

# **CHURCH SECURITY**

**(A SECURITY GUIDE FOR TODAY'S CHURCH)**

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(A Security Guide for Today's Church)

Copyright 2020 by Mfon Umana

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## **Revised Edition**

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For further information or permission, please contact:

Mfon Umana

+234 806 210 7945

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# CONTENTS

## C H A P T E R S

	Dedication
	Acknowledgement
	Forward
	Preface
	Beginning of the matter
One	Church Security and Approaches
Two	Securing Church Member
Three	Securing Church Staff
Four	Securing the Man of God
Five	Securing Church Property
Six	Securing Church Information
Seven	Threats to The Church
Eight	Curbing the Threat in the Church
Nine	Family Security One
Ten	Family Security Two (Growing incidence of rape)
Eleven	Securing the Church from the Pandemic (A new normal)
Twelve	Ultimate Security
Thirteen	Conclusion (End of the Matter)

## **DEDICATION**

**I** dedicate this Revised Edition to God Almighty, the sustainer of life, wisdom and grace. To Him alone be all the glory in the mighty name of Jesus and then to my wife, Mercy Umana, Children and Umana family worldwide.

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I am indebted to the Department of State Services (DSS) for giving me the opportunity to serve the country for thirty-five (35) years, the two past Directors General, A. A. Gadzama (OFR, MNI) and Ekpenyong E. Ita (CFR, MNI) and the present DG Alh. Y,M,Bichi for their support and encouragement.

My appreciation also goes to our father in the Lord, Archbishop John Praise Daniel for writing the forward, Bishop Dr. (Mrs.) Hope Praise, Bishop S.J. Wakili Power for their encouragement, Pastor (Mrs.) Chima Onusiriuka, for proof reading the book and the entire Dominion Chapel, Garki, Abuja, especially the ushering Department that ignited the flame leading to the publication of the book, after a security awareness talk held in Dominion Chapel, Kubwa in 2010.

I want to sincerely thank my wife, Mercy and children for their moral support and encouragement. I am deeply grateful for the encouragement from my family and In-laws. Also, my appreciation goes to Elder Aniefon Akpabio and Pastor (Mrs.) Margret Nnemkini for the inspiration to do the revised edition and to all my friends and partners in the faith.

# FOREWARD

**C**hurch Security written by Mfon Umana is a comprehensive balanced book. It covers both the secular and the spiritual angles to security management. Even though the book is titled "Church Security", the content is applicable to Church as well as other corporate organizations and even individuals. Mfon Umana, being an experienced security officer, has graciously shared from his wealth of knowledge and experience.

"Wisdom is profitable to direct," Ecclesiastes 10:10b. There is a place for faith and there is a place for works. In fact, "Faith without works is dead," James 2:26b. the author has detailed the necessary security checks and actions needed from the human angle. On the same note, he emphasized that God is the ultimate security. The summary is that when the Church management does what human beings can do, God, in His omnipotence, will do what human beings cannot do. It is necessary to take all human precautions but we need to submit to God in all sincerity because "except the LORD keep the city, the watchman waketh in vain," Psalm 127:1b.

A study of the book will open the reader's eyes to various aspects of our lives, physically and spiritually, that we have left porous for too long. There is no better time than now to know and put these necessities into action considering the constantly rising global level of insecurity. The adage "there is no hiding place for a golden fish in the silver bowl" is most applicable in these times.

Knowledge without application is wasted. The book will equip you but "If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them," John 13:17.

Archbishop John Praise Daniel  
Metropolitan Archbishop of Dominion Chapel  
International Churches and

## **PREFACE**

The revised edition of the book "Church Security" A guide for today's Church is coming out about a year after the First Edition. This is due to the enthusiasm and encouragement of friends and well-wishers in the faith in the regard.

The book as stated in the first edition is to draw the attention of the Church to prevailing threats that has crept into its fold. Today, a lot of hitherto unheard incidents such as advance fee fraud (419), pilfering, theft, character assassination, attack on brethren, kidnappings, killing of men of God and their followers, even gay and homosexuality have found their way into the Church, these are all the realities of our time and we cannot pretend or shy away from them, rather we have to face it frontally with wisdom.

Equally of recent, incidence of sexual violence such as rape have become and increasing occurrence in the Churches, that a social worker observed that a large percentage of sexual molestation she had handled comes from the Churches, with some "Men of God" involved in this bastardly acts.

The revised edition therefore includes; a chapter on family security, another chapter on family security with emphasis on growing incidence of rape. Also, it has a chapter on the Church and the pandemic, this arise as it is observed that the Church is not united in its dealing of the issue of COVID-19 pandemic, its therefore called on the Church to unite and with one voice, support the government in dealing with the pandemic, while not ignoring the place of fasting and prayers "Howbeit this kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting." Matthew 17:21.

The book finally still stands on the conclusion that, the cause of all security breaches and challenges arises from man's disobedience and deviation from the original plan of God. It therefore suggests that aside being security conscious, man should in true repentance go back to the place of obedience to enable it recover the lost protective shield blocked by sin.

## CHURCH SECURITY

### Beginning of the Matter

The impetus to write on the topic, church security, a guide for today's Church, came during a short talk on security awareness to the Church ushers and protocol officers of the Dominion Chapel International Headquarters held in Abuja, on 27<sup>th</sup> October 2007. The response and enthusiasm from the participants became the tonic needed to exploit this important, but not much talk about topic, Church security.

The book is not intended to take away the place of God as regards our ultimate security, security without God means the foundation is faulty as anything built on faulty foundation will surely crumble with time.

UNLESS THE LORD BUILDS THE HOUSE, ITS  
BUILDERS LABOR IN VAIN, UNLESS THE LORD  
WATCHES OVER THE CITY THE WATCHMEN STAND  
GUARD IN VAIN **PSALM 127:51 (NIV)**

A renowned man of God once said, "anointing without money is equal to annoyance" what I believe he meant was charging men of God not to be lazy but to get involved in other financial profitable investments or ventures to earn their living, as manna has since stopped falling from heaven. I will also want to say or borrow the above with a little modification **"that anointing without security is a folly"** as men of God have been and are being assassinated all over the place, the Church in some instances burnt down, while the Church in the true sense is doing nothing about its security. Jesus said

"BE ALWAYS ON THE WATCH, AND PRAY THAT YOU  
MAY BE ABLE TO ESCAPE ALL THAT IS ABOUT TO  
HAPPEN, AND THAT YOU MAY BE ABLE TO STAND  
BEFORE THE SON OF MAN". (Luke  
21:36)



If we note, he said watch before praying and not sitting or standing loosely and unconscious of the threats or danger all around us. It will be a folly and absolute lack of wisdom for one to go to the enemy's camp to pray. It will do us good to pray and to get to know the capabilities and weakness of the enemy(s) before getting into its territories.

WHEN A STRONG MAN FULLY ARMED GUARDS HIS  
HOUSE, HIS POSSESSIONS ARE SAFE.

(LUKE 11: 21)

The emphasis again on the above passage are guarding or keeping watch over property and lives, so that they would not be taken or stolen away. The Bible is conscious of evil threats and dangers lurking around us, so it urges us to keep watch and then pray. Prayers fortifies our defence.

THE THIEF (SATAN) COMES ONLY TO STEAL AND KILL  
AND DESTROY: I HAVE COME THAT THEY MAY HAVE  
LIFE AND HAVE IT IN THE FULL. (John 10 :10)

After creation, God put man in the Garden with specific instruction to work it and take care of it.

"THE LORD GOD TOOK THE MAN AND PUT HIM IN THE  
GARDEN OF EDEN TO WORK IT AND TAKE CARE OF  
IT". (GEN. 2: 15)

The emphasis is that man was to cultivate the Garden, keep it or guard it, as what we do not keep well or guard, we lose to the world (Satan). The first man, Adam lost it, that is, he lost his watch over the Garden, allowing the Serpent in to the Garden to take over, he (man) was then banished and in his place Cherubim (Angel) of God were placed to guard the Garden.

AFTER HE (GOD) DROVE THE MAN OUT, HE (GOD)  
PLACED ON THE EAST SIDE OF THE GARDEN OF EDEN  
CHERUBIM AND A FLAMING SWORD FLASHING BACK  
AND FORTH TO GUARD THE WAY TO THE TREE OF  
LIFE. (GEN. 3: 26)

In 1<sup>st</sup> chronicle chapter 26, we see the Israelites on return from exile in Babylon providing for their security, 1<sup>st</sup> Chronicle 26 vs 12-19 shows the explicit roles assigned to secure the totality of the temple.

The divisions of gatekeepers were from the Korahites, Meshelemiah son of Kore one of the sons of Asaph. These divisions of the gatekeepers, through their chief men, had duties for ministering in the temple of the Lord, just as their relatives had. Lot were cast for each gate according to their families, young and old alike.

The lot of the gate fell to Shemaiah, then lots were cast for his son Zechariah, a wise counsellor and the lot for the south gate fell to Obed-Edom and the lot for the storehouse fell to his sons. The lots for the west gate and the Shalleketh gate on the upper road fell to Shuppim and Hosah.

Guards was alongside of guards: there were six (6) Levites on the East, four a day on the North, four a day on the South and two at a time at the store house. As for the court to the west, there were four at the road and two at the court itself.

These were the divisions of the gate keepers who were descendants of Korah & Merari. 1<sup>st</sup> Chronicle 26:12-19.

The above indicate the importance place on the security of the temple, clearly designing specific roles and responsibility as God was with them in the point or post of their assignment. **The security we emplace, God blesses.**

‘But when Sanballat heard that we were re-building the wall, he became angry and was greatly incensed, he ridicules the Jews and in the presence of his associates and the Army of Samaria, he said, what are those feeble Jews doing? Will they restore their wall? Will they offer sacrifices? Will they finish in a day? Can they bring the stones back to life from those heaps of rubble-buried as they are? ‘(Neh. 4 :1 – 2)

But when Sanballat, Tobiah, the Ammonites and the men of Ashdod heard the repairs to Jerusalem's wall had gone ahead and that the gap were being closed, they were very angry. They all plotted together to come and fight against Jerusalem and stir up trouble against it. But we prayed to our God and posted a guard day and night to meet these threat. (Neh.4: 7-9)

Let's note that, though they intensified in their prayers, they emplace measured physical, watch [guards] in place to secure their works and effort.

**It is the writer's belief that when we put measures [security] in place, God strengthens it, as faith grows on something and not emptiness. Men of God or Christians should not faith their security they should do something about it.**

What good is it, my brothers, if a man claims to have faith but has no deeds, can such faith save him.  
(James 2:14)

In the same way, faith by itself if it is not accompanied by action is dead (James 2:17)

The world has become a global village and as such every inconceivable sins and atrocities are easily spread across the globe. The Church being part of the "global world" has had or is having her share of these activities crept into its fold

Today, we have a lot of hitherto, unheard incidence such as advance fee fraud [419], pilfering. Theft, character assassination, attacks on brethren, kidnapping, killings of men of God and their follower, even Gay, homosexuality and all forms of sexual violence in the church, these are the realities of our time, we cannot pretend about it, or shy away from it, but to face it frontally with wisdom. The book will therefore, attempt at opening our inner mind to the realities of these threats, believing it will help in no small

way at creating the necessary awareness to deal with traditional, current and future threats.

Also this day, it is common for Church ushers to walk to our side to mutter to us "please keep an eye on your bags or property" instead of urging us to be attentive to the word of God. Some members, intermittently go out of the Church to peep at their vehicles parked outside the Church premises to ensure that it is still there. It is that bad; also incident or threat of bombing and actual detonating bomb in the Church was and being witnessed. These are the realities of our days and time, may God open our eyes to these realities and grant us the wisdom to deal with it. It is wisdom to be weary of one's security

Wisdom is supreme, therefore get wisdom, though it cost all you have, get understanding. (Proverb 4: 7)

Discretion will protect you and understanding will guard you. (Proverb 2 :11)

## **QUESTIONS TO ASK**

As you read further, pause and sincerely answer these questions in your mind.

- ⇒ Do you feel safe or conscious of your safety in the Church?
- ⇒ Is your handbag, handset, Bible, or other item safe in the Church?
- ⇒ Have any of your items ever been stolen in Church?
- ⇒ How would or does your Church handles security breach or situation?
- ⇒ Does your Church have trained security personnel and equipment to handle its security breaches?
- ⇒ Does your Church have emergency or evacuation places or drill in place?
- ⇒ Does your Church have a security committee have ever held any security consciousness programme for church workers or members?

## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **CHURCH SECURITY AND APPROACHES**

This chapter will define the concepts of Church, security, Church security and give an over view of the concept while equally highlighting the approaches to security

#### **CHURCH**

The BBC English dictionary defines a Church as a building in which Christians worship. It also defines church as one of the group of people within the Christian worship. It is also seen as a local congregation of Christians

Church generally connotes a place either a building or space where believers converge to worship God and receive his word or message.

When the day of Pentecost came, they were all  
together in one place (Act 2:1)

The above connotes that for there to be a Church people must come together in a particular place, be in one accord or one mind in reverence to a true God.

#### **FUNCTION OF THE CHURCH:**

And in the Church, God has appointed first of all Apostles, second Prophets, third Teachers, Workers of miracles, also having gifts of healing, those able to help others, those of gift of administration and those speaking in different kind of tongues (1 Corinthians 12 :28)

**Apostles:** These are followers of Christ who go from place to place telling people about Christ and converting them to the way of Christ. They also plant churches.

**PROPHETS:** They Speak Gods mind through chosen persons, in some church people are observe, groom and prepare for the Prophetic office.

**TEACHERS:** They Teach the word of God in an unbiased and raw state, no diplomacy with the word of God especially if it is as received.

