

CHURCH OF GOD IN CHRIST TEMPLE

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April 3, 2011

Bishop Charles E. Blake, Sr.
Presiding Bishop Church Of God
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Dear Bishop Blake:

THANK GOD FOR "A HISTORIC CONVOCATION" IN ST. LOUIS.

The city of St. Louis, Missouri has had the pleasure of hosting the 103rd Annual Holy Convocation of the Church Of God In Christ, Inc., the Church that we love and serve. The record, when it is published, should show that the hotels, motels, clothing stores, and restaurants were all favorably affected by the great presence of the saints. The multiple vendors, who gathered from near and far, should have been, delighted to see so many potential customers who came prepared to purchase the merchandise that had been reserved especially for the saints. The list of invited speakers was most impressive, it comprised persons whom we see on television each week. They were persons who love the Church Of God In Christ and whose DVDs and other publications are favorites of the COGIC saints. Because of the blessings of television and the internet, those at home were able to share an experience that can only be enjoyed when COGIC saints get together. Bishop Mason told us that, if we would live holy and uphold the gospel of Christ, no place would be large enough to hold us. Only time will prove whether or not we will satisfy the condition required to make his prophecy come true.

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A DIFFERENT LOCATION AND A DOUBLE FIRST

The 103rd Annual Holy Convocation was a first for St. Louis, and it was indeed the first for the Church Of God In Christ, Inc. For St Louis, it was the first time that the Annual Holy Convocation of the Church Of God In Christ, Inc. was held in the city where the 630 foot Gateway Arch stands looking over the Mississippi River. For the Church Of God In Christ, Inc., it was a great big first, because this was the first time, hi 103 years, that the leadership of the Church dared to influence the saints to convene the Annual Holy Convocation hi a place other than the place that was sanctified for that purpose by the Founders who established the Church in 1907. The Founders proclaimed and possessed a Holiness Ministry and Lifestyle that attracted people from all walks of life. Some of the other religious denominations opposed us; not because they hated us, but because many of their members came to us and were filled with the Holy Ghost. They became part of the “Sanctified Holy Rollers” and began dancing and shooting because of the joy they had found “Over in Holiness.” Today, those who once opposed us have joined us and, in so many ways, we are just as they are. Is that good? Are we all trying to be like Jesus? Or are we trying to be like the other folks? Is being like others considered good?

Now that we have enjoyed a great 103rd Holy Convocation, and we are anticipating a greater Convocation, in St. Louis in 2011, there are a few matters that should demand the attention of the best “Spiritual Leadership” of our Church. When I think of who we say we are, what we say we believe, and what the record of our conduct toward each other reveals, there are certain blatant inconsistencies that might lead one to believe that we are in dire need of “spiritual help.” Spiritual help involves the intellect, the soul and mind: It is there that we should begin. Our faith teaches that as a man thinketh in his heart, so is he; and out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. It also tells us to “keep thy heart with all diligence: For out of it are the issues of life.” Reports that ungodly, unholy and immoral acts are being committed by some persons within the leadership of our Church is symptomatic of the existence of carnal mindedness to the degree that it should not be. As I pull up the Church Of God In Christ's name on the internet,

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and observe the multiple cases of alleged cases of sexual abuse by some of the “leaders” of our beloved Church, I am convinced that we are in dire need of some real, good sound doctrine (WORD) to help transform the minds of those in “leadership roles” who have allowed the Devil to deceive them.

In Ephesians, Chapter 5, St. Paul told the Church to “be imitators of God, therefore, as dearly loved children and live a life of love ... But among you there must not be even a hint of sexual immorality or of any kind of impurity, or of greed, because these are improper for God's holy people.” For of this you can be sure: No immoral, impure or greedy person - such a man is an idolater - has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God.” If what Paul said to the Ephesian Church is what we claim as our doctrine, why don't we teach or preach when we have the thousands of people gathered together for Holy Convocation? A retrospective view of the history and purpose of Convocations, especially in the Church Of God In Christ, reveals the fact that they were designed to bring God's people together for fellowship, instruction in the doctrine and principles of our Faith, and to be enriched by the testimonies from persons who had been delivered from divers sins. In the Convocations, they were in constant prayer, and God delivered many from sickness and sin. Since 1968, and the new regime in our Church, it appears that our purpose seems to have shifted in another direction. On many occasions, whether by design or misadventure, those selected to preach or teach seem to find it expedient to avoid those Biblical texts that deal with Holy Living. They usually read for about 15 minutes, on subjects with which they seem not to be familiar, and then they call on the organist to join in and help them preach. When the music starts it is so loud that the preacher is not heard. The tympanic nerves of the audience are aggravated, therefore, they just dance and praise the Lord They all join in the praise, which may be good, but it would be helpful if they could have been fed the WORD.

