

THE FORGING OF A MEGA CHURCH

Eye Witness Account

NICHOLAS SII MWIBAWA



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DEDICATION

For

Bishop Joseph Imakando,
General Overseer of the Bread of Life Church International,
whose ministry has greatly touched my life.

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This work would not have been possible without the obedience of Bishop Joseph Imakando, the founder and General Overseer of Bread of Life Church, and his answering the call of God upon his life. I, therefore, salute him wholeheartedly for his tireless and enduring resilience in serving the Church and its membership spread around the world.

I heartily thank my wife of twenty blissful years of love and romance, Inonge; you are a rarity among the fairer gender. Your patience when writing, indeed, did take me away from our intimacy, and that is a plus.

To our children, Sepho-Jéromé, Zóé- Mwangala, Naleli-Kharis and Mpho-Wycliffe. You guys help me get the inspiration to soar for your sakes. Big hugs.

Last but not least, my good friend and brother-in-Christ, Prof. Charles Mwewa, who made both the publication and the editing of this book, and indeed, the distribution, come true, and hence, bringing my dream alive.

Thank you.

FOREWORD

I am honored to pen a foreword to this illustrious book written by my good friend, Rev. Nicholas Sii Mwibawa. It was a pyrrhic déjà vu when Nicholas (Nic) asked me to review his manuscript, and perhaps, offer to publish it through our publishing company, the Africa in Canada Press. I obliged to just have a perusal until the content of the book began to strike a prodigious familiarity.

Like Nic has perfectly written, when we neglect to document our own history and actions, we risk leaving it to those who will depend on distortion to do so. In 2001 when I wrote *Zambia: Struggles of My People*, I devoted one full chapter in celebrating the enormous accomplishment of this monument of a man called Bishop Joe Imakando.

Personally, I know Bishop Joe from perspectives that probably only a few do. I was his personal intercessor – and, for close to 20 years when we parted company, I have never missed a single year when I did not pray for him and for Bread of Life Church International (BLCI).

A vow I made years ago to God to pray for the man and his work, it is one I cherish and embrace. And the reason is simple, because Bishop Joe is a rare gem in the community of contemporary spiritual giants. I remember how we broke the heavens, many times in private fasting only the two of us. There, we implored heaven to do for Zambia what He had not done before for us, at that time. The result was a major revival which through Bishop Joe has continued to break the devil's heart.

Credit must be given where it is due. For Nic and me and similarly-impacted persons like Rev. Fumbilwa and others, we are Trojan horses against Satan, fashioned in Bishop Joe's furnace of divine inspiration. We guarantee the sustainability

of his efforts, work and grace for perpetuity. Many people wonder why we did not remain with him “till the end.” It is an erroneous thinking that many in the movement have. Personally, I count it a blessing to have parted company with Bishop in late 2003. If I did not go, Bishop would have had no chance to see his seed germinate abroad in forms even he would not have imagined.

For example, and officially, I may be the first Zambian to have written over 30 books of international celebrity status – dealing with our history, law, economy, politics and religion. God be praised that the inspiration was partly sourced through Bishop Joe’s early mentoring and prayers. I stand as testimony wherever I have settled, partly because of Bishop Joe’s excellences.

When John Mark and Paul parted company, it looked like a terrible break up, until, later, they understood that, “All things work together for good to those who love God and are called according to His purpose (Romans 8:28).” Everyone who ever left BLCI to pursue their other interests should be considered to be an asset, an extension of the influence of BLCI at home and abroad. I am, like Nic, proud to be a guardian of the wealth of resilience and leadership acumen and prowess that God has bestowed upon his servant, Joe Imakando.

Nic, again, has done what most of us would have loved was done – celebrating the life, work and resilience of a modern spiritual icon while he still lives. *The Forging of a Mega Church: Eye Witness Account* is a gift to the Body of Christ. It is a breath of fresh air, a book written with a sweet spirit of love, desire to record a man who deserves recognition, honor and celebration, and a rare chance to recapture golden memories of those who have labored together with Bishop Imakando in God’s eternal vineyard.

Charles Mwewa
 Author, lawyer, professor;
 Lover of prayer;
 God’s *prisoner of grace!*

BRIEF INTRODUCTION

In this book, *The Forging of a Mega Church: Eye Witness Account*, I chronicle the process, principles and challenges Bread of Life Church International (BLCI) went through to achieve monumental success. I show how Bishop Joe Imakando, as the leader and visionary of the Church, was at the heart of the design of the template that built Zambia's first Mega Church.

I share from firsthand accounts of the forging of the Mega Church. I was a pastor under Bread of Life Church from 2006 to 2017. That was about eleven years of service. I joined the Church in 1991 when I gave my life to Jesus Christ there in one of the vestries of the sanctum.

The opportunity to write this body of work chronicling the broodings and nascent underpinnings of BLCI is catechistic moment. BLCI will always be dear to my heart for it was there where I met my most cherished Lord, Jesus Christ. I also found the wife of my youth there. It was there where I served Him as a youth leader, thus, cutting my teeth as an emerging leader. Leadership models and templates were exposed to me there by various leaders who helped to shape my leadership acumen.

You will be blessed when you read this book.

1 | THE WIND OF CHANGE 1990-1

Following the collapse of the Union of Socialist and Soviet Republics (U.S.S.R) on December 31, 1991, the world saw the unprecedented breakup of these former Soviet Republics, for example, the Russian Federation emerged as a dominant state, and the following; Georgia, Ukraine,¹ Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Estonia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Lithuania, Moldova, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan.²

Following these epoch events of a geopolitical nature, Czechoslovakia broke up into Czech Republic and Slovakia. Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia broke up into several Baltic States namely, Serbia, Bosnia, Herzegovina, Slovenia, Macedonia, Croatia, and Montenegro.

These geopolitical undertones not only affected the aforementioned countries but had far more unraveling effects on authoritarian regimes like the Zambian government of Kenneth Kaunda. The effect of Perestroika where greatly felt as the wind of change saw many autocratic regimes fall, from Nicolae Ceausescu of Romania who was ousted through a bloody revolution against communism in 1989, to Kenneth Kaunda who lost power in an impromptu election in 1991 to Frederick Chiluba.³

¹At the time of this writing, Ukraine had been invaded by Russia citing irreconcilable differences over the former's insistence in joining NATO and failure to be neutral. The other stated aim of the military operation by Putin was to denazify Ukraine, as well as blaming them for targeting Russian speaking Ukrainians in the Donbas region of Eastern Ukraine. Since 2014, there's been war in this region where Russian backed separatists have proclaimed statehood, namely the region of Luhanska and Donetsk.

²Britannica

³Frederick Jacob Titus Chiluba was the second Republican President of

This wind of change brought with it an aura of freedom that reverberated to the Evangelical movement here in Zambia. This wind of change was a breath of fresh air not only to the general populace but the Church community who saw large swathes of people both young and old convert to the Born Again Churches either from paganism or the main line nominal Christian Churches like Roman Catholic, Seventh Day Adventist, Anglican Church, Dutch Reformed Church, Church of Central Africa Presbyterian (C.C.A.P), United Church of Zambia (UCZ), New Apostolic Church, Salvation Army and the Episcopalian Churches.

Still others converted from the Watch Tower Sect or Jehovah's Witnesses as they are largely known around the world. Suffice to mention that I was among those nominal Christians who converted from the New Apostolic Church as well as United Church of Zambia as my parents were from these two Churches in 1991. My mother was from New Apostolic while my father was from the United Church of Zambia. As children we used to attend both church services whenever it was convenient.

Churches like Emmasdale Baptist Church or Emmasdale Church as it was fondly known among us greatly benefited from the Perestroika wind of change in that large groups of people converted to the Pentecostal Churches of all hues from storefront churches, class room churches,

Zambia. He stood on the Movement For Multi-Party Democracy (MMD) and won the election against long time President Kenneth Kaunda of United National Independence Party (UNIP). Chiluba was a trade unionist who had been a long- time critic of the former president Kaunda. Chiluba introduced market and liberal policies that in the short term brought untold misery to many Zambians who lost employment as many Government controlled companies were liquidated. In the long term however, investors came into Zambia and set up companies and business entities that eradicated shortages of essential commodities and queues at shopping centers.

house churches and well established churches. They all saw an exponential increase in Sunday services to the extent that many Churches introduced several services to contend with the growth in so short a time.

What usually took years to accomplish took merely months in terms of Church growth. Those sorts of conversions as witnessed in the 1990s have never been seen again in modern Zambia since the turn of the century. The wind of change saw the emergence of Evangelist Nevers Mumba⁴ of the Victory Bible Church who coined the famous phrase "Zambia Shall Be Saved" a telecast broadcast on Zambia National Broadcasting Corporation (ZNBC) in the 1990s. His flagship bearer was the "Victory Campaigns" large open air crusades that gathered thousands of crowds here in Zambia and some of our neighboring countries like Namibia and eSwatini (formerly Swaziland).

Dr. Nevers Mumba was the first Evangelist to run live T.V broadcasts from Mulungushi International Conference Center as well as being on television on a weekly basis. He is truly the 'Father' of modern tele-evangelism in Zambia without doubt. The story of revival in Zambia can never be complete and honest without the mention of Dr. Nevers Mumba of Victory Ministries. The role that his victory crusades and international conferences played can never be down played in the sustained evolution of Pentecostal and Charismatic movements. He was a trailblazer and a visionary we owe an unpayable debt of appreciation.

What I witnessed in the early to late 1990s was purely a country-wide revival that brought droves of people from all walks of life from politicians to the common man. We all

⁴Dr. Nevers Mumba a once powerful evangelist, transitioned into mainstream politics after being appointed Vice President under third president Levy Mwanawasa. He is currently the party president for MMD.

converged into the Churches, which burst to the seams containing the harvest of souls.

The Victory International conferences which were held at Mulungushi International Conference Center as an annual event introduced to the Zambia Church, names like Dr. Mensah Otabil, Mosa Sono, Dr. Enock Sitima, Fred Addoh, Dr. Charlton Pearson,⁵ Bishop T.D Jakes and a host of other famous preachers too many to mention. We could never have known some of these preachers had it not been for Dr. Nevers Mumba. Christians in Zambia grew in their faith due to such conferences and interactions even among the clergy who sat close to each other in those plenary sessions. It enhanced fellowship and togetherness among believers which further contributed to the growth, spiritual wellbeing and cohesion of the Body of Christ in Zambia.

I strongly propose that this father figure in the person of Dr. Nevers Mumba be honored by the Christian community in Zambia for the epoch role he and his ministry played in the nation. Suffice to mention that many Gospel singers and singing groups joined in the mass choirs that were formed to sing during the conferences.

These young people gained from such rare experiences and exposure which in turn benefited the respective churches they came from. So, there is a direct residual benefit to the churches that participated in these hallowed events spearheaded by Victory Ministries. Many young people who worked with Dr. Mumba found themselves in the United States of America where they were trained to do ministry either within the States or eventually came back to Zambia to minister.

⁵Charlton Pearson is credited for having brought Bishop TD Jakes unto the world stage. He introduced him to the late founder of TBN Paul Crouch who gave him a slot that changed the life and ministry of Bishop Jakes. Carlton Pearson is a famed King Maker.

It is very important for those keen observers of historical events to mark epic inflection points that lend weight to a move of God. It is critically important that we see how crucial the tearing down of the Iron Curtain in the U.S.S.R helped to blow the wind of change not only in that empire, but much further afield to our own country of Zambia. The advent of multiparty politics also helped to shape the trajectory that the Spirit of God took with the Charismatic/Pentecostal churches in so far as revival was concerned. This model and prototype as much as it can be studied, modeled or paralleled, cannot for all intents and purposes be replicated, largely because we do not have another break-up of the U.S.S.R.

