

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<sup>2</sup> Citing the brutal attacks of note, ISIS terrorists slaughtered 21 Egyptian Christians, like rams, in Libya in February 2015. Also in April 2015 al-Shabab terrorists stormed Garissa University in Kenya and shot dead about 150 people who were first identified as Christians and separated from others before their execution.

pretentious accusations are the order of the day and a thing of rejoicing for the overzealous agents of the government.

The fact that we can glean from this is that while she battles on this plane against the forces of Satan, the Church will never arrive at any point when she will be cured of all ills. Such expectation is for the age to come. The challenges confronting her on a global scale are dynamic and whatever solutions are suggested here or there and our responses to the challenges will only rotate other issues to the front burner.

Life consists of the fact that nearly every solution there may be to a problem usually brings along with it other problems. It is just that experience has confirmed that such a derivative problem is a preferred one most times. For instance, despite its cohesion, pristine devotion and genuine love for one another, we read about grunting in a segment of the early Church about the distribution of welfare materials just at a time when it began to experience revival and exponential growth in the number of believers after the Pentecost and following successful evangelical campaigns.

Coming back to the events on the platform of Christ Apostolic Church over the last few decades, the evil spirits that were routed and disgraced from the centre stage during the momentous revivals have gone nowhere. Whenever we have within the fold those who are willing to sympathise with their cause and lend themselves for their use, they will always reinforce to fight back. And, going by the revelation of Jesus Christ in Matthew 12v43-45 alone, which may appear to partially explain our present situation, no one would underrate what a legion of demons on a revenge mission may be up to. Also, it is like stating the obvious that the strategic target of such legions will be the leadership which would normally have

to develop a sense of extra caution to avoid a pitfall of apathy.

It may not be difficult for us to admit that something certainly went awry with the leadership of the church somewhere along the line that has resulted in our wandering off the track for this long. It will also not amount to anything new that leaders have always emerged in the history of the church that God has not ordained. The experiences in the Church universally and even in the political theatres of the nations through generations reveal how wrong leaders have always emerged in all human societies.

The Church will never lack the likes of Diotrephes who would fight and scheme for the position of leadership in pursuit of personal agenda (2 John 9). All that is needed is for the flesh to secure an upper hand and a means to assert itself by which sentiments and self-interests will creep into the assembly of the saints. Following this, it will no longer be necessary for anyone to complain about how carnality and even irrationality will dictate the tune of the music that people dance to at the church altars.

With the experience of the Old Testament Church which may find application to any dispensation, one may imagine what would have happened if, following the death of Moses, Joshua was to be schemed out by whatever means and the mantle of leadership was to fall upon any or some members of the clique that was always clamouring for a return to Egypt in the camp of the Israelites at the slightest provocation of the wilderness journey. Nothing more than this would have been needed to reverse the progress of forty years in the wilderness, with the pains and the gains, with the battles they had fought, the blood they had spilt and victories they had won, with the troubles the journey had spelt for a weary throng.

Expectedly, and in pursuit of its mandate, the new leadership would organise a myriad of activities. It would reassure itself and its followers that they were heading for Canaan; that Yahweh was still their God and that all was well and would be well. The mobile secretariat would be busy with the formulation of rules and redefinition of policies. Great and 'innovative' ideas may even be seen on display that would be more expressive than what the leadership of Moses and Joshua put together could have dreamt about. There might also be statistics to indicate progress and growth in the membership or financial strength of the movement. But the reality would be damning regression masterminded by the enemy to lead the people back to their generational bondage.

**The progression and conclusion of this slot are very simple. Those who dwelt on the fancies of Egypt and kept no focus on the land of Canaan would never have been instruments of God in taking any of the Israelites there. Similarly, if anyone loses the vision of heaven, he is not likely to be able to chart a course for anyone to get there<sup>3</sup>.** It will not matter if lip tributes are paid to the virtue of Christianity and values of eternal life, usually on the pulpits and in public domains when every action and inaction, every decision and indecision will reveal a move in the opposite direction. Action, they say, speaks louder than voice.

The last point here is to recognise that there are those whose opinions may differ from the ones here, either in the analysis of the problems or in the solutions being proffered, or both. I have no ground to question or discount whatever

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<sup>3</sup> An exception to this is where, in divine providence that is beyond human means, anyone may just serve or be used as a tout into the 'Ark of Noah'.

arguments they may peddle. Whatever such differences may be and over what, we should unite our opinion on the fact that Christ Apostolic Church has not measured up for things to be left as they have been. We should limit our differences to the definition of the depth and extent of problems and unite efforts in action that will begin to move us forward.

The process and project of rebuilding the walls of our Jerusalem are already gathering momentum in the efforts towards unification and in those of others who are praying. It is my sincere prayer that we will be found in the camp of God and on the positive side of history as we embark on the subsequent phases of whatever it is that will bring back the glorious days of our fathers, once and again.

### **WILL IT BE WORTH THE EFFORT?**

This question crawled to the surface while brainstorming with others on this project and objectivity demands an appropriate response to it. Is it worth the trouble to pray and mobilise others for prayer to revamp CAC? It is very necessary to establish, first of all, that it will not be a wasted effort to embark on such prayers for CAC and churches with similar issues. The need for this is buttressed by the history of the Church with abundant instances of how God has refused to be chained down by human failure. In His matchless wisdom and from the abundance of His resources in pursuit of His agenda in the world, God has always ensured a prompt replacement of anyone; a group, a church or any human institution that dwells on a downward trend, sometimes even with ‘stones’.

While the above conveys the established pattern, we do not have much in the church settings of Nigeria today or any much in the wider world by which to suggest that the likes of CAC

should be flushed into the drain of history. As we shall see later, I agree that several vibrant Christian groups have sprung up in the length and breadth of Nigeria and beyond. I also agree that many of them are bristling with fervour in pursuit of the business of the kingdom. Yet, factual and gratifying as this may be, we do not ignore the fact that true revival has continued to elude our nation and generation.

Nigeria today is a paradox and a bastion of confusion of a most irrational dimension. While we are choked on every street with mosques and church buildings of various structures<sup>4</sup>, while the churches, especially the new generation ones, boast of innovative programmes across their spectrum, evil and corruption of huge varieties and magnitudes, hatched and perpetrated mostly by the same worshippers, remain endemic. Therefore, those who will close their eyes to the flurry of activities in the churches today will see how their shallow testimonies are constantly debunked by vices that have eaten deep into their spiritual fabrics. And, instead of pinning all the gazes or heaping all encomiums on the externalities:

1. They will see how people in their millions, if not in billions nowadays, are trooping out of our well-decked sanctuaries and cathedrals, our posh retreat centres and campgrounds to eternity of misery and horror of hell.
2. They will see how only a few of the churches may claim to be fulfilling all the aspirations of heaven to midwife the kind of revival that the Church today desperately needs, the one that will break the grip of sin and

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<sup>4</sup> Winners' auditorium in Ota, Ogun State was the largest single building in the world until this record is now being broken within the same Nigeria.



corruption upon our nation and provoke holy living and desire for heaven among its people.

3. They will see, quoting the exact words of Brother Bosun Emmanuel, how the Church has stopped to build disciples while most of its energies are focused on raising millionaires and billionaires in pursuit of the 'glorious' destinies of members by whatever means and through nearly every programme that is devised by its leadership.
4. They will see how messages that call for genuine repentance, urge the pursuit of holiness and heaven and issue stern warnings about hell as the ultimate end of never-dying souls of men are dimming out of the pulpits and how they are being substituted by motivational orations to galvanise the audience into the fulfilment of their destinies and life ambitions.
5. They will see, as I pointed out in one earlier major work, how dirty money that Peter had barked should perish with the likes of Simon in the early Church no longer perishes with the moneybags in the midst and how, instead of that, even the ones from dirtier sources have been buying them positions of influence in various churches.
6. They will see, as I also wrote earlier, how genuine children of the devil have exchanged their magical robes and occult wands for cassocks and collars to become miracle workers and deliverance ministers for those who want it hot and quick; and how fake pastors have invaded the pulpits with the cabalistic anointing that the Church of our most enlightened generation cannot detect or question. Nowadays, deliverance, miracles and

breakthrough are rated far more important than wherever they may be coming from and Satan, as a smart enemy, has capitalised on this to lead millions astray in search of what is not lost in the first place.

7. They will see how unrepentant sinners and chronic backsliders have become very comfortable, especially in the posh and air-conditioned atmospheres of our church buildings and how those who should break down in tears and cry out unto God for help after the sermons are the same people who are ushering their pastors to the pulpits with rounds of applause and are welcoming them with handshakes on their way from there.

One may just go on and on with the analysis of the huge gap that is now pitched between the Church in our day and the one that was founded by the Holy Ghost with the first set of disciples on the day of Pentecost. As I am documenting in another work, the Church today is parading too much of a crowd, far above those that the Holy Spirit could have brought into its fold. Therefore, whatever prayer effort will be galvanised by this work will be what the heavens are craving for at this moment. We must see how God is grieving over the Church with deep sighing and how our world is overripe for the visitation of His power.

# CHAPTER 2

## WHERE IS THE GOD OF 1930?

Elisha stood at the brink of shame if the God of Elijah was not going to show up for him. He had lived under the towering shadow of his master who covered up for whatever he lacked in the ministry. Then came a time when separation was inevitable and hard bargains were traded on how the young prophet would step into the shoes of his master. After crossing the river Jordan, Elijah was snatched away and Elisha was left alone, all alone, to face the rest of his journey. His first challenge was how to trace his way back to Jericho where both of them had come from and which God would appoint as the initial base of his ministry (2 Kings 2v18).

Meanwhile, the river had closed up the generous opening by which he and his master had crossed the bed of the river and the one who parted the river had disappeared. At the same time and venue, people had gathered for a piece of the show, eagerly watching from the sides of the stage either to ridicule Elisha or bow to him, depending on how he would handle the situation. The only option the prophet had, then, was to raise a cry to the God of his master: *“Where is the Lord God of Elijah”* (2 Kings 2v1-14).

All that we see today indicates that CAC is caught and chained down on the opposite side of a glorious agenda and would need no less than the mantles of the fathers to cross its Jordans. They have not only swollen and extended their bands in fury, but they are also jolting to swallow her up, sweep her

essence into the drain and reduce a glorious mission to a mere comic. Or, where does CAC stand today in the spiritual rating and social ranking in Nigeria it was originally ordained to serve and bear a lamp for? How many of our ministers carry the image that is appropriate for a denomination of our age, geographical spread and a huge membership in the circle of gospel ministers in Nigeria today? What is it that resonates at the mention of CAC outside its assemblies today apart from being the divided house of a warring family, where innocent members are continually harassed with questions from their colleagues about which of the camps they belong to?

Sometime in 2009, I conducted a mini-research to find out what the average Christian youths on the streets of Lagos in some of the vibrant churches and ministries around know about CAC or any of our great fathers that once shook this nation to its foundation with their miraculous exploits. Just like I included some of the names of our founding fathers, I also listed a few of our foremost national officers, both in the immediate past and present eras and spiced them with the names of other prominent ministers on the gospel stage in Nigeria. I was humbled by the outcome of my studies. I discovered that many of the pastors and General Overseers that do not even have branches of their ministries in up to twenty cities in Nigeria or beyond are better known than most of our fathers and highly cherished national officers, dead or alive as I listed them in the research paper.

We do not need to pretend spirituality and argue that there is really not much to be attached to a popularity poll. Neither do we need to frame an excuse that those who are popular among men may not be so with God. The core of the issue is that today, it is not just that we are not branded for too many

things worthwhile and praiseworthy. Since the gradual exit of our anointed and their firebrand evangelists, with suppression of those who still carry some sparks of flames within the fold and the defection of several others who saw the need to smuggle their callings away from the bickering leadership, CAC has ceased to pose any major threat to hell or command appropriate respect in the society. This is to state it just as it is, that we do not even wield any more influence in that realm of the spirit that may be taken as a trade-off for our damning obscurity in the society and corporate world.

Apart from a few charlatans, those who dominate the Christian landscape and its media platform in Nigeria today were not known to have set out to blow their trumpets. Neither can we claim that any or many of them floated a regular TV programme just to project his image or that of his ministry. Rather, it is the operations of the grace of God upon the lives and ministries of those ministers, their faithfulness to their callings; the richness and depth of their ministration and how these have combined to impact the lives of their followers that have announced them to their world.

Let us play down a little on what may look like the lopsided emphasis of some of the popular church programmes just to borrow an instance. I do not know if there can be a serious practising Christian in Lagos and its surroundings that will not know something about the monthly *Holy Ghost Night*, the August *Annual Convention* and December *Holy Ghost Congress* of the RCCG, the November *International Conference* of TREM, the monthly *Power Must Change Hand* programme of MFM or December annual *Shiloh Convention* of the Living Faith Church and many other life-enriching programmes of W. F. Kumuyi, Tunde Bakare, George Adegboye, Gbile Akanni, and others.

No one advocates that CAC should levy its members and organise television programmes just to redeem a battered image. That will be a most stupid and ill-conceived step to take. On the contrary, it is as we seek the face of God and humble ourselves before Him in individual and corporate repentance, it is as He remembers us and His covenant with our fathers and revisits us with fresh fire that we will arise and begin to build the wastelands. The opening of heaven upon us will bring His power and blessings down, once and again and this will achieve far more than whatever human scheme or efforts may dream of.

Beyond this, the Church universal today is overripe for a raw encounter with God. We will need such encounters to confront and outwit most of the Egyptian magicians who are employing satanic power to work fake miracles and tout the souls of the people to hell. Though Jesus informed us that both the wheat and tares will continue to grow until the time of the harvest, the experience today is that the weeds and the tares have choked the wheat to a point of suffocation.

But when God decides to rend the heavens to visit our world (Isaiah 64v1-3), no one will need a sermon to know that He has arrived and is at work. The fake miracle workers did not need any story to know whom they were contending with in Pharaoh's palace. Similarly, those that were at the encounter of Mount Carmel did not need hours of a sermon or a weekend of retreat before declaring, out of sheer bewilderment: *"The LORD, he is the God; the LORD, he is the God"* (1 Kings 18v39).

For instance, just a repeat of the exploits of 1930 today will see the likes of CNN, Sky News, BBC, Aljazeera, CCTV and others even in many countries that are hostile to the gospel

craving for a piece of the show. No serious media house today will like to see its audience switch allegiance for the lack of versatility and narrow-mindedness of its station. Where, then, is the God of Apostle Joseph Ayo Babalola who planted the seed of the Oke-Oye project and must have intended to make it a bastion of Pentecostal power in Nigeria and beyond?

In 1969, I read through some portions of a collection of fire-igniting articles in my mother's copy of *Ise ti a ko ti pari*, (*Unfinished Tasks*), authored by Pastor E. H. L. Olusheye, our former president. The book sought to apprise all who consulted its contribution write-ups from some revival-inclined ministers of the church which he edited to make the publication. There is at least a message I gleaned from the book, way back at that time which has remained and will remain part of me till we cross to the other side. The notion I thought that Pastor Olusheye sought to champion through the book was that the struggle was not yet over. Even now, it will amount to self-deception for anyone to assume otherwise. If we will be honest with ourselves, the spiritual mess that the Oke-Oye revival sought to clean up has now been replicated and compounded in our days.

Today, the church that the revival of Oke-Oye gave birth to has become a bastion of confusion that makes the prevailing atmospheres of dead Christianity before 1930 almost a playmate. Cultism and evil associations which the revival challenged and outwitted can now be traced to various levels of our membership and hierarchies. The church is fettered by ignorance and forces of retrogression while anyone who will want to dwell on our modest achievements will be bugged when he makes an honest comparison between where we are today and whatever must have been the expectation of God at

the inception of the church.

I once picked a *gossip* which I can neither substantiate nor refute that, for some decades in the past, the events on the spiritual platform of Christ Apostolic Church were said to have dictated the pulse of the Nigerian nation. I may at least connect this with what I heard from my father concerning a statement that he picked directly from the lips of Apostle Joseph Babalola. It informed that as God sent the apostle for the spiritual emancipation of Nigeria, so also He sent a prominent politician of the subsequent eras for its political and economic emancipation.

This allusion became an open secret in Nigeria when, following the demise of the man, one of our highly principled and revered statesmen, even from another tribe and political party declared him “the best president Nigerian never had”. Everyone may see today how our nation has continued to drift about in search of direction and has been groaning under a yoke of mismanagement. Up to this moment, our leaders on the political podiums are still struggling, if indeed they are, to be weaned of a babyish mentality that will continue to sell the citizens of a rich nation into economic slavery.

Let us dwell a bit on a major challenge that the Church in Nigeria has continued to dodge. Many Muslims in the north of Nigeria remain alienated and are yet to be reached with the kind of evangelical programme that will break up the soil of their hearts for the germination of the gospel seed. I do not know who will contend with me the fact that God reckoned with the huge population of the region when He moved Lord Lugard to mastermind the Amalgamation of 1914 by which no one from the south will require travelling documents to go and preach in any part of the north, a request which is sure to be



denied going by what we all know about Islamic nations today.

Among the greatest servants of God that have traversed Nigeria was Sydney Granville Elton, popularly called Pa Elton, who exuded much concern and passion about the need for Nigerian churches to arise and overrun the north with the gospel in a good time. He was the one who prophesied that the Nigerian government would someday pay the youths to preach the gospel, the fulfilment of which came with the introduction of the Youth Service Corps scheme by the Gowon administration and by which the north was invaded from the mid-1970s by rugged and die-hard groups, like Calvary Ministries (CAPRO). But the self-centred and narrow-focused southern Church remains preoccupied with the pursuit of its comfort even as the souls of fellow Nigerians rot away in the north. That was for several decades before religious terrorism became an issue that now makes most of the places a no-go area.

In addition to the pleadings of Pa Elton, I am aware of several appeals of missionary agencies to the Nigerian Church and its leadership to brace up to the evangelism of the north which churches, including CAC, have ignored for decades. According to Dr Abi Olowe<sup>5</sup>, evangelism of the Muslims in northern Nigeria constituted a parting burden of Apostle Babalola who in the last prayer guide he wrote for the Lenten season of 1959 was quoted to have requested the church to pray: “May the Lord bring up great prophet among the Muslims that will proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ”. Yet this is one prayer leading I have never picked from any of our pulpits in over fifty years of my exposure to CAC prayers.

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<sup>5</sup> Dr Abi Olowe, *Great Revivals, Great Revivalist – Joseph Ayo Babalola* (Page 317)

Now, as was noted in one of the editorials of a recent CAPRO publication, those that would have been reached with the gospel at the time of ease and peace when no life was under any threat for preaching the gospel or seeking to plant churches anywhere in the entire region are those who are now hounding us about with AK-47 and suicide bombers. Since we failed to factor the worth of their souls into reckoning for decades when they waited in vain for the arrival of the gospel train, albeit unconsciously, their fanatics have constituted themselves into brigades of brutality in defence and propagation of the religion they hold so dear.

Today, irrespective of whatever anyone may choose to tell us, it will only be sensible for us to agree that the Oke-Oye mission remains, borrowing the exact title of our former president's book, an *Unfinished Task*. At the least, we may just see it as an abandoned project if we will tactically avoid having to label it a miscarriage. I will nurse no iota of respect for the opinions of those who will want us to believe that the machinery of the Oke-Oye project ever climbed to its peak or fulfilled all the expectations of heaven. An objective appraisal of our history and profile, our spiritual tepidity as a church together with our social status will burst any sense of achievement. We may then begin to, at least, face the seriousness of the issues with a loaded question...

### **...DID GOD 'MISCALCULATE'?**

It will be highly preposterous if not blasphemous for anyone to imagine that the Being that was revealed to us as all-knowing, all-powerful, the only wise and incomparable God from the pages of the Bible has probably miscalculated. Yet, whatever the reaction to this question may be will not matter

as much as what must be bluntly stated that the situation on our hand seems to offer a seemingly sacrilegious hint. Going by what we have come to know of Christ Apostolic Church over the years, it is either God has miscalculated His high stakes and expectations from the call of Apostle Joseph Ayo Babalola, or the mission which that call gave birth to has simply let Him down.

No one engages in or lavishes his resources on any venture without a clear definition of his give and take. Even if it is for this alone, we dare not assume that the God of heaven and earth, the best and Master Planner will Himself embark on the gigantic project of Oke-Oye revival with the power encounters that trailed it without clearly defined aims. It may be that the church at the leadership level has never bothered to think and figure out what must have traversed the mind of God before His sweeping moves. But that omission does not cast a millimetre of shadow on the fact that God was up to something. In other words, our inability to project well and match the enormity of the power He wielded at those revival grounds with whatever His expectations may have been has nothing whatsoever to do with Him as it has to do with our corporate lethargy.

Now we arrive at the crux of the issue. Of course, the truth that no one will contest is that God cannot fail, neither could He ever have miscalculated. But coming to the human side of the bargain, the question will always be: *“How is the gold become dim! how is the most fine gold changed! ...”* (Lamentation 4v1). Thus, if there are truncated visions, if our progress as a mission was stunted and our story is now dominated by negative pages, the cause of this will be traced to the doorstep of the church, its leadership and membership and its style of

operation. Put in a nutshell, it is **you** and **me**, and all those who have been parading the label of the church everywhere that should take responsibility for all that is or is not happening and which has combined to account for the gap between where we are and are supposed to be.

And since God will not allow any vacuum in His agenda, since He is an independent Being that cannot be frustrated by or become dependent upon mere mortals, He has never lacked alternatives by which His agenda would be pursued. This is why no one will be able to explain away whatever we are seeing on several other Christian platforms in Nigeria today outside the fact that God is still at work. We now have countless denominations and Christian movements, within and outside the country, which may be seen as His effort to fill crucial gaps.

