

Note: this was a recent Study by a Pastor in Nigeria Africa .

The Holy Spirit has said the exact same thing to me over the last 6 months and the biggest battle in the Church of Jesus Christ in 2017 is RELIGIOUS SPIRITS

**90 % of the Church IS BOUND UP IN RELIGION TODAY 2017.**

and compare and contrast what Jesus said in Mathew 23 will “Put you in the Picture”

I put my commentary **in RED** in this article

**There is POWERFUL TRUTHS REFLECTING ON THE STATE OF THE RELIGIOUS CHURCH IN 2017**

Tue 7<sup>th</sup> Nov 2017

Graham Healy

founder [www.fitforchristministries.com](http://www.fitforchristministries.com)

## **10 WAYS THAT THE PASTORS OF TODAY ARE EXACTLY LIKE THE PHARISEES THAT JESUS DENOUNCED....**

“Therefore, by their FRUITS you will know them.” (Matthew 7:20)

Obviously, Jesus Christ knew 2,000 years ago that DECEPTION will pervade the Christian landscape at the close of the age, the days that we live in today.

So, one of the clear instructions He gave us in relation to the end-time is to WATCH AND PRAY; particularly does this admonition relate to the many false prophets that abound in His name. In Matthew 7:15-20, **He taught on how to recognise false prophets – BY THEIR FRUITS.**

Therefore, in this end-time, **believers that are wise will be careful to CLOSELY STUDY the fruits of the lives of the men that parade themselves today as ‘men of God’.**

A close study of these fruits will quickly show that MOST of our leaders are just almost exactly like the Scribes and Pharisees that Jesus lambasted in His days. Eventually, those were the men that killed Jesus – for they could not withstand Him. **They could not withstand THE TRUTH.**

Can you imagine that Jesus would ever put such odious men in charge of His church??? The church that is described in 1 Timothy 3:15 as ‘the pillar and ground of the truth’. Yet, the church is today led by men that act IN THE SAME WAY as the Pharisees did!!! **In Matthew 23, Jesus OPENLY REBUKED the Scribes and Pharisees, pronouncing ‘WOE’ upon them eight times in that rebuke!**

If we use His words in that chapter as a template, we can easily identify, at least, 10 different ways that the lifestyle of our ‘men of God’ are similar in concept to that of the Pharisees. Here they are: **(This is exactly what the Lord has said to me over the last 6 months nov 2017 Gh)**

**(1) “THEY SAY, AND DO NOT DO”** (verse 3): Pastors attempt to teach us to obey God, **when they themselves do NOT show an example of obedience to God’s word.**

Even the position MOST of them occupy (**as ONE-MAN LEADER of a church**) is CLEARLY AGAINST the teaching of the Bible that gives us the precedence of local assemblies being led by a team of elders.

**(Here I make the point that yes you have a Team of Elders but Caution here that you are still a theocracy led by the Holy Spirit and the danger is power and control to a committee as versed to a Holy-spirit led Eldership. A committee never rules the church, we are a theocracy (kingdom) GH)**

**(2) “THEY BIND HEAVY BURDENS, HARD TO BEAR ... ON MEN’S SHOULDERS”** (verse 4): Please think about how the church leaders of today **have bound HEAVY, UNGODLY FINANCIAL BURDENS ON God’s sheep!!!**

Something that NONE of the Apostles of Christ did. Today, poor men and women are put under COMPULSION to pay all sorts of money with unbroken regularity – weekly, monthly, annually.