**MIRACLE:** When the word of God is preached in truth and spirit it builds up faith in the believers, this faith prompts up miracles in diverse forms. The first duty therefore, is to preach or teach the word, faith is there stirred up which brings about miracle and sharing of these miracle through testimonies which in turn stir up faith in other believers and a repeat is recorded

**HELP:** This is an area that really needs much attention from the church, the insinuation that church is not a charity organization or home should be jettison, as church should have a committee in charge to take care of genuine need of members.

**GOVERNMENT:** This has to do with the grace to administer the church [body of Christ], administration being the effective utilization of all available resources to meet expected end. The expected end in the regard is the salvation of soul. **It is important to note that the church is also to lift up the government of the nation to God in their prayers, teach its members their civic responsibility to the country, while the church remains non-partisan.**

Church is the house of God and Christ it's head, and the way to behave or instruction on how to conduct activities in the church is expressly stated in the Bible (1 Corinthians 2,3,4,5 and 6)

## **SECURITY**

The BBC English dictionary defines security as follows

- ⇒ All precautions that are taken to protect a place
- ⇒ A legal protection against possible harm or loss
- ⇒ A feeling of being safe

Security is also defined as the assurance or state of being secured, free from danger, apprehension and risk. It is equally defined as the state of being safe or free from harm and hurt and to be able to conduct one's responsibility without any hindrance

## **CHURCH SECURITY**

This is a state or condition attained when the Church and its brethren there- in are safe from assassination, their property safe from theft, vandalism and other dangers. The definition presumes that to effectively secure a Church, all the necessary procedures and precautions would have been put in place to achieve a condition of safety. There must be deliberate or conscious efforts at providing effective security in the Church.

Church security therefore, should entail the physical security of the Church building, its property, its leaders, workers, congregation and their property and their children.

The questions to ask therefore” is the Church safe or secured in the real sense of it?” This is not a matter of faith. If the answer to the question is in the negative, then we need to arise and do something about the security of the Church. The government or our faith alone cannot do it; even the Holy Ghost needs the cooperation of the Church in collaboration with government in its effort to provide us security.

## **SECURITY APPROACHES**

Security could basically be approached from two [2] perspectives viz proactive and reactive.

### **PROACTIVE:**

This is pre-empting or preventing a thing from happening e.g. if I had to travel without a spare tyre and one of the tyres got deflated or busted on the road, what do I do? Obviously, getting a good spare tyre before embarking on the journey could have been the only pre-emptive option. This is not about faith, but pre-empting it. It is a proactive measure.

Being proactive has to do with having it in one’s mind that if a certain situation arises, what would I do in preparation for the inevitable? **If we**

**have to go out for evangelism in a certain community, is there the likelihood of clash with the opposite religion or sect? What then do we do to avert it either to cancel, reschedule or liaise with security and law enforcement agencies?**

“when they had gone, an angel of the lord appeared to Joseph in a dream, ‘Get up’ he said’ take the child and his mother and escape to Egypt. Stay there until I tell you for Herod is going to search for the young child to Kill him”. (Matthew 2 :13).

The life of Jesus was proactively saved by the revelation of the Angels to flee before being killed. As Christians, do we pray and ask God for his will before doing anything or embarking on any assignment or project or do we later blame God or man for the negative consequences of our actions?

The spying of Jericho was a proactive security measure to identify the strength and weakness of the people of Jericho. The spies were able to penetrate Jericho, mingle with them and get necessary information about their readiness for battle. Today, Christians would do well to learn this, as information is power, the more information you have about your enemies or adversary, the more power you have over him or them. This puts you in a better place to protect yourself or direct your prayer instead of praying amidst, if you know where your adversary is coming from you can then avoid his route and save your energy in praying.

### **REACTIVE:**

This is the opposite of being proactive. Here, something or an event or situation has occurred and we are all hands to put up measures to prevent a re-occurrence: a sort of crying over spilt milk. The danger here is that lives and property lost can never be recovered. If I got a house prayed and moved



into it without considering its security, and that of its environment and if it is burgled, I will then consider fencing the house, employing guards and putting in place other security measures. That is reactive measure acting after a disaster. Prevention, they say, is better than cure. It is therefore better to be proactive than reactive.

**Proactive action is better than reactive action, while reactive action is better than no action at all.**

## **OTHER APPROACHES**

Security could also be approached from four (4) other areas viz a viz

- ⇒ Individual approach
- ⇒ Group approach
- ⇒ Governmental approach
- ⇒ Holistic approach

### **INDIVIDUAL APPROACH**

This occurs where an individual in a community or environment, being security conscious or having a security training and orientation, puts up security measures or apparatus in place within his vicinity to check or curb threats to his life and property. This is not an effective approach as it does not achieve an overall security of the environment. It is a selfish form of security as its attempt at taking care of self and immediate family alone.

### **GROUP APPROACH**

This occurs when individuals or group of people in an environment pool resources together to check security threats or put in place proactive measures to nip security threats as they manifest. This is usually done by joint patrol, vigilante, payment for general guards for the area, etc. This approach is better than the individual approach as everybody is involved and carried along. Resources are pooled together to achieve overall security. It also encourages order and good neighborliness.

## **GOVERNMENT APPROACH**

This is about government providing effective security control and regulation in an area or vicinity. These includes provision of Police posts, patrols, stop and checks, security education, liaison and law enforcement in an area. This, to a great extent, helps in checking threats and builds up confidence of the people towards the government. It also creates an enabling environment for development.

## **HOLISTIC APPROACH**

The holistic or effective approach is about a total work in synergy to bring about a free society devoid of varying threats to its security. Here the individuals, groups and government work together to bring about an airtight security.

The church can be a rallying point in the quest for having an effective approach to security. The holistic approach could also be about the government, through its security agencies, creating an enabling environment and regulations and co-opting other interested groups or stakeholders towards having an effective security in the country, a sort of community policing as currently being introduced by the Nigerian Police.

Security is every body's business. There is no need to be sentimental about it or to even faith it. In any environment we find ourselves, it behooves on us as individuals to prompt the group approach which could gradually move to the holistic approach. It is in doing this that progressively, the security of the Environment, State and Country will be ensured.

## **QUESTION TO ASK**

- ⇒ What is our own definition of the Church?
- ⇒ What is the place of the Holy Spirit in today's Church?
- ⇒ What is our understanding of security and what measures can we identify within our Churches?

- ⇒ Which type of Security approaches are we involved in or are applicable in our Church/Environment?
- ⇒ Do we have police presence in our Church environment?
- ⇒ If we have police presence in our environment, how do we assist or encourage the Police.?
- ⇒ What do you think about community or state police?

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **SECURING CHURCH MEMBERS**

The Church is made up of people (congregation or its members). These individuals make up the families and the families make up the Church. If the individual is not safe, then the family and ultimately the Church is not safe.

The security of an individual has to do with his safety from harm and provision of an enabling environment for him to go about his or her duties without any hindrances. It is on record the series of kidnapped attacks on Christians even the assassination of prominent men of God. No matter the motive, it is a reality that Christians and prominent men of God are being assassinated worldwide, Nigeria inclusive. So there is the need for every Christians to be security conscious, there is this security axiom that stuck to my consciousness longtime ago.

"DO NOT THINK IT CANNOT HAPPEN, BE SECURITY  
CONSCIOUS (ALERT)"

"DO NOT FAITH YOUR SECURITY, BE SECURITY  
CONSCIOUS".

It will surely do us well, if we stuck to this saying. There is no need to faith our security, but act on it. No matter how good or holy we think we are, there is always a Judas lurking around or the devil roaming about looking for who to devour (destroy). The security we put around ourselves, God strengthens. There is also the need to be conscious of putting security around our family members, our children, wives, relatives and those dear to us. As hurt to them could affect our psychological disposition.

### **THREATS TO CHURCH MEMBERS**

The Church like that of the days of old are surrounded by many threats to its members, some are herein highlighted

⇒ Assassination

- ⇒ Kidnapping
- ⇒ Theft of property/monies
- ⇒ Slandering
- ⇒ False prophecies
- ⇒ Radicalization
- ⇒ Petty jealousy
- ⇒ Hypnotism
- ⇒ Seduction
- ⇒ False messages
- ⇒ Bombing and demolition of churches.
- ⇒ Rape (growing trend)

In Matthew 2:1 – 23, we see the threats to the life of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, the warning from the Angels for Christ to be taken away to Egypt. This was a proactive measures put in place to safeguard our Lord Jesus Christ and his family.

“WHEN THEY HAD GONE, AN ANGEL OF THE LORD APPEARED TO JOSEPH IN A DREAM “GET UP” HE SAID TAKE THE CHILD AND HIS MOTHER AND ESCAPE TO EGYPT, STAY THERE UNTIL I TELL YOU, FOR HEROD IS GOING IN SEARCH OF THE CHILD TO KILL HIM”

(MATTHEW 2: 13)

ON THAT DAY A GREAT PERSECUTION BROKE OUT AGAINST THE CHURCH AT JERUSALEM, AND ALL EXCEPT THE APOSTLES WERE SCATERED THROUGHOUT JERUSALEM AND JUDEA.GODLY MEN BURIED STEPHEN AND MOURNED DEEPLY FOR HIM.

(ACT 8 :1-2)

BUT SAUL BEGAN TO DESTROY THE CHURCH, GOING  
FROM HOUSE TO HOUSE, HE DRAGGED OFF MEN  
AND WOMEN AND PUT THEM TO PRISON

(ACT 8: 3)

The above are all realities, no matter how well we do the work of God, or live our Christian life, there are still offenders of the brethren all about, Arch Bishop John- Praise Daniel, once stated that, "it's only a ripe fruit that attracts stones". When you are being attacked, it means you are on course and shining. The Church could prompt its members' security awareness through its preaching's, teachings and even organizing security awareness lectures or seminars periodically. Conversely, today people in quest for revenge or settling scores from all sort of perceived hurts, trailed their victims to church and in broad day on Sunday, kill or maim them before the altar of God with other innocent worshippers caught up in the fire, that's how bad it has gone.

### **INDIVIDUAL SECURITY TIPS**

- ⇒ Do not have a set or regular pattern e.g. going to the gym every particular day/time or using a particular route for your morning and evening walk.
- ⇒ Avoid taking a walk alone, move around with trusted friend and avoid dark alley.
- ⇒ Alternates routes and days you use when leaving home or office.
- ⇒ conscious of your instinct, if someone or something makes you uneasy, get out or get away.
- ⇒ Watch what you say and where you say them (flippancy)
- ⇒ Do not live an obvious flamboyant life. It could attract either verbal or physical attacks.
- ⇒ Inspect your car in the morning before driving out, to check for sign of tampering.
- ⇒ Establish agreed signals or body movement or gesticulation with your driver in event of emergency or breach to your security.

- ⇒ Locate alternative routes and use them interchangeably.
- ⇒ Be wary of overnight parking of vehicles in the open (light your area properly).
- ⇒ Be conscious of your environment or surrounding and its activities (report any unusual movement or happenings to the Police).
- ⇒ Use décor when driving to avoid being trailed or followed
- ⇒ Create or appoint a secret escape route in office and home.
- ⇒ Avoid reneging on promises or business dealings.
- ⇒ Choose your company or associates wisely
- ⇒ Keep good relationship with neighbors, they could be there for you in time of threat situations.
- ⇒ Do not be docile, but be current and conscious of global happening
- ⇒ Be suspicious of unusual parcels or mails, it could be time bomb or chemical mails.
- ⇒ Keep a line of communication open to a trusted friend, confidant or the Police in time of distress or emergency.

### **CHAPTER 3**

#### **SECURING CHURCH STAFF**

The staff of the Church in this chapter looks at full time and part time worker of the Church, whose disposition could have either positive or negative impact on the Church or body of Christ. The intent is to ensure that person(s) employ into any position in the Church is the right staff.

In the circular or government business, the process adopted to ensuring that the people that are employed into sensitive Offices or position are credible persons is called vetting, that is enquiries conducted before a person is employed into position of authority, to ascertain his competence and loyalty to the office or nation, he intends to serve. Therefore, securing the staff of the church has to do with measures put in place before employment of a person into position of authority in the church to ensure their credibility and loyalty to the church or body of Christ.

The key position in the Church to be subjected to security enquiries before employments are positions of Pastors, associate Pastors, Accountants, Accounting officers, Administrative officers, even part-times staff holding sensitive spiritual and Administrative position in the Church.

The questions to ask therefore are; how do we ensure that people employed into position of authority in the Church are men or women proven integrity and loyalty to the Church. How do we retain loyal staff, not prone to blackmail or threat to their life's and threat to others or from being bought over or defected on a slight disagreement?

"Brothers, choose seven men from among you who are known to be full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom. We will turn this responsibility over to them and will give our attention to prayer and the ministry of the word."  
(ACT 6 :3)



The key phrases in the above quotation are;

**LOOK**: to look means to painstakingly, inquire or sort out. It connotes a sort of selection or screening in our today's society. What the apostles requested for was that, the people locate and screen seven (7) men for the work in the Church.

**HONEST REPORT**: After locating the persons, inquiry properly commences. The past records of the people are investigated formally or informally to bring to bear the antecedents of those located or selected, were they faithful in past activities? how credible are they? are they men of integrity? what about their relationship with other people? their temperaments? etc. All are brought to bear to build up the true person.

**HOLY GHOST**: Are they men filled with the Holy Ghost, this could be noticed in their Behavior, Utterances, Dispositions and Temperaments.

**BUSINESS**: Business in this instance means, the church as an organized entity, set out to make profit of soul winning to the kingdom. The dividend or end of year profit being the total number of souls harvested and nurtured in the church in a given period. People chosen or placed in strategic position must aside the above, possessed the requisite educational background or skill in his area of responsibility.