No one will contest that the rising of many firebrand individuals and ministries, as if from nowhere, citing the Deeper Life Bible Church as a typical example, are part of God's scheme to bridge vital gaps in His agenda. Also, the debut of mission agencies like Calvary Ministries (CAPRO)<sup>6</sup>, Christian Missionary Foundation, Men of Issachar Vision and others, especially from around the mid-1970 in the length and breadth of Nigeria and the new ones that are springing up are developments that will lack credible explanation aside the fact that God simply refused to be chained down by institutionalised churches like CAC.

It does not even matter that many of the denominations that have since risen to dominate our Christian landscape are

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<sup>6</sup> I strongly recommend that every reader should get and read a copy of *CAPRO at 40* titled *From Africa to the Word*

either non-existing or barely existing at a time when God wielded great power on the platform of CAC. We recall that the rejection of the gospel by Israel only paved the way for God to remember, reach out to and shower His love upon the gentile world (John 1v11, 12). Yet because we serve a God of love who will not withhold the mercy and opportunity of a second chance from a solicitation of genuine repentance, our mission can leverage this to retrace its step and start afresh to pursue and seek to fulfil its mandate in a way that will begin to reverse the progress and joy of the enemy.

Let me quickly address this. I am not unaware of many who will question the motive of this work and will seek to water it down because of the disagreement they have either with its content or with the emphasis and direction of its arguments. We now live in an age that is plagued by damning theory (or heresy) of relativism by which no truth or a point of argument is to be taken as absolute. The loudly harped argument is that there is no single perspective that fully explains all that there is or may be to an issue while the jingle of every summary is that it depends on how each protagonist or antagonist chooses to see or understand it.

For instance, I stumbled upon an address that was read to the delegates of a segment of the church during its convention sometime in 2010 which touted our ‘achievements’ to date. Of course, the establishment of JABU resonated in the list and comment on this is reserved till later. Can you imagine how even a building said to be under construction somewhere made the list of feats that were touted in the address? As I burdensomely read through the paper, I could not but ask myself if any of those who have whatever connection with the preparation of the address or those who might gulp it when it

was vomited from a podium would ever have needed a visa to visit RCCG camp on Lagos-Ibadan Expressway or Canaan Land in Sango-Ota!

I suppose that those who project well will not judge some of the so-called achievements as such but as a clever diversion from the sad fact of a decline. Now, a bothering issue is that those who prepared that report for that occasion will want us to believe that all is well with the church, that the church is marching on and that those who will not join the celebration trains are either the fifth columnists or outright saboteurs. We do not judge. Yet, where a celebration of this sort is carried too far, it stands to jeopardise the cause of truth which should no longer be suppressed in our search for direction and genuine progress as a mission.

For over two decades now, the church has operated at least two parallel offices, officers and departments. I even learnt that we presently have two certificates of registration from the same institution mandated by the government for that purpose while at least one of the cases in the court has to do with each side claiming or defending the authenticity of its copy. While we expect that the wound of division will eventually heal, we should make no mistake to expect that the mentality and posture that sustained it for that long, which is a different thing altogether, will fizzle into the air.

Many times since the situation prevailed, I asked myself if the contending parties know just what was at stake. The situation had dragged on simply because none of the factions was willing to shift its ground and, if necessary, make a concession to the other for the sake of heaven and genuine reconciliation, even where it rightly believes that it was the aggrieved party. The concept of a peacemaker as taught by

Jesus Christ informs that, with divine grace and unction upon anyone on the race to heaven, it may even be the aggrieved party that will take the first step towards reconciliation and strive to meet its conditions. This is exactly what God demonstrated in surrendering Jesus Christ to rescue man even though it was man that was on the wrong side of the wall.

Or, who will argue that spiritual lassitude, barrenness of vision and self-interest had resulted in the balkanisation of the church? Who will argue that the perpetrators of the division truly cared for the welfare and progress of the church as they do about personal agendas? While the church is hunted by the wound that the split has inflicted on the psyche of committed members, while the church in this process has suffered so much trauma and misdirection and it continually presents the image of a frivolous bunch of people to the world, the bickering parties also pretend to have received the 'grace' to maintain their peace and posture, as if nothing was at stake.

### **...OR, WHAT COULD THE GOD OF 1930 BE UP TO?**

Though the immensity of God is beyond time and space, there are times and places He has chosen to interact with successive generations of men. Abraham in Ur of Chaldeans, Jacob at Bethel, Moses at Sinai, David in confrontation with Goliath and Elijah at Mt. Carmel are a few examples of what God can be up to in times and locations. It is in the pattern of these episodes in the history of CAC that events were set in motion with a tract that Pa David Odubanjo picked from the floor of the house of his friend in Ijebu Ode in 1917 to give birth to Precious Stones Society of Church Missionary Society (CMS) that metamorphosed into Faith Tabernacle Church. This is the movement that launched the prayer programmes that laid the

foundation of the call of Apostle Babalola at Ikeji Arakeji in 1928 and led progressively to the explosion of revival at Oke-Oye in Ilesa in 1930. Those events and locations remain unique in the history of Christ Apostolic Church.

Yet the question still begs for an answer as to whether God could have embarked on the gigantic project of Oke-Oye with a blank mind, without well-defined prospects or to put it more bluntly, whether He, by remote chances, simply miscalculated His expectation from the exploits. Therefore, as we seek to tap into the opportunity of a second chance, **we will need to cast our mind back to the call of Apostle Joseph Ayo Babalola and ask what exactly was in the mind of God when He mobilised the members of the then Faith Tabernacle into prayer for a visitation of His power in our land.** Let us remember that it was not wild dreams of a worthless pursuit that prompted our founding fathers into prayer that received a direct answer in the revival and the involvement of God could not have been without defined aims.

Though no one was on the drawing board with God when He conceived the CAC project and brought members of the Faith Tabernacles together for consistent intercession that lasted about ten years to pave the way for the revival, we can peep into the Bible for a sketch of His thoughts:

1. God must have seen the prevalence of evil and the yearning of the people for deliverance from oppression and wickedness. Yet, while responding to the cries of the people for deliverance from witchcraft and its reign of terror, this could never have been anything more than a bait to draw them closer to Him for a serious relationship. His intention for them, and indeed for all



without exception, must have been their ultimate deliverance from sin, genuine conversion and experience of salvation (Matthew 1v21) by which they will become His holy habitations (2 Corinthians 6v16). Jesus, while commissioning His disciples on an evangelical mission in Luke 10v9, made this clear when He said, “...*heal the sick...*, and **say unto them**, *The kingdom of God is come nigh unto you.*” (Emphasis mine). Therefore, the healings and miracles could never have become an end in themselves to the neglect of the vital aspect of the bargain.

2. God must have expected that robust Christian education would be instituted by the church and members will be taught about how He is in dire need of them, not as those who will forever be pestering Him for ‘bread and butter’ or for ‘cake and coke’ but as instruments of His power to their world, to spread His light and knowledge and extend His influence to other nations and regions of the world (Isaiah 11v9, Habakkuk 2v14). Today, just take an excursion to any of our mountains where volumes of prayers are raised day and night and listen to the prayers that are dished out from the altars. Those are prayers that have very little, if any at all, to do with confrontation with powers that have taken our land and generation hostage or to advance the kingdom of God, but which have everything to do with our narrow focus and selfish agenda. More on this later.
3. God must have foreseen the soon coming of educational advancement and advantage through the free education programme of Chief Obafemi Awolowo

that was going to bless the length and breadth of Yoruba land, the core region where the church had its initial foothold. Being the only One who could have masterminded the arrangements through the visionary leadership of the politician, God must have reckoned that such opportunity would propel the children of the members who were going to be raised in the atmosphere of effectual prayers and abundance of grace to great heights in their communities and ultimately in the affairs of the nation in the quest of time (Genesis 18v19, Psalm 132v12, Isaiah 58v13,14).

[Let us accommodate a digression that cannot be accommodated by a footnote here. I cannot forget how some foundations were laid for this in the days of our fathers by which the early elites of the church were to have secured their places at the forefront of everything good in Nigeria. It is only heaven and hell that will explain how subsequent generations of the same people turned around to become socially, spiritually and financially marginalised and relegated to where we are today. Firstly, I recalled many inspiring stories about how government officials and business establishments made the few educated members of the church much sought-after for employment in sensitive and responsible positions. If only such privileged people knew what it was to lean upon God in those days of unlimited opportunities, they would have risen to enviable positions over time and also raised their children who would have been nurtured on that elevated platform, far above most of their contemporaries in the larger society. Secondly, I also recalled that CAC, up to the time of my growing up, would not transact any business on Sundays in strict observance of and compliance with the Sabbath Day injunctions as instituted by our forefathers. That was a religious observance that carries an express promise of God to those who keep the covenant and by which He promises to cause them *“to ride upon the high places of the earth...”* (Isaiah 58v13,14). (Though I have since **personally**

discovered that the change of a holy day of the week from Saturday to Sunday by the Roman Catholic church, being one of the plagues that Reformation brooms could not sweep out of the Church universal, may have impaired our expectation from this). But when you combine this and several other foundations that should have attracted great blessings to and opening of heavens upon the church to catapult its members to a world of influence and high prospects, one is unable to explain how its members are more among the financially backward, and the church among the socially obscured denominations in Nigeria today.]

4. Linking up with number 3, away from the above digression, God must have envisaged that, with the opportunity of education and knowledge pursuits, many in the church would be taught about the need and how to respond to serve as missionaries to other land and nations which they will invade with the power of the glorious gospel leveraging on the great anointing working on Apostle Joseph Ayo Babalola to subdue the powers that hold people in bondage in those places (Matthew 28v 19, 20). The tribal grips of the church in its well over 80 years now have been confined mainly to the Yoruba race. While I may not be able to say what the operations of the Church look like in places and other countries I have not been to, observations of the impact of CAC on other parts and tribes in Nigeria may have furnished a pattern<sup>7</sup>. Or, how can anyone

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<sup>7</sup> I have visited and worshipped in CAC assemblies in many parts of the country, particularly in the north like Kaduna, Kano, Maiduguri, Damaturu, Minna, Sokoto, Jos. As at the time of my visits, assemblies do not have services dedicated to the indigenes, nor is their language factored into the church programmes. As at 2009 when I spent close to three months in Damaturu with an assembly each of the two dominant factions, the most they do is interpretation from Yoruba into English. One may even suspect

prove that the enormous power that heralded the birth of CAC was not intended to rake in the souls of Muslims in the North, the ones of those that are dedicated to water goddesses in the Mid-West and the ones of those labouring under the yoke of empty traditions and church idols in the Eastern part of the country? These have remained bound by strange powers even up till now and in this same Nigeria where we do not need a visa or travelling documents to invade with the gospel; a glorious effort that should have been pioneered by the likes of CAC.

5. God must have envisioned a church that will be committed with a vision to educational advancement and spiritual development of members such that will cut across all areas of Christian curriculums, services and activities to ensure all-round developments (2 Timothy 2v15). For instance, I have not been to our seminaries. But you just must pardon my being this blunt, that, if what we have been seeing on many of our pulpits is a reflection of those institutions, a lot of pastors-to-be may be better off without their syllabus. Today, as I wrote some twenty-seven years ago in one of my earlier works on the platform of CACSA, the church is still shackled by ignorance while her average member is second-rated to other Christians from several churches with similar Pentecostal backgrounds and fervour. This is besides the fact that many or even

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that some of the pastors posted to the areas do not flow well in either English or Hausa languages. I admit a departure from this pattern with the eastern parts of Nigeria where we have many indigenes or/and non-Yoruba adherents.

most of such churches could only have tapped from the spillover of the power that accompanied the ministry of Apostle Babalola.

6. God must have envisaged the raising of a Christian body that will call the shots on the political scene of our nation. Going by its commitment to aggressive prayer which is the most potent force in the world, CAC should have since been in a position to decide who gets to which political office at various levels of government through this weapon, even without having to stain our stance with politicking. This is because, much as we may not need to be directly involved in the electioneering campaign except if one has a calling for it, we can always apply the weight and force of our prayers as believers to prevail on voters to choose right, just as we apply the same weapon to defend such votes against electoral malpractices. And that will be far more than what the local and international human rights and observer groups can ever do. Our exercise of this mandate will have spared us many of the political misdirections we have been contending with in Nigeria (Daniel 2 & 3).
7. God must have envisaged how the enormous power He was depositing in the church would be applied to pull down all the strongholds that are threatening the peace and the interest of heaven in our nation in our days. Take the case of our problematic energy sector that has continually posed monumental challenges to successive governments in Nigeria or the present challenge of religious terrorism that has engulfed the nation to carve out a caliphate out of our geographical

entity. I suppose such a situation could have caught the attention of our intercessors and prayer warriors who will have been made to see beyond their petty and narrow selves. In the process, what has proved impossible for men and technocrats would have attracted divine intervention (2 Corinthians 10v4-6). Now with Boko Haram attacks adding a dimension to the complexity of Nigerian issues, Christians, despite the weapons of prayers at their disposal, are still the most harassed and helpless of victims.

8. God must have envisaged a Christian body that would play a lead role in the efforts of the new generation mission agencies by backing them with prayer, material and financial support in their effort to reach the people of faraway lands that are yet to hear the gospel. **I have consistently maintained that whatever the Church is doing today will be a waste except it is contributing something to the efforts of the global community of Christians to reach the very last soul with the gospel irrespective of where he may be, following which the trumpet will sound to evacuate us from the sinking ship of this world (Matthew 24v14).**

Following a peep into the mind of God as itemised above, we may see how the heart of God must have been bleeding because, over eighty years since He mobilised and set the ball rolling on earth towards a laudable project, the church which the answers to the treasured prayers of the saints gave birth to:

- i. Has just very little to show for all the power that was

deposited in it to conquer her world for Jesus Christ and for the expansion of His earthly influence and inheritance (You may care to consult and meditate on Psalm 2)

- ii. Has had significant virtues and powers known and exhibited by the founding fathers into the drain while basking only in past glory
- iii. Has been overtaken left and right and submerged by denominations that do not possess anything close to the anointing that birthed it
- iv. Has some of its pastors, workers and members in the cults and among those who are using fake powers to work miracles and protect their interests or territories while they pretend to be serving the God of Apostle Joseph Babalola.
- v. Has been confined to the backyard and shielded away from the outside world which would have had abundant testimonies of the blessing it has been to their lives, the impacts and difference it has made to their world
- vi. Has ceased to pose any threats to Satan or attract any reaction of hell on a corporate level, especially with the mindless routines that dominate most of its gatherings and which have come to mean nothing even to those within, to talk less of being a source of attractions to those outside
- vii. Has been carrying along, boasting of and lazing around many of its members who are estranged from the Bible and its life-giving contents and who as a result do not know their right from their left
- viii. Has, as a result of spiritual malnourishment, raised the

- majority of its members and worshippers as dwarfs in the larger society who are living as if they do not exist
- ix. Has been parading the image of the orthodox churches it was born to revive on one hand and, through the activities of untutored prophets within her fold, has become the haven of false and misguided shepherds that are trademarked by forbidden rituals and errors.

Take, for instance, no one may appreciate the enormity of the last point above until he discovers or remembers what the CAC central assembly in Enugu in the days of one pastor who left to form another church with the same acronyms had become. I remember vividly what Pastor J. A. Ogunlade who was transferred by CAC authority around 1981 to take over from the man met on the ground, the efforts and time it took him to tone down the mess and mend the image of the church. I witnessed this as one of those who visited him on arrival to the town in my days at the University of Nigeria, Enugu Campus. That was when CAC in that part of the world paraded a loathed image in the likes of the eerie, ritualistic and directionless churches we have around now.

As I earlier stated, I am not unmindful of those who will join issues with me here because people reserve their right to see things differently. But I can only state that those who think that the situation with CAC is not as bad as it is painted here may not have good arguments to sell. I should also remark that in the course of my Christian race of a few decades now, I have had the privilege of stepping out of our denominational walls to enjoy the benefits of fellowship and collaboration with many Christians from other churches and backgrounds. What I can declare with all clarity is that CAC is far from measuring



up to its billing. The chapters ahead will examine developments that have inflicted damage on us and what we must begin to do to reverse the trends.

# CHAPTER 3

## WHAT WENT WRONG

We begin with a search for further answers to the question we touted in the last chapter about whether or not God miscalculated in 1930. Those who will readily agree that God could never have miscalculated will have directly or indirectly admitted that something went wrong somewhere along the line. I sought to establish contacts with a few of those who should know what probably went wrong with CAC, about how we, though inadvertently, smuggled our course out of course. I picked some information which, I must admit, will not be shared through this medium without injuries to those that we do not have a licence to censure.

Therefore, just as I stated earlier, the fact of being unable to separate offices from the office holders who are supposed to be beyond our questioning will deny me the right and chance to point an accusing finger in any specific direction. But it is enough to state that our foundation developed cracks and some of those who pioneered the course of our mission did not pull all the weights attached to their callings. For instance, I heard of extreme cases and I know of at least one of our (very senior) pastors who battered their wives and would sometimes set the parsonage ablaze with unrestrained tempers.

Here, my analysis of the setbacks we have suffered will focus more on general observations as may have been obvious to all who cared not to play ostrich with our challenges. A merit of this approach is that it will bring to bear such

retrospective developments and events of the past that most of those who have stayed long enough in the system can testify to with minimum tasking to their memories.

What I am going to outline in this and the next chapter, about **“What Went Wrong”** and **“Where We Are”** which are the causes and effects of our problems are entwined. Just as I wrote in one of my earlier works, causes and consequences can present faces or characteristics that are difficult to distinguish. However, wherever any of the issues in the chapters should have fallen into will not be a subject of distraction. This is because, at the end of the day, it will not matter much what has caused which problem to result in what outcome and all that will matter is for us to chart a way forward. This notwithstanding, I will attempt to list what I sense to be more of the causes than effects in this chapter of the book, beginning with the revelation of Apostle Joseph Babalola himself before he bowed out of the stage.

### **UPSETTING REVELATION OF THE APOSTLE**

I have reliably gathered from some sources what Apostle Joseph Ayo Babalola, the man used by God to plant the seed of the church was quoted to have said, and which has become an open secret laying at the root of our dilemma..:

*“CAC ti da aso abuku kale, emi o ni duro bawon wo”*  
meaning *“CAC has sewn a garment of disgrace, I will not wait to wear it with them”*.

That was before he passed on to glory in July 1959. And, up to this moment in our turbulent history, I do not know and have not heard of anyone or any group of people who have

identified what symbolises this garment in our structure as a mission, let alone to target it for destruction. To be candid, all we can see on the theatre of the church readily buttresses the fact that the garment has only been replicated for wider circulation. Also, it may be seen how a number of those who have worn and may still be wearing it have flaunted it around with pride, without remorse, without the shame and embarrassment that the apostle revealed it verily embodies.

Further questions will be to identify whoever may have been responsible for the making of this garment, back in the days of the apostle. It is suspected that they would be his compatriots who were supposed or even ordained to support the vision of the apostle but chose another path. They would be his associates who pretended as if they were gathering with him with intent and purpose but who paid only lip service to the cause they claimed to embrace. There would also be among them those who were younger on whom his expectation for better tomorrow would have been rested but who would have begun to display traits that they were not going to build upon the foundation he was laying.

The most worrisome aspect of our analysis is the revelation that all these categories of people have greatly multiplied in the subsequent eras either through their biological offspring or those they recruited to team up with them against heaven in the course of their ministerial careers. The awful revelation of the apostle will at least confirm one thing. The challenges we are grappling with in CAC today did not begin in the 1960s, 1970s, 1980s or even in the 1990s when we finally split into factions. The seed of the confusion was sown and its unchecked sprouting through the years has only led us to where we are today.

Though no one can tell exactly what the highly endowed apostle saw to make his disturbing pronouncement, we can at least borrow an idea from what people of my age grew up to know about the church and its agenda. It is the outcome of that failure that we are all beholding today. Pointedly speaking, and going by his great prophetic unction, Apostle Joseph Babalola had probably seen:

1. How the Holy Spirit was beginning to lose His grip on the affairs of the church and how policies and pursuits would someday begin to spring up from its leadership that the God who called and commissioned him will know nothing about.
2. How events were going to unfold on the platform of the church to birth developments and consequences that would be at variance with the bargain he had with God and the pattern he had received at his call and commissioning. (Here we borrow ideas from Exodus 25v8, 9 and 40).
3. How those who have neither relationship whatsoever with nor contract of employment from God, even including many of those who have never even pretended to be His children, would flock to the altars of the church as pastors, workers and leaders of a sort, just to wreck a vision.
4. How a time would come when a number of those who are truly called and anointed for service will see the need to smuggle their calling from the commonwealth of the church and build personal empires, either within or without; but definitely outside the control of the authority of the church.

5. How the move above will undermine and paralyse the central authority of the church which will also be unable to bark against consequential indiscipline and recklessness to talk less of biting anyone who would need to be censured for choosing his way or pursuing personal agenda under the banner, and to the detriment of collective interest, of CAC.
6. How, on his surveying the future, the leaders of the factions of the church would parade themselves in and out of the courtrooms and who for self-aggrandisement and in pursuit of personal ambition and ego will not mind balkanising the church into factions with stubborn tenacity and refusal to concede for the sake of peace, progress and unity of the church.
7. How it would come to a time to announce appointments to top hierarchies of the church to the gathering of its pastors and anti-riot policemen would first need to be mobilised and stationed around to quell the revolt that the announcement might trigger, even in the assembly of pastors!
8. How, despite its huge efforts and voluminous prayers that would fail to graduate from mundane causes, the church would be side-lined and confined to the back seat among the churches and in the larger society, with little or nothing to meet or match the challenges of successive generations because of narrow and misguided prayers.