Secondly and crucially, the conditions that gave rise to Perestroika aren't prevailing and the geopolitical reality presently isn't the same as it was then. Everything occurs within a particular context and reality, it's for such reasons that certain events in history can never be replicated because they are irreducible.

As I close off this chapter on the "wind of change," it is imperative that as the Church of Jesus or indeed as a people, we cherish that change for what it heralded in our nation Zambia politically, economically, socially and spiritually. We did have some of our people suffer colossal and epic loses admittedly, while others reaped phenomenal benefits as a consequence of the wind of change. Our nation hitherto has never been the same. Politically, we have seen monumental changes from a one party system of governance to a multi-party one. Economically, we have evolved from a commandist and mono-economy once comprised of copper exports steamrolled by the government, to a market economy largely powered and driven by a capitalist

mercantile⁶ model that brought with it many multi-national corporations in various sectors of our economy from mines to industries and mega chain stores like Game, Spar, Pick N Pay, Shoprite Checkers, Choppies, Woolworths, Jet, Pep stores and others take center stage in setting international trends that we had never known in our country Zambia. The millennial generation often times laugh when we tell them that prior to our liberalized market economy we now espouse, large queues at state owned stores like Mwaiseni, Zambia Consumer & Buying Corporation (ZCBC) and National Import & Export Corporation (NIEC) stores were the order of the day for essentials like mealie-meal, cooking oil, bathing and washing soaps and bread. Suffice it to say, Kaunda was quite industrious and innovative for springing up such locally based mega chain stores that meant most if not all generated revenues from such entities remained in our country thereby boosting our gross domestic product (GDP). NIEC stores expanded its reach in our neighboring countries and used to export its products and services to Tanzania on a bilateral trade agreements with that country through their First President Mwalimu Julius Nyerere who was a close friend and confidant of President Kenneth Kaunda. Those goods eventually, though were dogged with scarcity and supply chains riddled with incompetence which made them uncompetitive once the market was liberalized, they simply couldn't match the new entities hitherto mentioned from South Africa with superior brands of goods and service as well as great packaging.

It seems almost ridiculous and nonsensical to the new generation spawned during the liberalized economic model

⁶ Relating to trade or commerce; commercial. The shift of wealth to the mercantile classes. Some of the synonyms of this word are; commercial, trade, trading, business, merchant, sales, profit-oriented, money-oriented, profit-making, for-profit, mercenary, capitalistic, worldly, greedy and materialistic.

with a plethora of malls just about at every street corner in plush neighborhoods in major cities like Lusaka, Ndola, Kitwe, Kabwe, Chipata and Livingstone.

To the older folks, scenes of meandering queues used to be common place. People used to wake up at midnight, dash off to wherever they got wind of a shop or a warehouse where essential goods would be sold. Smuggling rings were lords of trade, who would stockpile essential commodities with a view to exponentially increasing the price for a windfall. Some would smuggle these essential items to neighboring countries like DRC or Tanzania for super profits.

At one time Kenneth Kaunda banned the importation of Coca-Cola and Fanta to boost local brands like Tarino, Tips and Pepsi which were a flop as most people craved the former and could smuggle them into the country via our southern border from South Africa or Southern Rhodesia (Zimbabwe).

Those were dark and dim days to live in Zambia. I recapture scenes like those for the benefit of our youths who take the abundance of goods and services prevailing at the moment for granted. Imagine standing in a long queue stretching for miles as early as 0100 a.m. in the wee hours of the morning only to be told that cooking oil you had been queuing for that long had just finished? That my dear friends used to be our common and regular experience in Zambia in the 1980s and 1990s.

When we state that liberalization of our economy by late president Frederick Chiluba also brought some successes we mean just that especially when seen through the lens I have just shown above. It is wrong to look at such an argument purely from the skewed prism of major redundancies and closure of state owned parastatals that were in most cases poorly managed rife with corruption as well as nepotism

pervading the hiring policies under first president Kenneth Kaunda.

Liberalization of our economy brought on myriad of advances and ease of access to essential goods and services. At one time access to the U.S dollar was hard as hard could be. It was almost strange and a thing of gossip to see someone having a U.S dollar bill as low as \$20. One could find themselves trailed by state agents for mundane a thing as being in possession of a \$20 bill.

2 | THE BIRTHING OF THE VISION

The vision of Bread of life Church International is to bring thousands into the Kingdom. The vision coincided with the start of Bread of Life Church International on 18th September 1992. The vision was bringing thousands into the Kingdom, feeding them with the Bread of Life and helping them possess the land. The vision was to have a revision later in the 2000s as “Tens of Thousands” was added.

The word ‘International’ was added because at the time of submitting the papers to the Registrar of Societies, it was found that there was already a Church in their data base with the name “Bread of Life Church” so to differentiate it from our Church, it was determined that ours be known as Bread of Life Church International. At the time, what seemed to be an aspect of differentiation, turned out to be somewhat prophetic as the Church became truly prophetic as international branches became a prospect in the not so distant future.

The Features of the Vision

Bringing thousands into the Kingdom

The major thrust of the vision was to evangelize Zambia thus bringing people to Jesus Christ. This thrust was the rallying cry of the ministry in all its outreaches. I must admit that the Church/ministry has never quite lost its original vision of doing whatever was spiritually possible to bring people to Jesus Christ. Different strategies were employed to win people, mainly through door-to-door evangelism

spearheaded by the Evangelism Ministry, Lunch Hour Fellowships dotted around the City as well as in work places, open air crusades in places like Matero and other townships. The youths were also encouraged to reach out to colleges and universities (two) at the time, namely; the University of Zambia (UNZA) and the Copperbelt University (CBU) through Bread of Life Fellowships.

These fellowships were spearheaded by the Youth Ministry at the main Church. I will delve more deeply in the activities of the Youth Ministry later on in this book as I have devoted a chapter on the ministry of the youth which I was a part of. Radio and television outreaches were also considered as means to win the lost which culminated into the start of the 'Hour of Blessing' television broadcast on ZNBC.

It has been near miraculous for those of us who have over the span of 30 years witnessed how God has filled the barns of Bread of Life Church with kernels upon kernels of wheat stacked from the ceiling to the floor. God has truly fulfilled the vision of bringing tens of thousands of people into His Kingdom. People from all walks of life have been captured in the Lord's nets as fishers of men have cast nets widely to bring in many varieties of fish to the Lord's glory.

Bread of Life Church has seen the vision of ingathering of souls come to pass. No human could be able to pull such a stint, it has to be God. God alone deserves all the glory for what has happened. Many sons and daughters of Bread of Life in the past and present who rolled up their sleeves and put them to the plough helped and are helping to gather the Lord's kernels of wheat into the barnyard.

Feeding them with the Bread of Life

The feeding them with the Bread of Life encompasses all

aspects of teaching, preaching and partaking the word of God. This is one aspect where, from the very beginning, Bread of Life Church International through its founder Bishop Joseph Imakando has been very strong owing to his background as a Baptist minister. Bishop Joe has had a strong biblically based ministry of the word of God dating back to the 1970s. It is this strength in the ministry of the word which has quite evidently been the bedrock of his stability and success. Any meaningful success in ministry must firmly be anchored on both the word of God and the Holy Spirit.

If the current trends are to be reversed radically, the believer needs more than ever, to get back to the basics of reading, studying, quoting and meditating on God's word. The incessant waves of doctrinal error spewing from so called "spirit fire churches" and "neo-prophetic churches" can only be curtailed and extinguished by feeding the people with the word of God and getting them firmly into biblical themes as points of study.

We need more than ever to embolden our members through a systematic study of the word of God. Systematic theology must be undertaken by pastors across the Christendom to distill topics like Eschatology, Missiology, Angelology, Pneumatology, Ecclesiology, Bibliology and others to firmly buttress the saints in these hallowed themes of the word of God.

A believer's strength and witness greatly derives from what they feed on. You are what you feed, so goes the famous adage. There is no way a Christian can be strong if he feeds once every Sunday, while the other seven days are spent watching popular prime TV and reality shows featuring the Kardashians. In other words, believers must be

strong and do exploits.⁷ Exploits in God are a product of diligent search of the truth of the word until one grabs hold of a revelation from God. Without a diligent search for truth in God's word, there will be no exploits. Great revelations will put you in command in the spiritual realm.

The spiritual realm controls the natural world in which we live. Nothing in the natural world moves without the command of the spiritual realm. Knowledge, in this case, the word of God is the controlling and compelling power that makes things move in the natural realm.

Feeding on the word is what makes for exploits in a believer's life. Most shame in a believer is traceable to a scant word intake and lack of diligence in your pursuit of God. There is no one who has seriously pursued God who has not seen the hand of providence in their lives. No one who has purposed to pursue God diligently has been stranded in life. It's virtually impossible.

My prayer for the younger generation with this ethos of feeding the people with the Bread of Life is that lest they forget, it's one of the foundational ethos of the Church. It's imperative and essential that emphasis be placed squarely upon the word of God for our younger generation to grow up on good doctrine which as I have so eloquently contended for in this book and other of my publications like *Emerging from the Shadows*, *Sovereignty Restored* and *Gimme That Old Time Religion: Yearning for Authenticity & Reasonable Christianity*. In all these book titles, I make the strong case for contending heavily for doctrinal purity and integrity in order to raise a cadre of believers who know the tenets of our Christian faith and can give reasons for their beliefs to any especially to those outside the household of faith like Muslims, Hindus and Buddhists not to mention Atheists.

⁷ Daniel 11:32

Helping them to possess the land

This term stands for influence. Possessing the land and their dreams encapsulates all aspects of the influence of Christ over the believer. This is the overall conversion of the believer as they have submitted to the discipleship process of transformation. The new convert undergoes inward transformation through their partaking of the word of God which is working in tandem with the Holy Spirit, yielding inward change that invariably leads to influencing him.

This influence leads the believer to taking charge of components of the socioeconomic segments of life. The Bishop was a firm proponent of the word of God creating the mindset of a leader in a believer thus leading to influence in that particular believer's domain. That in my view is what possessing the land and dream means. Additionally, it also means the literal possession of land in many places within the country. When a Church branch was established anywhere in the country, it was logically envisaged that such a branch must invariably purchase land and build their own structure. This in the view of the Bishop was truly possessing the land. There was no way we could claim to possess the land without owning land.

God has truly blessed the Church from humble beginnings at Emmasdale Church with a membership of 120 members to well over 12,000 members at the main Church auditorium and several branch churches within the country of Zambia as well as outside the country.

Land possession is the means of production in a Capitalist economic model. There is no production that can rationally ensue without the acquisition of land. God's covenant with Israel known as the Abrahamic Covenant involves land, in fact, it forms the heart of the Covenant. God told Abraham to leave his kindred, his father's land and culture and to go a

LAND that He would show him. You notice that the Covenant involved the actual acquisition of land through conquest. The land they were to possess and eventually occupy was inhabited which means someone was going to have to fight for it.

Similarly, for us believers, God has given us promises to occupy until He comes. We need to roll up our sleeves and brace ourselves for a fight to displace the squatters on our LAND in order for us to see prosperity. It's a fight of faith. Nothing is going to land on you without the exercise of robust faith. Faith is the master key to possessing your land of immense opportunity.