Securing Church staff therefore, has to do with the painstaking selection of employees or persons into positions of authority in the Church. In the Church, who do we employ as Pastors, office workers, Accountants, Receptionist, Telephone operator, Security guards, Driver etc. do we use the standard of the Church of old, or today's standard in employing people into positions in the Church? Do we even in seemingly simple position as Account clerks or Receptionists, check these people's background to get little knowledge about

them. There should be differences, in the way the world does their things from the way the Church does hers. The Church should influence the world and not the world influencing the Church.

In the employment to any position in the church, aside being "Born Again", there is the need to do a check on such persons before appointment. These checks are necessary to exclude people of questionable character or antecedents from entering into the church system and from bringing the church and body of Christ to disrepute. There are security companies that can be contacted to do these enquires

In the church system, if a Pastor that was excommunicated from another Church on ground of wrong doings, finds his or her way into the employment of another church, without the requisite repentance and atonement, then the result could best be imagined. (except there was genuine repentance and follow up). These days, we have people of deceptive characters in and out of the Churches leading to doctrinal confusions in the body of Christ, simple enquiries on the background of these people before employment or posting to position of trust in the Church could suffice.

### **PRE-EMPLOYMENT CHECKS**

In the secular business world, person(s) to be employed or appointed into a high or sensitive position is or are subjected to thorough enquiries. This involves checking into records for anything that could negate his being employed or appointed. If the above, is done in the secular world, while then is it not done in our father's business. The Church in doing the above, should go beyond the secular to involve the spiritual, couple with the person being granted temporary employment or placed on probation and watching before being given final appointment.

In the days of old, the enquiry was to confirm honesty, infill of the Holy Ghost, wisdom and faith, which are tested before appointment.

## **THINGS TO CHECK**

**Birth place or Nationality:** to confirm the person is a Nigerian, and if not to ensure if he has the requisite papers.

**Cultural background:** Ensure the cultural background is not in conflict with the faith. This might appear unnecessary but important as a conflict of culture with that of the church could cause a problem in the church.

**School attended:** Confirm attendance and level of educational attainment and checking for antecedents and conduct while in schools attended.

**Previous employment:** Find out character and behavioral pattern while in employment and reason for leaving such employment etc.

**Police checks:** Police checks in area of domiciled are cross checked to ascertain any criminal antecedences.

These and more others are checked to ensure that any person to be employed into the church is a person of high spiritual and ethical character.

## **PERIODIC CHECKS**

When a person is employed or appointed into a church position, there is need for a form of monitoring of his duties or activities in the position. People are more likely to change with time, due to a lot of pressures or circumstances. There is therefore, the need to keep tap on the continuous integrity and loyalty of such a person. Such questions that need be frequently asked are:

- ⇒ Is he or she derailing into another area regarding his or her primary assignment?
- ⇒ What about his turnout, disposition and punctuality to work? This could be a sign of disloyalty or lack of interest;
- ⇒ Who are those he keeps as company and their antecedent? and

⇒ Is he living within or outside his income? This can be noticed in his dressing; things he purchases a new expensive way of life. (This though subjective when sincerely explore could reveal, useful information).

All this put together and properly analyzed, could tell if the employee is still loyal to the church or his loyalty has change or drifted.

In Acts 6 vs 1 to the end, we saw how Stephen, a man full of the Holy Ghost was duly appointed as a Deacon to serve. He lived to his calling and died seeing or making heaven, because he was indeed a man of integrity and well chosen. Can today Christians and Church leaders sincerely say so? All we are hanging on to is Grace. How long can we live in sin or disobedience that Grace may abound? **May God help us to realize that grace is an enablement to stay out of sin, not an excuse to stay in sin.**

The first impression to a new convert or comer to a Church is the disposition of the leadership and Staff of the Church especially the ushers. It is a necessary impetus that Christ is seen or read through the leadership and church workers, so the need to painstakingly select or choose church staff or workers became a necessary impetus to the body of Christ.

## **QUESTIONS TO ASK**

- ⇒ When and where was the person born, maturity could come to play.
- ⇒ Inquiry on parental background (to identify religious or cultural background)
- ⇒ Schools attended (to identify past antecedents and educational attainment)
- ⇒ Marital status (some position could be attached to marital stability)
- ⇒ Past employment (to identify experience and reasons for leaving previous jobs)
- ⇒ Any negative security Records (To identify antecedents and unrepentant disposition)
- ⇒ Attestation (who can attest to his characters).

## Chapter FOUR

### **SECURING THE MAN OF GOD**

... Strike the shepherd and the sheep will be scattered  
(Zech. 13: 7)

This chapter will look at the security of the man of God, or head of a Church, although there are many titles ascribed to Church leadership all over the world, however for the purpose of this chapter, they will all be subsumed as man of God, or the set man in a commission or Church.

The scripture above, says it aptly that, when a shepherd (head of a Church) is struck, the sheep that is the congregation (Christians) will scatter. It is no gainsaying that men of God all over the world have been assassinated or threat of attack visited on them across all denomination, this brings to fore the need for the Church to be pro- active and provide a buffer around its men of God.

In the Garden of Gethsemane, Jesus Christ, said to his disciples, sit here while I pray

“My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death”, he said to them “stay here and watch” (Mark 14: 38)

However, after Jesus finished praying and coming back to the disciples, he found them sleeping, he said to Peter “are you sleeping? Could you not keep watch for one hour?

“Watch and pray so that you will not fall into  
temptation” the spirit is willing, but the body is weak

(Mark 14: 38)

The Oxford Advance Learners dictionary defines watch as to look at somebody or something for a time, paying attention” to what happens, it is also defined as to take care of somebody or something for a time or to be careful about something”

The above points to the need for the church to be circumspect, pay attention to everything and every details, take care of its members and particularly take care, watch or protect its leaders, men of God or the set men of the commission, as any threat to them is a threat to all Christians.

### **WHO IS A MAN OF GOD?**

“And in the church God has appointed first of all Apostles, second Prophets, third Teachers, then workers of miracle, also those having gift of healing, those able to help others, those with gift of Administration and those speaking in different kind of tongues.

**(1 Corinth. 12: 28)**

In today’s church we have Head of churches that operates in more than one calling with different titles such as:

- **Pope, Arch Bishop, Bishop, Primate, General Superintendent, General Overseer, Rev Father, Priest, Pastors, Chaplains, Military ranking (General) as in the Salvation Army Church, etc.**

Irrespective of the nomenclature, the Head is the spiritual compass and cover for the Church and so its security and wellbeing should be of utmost importance to the Church, the body of Christ, else the vision is affected or altered.

### **THREATS TO MEN OF GOD**

Threats to men of God varies and evolving with each passing days, however, the following are some that have come to fore

- ⇒ Assassination/Threat of Assassination
- ⇒ Kidnapping
- ⇒ Slandering

- ⇒ Political victimization/Arrest /prosecution
- ⇒ Seduction
- ⇒ Spiritual attacks
- ⇒ Blackmail etc.

### **Biblical men exposed to threats**

Biblical men exposed to threats even assassination are herein cited:

**Jesus Christ:** Jesus' ministry began with threat to his life, Mathew 2: 13. He was betrayed by a "trusted" disciple, Judas Iscariot, Mathew 26:14. He was condemned before trial, Mark 14 :1, John 11: 50. As false witnesses were brought to testify against him, Matt 26: 59, therefore no defense for him was sought, Luke 22: 67: 71. Even though no charge was made against him, Luke 23: 4, he was crucified, Luke 23 vs 26:43.

### **ADAM**

Adam was deceived by the enemy, Satan through his wife. This was the origin of sin in mankind and still happening in today's church. (Gen. 3: 13)

### **ABEL**

Abel was assassinated by his brother, Cain out of jealousy as God regarded the sacrifice of his brother to his own. (Gen 4 :2-10)

### **JOSEPH**

Because of his dreams and vision he shared with his family, he was kidnapped and sold to slavery. (Gen 37: 12 – 36)

### **DAVID:**

As a result of the anointing of God on his life, Saul the king threatened his life on many occasions, he kept running away from the presence of King Saul. (1 Sam. 19:20, 21 & 23)

### **ELIJAH:**

As a result of his exploits and bold disposition, Jezebel threatened the life of Elijah, leading to Elijah's running away for his dear life. (1 King 19: 1 – 7)

**JOHN THE BAPTIST** He was beheaded on instruction of Herod, based on deception and manipulation by Herodian's wife because John the Baptist had been in constant opposition to their abominable marriage. (Matt. 14: 1 – 12)

**STEPHEN:**

He was killed for his boldness in speaking the word of God unfiltered. (Acts 7 :23 – 25)

**PETER AND JOHN**

They were arrested by the authorities for spreading the word of God. However, after much threat, they were let go. (Acts 4: 1 – 13)

**AREAS OF THREATS OR ATTACK TO MEN OF GOD**

The activities of men of God or other important personalities, revolves around three (3) areas, viz a viz

- Residence
- Road (travels)
- Office, church, crusade ground or environment

The above indicates that, any threat assessment or neutralization strategies, would need to revolve around the residence, travels, route of movement to office and conferences or crusade ground. In view therefore, these areas must be an integral part of any security planning around the Church Leader.

**ACTIVITIES TIME SCHEDULE**

The activity's time schedules, though not a constant, might be useful in security planning around the church leaders. How long do they stay at home, church or in transit, this example will suffice;

- Time spent at home (between 10pm – 7am) 9hrs
- Time on transit to office or church – 1hr
- Time spent in office (average)– 5hrs
- Time spent in meetings – 5hrs
- Church program, crusade – 4hrs



The above though, hypothetical could be used as an apt input to security planning as much resource or measures need be sourced as regards long time activities, in the case of appropriating resources.

## **IMPLEMENTATION OF SECURITY AROUND THE MAN OF GOD ACTIVITIES**

Having agree on these three (3) respective areas of attack, the next steps is to put in place measures around these areas. However, it is apt to say before doing this, a holistic security survey to identify the threats, therein must be conducted.

### **RESIDENCE**

A security survey of the residence and its environment, must be conducted to identify threats and vulnerability before any assessment and effective measures is put in place.

The major threat to residence will revolve around, intruder attack and fire outbreak, therefore the necessary measures should be put in place to avoid these threats from occurring. Some of the measures to include

- i.      Emplacement of High barbwire fence to deter intruder.
- ii.     Creation of watch tower or place to enable adequate observation by security guards.
- iii.    Provision of well trained and equipped security guards.
- iv.     Emplacement of adequate security lighting arrangement in the residence, well lighted at night
- v.      Effective checks and record of movement of visitors in and out of the residence.
- vi.     Provision of technical security surveillance aid to assist in monitoring of the residence.
- vii.    Emplacement of effective fire safety precaution.
- viii.   Emplacement of first aid facilities and establishment of muster point.

Aside the above, it is advice that, the services of an experience security company could be engaged to take care of the residence, even as the need to liaise with the police unit in the area is important.

## **TRANSIT/TRAVEL**

The travel and transit of the Man of God here, will include the route movement from residence to the church, office or crusade ground. To equally mention will be, mode of travel out of station, state or country.

The following among others should be considered in local transit.

- i. How far is the route from the residence to the church (is there no possibility of having a residence near the church/office)?
- ii. Is there other alternative and secured route to enable alternating?
- iii. Ensure the good working condition of vehicles attached to the Pastor, adequate checks be conducted to avoid breakdown, if possible a backup vehicles or car could be provided.
- iv. Do the Man of God have the need for personal protective security officers (threat analysis of his person could determine the status).
- v. The effectiveness and loyalty of the drivers and escort need be highly tested.

## **TRAVELS**

There are mainly two (2) means of travel, by Land and by Air. If by Land, what is the distance and how is the road or route? that should determine the type of vehicle to use for the journey. Equally there is the need to ensure that all the necessary pre-emptive checks are emplace before embarking on such journey.

### **Check List:**

#### **LAND**

- Checking condition of the vehicles to include the tyres, fan belt, water level, oil and other necessary items.
- Need to have a back-up car and ensure the fuel level is appropriate
- Need to have extra persons on the journey.
- Ensure there is first aid kits during the journey
- Be wary of time embarking on journey, to avoid being cut up by night fall.
- Equally be wary of the season, either raining season or dry season. Be well prepared for the season.

## **AIR TRAVEL**

Air travel is less cumbersome, however the following should be considered:

1. Have a good travel agent or an effective protocol officer.
2. Avoid travel alone, travel with your PA or SA as the case may be.
3. Ensure a vehicle is waiting on time at the other end to pick you up.
4. Try to get adequate information on the state or country you are traveling to avoid friction, language barrier and other socio-cultural differences.
5. The security situation in the state or country need be factored into the travel plans.
6. Consideration should be given to the accommodation situation in your host state or country.

## **CONCLUSION:**

Jesus Christ went about doing good, healing the sick and setting captives free, yet he was persecuted and unjustly crucified, even with the help of a "trusted" aide (Inner caucus member).

The days are evil, as men are vulnerable to be used by the devil, even in the Church to cause havoc to the body of Christ. In view therefore, there is the need to be circumspect in every sphere of our life and activities.

Personal security of the Man of God, Pastor or Set man is therefore a necessity that cannot be wished away, the security of the Church leader, will

depend on the Risk/Threat assessment of his person. The assessment variations differ considering various factors.

If the Risk assessment is high, necessary steps will need to be taken to checkmate it even to the extent of liaising with the Police or other security outfits in the area or country. Even if the risk is not so high, there is still need to do a proactive check to avoid a high threat profile.