Much as the fragmentation of the church may have been sour and sore, much as many have felt embarrassed by its incongruity that had propelled several unification efforts and

prayers on one hand, and which have also been frustrated over and again on the other, the trouble with CAC did not start with, nor will it be fully explained just by the events that resulted in the splits. The situation that built a wall of partition in the church over these years cannot be more than the leaves. It is not the root of our woes. This is to make it clear that, in effect, even the unification of the factions will not be more than the initial steps in a search for a solution to our problems and in our effort to rebuild a congregation of God's dream.

Put in another tone, the problems that resulted in the bad blood by which the leaders of the church parted ways to become birds of strange feathers did not crop up overnight. They had been entrenched in the system and had only hibernated until the time they considered it most appropriate for them to crawl to the surface and become issues. Barrenness of vision, spiritual lethargy, tribalism, nepotism, indiscipline, hatred and bad blood, malice, envy and jealousy, unhealthy and unholy rivalry among the pastors, elders and church workers, neglect of evangelism and more importantly selfishness, myopia and misdirection at the altar of our so-called fervent prayers will be discovered as fabrics of our woes.

An attempt will be made here to highlight a few of the loopholes which the enemy exploited to play his tricks on us, weaken our power base and stall our progress. I begin with the one that is not only the most glaring but which is the most crucial. Till this moment, it is a problem that is afflicting us in all of our gatherings, a problem that cuts across all the factions of the church irrespective of where they have pitched their tents or in which direction they have chosen to pilot their ship. It is also a fundamental problem to which our unification and its celebration will not offer an iota of solution. Even it is not

all the churches and ministries that I know to have broken away from CAC that have been able to outgrow its malady, till this moment. It is our reckless abandonment of the doctrine of salvation or the lip service we have been paying to it.

### **NEGLECT OF THE DOCTRINE OF SALVATION**

Christ Apostolic Church, as a Pentecostal mission with its root in and emphasis on the New Testament of the Bible, could never have pretended not to understand the fundamental need for its members to be grounded in the doctrine of salvation which is supposed to be the starting point for everyone in the race to heaven. Jesus Christ Himself had laid that foundation in His discourse with Nicodemus; a man that anyone would think had risen beyond that exposition on the religious ladder. Nicodemus did not just become a ruler and a Pharisee in Israel. He had an uncommon profile of being an honest seeker of truth and an ardent worshipper of the God of his fathers. And while he sought to pour encomium on Jesus for His striking moral ranking in comparison with his sect and for His miraculous power, while he raised issues to which he had expected the compliments of the Master, he got a bombshell in return. That discourse in John 3v1-18 became the foundation of a truth that would chart the course for all who will eventually come in contact with the gospel.

### **[A QUICK SIDE WORK TO DO FOR THE READER:**

If your memory cannot pin down a point of time when you made a conscious surrender of your life to Jesus Christ or if as you read this you lack concrete assurance of the Spirit that you truly belong to God, you should lay this book aside and seek to be born again now. Ask Jesus to come into your heart, wash



away your sins and enlist you as His own. This has nothing to do with the number of years you have spent in the church or put into Christian activities and service (Romans 8v16). If you lack assurance of salvation, that may be the only assurance that you are not saved, after all. In that case, not even Satan or his most vicious demon will deserve greater blame for the plight of this church than you as an enemy within its camp.]

### **PECULIAR PRIVILEGES OF THE FATHERS**

I do not know; neither will anyone have the ground or audacity to question the extent to which the founding fathers of Christ Apostolic Church<sup>8</sup> had a grasp of this truth. But I know one thing. The unique dealings of God with them together with His grace and anointing upon their lives and ministries were such that no one will cast any aspersion upon them, irrespective of whatever he may claim to know of or from the Bible. One clear thing is that at the inception of the church even with limited exposure to knowledge or doctrine, God dealt uniquely with the founding fathers, the core of whom are Apostle Joseph Ayo Babalola, Oba I. B. Akinyele, the Olubadan of Ibadan and Pastor D. O. Odubanjo and brought

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<sup>8</sup> These include our fathers in the likes of Apostle Joseph Ayo Babalola, Oba I.B. Akinyele, D. Odubanjo, Joseph Sadare, J. Odusona, Miss Sophie Odunlami, J. A. Babatope, John Oye, A. O. Omotosho, Daniel Orekoya, E. T. Latunde, J. A. Ademakinwa, J. A. Medayese, H. , Pastor H., J. D. Sanya, J. B. Orogun, A. O. A. Olutimehin, D. O. Babajide, Prophet S. O. Akande and very many of their contemporaries that included the likes of Samuel Adegboyega who partnered with white missionaries to hold the rein of The Apostolic Church, Samuel Olabode Sadela, perhaps one of the oldest men on the pulpit until a few years back. Lord, who left to establish Christ Apostolic Gospel Church and much later, Rev. Timothy Oshokoya, a worker in the church who left to partner with American missionaries to plant the seed of The Apostolic Faith in Anthony Village.

them into an unquestionable relationship with Himself.

This is why, up till this moment, no one needs to raise any questions about the point of their conversion or that of their contemporaries. From all that I grew up to know, no one was in doubt about the mightiness of the hand of God upon their lives and the damages their prayers and exploits inflicted on hell. My biological father belonged to this category. I am at least a living witness to the manner of his life and that of his senior sister with whom I also lived for many years. I know the doctrines they both practised, the devotion they demonstrated and the exploits they did for God. I also know that there is no way they would have secured the gifts they operated with, the power they wielded in purity without a Giver or reference point, though no record or diary was available to shed light on when and how exactly they arrived at their turning points.

Except as I once heard that one preacher remarked that Abraham was not born again, no one that I know has questioned the starting point of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. The same applied to the likes of Moses, Joshua, David, most of the prophets and those who lived for God in their generations. It is just that the same licence by which no one may question how they came about their encounters with God was not to be extended to those who were to be brought into the fold of Jesus. This is demonstrated by the experience after the Pentecost and especially during the ministry of Paul to the Gentile world when the converts needed a clean break from their past to chat a new beginning.

### **THEREFORE FOR THE MULTITUDES...**

Following this, it will make either complete nonsense or no

good sense whatsoever for anyone to expect such salient aspects of the testimonies of the fathers to define a general and generational pattern for those who would embrace the gospel that came in the wrapper of great miracles of Oke-Oye to the neglect of the clear revelation of the Bible on an issue of utmost importance. The demand of the Bible for an entry point into the kingdom of God since Jesus gave His doctrine has not and cannot be altered a bit, not even by the experience of special grace to a special group of few. The absence of loud records of how and when the fathers made their turning points does not negate the fact that such turning points must have been established by or with each of them.

Yet, going by what people of my age bracket grew up to know of CAC and its mode of operations, except for a very few pastors in the midst who have concrete testimonies to share about their encounters with the Lord that defined their turning point and fresh starting, many pastors and workers in the church cannot tell where, when and how they enrolled in the Christian race though many would recall when they were ordained for service. There may even be those, like the one that I know, who have celebrated some decades of service on the platform of the church but who have left the lines relating to the story of their conversion or salvation experience blank in their testimonies and ministerial profiles.

It will surprise no one that a typical CAC pastor can preach for twenty-five years without having a single occasion when he made an altar call and invited his audience; either old or new church members, to the altar to receive Jesus Christ as their personal Lord and Saviour! I recalled in one of my earlier works that a pastor who has since risen to a very high position in this church once boasted, right in my presence, of how he

stopped a guest minister who attempted to make an altar call in his church after the sermon. To him, all his members were just good enough and no one among them needed such an invitation. Yet, from what I know of the assembly where I once served as a drummer and choir boy, it was the opposite.

### **MY BACKGROUND IN THE CHRISTIAN RACE**

Because of the seriousness of this issue in the catalogue of my concern, because of the burden it has weighed on me, and because of its importance in the chain of my concern, I will dwell a bit more on it. This time around, the best example I can cite of the gross omission of CAC on this crucial subject will be my background with points of argument and conclusion that no one may contend.

I grew up in a highly conservative setting of Christ Apostolic Church where so much emphasis was placed on prayer, fasting and other church routines. My father was, by the grace of the Father, a devoted man who sought to inject into all members of his household a religious passion that had worked well for him for over two decades before I was born. The records are still there which continually testify to the tenacity of his commitment and fervency of his devotion to the cause of the gospel on the platform of CAC, especially in the middle and latter part of his life.

It was therefore a matter of course for any of his children to be fully booked into the routines of the church which saw me to a point when, **at six, I was already one of the drummers of the only drum to which the entire congregation danced during church services. But as far as I can recall, there were no exposures to or contact with the kind of Bible teaching by which we were to grow and**

### **become responsible Christian adults.**

All that mattered was for us to keep church attendance, observed the family devotion time as imposed by him as the head of the family and remained as good as we could be. I remember the times when we would sneak out of the church premises during services to the local motor parks and mingle with the garage urchins doing their things on Sunday mornings. As a sort of excursion to the local boys growing up in rustic settlements, we would sometimes follow vehicles, maybe to the streams to wash them and all that mattered was for us to make our way back to the service before it was over and someone would be asking questions.

Within my grasp of history, the first person to introduce Sunday school in the church in my hometown in 1966 was the late Pastor Isaac Lawal, then a Catechist who later became a prominent Bible teacher in the church. But, because of the rawness of his audience which must have defined the narrow focus of his efforts, not much was achieved at grounding the people in personal understanding of the Bible. Members did not have a grasp of doctrinal issues that affected them on day to day basis. The efforts and all the zeal he employed at them, as vividly as I can still recall now, did not address the fundamental question of salvation, though it stimulated people's interest to read or glean through the Bible, sometime just for them to win the quizzes which he introduced as a side attraction to the programme.

That was what I remember until I returned to Lagos in January 1971. Following my encounter with the *Light of the World Society* when the Lagos district of the group was led by the trio of M. A. Adeoye, Alfred Shasanmi who later left for the USA and Evangelist A. A. Fayinto and later with *Christ*

*Apostolic Church Students' Association* at different times through the mentorship of Dele Ajibola, now a pastor, I could or must have yielded my life in any of those meetings rather unconsciously. The truth, however, was that I lacked any assurance as to when, how and where of that experience for which it is more than suicidal for anyone to play a hoax.

We recall that even when Israelites were delivered from Egyptian bondage, there was a need for them to be constantly reminded about the fact of that freedom (Exodus 16v6). Thus for me, it was at one of the Monday Bible Study sessions, precisely on 04 October 1976 at a Deeper Life Ministry meeting in the flat of Brother W. F. Kumuyi that I made a conscious decision and commitment of my life to Jesus Christ to bury all doubts and secure a point of reference for my testimony of salvation experience<sup>9</sup>.

On the other hand, I do not deny the fact of very many people that I know to have become born again in and through the evangelical efforts of the church. Also, I do not contest the fact that it is not only in our mission that we have many seemingly good Christians and religiously flourishing members who are not born again. Such abound in all church settings.

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<sup>9</sup> I have gathered theories about the stance of CAC to salvation doctrine. Some hold that it is not that members of the Church are not born again but that they refused to grow or/and outgrow carnality. Others opine that harping on the “born-again” stuff as it is common with popular gospel churches is not conventional with CAC. Wherever we pitch our tent, and whether or not we agree with my position here, the message of repentance and salvation with which Peter carted the first generation of ‘fishes’ into the net of the Church on the day of Pentecost and afterwards, has been lacking in the required measure from our pulpits. While I agree that most of our pastors preach against sin in any form or magnitude, and often lead in the prayers to combat it more of the time, their ministrations suffer unconscious disconnection from identifiable doctrinal foundation.

All I am doing here is applying this fact to set a base for one of my strongest contentions. Assumption and oversight are two of the problems of this church on the need to teach the people sound doctrine of repentance and deliverance from sin. This has become the pillar on which many of the challenges we are battling are resting. Or, who is there to contest the fact that the problems of the church will be traced mostly to those who have been promoted into and are now operating within its hierarchies and will not even bother to pretend to be Christians in the first place?

This is a malaise visited on the foundation of the church by which many members lacked whatever exposure they needed to enrol in the Christian race and monitor their progression. As I stated, many woes of the church are an upshot of the flimsy attention it has paid to the conversion of members and nearly every section of this work will keep a trace of the fact that members who flock in and out of our sanctuaries are not sufficiently taught about how to become genuine Christians or, where this is not the case, how to live in the consciousness and assurance of that experience. They do not know how to place their lives at the disposal of God who needs them as His instruments of power to impact their environments to talk less of the wider world or their generation.

I have not forgotten that God did not appoint anyone to function as an umpire in the Body of Christ while anyone who may think he stands is continually cautioned to take heed lest he falls (1 Corinthians 10v12). Yet this counsel by Apostle Paul was not intended to tone down the need to brazen out evil and confront squarely the issue confronting our beloved mission, the more glaring of which is the lack of genuine salvation experience by a huge segment of its membership. To

me, this is a sore point that can never be over-flogged. Or, how on earth do we explain situations where those who are supposed to teach, lead and build the lives of other people and prepare them for heaven in our various assemblies are themselves not even born again?

For the sake of emphasis, no one will contest the fact that ours is a mission where a large number of respected members do not have clear testimony to share about the salvation experience. The majority lacks basic awareness of the process of becoming a Christian or, having made the commitment, how to live the life out on daily basis to the glory of God and the defeat of Satan. Just like we have in nearly every church setting, the fact that our pews have been sponsoring church workers to our pulpits explains why the latter will not be anything other than a reflection of the former.

In February 2009, I visited CAC Ikoyi Mount with a friend for a prayer retreat. In the course of his ministration, a pastor who conducted one of the afternoon sessions confessed to the entire audience how he was ordained as a pastor by the church many years before he became saved and received the baptism of the Holy Spirit. He even mentioned the name of one of our highly celebrated fathers in the mission who sponsored his ordination. The question that my friend asked as the pastor narrated his story and which we could not answer was how the man managed to pastor his church and what kind of messages was he preaching to which audience during those years before he secured basic experiences that should have qualified and prepared him for Christian service in the first instance.

Though we rejoice that the man received sufficient grace to find his bearing and is doing fine today, no one will contest the fact that there are several other pastors in his shoes who have



by now put in decades in pastoral service, either building on stubbles or destroying people's lives outright and who have not secured as much grace as this one was fortunate to. I strongly believe this is one major omission that Satan has capitalised on to sponsor questionable characters into our chancel to chain us down to where we are. Was it not God who angrily queried: *"But unto the wicked . . ., What hast thou to do to declare my statutes, or that thou shouldst take my covenant in thy mouth?"* (Psalm 50v16).

But it is like those who cast all care into the wind to deliberately sponsor into our pulpits people without pedigree are pretending to know better about how such people would suddenly change their bearing to begin to promote the interest of heaven which they have not set in their focus or advance the cause of the cross which they have not embraced. The situation has even become more aggravated nowadays with a smudge of pure commercialisation. There are now price tags for ordination and authority to wear collars by those who are desperate to secure access to the altars of the church.

Let us go a step beyond this and take the issues of our division into factions as an example. The battle that pastors have declared against those on the other side of the divides as I hinted earlier, may only compare to the one between the hosts of heaven and forces of darkness. It became even more disturbing that while acrimony subsisted and cases were being pursued at the various courts, some leaders of the church were suspected to have made recourse to darkness either to defend themselves and their positions or tackle those they consider to be in the opposition. Wrangling is even known to have since distilled from inter-faction to intra-faction warfare by which we are picking many ugly stories, here and there.

All these are causes and consequences of betrayal, distrust, suspicion and bottled-up resentments of pastors towards other pastors, extending to members of the church and down the hierarchical layers by those who lack the basic understanding of what it means to be a Christian. Over the years, I have gathered far more evidence than I will have all the time and space to list or than it will be expedient to share through this medium on this. For instance, I learnt of a pastor who bandaged his hand while on his way to the pastors' conference of the camp to which he belongs. He later confessed to one of those he could confide in at the meeting that there was no wound or fracture in his hand and was only keeping to the warnings he had received not to greet anyone with a handshake at the conference. What a gathering of pastors!

#### **FURTHER FOCUS ON OUR PASTORS**

The need for emphasis here derives from the fact that once we get it right with the leadership and can recruit those with the mind of God to man our affairs and pulpits, we will have begun to address the taproot of our problems. And so, if we will aim at an honest solution, honest questions that call for honest answers at this stage of our experience cannot be side stepped. This will assist us to check the trends that have embarrassed heaven, wrecked havocs on our collective mandate and rubbed shame on all of us as a church.

That our mission is today staffed with a large number of pastors who have no business whatsoever with the altar is a fact that is beyond contention. I do not at the same time play down the fact that I have been privileged to meet many genuine children of God too numerous to mention, with clear callings and messages who are pastors and workers of the

church. It only appears that the chaffs outnumber the wheat to make those who would advocate for or sponsor positive change within their domains a helpless minority.

I do not claim to have all the background issues connected with the faulty preparation of our pastors. But then, through my keen observation of developments of events on the platform of the church, I will not deny being quite familiar with some of the routes to pastoral ordination in CAC. In the past, particularly around and up to the early 1970s since when I began to keep my eyes on the ground, I knew many people who emerged as catechists (or evangelists as a preferred title) and pastors in the church after having been ‘faithful’ in following and relieving one *Baba* or the other of his baggage over a while. That was usually followed by or was regarded as part of a period during which they served typically as *apprentices* either as *tuule* operatives and/or as forerunners during whatever programmes that involved their *masters*.

With time, they would have understudied their mentors and be exposed to opportunities of taking the lead in some meetings for them to grow their style after which they would get posted to local assemblies as catechists<sup>10</sup>. After a consistently favourable appraisal, they would then be sent for formal training in one seminary or the other, usually on sponsorship of the church to which they are attached for their

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<sup>10</sup> As far as my memory can be of help, this is the title with which the church teachers and assistant pastors were known until around early 1970s when a new breed of that categories of workers began to rebuff the title and preferred to be referred to as ‘evangelist’ which they considered to be ‘more dignifying’. The correct meaning and function of that office should have been ‘teacher’ which the Bible makes explicit provision for in the Church (Ephesians 4v11) and as one of the offices of the Church equipped by the Holy Spirit and deployed for the development of the Body.

ministerial calling or apprenticeship. It is the process here that often led to or culminated in their ordination as pastors. I know quite a number of those who toed this route to become pastors in the early 1970s and have since risen tall in the hierarchies of the church.

Related to the above, some sextons also rose to become catechists and, with consistent efforts on their part, came to be ordained as pastors. It was a common progression for most of those who were sextons during my growing years to wade through the ranks once they demonstrated zeal and vibrancy. In fairness to them, I know quite a number of them who seized the opportunity to partner with God and became His instrument. For all we may care to know, Peter was a foremost apostle and clear leader of the early church while there was not a single prophecy in the Old Testament about his birth, calling and spiritual exploits. All that mattered was for someone to be sufficiently willing to yield His totality unto God and be ready to serve His purpose.

It is based on this that these backyard routes may not be faulted on their own, just as we may not deny that there are some among those who followed the Babas (*elderly ministers*), headed for the seminaries before or following their commissioning to the pulpit. The disturbing aspect of the bargain is that, as experience has buttressed, a number of those recruited through those eras and means are not born again either before or after the process was set in motion. And because of the levity with which the issue of personal salvation of members was taken on the mission-wide scale, I sincerely doubt if any check was ever put in place by which such people that lack genuine salvation experience could be filtered out and helped to make the crucial commitment before their

commissioning or before their going too far into the ministry.

Other routes to pastoral ordination present a much worse option and prospect. For instance, it has since become a vogue for those in the rank of elders to be ‘promoted’ or rewarded with pastoral ordination. Once a person is considered to have served as a good elder over time, he will eventually become eligible for ordination as a pastor, either for recognition or purely as a reward of loyalty. But then, just like the first route, we do not sweep this process into the drain altogether because a good and faithful elder stands a good chance to become a good and faithful pastor. But as we shall see later, it is a fact that CAC parades a horde of elders who are not born again and are not keen on that experience. This is more because there is usually no such opportunity for them to seek salvation experience at any point in their flamboyant carrier and carriage as elders by which an un-regenerated elder may suddenly translate to a genuine or born-again pastor.

We also know about those who bribed or bullied their way to the altars using unholy but powerful connections. Though they are supposed to be honorary, many among them have been discovered to be far more assertive than regular pastors either because of their educational advantage, financial muscle and their sit-tight postures by which they often turn out to be those who know the history of the assembly than those who are often on transfer in and out of the station. In the end, you find those who are supposed to be the regular pastors becoming relegated and subservient through internal and unholy politics. The trouble with this route is that the ordination of pastors into this category is not based on any known merit, gift, calling, ministerial or officiating capabilities. We have many of them who now seat “*in the seat of Moses*” and

to whom the right to say the grace in any gatherings of the church they find themselves is conceded as if such an effortless and routine function may ever amount to anything to heaven or the church members.

Many of them secured their privileged positions and postings on accounts of favouritism, lobbying, bribery and/or appeasement of one or some powerful interests. A number of them came from families that are considered influential in the mission and were honoured purely on the account of parental connections. While this may not be faulted on their own, they at least explain the composition of our pastorate by which the congregations are the worse for it. All these backyard routes to ordination do not explain everything there is to our process of recruiting the pastorate as there are also several others who have a genuine calling and went ahead to acquire appropriate training. But since Satan is always on the lookout for the slightest inroad, any distortion in the process of selecting and ordaining pastors is one of those he will not miss to slot in his candidates who will invade the altars to pursue his agenda.

This also explains why many sermons in many of our assemblies carry the weight of paper or the worth of chaff. It also explains why our members have been malnourished to remain spiritually stunted. **After all, no one can give what he does not have. Since many of the ministers we commission to our pulpits lack genuine testimony of salvation and exposure to sound doctrines of the Bible apart from the certificates from the seminaries, no miracle will lift the spiritual standard of our members.** A glaring outcome of this failure as a mission is seen in the way most of our assemblies are run and the influence they wield both on their members and the larger society.