During the Kaunda days, our fathers were indoctrinated with Communist dogmas and mantras that espoused Humanism and austerities where they were averse to wealth creation and prosperity while most of the land was owned by Galaun,⁸ a Jewish businessman. Land was cheap then in Lusaka and other towns but because our parents weren't exposed to economic platitudes that encouraged productivity most of them never owned land. Since they never owned land, they could not own the means of productivity thus they died poor and landless.

He who owns the land owns everything that's built upon it. As believers today, we need to own land no matter where it is, or how small it might be. Land's value appreciates with value added cost to it by way of investment. The moment you invest substantive assets of value on your land, that added cost of the value to the land makes that land appreciate in corresponding terms. My advice to you is to buy land and never sell it unless it's to purchase an asset that

⁸GALAUN now deceased, was a Jewish Business Mogul who owned large tracks of land in Lusaka. Most of this land has since been sold to Zambians who have built houses.

you could later sell at a higher than original purchase price for a profit.

Land must never be sold, it's even much better to borrow money from a financial institution than to dispose of your land. Land is the only commodity and asset that never depreciates in value over time. Most other liquid assets like money in the bank can lose value over time due to liabilities like inflation, exchange rate fluctuations, cost of doing business, political instability and cost of fuel. Fixed assets like property and land can always be disposed of higher than inflation for a profit.

Countries like Israel and the Netherlands with land at a premium never sell land, they merely lease it. Leasing of land is far more preferable than selling it. You can always lease land at a profit to meet an urgent need, then repurchase it later at the expiry of the lease agreement. In Zambia, we need to make an inventory of all arable and useful land so that we can determine which land could be leased, which one could be used for agricultural production, and for construction. It's not wise to use good fertile and arable land for construction when there are huge tracks of unproductive land.

3 | THE BIRTH PLACE; 136-CHINYUNYU ROAD

The birthing place of Bread of Life Church International was 136 Chinyunyu Road in Emmasdale. Emmasdale is a suburb nestled between Matero to the West, Chaisa to the East and Mandevu to the North of Lusaka. This was the birthing place of the vision of the Church. It will suffice to mention at this juncture, that Bishop Joe Imakando, then Reverend Imakando was a Baptist minister before he went over to the Pentecostals. He pastored from the late 1970s until 1992 when God gave him the vision of Bread of Life Church International. I was Born Again on 26th June 1991 in the Vestry of the Church, Emmasdale Church. I was led to Christ by Rev. Friday Fumbilwa,⁹ a pastor of El Shaddai Worship Center in Oakland, New Zealand. He was then the lead Music Minister at our Church at the time. He disciplined me as a new convert.

136-Chinyunyu Road was a hive of activities in 1990-1 and throughout the 1990s. Many of the founding members that constitute the current leaders of Bread of Life Church were converted at this address. People used to troop to this location for church services on Sundays, mid-week services on Wednesdays, choir rehearsals on Fridays and Saturday prayer meetings on Saturdays. Weddings were conducted on Saturdays for all our members.

On Sunday, every service was undergirded with teams of prayer warriors (intercessors) who prayed through the service as Bishop Joe or any other preacher ministered. This

⁹Rev. Friday Fumbilwa is the founder and pastor of El Shaddai Christian Center in Auckland, New Zealand. He is a Zambian Missionary to New Zealand. He actually led me to faith in Christ.

was the power behind the ministrations. I was also privileged to have been a member of the Intercessory team. At one point, I was torn between ministering in the praise, evangelism and intercessory teams.

The leaders of the three teams convened a meeting at which I was charged with choosing a group I needed to belong to exclusively. It was a difficult proposition as I loved all three. I had to leave the praise team and concentrated on the evangelism and intercessory teams of the Church.

I can remember so vividly how this place created such a buzz around Chaisa and the surrounding places. I used to live near the Church, a stone throw away in a place called Hillcroft, a cluster of housing units that belonged to NAPSA former employees. My Aunt worked for NAPSA (National Pensions & Scheme Authority). My aunt and other colleagues became bonafide beneficiaries of those cluster of houses through President Chiluba's housing empowerment initiative.¹⁰

Those houses were sold to sitting tenants. What was interesting about the church growth of the Church was that majority of the members came from the surrounding neighborhoods of the Church. People came from far places as well as surrounding farmlands, Avondale, Chelstone, Kaunda Square stage 1 and 2, Roma, Jesmondine, Chudleigh, University of Zambia (UNZA) , N'gombe, Kalundu, Northmead, Mtendere, Long Acres, Chilenje, Libala, Kamwala, Town Area, Thorn Park, Olympia Park and Extension, Garden Compound, Chaisa, George Compound, Jack, Chawama, Misisi, Lilanda Compounds. As the influence of the Bishop and his ministry grew however,

¹⁰Presidential Empowerment Initiative introduced by Chiluba to empower Zambians with council and some Government housing units. Those who were sitting tenants benefited. These houses were disposed of cheaply to gain political mileage it reckoned by his critics.

it became apparent that people could come from far flung places like Kafue, Chilanga, Chisamba and Lusaka West.

Fond memories of 136 Chinyunyu Road are indelibly etched on my memory due to myriad events that took place there in respect to the growth of the Church. One of those fond memories was the Saturday prayer meeting. This prayer meeting was the focal point of the Church in that all the leaders of the Church including the Bishop used to attend it religiously every Saturday unless he was out of town or the country. So much prayer power was generated in those meetings. The atmosphere used to be charged with so much power that when a demon possessed person entered the place, they immediately manifested the demons. Countless lives were transformed at 136 Chinyunyu Road.

It is quite clear to any Church Historian or keen observer of Revivals to deduce that the Pentecostals/Charismatics rode the crest of revival that broke out in the early 1990s. Unprecedented numbers of people attended prayer meetings, gospel music concerts; open air crusades conducted by various Evangelists notable among them included Reinhard Bonnke,¹¹ Ernest Angeley, Benny Hinn, Christopher Alam, Ed Elliot and our very own Evangelist Nevers Mumba.

Those crusades brought with them an added impetus to the Body of Christ in terms of unity, commitment and excellence in doing ministry. Our members who participated at various points in those crusades benefited in their learning and experience on how to conduct such high profile ministry. A city wide evangelistic crusade garners enough

¹¹A German leading world evangelist who trail-blazed African countries including Zambia preaching the Gospel of Christ. It is understood, Nevers Mumba interpreted for Reinhard Bonnke when he first came to Zambia. When he left, Mumba was given crusade equipment to commence his preaching ministry across Zambia.

human resources and capital at a monumental level that heightens the level of ministry expertise that is passed on to both the clergy and the laity. The Church of Jesus Christ benefits all round from such ministries by foreign brethren with state of the art ministry tools and exposure.

Some of these international evangelists with enough financial power would train crusade counselors drawn from all denominations, crusade literature, books for Pastors and how to witness for Christ tutorials. These sorts of trainings exposed the members of various denominations and the clergy to advanced ministry training methodologies that enhanced the work of God. Mass choirs were mobilized across denominations which harnessed and entrenched unity in the Body of Christ across the denominational spectrum.

Let me caution you as I veer to a screeching halt on this chapter. All good things are as good as they last. As much as some of us were saved at 136 Chinyunyu Road, Emmasdale, we must never be attached to places and things. We must never entomb ourselves to moments in history nor should we be overly sentimental about places and things but be attached to God and what He is doing currently.

I discussed what happened at that location, merely for historical cognition and for those younger or unaware of where the Church was born to be aware not to overly glamorize the place more than is usual. That sort of thing is what makes people worship a relic of a bygone era, I am a realist and merely learn lessons from the past. Human beings have an uncanny way of never learning from their past so they keep on making the mistakes of their forefathers. God is always on the move, never entomb His momentous moves of yesterday when He is gradually moving and building new things.

We need to keep abreast with what He is currently doing while never forgetting the places where we met Him. The

Jewish Patriarchs always built altars for remembrance so that when their children asked them why in future, they would say there is where God delivered Israel or here is where I wrestled with God all night, or here is where I saw a staircase into heaven, where Angels ascended and descended upon me. On these piles of stones I promised God to pay Him all my tithes of everything He would give me when He blesses me. There is wisdom in recollecting and chronicling what God has done in the past and how significant certain places are in that remembrance.

4 | THE ROLE OF PREVAILING PRAYER

I have so far alluded to the crest of revival that most Churches and ministries in Zambia rode from the overarching arms of political and spiritual awakenings that took place in 1990-1. I coined this awakening that took place, “The wind of change”. Change is a constant phenomenon of life. Every living thing undergoes change. According to Professor Rebecca J. Lester¹² of Washington University in St. Louis, U.S.A, in her studies in Anthropology, she states in a research paper titled, “Rites of Passage,” that chronicled a number of rituals that people perform to celebrate life defining moments like graduations, engagements and marriages. She states that humans need to have rites of passage from one stage of development to the next. This is healthy and marks a person’s transition moments which are commemorated and celebrated with friends and family.

Prof Lester stated how people’s psychology and psyche has been adversely affected due to the COVID-19 pandemic that has made it impossible to gather to celebrate such epoch moments in people’s lives. She has postulated that noticeable disorientations, stress and in some rare cases deep depression has often occurred when people haven’t had the time to participate in these rituals like rites of passage.

The political change that took place in Zambia in 1991 also brought with it a renewed impetus for all things spiritual. People’s new found political space gave rise to new forms of spiritual expressions. People ditched the nominal changes that couldn’t adapt and change in tandem with the times.

¹²Psychology Today

They patronized the Pentecostal Churches who gave their congregants new forms of spiritual expressions like speaking in tongues, clapping hands, shouting, congregational prayers done collectively as opposed to quite ones, dancing, playing guitars, drums and trumpets.

Many young people found these new ways of spiritual expressions irresistible and gave rise to numerical growth. The political wind of change also gave way to the dismantling of Parastatal business entities which led to the defunct of many such companies.

Many people lost jobs as a result of these redundancies but on the other hand, many also capitalized on the economic downturn to amass a lot of wealth as they purchased companies at less than market value. This wind of change turned out to be gain for others while it was loss for others. Every momentous change has two sides; loss and opportunity! When a wind of change occurs, those who never adapt are swept under the currents of such monumental change while others who adapt and change reap colossal benefits. Spiritually speaking, Bread of Life Church International adapted and changed its ways of doing Church thereby reaping the rewards.

Massive prayer mobilization took place at a corporate level as well as at an individual level. The Intercessory Ministry took off under the leadership of Charles Mwewa¹³ and Edgar Mulungushi. These two structured the ministry in such a way that members were trained as in a School of Intercession with a certificate upon graduation. We used to

¹³Charles Mwewa is a Zambian domiciled in Canada where he is a practicing professor of law. Charles Mwewa is a celebrated author, advocate, poet, preacher and lover of prayer. He once led the Intercessory' Ministry at Bread of Life Church International and founded the School of Intercession. Most of the graduates of the School of Intercession have gone on to be leaders of various branches and initiatives of BLCI, in Zambia and abroad.

refer to Charles as the High Priest because of his incessant praying round the clock. My wife underwent such training. They even held graduation ceremonies that were graced by the Church hierarchy including the Presiding Bishop Joe Imakando. Graduates brought family and friends to such momentous occasions. I cannot overstate the extent to which these intercessory training went in as far as galvanizing prayer mobility in the Church. Hundreds of people were enlisted and trained to pray throughout the day, week, months and year. The impact can be seen by all and sundry.