In our Statement of Faith, we claim the Bible to be the “only infallible Written Word of God,” and we also claim it as “our rule of Faith and Practice.” Since it is our rule of faith and practice, and was inspired by God, it appears to me that inspired men of God would be more effective if they would lay aside the poorly

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written, men-inspired and composed manuscripts and use the **“Only Infallible Written Word of God.”** Because the Holy Ghost (Spirit of Truth) inspired the writing of the **“Only Infallible Written Word of God; the Holy Ghost in us,** which is our guide, should show us how to apply the rule in our lives. The WORD can reach where we can't reach, and it can accomplish what it is assigned by God to accomplish. **“For the WORD of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the intents of the heart. Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in His sight: But all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of Him with whom we have to do.”** Hebrews 4:12 -13. If we preach the WORD, led by the Holy Ghost, it will transform the minds of die people. In II Timothy 3:16 - 17 all scripture is said to be **“given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.”** Jesus, the Head of me Church and our example - preached the WORD. When He went into the synagogue on the Sabbath, the book of the prophet Esaias delivered to Him. He opened the book, read from it and then He explained what is meant. (Luke 4:16-21) When He finished, He sat down. He didn't try to rock the audience, He saw to it that the people understood the WORD. Wouldn't we do well, in these times, if we let the Bible speak? Instead of writing and reading sermons that are designed to obtain a rating from the world that we are great preachers. When we preach God's Word, which is infallible, we need not be concerned about how the world rates us because the world loves its own. God stands behind His Word and the desired results are always realized Bishops Mason and Roberts found the WORD to be reliable; Bishops Nesbitt and Cohen relied on God's WORD; Bishops Crouch and Blake stood on the WORD; Bishops Driver and Pleas trusted in God's WORD; and Bishop Charles E. Blake, Sr. proclaims, lives by, and preaches the WORD with power, to the words of the old sister, who could not read or write, but, who could sing this song: **“Everything's Going Down, but me WORD of God.”**

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AS HOLY PEOPLE, WE ARE OBLIGATED TO PROCLAIM AND LIVE THE TRUTH

Because we accept the Holy Bible as the “Only infallible written WORD of God;” and our “Rule of Faith and Practice,” it appears that certain statements we are making, and allowing others to utter and publish, just may place us in jeopardy of inviting God’s disfavor. When we affirm that we have six (6) or eight (8) million members, to impress others that we are larger than we really are - knowing that we have no database to corroborate what we claim - that can be construed as deceit or lying. Listen to what the WORD has to say on the subject Proverbs 6:16- 17 states that a “lying tongue” is one of the seven deadly sins that the LORD hates. In Psalms 101:7 David seems to hate what God hates, for He says: “He that telleth lies shall not tarry in my sight” In Colossians 3:9, St. Paul instructs the Church to “lie not one to another, seeing that you have put off the old man with his deeds.”

Based on my study of (the etymology of the word lying, and relating it to the meaning of the words hypocrite, deceiver and pretender, I conclude that whether the deceit is uttered (orally) or by an overt act, it is a lie. A hypocrite, a deceiver or a pretender may be classified as “a liar in action.” For this reason, we should be careful what we do and what we say. We are also obligated to place persons in positions of leadership who meet the moral standards, as prescribed in the WORD, and the standards which the title represents. A person should not be made to think that he is what he is not In Galatians 5:3, St Paul says: “If a man think himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself.” It is not difficult to see how a deceived person may cause harm to others who may rely upon him to produce that which he is not qualified to perform. As leaders of the Church Of God In Christ, Inc., we are obligated to take every reasonable precaution to see that we don't place persons in positions who lack the qualifications to produce what the title is known to represent When we knowingly place persons in positions, for which they are not qualified, we may be guilty of making a person think that he is what he is not: That is deceit

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It is not right to place a person, and those who follow him, in jeopardy. If it is not right, it is not righteous; it is unrighteous, and all “unrighteousness is sin.”^{5*} I John 5:17.

CLOSURE SHOULD BE BROUGHT TO THE KANSAS CASE TOUT DE SUITE

Bishop Blake, even though I chose not to seek to serve another term on the Judiciary Board, I am still very much concerned about the blatant injustice that our beloved Church is perpetrating against one of its “children.” Pursuant to our biblical doctrine, our constitution and our years of operating as a Holiness Body, the initiation of the civil case against the saints; attempting to resolve a trivial ecclesiastical matter that should have been settled within the confines of the Church, was most unfortunate, insensitive, unbrotherly, unrighteous, ungodly, and unnecessary. It has caused immeasurable harm to the saints in Kansas, and to the total Church Of God In Christ family. We have been in court for more than six (6) years, and the case has the potential of escalating to the higher courts. Because of the nature of the case, and what it may cause to be exposed, it could become very costly, time consuming, embarrassing and unprofitable for all concerned.

There are questions involving the Kansas case that, if answered, will give insight into why there were so many unreasonable acts committed to take over the one, little, faithful body of saints who purchased their church without any money or other assistance from the jurisdictional or national church, and place a pastor over them that they did not desire. Let me list a few questions:

1. Don't members have a right to participate in the election process of a pastor who is to lead them:
2. Is the Consecration Charge in the COGIC Manual (Page 215) just loose words? Or is the Bishop obligated to comply with the same?

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3. If a Jurisdictional Bishop fails to comply with the terms of the Charge, is he not failing to perform an act that he was required to perform? Isn't that nonfeasance?
4. Pursuant to the COGIC Constitution, aren't members granted the right to transfer from one jurisdiction to another, if they meet the required conditions? Doesn't the U. S. Constitution recognize the right of citizens to worship God freely? What about property rights, are persons allowed to take real property without due process of law?
5. Why should a congregation be forced to work under the leadership of a Bishop that is unkind, unthoughtful and who lacks compassion for those who are placed under his care?
6. Why did the Plaintiff refuse to follow the recommendation from the Chief Justice that would have settled the case more than four years ago? Who advised him not to follow the recommendation? Why?
7. Who advised the Plaintiff to seek a Civil Court settlement of the case rather than a settlement by the Church's Court?
8. Who advised the Presiding Bishop to convene all the leading officers of the Church, and in their presence ask the Chief Justice to withdraw his recommendation?
9. Why did the attorneys for the Plaintiffs and the Defendants partition the Court for permission to withdraw from the case?
10. Why were the Presiding Bishop and the Chief Justice subpoenaed to come to Kansas to testify in the case?