Tithes, regular offering, special offering, thanksgiving offering, prophet's offering, seed offering, Sunday school offering, building offering, first-fruit offering, and so on. Collecting Naira/Dollars for the REDEMPTION OF FIRST-BORN CHILDREN is becoming more and more popular nowadays. **Yet, IN CONTRAST, most of these church leaders live in STUPENDOUS LUXURY.**

(This is TRUE many Church pastors today have a PAID JOB earning \$100k or more in TAX FREE MONEY, now I do not have a problem with that as long as the attitude is humble before GOD and the proportionate money's in to the church is used in the light of (Deuteronomy 8:18) God gives you wealth to expand the Kingdom and Poverty is a curse Duet 28. However, a Pastor who takes a luxurious wage out of the Church and this is not proportionally governed to the income of the church than that is WRONG biblically and morally.

The whole purpose of the CHURCH is to EXPAND THE GOSPEL . and yes the pastor need to cover his costs ,home etc and a MODERATE WAGE (that is biblical as a priest) BUT EXTRAVIGANCE is NOT OF GOD. Now I am associated with Bro Copeland who has one of the largest ministries in the world, and owns aircraft and a huge property in TEXAS , however, the ministry entity is separate form any personal entity. By this I mean legally speaking you can (as long as you are expanding the Gospel and all the purposes that you are doing are for the Expansion of the Gospel ) this is the charter of a registered charity. In my case Healy's Health is my Business entity and Fit for Christ is my Charity. I can DONATE money to Fit for Christ but that is one way traffic. I cannot legally take any money out. Once money is donated into fit for Christ (or any other charity) that money must be used for the Charity legally. The trouble with the Religious Church of 2017 is that money they have is used for massive buildings, pastors wages cars etc , staff wages, etc and when it come to support apostolic ministries or evangelists ZERO is given or available . Because 90% of what funds go into the church are absorbed in the pastors wages,etc .

**THAT IS WRONG and should be corrected.**

The Proportion of total Income in wages etc in a Church should never be more that 30% roughly 70% should be for kingdom use , supporting apostles ,evangelists ,prophets etc .

Unfortunately the Religious Church has become Corporatized and they don't do that very well either. GH)

**(3) THEY MAKE THEIR CLOTHING IMPRESSIVE AND DISTINCT** (verse 5): Today, our church leaders wear clothes that usually make them distinct from church members. Often, it is the Pastors that you'll find wearing designer suits, expensive watches, pointed and gay shoes, and similar ostentatious accessories. This mode of sharp dressing is part of the ministerial package. In contrast, Jesus dressed so much like His disciples that it took a kiss from Judas for the soldiers to distinguish him.

(dressing Neatly is Ok , going over the top looks ridiculous, but likewise in 2017 Church pastors have gone super casual , shirts hanging out etc ,worship leaders (females ) with jeans with holes and rips in them etc females in congregations with 'nigh club gear on' it all looks like the WORLD in the CHURCH not the CHURCH IN THE WORLD. I'm all for moderate clothing and respectful dress REMEMBER we are in the HOUSE OF THE LORD not a NIGHT CLUB !

and you don't have to be a prude , but give me a break Church today looks like and in many cases sounds like a NIGHTCLUB ATMOSPHERE is that what attracts the anointing of God ? ask yourself seriously that question? GH)

**(4) THEY LOVE THE BEST SEATS IN THE SYNAGOUGE** (verse 6): In most churches today, the church leadership has SPECIAL SEATS. Such seats are usually located in elevated positions, on front row, or of superior quality to other chairs. Usually, Pastors will sit on padded chairs while members sit on plastic chairs/wooden benches.

(Yep a total US and THEM mentality not a US and US mentality GH)

**(5) THEY LOVE TO BE CALLED RABBI, RABBI (verse 7):** Today, nothing distinguishes our Christian leaders as extensively as the use of titles – at times, pompous and bombastic titles!

Whereas Jesus CLEARLY DISCOURAGED the use of religious titles in this passage, how many Christian leaders today do not use special titles (apart from somebody like Bro Gbile Akanni)? The reigning vogue today is to call our Christian leaders by PARENTAL TITLES – ‘Daddy’, ‘Father’, ‘Papa’, etc.