Ways in Which These Prayers Worked

Breaking down strongholds

In the wake of these powerful prevailing prayers we saw strongholds¹⁴ broken over the city of Lusaka to the extent that Cabinet Ministers in our Government stated attending Church at Bread of Life Church International. Some people would want to make light of such high profile people attending Church. What you must know is that it isn't easy for such people to attend Church because in the political arena many people use black magic and charms for good luck. Powerful delusions are sent to politicians world over to hoodwink them to follow Satan, so when such people give their lives to the Lord, it is a direct result of prayer power. If my memory saves me right, Home Affairs Minister Mr. Kelly Walubita and Minister of Lands Mr. Chambeshi used to attend Church at Bread of Life Church International. President Frederick Chiluba once attended a conference as

¹⁴Under the auspices of Evangelical Fellowship of Zambia I and others working under the Chairmanship of Bishop Fortune Mwiza did spiritual mapping of Lusaka the results are documented in a book.

well as Vice President Brig. Gen. Godfrey Miyanda. The Church was also frequented by the former Lusaka Mayor Her worship Ms. Patricia Nawa and quite recently the Former Minister of Religious Affairs and National Guidance Rev. Mrs. Godfrida Sumaili. Rev. Sumaili has been a member of Bread of Life since the early 90s when she gave, her life to the Lord at a crusade conducted by Dr. Nevers Mumba at Matero Boys Secondary School grounds.

Large numbers of people attending Church

I am a pastor, I know firsthand what goes into people attending Church consistently, it's no walk in the park. For large numbers of people to continue attending Church without losing interest over a long span of time requires powerful intercessory prayers that break strongholds over people's lives. It is quite evident that the large numbers of people that have attended Church at Bread of Life Church are directly linked to powerful mobilization of prayer power. I can encourage other ministers of the gospel to take a leaf at what has happened at Bread of Life Church International.

Many youths joining various ministries

When youths would join the Church, what was amazing to see was that they all took keen interest in the work of God. They joined various available ministries to minister for the Lord they loved. There was an unparalleled zeal and joy in most of the youths. They were genuinely saved and wanted to serve the Lord as soon as they joined the Church. Again, it is not automatic that once people get saved, they will join the ministries and save God. It takes prayer power to make people join various ministries and serve God. There are so

many things that preoccupy young people these days, so for them to cease everything else and devote their lives serving God can only point to one thing— prayer. Never underestimate the power of prayer in drawing people to work for the Lord.

Large numbers of college and university students

Large numbers of college and university students were mobilized and joined our Church from all colleges, namely; Evelyn Hone College, Natural Resources Development College (NRDC), National Institute For Public Administration (NIPA) and University of Zambia (UNZA). Suffice to mention that all these institutions had Bread of Life Church Student Fellowships which were started by the Church through its Youth Ministry head by Pastor Lisulo Lisulo as the Director. The Church used to release buses every Sunday to keep up the students from the colleges to Church and back. Such fruits of ministry are borne from the power of prayer.

Elderly people attending and joining ministries

In most Pentecostal churches, elderly people usually take a back seat and don't do any ministry. We noticed however, that this was not the case at Bread of Life Church International. Many elderly people joined the Counseling Team, the Evangelism Team, the Praise & Worship Team, the Intercessory Team and Ushers Ministries. Such a demographic is only possible where there is sustained and prevailing prayer power.

Sustained and prevailing prayer is the platform of choice that God uses to grow the church and bring in all types of

people into it. Elderly people are skeptical of Pentecostal churches in general as they are deemed to be largely led by young pastors young enough to be their children. They harbor many prejudices and for good reason. For some, it's the doctrinal and other abuses they despise among Pentecostals, therefore to see them troop into your church in large numbers can only point to one thing-sustained and prevailing prayers. This point must never be underestimated by any pastor of a church, as such neglect can spell a disaster of epoch proportions. Many churches that could have blossomed and grown very large have been largely impeded due mainly to gross negligence of prayers and intercessions that tire the heavenlies and breakdown Principalities and powers of darkness holding people as captives in various territories. Before a Church can experience great breakthroughs in the areas of church growth both in terms of numerical and spiritual growths, sustained and prevailing prayers must be mobilized by the rank and file of the ministry and solicited from God Almighty. This is as simple as it is. Nothing short of this motus operandi will suffice. No magic formulas and gimmicks can pull off what has been witnessed at Bread of Life Church International. In a world of quick fixes where we want to know the keys to success, the temptation is to "cut and paste" someone's keys to their success only to have the rude shock that Satan has actually changed the lock and key system that you just acquired.

Giving offerings and paying tithes

Giving doesn't flow naturally with most of us when it does however; it usually is as a result of prayer power. Prayer is effective and powerful in its outworking. By nature and design man is a selfish creature, so giving isn't something he enjoys doing. Over the years at Bread of Life Church, we

saw people give cheerfully over sustained periods of time enabling the establishment of the work of God. A Mega Church like Bread of Life has a huge budget to function smoothly and seamlessly carry out their mandates requires mega bucks. One has to be prolific at raising funds. Methodologies must be devised to raise funds without stepping on people's toes so to speak. People have to be brought to a place where they give cheerfully and in fact desire to give without much coercion. To do that however, requires great people skills and a bit of understanding the psyche of people.

Great financial systems must be devised to give people the confidence that their money is in safe hands. Systems must run the finances meaning strong administrative systems that be deliberately set in place to build the confidence of the members of the Church to know that the funds are well managed and documented. Periodic feedback over the use of funds must be given to the membership as well as holding Annual General Meetings where the members have an opportunity to raise pertinent questions how their church is run. It also affords the church leadership accountability to the membership how the church funds are run in a particular financial year.

Sunday collections at Bread of Life are recorded and documented before they are banked by Deacons and Deaconesses. A financial committee oversees such transactions usually under a watchful elder in charge. Such things create confidence in the membership. Financial and management systems can grow the church apart from prayers and great preaching. Bread of Life has scored on that front and must be applauded as well as lauded.

Large attendees at conferences

Bishop Joe Imakando became renowned for inviting great speakers on the cutting edge like Bishop Tudor Bismarck, Apostle Enoch Sitima, Hendell Lesley, Bishop Mike Okwonkwo and Bishop Emma Isong. Consequent to that many people would attend from across the denominational divide in Zambia and abroad. God has done miraculous things through the power of prevailing prayers. This craze for dynamic speakers has been the foundation of great conferences in Bread of Life Church from inception to date.

Powerful speakers on the cutting edge are usually brought to Word Explosion Conferences. No expense is spared having these speakers brought to grace the flagship conference of the year that gathers all Bread of Life Churches worldwide.

Large conversions of people

It was typical every Sunday, after every service to hear Bishop Joe call people to the altar to give their lives to Jesus Christ. Large numbers of people would respond to the call for salvation.

Bishop Joe Imakando has always placed a high premium on lost souls, that's why he always makes an altar call wherever and whenever he preaches. Converting a soul is the work of inner grace and comes under the domain of God. God works with our prayers to convert souls; thus, the role of ceaseless prayer cannot be overemphasized. We need to pray until souls come into the fold of Christ.

Opening of many branches in Zambia and abroad

Bread of Life Church International is one of the largest indigenous Pentecostal Churches in Zambia. Its growth in both branches and numerical growth at the main headquarters can be directly attributed to the power of prevailing prayers. The Church has over 80 branch Churches in Zambia and others in South Africa, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Malawi, Zimbabwe, Tanzania, Namibia, Australia and the United Kingdom.

The construction of the Blessing Center

The most powerful fruit of prevailing prayer that can be evidently seen is the construction of the Blessing Center. Prayer power was marshaled over the years to rally people's giving, dedication and sacrifice to build that edifice of excellence. That building was built by sheer faith and prayers.

5 | STRUCTURING THE CHURCH

A great work is purposely built on strong structures of leaders from the top down. Every organization, the Church included, has its own leadership structure that best serves and suits the ethos, philosophies, vision, goals and aspirations of such an entity. The structures that best harnesses the collective strengths and gifts of its members is one that is appropriate for such an organization. It is for these reasons that I feel it's unfair to deride other's leadership structures when compared to your own.

The vision and leader of each entity determines the structure that upholds such an entity. It is not right to insist that one structure fits all; that would not take into account the varied aims, goals, aspirations and uniqueness of each organization. I think it isn't right to overly fixate on the type of structures, when in my view, the structure that best delivers your deliverables is the most appropriate for your organization.

Also each denomination based on its style of leadership; i.e. is it congressional, traditional, liberal, staunchly governmental or inclusive, will determine its flow chart when it comes to its leadership structures. Also take into account the founding documents of each entity, some are very dogmatic, others are liberal, while others are loosely bound by other considerations like all members and leaders are equal.

Other Churches espouse theories that debunk 'established religion' with hierarchical levers of power or clergy. Some do not even use any titles in their organizations, therefore even their leadership structures inevitably reflects that ethos. Every member in that organization address each

other on first name basis, no titles whatsoever. I found this trend especially among our white friends in South Africa. Even the dress code is also loose, the leader could come to Church clad in khaki shorts.

In my many travels around Africa, I have witnessed all these varied expressions of leadership and thus determine their leadership structures.

Another aspect that influences how an organization is organized and structured could be the leadership models that organization espouses. In some Churches like a certain Church in Johannesburg, South Africa where we used to attend an annual pastors' and leadership conference with pastors from Monze some years back, members would be encouraged to eat with their leaders on the same table. That was done in their view to equalize membership with their leaders over a shared meal. They felt barriers that inherently exist within the Church could be broken through such equalization. Everyone was free to mingle and eat while fellowshiping together.

Leadership models are what informs how power flows and the chain of command. Other organizations are structured in such a manner that power is held by the membership at the bottom, then it flows from there to the upper echelons of the organization. Once the concerns of the majority are reflected on, deliberated upon by the top brass, proposals are then sent down ward for authentication and final approval.

A pyramid, hierarchical leadership structure exists within Bread of Life Church International. At the apex we have the General Overseer and Presiding Bishop Joseph Imakando. His inner core known as the Council of Elders, are his closest confidants and advisors. There is a Chief Elder among them who has seniority. Take note that this is at the headquarters church, but this structure is encouraged

throughout the entire branch churches. Directly under the Council of Elders are the Pastorate Division where District Pastors are domiciled. Their role is to shepherd the flock of God. Suffice to mention that the Bishop meets with the District Pastors very often to hear how they are pasturing and also do give him personal feedback concerning work in the Districts. Any challenges they are experiencing are mentioned, consequently prayers are conducted for God to solve the problems. He also shares devotions and encouragements to the pastors thus fulfilling his mentoring and coaching roles.

Within the District, we have the District Elders who work under the supervision of the District Pastors. The Cell Leaders work directly under the supervision of the District Elders. Assistant Cell Leaders work under the supervision of the cell leaders. A section Supervisor works to oversee a cluster of say 3 to 5 cell groups with a District.

Back to the Church hierarchy, directly under the Eldership are the Deacons and Deaconesses who serve 'table' mainly in administrative roles like counting funds, recording and banking the funds. They also serve the communion emblems on Sundays as well as oversee maintenance of all Church properties including vehicles.

Ministry leaders also come into the fray, who are in-charge of all the ministries of the Church.

In the Missions Department, there is a Mission's Director who works directly under the supervision of the General Overseer (G.O). The mission churches are divided into ten provinces each headed by a Regional Overseer domiciled at the Provincial Headquarters with the exception of Southern and Muchinga provinces where the Headquarters are at Livingstone and Nakonde respectively instead of Choma and Chinsali.

Resident District Pastors in the Districts are in charge of

their churches with their own church structures that mimic the structures at the Church headquarters.

The Administration at the Main Church has a Finance Department that manages the finances of the Church. The Human Resources now also exists to make sure anyone who is employed goes through an interview, employed and their conditions of employment are issued. Other employment requirements and statutory obligations like Zambia Revenue Authority (ZRA), National Pensions Authority (NAPSA), and Registrar of Societies are handled by the Administrative division of the Church.