For instance, except for only about four or five, I was unable to pick any much from about forty sermons I listened to from the pulpit of one of our foremost central assemblies for nearly one year. While two of the sermons were preached by guest ministers, others were by two of the young pastors in the assembly who were given only very rare access to the pulpits. That is an assembly which boasted of seventy years of existence but which cannot count more than five hundred people as ‘good’ and regular members. In fact, at a time, I took statistics to establish that the service sometimes started with more pastors in the chancel than the total number of male members in the pews.

We are aware that no screening criterion may eliminate the infiltration of bad eggs in any setting. If Judas Iscariot could sneak<sup>11</sup> into the puzzle of Jesus Christ Himself, the very Son of God who did not embark on the recruitment exercise until after a rigorous night vigil for guidance from His Father, no one may then pretend to know the mind of God better or who will be able to exercise greater caution. Yet, whatever may seem to be the outcome of this exercise by Jesus is not intended to encourage our deliberate choice of those that we

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<sup>11</sup> It was not as if Jesus who knew all men, their hearts, motives, starting and endpoint was deceived by Judas Iscariot but for the need to create a premise for the fulfillment of crucial prophecy and allow whoever will choose a path of ruin to so do (Psalm 41v9). The choice of Judas by Jesus has illustrated how God may bring and use people to further His cause even when He knew well enough that they were not ready to be part in His kingdom. It also confirms how some people will have to step into dirty aspects of prophecy, like the one foretold by Apostle Babalola. This offers explanations for those who are masquerading about today, fulfilling the prophecy of wolves in in cassock and collars of pastors and pretending to be working for the Lord, in the name and house of the Lord but who are enemies of the cross and righteousness.

know to be the 'Judas Iscariots' with the damage they continue to sponsor in the body. Now is the time for us to quit the pretence that all is well; that judgement is left only for God and that there is nothing we can do about the mess.

### **BETWEEN REVIVAL PODIUMS AND CHURCH ALTARS**

A great outpouring of power accompanied the ministry of Apostle Joseph Ayo Babalola and the world of his time was a witness to this. Also, authentic records of CAC history reveal how he still managed to pay some attention to the redemptive aspects of his ministry as he was said to have consistently preached repentance from idol worship and genuine salvation from the grip of sin to his audience. I have earlier hinted at what could have been the expectation of God from the power He poured on the apostle.

The major aspect of our challenge as a mission will therefore be traced to an unintended break in transmission between the podiums of the revival grounds in the 1930s and various church altars of the subsequent eras. I mentioned earlier that cause and effect are intertwined and may be difficult to neatly untie them. Here is an example that hangs between the two. The pulpits breed malnourished pews which will someday change roles to occupy the pulpits. By the time you weigh the activities that are crowded into our church routines, you discover most of them have too negligible an impact on the members and the quality of their lives.

For instance, **most of our assemblies have pre-programmed routines for services and for nearly 95% of the times and places of worship; no 'interruption' is anticipated from, or experienced by the Holy Spirit. From one Sunday service to another, and from the**



**beginning of one year to the end of another decade, it is the same liturgy, presided over by the same kind of ministers, preaching the same dreary sermons** that have left the members spiritually moribund and destitute for most of their lifetime. Going by only that which man can see, and supposing I was to assess their relevance or impact only in the light of what their programmes have to offer, one would have since lost interest in the church.

In fact, since around the mid-1970s, the number of Sundays has not been many when I have sensed the presence and touch of God in the gatherings in such a measure that will provoke a thirst for more as to make someone to be willing to come back. Coming to what our church programmes had become during those years, I wrote in an earlier work<sup>12</sup> about how anger often invaded my privacies during some service sessions such that I would feel like jumping out of the window of the church building in hot protest were it not for the need to respect the presence of God who promises to be whenever two or three are gathered in His name.

We know that routines which have come to define our worship systems over the years may not be faulted on their own just because they are routines. Major activities of life itself still revolve around typical routines of sleeping, eating, working and regular exercise of the body. While nothing is wrong with the regularity of weekly programmes, everything is

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<sup>12</sup> I recall the first reactions I penned down sometime around 1977 in an article I titled *Lost in the Church*. It was evoked by my observations of some CAC assemblies I associated with, especially during the tenures of some pastors I do not need to mention. It was for the lack of means of reproduction that the write up with many of its protests and entreaties that I still remember was never published.

wrong when they have been rendered shallow and empty, like expired drugs on a shelf, without any content of life. There are times when mere observation should inform those at the altars that some of the routines in our schedules need either scraping or a fire of freshness. It is either that they do not recognise this or are too complacent or rigid to introduce needed innovation that can inject life into dying routines. (Please refer to Appendix 3: **“Monkey See, Monkey Do...”** on Page 137(?)).

I have witnessed several instances when even some of our educated ministers operate as if their faculties get switched off whenever they are on their way to church services. Though they know or are supposed to know what is required to deck church programmes with varieties and how organisations should be run with dynamism to attract enthusiasm, it is in the church that empty traditions and mindless liturgy continue to thrive. Consequently, a regular feature of most Sunday announcements has always incorporated significant time of appeals by pastors to members to come for weekly services. And sometimes, when members yield their grounds and attend the programmes for a while but are unable to recount any benefit, further appeals usually fall on closed ears.

For instance, just take the statistics of those who attend weekly services of most of our churches with genuine expectation and commitment, apart from the ‘social’ gathering that most of our Sunday mornings worship had become. You will be amazed at what you will discover. And when members themselves do not attend their church programmes or see any merits in them, who will blame them if they do not invite others to come? Conversely, and in a practical sense, no pastor will ever need to beg his members to come for programmes that are packaged with richness and spiritual

content that the members themselves know they cannot afford to miss. Someone has said that if you keep the pastures green, the sheep will keep flocking in.

Those who were part of the move of God in those days will never forget how all roads led to the choking premises of the flat of Brother Kumuyi on Monday evenings for Bible studies when Deeper Life Ministry debuted at the Faculty of Education at the University of Lagos in the 1970s. I was both an eyewitness and a regular participant, going weekly from Agege to Akoka with public transportation facilities and road networks that do not compare with what we have today. It is in the light of this that we will need to examine whatever may have gone wrong between the revival grounds where our evangelists wielded much power and pulled the crowd and our sanctuaries where the people were supposed to be groomed into the image of Christ for even greater exploits.

### **LACKLUSTRE CHRISTIAN EDUCATION DEPARTMENT**

This has a direct link to what was earlier mentioned about the dry and shallow contents of the sermons which have left the members bereft of spiritual nutrition. The quality of Christian Education that has been a lot of this church, either in terms of curriculum development or in their delivery to the prospective church workers, is a gross mismatch to the anointing and huge mandate it carried. The only way to deny this or argue differently is where to agree that most of the ministers officiating in many of our assemblies today are not graduates of our seminaries.

From a broader perspective, and **through years of observation, I have established a portentous trend, which is not limited to CAC alone, of how those who are visited**

**with power by God have always fallen into the temptation of undermining the place and authority of the Bible, either in their personal life or in the conduct of their ministry. This alone will explain how and why some of those who tapped into the anointing of Apostle Joseph Babalola may have made a shipwreck of their callings.** Once the Bible begins to lose its grip on our course and actions, there will be no means by which even the Holy Spirit we claim much allegiance to can work.

No matter the level of anointing on any man or ministry, the Bible is not just to take pre-eminence; it is the only authority and guide that we have. Those who paid the price of power and are endued with it but later turn their back on the Bible will never be discharged from the guilt of operating at variance with God. And from experience, this does not have much to do with whether or not the anointing continues to flow. After all, it is understood that the gift and calling of God are without repentance (Romans 11v29) and continuous demonstration of power can never serve as sufficient evidence that a pastor or his ministry is still on track.

Within the limit of my little understanding, I have raised questions and on occasions too numerous, whether it could be said to be an omission in the scheme of God that He would pour out the amount of power with which He worked with Apostle Babalola and his compatriots and then go ahead to make insufficient provisions by which those to be brought into the light of the gospel from the thick darkness surrounding them would be ill-equipped to match it. On pondering over this issue, my agitation has transferred every blame from the doorstep of God to those He mandated to pursue this but who, for whatever reason fail to fulfil that aspect of the

bargain. Here are a few of the facts that we all know...:

1. That Joseph Ayo Babalola was a young man who, going by his rare humility, did not and would never have objected to having the benefit of mentorship of much older and experienced Christians in the fold.
2. That he suddenly found himself at the forefront of a revival movement following the opening of heaven upon him and his subsequent launch out does not erase the fact that he had stepped into the centre stage of a mighty and would-be global ministry when he was only 25 years of age.
3. That though there was nothing wrong in giving honour to whom it was due irrespective of his age (Romans 13v7) and as it applied to the young apostle, it is highly unlikely that God would have abandoned the fate of the huge crowd that was going to embrace the gospel through his campaign to whatever may be personal limitations of the apostle in terms of Christian experience and exposure to the scriptures. This is more so because no historical record has confirmed that he had undergone any formal training or study of theology before his glorious commissioning.
4. That it was true that the outpouring of power upon Apostle Babalola was quite great and he also received the grace to cultivate a deep intimacy with God through his prayers on the mounts. But none of those privileges was meant to undermine the need for him to learn and know what he needed to through the written word of God which He had magnified even above all His names (Psalm 138v2).

5. The fact that baptism of power launched the apostle into the ministry was not to suggest that the preparation and training that Jesus personally ran the likes of Peter and his group through for three years before their power encounter were to be cast overboard. After all, we all know that no one becomes an Angel overnight because of his baptism into power.
6. That, through the works of those who documented the events of the early days of Christ Apostolic Church, I know that while great anointing operated in the life of Apostle Babalola, he did not cast any aspersion on the calling of others who were much older than him in the fold and under whom he would have been fully prepared to learn whatever he needed to for effectual ministry and enduring legacy.
7. That, indeed, revelations have confirmed how very submissive he was to those who were either old enough to be his biological father or had been part of the Faith Tabernacle movement whose prayers birthed his revival. Since there will almost always be the need for Priscilla and Aquila for every Apollo that is raised in the ministry, no matter the level of anointing that may operate upon him (Acts 18v24-28), we do not know the extent to which those who were to assist the apostle in his further training and development stepped into that role to rub minds with him.
8. That, somewhere along the line, God must have made provisions for how the huge crowd that would be brought into the fold would be cared for and nurtured spiritually. As I earlier stated, He must have envisaged how they would need to be taught just the little they

needed to know, even within their primitive setting and limited education, for them to understand the difference that their call into the gospel was supposed to make in their lives, the privileges and demands of their new spiritual status and the need for a clear separation between their past and new life.

9. That the members should have been taught from those early days, that miracles, which became commonplace in the ministry of the apostle were not to be taken as an end in themselves or as anything more than a bait to secure their attention, that genuine conversion and individual salvation of the people must have mattered more to the heart of God.
10. That, in the process, the need for everyone to personally encounter Jesus, who is not only a miracle Worker but also the Lord and Saviour who came to deliver men from their sins, would have received all the emphasis it deserved by which they would have been driven gradually to a point where they would see the place that God carved for them in the church on a larger scale and in its corporate agenda.
11. That we know how the sudden response of a huge crowd to the outburst of power would have made this difficult at the initial stage of the movement. But then, subsequent years of progression in the ministry should have afforded its leadership sufficient opportunities to address the lop-sidedness of that starting point. This is if we assume that the will was there and we were not to play hoax with such a vital aspect of the call of the Apostle and his bargain with God.
12. That although it may be said that CAC was not blessed

with many educated leaders and members at the start, there was nothing to suggest, either, that all our leaders at inception were illiterates. My memory can still testify to it that some of our fathers that I grew up to know in the church were fairly educated and had opportunities of many decades to correct the defects in the foundation that was laid for the church.

It is not a pleasant thing to recall that during my early years in the Christian race, CAC had manifested so much apathy and sliding trends in the areas of Christian education to the point where you find some of us who ventured outside its fold to interact with other Christians sometimes feeling abashed to be introduced as members of the church. Those who may pretend not to know the extent of our tepidity and shallow spirituality as a church will only need to observe the level of Christian virtues and scriptural depths that may be seen in the life style of average or typical CAC members in their various duty posts, in their contacts and general interaction with others members of the larger society, Christians or non-Christians.

As I said of the generality of our members at the start, we have many ministers who are either half-baked or not baked at all. And just before anyone will join issue with me on this, let him cast a look at our average assembly and recount when last many of the dancing members we parade during offering segment of the services were driven to their knees after sermons or those whose Christian lives were known to carry one question mark or the other have had to re-consecrate their lives in response to a fresh visitation of heaven and its unusual unction upon our ministering altars.

We do not ignore the fact that seminaries and (pastoral)



training centres have been established by the church as listed below<sup>13</sup>:

- 1946 - Pastoral Training College, Ibadan
- 1949 - The School of Prophets and Evangelists, Ilesa
- 1952 - Bible Training College, Ede (the Bible Training College moved to Erio Ekiti in 1954, to Efon Alaaye in 1958 and to Akure in 1969)
- 1979 - Theological Seminary, Ile-Ife, with 13 satellite campuses

Yet, the establishment of seminaries is one. The expectations from them, the quality of their curriculums and materials for teaching that should inform those expectations, the academic qualifications and spiritual depth of resource persons and the adequacy of the visions of those that manage the affairs of the institutions are other compelling factors. And, to the extent that many of the graduates from these institutions have not been pulling their full weights on the pulpits may be all that is needed to expose the leakages in the approach of the church to her Christian Education that has proved to be far less than whatever may be expected to sustain its unique mandate.

Most of our churches indeed claim to operate Bible study programmes. But, apart from the constraints of those who reside in busy urban centres where easy movement is hampered, it is also true that members are hardly in attendance. Yet it is all because a few trials have proved that there is little or nothing to gain by sacrificing their time and

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<sup>13</sup> Source: CAC World Wide Website #1- Besides, I also recall, both as a close watcher and regular visitor to Odubanjo Memorial Centre in Agege in Lagos when it hosted our pastoral training institute and Pastor M. B. Oyeyemi and later Pastor G. Lagunju were instructors and Pastor A. O. A. Olutimehin served as the principal.

efforts for attendance. Therefore, rather than blaming the apathy of members to such a programme, the appropriate thing would have been to censure the ministers who have demonstrated time and again that they do not have much to offer that will justify their expectation of members or their commitment to such programmes.

### **MISGUIDED PRAYERS**

Prayer connects Christians with heaven for intimacy with God by which they secure the power needed for service. But once Satan manages, as it appears he has already done, to achieve the blurring of vision at its altar, he will have scored a highly strategic victory over the Church. I had written a long and strong protest against the prayer pattern I grew up to know in CAC in an article, *Fractured Focus*, which was published in one edition of *With One ACCORD*, the newsmagazine of Christ Apostolic Church Students' Association which then was my primary constituency in 1988.

I had argued on the need to birth revival from our prayer altars; that it does not make sense to continue to chase mosquitoes around with atomic bombs when dangerous lions and wolves are on the prowl. Just go to our services, prayer meetings, night vigils and even Prayer Mountains and listen to the lacklustre, narrow-focussed and shallow-depth prayers that people engage all their energies to pray. We know how it has become an issue of serious concern more than a matter of course, even to the discerning, that for no less than ninety-eight per cent of the prayer times and venues, it is the prayer points vomited by the pulpits that will be gulped and parroted by the pews; no matter how myopic or unscriptural they may be. This is known to be more a result of ignorance than

unsolicited humility.

Unfortunately in our peculiar case, just as I argued in the referenced work, faulty prayer orientation had developed to take a firm root since the early days of the church for reasons which I also tried to fathom. A missionary friend, Festus Ndukwe, noted on the back cover of his book, *Prayer: A Christian Response to the Missions Challenge* that “painfully today, prayer, a great weapon for revival, national rebirth and turning nations to Christ is being misused and abused. When a church which is supposed to be a house of prayer for all nations is turned to a house of prayer for a self and personal vendetta against perceived enemies, it jeopardises the purpose for which God has established the Church”.

The ugly truth is that CAC has joined, or maybe I should say has led, many other churches to abuse the privilege and power of prayer. Prayers that have now come to dominate the psyche and circle of Christians are those that deal a ruthless blow to the enemies of their progress or obstacles to the fulfilment of their destinies. This is not minding the fact that experience has since informed all those who are well informed that every man is, for nearly more of the time, the greatest enemy of himself. We have continued to see how prayer pulses are dictated by what we want God to do in our secluded corners and how all efforts are consumed on such a narrow focus as opposed to what He wants to do in a wider world to showcase His power, especially to a wayward generation.

For instance, it is quite possible to discover that there will be many churches in the south of Nigeria that are yet to declare a day of prayer and fasting for the intervention of God in the North East of Nigeria where Boko Haram has declared war of extermination against the Church. The members of the

churches who are dying and are being maimed in that region and those who are shedding tears of sorrow after them are supposed to be part of the same body, according to Hebrew 13v3. But this does not mean anything to most members of the churches in the south once they have ‘testimonies’ of protection and provisions to share during their services!

It has been my well-grounded opinion that the only people that God has to hold responsible for the many woes of the country are not the politicians, the military or even our corrupt administration but His children who have failed to live up to expectations and neglected the exercise of their kingdom mandate. God must have expected the Christians in Nigeria and other places to break the yoke of corruption, oppression and wickedness in high and low places, without neglecting their challenges. He has placed enough power at their disposal to take charge of all events in our personal, social, political and economic spheres.

But what do we see? It is more of our petty needs that continue to dominate our prayers and, sometimes, all that we burn all the time upon at our prayer altars are the least of the things that God wants to do with and for us. His real concern has always been how He may secure our full devotion following which He will be ready to fill our emptiness with His fullness. Moreover, Christians should have united their efforts with resolve to pray our energy sector with the monumental challenges it has posed to successive regimes out of bondage to liberate the economic potentials of this great nation. But we are rested with miracles that give us generators to power our loud speakers during service and light our homes at nightfall.

Pastor Tunde Bakare said in one of his telecasts sometime around the mid-1990s that while God wants to establish a

bakery for a lifetime supply in the backyard of our homes, all we care for is to search about for crumbs that quench only immediate appetite. Another missionary friend also put it this way that God expects Christians to ask for great and mighty things (a revelation of which was promised in Jeremiah 33v3) like, say, the souls of the millions that are perishing in Japan (Psalm 2v8). But all they are pestering heaven with are requests for Japanese products!

### **MEMBERS' LACK OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION**

One of the problems that afflicted CAC from the onset was the lack of education among its members<sup>14</sup>. The reason for this and how it affected our structure and operations was documented in *Fractured Focus*. From what I grew up to see, not too many of our members were able to avail themselves of the opportunity to pursue education as would have been expected. Also, a few of the children of our pastors and privileged members who had the means to sponsor their children to higher institutions soon lost control of the spiritual lives of such children. This is a development I monitored in the church up to around the mid-1970s when anyone could count on fingers tips the number of graduates in our services even in some of our foremost assemblies in the urban centres, to talk less of those who operate at rural ends.

The vicious cycle was that some of our educated few that

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<sup>14</sup> The revival of Apostle Babalola ignited interest in the pursuit of education by early adherents and, just as I earlier wondered how members of the church became marginalised, it appears the church did not capitalise on such interest to inculcate sound Bible reading culture in the people. For instance, the work by Dr. Abi Olowe stated about Ilesa revival of how “over 2,000 copies of Yoruba Alphabet books were sold and bookshops ran out of Bible” (p.134 (the same about Ikare in p.165)).

would have teamed up to boost the profile and operational strategy of the church could not find excitement or attraction in most of the church programmes that were anchored by pastors and their assistants who were mostly illiterates. A number of the children of our foremost leaders who became the early generation of elites of the church were plagued by poor Christian foundations by which many of them remained unbelievers and spiritual illiterates despite the opportunity they had. Worse still, just because of their social status, many of them were treated like thin gods whenever in the church with little concern for their worth on the scale of God.

Let me remark that the illiteracy of the pastors on its own could not have been the cause of the problem. The real issue was that the anointing that would have covered for such deficiency or made education a secondary factor or even a non-issue in the spiritual circus had either dissipated or was lacking in the expected measure. After all, we have abundant witnesses of how those who do not have western education have been used and are still being by God, even today. Still, however, there is no way to detach the present faint attitude of the members of the church to the Bible, their lack of understanding in spiritual matters, the myopic and shallow contents of our sermons and general apathy to biblical doctrines from failure to institute sound teaching, especially at the mission-wide level.

From its inception, Christ Apostolic is one church that heaped undue emphasis on prayer and fasting in pursuit of mundane causes with the use of sanctified water and oil<sup>15</sup> to

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<sup>15</sup> I do not castigate this. It is still one of the pristine covenants that God has with CAC. Also, just as we may glean from the Book of Psalms, there is

address mortal challenges. An unintended consequence of this is the undermining of the word of God that ought to have attracted and enjoyed a priority of devotion. Yet, it remains a cheap truth that no one needs any proof for that many bottles of holy water cannot quench the lust that is razing the mind of a typical youth or purge another folk, whoever he may be, of malicious inclination.

The skewed emphasis from the early days of the church made the quest for bodily healing and deliverance eclipse the need for spiritual healing of the hearts where God wishes to dwell. The doctrine of divine healing or abstinence from the use of medicine during sickness was taken to a point where it would almost seem like the only thing anyone needed to be a good Christian or make heaven. And that seemed to be without as much attention to many other doctrinal awareness, activities and pursuits that combine to make a robust content of the gospel and complete mandate of the Church.

In the earlier work, I recalled how ministers of a section of the church once suspended Sunday school programmes and boycotted its manuals because of whatever misunderstanding that ensued between them and fellow ministers from where the manuals were produced and circulated. As I remarked then, if one may investigate, it may not be that the leaders of the quarrelling segment had any alternative to fill the gap for the period. Just imagine that! It is as a result of all these that the Bible knowledge of CAC members and even leaders will easily be dwarfed by those of many Pentecostal churches and enlightened ministries of our time.