(Respecting the Anointing on somebodies life I have no problem with, but respect through Titles is Religion GH)

**(6) LEADERS THAT DO NOT PRESENT THEMSELVES AS SERVANTS (verse 11):**

Please cast your eyes over the church landscape today, how do Pastors present themselves?

**As men that are serving the church, or as CEOs of the church?** In a particular case, a prominent Pastor slapped a young lady during a church service, because he found something she said distasteful! Have you ever heard of servants slapping those that they serve?

No! It is a ‘boss’ mentality issue.

(this is a BIG one in the Religious Church of 2017 the BIG BOSS is scripturally and morally WRONG the pastor should be a ‘humble servant of all’ and ‘lead be example’ in fact most of the religious pastors DISTANCE THEMSELVES FROM PEOPLE who they cannot control creating a US and THEM mentality. THIS IS A RELIGIOUS SPIRIT NOT OF GOD and very CONTROLLING!(to those weak in the spirit)

God is LOVE and the pastor should be the EXAMPLE OF A FRIEND TO THE CONGREGATION well Jesus was and still is today , compare the ‘attitude’ of your Pastor to the JESUS LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOUR standard and you will see if the Religious spirits of ‘power and control’ are operating and unfortunately 90 % of the 2017 Church it is GH)

**(7) THEY SHUT UP THE KINGDOM, WHILE NOT GOING IN THEMSELVES (verse 13):** There is no doubt that Christianity today has been reduced into a faith of mere religious observance.

The spirituality and vitality of life that the early church exuded, resulting in their turning the world upside down for Christ, has been replaced by a religious attendance of service, in an equally lifeless building we today call church. Thus, religiosity has suffocated spirituality, and men are barely able to see the way to the Kingdom of God, through the way of the cross of Christ.

(THIS UNFORTUNATELY IS 100 % TRUE TE RELIGIOUS SPIRITS HAVE BLOCKED THE HOLY GHOST GH)

**(8) THEY TRAVEL LAND AND SEA TO WIN A CONVERT, AND WHEN HE IS WON, THEY MAKE HIM TWICE A SON OF HELL (verse 15).**

Our church leaders are very earnest in evangelism.

But this is not evangelism to win people into the Kingdom of God.

Put succinctly, this is more like a RECRUITMENT DRIVE for their denomination/church!

**Converts are indoctrinated in the ‘Gospel of their denomination’ NOT in the Gospel of Christ.**

This is why it is easy to distinguish an denomination/religious member from a True Born again Kingdom of God member.

Every convert is ‘built up’ according to his/her denomination.

However, because the ‘denominational gospel’ is NOT the same as the Gospel of Christ, many converts do not even know that they are IN CHURCH, but not ‘IN CHRIST’!

**They do not know they are NOT truly born again!**

Today, many such converts falsely believe that they are on the way to the Kingdom of God, refusing to listen to the genuine Gospel of Christ. Many may end up in hell thereby.

(I have found this that members of Churches have contacted me and ask why do we pray in tongues etc I TOTALLY AGREE (ABOVE)WITH THE RECRUITMENT DRIVES of the RELIGIOUS CHURCH .

That’s all it is a recruitment Drive ,numbers crunching to keep the Religious machine churning, and it usually results in that person/member never coming back to church again (once they are drained,

burnt out and used up) .

IF THE MOTIVATION IS NOT THE LOVE OF JESUS DISPLAYED FROM THE PASTOR DOWN then this is simply religion .controlling and manipulating members with 'religious guilt trips' eventually they WAKE UP AND LEAVE . however many remain completely "religiously lobotomised" too frightened to move or think for themselves. RELIGION DRAINS YOUR SPIRIT and NEVER EMPOWERS YOU! this is totally contrary to the book of Acts.