The Church now also has a University known as BLUE acronym for Blessing University of Excellence a government accredited University offering Diplomas, graduate Degrees and post graduate degrees like Masters Degrees. A primary and Secondary School also exists with their own Teachers and Administration.

6 | THE YOIDO FULL GOSPEL CHURCH

It is in this author's considered view and estimation that our Bishop Joe Imakando's visits at the said Church then shepherded by the late Pastor David Yonggi Cho contributed to his leadership appraisal and as a result of his exposure to the prayer mountain, early morning prayers at the Church (as early as 0500hrs) and the Cell System that became a blueprint for the structures that Bread of Life Church International was built on.

The Bishop's own personal testimonials upon his return from Yoido Full Gospel Church, in South Korea, had such a profound effect upon the general membership in galvanizing our spiritual worldview in terms of dedication to God, commitment to prayer and the Cell System hitherto established in the Church. These stated commitments greatly affected the entire membership that had a profound residual effect on the Church going forward.

There is a saying that all great leaders stand on the shoulders of giants. I believe that the wise adage applies aptly to our Bishop whom we had the privilege of following for over 30 years and attest firsthand how he was impacted by the life, ministry and church growth principles of the late Rev. David Yonggi Cho.

I equally with similar weight attest to the impact of the Bishop's ministry upon countless lives around the globe including mine. Accordingly, admitting one's impact upon another doesn't take away from the impacted but rather elevates them to the level of the one who impacted them. Jesus stated that the disciple is not above the discipler though the one who has been well taught can be like his master; (see Matthew 10:24). There we have it – a learner can

never be above his teacher though a good student can be like his tutor. It is for this reason that we need to learn from the very best in our craft so that if we master the craft well from them we can be on their level.

The impact and scope of influence of Dr. Cho is global especially in the field of Church growth. At the time of his death, Dr. Cho had a single congregation of over 800,000 members. His influence on the global stage is legendary as many servants of God replicated his model of Church growth principles and saw their work grow to boundless leaps.

Pastor Enock A. Adeboye of the Redeemed Christian Church of God (RCCG) has testified that he greatly benefited from his spiritual excursions to Yoido Church pastored by Dr. Cho. He was exposed to the myriad forms of prayer at the famed Prayer Mountain, prayer meetings and the Cell System while there. He and his wife were prayed for by the famed Dr. Cho and received impartation. The results of such impartation are self-evident for all to see how RCCG has thrived all over the globe and within Nigeria. My considered view is that the work of God to take what He bestows upon one of His servants and replicates it around the world for His purposes.

This phenomenon is not unique to Korea alone, we see it replicated around the world; the Brownsville Revival had a similar dimension where believers trooped into Brownsville Assemblies of God in Pensacola, Florida, U.S.A to experience revival and restoration of miracles, signs and wonders, then went their way to serve God after having had their encounters.

This famed revival lasted five years. Its leaders were Steve Hill, John Kilpatrick, Lindell Cooleyn and Michael Brown. It was reported that over 3 million people attended the revival with over one hundred thousand conversions.

The same ethos was also seen at Toronto with John Arnot of the “Toronto Blessing” that elicited much world-wide interest as many converged onto Toronto to experience the blessing of ‘holy laughter’. The atmosphere created at Toronto was one of a festive nature where Saints basked in the rain of the Holy Ghost as they praised, worshiped, sang, danced and rejoiced in the presence of God.

Bringing this discourse in historical context, we have evidence of Azusa Street Revival in California at the Assemblies of God Church pastored by William J. Seymour. Thousands of people trooped into California to experience the baptism of the Holy Spirit and where touched by God. God sovereignty chooses where He sends revival, and whomsoever He chooses to work through. Thousands of clergy and laity were impacted by the phenomenon of fire at Azusa street revival.

Here I use an excerpt from Roberts Liardon’s book, *God’s Generals* to reinforce my point about the impact of revivals on the people impacted by them: “Serving as the catalyst for the “Pentecostal Movement”, in the Twentieth Century, William J. Seymour turned a tiny Los Angeles horse stable on Azusa Street into an international center for revival. Because the baptism of the Holy Ghost with the evidence of speaking in tongues was a major part of the meeting held there, Seymour became the leader of the first organized movement that promoted this experience. At Azusa, Blacks, whites, Hispanics, and Europeans all met and worshiped together, crossing impossible cultural lines. Although the success of the revival was short-lived, we still enjoy its fruits. Today, Azusa remains a common word in God’s household.

The Azusa Street Mission produced some wild stories. Time was of little concern to these Pentecostal pioneers who would often pray all night for another’s deliverance. They believed the word of God and waited for its manifestation.

In every situation that arose, the seekers made a demand on the word's authority. If insects tried to destroy someone's crops, believers at Azusa marched out to the field and declared the word of God on their crops and the insects! In every recorded account, the insect stayed where they were told, they didn't cross field borders. If they were destroying a neighbor's crops, they remained about 20 yards away from a believer's crops.

In another story, a large group of firemen came rushing into the Azusa street Mission during a service carrying hoses to extinguish a fire. But they never found one. Neighbors of the mission had seen a light that led them to believe the building was engulfed in flames, so they called the fire department. However, what they had seen was the glory of God.

Centerville, Louisiana is a southern Bayou town only a few miles from the Gulf of Mexico. On May 2 of 1870, a son was born in Centerville to Simon and Phyllis Seymour. They had only been freed from slavery, a few years earlier, so William was born into a world of horrible racial violence. The Ku Klux Klan had been on the rampage for years. The Jim Crow law had been established to prohibit all blacks from any social justices. And segregation was prevalent even in the Church.

Once freed from slavery, Seymour's parents continued on the plantation. As Seymour grew, he continued in their footsteps. Undaunted by the lack of formal education, he like many others, taught himself, primarily through reading the Bible.

Seymour found his identity in Jesus Christ, believing that Jesus was the only liberator of mankind. He was a sensitive, high-spirited youth, and hungry for the truth of God's word. It is said he experienced divine visions, and that early in life began looking for the return of Jesus Christ.

At the age of Twenty-five Seymour finally broke through the mental bondage of his Inferiority complex. Then doing what few black men dared, he left the homelands of southern Louisiana, and headed north to Indianapolis, Indiana.

According to the U.S census of 1900, only 10% of blacks had ever left the South. But Seymour was determined, so he left. He was determined that man-made shackles would never hold him."

Finally, another precedent exists of the Welsh Revival. Thousands of people got saved. The police force was turned into a Quartet that started singing gospel songs as there were no thieves in the city to arrest! The revival sent police officers onto the street to sing gospel songs rather than arrest people! That's the indelible impact of revivals or any such type of spiritual phenomena to servants of God, general membership of the body of Christ and other individuals in Countries of origin.

Regarding the Welsh Revival, here is an excerpt from Roberts Liardon's book, *God's Generals*; "In December of 1903, Evan knew in his heart that God had planned a great revival for the Welsh community. While preaching at Moriah he said, 'I have reached out my hand and touched the flame. I am burning and waiting for a sign.'"

Let me make a point here, revival must be in your heart before it comes into the earth. Each revival has nothing to do with the last one, but it has everything to do with the individual who brings it."

Evan Roberts conducted a training for Intercessors at his Church, Moriah Chapel that lasted 2 weeks and eventually lasted for two years engulfing all of Wales. His meetings were characterized by laughing, crying, joy, dancing and brokenness.

The people that used up all their earnings on beer depriving their families of money to sustain their lives soon

repented and stopped drinking liquor. The ones who owed outstanding debts also made good by paying what they owed. Most of the miners who were saved, it was understood that before their conversions used to profanities when working with their workhorses at the coal mines, however, after their conversions, they had to re-train the workhorses to obey normal instructions instead of profanities. Hallelujah!

The reporters who came with a view to cover events at the revival ended up being converted. Bars and movie houses soon closed; former prostitutes began holding Bible studies.

As I epilogue this chapter, it is important to underscore and make strong emphasis of the fact, as the late Dr. Myles Munroe, used to state, that we are a composite of all the people that influenced us. Likewise, it is safe to assume that of the myriad of influences upon the life of Bishop Joe Imakando, Dr. Yonggi Cho is one among many. The Yoido Assemblies of God Church is a touchstone of great worth in the economy of God, thanks largely to the ministry of the unassuming Dr. Cho. Church growth and the Cell System will always be his lasting and enduring legacy.

No man is an Island

It suffices at this juncture, to state as the late Dr. Myles Munroe used to say that, no man is self-made. We are a composite of the myriad influences that helped shape our lives. Bishop Imakando is no exception to this principle.

There are many people that have influenced our man of God. He will be the first to admit that fact. It isn't plausible or rational to expect a man of such great stature to have accomplished what he has without having great influencers of his life. I learnt of Dr. Myles Munroe through the books

Bishop Joe used to purchase from the Rhema wholesale in South Africa. It is my firm belief that there is no way he would have sanctioned the sale of such book titles without having interacted and interrogated them through his own personal study. Bishop is famed for teaching on destiny, potential and purpose. He was to make quotations from Dr. Myles Munroe and in fact, he would even encourage us to purchase his books from the bookshop.

One person has eloquently quipped that we are huge because we are standing on the shoulders of great men and women. God sends his ministers along our path to shape and sharpen us. I believe that God in his infinite wisdom sent Bishop Joseph Imakando across my path to shape and sharpen me. My success should be his and my joy should be his too. He must take great joy in seeing not only me but countless sons and daughters of his within Zambia and abroad who are championing the causes that Bishop Joe stands for and advocate for.

He has by the grace of God managed to replicate himself through his mass of disciples scattered throughout the entire globe. This is no mean achievement. It is all down to the greatness of God. No man can make himself great. We read in Genesis that God told Abraham that he would make his name great and that He would make him into a great nation¹⁵.

God made both Abraham and Israel the nation He inferred great. So there is no mistaking that fact that God has made Bishop Joe Imakando into a great man whose story shall be told long after he is gone by many people as I have done in this book. We honor God for the myriad influences upon Bishop's life from the cradle to his ministerial calling who helped to shape and sharpen him as a battle axe. I am

¹⁵ Genesis 12:1-3

singularly proud to have been formatted, configured and calibrated under his tutelage.

7 | THE PURSUIT OF KNOWLEDGE

It is eloquently stated that knowledge is power. The Biblical counsel is that where there is knowledge there is strength, (see Proverbs 24:5). A man of knowledge increases strength. (*Italics used for emphasis*).

Strength derived from knowledge is a critical component to having exceptional success the Bishop has acquired. In our world, it is an indisputable fact that needs no belaboring, that those highly industrialized nations possessing great innovative and critical knowledge are extremely wealthier than nations operating on defunct or obsolete knowledge crafted for the 19th Century.

We live in a knowledge-based and driven world. Those who know how to apply knowledge to situations they encounter rule over the poor. The poor here are bereft of functional knowledge to innovate, create and replicate models of working knowledge to better their lives. Africa has to rid itself of models of defunct knowledge a legacy of colonialism which produced a lender and a borrower, the rider and the horse, the innovator and the traditionalist who never tinkers with the template left over by the colonizer.

The school curriculum left over by the colonizer must be abandoned, in its place, we must craft one that makes our children to be highly critical, possess critical thinking, innovate and use their minds creatively. We need to link our universities and colleges with patrons of industry. There shouldn't be a disconnect between the halls of higher learning and industry. The two must collaborate and work together to think critically about how to innovate solutions to problems and challenges that plaque Africa and impedes her social and economic development.