With the above in place, by the grace of God, it is sure that the man of God will be thoroughly protected and shielded from threats within and without the house hold of faith. **"The measure we emplaced; God bless".**

### **QUESTIONS TO ASK**

- i) Do you have a predictable daily routine?
- ii) Have you or has any member of your family been attacked or threatened before?
- iii) What is your temper or anger level?
- iv) How is your relationship with your close staff and Church member and other Church Pastors?
- v) Do you have a cordial relationship with Security officers/personnel around your residence/office or country?

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **SECURING CHURCH PROPERTY**

The church is an assembly of people in a place, with intention of praising, worshipping and hearing from God. The physical church consists of the structure which houses worshippers. Today, there has been outpouring of the spirit of God in different dimensions, prompting church growth and explosion. This has necessitated building of gigantic church structures all over the place. But can we in all sincerity say that our church premises today are safe or secured? How easy or difficult is it for people to gain access into churches, vandalize it, steal, rob and kidnap members tells of the porosity of our churches today.

Church growth has brought the body of Christ into much focus and of great concern to the opposing camp (devil). Satan has therefore directed its Vernon at the church, afflicting it spiritually and physically. Today, we have direct or indirect attack on Men of God and their member's right in the Church. Infrastructure are damaged and vandalized at the least provocation, hoodlums drive in or stroll into the churches unperturbed, mingle with church members only to rob and kidnap them right in the church premises and get away with ease. **There is no more fear and sobriety in the house of God, nor is there fear for touching the things of God.**

In view of these real threats to the physical structures and property of the Church, there is the need to adequately secure or protect her property from further vandalism and attack.

To do this, a well-articulated physical measures/cultures need to be adopted by the church.

**Physical Protection:** This could, in the simplest sense, be defined as all measures or structures put in place to protect a property from theft, vandalism or unauthorized entry. Such structures include:

- ⇒ Fencing
- ⇒ Guard on patrol
- ⇒ Adequate lighting system
- ⇒ Access control, checks etc.

The essence of these structures are to Deter, Deny, Delay, Detain and Detect unauthorized intruder, into any facility or property of either an individual or the church.

## **ESSENCE OF PHYSICAL PROTECTION**

**Deter Intruder:** A fenced compound with barbed wire on top, coupled with good lighting system will surely give cause for concern or a second thought to the would-be intruder. All these facilities in place will deter an intruder.

**Deny Access:** Where the intruder wants to bold it and attempt to go ahead and access the facility, the measures or protection in place will effectively deny access.

**Delay Access:** Even if the intruder is adamant of entering the premises or facility, so fenced and guarded, the protective structure in place will delay easy access as time is lost in trying to beat the protection and give enough time for apprehension.

**Detain Intruder:** A good physical protective infrastructure could be programmed to trap an intruder. Electronic or technical facilities could be put in place to do the apprehension. Even high scale wall with barb wires at the other side unknown to the intruder could detain an intruder who scales such wall.

**Detect Intruder:** Technical equipment could record or capture pictures of intruders as they come into the premises or trip off alarm devices to aid the apprehension of intruders. Also, there are smoke/fire detectors and other security devices that could aid in the physical protection of the church premises.

"Now Jericho was tightly shut up because of the Israelites. No one went out, and none came in, (Joshua 6:1)".

"At dusk. When it was time to close the city gate.

(Joshua 2: 5)

"When the trumpets sounded, the people shouted and at the sound of the trumpet, when the people gave a loud shout, the wall collapsed; so every man charged straight in, and they took the city. (Joshua 6: 20)".

"Then Joshua son of Nun secretly sent two spies from shittim 'Go look over the land' he said especially Jericho Go view (spy) the land". (Joshua 2 :1)

The above quotations, point to how highly fortified Jericho was, with high walls and heavy gates, which was manned day and night. It only took divine intervention to bring down the wall of Jericho. Even the Israelites were conscious of the well-fortified physical/natural protection of Jericho and had to resort, through their leader, to God. **Physical protection without God is a folly.**

The victory of the Israelites over Ai in Joshua chapter 8, the sun standing down for them in chapter 10 and other conquests could not have been possible (because the cities were highly fortified) if not for God's intervention. Sometimes, we need the application of knowledge (wisdom) because the "anointing" (God's protection) could have left us in time of the manifestation of flesh. Ask Sampson.

**"The measure we put in place God strengthens"**

**Men keep watch, God secures "(Grace)".**

Also of note is that the level or degree of physical protection we put around a property (church) is dependent on the following:

- ⇒ The level of threats around the property (church), that is, is the property or the land in contention?
- ⇒ Is there misunderstanding among its Board of Trustees or Members? Is the property at the right place? Does it have certificate of occupancy etc.? There is no need claiming faith in the above. if the issues are not resolve there is a potential threat to such a Church/premises.
- ⇒ Is the environment where the church is situated hostile or friendly? Who were the initial occupants and what was their religious inclination and antecedents?
- ⇒ What is the level of religious tolerance in the area?
- ⇒ What is the cost of the property (church)? The higher the cost, the higher its risk or threat and hence the need for enhanced physical protection.
- ⇒ What is the level of security consciousness of the church leaders, their members and neighbors?
- ⇒ Was the property structural work properly done before construction of building and expansion of the property?

## **QUESTIONS TO ASK**

### **BUILDING/FENCE**

- ⇒ Is the church adequately fenced? What about its height, distance from other buildings or cleared area? Does the fence have barbed wire on its top?
- ⇒ Is there a thorough fare through the building or church?

### **VEHICULAR/HUMAN MOVEMENT**

- ⇒ Is there free or unrestricted vehicular and human movement in and out of the church?
- ⇒ Is there gate pass and vehicle pass issued?



**LIGHTING :**

- ⇒ Is perimeter (high) lighting provided?
- ⇒ Is there an emergency lighting?
- ⇒ Are all doors sufficiently lighted?
- ⇒ Are there adequate lights for the packing area?
- ⇒ Are guard posts properly illuminated?

**ALARMS**

- ⇒ Does the church facility have alarm devices?
- ⇒ If so, are they connected to any police post or station/security room?
- ⇒ Are there technical monitoring devices?

**GUARDS/SECURITY**

- ⇒ Are there guards employed to protect the church facilities?
- ⇒ Are they on watch twenty-four hours daily and seven days a week or only on church days?
- ⇒ Are the guards adequately remunerated to avoid compromises?
- ⇒ Is there frequent guard patrol?
- ⇒ Are the guards exposed to routine and current training?

**EMPLOYEE/VISITORS MOVEMENT**

- ⇒ Are there a daily visitor's/ employees registers maintained?

**CONTROL**

- ⇒ Is there control to prevent a visitor from wandering within the church premises? Are visitors escorted to where they are going and back?
- ⇒ Do employees of the church use identification tags?
- ⇒ Are visitors issued identification passes? Etc.

**SUPERVISION:**

- ⇒ Does the church have a security supervisor or security committee?

## **CHAPTER SIX**

### **SECURING THE CHURCH INFORMATION**

#### **"INFORMATION IS POWER"**

"Just as he was speaking, Judas, one of the twelve appeared. with him a crowd armed with swords and clubs, sent from the chief priests, the teachers of the law, and the elders". ...

(Mark 14: 43)

"Now the betrayer had arranged a signal with them; the one I kiss is the man (pre-plan), arrest him and lead him away under guard (Mark 14 :44)

The main point in the above passages is that of the betrayal of Jesus Christ our Lord through the passing of advance information from somebody in the "Inner caucus" of His ministry. Judas was one of the most trusted disciples. To Whom do we trust our information in the church, or who do we confide in? Let us watch that person we are confiding in; he could be the Judas in the church.

"And they watch him and sent forth spies, which should feign themselves just men, that they might take hold of his words, that so they might deliver him unto the power and authority of the governor" (Mark 20:20.)

The above passage, if read from verse 19, gives a clear picture of how the chief priest and scribes sought to no avail to frame charges or accusation against our Lord Jesus Christ. Having failed, they sought to spy (keep watch) on him, that is mandating somebody to follow him about and hear what he would preach or say, so as to gather information that could be used against him before the authority.

In the church today, what are we talking, preaching or discussing? Who do we confide in? Are they trusted, reliable and tested people? As church leaders, we get privilege knowledge of classified information about people, other Churches and government. Do we divulge this information on the altar without being conscious of the reasoning level or dispositions of the congregations? As Churches, do we castigate leadership and whip up sentiment among our congregation? Or do we pray and urge our congregation to pray for those in positions of authority? **When the populace is enraged with the civil authority and they revolt, the Church also becomes part of the first line of attack.**

The Church needs to be awakened to the fact that critical information about her activities could be collected and used against her. It therefore, becomes incumbent on her to safeguard information and be weary of unwittingly divulging same on the altar. Preachers should not be emotional but spiritual in their sermon. (There should be a better way of engaging government in their short coming)

### **SECURING ITS INFORMATION**

Securing the Church information is simply the deliberate putting in place measures and procedures to ensure that its important or critical information does not find its way into unauthorized hand or the enemy of the Church.

Information is said to be power, the secret information about the strength or weakness of an individual that is known to his adversary places him in a disadvantaged position. Ask Samson, (Judges 16 vs 1 :31)

” So Delilah said to Samson, tell me the secret of your great strength and how you can be tied up and subdued,

(Judges 16:6)

So he told her everything. No razor has ever been used on my head, he said, because I have been a

Nazareth set apart to God since birth. If my head were shaven my strength would leave me, and I would become as weak as any other man"

(Judges 16:17)

Samson's problem started in chapter 14: 1-3 "And Samson went down to Timnath, and saw a woman of Timnath of the daughter of the philistine Then his father and his mother said unto him, is there never, a woman among the daughters of thy brethren or among all my people, that thou goes to take a wife of the uncircumcised philistine". "... But Samson said to his father, get her for me; she is the right one for me."

As a church or Christian, what do we see? Are we looking and not seeing, do we seek the face of God before association or just get carried away by impulse? Who do we employ, associate or bring into our midst? Are they tested? What about spouses of church ministers? Are they investigated or just believed for their words? The church need to watch it or might end up bringing in more enemies into the faith. Some "men of God" are brought into churches without reservation and they end up preaching heresy or manifesting powers other than that from God, this is capable of bringing the church into disrepute.

The adversary who has information about the church or Christians is in the position of strength or power. He knows the strength and weakness of the Church and can strategize on how to destroy or stir up discontent in the church.

"Then she called, Samson, the philistines are upon you. He awoke from his sleep and thought, I 'll go out as before and shake myself free. But he did not know that the lord has left him (Judges 16: 20)

He, Samson adamant against his parent advise against the union, insisted "Get her for me", she is the right one for me. He did not think with is head but his mind, disregarding his parent knowledge about women from Timnath, resulting in his down fall and loosing Gods purpose for his life.

## **INFORMATION TO SAFEGUARD**

Information about the individual, church or organization can be conveyed through verbal and documentary form. The pieces' information to safeguard are:

- ⇒ Information about the church history and its property in documentary forms
- ⇒ Information about movements of church leaders and elders
- ⇒ Information about church leadership frailty or weakness.
- ⇒ Information about individual tithes and donation
- ⇒ Information about church funds and financial records
- ⇒ Information about church plan of future activities or expansion
- ⇒ Information about member's testimony of breakthrough and other sensitive issues.

The information about breakthrough could be shared with the Pastor, tithes paid and prayed over privately. God sees the heart and not much of the physical expression.

Generally, information of high value need only be entrusted with people of high and tested integrity. Also the need to put check to movement of sensitive documents or items should be employed. Access to computers, tithes and other financial records checkmated.

## **SAFEGUARDS**

- ⇒ Restrict access to the church computer/documents

- ⇒ Provide steel cabinets for storage of sensitive church documents and materials
- ⇒ The account department or office to be well fortified
- ⇒ The church should encourage use of cheques rather than movement of cash during offering and donation in church.
- ⇒ Church workers and assistants should be weary of loose talk or divulging of information about church activities.
- ⇒ Confidential information should be restricted to only selected few.
- ⇒ Information about discipline or frailty of members should be handled with utmost confidentiality.

## **CHAPTER SEVEN**

### **THREATS TO THE CHURCH**

But we prayed to our God and posted a guard day and night to meet this threats. (Neh. 4: 9)

Watch and pray... (Matt. 26: 41)

That the church is faced with varying threats is a truism. That the church, which was hitherto a haven where people with varying problems yearning for solution besieged, has now turned to a beehive of problems and threats are disturbing. There are manifest-able threats all over the world and some, if not all, have crept or is gradually creeping into the church. This chapter will identify some of these threats and with God on our side, proffer solutions to reducing them and taking back the church to its original position.

**THREATS:** The dictionary defines threat as a person or thing that is likely to cause trouble or danger etc.

Threat from the security parlance is seen as person, thing, situation or activities that have the potential of endangering peace and tranquility of a place or entity.

The key words in the above two (2) definitions are person, thing or situation that has the likelihood or potential of endangering peace. So as Christians or Church leaders, we need to be conscious of persons, things or situations around us that have the potential of disrupting peace in the country and environment where our Churches are situated. We need to be vigilant and responsive to happenings in our environments, other religion and the nation. What happens to these entities has the potential of spilling to our Churches: a case of the "UNCONCERN BEING CONCERN" some of the threats are as follows:

**PILFERING/THEFT:**

That is stealing of things of little value or in small quantities especially from where one works or worships, such as people's hand bags, cell phones, Bibles etc. in the Church.

These activities have become the order of the day in Churches. It has deferred solutions, to the extent that ushers warn people to be watchful in the Church as many are called indeed, while only few are chosen.