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nothing wrong in making a plea unto God for His intervention in our material, financial or physical challenges.

## **LEADERSHIP CRISIS AND ITS ODIOS SIGNALS**

The starting point here is the administration of discipline I earlier alluded to by which erring ministers were known to have been indulged when bold action should have trailed their misdemeanour to serve as a deterrent to others. I cannot tell the extent to which this problem has been addressed in recent times. From what I know in the past, transfer always served as a means by which offending pastors were shielded from the consequences of their actions. Comments on this aspect of our administrative lapse will not be harped beyond this point at this point because of the sensitivity of the issue and because no one who is not in the hierarchy of the church may corroborate allegations with sufficient facts.

Yet, a major aspect of my concern here is what may be seen as a blatant disregard of the open scriptures by the leadership of the church and as a result of which one case has been climbing on the back of the other in various courts. On one hand, the burden of the concerned members of the church was growing heavier and their prayers roared to the heavens on how to soften stances and get all aggrieved parties together for true reconciliation in the spirit of unity that has eluded us as a mission for over two decades now.

On the other hand and at the same time, we note painfully how each of the warring factions continued to pretend as if it had the monopoly, authority and endorsement of heaven to grab whatever others would be asked to surrender to the bargaining table for the sake of peace. Despite huge efforts that have gone into the reconciliation of factions, it still seems, up to the time of going to the press with this work, as if unity has become something that would not be achieved in this



generation.

We also noted painfully the intransigence of each faction that wanted to sit as arbitrator in a case where all feuding parties may only have been equally guilty and in need of repentance and redirection. Calls for truce and unity, particularly by one faction of the church to the other(s) were known to have been channelled through the pages of newspapers in vain and self-deceiving efforts that are meant to achieve absolutely nothing. Truth, they say, is the first casualty of war and the one being fought on the platform of CAC is no exception. We will not need to debate the action of those who wooed pressmen to their offices to place and pay for reconciliation advertorials but who would have needed no more than a fraction of that efforts and expenses to visit other parties they pretend to be seeking reconciliation with.

So much money that could have sponsored evangelism to several places has been squandered in pursuit of court cases. At the same time, a voice still tells the litigants, especially when they meet in the courtrooms presided over by unbelievers, that they are fighting "*the good fight of faith*" in defence of the cause of Jesus Christ. It is as if heaven has never been at stake, as if there was nothing to bother about and as if the feuding parties were sure they would hear "*well done, thou good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord*" either when the trumpet will sound at any of these moments or when the eyes will be shut to open no more.

There is this illusion in the claims of the two main factions to being *CAC World-Wide*, a term which has come to mean nothing more than how it appears on their stationeries, calendars and signposts. We know that we do not have more than one world to which references are made by the factions.

We also recall that those who embellished the church's top offices with the term to bloat their ego in the days of our erstwhile fathers, and those who continue to harp on it now in the rivalling camps may not be able to list the names of up to one-third of the countries we have in Africa by heart, to talk less of today's wide world, or *world-wide*. This is likely to be the case especially if they are not among those who study geography or international relations in higher institutions.

Up to now, I do not know which of the restricted country, particularly in the Middle East has an active branch of CAC. I do not know how many CAC members, converts or assemblies can be traced to the underground churches in places like Bhutan, Afghanistan and Laos or to Catholic-dominated Philippines, to Vanuatu said to have a high percentage of Protestant Christians, to Cambodia, Kyrgyzstan, North Korea, Palau, Tonga or even to the (North of) Sudan which is much closer to our Nigerian base.

This is the core of the concern. If those at the forefront of the race to heaven, that preach the virtues of the kingdom; temperance, forgiveness and forbearing one another continue to treat each other as outcasts, if a split was wedged between them and the followers are not seeing enough effort on their part to mend fences, if those who should have been more concerned about bridging the chasm are not perceived to be doing just enough, one wonders what signals they send to others, either within or outside the church buildings.

In December 2011, a soft-selling newsmagazine carried a headline story about ministers of the same gospel in Nigeria who hate each other. Even while CAC does not command any ranking in Nigeria gospel media; even while the photographs of its indicted officials were not among the ones that were

handy for display in the publication (thank God for this), the quarrel involving two of its prominent leaders had the first slot in the embarrassing news. This is one development that the church publicity would wish to cover up but which could not be hidden from the press that, unfortunately, takes delight in painting the church in dark colours!

As remarked earlier, God will not be chained down by human failures. We can at least attest to the feats that several ministries which broke off from the chains of their parent churches, including CAC, have been recording. We may also ask about what would have made the content of the biographies of W. F. Kumuyi, David Oyedepo, Mike Okonkwo and a host of others if they did not seek disengagement from their one-time bases where they served either as pastors, co-pastors or faithful church workers.

While the above is not to sponsor or encourage schism in the body of Christ, it simply makes it a naked fact that since Martin Luther led the protest against Roman Catholic and Anglican Communion was born, denominationalism has become a feature of Christendom. This revelation is accentuated by the fact that God did not make all of us to always see and think the same way and some will be mandated for a diversion from the prevailing traditions and spiritual culture of their immediate surroundings.

# CHAPTER 4

## WHERE WE ARE

Satan has pitched his battle against every church of Jesus Christ on the earth that is built on the foundation of truth. Even if it is for this alone, our mission, ordained and commissioned to confront his empire, cannot expect to have it any different. Therefore, whatever may be our struggle against his kingdom will not be anything new or more than a passing phase. The only times it becomes an issue that we are making out of it now with our church is when the exceptions suddenly transform and become the rule. Therefore, following spiritual and administrative lapses through the decades, we may cast a look at a few of the fallouts.

### **THINGS BEGAN TO FALL APART**

As a result of lapses and oversights that bred envy and distrust, several of those that were to be reckoned with in the church became a builder of their empires. Today, I know as well as or even far less than some of the readers do, of many individuals that have broken away from the church by simply changing the names on their signposts and stationeries from Christ Apostolic Church, particularly the ones that many of them were instrumental in founding on the platform of the church. Perhaps no one will argue that very many of the denominations that are operating with Pentecostal fervour and under the name of one church or another ministry in Nigeria today will trace their roots to the revival of Oke-Oye!

If those were blatant enough to declare their stand, we have others who operated and are still operating within the system of the church but who at the same time, are guarding their autonomy with jealousy. There can be no other way to explain how WOSEM, CAC Agbala Itura, CAC Lion of Judah and others came to be more popular than most of our foremost assemblies that had existed and operated for decades before those ministries within the church were founded.

For instance, without having to stir the net of a resting bird, that is if we believe the bird is resting, at what point did it occur to our anointed and esteemed evangelist, Prophet T. O. Obadare, whom I grew up to know as one of the itinerant evangelists in Christ Apostolic Church, to establish WOSEM and then went further to make the ministry independent of the controls of the central authority of the church? Part of the information I picked up is that Prophet Obadare was not the first person to establish an independent ministry within the church and outside the control of its authority but that the explosion and success of his ministry attracted the envy that became one of the taproots of our crisis.

Beyond WOSEM, we may ask a similar question about whatever could have led Pastor S. K. Abiara to establish CAC Agbala Itura, first in Ibadan and then in other places as we have today. What I do not know, and about which I have no comment, is the extent of the control that CAC central authority wields over those branches. While this will be a guess of anyone who is not involved in the administration of the church, the fact remains that the label *Agbala Itura* is a trademark more associated with or popularised by Pastor Abiara than just any typical CAC assembly. I also do not pretend to have a grasp of the background to the business of

empire building that sneaked into CAC since the 1970s or even before. But it is sufficient to note that those were not part of the arrangement that people of my age group grew up to know in the church.

Even when I lack full information with regards to the activities and financial operations of those churches and ministries, I may at least feel free to think that the control that the authority of the church will wield over assemblies like CAC Shiaba, Agege, CAC Odewale Street, Yaba, CAC Ebute Elefun, Lagos Island, CAC Olorunsogo, Mushin, CAC Oke Isegun, Efon-Alaye, CAC Oke Oye, Ilesha or CAC Latona, Osogbo may not necessarily be like the one it will exercise over a typical CAC Agbala Itura or others with founders' brandings. Better still, while I am waiting to be educated on this, we may just ask a typically pointed question as to who has been sitting on the board of, say, CAC Lion of Judah churches or ministry as a representative of the authority of the church and what level of power does he possess to censure and ensure that activities, reporting and returns comply with the regulations of the central CAC authority.

I once heard about a dirty drama that trailed the efforts of the church to wrestle, as it were, the control of one of such assemblies from the families of a deceased popular pastor of the church, somewhere in Osun State. And now, we have many others too numerous to mention like WOSEM, Agbala Itura and Zero Hour that have emerged on the platform of the church, each with its set of pastors and senior pastors, with independent and isolated finance and administration, policies and politics, activities and programmes in pursuit of agenda that do not emanate from any of the factions of the church or subject to the control of any of them.

Though the Bible underlines the folly and selfishness of Nabal, the husband of Abigail, the abrasive comments he made while rebuffing the servants of David who came to make a demand on him for victuals hold some truths. The problem cuts across a huge segment of Christendom which is regarded as a wide sky in which birds of different sorts, including bats, cockroaches and even mosquitoes can fly without infringing on the pathway of others.

Today, many founders in CAC seek to define their territories and establish their domains without affiliation whatsoever with any assembly. The worse part is that many such pastors are in no way responsible to any mentor within or outside the fold. From all we can see, it will seem that even the administration of the church may not be able to reverse this trend that has been set in motion and which will dictate the feature of the future. The preoccupation of the emerging administration will now be how best to coordinate and harness the capabilities and peculiarities of each of such assemblies for the advancement of the gospel and on the corporate platform of the church.

We do not question the fact of a number of them that I know personally are going about it with the purest of motives and under the guidance of the Holy Spirit as a project of the kingdom. A propensity of some of them and their assemblies, as far as I can understand, is the readiness with which we expect that; given the right crew in the cockpit of the church, they will submit and adjust to the dictates of the central authority at its beckoning. However, we do not lose sight of very many others who keep only the size of their pocket in focus and who do not have anyone they report to either for monitoring or censorship and to which it appears the same

authority has turned a blind eye.

The concern is therefore real for many who operate with the name and signpost of the church but who are completely outside the control of the authorities of the church. From my intimate contact with the leader of one of such major breakaways in the church, it is earnestly expecting when the will of God will prevail and sanity will pave the way for unity following which it intends to surrender the control of his faction to the leadership of the church. But a time will come when we should be ready to summon sufficient courage to tell those who are unwilling to submit to pull totally out of the church since no portion of the Bible has linked their candidacy of heaven with a membership of or affiliation to CAC.

It is on this note that we may not need to bother much about those who have changed the name of their churches or ministries though I foresee many of them rushing back to the fold to tap into the anointing of the promised end-time revival. While we know a number of them that are doing well, we also know a few of them who have been bitten by the serpent of greed and into whose lives and ministries the venom of corruption has been injected.

### **COMMENTS ON THE ELDERS**

Having devoted sufficient efforts to x-raying the challenges with pastoral ordination in the church, we turn attention to another component of our presbytery. It is a claim that calls for no evidence that our church parades elders who do not measure up to their calling as leaders of God's people. Many of them have remained spiritual dwarfs despite their years of exposure to church programmes and their involvement in its activities. Their involvement in the administration of the local



church has only served as a cover-up of their lack of basic knowledge of the Bible and the need for personal development by which they are supposed to stand up and fill crucial gaps in the body of Christ. The conferment of the titles of pastor and elder is one area where CAC is known to have violated the standard of the Bible and instructions of a sound judgement.

I cannot be the only one who is upset about how the title of elder has been slammed on people who do not deserve it and cases of this are too numerous to cite. One man was made an elder just because he temporarily housed the pastor following his transfer to the station. But going by what everyone knew about the man before the arrival of his 'benefactor' to the station and going by what I also personally observed about him during my stay at the station, the man may not be regarded as one of those who have ever seen the light of the gospel to talk less about being an elder in a church. I even learnt that the same pastor who sponsored his ordination regretted his action after. I am sure many have heard of or witnessed similarly disturbing cases.

As I have come to know over the years, what some of them understand about their ordination is no more than for them to wear *agbada* to the service on Sunday morning, for those who prefer that style of dressing; participate in the meeting of the board after the service and then patiently hibernate till it will come to their turn again, either to read the lesson of the service or say the prayer after the sermon. Just as one pastor told me, where anyone in the church is among those on whom fortunes have beamed its smile, the size of his purse alone will become a qualifying criterion by which he will be expected to pick up the bill of the assembly's projects with greater enthusiasm and sense of commitment than it would be

if he is not so ordained. This is not to say that I have lost sight of a great number of them who have strived for higher grounds, especially those who are involved in the Sunday school activities of their parishes.

In an English-speaking assembly of one of our state capitals where I worshipped sometime in 2012, a pastor preached a sermon on a topic that though would have been better for a teaching session. Ordinarily, the topic is what the church members should have been exposed to and revisited on regular basis either through Bible study or Sunday school. Fair enough, the pastor made good points with his choice, as the topic requires some level of academic exposure. What is more is that I recalled that in all my years in the fold of Christ Apostolic Church which is now over five decades, that was the first and so far the only time I would hear teaching along the line of that subject from any of our pulpit, seminar or conferences, for which I sincerely commended the pastor.

When the service was over, I tried to meet the pastor, offer some words of appreciation for being thoughtful enough to bring the topic to the pulpit and rub my mind with him on where I sensed slight mix-ups in his analysis. But lo and behold, before I could reach him after the service, many people including elders had besieged him, pouring encomium and asking for where they could get the book that treated the subject. And as the elders of years or decades were doing that, I remember that the subject was one of the topics on relationship management I had bought a book on to educate myself about, even as a growing youth around the mid-1970s. It will not be anything surprising to find out that there are some of the elders who were hearing that for the first time.

## **THE PROBLEMS WITH THE CHORISTERS**

Because of the age bracket of those that are being recruited into the choirs, because of the shoddy foundation laid for the Christian lives of many of them, because of the bad influence of parents and the society and also because of the peer pressure from within and outside the church environment, a number of those who hold the microphones to lead worship sessions in many of our assemblies are fornicators. This is just to avoid begging the issue!

It is a fact well established by what I have seen for years of my being a member of the church and the choir. I have unprintable evidence that I have gathered through at least four major assemblies of the church where I had served as either a choir member or leader through my growing years; from the early 1960s and up to the late 1990s. In fact, my experiences in other churches and fellowships I have ventured into offer sufficient proof that the problem of immorality among the choir is not limited to our church. It cuts across the church divides except where the leadership is vigilant enough to nip the evil in the bud.

Those who will pretend not to know the depth of this problem will be jolted by the story that involved members of the choir of a foremost assembly of the church, which is not even one of the four I mentioned earlier. A pastor friend and one of those with whom I kept praying appointment about the challenges confronting the church a few years back narrated to me how he caught two members of his church choir committing the dirty act right inside the vestry of the church while they waited for a night vigil programme to commence. Now, if the pressure was so strong to a point where those could desecrate the house of God in that manner, one may

simply imagine what they would do in the privacies of their homes. Perhaps it was the turn of the two to ‘minister’ during the night vigil they were waiting to participate in!

Stories like this have since ceased to evoke any shock from me because of what I have seen in the churches and among the choirs over the years. The most tragic aspect of this is that immorality in the choir is not limited to the youth and the unmarried. Even married members were not immune from it. It is only a compromising or spiritually insensitive church leadership that will undermine the seriousness of this matter and the need to keep watchful eyes on those who sit in choir stalls during its programmes.

From all expectations, the choristers who minister in songs are supposed to be the next in line to the pastors who minister in words during a typical worship session. From all we may see from the Old Testament, the choir holds a unique place in the ranks of church workers who need all the evidence and assurance of a relationship with God before they are enrolled in such service. Yet, I can almost assure you that the profiles of those who crowd the choir stall of our assemblies concerning their spirituality will blow any mind.

#### **AFFLICTION BY POVERTY MENTALITY...**

Though we read in the Bible that “... *the earth is the Lord’s and the fullness thereof*”, our members are yet to be awakened to the fact of this revelation. They do not know how and what to give of their substances unto Him who created and owns all things for His pleasure and to His glory and who promises to return to their coffer abundance of all good things. **Because they are not sufficiently taught to give, members of the church do not give as they should. Because they do not give as they**

**should, they do not receive as they should. Because they do not receive as they should, they do not have as they should. And because they do not have, they just cannot give as they should.** This is the odious cycle that has afflicted the finances of the church today at individual and corporate levels and by which many of our members remain in the struggling class despite their several decades of voluminous and ‘earth-shaking’ prayers, especially in the mountains.

We are all familiar with the drama of our members and their pastors during offering segments of the service in most places which is always like that of a cat and rat trying to outsmart each other. The scenario often paints a picture of people who are being forced to pay through their noses rather than the cheerful givers they ought to be. In preparation for the games to which they are accustomed and which they are sure the pastors would repeat over and over again, they would break whatever paltry offerings they plan to give into the currencies of smaller denominations, waiting to drop them in bits and for as many times as they were sure that calls would be made. Also, pastors resort to gimmicks or coercing to get the people to shed extra weight during the service, especially whenever there is a pressing need. In one of our main assemblies where I worshipped in July 2011, calls were made for **ten** (10) different offerings to the same people, and in the same service!

Though a number of our ministers have been surviving purely on God’s grace and provision, one would rather have wished the church stop the ridiculous amount they attach to their offices in the name of salary and just let them live purely by their faith and generosity of God’s people. The issue that kept poking to the surface as I reflected on this matter is the need to determine who among our pastors have the contract

of the Levites who are not supposed to add any engagement to their ministerial calling. I have also imagined whether it would make much better sense to free and encourage the majority of them that do not have that specific restriction upon their calling to think of how they may employ their spare time to pursue a legitimate business that may add something to them and their family. I understand how each pastor may need to sort out the issue with God in prayers for clear direction.

The foregoing notwithstanding, I am not oblivious to what applied to the Levites in the Bible by which a number of our pastors may be detached from every secular pursuit. But then, perhaps we would need to double-check and be sure that God is expressly forbidding all the arms that are now folded and rested on our altars with their potentials from ever venturing into any ventures. I am not asking CAC to blindly follow the pattern of the new-generation churches and ministries which have most of their pastors among the professionals who in addition to their pastoral callings are also career driven. While the templates they operate may not fit neatly into what God is calling our pastors into, it does not mean that we all must bury our God-given talents or secular training and blind ourselves to opportunities. God is the author of creativity and the problem with man is either he is not venturing at all or when he does, he often goes to the other extreme.

While the unbelievers who do not share any faith in God will cast the promise of the Bible aside to overstretch their creative capability, it is the Christians that will hide under the pretext of ‘trusting and obeying’ and do nothing to harness their creative potential. I do not know how successfully we may continue to propagate the thoughts and teachings that anything that brings Christians into wealth and repute must be

from Satan or as bait to lure them out of the race. We know and understand what the Bible says about the prosperity of the fool or the wicked but that is not to suggest that all those who are not fools and wicked must live and die in poverty for them to make heaven. The blunt truth is that it is not possible to take the gospel too far by just praying and speaking in tongues, especially in our days. Raw cash has become part of the tools we need except we want to fool ourselves.

### **... AND CELEBRATION OF MEDIOCRITY**

I noted earlier that the only thing required to celebrate a failure is to give it a robe of success. This is how it may seem that we have taken delight in the celebration of mediocrity and the ordinary. I was in a church service where the Chairman of a prominent coordinating council was going to announce to the congregation that the National Universities Commissions finally approved the establishment of Joseph Ayo Babalola University (JABU) for CAC. It is usual in our gathering that the weight of an issue determines who is worthy, or unworthy, to announce it to the congregation. That was how information about JABU became reserved for the biggest ‘boss’ of the house. And, before he was going to let the ‘big cat’ out of his bag, the man had verbally gyrated in repeated cycles of excitement, demanding the shouts of continuous and thunderous ‘hallelujah’, to tear the roof of the building open.

Of a truth, no one will demean the worth of this achievement or cloud its import under a craving for more of such. At the same time, no one may deny that the drama of the over-excited chairman was scripted from a battered mentality. For instance, right where I seated in the service while his drama lasted, my mind quickly scanned through a few

individuals and much smaller denominations that have put that feat behind them within their short history. I particularly recalled that Bishop David Oyedepo and his Winners' Chapel had established Covenant University with faculties and facilities that have attracted reputation and commendation beyond Nigeria and across Africa<sup>16</sup>. One would then think that for a denomination of eighty years to have suddenly woken up to something of a similar or even less feat should only be seen as a starting point and not a milestone of a lifetime.

A similar instance was at the National Christmas Carol service of Lagos section held at CAC Olorunsogo auditorium in December 2008. While the entire programme would be adjudged to be below expectation going by what CAC was known for musically over the years, one of the officiating pastors stood on the podium to announce another 'feather in our cap'. Of all the broadcasting stations operating in Nigeria as of date, a local (radio) station with broadcasting signals that could hardly reach the neighbouring states was wooed over to cover the event. I noted how the station's crew received special recognition at the event. I simply wondered how the official and seemingly excited audience forgot about the individuals and churches of much younger age that have established their cable network stations and through which they have most of their special events transmitted live, not only to the local but global audience.

One would expect that CAC had attained such social status that media outfits that matter in the broadcasting business in Nigeria like Radio Nigeria, NTA Network Services, African

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<sup>16</sup> He has even gone further to establish Landmark University with similar grooming and focus, perhaps to cater for those on the lower social ladder



Independent Television, Channels Television, Silver Television and the rest will be craving for a licence to transmit our programmes. The establishment of a privately owned cable station is a feat that churches like Evangelical Church Winning All, popular for its radio evangelism since the early 1970s, Idahosa World Outreach and now, Redeemed Christian Church of God, Mountain of Fire and Miracles and several others have put behind them. While the face of Christianity has changed in Nigeria since the last few decades and particularly with the breeding of a new generation of enlightened and educated audience, ministers and their ministries, it is as if CAC is glued to stagnation in many respects, refusing to tap into the abundant opportunities of the age.