Knowledge will never deflate you but will increase you. Some people erroneously advocate for a non-scholarly approach to development and life in general. While I am aware that there are some people who have succeeded without a formal education, the rest of us do need a formal education or personal development to succeed.

Bishop Joe Imakando is an avid reader and seeker of knowledge. I vividly remember as a Bible School student at Rhema Bible Training Center, Johannesburg, South Africa, Bishop Joe and Pastor Lisulo Lisulo (had a dual role as Accounts Officer) would come to Rhema wholesale purchase great stocks of books for the Bread of Life Church Int'l bookstore. Incidentally, the BLCI bookstore has pretty humble beginnings; I will discuss that in the Chapter "Despise Not Small Beginnings" as well as the TV ministry that started operating with one camera! Every great undertaking starts small, grows from there to become greater incrementally. Young folks need to get this fact right. There is no instant success in life, life isn't instant coffee. I remember how I started writing books. I began by using a Dell laptop with cracked screen coupled with very slow processing speed. The very first publication on that Laptop was on Psalm 23 I titled, "Studies on Psalm 23."

Bishop Imakando hasn't despised his small beginnings. He started small, made major strides by being consistent over the years and has continued possessing the same passion for learning. Bishop Imakando has been a vociferous learner, learning from those who went before him in the Pentecostal/Charismatic movements.

I am a keen observer of men; I take keen interest in knowing what makes certain men stand out! When you invest your life in God, you set yourself for outstanding distinction. Whatever vocation or career path you choose, for you to be rewarded with exceptional wealth, you must set a very high

bar of excellence as the Bishop has done. I have observed the Bishop over the years. He would accept invitations to speak anywhere without considering the place or venue, size of the ministry and so on. What matters to him is fulfilling his assignment. Bishop used to speak at the Professional Center lunch hour fellowship in Lusaka Town on Cha-Cha-Cha Road.

I have ministered there before, as well as a host of other BLCI ministers. In retrospect, that was a very good training ground for preaching and honing one's skill in hermeneutics. The place used to swell with professionals from wide range of companies in Town. Many eventually joined BLCI. A man of his stature would have shrugged off the invitation not him. We used to load musical instruments and other equipment for him to minister at the lunch hour fellowship back in the day in Lusaka.

Knowledge forms the bedrock of his ministry. I have never had the opportunity to visit his library, a habit I have whenever I visit anyone especially leaders, is to have a sneak peek of their library. Someone's library tells you plenty on what sort of premium that person attaches to knowledge and their acquisition of it. I have in my possession a photo of Bishop's library. He was photographed in his study, it's quite a sight. The volume of books is huge. Hearing him speak will immediately reveal a man who takes his study of the word of God seriously as indeed he does other materials.

For Bishop to have scaled the summit of unprecedented success as he has can be attributed to his vociferous study of the word and an unquenchable thirst for knowledge. Possessing of relevant and accurate knowledge in any field is in my estimation an indispensable quality everyone desiring to make a mark on his generation must have in their repertoire of skill sets. Knowledge has been the game changer for Bishop Joe Imakando as indeed it will be for you

if you treasure it.

What We Must Do for Knowledge

Search for it

We need in our generation that trivializes knowledge due to its influx and instantaneous availability, to search for knowledge. It is possible to be awash with information without having a handle on knowledge. There is a vast difference between knowledge and information.

That's why there are people in the world who are well informed about many things but don't have the knowledge to apply to their myriad challenges. Possessing much information isn't the same thing as having and utilizing knowledge.

We need to develop an unquenchable and insatiable appetite for relevant knowledge, that's what will set us well above the competition. Our competitors can only wrestle us to the ground when we aren't appreciating our knowledge base. When you upscale your knowledge base, you are likely to leap frog all your competitors, detractors and naysayers. Allow me to ask you a poignant question? Are you actively and strenuously searching for knowledge as one does for hidden treasure?

If you are, you will likely hit oil. Zambians need to appraise our reading culture in order for us to raise the quality of our political discourses and general debating of national issues. People bereft of knowledge normally give us redundant and derelict templates of a bygone era that failed to deliver purgatory much less Heaven.

Acquire it and never sell it

Proverbs 23:23

This Proverb admonishes us to buy truth (knowledge) and never sell it. What an astounding statement. You must buy truth and never sell it. I am aware that I am discoursing Knowledge not strictly truth but allow me to substitute knowledge in the place of truth in other words, use these words interchangeably.

I am keenly aware that truth isn't always the same thing as Knowledge but what is relevant here is that knowledge should accord with what is true for it to be close to reality. I discourse this aspect profoundly in my most recent book, *Gimme That Old Time Religion: Yearning for Authenticity & Reasonable Christianity*. This is discoursed under the title, "Truth Everlasting" and the subtitle the nature of truth. I borrow my suppositions on the nature of truth from Pontius Pilate's daunting question, "What is Truth?" Before Jesus could answer him, he got distracted and focused on the Teachers of the Law. How does one ask such a laudable question and easily gets distracted? Pilate didn't ask to get an answer as many smart people do when they either want to display their intelligence or they want to avoid answers to their hyperbolic questions they ask.

Human beings have an inbuilt affinity towards authenticity but lack the fortitude to either embrace it or fight to possess it. Human beings are averse to falsehood and lies, it doesn't even matter that they are atheists or not. Truth is that which accords with the nature and being of God. It's unchanging or immutable. We need to acquire truth about ourselves, our capacity to endure pain without buckling, our temerity for change and our mental conditioning. All these play a large part in your actualization of your potentialities.

You cannot afford to be ignorant about your strengths and weaknesses. In order for you to make mitigatory interventions on your lapses requires you to be intimately aware of them.

Attach yourself to those who possess it

The Scriptures state unequivocally that he who walks with the wise shall become wise but a companion of fools shall be destroyed. That is wisdom by association as well as foolishness by proximity to fools. Both have outcomes in tandem with either wisdom or foolishness. Be aptly aware that there is the age-old wisdom that condescends or distils to you by associating with the wise through their publications in the form of articles, magazines, Facebook posts or books. When I meet wise people, which is a rarity, I have developed the art of self-censorship or I take the posture of a learner. That way, I allow that wise person's wisdom to coalesce with mine thereby increase my strength.

Remember the Bible says he who has knowledge increases strength? We all need application of strength to get things done on this planet. Ever heard of horsepower? Turbo power? Nuclear power? Mega Watt power? Will power? Monetary power? They all have one thing that seamlessly threads through them— strength. When power derived from knowledge is harnessed and channeled to worthwhile causes, tremendous accomplishments ensue. In the 19th Century in Britain, began what is termed the Industrial Revolution. With it came the invention of the diesel engine.

The Industrial Revolution gave rise to steel plants, conveyor belts that enabled the Ford Motor Company and others churn out thousands of car per day, the Printing Press that enabled large volumes of books to be bound, the radio and television to be relayed and broadcast over thousands of

miles, the Jet engine that enabled air travel across the globe and a host of other attendant discoveries. These discoveries made life a whole lot easier and comfortable which gave rise to people in civilized world to live longer and healthier lives. All such discoveries however could never have seen the light of day without the meticulous application of knowledge. They are all quite frankly knowledge based applications.

In the 21st Century, we live in an Information Age. The digital divide between those technologically savvy nations and those bereft of these tech skills exists which cannot be minimized until there be transfer of technology. The Information Age has enabled us to do quite literary anything humanly possible.

I recently gleaned from an online publication that U.S Billionaire Elon Musk of SpaceX is aiding Ukraine forces to pinpoint with great accuracy the Russian tank units and destroying them using technology to destroy them thus tipping the scales of the war in their favor. Russia bombed out all the normal regular internet infrastructure, so has tipped the balance in Ukraine's favor. Musk deployed the Starlink broadband satellite system in Ukraine. SpaceX has deployed and commissioned 1,469 Starlink broadband satellite systems that are undercutting Russia and proving to be a game changer in the ongoing Russian aggression in Ukraine. This my dear friends is what specialized knowledge can do. Russia is lamenting Elon Musk's taking sides in the war and decry his invention.

From beaming live digital signals from space, send Astronauts to space and back, printing digital pictures with micro-minuscule per sec resolution, to creating social media platforms like Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, Instagram, WhatsApp and SnapChat. Quite literally, technology has revolutionized our world. What used to take days to do like send letters by post mail through the famed Post Office, now

merely takes a mere second. Facebook, Messenger, Instagram, YouTube, WhatsApp social platforms affords video-on-demand content in real time aiding people to communicate more efficiently and faster than ever in recorded history.

Google™ which links Computers and other libraries to acquire information on literally any topic on earth. Larry Page and Sergey Mikhailovich Brin co-founders of Google Inc. 1998 build this search engine by building algorithms that harness the power of other web pages to users by cross-referencing them to acquire information. When you type in the search engine, the algorithms link any websites with that information you requested and displays it for you to then browse them. At my last check, Sergey Brin was the seventh richest computer scientist worth \$115 billion. This tremendous wealth he has is all thanks to the application of knowledge in computing! Sergey Brin attended Stanford University in the U.S.

Another tech savvy fellow is Jeff Bezos of Amazon.com Inc. He founded this company by pioneering e-commerce on the Web. He used Creative Thinking, entrepreneurship models to device Amazon. He pioneered selling books online in July 1995. As a rule of thumb, whenever you pioneer something, you are likely to be rewarded handsomely through supply and demand. He majored in electrical engineering and Computer Science at the Princeton University in the U.S.A. Jeff Bezos is one of the world's billionaires due largely to the right application of knowledge.

With the emergence of global trending, it is now envisaged that going forward, people are more likely than not going to be reading and acquiring eBooks online than actual purchasing of hard copies. We saw how COVID-19 changed the way we socialize and basically communicate with one another to avoid contact. Churches 'gathered' in

the virtual world through YouTube, Facebook and FaceTime. Giving of offerings and paying tithes was via Mobile Money transfers. The world had gone digital, so one has to adapt and adopt technology to engage the world. Social gatherings like graduations, weddings, engagement parties and football games were held virtually through Zoom and other platforms. Technology enabled all such gathering to limit the spread of the Coronavirus. Thanks to knowledge, we were able to transcend space and still socially connect on the web.

Apply it with discernment

Knowledge must be applied to real life situations with discernment. Knowledge unrelated to life isn't good enough to even possess in the first instance. Knowledge as Paul the Apostle admonished us in his letter to the Corinthians, puffs up but love edifies. A wonton display of knowledge for its sake is also unimpressive and unhelpful. We need to utilize knowledge to better the lives of those around us.

The Web is an invaluable resource and source of relevant information, however, if not used judiciously and with discernment, it can be a very destructive force in the hands of the devil. Anything sacrilegious and diabolical can be easily accessed on the web via handheld devices at someone's leisure. Kids can access porn, violent video games and even surf extremist sites where they can quite easily be indoctrinated into extremism. That's why it is important to constantly change Passwords on our computers and place restrictions on what can scroll on your Browser to avoid polluting the young ones.

Discernment must be used when watching Television. Even Christian stations must be watched with resigned cognition otherwise one is bound to consume stuff that can

kill your faith and pollute your spirit man. Not all knowledge is beneficial. We mustn't expose ourselves to teachings we aren't mature enough to digest or handle. For instance, if you aren't familiar or able to decipher the Book of Revelation, there is no point even making an attempt! It's like, if you cannot figure out Additional Mathematics, it's a futile attempt to do Algebra or Calculus.