**ROBBERY:**

This is the advanced form of stealing by the use of weapons such as guns, cutlasses and axes, Hitherto, robbery was a recurrent event in big towns and usually carried out in the night. But these days, it is a broad day robbery event even in Churches. Armed men trail their victims to the church to rob them. Also Church offerings are robbed at gun point within the Church, with the hoodlums boldly driving out of the Church premises without any restriction.

**ARSON:**

This is the deliberate act of setting fire to something, especially a building. This is also a recurrent issue especially by opposing religious organization/sect, disgruntled landlords, Church members and neighbors.

**KIDNAPPING:**

The act of taking away somebody illegally and keeping him as a prisoner, especially in order to get a ransom. Sometime ago, an eighty-five (85) year old man was kidnapped in a church. This is disturbing and calls for concern by all Christians.



## **TERRORISM:**

Act of using force or threat of force to achieve a goal or set objectives, these includes open assault on Churches or through detonation of explosive to razed down Churches.

## **PHYSICAL ASSAULT/ASSASSINATION:**

People are being physically trailed to Churches and assaulted and in some extreme cases assassinated in the Church premises for whatever reason or misunderstanding. While the writer would not support these incidences, it will be apt to warn that **"stinking things attract flies"**. Christians should be weary of their activities and people they do business with to avoid some of these vices. This is because some of these ugly acts occur as a vendetta.

## **RELIGIOUS INTOLERANCE:**

This is also another threat that is bedeviling the Church. This religious intolerance is both within and without the fold. The need for Church leaders and Christians living the true life of Christ becomes inevitable to checkmate these vices.

## **VANDALISM**

This is the deliberate destruction of a property for different reasons. In the case of the Church, it could be due to rivalry or caused by opposite religious sect mainly due to ignorance of what religion is all about or prompted for political reasons.

## **DEMOLITION OF CHURCHES**

This is also threat to the Church as it is capable of the extinction of Churches. The reasons advanced for these are the illegality of occupation of such property. It there behooves on Christians and Church leaders to follow due process in the erection of churches. Due consultation with land owners and neighbors before acquiring the necessary documents become incumbent.

There is no need to apply just faith on people's land or property. They must be properly procured, paid for and documented. Faith should be justified with works.

## **INFLAMMATORY PREACHING**

Inflammatory preaching about other churches and other sects is capable of causing serious threats to the Church so concerned. While the writer believes in being frank, it behooves on Christians and church leaders to apply wisdom in their preaching. Preaching should be inspired by the Holy Spirit and not self, flesh or vendetta. The Church should preach the message to its members and not castigate other Churches or sect. where a Church leader is displeased with the other Church or sect, there should be an avenue for cross fertilization of ideas and feelings at the higher level. I recommend a situation where a church leader writes to another Church leader on his perceived disagreement to a certain norm or belief of the said Church, and both prayerfully resolve same rather than blast it open in the public glare. This is nothing but bringing the body of Christ into disrepute. Where there is no agreement, it is better left to God to take control as he is the avenger. At the end, the wheat will be separated from the Chaff. Umbrella bodies like Christian association of Nigeria (CAN) and Pentecostal fellowship of Nigeria (PFN) could be approached for redress.

## **VICES**

### **Gossiping**

"The word of a gossip is like choice morsels they go down to a man in most parts" (Proverb 18:8)

"The word of a talebearer are as wounds, and they go down into the innermost part of the belly,"kjb

Gossiping is a potent threat that could destroy the Church. These cause clashes and could lead to the disintegration of the Church. Church leaders

should learn to bring people together to resolve any lingering issues rather than hearing from one side to make judgment. It should be guided by the Holy Spirit being invited to take control.

## **LYING**

"Lying lips are abomination to the Lord; but they that deal truly are his delight (Proverb 12:22). KJV

The above verse is explicit as the Church that is led or surrounded by liars, is an abomination to the Lord. And abominable Church indicates there is no cover of God on such a Church. The Church is thus open to many form of attack and hence no manifestation of the power of God.

## **SLANDERING**

"Do not go about spreading slander among your people. Do not do anything that endanger your neighbor's life, I am the Lord

(Lev. 19:16)

Though shall not avenge, nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people, but thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself, I am the Lord.

(lev. 19 :18)

Other vices abound such as immoral behaviors and dispositions, provocative dressing, seduction, distrust, activities of new converts or new employees etc. These vices might on the surface, appear to have negligible impact but they are capable of eroding people's confidence in the Church and ultimately affect its peace and tranquility. God is a God of peace.

## **THINGS TO LOOK FOR TO AVERT THREATS DURING CHURCH SERVICE OR ACTIVITIES**

⇒ New comers or strange faces

- ⇒ Early comers to Church
- ⇒ Late comers to Church
- ⇒ Men or women in suit wearing dark glasses to disguise looks
- ⇒ Unusual movement during praise worship
- ⇒ Unusual movement during prayers/preaching
- ⇒ Those dropping offering during preaching or other activities
- ⇒ Strange faces around the Church environment

The import of the above is to be proactive in checking threats in the Church. An early Church comer might come in with intention of picking something from the Church or cause havoc/ confusion or planting offensive items, while a late Church comer may come in when the atmosphere is spiritually charged, pick something and quietly leave. Unusual movement during praise, worship, prayers and preaching should be discouraged as any person doing that should be looked at as a threat capable of happening. **"Remember do not think, it cannot happen".**

Dropping of offering during any of the above activities, aside being capable of distracting attention, also has a potential of posing threats to either the preacher or members. The Church should be able to teach its members to package their offerings and other financial commitments in an envelope and deposit same as guided or directed during church service. It should not be done on individual prompting or impulse. The idea of going to the altar to drop offering during preaching as appreciation of the message should be discouraged. Time of message should be a time of sober reflection as it is hearing from God. It is a time of admonition from God to man through a chosen vessel by grace and not supposed to be applauded or intended to psyche up the man (vessel) of God.

## **CHAPTER EIGHT**

### **CURBING THE THREAT IN THE CHURCH**

“Blessed is the man who finds wisdom, the man that gains understanding,”

(Proverb 3 :3)

Wisdom is supreme; therefore, get wisdom. Though it cost all you have, get understanding;

(Proverb

4: 7)

Wisdom is said to be the correct application of knowledge, while knowledge is acquired facts. Facts are acquired through studies, experience, observation and revelation. It is a fact that crimes or threats that were hitherto confined to the world have crept into the church. It would therefore be wisdom to reason based on the above fact, to apply the understanding by way of providing proactive solution to curbing the crimes and threats. It is foolishness to acquire facts or knowledge and do nothing about it.

**“Wisdom is not acquiring something but doing something”.**

**“Latent understanding is foolishness”**

**If I will that he tarry till I come (john 21:22)**

Tarry, till He (Jesus) comes is a charge to Christians to take over the spiritual and physical Church. Jesus said, he is coming to behold a Church without blemish (spiritually and physically). If the Church is not secured due to lack of understanding of the devices of the evil ones attacking it, and over indulgence in sin, then Jesus would not come for such a Church.

" God made the wild animals according to their kinds,

the livestock according to their kinds, and all the creatures that move along the ground according to their kinds. And God saw that it was good" (Genesis 1: 25)

THEN GOD SAID, LET US MAKE MAN IN OUR IMAGE, IN OUR LIKENESS, AND LET THEM HAVE RULE (HAVE DOMINION) OVER THE FISH OF THE SEA AND THE BIRDS OF THE AIR, OVER THE LIVESTOCK, OVER ALL THE EARTH, AND OVER ALL THE CREATURES THAT MOVES ALONG THE GROUND" Genesis 1 vs 26

In Genesis 1 vs 25 & 31, God after creation, saw everything that He has created, that is, He sat down and looked over His creation and declared that ***"it was very good"***. He later handed over everything in that perfect stage to man to control (Gen. 1 vs 28). But with the fall of man, sin came into the world and man lost control, with all vices creeping in, even into the Church - God's sanctuary. ***So it will take wisdom inspired by the Holy Spirit to check the influx of threats and vices into and against the church of Christ.***

In curbing these threats to the Church, therefore, there has to be a conscious effort starting from the point of acceptance that the Church is increasingly becoming insecure by the day. There is no need wishing these impending threats away, but with prayer and supplication, God will grant us the wisdom on how to tackle these threats in Jesus name.

Threats to the body of Christ, the Church could be tackled by the following:

i) **Individual/family consciousness/awareness**

The saying that, a problem identified is a problem half solved is apt here. The individual Christians and their families need to realize that a lot of vices have crept into the Church and it is imperative to speak and take

action instead of ignoring them. If a vice is noticed in the Church, it should be exposed and dealt with frontally and not covered up for whatever reason. If we do this, we might be helping somebody to receive his or her salvation.

There is also the need for the Church to liaise with security organizations /practitioners to regularly present security lectures to its members to keep them abreast of security issues within and without the Church and the country.

ii) **Security Drills and Procedures**

The Church should also liaise with security bodies to map out security drills for its members. This could be prompted unannounced to test its member's ability to react to security challenges, just as it is done with fire drills.

iii) **Provision of Fences and Obstacles**

The Church should endeavor to provide high fences or obstacles around its formation or structures. This will either deny or delay access to the Church and help in securing the staff/members and property.

iv) **Provision of Well Trained Guards**

This will help in monitoring movement of people and materials in and out of the Church premises. The guards must be well trained and motivated. Private security companies could be contracted as this will enhance professionalism and shift burden of security from the Church.

v) **Proper Lighting System**

The Church needs proper lighting system especially in the night. These lights when appropriately placed or located could help in deterring intruders into the church premises.

vi) **Liaison with Police and Security Agencies**

The Church is part of the system in any nation. No matter the conception

or misconception about the police and security agencies, the Church needs to liaise properly with them as to have effective security. The Church can do this through the Police and security officers amongst them. The Church can also liaise with Federal Road Safety Corps (FRSC) and Nigeria Civil Defence and Security Corps (NCDSC), on traffic control issues and security awareness lectures etc.

Vii) **Security Committee/Department**

Every should have a standing security committee which should work hand in hand with the ushering department for effective security coverage of the Church. The committee will also be the liaison units with security organization and police.

viii) **Provision of Technical Aids**

There abound technical aids to secure premises. The Church could explore such opportunities such as closed circuit television (CCTV), fire detector, intruder alarm system etc. Money invested on these should not be seen as waste but a sure investment against theft or fire hazard and even terrorist attacks.

ix) **Checks before Employment**

The Church should carry out preliminary enquiries, even if it means asking few questions, here and there about any person to be employed into its fold. This will help to check traitors and disloyal persons from entering into the Church system.

x) **Adequate Preaching of the Word**

Jesus in John 21 vs 15, 16 and 17 asked, Simon, son of Jonas three (3) times "lovest thou me?" And Simon answered, "Thou knowest that I love thee. And Jesus commanded, feed my sheep (lambs)". What do we feed our Church members with? Is it the truth, undiluted Word of God or word laced with bias and ulterior motives? Let us watch what we feed our Church members before we end up breeding monsters that would



end up destroying the Church. It is time people go into the Church and come out repentant and sober rather than going through the Church and the Church not going through them.

**"It is time the Church stops helping in the breeding of monsters but saints" may God help us in Jesus name.**

xi) **Security Officers**

The Church should engage the service of security officers to oversee its security. The duty of the security officers will be to keep custody of the Church property, supervise security guards, liaise with other security organization and the Police. Such person could be a retired Police officer or from any other security organization.

xii) **Welfare of Church Members**

Jesus in his ministry days, was always concerned about the welfare needs of His audience. This is not condoning laziness, but the Church should have a viable welfare and counseling units to take adequate care of the needs of their members', such as widows, orphans and the unemployed.

**DISCRETION IN SHARING TESTIMONY**

There should be absolute discretion in the way and manner testimonies are given in Churches. Testimonies should be screened before sharing. Those of breakthroughs or on issues that could affect the security of individuals, Church or the country should be avoided or screened before it is given in Church or broadcasted on television. This is not to say lies should be told but a testimony such as one having a breakthrough of say about N50 million aside that it might cast doubt on its validity, tend to expose such a person and even the Church to hoodlums who would have calculated the amount of tithe paid to the Church. Again, testimonies that tend to discredit one church or sect from the other could breed unhealthy rivalry among Churches. Wisdom is profitable to direct in all situations.

## **MODERN MONETARY TRANSACTION**

Churches should encourage giving of tithes and other forms of offerings through cheques. This will prevent the Church dealing with much cash and hence discourage armed robbery attack and petty theft in Churches. Some Churches keep billion van at standby to move monies on Sundays. This is not encouraging as it could lead to more prepared attacks.

The way out is to encourage the modern means of Financial transaction through cheques and other forms of electronic monetary transfers.

All the above are not exhaustive, but I believe that with prayer and quest to hear from God, he will reveal more to the church and grant us the wisdom to check the threats to and within the Church.

God will give us the grace to effectively occupy till Jesus comes. Amen.

## CHAPTER 9

### FAMILY SECURITY ONE (1)

***"When a strong man, fully armed, guards his own house, his possessions are safe"***  
***(Luke 11:21)***

#### INTRODUCTION

Security of life and property in any country is the main function of the government, and in carrying out these onerous responsibilities, the government employs various agencies to act on its behalf, allocating specific roles to these agencies. However, the numbers of agencies and personnel are in most cases not enough to cover the nooks and crannies of the society, necessitating the call for support of all citizens in the form of providing information to security agencies (**see something, say something**), while each community is encouraged to put in place local security watch or measures to help in reducing criminality in the community and in the long run, the country.

The above, equally put a burden on the family being the basic unit of the society to be wary of its security, by putting in place measures that could eliminate or reduce threats in the family, as a secured family makes for a secured society. ***"Discretion will protect you, and understanding will guard you (Proverb 2:11)"***

***Wisdom will save you (family) from the ways of wicked men. (proverb 2;12)***

This Chapter, would look at, what Security is, Family, Family Security, identify some threats to the family and proffer ways to ameliorating the threats.