The religious Church of 2017 does this :

1)Recruitment Drives for Numbers

2)A form of religious conversion (religious lobotomies I call it) where the new member is indoctrinated into the religious system they may 'say' the sinners prayer but only make an intellectual decision (however that has them saved for sure) but what happens after is the concern. After that the new member is 'processed' into the religious system (various programs, courses,and religious brain washing) **none of which EMPOWERS THEM IN THE HOLY GHOST** they are turned into disempowered ROBOTS to the religious system.

The book of ACTS demonstrates what should happen **people should be EMPOWERED** but they are not , they become 'religious slaves bonded to the religious system' .

The Religious church attempts to 'occupy the new members minds' with all these courses/programs and entertainment and suck the 'spirit and drive ' out of them until they (the religious Church) reaches the 'Religious Lobotomy state) where the 'religious slave' will do EXACTLY WHAT THEY ARE TOLD WITHOUT QUESTION ! and you will notice only SHEEP not TRUE BIBLICAL Leaders get caught up in this Labotomised MELTING POT.

3)the book of ACTS outlines TRUE HOLY SPIRIT EMPOWERMENT and what SHOULD happen to a new convert. THEY SHOULD BE EMPOWERED not DRAINED.

the Religious Church of 2017 NEEDS A DAMASCUS ROAD EXPERIENCE THEMSELVES as they have transformed themselves into **the Pharisees of Mathew 23** and **the Sardis Church of Revelations 3** unfortunately .

But be Rest assured Ladies and Gentlemen JESUS is LORD and HE IS BUILDING HIS CHURCH and the Gates of Hell will not prevail against IT.

2018 I have prophesied will be a complete TURNING POINT FOR THE RELIGIOUS CHURCH and the Apostles of FIRE will go through the religious Church like a Donald Trump WRECKING BALL. and there will be a DRAINING OF THE RELIGIOUS SWAMP ! Amen GH)

#### **(9) THEY LOVE TITHE, AND HAVE NEGLECTED THE WEIGHTIER MATTERS (verse 23):**

Tithing is the STRONGEST subject of indoctrination in most churches.

Many believers have been deceived into believing that God will not bless them, but will send devourers against them, when they fail to regularly pay 10% of their income to the churches set up by our Christian leaders.

**If love, righteousness, and carrying the cross of Christ are taught as repeatedly** as we have been taught about tithing, **the church would have been a sanctuary of hope for humanity.**

But in the spirit of religion, tithing has been falsely taught to be the surest way of accessing God's blessings.

(Tithing is Biblical ,however God is LOVE and LOVE, not MONEY, is the priority if people are in an environment of LOVE they will have no problem supporting the CHUCH if the LOVING SPIRIT of GOD is the priority in preaching. God will bless you not because of money but because he Loves you , and by the way poverty is a Curse so we must find the LOVE balance here GH)

#### **(10) "IF WE LET HIM (JESUS) ALONE, ALL MEN WILL BELIEVE ON HIM: AND TAKE AWAY ... OUR PLACE...." (John 11:48).**

In this end-time, in preparation for the return of the Lord, God is sending more and more men to proclaim the true Gospel of Christ to His people.

**But church leaders have started RESISTING the proclaimed truth, striving strenuously to preserve**

**their false doctrines.**

The reason for this is simple. **PASTORS DO NOT WANT TO LOSE THEIR POSITION!!!**

They are just like the Pharisees in the above verse that said they will "... take away ... our place...."

**The Pharisees were obviously more concerned about THEIR PLACE (position) than what Jesus had come to do for mankind.**

**That was why they resisted and killed Him.**

In the same way, Pastors know that if the truth of the genuine Gospel spreads, **believers will BE LIBERATED into their freedom in Christ; and the consequences will be massive for the Pastors.**

**There will be no 'BIG MAN' in the church any more.** It will become more difficult to fool people into parting with their money. Men will begin to look more directly at God, rather than through any Pastor.

