

# WHO ARE THE BLIND LEADING THE BLIND?

Jesus Christ warned his disciples to beware of men who use Christianity as a cover to pursue their own material or worldly concerns. ` Those who allow themselves to be misled by outward appearances as to simply follow such charlatans have nothing but emptiness and ruin to reap at the end.

On several occasions, our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ during his earthly ministry denounced in the most emphatic terms the scribes and the Pharisees for claiming to be devoted to God's service whereas they neither knew God nor regarded man. In one of such encounters Jesus Christ, quoting the Prophet Isaiah, made it clear that they were worshipping God in vain in that they were giving Him lip-service and "teaching for doctrines the commandments of men".

(Matthew 15:1-9) Drawing the attention of Jesus Christ to the reaction of the Pharisees, his disciples came thereafter and said unto him: "Knowest thou that the Pharisees were offended, after they heard this saying?" To this the Lord replied: "Every plant, which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up. Let them alone: they be blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch." – Matthew 15:12-14.

The blindness Christ was speaking of was of course spiritual; he meant a condition or state of ignorance of the truth, a situation in which one does not understand the will of God. One who is blind is in gross darkness. Christ said: "The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light. But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!" -Matthew 6:22,23.

On another occasion, while the Pharisees and unbelieving Jews were questioning his authority after he had cured a man born blind, he told them: "For judgment I came to this world, that they which see not might see, and they which see might be made blind." The account under reference states further: "And some of the Pharisees which were with him heard these words, and said unto him, Are we blind also? Jesus said unto them, if ye were blind, ye should have no sin but now ye say We see; therefore your sin remaineth." (John 9:39-41). God Almighty, through Jesus Christ, teaches the understanding of His ways to the meek or teachable ones who humbly acknowledge that they are ignorant and need to be taught. But those who are proud, self-satisfied and who despise the truth will remain in their state of ignorance and die in it. -Psalm 25: 8,9; 50: 17,18.

When a religious leader does not have the light of God, he is spiritually blind. Such a leader would be perverse in his ways, heretical, given to speculation rather than relying on the word of God. The people he is leading are also blind in as much as they freely and without compulsion chose to follow falsehood. St. Paul declared: "And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness." – 2 Thessalonians 2:11-12.

The 23rd chapter of the book of St. Matthew contains scathing indictments of the Pharisees by the Lord Christ. He exposed the false doctrines which kept the religious leaders and those they were leading in blindness. He said: " Woe unto you, ye blind guides, which say, Whosoever shall swear by the temple, it is nothing; but whosoever shall swear by the gold of the temple, he is a debtor! Ye fools and blind: for whether is greater, the gold, or the temple that sanctifieth the gold? ...Ye blind guides, which strain at a gnat, and swallow a camel. Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye make clean the outside of the cup and of the platter, but within they are full of extortion and excess. Thou blind Pharisee, cleanse first that which is within the cup

and platter, that the outside of them may be clean also.” – Matthew 23: 13-26

From the above text, it is evident that the works of those whose stock-in-trade is to deceive people in the name of Jesus Christ are all naked before God. Such ones should repent thoroughly or else the curses pronounced by Christ will fulfill on them.

That there are many of such false prophets today is a fulfillment of what Christ said in Matthew 24:11,24, showing that we are now in the Last Days. He warned: “And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many. For there shall arise false Christ’s, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect”. (Matthew 24:11,24) The doing of signs and wonders is not the mark of a true servant of God but of false prophets as is common in Nigeria and in other parts of the world.

“I didn’t know I was leaving my sister in the hands of a butcher.” That was the cry of a medical doctor following the death of his sister in the house of so-called prophet who had promised to heal her as reported in the *Weekend Sketch* May 5, 2001, page 9. The woman, a primary school teacher, was suffering from fibroid, and the prophet asked her to come for night vigil where he gave her a black potion to drink which allegedly led to her death. The prophet who gave it to her claimed it was holy water. As the condition got worse, the medical doctor-brother wanted to remove her for treatment but the prophet threatened she would die if removed from the chapel. It was when the prophet saw that the lady was dying that he attempted to take her to the doctor. It was however too late. He was later arrested by the police.

These false prophets outwardly appear to be harmless and sincere, like sheep but beneath that appearance of sanctity and innocence is their true character which is to devour the people. Thus we can see in clearer perspective the importance of the warning of Jesus Christ to wit: “Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?” He added: “Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them.” –Matthew 7: 15-20

These “pious frauds” in holy orders who without fear adorn themselves with such high sounding titles as Most Senior Apostle, Very Superior Apostle, etc claiming to be anointed by God or Christ only make mockery of themselves and should be exposed and shunned. Apostles are not appointed or taught by man. They are the highest class of Christians, and they preach the truth and nothing but the truth. There is no woman among them. –1 John 2:27; Ecclesiastes 7: 27,28; Job 33:23; 1 Corinthians 12:28-31.