#### **EXIT OF THE YOUTHS, DWINDLED MEMBERSHIP**

CAC has carved escape routes for many of its youths who have migrated to other churches and ministries they consider to be relevant to their expectations. One may just picture what it will be like if the majority of them have been retained in the fold to contribute their quotas to the project of the gospel on the platform of the church. This is concerning what their gifts and talents, financial resources and education, youthful strength and resourcefulness, social connections and status with other potentials would have achieved for God on the platform of the church. For instance, a number of those who were born and raised in CAC will be found among those doing great in other churches and ministries, including even the ones which are not as grounded or popular.

Perhaps many of them had waited to see if we would get it right. They gave up and, with or without the leading of the

Holy Spirit, moved on to avoid being chained down in a setting they discovered to have become a haven of immobile and illiterate ones that the ministrations of many of our pastors can attract. What is more, we soon discover that what the youths run after in these other places are not materially different from the doctrines which our fathers had, even with the add-ons of faith against odds, strength for perseverance, the spirit and power of prevailing prayer but which our pulpits have failed to capitalise on. It is these same teachings that have been repackaged with a touch of innovation by visionary pastors to bait our youths away. But it is CAC, including our order of services in many places that have refused to brace up to the needed change, even from the practices of the 1940s!

Those who apply phoney criteria may not be able to see the extent to which we have lost members over the years. If we are to measure the membership growth of the church by societal population progression, if we will cast our focus, not only on those who are in the fold but also on those who have left us, we will see the extent to which we have diminished over the years. This is especially if we judge by the great crowd that our evangelists pulled to the revival grounds in our early days. The number of those who have left our fold in search of greener pastures and those who have been incensed out of the Christian race because of bad leadership and our corporate intransigence will expose the fallacy of misinformed opinions and distorted statistics.

Let us borrow an arithmetical guess from a young couple who may have wedded in the church in 1960, blessed with five children who in turn have raised five grandchildren each, barring any death. A couple of about eighty-something years old would have accounted for the addition of thirty souls or

more to the membership of the church, a growth ratio of 1v16 in fifty-five years. While the church may want to harp on or brag about an increase along this pattern over the years, natural population progression alone could have done the trick without any evangelical effort. In other words, the increment of two souls to thirty-two or even more in about fifty-five years may not be defined as progress that calls for celebrations.

Even, with the impact of cross-border opportunities of this age, the extent of our stagnancy may just be blown to your face by the fact that the church has failed to spread its tentacles to people groups, countries and regions of the world where several other churches and ministries, aggressive businesses and progressive organisations have ventured into. I agree that there are those that the church has been able to retain, who remain in the system for whatever explanation, the most of which of course is by His grace. Concerning this, I strongly believe that God has the days we are about to witness in mind for planting and establishing such people in the midst.

Yet the fact of such people cannot blind us to the number of those who have either emigrated out of the church or have abandoned the faith. At the same time, no one should shy away from the fact that the multiplicity of Districts, now DCC, is more of a reflection of the same population growth pattern as many of them are a case of cutting the same yam into slices and re-labelling them. Now to the worst aspect, some of such divisions are more of a result of rancour than the need to ease administration, ensure the effectiveness of operations and advance the cause of evangelism.

We have similar cases with the erstwhile pastors and workers in the church who have grown weary of the direction of the church and its leadership and have smuggled their

calling away from the umbrella of the church. As I wrote earlier, many of the freelance ministries, particularly in the south-west of Nigerian will trace their roots to the revival of Oke-Oye, one way of the other. Nowadays, it does not mean anything anymore for many of them to write the names of their ministry and then slot in the picture of Apostle Joseph Babalola somewhere on the signpost as bait to lure in those who are already familiar with what the apostle and his ministry represented in the scheme of God. Perhaps, not even our efficient secretariat may be able to furnish the full list of pastors who have defected from the battle zones that the church has pitched against itself in the last few decades.

# CHAPTER 5

## THE WAY FORWARD

I open this chapter with an adage that has been popularised by Rev. Matthew Ashimolowo who often says “it is not over...”, even for us and CAC, “...until it is over”. Therefore if as you read this work the rapture trumpet has not sounded to call the saints home and seal up the dispensation of grace, Christ Apostolic Church will not be denied the chance of a new beginning and a strong finishing. I reflect here below on facts about CAC which will forever keep Satan and his cohorts edgy, I mean facts in our favour that far outweigh all the odds that may be against us:

1. Whatever may have gone wrong with CAC, the church, as a prototype of the universal Church, remains what Jesus Christ has called and ordained it to be in the world. It is the *light* of the dark world and the *salt* of the decaying earth. These are metaphors that will not fizzle out just because Satan has pitched his tents against us. If the likes of CAC are spared of these attacks, Satan will go mad with his gang for dereliction of duty. But, while Satan is not failing in his duty to attack the church, to eject spiritual viruses into its system and seek to subvert the plan of God for her, it is the Christians that are supposed to detect and withstand his ploys that are failing on their own.
2. As for CAC, no one may jump to a conclusion that

God has abandoned us, after all. I am one of those who are privileged to have interacted intimately with three of the major factions that the church is operating now. We have continued to sense His presence in many of our gatherings and at many times, both at the individual and corporate levels. The only problem is how people have pitched the tents of their testimonies with such trickles to the neglect of our need for a mighty ocean-like outpouring of His power. It is not uncommon to hear people talk about “great things” God is doing in our midst with such sparkles as if to pull the wool over our corporate failures and discount the magnitude of our challenges.

3. CAC, till this moment, is blessed with very many faithful and dedicated ministers and members in various assemblies and at every level of its hierarchy. Some are touched by our plight and are raising cries to heaven. They erect altars and, through the appeal of this work, will raise the height of such altars for prayer that God will not ignore, just as they too will not take a ‘no’ for an answer.
4. We have indeed gone forth and back from the courts. Despite this, the church at all levels and in every of its faction has not dismantled the platforms by which we may seek and secure genuine reconciliation.
5. No faction or assembly of the church has been handed over to Satan. As many have observed and testified; the conflicts that Satan has sponsored in the church alone are enough to sink our history were it not that God has stood firmly behind us as a people of choice.
6. While it is true that CAC is sick, our situation is not

beyond redemption, nor our hope beyond revival. The delay of Jesus Christ in responding to the news about the sickness of Lazarus is a pointer to a miracle which God is more than able and may be willing to repeat in our days and situation.

7. Finally, going by the signals we are sensing, the final chapter of the church has not been written, after all.

All the above and more facts than I can capture here are great tonics for those who are praying and yearning for a return of glory to the house. Coupled with the fact that we serve a God who answers prayer, the light of heaven will yet dawn on CAC that will show her the pathway of recovery and reposition her to where God is waiting to heal her backsliding and use her, once and again, just as and even beyond whatever we may have heard about 1930.

But such expectation must be preceded by genuine repentance at all levels of the church hierarchy. This is where my emphasis has been waiting to build upon. Considering the enormity of the challenges confronting us, there can be no way forward from this point except as we are prepared to seek the face of God for clear direction. This will demand that we confess our failure as individuals and as a mission and own up to the fact that we have fallen short of divine expectations and it is only God who can bail us out. And if we sincerely seek, there are abundant promises in the scriptures that inform us plainly that He is able and willing to visit us again.

For us to avoid too much digression at this stage, I have carved out a major part of this chapter which may be made into another (complimentary) work that will deal with the suggested administrative structure that the church may need to

consider to meet the challenge of today and lay good groundwork for the promised revival. Let us remember that while the answer of the tongue is from the Lord, the preparation of the heart (the ground of our hearts for the outpouring of His power in this case) is our responsibility, a sort of rendering of Proverbs 16v1. It is for us to build the form while we trust God to fill it with His contents. Meanwhile, our attention is concentrated on the bigger picture by which we will seek to engage God and ourselves on the way forward.

### **THERE IS A WAY FORWARD**

My confession at the introduction of this book that I do not claim to be a prophet does not mean that I am coming from nowhere. We as a people can at least leverage the fact that many who do not acknowledge heaven to have bent to their side or worked in their favour have succeeded in this world. Some have progressed without having spent their days and night praying on the mountain. As I pointed out in another work, those who embarked on the rebellious project of the tower of Babel would have succeeded if the Lord had not intervened in time to frustrate their moves.

What the above is implying is that the suggestions being offered here as ways forward may not be trashed just because I do not claim to have received them in a trance while fasting and praying on any of our popular mountains and by which I would have prefixed them with *“Thus saith the Lord...”*. Having said this, I will not play down the need for us to locate a corporate platform through the efforts of those that are called and gifted in prophetic ministry to prayerfully probe into the mind of God for us to chart a course of how we may progress



from here to the destination of our desire.

Besides and beyond this, however, addressing many of the issues raised in this work could be a straightforward matter since a problem properly defined is said to be half solved. It is just that we must understand, and make it abundantly clear that nothing short of prayer, effective and intercessory prayer, will define our progression from this point forward in the onerous task of rebuilding the waste places and re-gathering the squandered fortunes of our church. As it will please the Lord to give us direction when we seek His face, there are just a few obvious things that we should note, especially as they relate to the challenges.

### **BEGINNING WITH *YOU!* ...AND *ME!***

First, let me thank you sincerely for the sustained interest you have demonstrated to read this book up to this page. Before I address our collective responsibility and joint ownership of the revival project, let me unwrap a parcel particularly packaged and addressed to **you, YOU...** personally. As a member of CAC or a part of the Body of Christ, **YOU** are the most important singular agent of the solution to the multi-dimensional problems of the church and the challenge of dreary Christianity that is touting our generation to a harbour of shame. Recall that I requested somewhere earlier that you stop and reappraise your spiritual status. I am taking this further to let you know the mammoth difference that **YOU**, as an individual, (and **not WE...**, as a people) can make in the entire bargain.

Let me remind you of a folktale that I guess many of us must have heard at some point before. There was a very important task to be done in which **three** people; *anybody*,

*everybody*, *somebody* with the uninvited fourth person; *nobody*, played roles that resulted in tragic failure. **Anybody** could have done the task. But **everybody** thinks that **somebody** will do it. In the end, **nobody** did it. The gist of the story is that a search for the solution to our problems will begin with our realisation that we are *individually* and *collectively* liable. There is nothing I have written or that you have seen through this work that will permit anyone or you to point accusing fingers only at others to exonerate yourself. We have all goofed and in one way or the other contributed **individually** to the failures. In the exact way that we have knowingly or inadvertently done this, we must begin to reverse the trend in our small corners.

The way forward, therefore, is not for one brother, sister, *Baba*, pastor or one elder somewhere to begin to get it right. The mammoth challenge of change here must begin and catch up with **YOU** and **ME** and must be embraced by **YOU** and **ME** just as it will only be pursued through **YOU** and **ME**. It is far from being a situation where someone will sit at the back row of the church pews and begin to shout or imagine through a message like this that the pastor; or the writer in this case, should *tell them!*

For instance, try and pose a few direct questions at **yourself** and be honest about **your** answers. Judging by what **you** know of **yourself** and which God who sees and knows the secrets of men also knows about **you**, can He count on **you** or be willing to showcase His power to this generation through **you**? **Are you** truly a salt to the decaying earth or a part of the decay? **Are you** radiating any light amid our darkness or **you are** a part of the darkness? If everyone is living, eating, talking, working, praying, reading the Bible, meditating, loving, caring and watching African Magic the way

you presently do, will God find enough people for whose sake He will send revival, or spare **your** *Sodom* and *Gomorrhah*?

What exactly do **you** weigh on the scale of God and Satan? Even now that we are seeking to chart a new course for CAC, even now that we have come to the inescapable conclusion that things cannot and must not continue like this in our society and nation, to what extent can God count on **you**? These and similar questions should engage our attention, even before we begin to address our collective obligations. It must strike us, and pointedly too, that the process of national and generational repentance and rebirth begins with individuals, and that is with **YOU** and **ME**!

### **SINS OF THE FATHERS**

This is a reiteration of the point earlier made in a sharper tone. I wrote in 1988 that it is never a popular thing to question the sacrosanct status of the founding fathers of any movement. Even while this is true, I also stated that when the truth must be stated and a spade will not be called another name, we soon realise that not all our fathers may be absolved from the confusion that later engulfed our realms as children. While there is no doubt that the hand of God was mighty upon our fathers, it does not make any sense for us to hide under this to whitewash their share of humanity which was just enough to serve as a foothold for the devil they confronted and fought to a standstill on the corporate platform.

As I earlier stated, the Church will never be able to throw in the towel in its battle against forces of darkness except where it has chosen to be submerged without a trace. The authentic accounts of Pa (Elder) J. A. Ademakinwa who was part of the CAC movement from the start of our evangelical

campaign reveal traces of betrayal and distrust, self-interest and parochialism that reared their heads, over and again even in those very early days. That was when Faith Tabernacles (a local praying group known as Precious Stones got affiliated with the American church led by one Pastor Clarke).

In the subsequent eras and up to the recent or present times, we have heard of and seen nuances of sentiments, favouritism, tribalism and nepotism that influenced the ordination, posting of ministers from one station to another and allocation of offices. The incidence of these vices and those who perpetrate them cannot be anything surprising if we remember that even in the time of Peter and the apostles, Ananias and Sapphira cruised along with others until their works found them out. But while we comfort ourselves that the situation is nothing too strange, we do not expect that Satan, as the vicious fighter that he is, will ignore such misdemeanours in his desperate search for a foot hole to perpetrate havoc and wreck a vision. The point here, therefore, is the need to begin our pleading with confession of the sins of the fathers, just as Daniel did.

On the side lane, I had questioned why it appeared that the church from the onset seemed to lack a good means for the acquisition and impartation of sound knowledge and a good doctrinal foundation that people of my age bracket should have inherited. Though he too did not mention any name, just as he would not be expected to, Pastor Dele Ajibola once attempted an answer to this in the fact that there were contemporaries of Apostle Joseph Babalola who were raised to bridge the gaps for teachers and establish a strong platform for the development and communication of sound Christian curriculum but who, for reasons we do not know and which

no one will be able to judge, seemed not to have lived up to that calling.

I mentioned earlier a statement credited to Apostle Babalola about a garment of shame which he said CAC had sewn. Whoever was involved in the preparation of that costumes and those who embarked on its circulation even while the apostle was still alive, even at a time we would want to refer to as the golden era of the church, could never have been outsiders or even ordinary folks in the church. It must have been those to be traced to or connected with its hierarchies in one way or the other and at such a time in the history of the church. As I earlier mentioned, it is the same people who would have used their unholy influence to sponsor their children and cronies into offices in the church even when it may be clear that such associates may never have secured any call or contract of employment with God.

Therefore, the starting point for us will be to borrow the wisdom of Daniel, who in chapter 9 of his book went before the Lord with a confession of the sins of his fathers. From here we know that it is nothing strange that we have to confess the sins of the fathers for the visitation of God upon our church. We do well to remember that though not all of them were enmeshed in the mess, Satan could not have needed a crowd to perforate the ship or truncate the voyage of the mission. Let us remember that while such people may be held in great esteem by all of us and our human institutions because we do not know their spiritual worth or profile or we are not to judge anyone even if we do, both God and Satan knew them to be humans and will not excuse their failures on the account of whatever reverence we bestow on them.

## **GOING BACK TO THE BASIS**

Though it requires a simple process for a person to be born into the family of God and to be sure of his salvation, thousands of people may have been cruising along on the crest of unfounded optimism. The fact is that such people consider themselves good, responsible, responsive and loyal members of the church. And then, they stop there. Yet, even if they are good and have passed all human criteria for acceptance and respect, even for ordination into positions, if they are not truly born into the family of God by the process of repentance and regeneration, the only truth will be that they are not born again. For such people, there will be no means for jumping over the barrier and guilt of sin to come into a reckoning with heaven and hell.

One of those who responded to my questions on salvation experience was a 73 years old man who claimed to be born again on the day he was born into the world. According to him, his birth occurred during great moves through Apostle Babalola in his town and, to him, that coincidence was all the ticket he needed for his assurance. It would then seem that no one has told this man, all along, of the need for a second birth. Who will not see the need for the message of repentance and salvation from sin to begin to resonate from our pulpits and to our members in a more saturating measure and tones than we have ever had before?

Anyone can attest to how preaching about such subjects has been too rare in our local assemblies. Even for those churches which may think they are exemptions; it may not matter so much if such a sermon will sound either too familiar or monotonous. Yet I do not see how a pastor may preach salvation to a perishing audience with a God-given burden,

over and again and heaven will refuse to back him up.

On another platform, let our pastors who themselves are, first and foremost, sure of their stand begin to engage their members, one-on-one and one after the other in counselling sessions that will bring the truth about their spiritual status to the fore. Indeed, this is a sort of operation that should commence in the gathering of the pastors with whoever, as I said earlier, is sure of his stand and relationship with God setting the tone. Let those without clear evidence of second birth be properly guided to surrender their lives to the Lordship of Jesus Christ and then have a point of reference for the experience and testimony of their salvation. The starting point could be for DCC chairmen<sup>17</sup> to probe into the testimonies of their pastors to confirm that they are not spiritual masquerades.

I cannot but advocate for a session of Sunday school that will be devoted to the treatment of these fundamental issues by which the teachers will have the opportunity to also engage members of their class, perhaps in turn. The lecture series of such issue(s) and period(s) will deal exhaustively with such subjects as the gravity and consequence of sin, why Jesus came, the need for true repentance; securing salvation or second birth status; justification and adoption into the family of God; assurance, temptations, victory and basic understanding and demand of the life of righteousness and similarly fundamental subjects. If they have to, it is better for those who think they are already born again to repeat the exercises, either to address any costly omission or gain

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<sup>17</sup> From the little I have seen, the problem we highlight here does not exempt this category of our workers though it serves as a reflection of our hierarchies.

reassurance in the event something had happened along the line since they first made the commitment, than to ride on the currents of false assurance.

I know how ludicrous the suggestions here may sound especially to those who have not bothered to ponder on the weight of sin and the awful consequence of miscalculation in eternity. While conducting my research on the extent to which our members understand the doctrine of salvation, I deliberately targeted the members of the board of elders of one of our oldest churches. The response I got when I went back for feedback was the question they raise as to who authorised me to question their spiritual status. Yet, without having to pass judgement ahead of time, observations have revealed how not many of their members may be said to be on the track.

### **MASS RE-ORIENTATION OF MANY OF OUR MINISTERS**

This is a daunting aspect of the change project which will aim at re-grooming our ministers and arming them with what they need to meet the challenges of today. We may no longer pretend that, in addition to evidence of a call into the ministry and a desired level of personal spiritual retreat or development, educational qualifications have become part of the keys today. Seminar leaders, resource persons and facilitators will be trained and deployed to other places to replicate a curriculum that will have been carefully developed to be passed on to the lower cadres of our ministerial hierarchies.

I may not be able to imagine anyone who is enrolling in the ministry today with anything less than sound secondary school education. Those who are without it but who, with determination, may still venture should be encouraged to engage in such a personal development programme to enhance



the efficacy of their calling. A pastor who has been stationed in the urban centre with WASC since the 1980s/90s, and has shunned all the part-time opportunities that diploma or degree-awarding institutions offer may not have been doing himself and his calling any good. We have since reached an age where mental and spiritual stagnancy cannot be part of the profiles of any pulpit that will make any impact.

Nowadays we have some in various churches, including CAC who fix the title of “Pastor (Dr)...” to their names but who cannot speak good English and I have too often wondered who they seek to impress with such display. At the same time, especially for those who may not have passed the age, it is only a portion of their abundant free time that would have been needed to avail themselves of the opportunity of adult education or buy and study a good O’ Level of English text and seek to learn a near-universal language that no minister or ministry can do without in the world of today.

There is now great stuff abounding everywhere by which a pastor can enrich his library, his ministry and in turn members of his church. Ministers in the urban centres should train in the use of computers and surfing of the internet to the advantage of their callings. Gone are the days when all that is required to be a pastor in CAC is to know how to read Psalms and pray into the water for the use of illiterate church members. I am aware of a template already in place for regular refresher courses for the ministers, presbyteries and other workers at the district and DCC levels. Perhaps all that will be required is an upgrading or redesign of the curriculums and purposeful enrichment of course contents which will now be tailored to meet the present needs and the challenge of change.

God did not establish a Church that will operate only as

nursing clinics and refugee camps. Neither did He call out a people that will forever be fire-fighting for survival. He intends the Church to be soldier barracks where aggressive combatants are raised and pushed forth to take the battles for the souls of men right to the gate of the enemy. It is a matter of regret that many of those who have been pastoring churches and who are supposed to be war lords and battalion commanders have only been operating as mere mortuary attendants. The link between barren pulpits and malnourished pews earlier hinted upon derives from the popular parlance of “garbage in, garbage out” on the theatre of our aimless religiosity. It has also bred a vicious cycle through the problem of in-breathing from which there may be no easy escape except by drastic measures.

#### **REINSTITUTION OF LIFE-ENRICHING MUSIC MINISTRY**

I grew up to know CAC which was richly blessed with good music that met the spiritual needs of the local environments and high global standards. Our services were soaked in choruses with beautiful lyrics and melody lines. A number of our leading assemblies were well exposed to good music which defined the ambition and efforts of our erstwhile organists and choir masters. Perhaps the first generation of choirmasters in CAC will include the likes of Pa D. O. Babajide and Pastor/Prophet Adeleye (with his accordion) and others I do not know. Those that my age group grew to know included but were not limited to those from Itire Assembly; late Elder F. O. Oyebadejo and his assistant, Elder S. O. Ige on secondment to CAC Agege choir in 1972 where I was a chorister, and Pastor Oludare of CAC Ebute Metta, (especially in Negro Spirituals).