#### FAMILY

It is the basic unit in a society traditionally consisting of two parents, wherein their children. Also any of various social units of differing form but regarded as equivalent to the traditional family.

## **SECURITY**

- All precautions that are taken to protect a place.
- A legal protection against possible harm or loss
- A state of being safe or free from harm and hurt and to be able to conduct ones' responsibility without hindrance.
- Safety, as well as the measures taken to be safe or protected.
- Protection of a person, building, organization or country against threats such as crime or attacks by foreign countries

## **FAMILY SECURITY**

**The protection of the individual and the family, against any risk to their personal safety,**

A condition attained when the family is safe from all threats to their lives and harassments, and their property safe from theft, vandalism and others.

## **SECURITY APPROACHES**

These are basically two approaches to security viz, proactive and reactive security

**Proactive:** This is to foresee or envisage a likely happening and pre-empt it from happening by putting in place measures to forestall it, or avoiding it (prevention is said to be better than cure). Proactivity to some might not make sense, a sort of lack of faith or overreacting but will always pay at the last resort.

**Reactive:** This is the opposite of not foreseeing or envisaging anything or threats, letting it happened and then putting in measures to forestall a reoccurrence. This approach usually involves a lot of irreparable damages that has a lot of negative impact on the person or family. It is better to be proactive than reactive.

## **THREATS IN THE FAMILY**

Threats to the family varies depending on a lot of factors, however some common ones are herein stated to include; Theft, burglary, rape, kidnapping, assassination, assault, blackmail, fire outbreaks, "spiritual attack", peer groups influence, bullying etc.

## **SOURCE OF THESE THREATS**

Source of identifiable threats to the family are;

- i. House helps,
- ii. Security guards,
- iii. Relatives,
- iv. Drivers,
- v. Neighbors and their family members,
- vi. Cobblers,
- vii. Artisans,
- viii. Vendors,
- ix. Mailmen,
- x. Utility workers,
- xi. Business associates,
- xii. Social miscreant and
- xiii.** Social media etc.

## **WHERE THREATS OCCURS**

Threats occur mainly at Home, On Transit, Social/Religious events, Work place, Happenstance (being at the wrong place at the wrong time). Also, threats revolve around Person, Things and activities (socials, cinemas, clubs, park, church, football activities)

## **FAMILY SECURITY TIPS**

***----- "But we prayed to our God and posted a guard day and night to meet the threat " (Nehemiah 4:7-9)***

***'the security we emplace God  
Strengthens (anonymous)'***

- Let your house have the minimum security protection, fence, security keys/locks etc.
- Develop a communication pattern/signal on arrival home with your family e.g. car horn or a call to say you are on your way home or near home, etc. to ward off being trailed.  
Create an escape or emergency exit or route in your house in event of fire outbreak or attack (however avoid over fencing).
- Do not announce home alone for any member of your family in event of travelling and leaving children behind.
- Teach the family proper ways to open door for visitors and protocol to follow.
- Mind who picks or escorts your children to and from school
- Report unusual movement in or around your environment to the Police promptly.
- Do not send your children on errand unescorted by older person.
- Know your neighbors and environment
- Create security awareness amongst family members.
- Have an emergency line or communication in the house, equally have security numbers pasted at a strategic point, in case of emergency.
- Girl child should be made to avoid clothes that expose their bodies.
- Ensure light are switched off when leaving home.
- Have fire extinguisher at home and regularly service it.

- Watch out for bully of children in the school.
- Do not have a regular personal or family routine.
- Keeping of dogs in the house is encouraged.
- Encourage patrol or neighborhood watch.
- Do not leave any object like ladder, drums, table or items that could aid burglars to climb into your compound by the fence or backyard.
- Be wary of artisans, vendors and utility workers, while house help, guards and visitors are properly screened before employment or granted access to your family home. etc.
- If affordable introduce technical monitoring aid to cover the residence, such as closed circuit television (CCTV), intruder alarm system, fire detector etc.

The world being a global village with ease of transmission of criminality behold on us as parents to be cautious in entirety, we should arise and be security conscious and equally avail our immediate and extended families, every security tips or information at our disposals or as they come to our view, as security in the family is a sure guarantee to a safe society. Equally we should be current or in turn with current world crime rate and novel criminal enterprises.

***"Wisdom is supreme, therefore get wisdom, though it cost all you have, get understanding (Proverb 4:7)"***

## **CHILDREN SECURITY TIPS**

The threats to Children could manifest in form of kidnapping/abduction, bullying, rape and peer-group influences. Facts about abduction shows, that there are three (3) strands of abduction as statistics reveal the following, Family abduction 49%, Acquaintance abduction 28% and Stranger abduction 24%. The statistic shows that about 77% of abduction are family/acquaintance related, so the need to be circumspect always 'do not think it cannot happen' 'the tips children should watch out for are;

- Avoid boasting about family wealth
- Avoid flamboyant life or frivolous spending in and out of schools.
- Take your studies serious (leaders of tomorrow)
- During holidays, get involved in vocational activities.
- Be security conscious especially of your environment.
- Do not discuss in details with strangers nor share personal/family information.
- Do not accept ride from strangers.
- Do not keep secrets from your parents.
- Avoid taking taxi cabs at non allotted bus stops.
- Avoid high social parties or events and night clubbing.
- Choose your friends carefully.
- Be careful of information posted on social media and the group chat you belong to.
- Report any threat or blackmail or bully from any person to your parents, guardian or Law enforcement agency
- Memorize or have to heart your parents or close relatives' phone number in the case of emergency.



**CHAPTER TEN**  
**FAMILY SECURITY TWO (2)**  
**GROWING INCIDENCE OF RAPE**

But when someone stronger attacks and over powers him, he takes away the armour in which the man trusted and divides up his plunder”.... (Luke 11: 22)

Rape is the unlawful sexual intercourse or other forms of sexual penetration committed by a perpetrator against a victim without their consent. Rape and assault are commonly available in industrialized countries and are becoming common throughout the world.

It is universal, not restricted to any country, race, caste or class. It is amongst the poor, rural, illiterates, rich, urban and so called elites; rape is committed by teachers, religious leaders, guardians, fathers, brothers, uncles, relatives, neighbors, friends, acquaintances, etc.

However, there are difficulties arises from inconsistent definition of what is rape in various countries, the rate of its reportage, recordings, prosecution and convictions for rape cases, controversial statistical declaration leading to acquisitions of unreliable data etc.

Records revealed that, rape cases over the world is under-reported with the dark figures of up to 91.6% rape cases going unreported. The reasons for unreported cases are due to fear of retaliations, uncertainty of commission of offence, fear of shame or stigmatization and doubt in Local Law enforcement.

According to the Wikipedia, the UN reports of 65 countries show that about 250, 000, cases of rapes are reported daily by the police. Equally, that countries with high cases of rapes are Sudan, Sweden, Syria, Tanzania, Turkey, United Kingdom (UK) United States of America (USA) and Yemen.

In India, rape is the fourth common crime against women. The National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB), in its 2003 annual reports indicates 24,923, rape cases reported across India in 2012 and of these, about 24,470 (98%) was committed by someone known to the victims, while about 40% victims are minor. Also that, about 71% rape cases goes unreported in India.

Equally, it is reported that, of all rape trial in India, only one of four of such cases leads to conviction, and that the rate of conviction has dropped over the years, 1973(44.3%), 1983 (37.7%), 2009(26.9%), 2010(26.6%) 2011(26.4%), 2012(24.2%), and 2013(27.1%).

## **NIGERIA**

Sexual violence is endemic in most African country, Nigeria inclusive. Data on numbers of cases reported in Nigeria is Limited as much of the crime goes unreported. A United Nation report on rape in Nigeria conducted in 2014 revealed that one in four (1 in 4) boys and one in ten (1 in 10) girls had experience sexual violence before the age of eighteen (18) years, with approximately 70% reporting more than one (1) incident, 5% sought for help while 3.5% received some services.

The issue of rape however, came to public limelight when one Vera Uwaila Omozuwa, a 200 level student of the University of Benin was on 27<sup>th</sup> may,2020 raped in a church in Benin city. She later died in a hospital. Also one Barakat Bello, an undergraduate student in Ibadan, Oyo state was raped and killed.

On 15<sup>th</sup> June 2020 ,the Inspector General of Police, Abubakar Mohammed Adamu, after a meeting with the president and commander in chief of the Armed Forces, Muhammad Buhari at the state house told reporters that, between January and may, 2020 about seven hundred and seventeen (717) cases of rape was reported to the police,

seven hundred and ninety nine (799) suspects apprehended, six hundred and thirty one (631) cases concluded and in court, while fifty two (52) cases are still under investigation. He suggests Covid-19 pandemic shut down could have contributed to the increase incidences across the country.

However, earlier in December, 2019, the Minister for Women and Social Development, Mrs. Pauline Talen during the launch of the sex offenders register, claimed that about 2million Nigerians (mainly women and girls) were raped every year.

Equally, a survey conducted by NOIPOLLS in july, 2019 reveals that about 85% Nigerians believes there is increased incidence of rape in Nigeria. According to the report, three in ten (3 in 10) persons (26%) knows someone who has been raped, that the percentage according to age are, 1-15years (72%), 16-25 (24%) and one in three persons (1-3) raped before the age of 25years.

Arising from the above, the Senate of the federation, on July, 8<sup>th</sup> 2020 assented to the Protracted bill against sexual Harassment in Tertiary Institutions, title 'A bill for an act to prevent, prohibit, and redress Sexual Harassment of students in Tertiary Institutions and for matter concerned therewith 2019, sponsored by the Deputy president of the senate, Ovie Omo-Agege.

The bill proposed up to 14years jail term for offenders. The bill implies that sexual predators, sexual favour for marks and other incident acts such as groupings, butt slapping, rape, sexual explicit comments, uninvited messages, sexual suggestive gesture, cat calls, ogling and cornering of someone in a confined space are now punishable.

## **CAUSES OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE**

Some of the causes of sexual violence including rape are; military conquest or wars, terrorism, environment, anger, power, sadism, ethical standards, laws and order etc.,

## **PREDISPOSING FACTORS FOR PERPETRATORS**

Alcohol and drug use, delinquency, lack of empathy, aggressiveness and violence, coercive sexual fantasies, hostility towards women, exposure to explicit media/porn, profanity in using vulgar lyrics in songs, suicidal behavior and prior sexual victimization etc.

## **RELATIONAL INFLUENCING FACTORS**

Family environment characterized by physical violence/conflict, childhood history of physical, sexual or emotional abuse, emotional unsupportive family environment, poor parental child relationship particularly with fathers, Association with sexually aggressive, delinquent peers.

## **COMMUNITY INFLUENCING FACTORS**

Poverty, lack of employment opportunity, lack of institutional support from security agencies and judicial system, General tolerance level for sexual violence in the community, weak sanction against sexual violence, High level crimes and other forms of violence and societal norms that support male superiority and sexual entitlement

## **AVOIDING OR REDUCING RAPE**

Avoid late nights' activities/walk/exercise, Dress moderately, avoid walking alone, avoid places or area with history of rape, avoid lonely alley or path, be suspicious of people, be security conscious and alert.

## **THE ROLE OF THE CHURCH**

The growing issue of rape especially during the pandemic is a call for worry, especially as some of the incidence have been traced to some

churches, its leaders and brethren. It therefore, calls for the Church to put aside any sentiment or diplomacy and put in place measures to stop this negative occurrence, as it has become a threat to security of the church. The following suggestions could help to reduce these threats;

- That, the church should put in place committee or measures to give moral and psychological support to victim within its fold.
- That, there should be the promotion of periodic enlightened programs/counseling session for youths and adults on sexual violence and related issues.
- That, parents should be encouraged to be free with their wards to enable unrestricted communication in the home.
- The church should discipline all sexual violence offenders amongst it, no matter the position of the offender.
- That the church should place emphasis on dressing mode of its members especially among the female folks.
- The church should screen all pastors or workers before employments into its fold, while putting in place measures to preempt any untoward attitude.
- Parents should be observant, inquisitive of their children activities
- Parents should use reasoning to resolve family issues or conflict to avoid split over to their children.
- Parents should encourage and show interest on their children's academic pursuit.
- Parents should show empathy to rape victim within and without its fold.
- The resolve to seek justice should be encouraged and pursue by the church and parents

## **CONCLUSION**

The issue of rape and sexual violence is on the increase in the country and the spilt over to the Church should be worrying to every Christian. That, the Church which should be the moral compass to the society is equally entangled in this crime need all hands to be on deck towards checkmating it. It therefore, becomes imperative on the body of Christ to arise in unison and condemned this act in its entirety, there should not be any cover up, no matter who is involved, while not advocating for over publicizing the issues, appropriate committee of Elders be put in place under the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) to check and control the activities of Churches in the regard. Equally there is the need for the Church to relate with appropriate Agencies or Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) specializing on the subject matter for information and informed opinion on rape and related issues and how to tackle it before it engulf the society and church in particular.

## **CHAPTER ELEVEN**

### **SECURING THE CHURCH FROM THE PANDEMIC (A NEW NORMAL)**

The World Health Organization (WHO) was on the 31<sup>st</sup> December, 2019 notified about a cluster of cases of Pneumonia in Wuhan City, a cultural and economic hub of Central China. By 5<sup>th</sup> January 2020, Fifty-Nine (59) cases were reported, though no fatality, ten (10) days later, two hundred and eighty-two (282) cases were confirmed, four (4) in Japan, South Korea and Thailand, six (6) death reported in Wuhan, Fifty-One (51) severely ill and twelve (12) in critical condition.