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11. After the FAX was sent from the Attorney for the Plaintiffs office to the Chief Justice; asking him to sign either of two affidavits which stated that he was not able to attend the hearing in Kansas, why did the General Counsel and Attorney for the Plaintiff call the Chief Justice trying to persuade him not to go to Kansas? Since both of the affidavits were not true, if I had signed them wouldn't that be lying?
12. After the Chief Justice answered the subpoena, and testified as to his function in the Church, and other pertinent matters, why did the Court dismiss the case and send it back to the Church for proper adjudication?
13. When the case was heard; and, an intelligent, righteous decision was rendered, pursuant to the biblical doctrine and constitution of the Church, why did six (6) justices vote against what they knew to be right?
14. Who influenced the six (6) justices to sign against the right decision when one of them, who was not present for the hearing of the case, is said to have been hospitalized in a condition which rendered him incapable of making a right judgment?
15. Why is the content of the Article III, Part II, Section D, Par. 17, to which reference is made in the residing Bishop's letter to Bishop Gilkey, Dated September 9, 2009, different from what is stated in the constitution? Was there a "legal" reason for the change? For whose benefit?

Constitution, Par. 17 - "All vacancies that occur in the pastorate of a local church shall be filled by the jurisdictional Bishop. The supervision and management of the church shall remain with the Jurisdictional Bishop or his designee until such time as a Pastor is appointed to fill such vacancy." Par. 17, as stated in Par. 3 of your letter to Bishop Gilkey: "You, as Jurisdictional Prelate, have the authority to

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appoint a pastor of your choosing to Emmanuel Church and shall have unfettered access to the Emmanuel Church premises to supervise and manage the Church until a pastor is appointed.

OBSERVATION: It is easy to see that the two renderings of Par. 17 of the COGIC Constitution are different. The rendering in your letter to Bishop Gilkey, is not true to what the Constitution sets forth. It is misleading and appears to give authority to Jurisdictional Bishops that the Church, by the Constitution, never intended to give. The Constitution certainly gives to the Jurisdictional Bishop the authority to appoint pastors, but it does not give him the exclusive authority to choose the pastor who is to be appointed. The Consecration Charge to Bishops, COGIC Manual, Page 215, gives a Charge that the Jurisdictional Bishop affirms that he will keep, and it requires that the choice of a pastor will be made by the TRINITY: Jurisdictional Bishop, District Superintendent and Congregation. Once the CHOICE is made, only the Jurisdictional Bishop has the authority to make the appointment. **I THINK WE WOULD HAVE IT NO OTHER WAY.** The people build, buy and pay for the Church, and they are expected to support the pastor who serves them. They have and deserve the **RIGHT** to have a part in choosing their leader.

NOTE: Why is it taking so long six (6) plus calendar years, for competent lawyers and spirit-filled leaders to settle this case? Does being in the wrong place affect the process? Is God trying to tell us something?

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THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY CAN AND SHOULD SETTLE THIS MATTER

Pursuant to Article HI, Part H, Section B, Page 9 of the COGIC Manual, states:

The General Assembly is the supreme legislative and judicial authority of the Church Of God In Christ It is the only tribunal which has power to express doctrines and creeds of the Church, and its decisions shall be binding on all members of the Church Of God In Christ.

AS FORMER CHIEF JUSTICE OF THE CHURCH, AND ONE WHO IS CREDITED WITH POSSESSING A REASONABLE KNOWLEDGE OF THE HISTORY, DOCTRINE, TRADITIONS AND CONSTITUTION OF THE CHURCH, I HIGHLY RECOMMEND THE FOLLOWING:

Bring the Kansas Case before the General Assembly, and let it be decided where all can see and hear. What the General Assembly says will be res judicata. If you will recall, the West Angeles Church case, where you are the pastor, was appealed to the General Assembly and justice was given.

It has come to my attention that our beloved Church is on the brink of becoming involved in another matter which should have been resolved within the ecclesiastical forums of our Church. Don't we profess to accept the Bible as our rule of faith and practice? Has God's word failed? Or have we failed to follow God's word? Do we need a Refresher Course in Old and New Testaments to bring to our remembrance what is contained therein? Are we aware of the fact that **our rule of faith and practice** tells us that "if you bite and devour one another, beware lest you be consumed by one another?" Galatians 5:15 **Our rule of faith and practice** also tells us that we should possess a fervent love for one another, and even if a brother or sister sins, "love will cover a multitude of sins." I Peter 4:8, Galatians 6:1 provides another way that we should deal with a brother who

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may be overtaken in any trespass. It states: "You who are spiritual restore such a one in the spirit of gentleness, considering yourself lest you also be tempted."