There were also others like the late Pa Yinka Oyesanya,

also in Ebute Metta and Pastor S. Olukunle who co-led the CAC Agege choir at a time I was a member. I am also privileged to have worked with the latter generation of choirmasters like Pastor Tope Dada, the late Pastor Ayo Adeusi, Brother Solomon Mosaku and others I cannot remember to list. But, except in a few places now, the passing decades seem to have made a little mess of the foundation that these people laboured hard to lay for the music ministry of Christ Apostolic Church.

For instance, I call to remembrance with nostalgia the music concert segments of our annual pastoral conference of the 1970s at Odubanjo Centre in Agege which I witnessed for some years and which testified to the rich musical legacy we have in CAC. I recalled how the choir of Lagos District<sup>18</sup>, led by the likes of Elders Oludare, F. Oyebadejo, Yinka Oyesanya and others would minister at welcome service concerts and the one of Mushin District, led by Pastor G. Okafor and others would close the events. Not anyone of our pastors and old members who remember what the outings of those years were would ever have any doubt about how greatly blessed CAC is in the area of Christian music. Even the volumes and quality of selection of the hymns in our Gospel Hymn Book (GHB) are a testimony to the prime attention our fathers paid to the place of good music in Christian worship<sup>19</sup>.

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<sup>18</sup> That was in the 1970s when CAC Lagos District was under the leadership of Pastor A. O. A. Olutimehin and that of CAC Mushin District operated under the administration of Pastor J. A. Adegoroye.

<sup>19</sup> Even now, the compilation and printing of our hymn book have become another source of embarrassment to the church far more than what it was when the authority of the church during the tenure of Pastor E. T. Latunde had to wade in and address the discrepancies in numbering system of the two versions of the book then in circulation. We do not even know how

For lack of solid arrangement and policy formulation, CAC has gradually been descending through the wrong ladders to embrace the kinds of music that are either foreign to our tradition or incompatible with the gospel. I know this to be one of the consequences of the fact that our youths have been overpowered and re-orientated by American values and its worship system and by which the way our fathers went about it, now regarded as ‘old school’, is now being almost jettisoned. Added to this is the gradual disappearance of hymns from the regular worship of some of our assemblies. While we may not insist on four hymns in every service as a number of us grew up to see in the church, to now reduce hymn to only one or, at times, none at all in a service will be foreign to our tradition.

The truth is that I have been enduring bad music in most of our assemblies for many decades now. Quack organists, otherwise known as *vampers* or *keyboardists* are those calling the shots on our organs and musical instruments that require high skills and inspiration to handle. It may not be more than one out of our ten assemblies in urban centres that have good, trained organists manning the keyboard to bring about rich harmony of music, especially the one that should accompany the hymn sessions.

Most of the time when it comes to the turn of such accompanists to lead the choir and congregation at the introduction of hymns during the services, those who have ears and a taste for good music are force-fed with junk. Yet,

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many versions of the hymn book there are now in the market, with spellings and typo errors. But this cannot be made an issue especially now that the church is balkanised, with each faction fighting for survival and supremacy, and seeking to produce its literatures and materials independent of the other.

we are careful not to cast aspersion on the services that such people render especially if that is the best they could offer. As I hinted at the start of this section, the problem is traced to system failure and omission of those who are supposed to set the standard, lay a good foundation for its pursuit and chart a course for our organists to get it right from the onset.

A highly focused forum of the choirmasters, first at the national level and then to the zones and urban centres will assist the church to begin to set the minimum standard that should be developed and maintained for our church music should. In addition to equipping our musicians spiritually, that process will create the awareness and the need for personal development of those who are called into that area of our ministry. For instance, at the peak of this arrangement, it will become an aberration for anyone to parade him/herself as a choirmaster or music director, at least in any of our main assemblies, especially in the urban centres without sound exposure to the rudiments of music. The forum will make a demand on them to shake off complacency and rise to the demand of their calling as music ministers. Once the standard is set at the national level, it will dictate the pulse of music ministrations of each assembly, from the urban centres and gradually to the local and rural assemblies.

### **LIFE-IMPARTING LITURGY**

Liturgy is one of the branches of Christian theology that lacks a pattern from the early days of the Church, especially from the time of the Pentecostal outburst. Apart from a few things we can scratch from some passages, the Bible is not very loud about which liturgy is right or wrong. What we read in the book of the Acts of the Apostles are such activities as prayer

and teaching sessions, preaching and open-air evangelical campaigns backed by miracles, breaking of bread (physically eating together when occasion allowed it), commissioning and launching out of missionaries and their feedback to the church. We do not have their order of service, the frequency of their meetings or the timing allotted to the specific activities. Therefore, anyone who is starting a church will be at liberty as to the extent to which he wants to uphold or deviate from the recorded activities. I am aware that most of our practices in CAC are rooted in those of the Anglican Church where most of our founding fathers had varying degrees of affiliation.

This notwithstanding, it does not suggest that we would operate with disregard to what is most appropriate for our time and circumstances. Our liturgy is overdue for overhauling because it is under its blankets that we hide ministerial excesses and waste of time that have become the cause of bitter complaints during our services. Where is it written in the Bible that we must dance around the altar more than once, twice or more in a single service? Why can't the offering and collection be taken during the brief time that will be allotted to announcements?

Why should individuals be made or allowed, to dance to the altar every Sunday under the pretexts of special thanksgiving while spending several minutes to recount testimonies from which most of the members cannot take anything home? Where is it written in the Bible that people attending the service are coming into bondage from which they do not know when the 'holy spirit' will lose them to go back to their houses? How can a church that it trusting God for an explosion of revival fire afford to keep thousands of worshippers glued for the period it takes to dedicate a baby?

While the time of sermon averages between 30 and 40 minutes in most of our assemblies, announcements, thanksgiving, collection of offerings and *olopelopeye* take about one hour or more, almost Sunday after Sunday, especially during special programmes! During such period, many church members would have sneaked their way out of the church buildings to converge in groups for side talks and frivolous activities that may even be more worthless than those in some serious social gatherings. But those have become the only pills to kill the boredom that has become a regular feature of our worship time. It is not unusual, especially in the urban centres, to find those who will be patronising the food vendors that have come to know over time the right moments to arrive at the church premises and catch a good business.

This has also become one of the means of assessing the effectiveness or otherwise of the sermon that has just been delivered and by which you know that people just come for nothing other than for 'business as usual'. I believe that, if effectively used, may be something like two hours should be enough for a meaningful worship service during which there will be time for a praise session when people are lifted into the presence of God in solemn worship and also dance to good and inspired music. There should be corporate Bible reading, singing of hymns when emphasis and attention are focused on their lyrics and ministration in choir songs and words. The exception to this will be where there is the need to tarry further in the presence of God, perhaps for digging deeper at the altar of prayer and/or as may be directed by the Spirit.

As for the sermon that has become a highpoint and main feature of every service day, even though there is no scriptural support or basis for this, innovative ministers should devise

programmes that the congregations will look forward to with eagerness. Something like a question and answer session, a scriptural analysis on a topical and burning social issue or even an exchange of views in groups may stimulate interest. We may also dwell on and seek to trash out a controversial issue affecting the singles, youths, couples (or family) programmes, musical outings (with the choir which is prepared spiritually and technically) together with an innovative evangelical outing.

Nothing may stop churches to establish a programme committee that will prayerfully plan for each session or quarter and define the focus of Sunday worship, vigils, public holidays and others. These will have been pre-programmed such that members too may have advance notice both for prayer, preparation, effective participation and invitation of their friends and colleagues. The introduction of varieties will kill tedium in the churches and create the excitement required to attract and sustain not only the regularity of members' attendance, especially the younger members in the fold, but also their involvement. As I wrote with lamentation in 1988, it is not that our God has run dry of innovation and creativity to promote His business but many of our ministers have been too lethargic to tap into the grace and anointing for fresh ideas and new inspiration for the benefits of their members.

### **SUNDAY SCHOOL: SWEATING OUT OF CONTEXT?**

Perhaps the only department that may be easily exempted from the malady of pointless services and lip devotion in the church today is the Sunday school department where, like in the choir, I have been privileged to serve for several years and where I suppose the mission still retain a good number of serious and heavenly minded members. For the majority of



our assemblies, the commitments required for Sunday school teaching alone have screened out many who would want to play it like a game or toy with that area of Christian calling. However, this is not to say that they are without chaffs that we will need either to shape in or shape out with time.

The positive notes above notwithstanding, my concern for the department relates to all that I have come to know of its arduous efforts and struggles over the years and for which I am yet to see commensurate impact and fruits in the lives of the members of the church. For the record, I joined the department of the church at CAC, Agege as its first and only English class teacher at the re-inauguration of the class in 1975, with Pastor Dele Ajibola as one of the departmental mentors under the leadership of Elder (later Pastor) J. A. Alabi. That was in the days of Pastor E. O. Olufowose who took the mantle of leadership of the church around or early 1972. At that time, we used the Assemblies of God Mission manuals which were quite rich and excellent for their high quality both in content and presentation. The teachers' copy of the manual was one of the best I have come to know in the Church.

While nothing is wrong with a mission of the size and spread of CAC having its own Sunday school department, no objective mind would question how our initial efforts and output in this respect did not measure up to the one of the Assemblies of God we were used to. However, the initiative and continuous quests for improvement of the department and its manuals, as spearheaded by our former president, Pastor E. H. L. Olusheye was widely welcome. It has since continued to grow to fill crucial gaps over the years. After all, the city of Rome could never have been built in a day.

Thus, my concern has much less to do with the quality of the lessons in the pamphlets and the efforts of the department than with what the members have been making out of them. The fact is that those lessons, one year after another year, one theme and series after the other, do not seem to register the desired impact in the lives of the receiving audience. It boils down to the same problem of asking those who are not born again to be who they are not, to render services, to seek revival, to practise obedience, to offer their substances to and be representatives of the God they do not know with a sufficient degree of intimacy. Not even vital lessons like the one on the exploits of Naomi and Ruth, on missions and evangelism, will have any relevance to someone who lacks fundamental experience of salvation and who is yet to appreciate God as a Father, to talk less of the need to go extra length like missionaries and disciples.

This is my stake here. Just like I stated earlier, there must be a series that should be devoted to the issues of the foundation which is glaringly lacking in the lives of the members. There should be a revalidation of such series on subjects like sin, consequences of sin, steps to and effects of repentance, overcoming greed, selfishness and unforgiving spirit and living by faith (not in the sense of living the Christian lives but as a precondition for establishing a relationship with God from the onset), the question of salvation, grace, justification, righteousness, victory over temptation and other topics need to be revisited. The presentation of such lessons should make sufficient room for which the teachers will have the opportunity to probe into a specific experience of their students, collectively and individually, to identify the missing links as to why people are

not what they should be and what may be done to assist them.

### **REDRESSING THE DAMAGE OF TITLES**

God who designed the Body of Christ and the way it should function and went ahead to kit her members with a gift for various offices and operations knows better than the authorities of CAC that have brought about so much interfusion of offices in the rank and files of its workers. God knew what He meant, and what He expected when He “*gave some, **apostles**; and some, **prophets**; and some, **evangelists**; and some, **pastors** and **teachers**..*” while His aim is “*for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ*” (Ephesians 4v11,12). Thus, there can be no other means “*for the perfecting of the saints..., for the edifying of the body*” or a shortcut to achieving the goals that define the essence of every gathering of the saints.

It will therefore amount to nothing but a sheer waste of talents and resources of the church for its authorities to ground the primary calling of its workers and create substitute offices or assignments for them. It is common knowledge today that many called and core evangelists have been diverted or ‘promoted’ to become church pastors and administrators. Similarly, some pastors are struggling as teachers under those who are not supposed to be pastors in the first place but who pose as their bosses. One of the fathers I related closely with a few years back, who was ‘promoted’ to become chairman of a coordinating council expressed personal frustration he had to my hearing for being grounded and chained to the duty post of a church administration when his calling is on the field.

I do not know how the Holy Spirit will endow members of the church with gifts and then expect that such people will

someday be promoted by human institutions to the office into which they have not been called and for which they have not been equipped. It is stating the obvious, therefore, that all those who have been diverted from their primary calling by the church administration in this way will never be expected to achieve their best or yield their fullest in the service of God and man. They may hold office, especially as they will not wish to gainsay the authorities or as they may need it to boost their personal or ministerial ego. They may even try their utmost to make the best of such positions and appointments, even with prayer, fasting and whatever gimmicks they may bring to bear. It is only that once such diversion occurs and it is not addressed, as it has been for very many of our ministers and church workers, there is no way they will ever reach the peak of their potential in the ministry, find fulfilment and attract the blessing and intended reward at the end of the day.

Further to the foregoing, we are witnessing the gradual exit of the office of the prophets in the church. No Bible reader will argue against the fact that they have vital roles in the church of any place and age. Conventionally by prophets, we mean those who are gifted to counsel the members, especially the young ones in the faith, to probe into the mind of God concerning issues that may be obscured to them. I am aware of the abuse to which the office of the prophet is subjected by the majority of those who have exercised the gifts to the neglect of the Bible. Some have used such gifts as tickets to wealth, popularity and stardom. Yet the abuse, which could not have escaped the mind of God when He made the gifts part of the armoury of the Church, will never play down its place or importance in the body of Christ.

Rather than throwing the baby of this precious calling away

with the bath water of its abuse, all we will need to do is to organise sound training for those who are called into such offices so that they will understand their endowment as stewardship and not as a vehicle to personal aggrandisement. The operators of this gift are those blessed with the word of knowledge, words of wisdom and similar callings. Those who operate in this office in the new generation assemblies are to be found mostly in the counselling team. But apart from a few of our new assemblies just springing up, there is no provision in our church system or on a corporate scale for the department to assist people, particularly the young ones who need to discern the mind of God on issues that affect them. A consideration for the place and worth of this gift in the church will restore the blessing packaged into its operation for guidance and edification of the body of Christ.

### **DISCIPLESHIP EXPOSURE WITH MISSION AGENCIES**

Far beyond lapses that are peculiar to CAC, discipleship training is one area where the present Church has scored very poor marks. This is a direct consequence of the wrong emphasis on the church and the mentality that an average Christian has developed from it. It has become one glaring challenge of CAC and that of older churches that have had their erstwhile fervency grounded by a morbid tradition. The emblems of discipleship stamped on every page of the book of Acts of the Apostles are part of the things that Satan has smuggled out of the curriculum of the Church.

Yet the fact remains that Jesus Christ does not reckon with spiritual mediocre whose loyalty will be more to their pastors while they pay only lip service to God. He expressly demanded that all His followers be disciplined such that every one of them

will identify his cross and carry it to the point of death of self and every self-worth. The patterned progression is for the Church, just as we had in the ministry of Apostle Ayo Babalola, to reach out with the message of deliverance to the oppressed who would in a process of time be groomed into disciples. Their gradual advancing through this will enable them to discover the purpose of God for their lives as partners who are to invest the privilege of their calling and all at their disposal to join the forefront of the battle for the souls of those still trapped in the dark ends of the world.

**The blunt truth is that no one can do exploit for God who is not a true disciple. No one can ever be relevant in the programme of God who is not a true disciple. And by the time we go on and on, we soon discover that we can confidently affirm that no one may expect to make it to heaven at last who is not a true disciple of Jesus Christ.** Despite the seriousness of this matter, sound teachings that can breed and build true disciples have since ceased to be part of the corporate agenda of the Church, even on a global scale.

The counsel here is for CAC to identify and build bridges of partnership with established mission agencies which are not only well equipped but are prepared with all eagerness to lend a helping hand in the design, review and delivery of discipleship training curriculum. We have within our immediate reach several such agencies in the likes of Calvary Ministries (CAPRO)<sup>20</sup> in Yaba, Lagos. There is the Soul

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<sup>20</sup> **CAPRO** is one of the largest indigenous missionary agencies in Africa with well over 500 missionaries presently labouring in many parts of the world among the unreached people, particularly the Muslims. They depend solely on God through churches that buy into their vision of world evangelism for provisions and prayer support.

Reapers International Commission (SRIC) and Ark of Covenant Mission (AOCM), youth and vibrant movements coordinated by two brothers I am very close to. We have the Christian Missionary Foundation and Men of Issachar Vision, both in Ibadan, to mention just a few.

Others can be sourced from and contacted through Nigeria Evangelical Mission Agencies (NEMA) in Jos, presently coordinated by Michael Adegbile and his team. There are resource persons and ministries; like Gbile Akanni in Gboko, Benue State and Timothy Olonade, focusing on the development of disciples and leaders in the Body of Christ. We also have the likes of Sam Kputu, Festus Ndukwe, Niyi Gbade and others in CAPRO who will respond at a beckon. Calvary Ministries has Discipleship and Mission Exposure Programme (DIMEP) that has been running for several years now. Its curriculum is rich with a focus on the needs of the Church that God can use to wake sleeping giants.

While CAC may boast of millions of members across the places it has spread its tentacles, I do not know what percentage of that huge number is currently involved in or is dedicated to cross-cultural mission works, especially in virgin lands where we do not have missionaries or organised churches. The ratio of such people to our huge population is something to ponder by the foreign mission department of the church. Yet, the call here to a partnership with established ministries is based on the fact that it will not make much sense for us to insist on reinventing the wheel for cross-cultural mission training.

Many ministries that have operated and excelled in such areas are not only willing but are also eager to pass their knowledge to any church that manifests a desire for them.

From the little I have come to know about them and their activities over the years, one thing they have always craved is that the Lord will open the eyes of the mainstream Church to share their burden and enrol in the efforts that will mobilise the entire Body of Christ to finish the task of world evangelism in the shortest possible time remaining. Our aim in CAC in this regard will be to explore areas of cooperation with such agencies and begin to bridge the gap with them for:

1. Strong prayer backing for their works, especially as they often call for such support through their publications that can be made available to our pastors, teachers, elders and church members. A typical example of this is the quarterly *Praise and Prayer Calendar* published by Calvary Ministries. Take as an example. It is disappointing, if not tragic, that a major prayer request that Jesus posted to His followers, that the Father will raise, equip and send labourers into His harvest (Matthew 9v36-38) is one I have never heard from the pulpit of any mainstream church since I was born into the world, into the family of believers!
2. Financial and material support for the field projects of the agencies. This can be at the local, district and DCC levels. At the same time, individual members and families can be encouraged to make such prayers and extra financial support their delightful routines.
3. Some of the agencies may even begin to serve as the mission arm of our local assemblies to an appreciable extent with good arrangements. This can be through numerous programmes they run like the Missionary Adoption Programme (MAP) by which an individual, a



family, a local church, a district or any bounded group of churches may take up the bills of missionary personnel and projects of their choice.

4. Serve as a training base for cross-cultural gospel invasion for the members of our church who will discover that God may have been calling them into that area of Christian services, to reach people groups or even countries other than their own with the gospel.

It may be true that very many in CAC know very little about issues confronting the world and the universal Church of this age. Even there may be many of our pastors who do not know as much about the threat of Islam, the persecuted Church, the global missionary thrust on 10/40 Window, the Joshua Project, the concept of tent-making, developments around the people and nation of Israel and their prophetic implications for our last days. Organised interactions with these agencies and other ministries will be a way of broadening our perspectives to become global players that God expects us to be in our race to heaven, especially now that the whole world is shrinking into a small community of humanity with the wonders of technology.

# CHAPTER 6

## IN CONCLUSION

God has not finished with CAC. Neither has He folded up His business in the world. There are prophecies in the air, either as we can find in the open scriptures or in the specifics to revive our hope, that God is still willing to enlist the church in the exploits of the last days. The drive behind this work transcends mere jealousy for the numerical growth, financial prosperity and socially flourishing status of the church as an institution that deserves respect.

Though it is the perfect will of God for a church and its members to prosper materially (Psalm 35v27) and advance politically and socially (Esther 9v3,4); we also know too well that a denomination can achieve all that even when it is not fulfilling the divine agenda. The church of Laodiceans in Revelation 3v14-21 is a perfect example here. But CAC has not only retrogressed socially or financially, but it is not even attracting the respect of heaven or the dread of hell which makes it a real cause for heartbreak.

No one is naive to suggest that the task of revamping and repositioning the church is going to be a leisure affair. Battle against the status quo in any sphere of life is one of those that have proved most difficult to prosecute which is why our nation, despite its great endowments, has been going through traumas in a repeated cycle. We know that the forces that catapulted fake pastors to our altars or promoted them into our hierarchies are not to be taken lightly. The wolves that

pose as pastors in the chancels and have grown wide wings, deepened their connections and spread their tentacles will not be wished away, just like that. We know that it takes far less effort to analyse a problem and write about them as is being done here than it will be required to pursue an appropriate line of solution. Despite all these, **two** nudges are ringing above the dins of our concern or a lack of it:

1. There is a need for prayers; I mean serious, consistent and focused prayers. There is an assumption that there can be no problem with praying, especially whenever members of CAC are involved. I will key into this, both by experience and by the fact of our inheritance. However, the fact that the fate of this mission perches delicately will dictate a need for the type and focus of prayers that can bring heavens into our situation. I should thank God because our being able to prosecute a battle to where the enemy will have no choice but to surrender is part of our trademark and God-imbued legacy in CAC. Or, how do we expect to see revival and the bouncing back of the mission if we consider the problems to be beyond God's solution in the first instance? Therefore, the only thing that stands between us and where we hope to be is our readiness or, God forbids, our laziness to prosecute the battle on the altar of aggressive prayers.
2. Secondly, those who will want to stand in the way of progress and seek to resist whatever change heavens will want to foist on the church will not be lacking the mandate and support of the powers they have been

fronting for. **Thus, I wish to state that the factions that had fought it out in various courts over the years are not the real parties at war. Those that have paraded themselves before unbelieving judges at times too numerous to count are not the combatants. If anything, the opposing teams are only stooges of the powers at war in the higher realms over the fate of this church.**

Commenting on this some time ago, Pastor S. O. Oladele said that when God will be healing our division to bring us together again as one body, we will discover that we have a large number of the children of God and also of Satan in all the factions who will then be coming to roost together. To the discerning, it is the forces behind these two tribes of people in the realm of the spirit that are at war, irrespective of which faction of the church they may belong to on this plane. All the litigations and fighting on our human level; no matter how justified or unjustified, rational or irrational they may be, irrespective of whoever is involved, are only an expression of sizzling enmity rooted in the higher realms.