Use it as a leveraging tool

Here I look at using the information you source from reliable sources and using it to make money, or profit from it in making decisions. The Web again is a perfect example of this principle. For instance, if you are into selling products on the market, you could do an online research and find where your competitors source their products. Once you do that, you could search for where to source similar products at a much cheaper price due to cheaper production costs. Once you do that, your products can sell faster than your competitors thus gaining a larger slice of the pie. You also dominate the market with your products. That is the smarter way to use information as a leveraging tool to create wealth. You can still use the internet to find out the kinds of foods are healthy to consume to avoid say Type 2 Diabetes. Such information can be used to better your health thus enabling you to live longer. When you live longer, you can manage to influence the younger generation and help them benefit from your expertise through mentorship roles.

Know that possessing knowledge gives you access to power

Without rehashing what I wrote above, let me underscore unequivocally the role that information plays in acquiring

strength or power to get stuff done. I am sure you may have heard of brain power. How does the brain acquire power? Power in the brain is acquired through the acquisition of powerful information gleaned from many sources like the Web, magazines, books, pamphlets and other articles. These sources will empower you enormously and affect the way you think. Thinking affects the way you feel. How you feel affects the way you are likely to act, how you act reflects your character, which in turn, eventually affects your destiny.

Will power is another area that needs exploring as it has huge ramifications on your ability to succeed. Success is a multi-myriad proposition. It isn't affected by a single ethos. It is influenced by a myriad of factors. For instance, cognitive ability aids success. So if someone is cognitively challenged, it stands to reason that such an individual will not succeed at anything especially those activities that draw much from cognitive power. Cognitive power is an endowment bestowed by nature (for those naturally inclined) and God (for those spiritually inclined). If one hasn't been endowed with power cognition, it can affect that person's ability to succeed.

Emotional Intelligence power or otherwise termed Emotional Intelligence is one form of power knowledge will help you harness. Intelligence Quotient (IQ) has been king in the pecking order of cognitive power, however, studies in Psychology have discovered that to succeed in other settings requires more than just cognitive power but would also require Emotional Intelligence. Most people do not possess the skills to align their emotional abilities properly thus are unable to utilize their emotional strength in tandem with their other strengths.

People have certain unique proclivities like they easily lose their tempers, or are unable to cope with emotionally charged environments due largely to the fact that they aren't

well rounded emotionally. Emotional Intelligence is the ability to harness your emotional energy towards being a well- rounded individual emotionally. Emotional immaturity could cost you employment, an opportunity to manage a large conglomerate, work within the context of a team with varied personalities. Emotional competences can actually rival IQ.

The last and final form of power is Artificial Intelligence. This field is a new and recent one which exploits the power of robotics using micro-chips to investigate, solve complex mathematical and scientific problems. Robotics will be able to work round the clock and devise ways to solve quantum theories hitherto undone due to their immense cognitive powers of ‘thought.’ These hitherto powers can be derived from specialized knowledge and its application is revolutionary. Knowledge is quite simply close to the omniscience of God who knows everything there is to know in the universe. Technology is introducing us to “MetaVerse” which exploring the power of virtual world of computing via tapping into Artificial Intelligence of Robotics. This is a new frontier that the U.S.A and China are seeking to exert dominance.

8 | PURSUIT OF EXCELLENCE

Excellence is defined as the streak of maintaining very high standards. Excellence is the continuous striving to adhere to very high standards. Excellence is a dynamic concept that adapts to different settings and contexts. When excellence is applied to the ministry context and seen through that lens, it takes on a stark contrast to say football or the world of arts.

In ministry, excellence would incorporate and include a maintenance of standards in terms of the delivery of the word of God from the pulpit, the kind of building that the Church has, the size of the parking lot, the level of hygiene standards in the cafeteria, the security around the property, where the exits and entry points are, how well manicured the lawn is, the feel of the place of worship, how neat and trendy the rest rooms are, the comfort of the seats in the auditorium, et cetera.

Other considerations could be in terms of the Air conditioning – how effective is it? Other considerations are to do with the lighting fixtures and ambience thereof, and seating layout of the auditorium. How many rest rooms are they in proportion to the number of people? Where are they located relative to the seating area? Here, the Blessing Center delivers exceptionally.

Exposure to high standards will inevitably translate into acquisition of such standards, implying that travel does play a significant role in adoption of standards. Bishop Joe used to do a great deal of traveling around the world and to a great extent still does. His extensive travel does logically expose him to very high standards which he can apply in his own setting. Bishop used to attend the Rhema Conference in

Republic of South Africa in the early days of Bread of Life Church International. Pastor Ray McCauley, the resident pastor, used to assemble motley of preachers from across the globe. Ministers at the very cutting edge were brought to Rhema annually. Ministers like Bishop Joe and others from around the world would travel to be at Rhema conference for one whole week and be exposed to great ministry of the word, song, and get a feel of the environs around the ministry of Pastor Ray.

I did two years of Bible training at Rhema, so I can speak candidly and honestly from my experience there. It's a no brainer that anyone who spends some time at Rhema will go away with a wealth of experience worth replicating elsewhere. The auditorium sits about 10,000 people in grand and pristine settings with a wonderful Book store stocked with awesome book titles by great authors like T.D Jakes, John C. Maxwell, Kenneth Copeland, and Dr. Miles Munroe, Kenneth E. Hagin, Charles Capps, Dr. Frederick K.C Price, Casey Treat, Creflo A. Dollar, Carlton Pearson, Kenneth E. Hagin and many others.

As the ministry of Bishop Joe has evolved over the long span of 30 some years, I have observed how his standards have evolved too. From very humble beginnings of renting office space in the heart of the city of Lusaka to now having his own sealed off section within the Blessing Center that houses his executive office speaks volumes of a man intent on maintaining standards of excellence. From having polished concrete floors in the old building at 136 Chinyunyu Road, off the Great North Road, to the porcelain tiles at the Blessing Center reveals a man willing to bring standards in a place of worship. An antiquated preacher would have stuck to polished concrete floors as they are a lot cheaper, but Bishop settled for porcelain tiles that are on trend and quite expensive considering the span of the Blessing Center.

As the saying goes, "Excellence doesn't come cheap." Excellence sets one above his competitors. The one distinguishing quality that sets you well above your competitors in any field is the quality of excellence. The streak of excellence delivers all the time. Ministry and the environs within which it is conducted doesn't have to be drab and sloppy, it can be on trend and be classy – which can attract droves of people to your ministry.

The theatre style seating arrangement is what adorns the Blessing Center draped in blue covers. The stage area is decked in a sky blue carpet with one towering pillar with groves in it that amplify its appeal of grandeur. The floor to ceiling aluminum window frames in some spots as well as large aluminum window frames gives the edifice a classy on trend feel. This is coupled with large aluminum Glass double doors that adorn the openings throughout the sprawling auditorium. It is a modern feat of engineering and architecture on display done with much forethought and planning.

It's a marvel to behold the Blessing Center that places Bread of Life Church International at the cutting edge of modernity in terms of the facility. It is a crosscutting building that incorporates modern architectural design with traditional fittings like the crusted blocks of glass at the front part of the building that makes them a focal point as well as drawing natural light. The foyer is another powerful display of smart architectural design with the star shaped design concept of the tiles and the vaulted ceiling above and a large chandelier adorned with glistening crystals that sparkle in the light emitting a brilliant ambience.

The adjoining rooms as a wrap around the entire span of the auditorium are another added detail of the excellent design element of the Blessing Center that is unmatched. Every adjacent room has its own unique layout and appeal.

This is a mark of excellence. Excellence is a mark of divine inspiration, as God Himself is the very epitome of excellence. Everything God created exudes excellence from the mountains, oceans, rivers and the sky, all reveals the excellence of God. One who captures God's excellence in nature will inevitably encapsulate it in their lives as Bishop Joe has so effortlessly done with the Blessing Center. Excellence is a product of wisdom. Wisdom has excellence at its center.

A tour of the facility right from the entrance is a breath taking experience, the entrance has a concrete arch way with a guard room, leading to a beautiful fountain whose circular shape is layered with marble tiles; concrete tarmac around the facility that has a spindle shaped center piece that evokes a dome appeal. The choice of iron sheets is another great feature that of terracotta, its earthy tone comes into focus under the African sun. The entire structure is painted in a nice Banana Scotch and white palette that oozes class punctuated with a traditional design concept.

Need I state categorically that this excellence seen in the design, architecture and general appeal of the Blessing Center transcends all these elements into the way Musical team handles singing, their dress code, type of instruments purchased, the way the ushers lead people into the auditorium, the way the offertory baskets are placed within the facility, the seating arrangement of the pastoral staff and the type of seats on the stage where Bishop and the core leadership sits. Black leather seats are an item of choice on the stage with a silver frame.

The bookstore is another excellent place to visit with all sections clearly labeled for easy access by the customers. The TV and recordings is another department that has had a very humble ethos. From one camera with antiquated pixel resolution to state of the art cameras is a quantum leap that

must be applauded. The TV crew while adorned in professional gear clearly labeled TV crew is a sizeable outfit compared with their original outfit. The equipment that comprises the 'Hour of Blessing crew' is impeccable and on trend. Excellence underpins and epitomizes everything from the CDs, DVDs to quality of sound within the Blessing center.

Lest I be seen to have a high preference for all times material in my analyses of the excellence at Bread, allow me to pinpoint other aspects of excellence like time keeping and management at the ministry. Adherence to time in the delivery of services is a concept the Bishop aspires for in every meetings. However powerful a speaker is even during conferences; time is always of the essence.

Ministry starts on time and ends on time, that's standard practice at Bread of Life Church International. Another area of excellence is in the delivery of sermons. Sermons are always skewed towards helping members grow spiritually and take full responsibility for their lives. In short, maximum standards of excellence are strictly adhered to at the Blessing Center down to appointments to see the Bishop to prompt payments of all bills and statutory obligations to statutory bodies like ZRA, Registrar of Societies, and NAPSA etcetera.

9 | THE ROLE OF DISCIPLINE

A disciplined lifestyle has been the hallmark of Bishop Joe Imakando as far as I can remember. Bishop Joe Imakando runs a well-disciplined regimented army of spiritual soldiers. That in a way largely accounts for his tremendous success in Ministry. Everyone in the rank and file of the ministry knows where they belong and whom to report to. Bishop Joe Imakando though a benign individual when you meet him in person, don't be fooled, he brooks no nonsense from anybody.

One notable value that relates to discipline I saw firsthand in the Bishop Joe's repertoire was that every time he came from ministry errands abroad, he straight away went to his office. I often wondered what would make the Bishop do that? Later on, I learnt from those closest to him that he went there to study, meet appointments made while he was away and look at how his week schedule would be beforehand. I saw in that an indispensable quality of a winner, goal getter and disciplined individual. I also learnt that Bishop was extremely committed to work.

He takes his work seriously; it's a no brainer, why he is on top of his game, way ahead of his peers surpassing those who went ahead of him in the Pentecost/Charismatic ministry. Even dating back 30 years ago, I saw that consistency, meeting all leaders to cast his vision, writing down the vision for all members to see, rehash it several times over making sure everyone is on the same page with him, drawing the Blessing Centre on a board in color as a visual depiction for people to internalize and visualize to own it, attending prayer meetings on Saturdays whenever he is within the country, holding mid-week Bible studies religiously throughout the

year without fail, having Pastoral Retreats every year, holding perennial conferences consistently without fail, teaching the people on all pertinent topics consistently and so on.