Bishop Blake, as leader of "**the greatest Church in the world,**" and one who has for many years participated in the ordaining of Elders, selecting of leaders, appointing of pastors, and consecrating of Bishops in the Church, you have been blessed to come to know persons who might be classified as **SPIRITUAL** as well as **SPIRITUEL**, Question: Within the "millions" of persons under your leadership, did we not have a few persons, who are **SPIRITUAL**, who possessed the wisdom knowledge, and understanding needed to resolve our church matters within the Church? James 5:16 provides the means by which we all may be blessed, it says: "Confess your faults one to another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed." Our beloved Church is in dire need of healing! Healing from bruises and wounds that are inflicted by persons within our fellowship, whom we love and support, and not from persons on the outside who don't even know us. We need the healing which is experienced when we ingest properly prescribed doses of God's Word, which is **SPIRIT AND LIFE**. Psalms 107:20 says: "And He sent forth His Word and healed them." My prayer is, Lord send **YOUR WORD!**

Sir, the Lord has blessed me to be good at what He has qualified me to perform; therefore, I hereby offer my services to our beloved Church to help us resolve certain ecclesiastical matters that, if allowed to go unchecked, may be most expensive and embarrassing to our National Church, its leadership and to ail of the members at large. The angel mat was thrown out of heaven would like to see us in the Courts, but I would like to see us out of the Courts. As Holy Ghost filled people, we will hear and follow the voice of the Lord, so let me help you. I hereby offer the following: If you will present to me the files on all **ECCLESIASTICAL MATTERS**, that should be resolved pursuant to **OUR BIBLICAL DOCTRINE** and **CONSTITUTION OF OUR BELOVED CHURCH**, after prayerful study, evaluation and analysis, I will present to you a paradigm and modus operandi that will, **IF FOLLOWED**, bring immediate settlement of those cases that tend to divert our attention from our **TRUE MISSION**. When the Lord gives us the solution, all will be satisfied.

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Bishop Blake, **METAPHORICALLY SPEAKING**, as to the matter which I have herein before addressed, I may be classified as Balaam's Ass. I am a dumb beast, guided by **INSTINCT** (which is God-given). You may desire to ignore my actions, or strike me, or even kill me. But, when the Lord opens your eyes you will see that what a **GOOD ASS I AM**. Why? You'll still be alive and able to go and bless God's people with the blessings that HE alone can give.

OUR CHURCH LOVES AND CARES FOR OUR PRESIDING BISHOP

When we renounced the One man leadership model, that was given to our Founder, we rejected the leadership model upon which the Church Of God In Christ, Inc. Was found. God is one, the Church is one, the Church is led by one Spirit, and Christ, who is One with God the Father is Head of me Church. One is the perfect number, for it is like God. God always chose one man to lead His people, and He always gives His leader one people to lead

The General Assembly has elected you to lead the Church Of God In Christ, Inc., the Church whose name and ministry are suggested in II Cor. 5:17-19. In verse 19 the name is clearly set form: "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself." By this time, I am sure mat you have been made aware that you are not elected to lead the Church Of God In Christ, Inc. in which you and I were born, nor the Church that was led by Bishops Mason and Jones. The **NAME** may look the same, but you are called to lead a **DIFFERENT** Church. Your title is different, the process by which you were elected is different, your tenure in office is different, and your expectations are different. Because your position, at present, is not considered permanent or for life; and because of the great sacrifice that one is required to make to serve in the position of Presiding Bishop, the Church allows the Presiding Bishop to continue to pastor his local congregation while he serves. The local Church is his main source of support, but he is graciously provided for by the National Church. After four years, if he is not reelected he is able to return home where he is loved and supported.

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Fortunately, for you and for the Church as well, you are the pastor of the largest congregation in the Church Of God In Christ, Inc. By your testimony, you have a membership of 27,000 members who love you and the Church Of God In Christ, Inc. As our Presiding Bishop, the Church provides the means by which your needs are met. Whenever you travel, we desire that you will be comfortable; therefore, an adequate expense account is provided. An annual \$100,000 honorarium is provided along with other appropriate emoluments that are deemed necessary. When the Presiding Bishop visits; by invitation or personal choice, any of die more than 200 ecclesiastical jurisdictions, to preach, teach or encourage the saints, he receives liberal financial offerings. In the smaller jurisdictions \$10,000 and above is considered appropriate, and in larger jurisdictions the offerings may be \$15,000 or more. He attends and speaks at seven (7) national conferences or conventions each year, and they are delighted to give him an offering. During the Bishop's Conference in Cleveland, Ohio, the bishops were happy to give a sum of more than \$40,000. The Women's Convention, AIM and die other conferences make liberal financial gifts to the Presiding Bishop. During Holy Convocation, when he speaks to the Board of Bishops, the chairman sees to it that a liberal offering is received for the Presiding Bishop. When new bishops are made, the Presiding Bishop is usually invited to give the inaugural address, and mat assures him of another liberal financial blessings. The Presiding Bishop shows his concern for the families of deceased bishops by making himself available to eulogize the beloved deceased. When the funeral is over, they usually find time to bless the Presiding Bishop with an offering. Even though all of his expenses are provided for, and his annual honorarium is assured, the fifty or more appointments that he makes during the year should yield an estimated sum of \$500,000 to support the ministry of the Church. The saints are taught to show their love by giving, and they give, as the record will show.

The Church Of God In Christ, Inc. Is indeed fortunate to have a Leader whose presence in various jurisdictions, conventions and conferences throughout the Church, has the effect of generating large sums of finance to be remitted to the General Treasury of the Church to support Education, Missions and other selected

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Ministries. We thank God for the Leadership position that you now occupy and trust that God will continue to guide and direct your steps as you seek to lead us during these Perilous Times.

WITH YOUR LEADERSHIP, I CAN SEE THAT OUR FUTURE WILL BE BETTER AND MORE PROSPEROUS FOR ALL CONCERNED.

LOOK UP! SPEAK UP! AND TELL THE WORLD WHO WE REALLY ARE!