This means that even our project of unity has its hibernating challenges because it will be pulling together children of God and Satan from all camps into the same fold. It will therefore imply an emergence of larger battle zones across the length and breadth of the church. At the same time, we do write off those who, though they may be high in the hierarchy of the church, are in dire need of a personal encounter with God. Since God does not cast anyone away, we dare not overlook the chance for such people to embrace the gospel and begin to get it right. The love of God for

sinners outside the walls of the church buildings is not more than the love and mercy He also wishes to extend to those within the walls, or even to many of such people who may have become established 'landlords' at the altars of our numerous sanctuaries.

The essence of this revelation will be for all who have enrolled and will enrol in the army of God in the church to awaken and strengthen their arms (Isaiah 52v1). The battle of the church against internal traitors and external aggressors in any age has never been a picnic affair. This is why only prayer based on prophetic unction and injunction from God should dictate our lines of required action and primary recourse. By extension, and just as I hinted earlier, we may discover that many of those currently serving as the tools of Satan in the church may not have strayed outside the reach of the mercy which God will not withhold in His new move, a means by which they too, just like everyone and everybody, may embrace genuine repentance and enrol, or re-enrol as the case may be, in the service of the Lord.

In the meantime, just as we call on those who will enrol in partnership with heaven to pray CAC out of the woods, I strongly urge our fathers, especially those who are presently pitched in different camps to cast aside their differences and begin to engage in meaningful dialogue. For instance, the leaders of any dominant faction may not need to wait for the prompt of Angel Gabriel for them to arrange a visit to the other in a step that will begin to close the ranks. The visit will set in motion the building of the bridges that will connect us again. The ego that such initiative will deflate or the self-esteem it will lower is absolutely nothing to be compared to the abundant blessing that will burst forth from the healing of

the rancorous atmosphere over the church.

I believe that our fathers in all factions have crucial roles to play. Agreeing that it is only God who knows who is pulling what weight on His scale, the list should include Pastor J. D. Obafemi, Pastor E. H. L. Olusheye, Pastor D. Oloye, Pastor P. Bamidele, Pastor Abraham Akinosun, Pastor G. O. Lagunju, Pastor M. A. Adeoye, Pastor S. O. Oladele, Prophet Adediti Oyelami, Pastor S. K. Abiara, Pastor J. A. Adeoloye, Pastor (Prof.) Imevbore, Pastor J. O. Oguntile, Pastor S. O. Ogundare, Pastor M. O. Olatunji, Pastor E. A. Oluyi, Pastor E. O. Alonge, Pastor Joseph Oyebanji, the veteran evangelist and others that I do not know at the moment<sup>21</sup>.

The team will include Pastor/Prophet M. O. Salawu of CAC Revival Centre (with headquarters in Apata, Ibadan) and other leading pastors who are operating as stand-alone ministries outside the control of the factions of the church. I am sure the conveners of the meeting will decide on and establish the right contacts. Expectedly, the meeting will be chaired or coordinated by Pastor J. D. Obafemi, our ex-president and the most senior pastor of CAC still alive. Prayer of repentance and plea for forgiveness with a search for new direction will define the focus of the conference which, as I earlier hinted, may not be a one-day or just a one-time affair.

Invitations should also be extended to members of movements that have demonstrated genuine concerns for our

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<sup>21</sup> As work on this book progressed, our fathers like Prophet T. O. Obadare, Pastor J. A. Ogunlade, Pastor Jacob Alokan and Pastor Olu AriJesudade among key players that would have been great accessory to reconciliation, passed on. The exits of these people is a solemn reminder that most of the fathers being called upon here do not have all the time they would have wished for while the issue on hand demands urgency.

reconciliation over the years. They can be a great accessory for the planning and execution of the event, even if their involvement will be in the background. Such a gathering will focus on whatever needs to be done to get us united again, first at that peak level of the church and then down the hierarchical layers. Those who will have to give in and let go will understand that heaven will not misjudge their humility for timidity or their sacrifice for stupidity but as things that will attract great reward in eternity.

I am not under any illusion to assume that pleas or suggestions here will produce the effect of an incantation by someone who has rubbed *afose* on his tongue (or on the tip of his pen), although I sense an unction that will be several folds more efficacious. Therefore, despite the many flopped attempts, I believe that the appeal here, particularly at this time has a way of rousing our sleeping giants into action. I also believe that it will convey strong signals to all those who are conscious of the fact that God will always be God. My consolation will continue to hang on the fact that, while man may always pursue whatever path he chooses to tread; no one can hold God to ransom beyond what His patience will allow in the ultimate.

I, therefore, offer a solemn counsel, within the limit of what the Bible has revealed to us about Him; that if nothing may stop a man from choosing to be who he is, with the ability and conscience to discern rightly or wrongly and then face the consequence of that choice, there is absolutely nothing that will ever stop God from being whom He is, even with all His awesome attributes and fiery side of His dealings. We will have done well to remember that we are talking about a God who cannot be frustrated and whose purpose cannot be

defeated by anyone or any group of people. His counsel will prevail in the ultimate (Isaiah 46v10) when it will not matter if that may involve the shoving aside of a whole generation as He threatened to do in Exodus 32v10 in demonstration of His power and the pursuit of His agenda.

Agreed, just like I have argued, that the division is only an upshot of our numerous challenges, our real or plastic reunion alone will not heal the root of our ills and woes. Yet, no one should pretend that we do not need to pursue reconciliation, bridge the gaps and mend the fences. I believe that our reunion will be the first signal that we are beginning to face the right direction as a body that has been plagued by division over the years. In the meantime, those who will through this work respond to the call to erect prayer altars should begin to network with each other to prosecute the business of heaven. The situation confronting CAC and the global Church has made God and His power that knows no limit our only hope of recovery. There is no mortal, no matter the height of his zeal or the measure of his anointing that has an iota of a solution to the issues. This revelation must burst upon those that will begin to either pray or pray much harder as individuals, families and in groups. They will not relent until Jesus is, once and again, crowned as the Lord and King in the congregation of His people.

Let me reiterate; that this book intends to birth prayer altars by which readers will invade the throne of God and plead the cause of the church. At this point, there is nothing more or less. We know more about how the arms of flesh will fail anyone than for us to fall into the trap of employing, let alone trusting in them. The reason why we find ourselves where we are as a mission is that when we gave room for the



flesh to dictate our bearing to the neglect of the spirit. We also know that spiritual reversion that was brought about by not heeding the leading of the Holy Spirit will not be redressed by a repeat of the same blunder. The appeal here to every reader, therefore, is to see this as a call for us to raise altars from where cries will rise unto Jesus Christ who alone, as the Head and Groom of the Church, has what it takes to bail us out.

### **ON A FINAL NOTE**

I wrote in the opening chapter on the need for revival; that those who will join in prayer for CAC and the global Church will be those who can see the backsliding of today's Church. They will be those who are burdened by the fact that the taproot of the corruption that has grounded the larger society, especially in Nigeria is in the sanctuaries. They will see a Church which has become more of a caricature, a social and partying movement than a partnership with heaven in salvaging its world and arresting the spread of evil. I have a greater burden for the youths that make up a large part of our various churches, particularly the new generation ones who appear to have settled with a pseudo-Christianity that thrives on lip services, external displays and sheer hypocrisy. There are too many people in too many churches today who are empty barrels devoid of any real content.

Millionaires have outnumbered the disciples while the size of their purse alone has wormed their passage to the hearts of many pastors and pitched them closest to the altars. The blunt and bitter truth is that a number of them are only garbage in the dustbin of God and spiritual maggots who have fed themselves fat on societal corruption. While nothing is wrong about being rich and being Christian, everything is wrong

when un-regenerated moneybags are showered with recognition and leverage they do not deserve in the assembly of the saints. But what else do we expect in the chancels where mammon has taken the place of God and His agenda for the world has become submerged in the pursuits of the mundane? Let those who see the doom and gloom delicately hanging upon this generation begin to pour their souls on the altar and cry unto God for our restoration and healing.

Finally, let those who will pray do so with the honesty of purpose, with the earnestness of the spirit and with great expectations. We must see the situation as being too feeble for God to handle. We must see the bigness of our God in comparison to the tininess of the powers that seek to frustrate His plan in the world. The monumental challenges notwithstanding, our cries to heaven, as individuals, at the family altars, in groups of two, three or more, in the sanctuaries, in the offices and private residences, on the mountain and everywhere will arrest the attention of God. Even where faith is weak and the magnitude of the challenge continually bursts upon our brow, we should begin from somewhere to reverse the trend. Even where the journey may seem very distant and progress may appear slow, every step in the right direction will be a giant leap in the agenda of God.

Ezekiel doubted whether the bones could live. But he still went ahead to prophesy (Ezekiel 37v7,10). King of Nineveh was not too sure when he said "*Who can tell...*" (Jonah 3v9). He still went ahead and mobilised his people to seek repentance and plead for mercy. The corpse of Lazarus was already decaying. Yet Mary and Martha did not prevent Jesus from coming to 'waste' His precious time as His trip in their company to the graveside would seem to suggest. They still

urged Him “*Lord, come and see*” (John 11v34). We will do well to remember that it is not about us. It is all about Him. It is not really about our desire or human agenda. It even goes beyond how CAC will take its rightful place in the comity of churches and in our national affairs. It is about what God purposes to do in the world of our time. Therefore let us unite our bended knees.

And at the end when God will have responded to our pleas and revisited our world, we will not share an iota of His glory with Him. We will remember that glory is not that of him who prays but exclusively of Him who answers prayer. We will remember that it is not of him who is willing, or running, or praying or writing to mobile others to pray but of Him who has promised to show mercy (Romans 9v16). We will remember the counsel of Jesus in Luke 17v10 by which whatever achievement we may want to swell about will be no more than a pledge of a fresh start in a renewed chain of commitment and obedience we have denied God over the years. Let those who have seen the faintest light through this book be prepared to tap into whatever God is about to do, be willing to stand in the gap and be counted on the positive side of history. I pray that He will find us fit and faithful for a time such as this.

### **SUGGESTED PRAYER FOCUS**

The efficacy of prayer is rooted in the involvement of the Holy Spirit in prosecuting it. And, while prayer is the most abused privilege in the Church today, it is still a fact that God will do nothing except in His response to the prayer of His people. This is why it is important to first identify with whatever God would wish to do in the world and into which He expects His

children to key and then enrol in partnership with Him in prayer. While the listed points do not exhaust the focus of prayers relating to this cause, they can serve as a guide and be addressed as we feel led at the altar or prayer:

1. We will begin with special appreciation and thanksgiving unto God for the church, for the grace of preservation that we have enjoyed over the years, for His presence that is not lacking in the gathering of any faction, even up to this moment, and for the opportunity of a second chance He will not withhold.
2. That God will locate and destroy with fire the garment of shame that the enemy sewed for the church right from the time of Apostle Joseph Babalola and which the church through its membership and leadership has flaunted about, either in ignorance or in sheer rebellion.
3. That God will visit the very foundation and high places of Christ Apostolic Church with His broom of fire that will sweep out the complacency, ordinance and traditions of man that have combined to cage His moves. For instance, I may not be the only one who is aware of and upset by the gross inadequacy of the huge segment of our leadership and membership when it comes to the knowledge, understanding and appreciation of the Bible, right from our early days.
4. That God will visit the Church universally, break the grip of sin upon His people, heal our diversion, restore the spirit of genuine repentance, holiness, righteousness and then provoke a strong desire for heaven in the congregation of the saints.
5. That God will visit the world, particularly the one of this

generation with a revival more explosive and pervasive than that of 1930 that will shake hell to its very foundation, liberate the souls of men and prepare them for His kingdom. This will in turn make all the things that the Church is busy chasing today to be no more than a by-product (Matthew 6v33).

First, I stated earlier that this is not a write-up for someone, somewhere but for **me**, the writer and **you**, the reader. The beauty of prayer is in its simplicity by which it can be prosecuted anywhere, anytime, in any posture and whether we can close our eyes or not. True prayer warriors know that incense of prayers can ascend from ready altars; even the ones erected at most odd locations like in the bathrooms, even in toilets, on walking passages, at the place and during manual work and a journey. Since God is omnipresent and His ears are open, we can pour out our hearts.

Therefore, while waiting for when a call to corporate prayer will be disseminated, everyone can, and indeed, should respond to the call to prayer. Those who oversee the affairs of our mounts; Akinkemi, Ede, Erio, Ido, Efon-Alaye, Ikoyi, etc. should buy into the vision and share the burden with those who flock into their domains. Individuals, family altars, prayer warriors, pastors and workers forums, even those who have stepped out of the control of the church should raise a cry unto God to open the heavens upon us, once and again.

(Please turn again to pages 102-103 and revisit the message specially packaged and addressed to you...**PERSONNALLY!**)

# APPENDIX 1

## SAMPLE OF QUESTIONS AND RESPONSE ANALYSIS

(Here is the copy of the questionnaire referred to in Chapter 4 on members' spiritual status)

Dear Brother/Sister,

We are working on important information based on the Christian foundation of our respondents. The aim is to detect any missing link in the approach of the church and how the presbytery of the church can better serve the spiritual needs of the members.

We value your privacy, especially on issues of this nature. The search is based on utmost confidentiality which is why we are not asking about your identity. We presume this is one way you will be much freer to speak your mind as you intend to, without holding anything back and without any recourse whatsoever to you.

We sincerely thank you for your participation and cooperation.

The Research Team

### QUESTIONS

1. Please tell us how old are you: \_\_\_\_\_ yrs
2. Since when have you been a member of Christ Apostolic Church (of any branch) \_\_\_\_\_ yrs
3. Do you hold any office i.e. group coordinator/choir/deacon/elder (Tick as appropriate)? Yes/No
4. Are you personally known to (any or most of) your pastor(s)? Yes/No
5. Are you born again? Yes/No
6. If 'yes' to question number 5, describe below what you understand by the term being "born again" (*If necessary, use the back page and link with question number*)
7. If 'yes' to question number 5, please answer the following as accurately as possible:
  - a. When were you born again?
  - b. Where were you born again?

- c. Please throw further light on the occasion and circumstance that led you to the Lord\_\_\_\_\_ (Where necessary, use the back page and link with question number)
- d. Do you recall (you really should, if any) who preached the sermon that led to your conversion? \_\_\_\_\_
- e. Share, in brief, the testimony of your conversion and the basis of your assurance. (If necessary, use the back page and link with question number)

**The following are the outcomes of the research:**

1. Two major assemblies were sampled, one of the oldest generations of close to 70 years and the other of a younger age of about 35 years.
2. 100+ questionnaires were sent out with the hope of securing about 80 responses. But as this is a novelty and something that people are not used to, we were only able to secure little response at the time of the analysis. The number, though measly for the purpose on hand, suggested a direction or pattern. A wider, perhaps mission-wide exercise may be necessary for more authentic analysis.
3. The scores were based on answers supplied by respondents. One (1) means there is a good/positive response and zero (0) means no point. 0.5 is in-between.
4. The judgement of respondents as to whether or not they are born again does not depend on the total point/mark scored but on the combination of other revelations/explanations offered.
5. In analysing the result, I am conscious of those who:
  - a. Are genuinely born again but lack expression to convey the fact. This is why I ensure that I sought the facts and not only for expression in the analysis of such responses.
  - b. Are lacking in the experience of salvation but have, over time, learnt all the grammatical and theological explanations of the concept of salvation and also know how to convey this.
6. The sum of the two factors above is that I have taken the responses as they are, allowing instances of (a) to cancel out the instances of (b).
7. In all, I presume that this is a difficult exercise which is not meant to reveal that which only the eyes of God may see. For instance, all the respondents claim to be born again, including even a 73 year old who was brought into the church at age three and who claimed to have been

born again “At Birth”.

8. From the results, however, it may be clear that there is work to do. If someone is in a church for several decades, even if he is a stack illiterate, he should be able to explain what it means to be born again.
9. There are cases or observations from the collated data that paint a worrisome picture:
  - a. The pattern is such that most of those who lack the salvation experience or understanding of it are older folks who have been in the church for many decades.
  - b. On the contrary, the younger ones are more on-trend and seem to know better. This must have resulted from their interaction with other ministries either by venturing or through the media.

### **Rough Analysis and Conclusion:**

The analysis shows about 55% of respondents are lacking in a genuine experience of salvation. This is even though about 70%, of responses, were from an English-speaking assembly comprising supposed elites who are expected to know much better. In other words, if those in this group exhibit a trend, one should expect a much worse, far less than 50% of whatever mark they scored for the generality of those that come to dance around our altars every Sunday. In all honesty, I give it out that our members lack clear spiritual direction and this is the core of our challenge.



## APPENDIX 2

### MONKEY SEE, MONKEY DO...

My free-thinking boss, one of the hardest critics of the Church and its routines I know, posted this interesting piece to my mailbox on how policies and customs develop into unbendable traditions in most human institutions. Though he intended it for better management of our business at the time, the scolding sponsored by the piece could not have excluded the Church as a typical human institution run on moribund principles. It reveals the origin of many things we do in the churches, the conception and patterns of their operations, how wedding, burial and holy communion services evolved, how the order of services for the dedication of new babies and the variety of norms and practices associated with several other rites developed into what people have keyed into and dare not raise any question about.

And just like some segments of the letters of Paul to the churches, hardly has it occurred to the authority of various church institutions that most of the traditions they inherited and have cherished so much and by which the power of God may have been caged for ages emerged from developments and premises that no longer exist. But the traditions must survive anyway and the souls of men and their spiritual welfare are the worse for it.

Yet, he cannot be a good leader that fails to make a difference between heaven-ordained patterns peculiar to CAC and the ones smuggled in and crowded into the system from other (parental) churches or those that are based on the situation that prevailed at a particular time. He cannot be a good leader who fails to recognise when change is inevitable and millions of people are subjected to empty routines that no longer work. Just like I wrote in another work, it is a matter of concern that many pastors bring the Bibles out of their wallets and tuck their brains into them until the sermon is over and the Bible is to be locked up back into its place to free the brain for their use again. The short piece here has much to say about how traditions and moribund activities are developed and sustained for decades, even for generations who operate them mindlessly.

## **MONKEY SEE, MONKEY DO...**

“That’s the way it’s always been around here”

1. Start with a cage containing five monkeys.
2. Inside the cage, hang a banana on a string and place a set of stairs under it. Before long, a monkey will go to the stairs and start to climb towards the banana.
3. As soon as he touches the stairs, he sprays all of the monkeys with cold water. After a while, another monkey attempts with the same result - all the monkeys are sprayed with cold water. Pretty soon, when another monkey tries to climb the stairs, the other monkeys will try to prevent it.
4. Now, turn off the cold water. Remove one monkey from the cage and replace it with a new one. The new monkey sees the banana and wants to climb the stairs. To his surprise and horror, all of the other monkeys attack him. After another attempt and attack, he knows that if he tries to climb the stairs, he will be assaulted. Next, remove another of the original five monkeys and replace it with a new one. The newcomer goes to the stairs and is attacked. The previous newcomer takes part in the punishment with enthusiasm.
5. Again, replace a third original monkey with a new one. The new one makes it to the stairs and is attacked as well. Two of the four monkeys that attack him have no idea why they were not permitted to climb the stairs, or why they are participating in the beating of the newest monkey.
6. After replacing the fourth and fifth original monkeys, (and removal of the cold water basin) all the monkeys that have been sprayed with cold water have been replaced. Nevertheless, no monkey ever again approaches the stairs. Why not? Because as far as they know that’s the way it’s always been around here.

And that’s how policies that companies (or, in this case, the traditions that churches) cherish and defend with vigour and fervour develop.

(Once again, and on a final note, please go back to pages 102-103 and revisit the message specially packaged and addressed to you...**PERSONNALLY!**)

#### **FOR FURTHER READINGS:**

1. ***In His Step*** (*What Would Jesus Do, (WWJD)*) by Charles Monroe Sheldon. Available for purchase on the internet and in leading Christian Bookshops
2. ***Prayer: A Christian Response to the Missions Challenge*** by Brother Festus Ndukwu (A Publication of CAPRO, 9/10 Turton Street, Sabo, Yaba, Lagos State)
3. ***From Africa to the World (A Story of Calvary Ministries (CAPRO) at Forty)*** A Publication of CAPRO, 9/10 Turton Street, Sabo, Yaba, Lagos State) – A historical account of how some ‘crazy’ youths pioneered cross-cultural mission with tenacity and commitment yet to be matched in the history of Christianity in Nigeria and gave Africa its foremost missionary agency that began in the north of Nigeria and is now operating in four continents of the world!
4. ***Prophetic Force: A Demystification of Eschatology in Four Volumes*** by John O. B. Agbaje (The first of the volumes already in circulation)

#### **Coming Soon from the Author:**

1. ***Nigeria And Its Embattled Church:*** A work that lays the blames for the woes of the Nigerian nation at the doorstep of its Church which is in dire need of repentance.
2. *Devotional Commentaries on the Book of the Acts of the Apostles*
3. *Devotional Commentaries on the Gospel by St Matthew*
4. *The Church Militant – A Quarterly Journal for the Advancement of the Gospel and the Cause of the Cross*

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