On 7<sup>th</sup> January, 2020, the virus responsible was isolated and its genome shared on 12<sup>th</sup> January, 2020. The cause of the severe respiratory syndrome that became known as Covid-19 was novel Corona Virus, SARS – COV-2

#### **INFECTION**

The SARS – COV-2 virus responsible for Covid-19 can survive in aerosols for hours and on surfaces including stainless steel, plastic and cardboard for days. It can be transmitted during the asymptomatic incubation phase (estimated to occur in 50 – 60% cases) and for two weeks after the onset of the symptom. Each person infected can pass the virus to an average of three (3) others, while the incubation periods 5 – 6 days (range 1 – 14 days).

The mode of transmission is either direct or indirect. Direct involves transmission between people through respiratory droplets and contacts routes within a close range of 1 metre with someone who has respiratory symptom, like coughing or sneezing and the point of entry is either the mouth, nose or eye. Indirect transmission can be due to contact with the immediate environment or items handled by a person infected with the virus from asymptomatic, subclinical infection and mild illness to severe or fatal illness, deterioration can occur rapidly often during the second week of illness. Death

is due to pneumonia and possible hyper-inflammation associated with cytokine storm syndrome.

## **SYMPTOM**

Most common symptom reported are fever (49%) dry or productive cough (24%) sore throat (12%), general weakness (8%) pain (7%) rhinorrhea (4%) and diarrhea (2%). The probable risk factors for the diseases and death include increase age, minority ethnic background, immunosuppression, hypertension, diabetes, cardiovascular disease, chronic respiratory disease, obesity, smoking and cancer. Men in this group appears to be at high risks, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), cardiovascular disease and hypertension are strong prediction of admission to intensive care.

## **Management**

Management of COVID-19 relies on supportive care and oxygen supplementation via non-invasive or mechanical ventilation, patients who are critically ill may require vasopressor support, antibiotics and secondary bacterial infection.

The search for drugs and vaccines to treat or prevent COVID-19 has begun and at different stages of development. About 73 of such vaccines are reported in exploratory or pre-clinical stages and five (5) in phase 1 trials.

## **CASUALTY RATE**

As at July, 2020 the Wikipedia reported that about 13.7 Million persons has been confirmed with the Virus, 7.62 million recovered, with 586,000 deaths, the highest countries with the virus are

<b>Country</b>	<b>Confirmed</b>	<b>Recovered</b>	<b>Death</b>
<b>USA</b>	3.53M	1.03M	138K
<b>Brazil</b>	1.98M	1.37M	75,697
<b>India</b>	969K	613K	24,915
<b>Russia</b>	753K	532K	1193K



<b>Peru</b>	342K	231K	12,615
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## **THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC IN NIGERIA**

The first confirmed case of COVID-19 in Nigeria was announced on 27<sup>th</sup> February, 2020, when an Italian citizen, who works in Nigeria had returned on 25<sup>th</sup> February, 2020 from Italy through the Murtala Mohammed International Airport, Lagos, tested positive to the virus.

On 9<sup>th</sup> March, 2020, a second case of the virus was reported in Ewekoro, Ogun State by a Nigerian citizen, who had contact with the Italian. Yet on 13<sup>th</sup> March, 2020 a third person, a 30 years old Nigerian female citizen from the United Kingdom tested positive to the virus.

In the quest to quickly arrest the spread of the virus, the president on 9<sup>th</sup> March, 2020 set up a presidential task force (PTF) on COVID-19 to coordinate and oversee all activities aim at curtailing the spread of the virus in Nigeria.

The Presidential Task Force (PTF) on COVID-19 comprises of the following members:

- i. Mr. Boss Mustapha (SGF) Chairman
- ii. Dr. Sani Aliyu – National Coordinator
- iii. Dr. Osagie Ehanire – Minister of Health
- iv. Ogbeni Rauf Aregbesola – Minister of Interior
- v. Senator Sirika Hadi – Minister of Aviation
- vi. Hajia Sadiya Umar Farouq – Minister of Humanitarian Affairs, Disaster Management and Social Services
- vii. Mallam Adamu Adamu – Minister of Education
- viii. Alh. Lai Mohammed – Minister of Information
- ix. Dr. Mohammed Abubakar – Minister of Environment
- x. Alh. Yusuf Magaji Bichi – Director General State Services.
- xi. Dr. Chikwe Ihaekweazu – DG Nigerian Centre for Diseases Control (NCDC)

xii. Dr. Fiona Braka – WHO Acting Country Representative.

### **MANDATES:**

The Task Force is tasked with the following mandates:

- Provide overall policy direction, guidance, and continuous support to the National Emergency Operations Center (EOC) at the NCDC, and other Ministries and Government Agencies involved in response activities, and ensure their coordination towards a single set of national strategic objectives.
- Enable the delivery of national and state-level outbreak control priorities which include;
- Effective and safe treatment centres to ensure capacity to manage outbreaks
- Coordination of National and State Emergency Operation Centres
- Response commodities for case management, infection prevention and control, diagnostics, etc
- Sensitization and awareness campaigns for the general public on prevention measures and response activities
- Diagnostic laboratories and deployment strategies

Review and make approval recommendations for implementing country-wide or regional non-pharmaceutical interventions if and when needed; such as school closures, suspension of large gatherings, implementation of social distancing, flight limitations etc.

Provide recommendations for the provision of direct funding and technical support to states and local governments to strengthen their preparedness capacity and mobilize human, material and financial resources from within and outside the country for effective national and state-level preparedness.

Define targets and monitor the progress in the delivery of these targets to meet the minimum requirements for a satisfactory performance and use this to advise the Presidency on the overall national response to COVID-19.

Coordinate Nigeria's engagement with other countries' bilateral and multilateral bodies, international organizations to share lessons, best practices, and technical assistance.

Keep the public abreast of strategic progress with Nigeria's response, and emerging developments regarding preparedness and response.

## **STATISTICS**

As at 16<sup>th</sup> July, 2020, the following statistics on the virus in Nigeria was released through the NCDC Platform <https://covid19ncdc.gov.ng>

Arrival date of the pandemic to Nigeria – 27<sup>th</sup> February, 2020 (4months, 2weeks and five days)

Confirmed cases – 34,259

Active cases – 19,500

Recovered – 13,999

Death – 760

## **SHUT DOWN/GUIDELINES TO RELIGIOUS ACTIVITIES**

The Presidential Task Force (PTF) initially had two (2) shutdown, and later on gave a partial opening and finally reviewed the partial opening to religious centers for religious activities but with guidelines:

- i. There should be no entry to place of worship without face mask. All attendees and religious leaders must wear a face mask.
- ii. People who are sick should not go to places of worship
- iii. There should be a temperature screening on entry.

- iv. Hand washing facilities and hand sanitizers should be provided at points of entries and strategic point.
- v. Religious centers should be clearly marked such that people sit and maintained two meters' distances from each other.
- vi. There should be no form of direct contact practice such as handshake as peace signs are discouraged.
- vii. Practice that requires sharing of materials be limited e.g. ablution should be done at home for the Muslim brothers (care in the serving of communion).
- viii. Religious centers should be dis-infected routinely before and after service.

### **BASIC PUBLIC HEALTH PRINCIPLES**

The Basic Public Health Principles by the WHO to guide against the spread, which is adopted by all countries over the world are:

- i. Regular hand washing
- ii. Physical distancing
- iii. Wearing mask
- iv. Social distancing
- v. Coughing etiquette
- vi. Stay at home when sick

### **SECURING THE CHURCH FROM THE PANDEMIC**

The COVID-19 is a global pandemic, which by WHO and as echoed by the PTF has come to stay. The pandemic has wreaked economic, social, industrial, teaching and religious activities worldwide. The pandemic led to close down of churches worldwide, including Nigeria, leading to most Churches resorting to conducting on line activities, while offerings, tithes and other financial commitment done electronically.

The pandemic has brought to fore a lot of discerning voices about the Church mode of activities. Some calling for the return to the old time religion (old

order), Pedro Ukokobili, writing on "Nigeria, COVID-19 and the church" at alAfrica.com has this to say "There were three (3) goals that shaped the early church administrative style namely, love goal by living common life, evident by sharing belongings among one another in community of believers (Acts 2:44-45) common fellowship goal by breaking bread (the word) and prayers daily in designated house fellowship centers (Acts 2:46-47) and zero needy goal target by gathering church offering, tithes and assets offering given to the church by net worth individual member to design employable career development programme of 21<sup>st</sup> century (Acts 4:32-35).

Equally, the pandemic brought to fore lack of unity in the body of Christ as there was no unity on the perceived cause of the pandemic, from the religious point and the way out, while some believe it was a punishment from God, others believe it was end time manifestation. Also some believe, it is a clear indication of the secret powers of Anti-Christ grip on the church of God.

The following passages in the Bible were variously quoted to buttress some views of the situation:

"He said, if you listen carefully to the Lord your God and do what is right in his eyes, if you pay attention to his command and keep all his decrees, I will not bring on you any of the diseases, I brought on the Egyptian for I am the Lord who heal you" (Exodus **15: 26**)

"The Lord will keep you free from every disease. He will not inflict on you horrible disease, you know in Egypt, but he will inflict them on all who hate you" (Deut **7:15**)

Rev Ruth Wolf Bonsireun, Inspectrice Ecclesiastique with the union of protestant churches in Alsac and Lorrain's, on 9<sup>th</sup> May, 2020 wrote "my

experience of the corona-virus disease has left a profound sense of humility and a deeper understanding of how we live by grace alone. My task now is to support other pastors as they accompany anxious sick and grieving individuals and families.”

All the above are religious and spiritual matters, which the writer will not want to probe into, as it does not have the deep religious grace in the regard. However, his concern is the security implication of the pandemic to the church, the body of Christ. In the regard the perspective to look at will be on

- i. Identifying the threat
- ii. Set objective to be achieve
- iii. Collect Information about the threat
- iv. Analysis the information collected
- v. Provide measures to reduce the threat
- vi. Put in place procedure for reassessing measures

1. **Identify threat:** The threat here is the Corona Virus (COVID-19), a biological disease that has incapacitated the whole world including the church. The church being closed down and much of its activities affected, thereby giving rise to all sort of activities that negate the true essence of Christian lives and worship. The question therefore to ask is, in truth do we really have the threat (virus) and what do we know about the virus?
2. **Set Object: If the answer is positive, then the next question is,** what is the Church main objective in the regard? The Church main objective therefore, should be to do everything in its power, legally and spiritually to mitigate the effect of the pandemic on the church and society.

3. **Collect information:** Here the church is supposed to in unison collect credible information from authentic sources on the subject matter, to enable it has an informed knowledge that could aid the mitigation of the pandemic or any action therefrom.
4. **Analyze information:** the information collected need to be tested to ensure it meet common sense or knowledge, in the case of the church, it should also meet the spirituality of the word of God. It will also suffice to enquire if there was previous knowledge on the pandemic, its effect and how it was handled. All this should be done with assistance of professionals/experts in the relevant field of the subject matter, within the Church to enable for an informed and accepted analysis and opinion
5. **Measures to reduce threat:** After the analysis, an inform opinion is arrived at that will aid articulation of measures, the church could then put in place measures to mitigate the effect of the pandemic. Some of the measures could include the following;
  - i. The church should collaborate with statutory authorities in the country to mitigate the effect and spread of the virus
  - ii. The church in unison should fast, pray and intercede to God for mercies against the pandemic
  - iii. The church to put up a massive campaign among its members, and the populace on the Basic Health procedure during the pandemic and thereafter, (media and leaflets)
  - iv. The church to strictly abide by the guidelines and emplace medical committees in their various churches to educate the members on the correct way of living during the pandemic (the new normal)
  - v. The church continues to provide welfare services to the needy amongst them.

6. **Reassessment Measures:** A body should be set up to ensure compliance by all churches on all the measures agreed while penalty be clearly spelt out for any defaulting church or group.

### **ACTIVITIES THAT MIGHT NEED NEW ORDERING IN CHURCH**

- The process of conducting thanksgivings and child dedications
- The process or procession for taking offerings and other financial commitment. (electronic means)
- The procedure for taking of Holy communion (now being package in sealed cups)
- Shaking of hands and Holy hugging as sign of love and peace
- Choirs seating and singing arrangement to allow for space, depending on the numbers.
- Using of same microphone by more officials during Church service
- Laying of hands on the sick and afflicted persons etc.

### **Conclusion**

The COVID-19 pandemic is a reality that cannot be wished away so easily. It must be so accepted and not much sermonizing on. While, it is not the writer's intention that the many issues raised by school of thoughts and conspiracy theories as regards the origin of the pandemic and future intentions should be gloss over, the main issues of concern now should be on how to mitigate its effects on mankind and reduce its spread and casualties, in the long run to enable the return to a safe religious activity.

Equally, the church should use this period of pandemic as an opportunity to do a retrospective on its self and see how it could improve on its activities in general, especially in the areas of welfare, security, technology and



networking among churches to improve unity among the body of Christ (the new normal might not encourage mega congregations for now).

...but you have neglected the more important matters of the law, justice, mercy and faithfulness, you should have practice the latter without neglecting the former – (Matthew **23: 23B**)

The Bible equally says “watch and pray, so that you will not fall into temptation” (Matthew 26 :41). The way to overcome is to be aware of happenings in the environment and through prayer and fasting assisted by the Holy Spirit be able to get guidance on how to prevent, protect and pursue to the pit all threat to the body of Christ.