Bishop Blake, at this time in the history of our Church, when our true identity should be revealed, why is the leadership of the Church silent on certain issues involving immorality that are slowly, but surely, surfacing in our Church. Are we aware that we have a duty to speak and make clear what our Church believes, what we teach, what we practice, what we proclaim and what we uphold? We recognize the fact we are all fallible creatures, as all men are, but we also attest the fact that, pursuant to the guidelines given in **“our rule for faith and practice,”** we are in process of living a holy lifestyle. It is a progressive process: As the light or truth is revealed to us, we learn how to live each day. Some learn faster than others, and there are perhaps some who are “ever learning but never come to know the truth.” They are still in the family, they are loved; and our love “covers a multitude of sins.” It does not condone the sin; but as a scab covers a wound while it heals, so does our love cover those who may be struggling with certain ailments, whether spiritual or physical, that are in the healing process. While they are being covered by our love, we are obligated to continue our spiritual therapy by teaching the **WORD** so that they will be constantly reminded that all unrighteousness is sin and that, if they are to be witnesses for the **LORD**, they must repent and change their lifestyle.

The new Church Of God In Christ, Inc., since 1968, has not been as diligent in preaching doctrinal messages as was the Original Church. It appears that the preachers find it convenient to avoid preaching about the sins of the flesh, sins of

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the spirit and sin for which there is no forgiveness. Whoever is responsible for selecting the speakers usually seems to choose those who are known to “rock the audience,” and who are known to possess a special “anointing” for raising money. The people desire to be fed the “sincere milk of the **WORD**,” so that they may become strong in the **FAITH**, but, in many cases, instead of giving them the **WORD** we put “**PACIFIERS**” in their mouths that deceive them into feeling that they are being fed. When they leave us, the hunger is still there: They lack the **WORD** that gives the spiritual nutrients needed to resist temptation. Because their “spiritual immune system” is weak, such persons become victims of greed, lying, sexual immorality, and murder (hating their brothers and sisters) and other sinful viruses to which the “angel that was thrown out of heaven” exposes them. When they become victims, and are placed in high position of leadership by the Church, it gives the Church a bad name. When new members come into the Church, and observe persons with whom they have been associated in the world in lofty positions of excellence in the Church, they may find a new “comfort zone” in the Church and attempt to remain therein. If they are not taught what we believe, and see what we believe enforced, you can understand why we may get a bad name, both within and without.

As you will recall, in the past we allowed certain persons, who were reported to be homosexuals, to remain in office. The late Bishop Husband was on the General Board, the highest executive office in the Church, for 20 years. They put him up to preach in every convocation, and he would always sing: “I’m bound for Mt. Zion away out on the Hill, and if anybody makes it, surely I will.” Well, he might have made it to Mount Zion, away out on the hill, but many persons were misled by his conduct. There are other cases that I could cite, and how we worked together to save them and to protect their names and the name of the Church, but I find that unnecessary at this time.

In Isa. 9:16, it appears that God charged the Leaders of that day and time with the “crime” of causing the people to err. In Isa. 58:1, he assigned the prophet the task of showing the people their sins and trespasses. And, in Isa. 56:10, he accuses the watchmen of being “blind, ignorant and like dumb dogs that could not bark.”

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They are said to be sleepy, slumbering, greedy dogs that never seem to get enough, and who cannot understand. He further states that they look to their own way and each one seeks for his own gain. I conclude from my reading that in the past God appointed Leaders to teach, instruct and warn his people. God did it in the past, and I believe that God gives His Leaders similar assignments today. With all of the immoral acts taking place within our Church, I have been rather concerned that our Leaders have not made a statement as to our position regarding the same. I have great love and respect for our Leaders; therefore, I am not so audacious as was the prophet Isaiah: He referred to the Leaders as dumb dogs. In the spirit of what Koheleth says in Eccl. 3:1-8, relative to seasons and time, I'll just put it this way: Our Leaders seem to be undergoing a **SEASON** of silence, waiting for the appropriate **TIME** to speak so that the intended **PURPOSE** may be realized.

When the **SEASON IS OVER**; and the **TIME TO SPEAK** has arrived, if our beloved leaders are busy with other pressing ecclesiastical matters, there are capable, spirit-filled, qualified, sanctified persons available, and ready to write the message for you. When the message is delivered to you; there will be no charge, but the writer will accept a generous freewill offering of the kind that the saints gladly give to the Presiding Bishop when he delivers a message that feeds their hungry souls.

“TIME, EVER GROWING OLDER, TEACHES ALL THINGS”

My life in the Church Of God In Christ, Inc., almost 87 years, has been - and continues to be - exciting, wonderful, educational, and reassuring. Having been taught, trained and loved by Holy parents, Bishop & Mrs. W. R. Nesbitt, Sr., pioneers of the Church Of God In Christ, I was taught that the **WORD of GOD** is right and that it will **STAND**. I knew and shared many great hours with Bishop C. H. Mason and other founders of the Church, and gained information as to our early beginnings and what God had revealed to them. Beginning in 1945, I assisted Bishop U. E. Miller in the General Secretary's office. I served as Executive Secretary and Special Advisor to Bishop O. T. Jones, Sr., second Senior Bishop of

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the Church, and only successor to Senior Bishop Mason. I was very much involved in the legal and other matters that led to the Coup in 1968. It was that single event that changed the total structure and operations of the Church. The fact is, in 1968 we became a different Church, operating under the same name, but with a different constitution, a new and different leadership model, and a different “spirit.”