**In short, most pastors will LOSE THEIR POSITION OF PROMINENCE in the lives of believers.**

**For this is why Christ came – TO SET MEN FREE.**

**And this is what the Gospel of Christ does – IT SETS MEN FREE.** So, like the Pharisees, church leaders will rather RESIST and FIGHT the truth that Jesus is sending to His church today, so that the status quo can be maintained.

**Friends, these are only 10 similarities between Pastors and Pharisees.** As we study the Bible, we'll see even more!

**So, in view of this shocking anomaly, what should a believer do?**

**First, it is extremely important to realise that DECEPTION has enveloped the Christian faith today.**

What we today call Christianity is RADICALLY DIFFERENT from the faith that Jesus Christ introduced 2,000 years ago. Until a believer sees this truth clearly, AND ACCEPT IT, it will be difficult to understand the spiritual complexities of the days that we live in.

**Second, we need to know and accept that almost all the 'men of God' in the Church in Nigeria are NOT real men of God in the real sense of the word.**

A lot of them were NOT called by God, they were called by denominations/men.

And some that were genuinely called by God have betrayed their calling for mammon and fame. This is why they are now manifesting the FRUITS of the Pharisees.

**Can you imagine any of Christ's Apostles manifesting these traits of the Pharisees? The answer is NO, because these were genuine men of God.**

**Third, please be in no doubt that what we call church today is radically different from the TRUE Body of Christ.**

Different from what God calls Church. **The church system that is common in over 90% of our churches today is totally different from the system that God instituted for the New Testament Church.**

**The implication of these three points is clear – there are many people that today think they are born-again IN CHRIST, not knowing that they are simply born-again IN CHURCH!**

The difference between the two is a matter of LIFE and DEATH!

And many people do not even realise this difficult truth.

**This is the GROSS DECEPTION that is playing out in our days.**

**Right now, in going forward, the best course of action is to seek an ever CLOSER WALK with Jesus will all your heart, soul, and body.**

**It is in Him ALONE that we can find safety in these days of deception.**

**It is as we entwine ourselves in Him in fellowship, that He Himself will lead us to the TRUE BODY**

**OF CHRIST for fellowship – NOT for followership.**

This is the path to safety.

Continuing to stay in the adulterous church system of today is EXTREMELY DEADLY for any believer that aspires to overcome the perils of this end-time.

You cannot be a part of the world, and hope to change the world.

You need to STEP OUT of the world, to be able to influence the world for God.

**This is the path that Jesus took, and it is for this reason that He is calling His sheep OUT OF THE CHURCH SYSTEM OF TODAY. Calling them primarily to Himself.**

**In addition, please keep the true church of God in your prayers.** We urgently need His intervention. For we know that He is able to save, and to keep to the uttermost all that come to Him through Christ Jesus. It is well with all those that are determined to follow Jesus Christ at all costs. Amen.

Thanks for reading, God bless you.

(author Pastor Chris Oyakholeme Christ Embassy Nigeria Africa)

(I like the statement **FELLOWSHIP not FOLLOWSHIP** there is no question that what Pstor Chris is saying in this study is what the Holy Ghost is saying as this has been placed STRONGLY IN MY SPIRIT especially over the last 6 months and has resulted in my pages on the Apostolic Church on [www.fitforchristministries.com](http://www.fitforchristministries.com) so this is a direct confirmation of the WORD OF THE LORD. and as I say 2018 the Lord will be PURGING HIS CHURCH of all these RELIGIOUS SPIRITS and systems . Amen and the Authority of the Apostles, Prophets and Evangelists RESTORED. again I repeat as Always the LITMUS TEST of any Pastor/leader/CHURCH is HOW YOU TREAT PEOPLE especially other Christians is whether or not the LOVE of Jesus Christ is operating.

**PEOPLE should always be put before PROGRAMS**

**JESUS IS A PEOPLE PERSON and NEVER FORGET IT he said LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOUR is the Greatest Commandment, a commandment NOT A SUGGESTION)**

Tue 7 th November 2017

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