**“The church more than ever before need to stop replacing faith with security”**

## **CHAPTER TWELVE**

### **ULTIMATE SECURITY**

#### **ORIGINAL PLAN**

"In the Beginning God created the Heaven and the Earth"

" The earth was without form and void and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters:( Gen 1:1&2)

"And the earth brought forth grass and herb yielding seed after his kind, and the tree yielding fruit, whose seed was in itself after his kind and God saw that it was good". (Gen 1: 12)

"And God said let us make man in our image after our likeness and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air and over the cattle and over the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth". (Gen 1: 26)

"And God blessed them and said unto them, be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth and subdue it and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the fowl of the air and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth. Gen 1: 28. The original plan of God after creation, was for man to be in charge of his property, the earth. God created the earth and handed it over to man, giving him the authority (power to oversee it, rule it and to use it to his Glory.)

Also God in his love for mankind went ahead in Genesis Chapter 2, to provide everything that could make man stay on Earth fruitfully viz a viz

Gen 2: 6 - streams from earth to water the earth surface;

Gen 2: 8 - Planted a garden of delight;

Gen 2: 9 - Every tree that is pleasing to the sight, good for food, tree of life and tree of knowledge of Good and evil (freewill);

Gen 2: 10 - a river out of Eden to water the garden; and

Gen 2 :12 - and the Gold of that land is good, aromatic resin and onyx stone.

All these was put in place for man's pleasure and God's Glory. But because of man's disobedience to God's instruction (Gen 2 :17), he lost everything including his peace and security as he was driven out of the secured garden of Eden.

"Therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the Garden of Eden to till the ground from whence he was taken. (Gen 3: 23)

I pray that, after being born again, we would not be found wanting to be sent forth from a place of goodness and delight to a place of pains and sorrows in Jesus name.

"So God drove out the man and he placed at the East of the Garden of Eden Cherubim and a flaming sword which turned every way to keep the way of the tree of life) This is Gods form of security.

When man fall to the sin of disobedience as engineered by Satan, he lost his place, when as individuals or church dwell in sin of disobedience, we surely lose our place and Satan will have a field day in our lives and situations. This is the reason for the present situation or state of insecurity in the church and Nation today.

## **DEVIATION FROM THE ORIGINAL PLAN**

God created the Heavens and the Earth and gave man authority, equipped him to take charge of the earth and dominate it. However, man in quest of wanting to be like God, fell into the temptation of Satan and disobeyed God. He therefore lost everything including his peace and security. The major cause of his fall was that of disobedience, which unfortunately is still plaguing the church today.

## **SIN OF DISOBEDIENCE**

"And he said, who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the

tree that I commanded you not to eat from? (Gen 3: 11) A man of God, Pastor Abioye, once said that we pray much because of disobedience, that, if we live a life of obedience, the result will come while we are yet praying and we would not have the need for much prayer; rather we would only deal in prayer of thanksgiving and praise to God.

## **CONSEQUENCES OF DISOBEDIENCE**

Gen 3: 15-19

- **Enmity** between serpent and woman, between thy seed and her seed (Power of darkness and man)
- Sorrow in conception for women, man shall rule over women (attempt at reversing this has failed)
- Cursed be the ground for man's sake, in sorrow shall thou eat all the days of thy life"(with modern technology, poverty still prevails on earth)
- Thorns and thistles it shall bring forth, thou shall eat of it all the days of thy life"
- In sweat of thy face shall thou eat bread;
- If thou shall hearken diligently unto the voice of God (Obedience) (Deut28 :15)

If one hearkens to the voice or word or instruction of God, blessing follow, but if we disobey, curse follow as enumerated in Duet 28 vs 16-68

Some curses associated with Disobedience include:

- Vulnerability to attack by enemies (Gen 28 vs 25) The covering of God abhors sin and the cover is instantly removed when sin creeps in to man.
- Sickness of all sort (Duet 28 :27)
- Pestilence and famine (Duet: 21)
- Closed heaven ( Duet 28 : 23)

The manifestation of all this curses or consequences indicates the presence of the sin of disobedience in our lives. This is aptly manifested in churches as

the Bible is no more preached in spirit and in truth. No balanced messages but lopsided messages all over the air waves and in churches. Messages from pulpit are subjected to Human understanding, whims and caprices, idiosyncrasy and manipulation. These days, we hear of diplomacy with the word of God, Church should thrive on the word of God, which is the foundation and not on diplomacy. The Church should not care whose horse is gorged? Sin is sin and should not be called any other name than sin.

Sin has taken over the church, thereby exposing it to all manner of atrocities befalling it today. For the church to go back to its original plan of a peaceful and secure church; it has to abide strictly by the word of God and not of man. We have to go back to the old time religion, that is really what we need, a religion of sobriety and awesomeness in the presence of God. A preacher Evangelist Owojaiye, once preached on a title, "The Church: an express way to hell". With the ways criminality is creeping into the church unabated, the likeliness of such prophecy coming to realization is becoming glaring by the day.

The old school song says 'give me the old time religion(3ce), its good enough for me (us)

We need to stand up and reclaim the church back to Christ

### **GODS HEDGE OR SECURITY**

"In the land of Uz there lived a man whose name was Job. This man was blameless and upright; he feared God and shunned evil" (Job 1: 1)

"When a period of fasting had run its course. Job would send and have them purified. Early in the morning he would sacrifice a burnt offering for each of them, thinking, perhaps my children have sinned and

cursed God in their hearts, this was jobs regular custom.

(Job 1:5)

"Have you not put a hedge around him and his household and everything he has? You have blessed the works of his hands, so that his flocks and herds are spread throughout the land.

(Job 1: 10)

The above three quotations, chronicle the person of job and the lesson that could be drawn therein in terms of our security. Also, it brings to fore the following;

- i. That God is our ultimate security
- ii. That we have to be in the same realm or frequency or in other words remain under the covering of God to be protected (Be ye holy for I am holy)
- iii. As Human being, there must be conscious efforts at remaining at all times within the covering or Hedge of God.

Job was introduced to us in the book as perfect and upright, one that feared God and eschewed evil. So he fulfilled the second postulation above. So he was under the covering/hedge of God.

In verse 5 another characteristics of job worth emulating was that he was always interceding through prayer and fasting for himself and family, peradventure they had sinned and cursed God in their hearts. He knew sin was the only thing that could remove the covering of God over the life of the children of God. This fulfills the postulation in (iii) above.

Finally, God is our ultimate security because he has hedge over all his children. This is confirmed even by the devil in vs 10. Here he asked God to remove the covering for him(job) to be able to tempt Job.

The above indicate that as children of God, we have a covering over our life, families, our Jobs and business. Anything contrary to our success in these endeavors, should alert us to the fact that our covering or hedge might have been broken by sin. "He who breaks the hedge, serpent bite."

In summary all this criminality entering, living and evading churches, almost bringing the body of Christ to disrepute is an indication that sin is now domiciled in our life's and churches. The only way out is to be resolute to uproot sin or else these vices will continue to increase and much effort on physical security than spiritual security or covering.

## **OPPONENT OF OUR SECURITY**

### **SATAN**

Satan, the accuser of the brethren is the greatest opponent of the security of the church and Christians.

"The thief (Satan) comes only to steal and kill and destroy: I, (Jesus Christ) have come that they may have life and have it to the full.

(John 10: 10)

He, Satan came to kill and destroy the church of Christ deviating the heart of the men from God, but Jesus said.

"I am the gate (security), whoever enters through me will be saved". He will come in and out, and find pasture.

(John 10: 9)

The above brings to fore, the need to be conscious that anything that is not of God or not in the law of God is of the devil, and has manipulative tendencies and therefore, be treated like a plague.

## **REMEDY**

The remedy to the crisis in the church aside vigilance is to go back to God in all sincerity because it is the security we emplaced that God fortifies.

The following are some of the way out:

### **1. TRUE REPENTANCE**

When we sinned as a church or individuals, judgement must come in the long run, the covering of God will be removed from the church, exposing it to the perils of the world. However, God said in its world that,

If you repent, I will restore to you that you may serve me. (Jer 15: 19)

### **2. OBEDIENCE**

"If you are willing and obedience, you will eat the best from the land". (Isaiah 1: 19)

"But if you resist and rebel, you will be devoured by the sword (of the enemy), from the mouth of lord has spoken" (Isaiah 1: 20)

A man of God (Bishop Abioye) once said that, if our obedience is full and in place, prayer becomes less and only prayers of thanksgiving will be on our lips. **Much obedience less prayers.**

### **3, DELIVERANCE**



Deliverance means to rescue, liberate or redeem, to turn over or give up to "from the lord comes deliverance..." (Psalm 3: 8)

The church and the Christians need to be rescue from the claws of the world, it need be liberated or redeemed. God will not touch the things of the devil (accused things) as the devil equally do not have a right over the things of God. Therefore, the church has to, in all sincerity re-dedicate itself and the flocks back to God to continue enjoying His promises and protection.

#### **4, PRAYER AND FASTING**

"And pray in the spirit on all occasion with all kinds of prayers and requests, with this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints"

(Eph. 6: 18)

If we read from Ephesians 6 vs 10 – 18, we will note that, struggles or threats plaguing the church are not against flesh and blood, but against the authorities, against powers of the dark world and against spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms, so the need to pray for the church, men of God and brethren becomes apt.

"So Peter was kept in prison, but the church was earnestly praying to God for him"

(Act 12: 5)

When Peter was in prison with intention of king Herod putting him to death, the church arose in one accord and earnestly prayed and God sent angel to release him, what can we say of today's church in the regard?

#### **5, LOVE**

"This is the message you heard from the beginning, we

should love one another. Do not be like Cain, who belonged to the evil one and murdered his brother. And why did he murder him? Because his own actions were evil and his brothers were righteous" (1 John 3;11-12)

What is happening in the church today, lack of love in its entirety, all sorts of worldly atrocities being replayed in the church, to the extent of brothers and sisters killing each other. Even pastors plotting against fellow Pastor all in the quest to be rich and popular, where is the glory of God in today's churches.

## **6. VIGILANCE:**

The church must more than ever before, be vigilant to her environment and the outside world. The time of docility and blind faith should be over, as the world has fact become a global village. So criminality and all sort of threat have become easily transferred and implicitly applied all over. The church must in the true sense be at alert, keep watch and be eternally vigilant.

## **CHAPTER THIRTEEN**

### **CONCLUSION**

The content of the book, as earlier stated is not intended to substitute the place of God in our overall security. However, the intention is to raise the necessary awareness to the body of Christ and anybody reading this book, on the need to be conscious of the threats within and without the Church.

If the men of old could be conscious of their safety, Prophet Elijah had to flee at the threat of Jezebel (1 king 19:1-3). We must do our best as Human beings to prompt our security while we believe God for the divine dimension.

Our Lord and savior Jesus Christ was taken away to safety at birth, prompted by the revelation from the Angels that he be taken to Egypt.

“Get up, he said, take the child and his mother and escape to Egypt. Stay there until I tell you for Herod is going to search for the child to kill him” (Matthew 2:13)

“So he got up took the child and his mother during the night and left for Egypt” (Matthew 2:14)

Equally, with the outpouring of the power of the Holy Spirit on today’s Church, miracles, sign and wonders, accompanying with gigantic edifice sprouting up all over the entire Landscape, the Church is fast becoming a target of security threat. Therein lies the need to be circumspect an emplace proactive measures to forestall any threat manifestation in the church or to brethren.

In this wise, the book looked at securing the Church members, Leaders, information and the physical Church structures to ensure that the Church is not undermined and recommended some measures to curtail threats in the Church. Equally, this second edition looked at family security in brief and family security with specific emphasis on rape, a new pandemic in the land,

with its already presence in the Church. Also, introduce is the topic "The Church and the Pandemic".

In the end, attention was drawn to the fact that God is our ultimate security as any security without God is a folly. The book re-iterated the need for the Church to repent of all known and unknown sin, go back to God in repentance to be able to recover the protective shield hitherto blocked by sin. The writer believes that this approach is the only genuine solution to our true and eternal security.

### **THE END OF THE MATTER**

- ⇒ That hitherto vices known only in the world has crept into the church is a truism – Need for True Reflection
- ⇒ That the world is influencing the church rather than the church influencing the world – Need for Role Reversal
- ⇒ that messages preached in the church these days are bereft of the efficacy to deter vices in the church and the society- Need to Preach Undiluted Message
- ⇒ That the church is knowingly becoming spiritually blind to rogues and people of questionable character in its midst –Need for internal cleansing
- ⇒ That the church is becoming lazy in the name of faith – Need to wake up from slumber
- ⇒ That in the final analysis, the Church needs to go on its knee for God's intervention. —Needful Imperative
- ⇒ That the church needs to go back to the old time religion. It is good enough for us. —Needful impetus

The greatest plague besieging the church today is disobedience to the word (law) of God and hence the rampant vices in its midst – (Duet. 28:15-68).

**"Let us hear the conclusion of the matter;  
fear God and keep his commandments for  
this is the whole duty of man.( Eccl. 12:13**

### **The Author:**

Mfon UMANA is a retired Security officer of over three (3) decades experience. He is currently a security consultant and senior partner, M.U.U Security Limited (MSL) Abuja.

He serves as a Deacon with the Dominion Chapel International Headquarters, Garki, Abuja, where he has been worshipping and receiving inspirational words for over twenty-five (25) years.

He hails from Ikot Obong, Ibekwe, Ikot Abasi Local Government Area, Akwa Ibom State, He holds a B.A English (University of Abuja), M.A Security and Developmental Studies (University of Ilorin).



He is the author of the fast selling book Church Security (A security guide for today's church) first edition and his second book," 20 Inspirational Biblical Facts", he speaks at conferences for workers and ushers on church security issues and the effect on church administration.

He is married to Mercy Umana (new Eyeye) and they are blessed with five amazing children, Favour, Faithful, Fortress, Gideon and Grace.