With the new system, a 12-man leadership model is attempting to lead a Church that was found under a 1-man leadership model. The 1-man leadership model was believed to be God-inspired, as attested to by the Founders, but the 12-man model appears to have been designed for different reasons than that of the original Church of God In Christ, Inc. In some respects, this new Church appears to glorify man rather than God, for God’s plan appears to have been rejected and man’s plan was adopted. It further suggests that it was the fallacious thinking of those who devised the plan that 12 men, elected every four years, by the will of the people (General Assembly), could lead and direct God’s Church better than One God-given leader who was submitted to the will of God and guided by God’s Word. Under the new regime, we recite the words “We hold the Holy Scriptures as our rule of faith and practice,” but we have adopted a poorly written, ambiguous constitution, that is void of the Holy Scriptures which we are attempting to enforce. By the constitution, it appears that we have adopted a philosophy that “man is the measure of all things.” Under the rule of the Original Church we acknowledged God as the **ONE** who set certain positions in the Church, but under the present system it appears that the General Assembly is the Law Maker and the standard setter for all leaders of the Church. By the constitution, Elders, Pastors, and Bishops are not required to meet the Biblical Standards as set forth in I Tim. 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5 - 9. The General Board, made up of former Jurisdictional Bishops, is elected by the General Assembly. The General Board selects and appoints Jurisdictional Bishops; Jurisdictional Bishops select and appoint Elders who are appointed as Pastors. Pastors select and recommend men to the Jurisdictional Bishop to be ordained. Because there are no specific Biblical

requirements or enforceable uniform training programs, it is possible that some may become pastors, and even Bishops without the necessary qualifications to perform at the level that is expected.

Whether it was by design or misadventure, the writer of the constitution made no provision for the office of BISHOP as it is described in I Tim. 3:1 - 7 and Titus 1:5 -9. This office is to be held by persons of high moral and spiritual values. They must be educationally and culturally trained and able to teach others by precept and example. They must be hospitable, compassionate, kind and domestically stable, and they must not be drunkards, quarrelsome or lovers of money. Finally, they must not be novices because there is the danger of being deceived and fall under the same judgment as the Devil. You can see that the office of BISHOP was to be highly esteemed, and it was not for any and every person who might have the desire to be a BISHOP. Only those who wanted to meet the requirements were to be admitted to that office.

Under the present system, the General Assembly only sets the requirements for Jurisdictional Bishops, and they are minus the Biblical requirements. Article IV, Section A, Paragraph 1, lists the following requirements:

- a. He must be an ordained elder
- b. He must be in good standards with the Church
- c. He must be a man of ability, honesty and integrity, and he shall be dedicated to the work and service of the Church

There may be some **Jurisdictional Bishops**, elders and pastors who meet the biblical requirements that are set for the office of BISHOP, but the constitution does not require it. The constitution does not set requirements for FOREIGN BISHOPS, but it provides as follows: Article IV, Section B: The qualifications, powers and duties of a FOREIGN BISHOP shall be fixed and determined by the General Board.

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If it is our conviction that the Holy Scriptures, as contained in the Old and New Testaments of our Holy Bible, are the only infallible written **WORD of GOD**; and if we believe that the **WORD OF GOD**, the Holy Bible, is “our rule for faith and practice, shouldn't we require Pastors and Bishops, who teach others to follow and obey the **WORD**, to comply with the biblical standards as a condition precedent to being ordained or consecrated? I am sure that those who aspire to such position would be happy to comply if it were a constitutional requirement.

OBSERVATION: There are some in our midst who **PREACH** very hard against those who put the **BIBLE** and **PRAYER** out of the public schools. Perhaps they have justifiable reasons to take a position against such an act, but I am grateful that they could not take **PRAYER** out of US, because I pray all the time; and there are many places that I can read my **BIBLE** that are outside the **PUBLIC SCHOOLS**.

THE BIG QUESTION: **WHY DID THEY LEAVE THE BIBLE OUT OF OUR CONSTITUTION ? WAS IT AN OVERSIGHT?**

Let us pray for those who left the **BIBLE** out of our **CONSTITUTION**. Because of the lack of the guidance the **WORD** gives, our beloved Church is suffering in ways that only God can heal.

LET US PRAY: Father, please forgive them for they did not know what they were doing.

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SUGGESTIONS FOR PREPARING TO MOVE THE CHURCH FORWARD

We are now operating in the 21st Century; and our beloved Church is now 103 years of age, but it appears that, with all that is available to and for us, we don't seem to be as effective as we should be. We are indeed a great Church, we have wonderful, talented, educated, trained, eligible, available, qualified, dignified, experienced, professional, sanctified, knowledgeable persons whose efficiency can help us to be what God wills that we become. If they are not within our ranks, if they can meet our requirements, we can bring them into the fold.

- 1. WE NEED A MASTER PLAN FOR THE CHURCH THAT OUTLINES OUR MISSION, AIMS, GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND THE MODUS OPERANDI FOR IMPLEMENTING THE PLAN FOR THE PRESENT AND FUTURE.** Selecting a leader every four years has been one of the main causes for our lack of progress. Since 1968, every new leader presents and tries to carry out his vision for the Church. Even though the leader before him might have had excellent ideas, when he died or was moved out of office, the plan died with him. That is quite unfortunate.
- 2. WE NEEDED A FULL TIME OPERATING NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS OFFICE, IN MEMPHIS, TENNESSEE, THAT IS MANAGED BY A PROFESSIONALLY TRAINED DIRECTOR AND STAFF.** We are attempting to operate a multi-million membership with **ABSENTEE LEADERSHIP**. Most of the persons who are in leadership roles in the Church are Bishops, Elders, Superintendents and lay Persons who are already fully employed. They are trying to serve two masters, and one is neglected. In this case, our beloved Church is the victim. With the proper staff and organization, this office could be the means by which the Church will begin to grow, prosper, gain wealth, win souls and take its rightful place in the **WORLD**.