About these false apostles St. Paul wrote: “For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; WHOSE END SHALL BE ACCORDING TO THEIR WORKS”. – 2 Corinthians 11:13-15.

Some of these false prophets deceive people to the sea shore sand river banks where they claim their prayers are speedily answered. For N15,000 to N20,000 each, they sell candles, handkerchiefs, etc for prosperity, miracle cure, protection against enemies, etc. They hypnotize or use diabolical powers on some of their subjects, who thereafter do whatever they are told. Many have suffered bitter disappointment, physical torture and even death in the hands of these so-called prophets. *The Comet* of Monday August 20, 2001 carried the story of a woman, Olaoluwa Famowopo, the daughter of a man who was once the follower of Mr. Emmanuel Odumosu, the “Jesus of Oyingbo”. The woman who gave herself the title “Queen of glory” calls her commune based in the Opebi area of Lagos, “Glory Ministries” and claims to be the

incarnation of God Almighty. She requires her stupefied adherents to worship her, hand over their wives, children, property to her and live in poverty. One of her victims who escaped after two years in detention at the church premises, is reported to have sold his six plots of land on Allen Avenue, Ikeja, two plots at Victoria Island, a foundry at Ikeja, his shares in a soft ware company as well as his wife and three daughters to the sect. Those who refuse to come under her spell, usually the first children of wealthy families, are imprisoned, tortured, starved. Some have died there, the report alleged. The police later came into the matter and sealed off the place.

Another gory report from Uganda tells how with the aid of a dozen or more accomplices, a woman, Credona Mwerinde, founder of the *Movement for the Restoration of the Ten Commandments* killed as many as 2,200 to 3000 members of her movement following her claim that the world will end before the end of the year 2000. This was said to be biggest cult murder in modern history. On joining the *Movement for the Restoration of the ten Commandments*, members sold their property, and gave the proceeds to the Church leadership. Her followers swore to absolute poverty, chastity and obedience, fasted two days a week and on the other five days were fed next to nothing. The cult was exposed after a mysterious fire burnt the chapel they were using roasting hundreds of her followers to death. – *NEWSWEEK*, August 14, 2000, pages 24-27. , Another well-known case is that of Rev. Jim Jones who considered himself to be the reincarnation of both Jesus and former Soviet leader Vladimir Lenin. In his “People’s Temple’ in Jonestown, Guyana in 1977 he caused the death of 914 persons, – 638 adults and 276 children. They drank juice laced with cyanide. Those who resisted were shot. He himself committed suicide by shooting himself in the head.

These incidents call to mind the words of God through the prophet Jeremiah “A wonderful and horrible thing is committed in the land; The prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests bear rule by their means; and my people love to have it so: and what will ye do in the end thereof? Jeremiah 5:30,31. See also Jeremiah 14:14; 23:13,14,31,32; etc.

## **Dumb Dogs.**

In Isaiah 56:10 the Bible spoke of these false prophets as blind, ignorant, dumb dogs that cannot bark. In other words, they do not have the courage to rebuke sin, they compromise with evil, they fail to preach against sin because they are afraid of losing the big donors in the Church and because they themselves are not clean before God. A Lagos-based magazine, *CITYPEOPLE* of April 24, 2002 (page 48) has a report of a man described as a “419 kingpin” who “has a chair dedicated to him, which nobody, not even the Pastor sits and which remains empty on occasions he could not attend service.” These false prophets are lazy, inactive spiritually. They live in luxury, opulence but do not preach judgment or righteousness, exactly as apostle Peter foretold in these words: “But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of. And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you: whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not.” 2 Peter 2:1-5

Some of these religious leaders are irresponsible, loose and immoral. They seduce people’s wives, deceive them to come and sleep in Church houses, and afterward defile them. Some go to the extent of bathing women. Others see visions for criminals and pray for them. Recently a so-called pastor who specializes in praying for and selling miracle underwear’s to girls going to

Europe for prostitution was arrested in Benin. He was exposed by the girls after they had been deported from Italy when the underwear's which were supposed to boost trade for them failed. This was published at page 14 of *The Week* magazine of April 8, 2002.

False prophets are more dangerous than armed robbers, sinful though their act is, because they lead many souls to destruction. That was why Christ described false prophets as ravening wolves. Destruction is the fate of false all prophets. Scripture says: "The leaders of this people cause them to err and those that are led of them are destroyed." -Isaiah 9:16.

We can therefore appreciate why Christ said: "...if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch". Christ gave the warning so that we may be on our guard so as not to be misled by charlatans or deceivers. They are very noisy, boastful, like frogs, but they are spiritually empty. -Revelation 16:13-15.

Every seeker after truth should therefore not take claims of these so-called prophets at face value but should examine their teachings or doctrines in the light of the Scriptures. The Bible says: "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world." – 1 John 4:1; See also 1 Thessalonians 5:21.

It is our prayer that God Almighty will deliver his children who are in the enclave of false prophets so that they may see the light and serve Him till the end for their own blessing and salvation.