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OBSERVATION: The office that I envision for the Church would have on staff a research and development expert who would have advised against our selling the CHISC A Hotel. I think he would have advised us to restructure the historic hotel and make it an elegant revenue producing hotel in downtown Memphis.

3. **AN UP-TO-DATE CENSUS OF THE CHURCH IS NECESSARY IF WE ARE TO FUNCTION AS A VIABLE PRODUCTIVE BODY OF BELIEVERS. WE NEED TO KNOW WHO WE HAVE TO DEPEND ON FOR SUPPORT, AND THEY SHOULD KNOW TO WHOM THEY SHOULD LOOK FOR LEADERSHIP, HELP AND PROTECTION.** Question: If a deadly disease were in the land, and every person had to receive one pill that would save his life; as Leader of the Church Of God In Christ, Inc., how many pills would you request to save the lives of the membership?

Bishop Blake, you told us that you are pastoring a congregation of an estimated 27,000 persons. Did you just make up that figure? Or do you have a record to corroborate the feet? Well, if you have a record for your local congregation, we should have a record for the National Church that you lead Moses knew how many troops he had, Gideon knew how many cowards he had in his army, and Jesus knew how many devils he had in the midst of the **TWELVE** that He anointed. It's good to know who you have. This is the **TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY**, it's time for us to be counted.

In the General Assembly of 1987, Bishop J. O. Patterson, first Presiding Bishop of the Church, appointed Elder Samuel P. Nesbitt to the position of National Statistician for the Church Of God In Christ, Inc. After study, research and conferences I came up with a plan that would have assured us of a "good success,"

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but the Presiding Bishop and General Board would not allow me to implement the Plan. After traveling all over the country to meet with the Board, to no avail; and after spending money that could have been used for more important matters, I concluded that **I SHOULD WAIT** for the right **SEASON** and **TIME**.

We are losing members because we don't recognize them. We don't give them the respect of sending them a **MEMBERSHIP CARD**. They receive a card from AARP, AAA and other organizations, and they send in their membership fee each year. They will do the same for the Church, if they are recognized. If you and the General Board will activate my 1987 appointment, and allow me the privilege of conducting a census of the Church, you will be amazed to see what you have been missing. We will find out how many members we have, and we will raise more money that we are now raising in all of our different efforts. Try it, you'll like it

WE WORSHIP GOD IN SPIRIT AND IN TRUTH

The colorful picture of the General Board, displayed on the cover of the Sunday School Teachers' Manual for March - April 2011, sends a powerful message to all who view it. With smiles gleaming from their faces, our Leaders declare to the world, in **BOLD** letters: **WE WORSHIP GOD**. Their declaration identifies them with all men in the world, for every man who worships, must worship his Creator. There may be some who worship, Him ignorantly, but thank God that, because of what we believe, we are able to make the declaration: **WE WORSHIP GOD IN SPIRIT AND IN TRUTH**. By this statement, not only do we identify with all men by stating **THAT** we worship **GOD**, but because we believe in the **JESUS WAY**, we can join with all believers, too, and boldly proclaim, as Jesus said in St. John 4:24, "God is a Spirit, and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth."

The Church Of God In Christ, Inc. Believes that **GOD** is a **SPIRIT**, and we worship Him in spirit and in truth when we exemplify love, compassion, goodwill, kindness and humility in our lives each day. Our Church is known as the Church where every person is God's child, and that we are all children of God. Today, in

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some circles, the question is being raised as to why some persons within the Church, who have labored and made vital contributions to the growth and development of the Church, and who stand up for the principles of the Church, are now considered as non persona grata. We know that things are not always as they seem, but since appearances can be misleading, we would do well if we will let our lights shine on “high beam” so that people will know that The Church Of God In Christ, Inc., is the place where all persons are persona grata.

MONEY FOR EDUCATION AND MISSIONS - IT'S IN THE GOLD CHAINS, THE GOLD CROSSES AND GOLD RINGS

As we approach the **EASTER SEASON**, we should call to remembrance Calvary, and the empty tomb before we rejoice at **EASTER**. Jesus laid down His life on the cross and was buried in a tomb (borrowed) so that **GOD** could raise **HIM** from the dead on **EASTER**. He had to lay down His life **FIRST** before God could raise Him from the dead. Because of His great sacrifice for us, we are who we are today. What are we willing to give to make life better for others?

We have more than 250 Bishops in the Church, and each one wears a **GOLD** cross, a **GOLD** chain and a **GOLD** ring. We are Church of God in Christ **BISHOPS**, which suggests that we wear the best quality of **GOLD**. When our Bishops assemble, it is reasonable to conclude that, on today's market, they should be wearing gold that is valued at approximately **1 MILLION** dollars. Because we love **GOD**, who is **LOVE**, and we worship Him in Spirit and in Truth, we are willing to give **OURSELVES** and all that we have to the cause of the saving of souls.

Based on what we preach and proclaim to others, I am sure that we, the **CONSECRATED BISHOPS OF THE CHURCH OF GOD IN CHRIST, INC.**, will gladly give our **GOLD** for the purpose of financing **EDUCATION AND MISSIONS**. Jesus gave His life for **EDUCATION AND MISSIONS** so that we may be empowered to go and teach all nations. He gave us an example of what

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LOVE will do, and every **BISHOP** of the Church who understands the power of the Love of God, and who preaches Christ and Him crucified, will rise to the occasion and follow the **PRESIDING BISHOP** and **GENERAL BOARD** as they all join in giving their **CONSECRATED GOLD** to the cause of **EDUCATION AND MISSIONS**. When Bishops die, they remove the chain, the cross, and the ring from their dead bodies, so why not give it to Education and Missions while you live. Your gift will help the Church, which you love, to carry out its mission. When this sacrificial gift is made we will all be able to join with the **PRESIDING BISHOP** and say: **"I SEE YOU IN THE FUTURE AND YOU LOOK BETTER THAN YOU DO NOW."**

SUGGESTED CEREMONY FOR GIVING OF GOLD

This ceremony should be conducted in the presence of the **GENERAL ASSEMBLY**. Led by the Presiding Bishop and General Board, they will all march forward and place their **GOLD** in a **LARGE RECEPTACLE** which has been prepared for them. The Presiding Bishop will pray over the gifts and then ask the congregation to stand and join in the singing of **"PRAISE GOD FROM WHOM ALL BLESSINGS FLOW."** This one act of **LOVE will cause REVIVAL** to break out in the **CHURCH OF GOD IN CHRIST. INSTEAD OF SENDING OUT BAD NEWS, LET THE WORLD KNOW THAT WE ARE WORSHIPING GOD IN SPIRIT AND IN TRUTH.**

WHAT IF THE BISHOPS DON'T DESIRE TO GIVE UP THE GOLD?

THE POETIC ANSWER FOR THE BISHOPS

The breath that you breathe didn't cost you a dime, and the Sun gives you light and heat each day for free; the time that you call yours, is in My power to give, and it's by My grace and mercy that I allow you to live.

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I allowed you to use **My GOLD**, because I thought you loved Me; and I expected you to share it, and help to make others free. But I'm disappointed and grieved at how little you care for Me; for when you withheld your GOLD from others, you withheld it from Me.

When viewed from your vestments, Bishops you appear to be; but, that was determined by only what the eyes could see; but, I'm God, the Creator who looks at the Heart, and when you come to Me for help, I'll say to you depart.

In just a few days you, the Leader of the great people of the Church Of God In Christ, Inc., will meet with the saints in our Annual General Assembly in Memphis, Tennessee. Our Church has undergone multiple experiences that have challenged our very souls; but, God is still in control.

When you stand to address the General Assembly, and look out over the thousands who will be gathered to hear you, if you will just be quiet and listen, you will hear them ask: "Is there any word from the Lord?" What will your answer be?

As I have been inspired to write the above, I trust that something contained therein will help with your answer. Get some rest, kiss Mae, and be ready to meet and greet the saints.

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I leave you with the Benediction that we used to close our YPWW Service:

“The Lord bless thee, and keep thee: The Lord make His face
shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee: The Lord lift up His
countenance upon thee, and give thee peace.”

- Numbers 6:24,25, and 26

PAX VOBISCUM

Samuel P. Nesbitt

SPN/jfj

c: AWL COGIC AWH

IT'S JUST A MATTER OF TIME

By
Samuel P. Nesbitt

* * * * *

The tadpole, with its tail, will be released from * jail* and be a jumping frog one day; the caterpillar, in its cocoon, will look forward to June and take wings and fly away.

Many things which appear weak will soon be strong, and things which appear right will be made wrong; when the measuring systems of life are properly applied, many short things will then Measure long.

How long, My GOD! How long, My GOD! must we continually be made to bow low, to the systems of this life which hold us back, and make progress appear to be so slow?

The answer comes, in the sound of a ringing bell, which rings with the beauty of a CHIME; it comes with the sweetness that soothes the taste, but quickens like the acid from a GREEN LIME.

WAKE UP! MAKE UP! And atune your mind to the systems within GOD'S Eternal Plan; you'll get a good look, at just who you are, and how you fit in the MASTER PLAN.

WAKE UP! WAKE UP! and see the change which is progressively coning about; many who have been running speedily around the bases of life, will soon at home plate be called: OUT!

OUT! at home plate, may be IN! - and not too late - since GCD, and not you, controls your fate; the clock on the wall nay show midnight for you, but in GOD'S Plan it's never too late.

This is the moment, in time for you, to invest in GOD'S Eternal Enterprise; life will take on new meaning, and so will you, in a way that's hard to realize.

The time of your arrival at the place of your dream, is not within our finite power to know; but, if you're faithful - in God's Enterprise - the future to you He'll gladly show.

So, don't despair, but remain continually in prayer, as you move upward to the sublime; be temperate as you go, with the assurance to know: IT'S JUST A MATTER OF TIME.

* * * * *

". . to those who love God, who are called according to his plan, everything that happens fits into a pattern for good." " Delight thyself in the LORD; and he shall give you the desires of thine own heart. Commit thy way unto the LORD; trust also in him; and he shall bring it to pass." "Let us not grow tired of doing good, for, unless we throw in our hand, the ultimate harvest is assured." Rom. 8:28; Psalms 37:4-5; Gal. 6:9