He is a person of routine, detail, repetition as he probably learnt that human beings are creatures of routine and habit. When you do something routinely for 6 weeks, it is more often than not to become a lifelong habit. Human beings are creatures of ritual, most of us wouldn't accept that, but the reality though is it we all are. There are so many ritualized and synchronized routines we habitually make every day without even batting our eyes. Take for instance that you wake up at exactly the same time every day? You sleep the same time every night, any time you go past your bed time, something will begin to stall, you will more often than not become drowsy, yawn, hysterical and so on an indication that you are tired and need rest.

Studies show that human beings conform to new programming so if one can make them adapt and change to what one wants then in no time they can seamlessly adapt to their new working template. Bishop must have known these facts thus his having adopted them in the general membership over the span of 30 years and counting.

Bishop is also a very methodical person. He has regimented all his leaders at every level from the core at the center who are the Council of Elders to the Section Supervisor at the Cellular level. The Council of Elders have a Chief Elder who has seniority among the elders and assume a lead position. The Deaconate also have a chairperson who heads this department. The Finance Committee also has a chairperson who heads it and so on. The Ministries have chairpersons in charge of them. In some instances, these also have a miniature core that further provides leadership to the entire group and make key decisions.

The Missions Department is tasked with overseeing the Mission Churches domiciled in Provinces across Zambia, segments them according to regions and are headed by Regional Overseers. These Overseers supervise the District Pastors who are Resident Pastors of their own congregations within provinces.

In Lusaka where Bishop resides, the entire city is segmented into Districts 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5. These are headed by District Pastors who report to the Presiding Bishop. These Districts do ministry works in Lusaka Province making sure all members of the Church receive pastoral care, care, support in form of counseling if need arises.

It is my firm contention, that Bread of Life Church International is where it is largely due to the founder's disciplined life and diligence and the assistance and collaborations with many people who have contributed in many ways to the vision. I cannot emphasize this incredible quality hard enough especially to our young and upcoming ministers. Gifting alone isn't enough in ministry. You need to adopt a range of areas where you discipline yourself in order to stay the course of discipline long term.

Another area of discipline I have witnessed in the life of the Bishop is in the area of exercise. Having lived near the Bishop in Long Acres when he was in Rhodes Park, I used to visit his home to hang out with his son Benjamin. I would see Bishop go to the gymnasium very often to exercise. As far as I can remember, the man of the cloth is an avid gym enthusiast of note. He goes to the gymnasium weekly without fail. That keeps him strong and healthy in order to run ministry on a sustained level of excellence as seen by all of us.

He also observes a strict adherence to healthy diet. In so many Three Days of Power conferences in Livingstone, I would have the honor of sharing the high table with him, he

eats selectively and most traditional foods. Traditional foods are his specialty. He never eats junk foods. Discipline in the area of food is cardinal for a minister to stay the course of a long and fruitful ministry.

Sleep cycle is also one that he emphasizes to his pastors as being quite important a routine one must strictly observe to maintain good health and strength. He counsels that people ministers must retire to bed as early as 2200 hours and wake up early as 0500 hours to study, pray and meditate. This formalized ritual is very important for a minister to observe and for that matter for leaders in any field.

Other areas that require discipline Bishop often makes emphasizes with great weight are three areas, namely: Opposite sex, finances, and power.

The Opposite Sex

These aforesaid areas need our collective and utmost attention as ministers and as leaders in general. Many have fallen prey to them thus we need to take counsel and heed the instructions. Many a clergyman has savored the bitter taste that remains after sexual indiscretions with someone they aren't married to. Evidence abounds to deter any of us from committing violations in this area, unfortunately we humans, being creatures of passions, cravings and emotions, find ourselves falling for what is prohibited or the forbidden fruit as it were. The mind can be in the right place and confess the right things concerning sex, however, the emotions, cravings and passions could be completely on a different place altogether! Feelings, passions and cravings for what is clearly forbidden must be reined in.

Learn as a minister that the heart usually intent and bent on having what it craves which is quite different from what

your head logically knows it shouldn't do and should do. This is where discipline and mental conditioning comes into play. If you have conditioned your mind to be disciplined, when your eyes sees a very beautiful woman and wants to have her, your head having had the mental fortitude through the study and meditation of the word, will help you over rule your heart's cravings. Many men of God have capitulated to the emotional pull and appeals they have to more attractive women they saw.

Of utmost most importance for the minister is being close to your wife and completely open to the areas of potential temptation with the opposite sex. As men we usually know and are aware of the potential risks we have with certain types of women. So when you sense that the alarm bells are ringing, it's an indicator that the risk threshold is about to be crossed thus, learn to peel away from such potential risk areas. When a man crosses a red line with sexual liaisons and indiscretions, it wasn't that he didn't read the signs, or wasn't completely aware of the potential risks, it is that he decided to follow his passions rather than rein them in.

Discipline and wisdom is required in this area as we have come to witness scenarios where servants of God have been waylaid to yield to sex outside of marriage while on counseling duty. Reasons are that most servants of God think they are very powerful thus cannot yield to beautiful lasses. That couldn't be further from the truth beloved. Women in general are attracted to ointment; men of God are anointed so be forewarned man of God.

How the mighty have fallen. We need discipline and wisdom. There's no way you can go counseling a beautiful lady alone with doors closed beloved. That's recipe for disaster. It is advisable and prudent to insist on counseling women in general in the company of one's wife. As a general rule, the late Billy Graham made it a rule to never be with a

woman alone. This might sound extreme, but it kept him from compromising the standards of the word of God in the area of sex. Safety nets and prevention measures must be put in place well ahead of any potential sex indiscretions. Failure to put such measures ahead of time will prove disastrous. Never live in the land of regret, to be forewarned is to be forearmed the wise have aptly counseled.

Finances

Apart from sexual indiscretions and misdemeanors, as a problematic area, financial scandals are another minefield area that needs our attention as ministers of the Gospel. Finances by nature are a gray area, and notably we all need money to live, thrive and fulfill our callings. Someone has eloquently quipped that there is temptation in acquiring money, anxiety in keeping it and trepidation in spending it. Let me put it categorically, that there is absolutely no one who is risk averse when it comes to money. By nature money is a powerful force for good or evil in our world. It gives us financial independence when we have it in abundance and gives us options, power and confidence. No one can say they wouldn't want options, confidence derived from possessing money or financial freedom. We want to be able to purchase what we want, so therein lays our risk to money indiscretions. We all need discipline in how we intend to make money.

For those of us who are leaders, realize that the trust and confidence people place upon us shouldn't be betrayed by financial indiscretions and misappropriations. We must resist financial temptation with equal force as with sexual temptation. Misuse and misappropriation of company or ministry funds is a line we must never cross. If there is

financial pressure, it's better to get a loan advance than to siphon company or government money. Lately, we have heard how financial crimes involving colossal sums were occasioned in the previous Lungu Administration. Recently, a quantity surveyor at the Ministry of Education was arrested by the Anti-corruption Commission for obtaining money by false pretenses in the tune of \$1,700,000. This feller falsified claims in his quantity survey report in the amount mentioned. Such glaring reports of financial indiscretions are rampant and on the rise due to lack of discipline and insatiable appetite for money. We all need to be aware and take appropriate actions to stem this vice of financial scandals in the public sector.

Power

This is one of those potentially hazardous areas we must pay close attention to. Possessing an insatiable appetite for power is like having bad breath. One who has it isn't remotely aware of it, but those who surround you are. Power in and of itself isn't necessarily bad, it is its abuse that's in question here. Power can be a potential force for good in the right hands, while in the same token, can be a destructive force for evil and vice in the wrong hands. Russia makes €1,000,000 per day from sales of its oil to Europe. Such colossal amounts of money in the hands of a dictator makes for very bad bedfellows. Half that sum to a good fellow is bad enough, imagine what a €1,000,000 is to a despicable bully like Putin? He has built a huge army not for deterrence but for aggression.

This type of individual hell bent on rewriting history and seeking a special place in it isn't one who should be getting such monumental amounts of cash from oil reserves every

day! Europe with its over dependence on Russian oil has been feeding this beast over the years that have bolstered Russia's war machine. Russia wants to test their mettle against any army in the world. Europe must wean itself of Russian natural gas and oil otherwise, they will be complicit to Russian aggression in Ukraine and anywhere else for that matter.

Absolute power corrupts absolutely. Strong watchdog institutions, integrity and a robust democracy can help mitigate against a power craze. Without such a repertoire of variables, anyone of us can be drunk on power leading to self-destruction as that of others. Power can be like a cocaine addiction, the more of it one has the more the craving until such an individual overdoses on the drug. The more power one has and uses it with impunity, the more power he relishes which then makes such a person intolerable with the levers of power.

Bishop Joe Imakando has taught us how to use power judiciously, prudently and smartly. People you lead must be so inspired by your leadership they want to willingly follow you. In the exercise of power, we must use our hearts to contain our desire to use it for self-aggrandizement. Some wise person has eloquently quipped that when leading others use your heart, when leading yourself, use your head. There is a direct link between possession of power and that of finances. When one's ambition is to acquire more power with the view to then acquire colossal amounts of money, such an individual becomes very dangerous.

He views those who oppose his rise to power as directly interfering with his insatiable appetite for money. These two don't make great bedfellows – power and money. Those with a large-than-life appetite for money usually will use people to make money rather than use things to make money. Never use people, use things. Grow the people

around you through the wise use of power. People resent being used to acquire money and prestige.

Power is given by God us as leaders to empower people, help them discover their God-given potential and use it to better the lives of those around them. Instead of such clearly aspired claims for leadership however, we constantly witness a gross departure to such ideals by those entrusted with leadership responsibilities be it in government, civic authority, Church and family. Sin has greatly blighted our ability to lead and undermined the spirit of leadership that is inherently in all human beings.

Because human beings do not understand who they are, they do not understand their original functionality. Functionality naturally derives and flows out of one's understanding of their nature. We are all grasping helplessly at the straws when it comes to leading effectively because we are blighted in our efforts by sin. Sin imperils our leadership potentialities. All the indiscretions and misdemeanors in leadership underpins our dysfunctional state as sinners that makes us inertly inclined towards vices, compromises, ineptitudes and liaisons that blights all our efforts at leading correctly. As humans, we lost the correct template to lead properly and correctly due to the pervasive and invasive nature of sin.

10 | DESPISE NOT SMALL BEGINNINGS

The Biblical record lends great weight to this matter in Prophet Zechariah's prophecy, see, footnote. It is the nature of men to incline to great things, men and women of stature and despise or disrespect those without political, economic and material clout. We disrespect and think less about those who do not appear to have any significance.

Having been privileged of being under Bishop Joe Imakando's ministry for over 30 years, I have seen over that span of time, how he has been consistently working as hard from the beginning as he does presently. Bishop has consistently respected what he does throughout the span of 30 years I have been closely associated with his ministry.

To me that's a mark of great leadership being able to respect your work no matter the size. Smallness is in the mind. You are as small as you think or imagine. What men say or do doesn't have to limit what you can achieve.

Learn that men despise small things and think nothing about them. Also it's a mark of a great leader to accommodate those who are small and insignificant. Christ our Master exemplified this kind of leadership when he called for the children to be brought to him after they were unceremoniously rebuked by the Disciples. He said in effect, I place a value on what men are inclined to rebuff! He said, "Bring the little children to me, for theirs is the Kingdom of God." He taught that he who does not receive the Kingdom of God as little children shall never enter the Kingdom.

He eulogized the humility and unpretentiousness of little children as opposed to the pretense adult's display. Children never mask things up. They call things for what they are not

what they seem? The reasons why we despise little or small things is largely due to the fact that we cannot discern the value in small things and their hidden potential. God on the other hand values small things because he can see the value that is inherent in them and the hidden potentials. For Bishop Joe to have tended after his flock of 120 members judiciously and diligently, shows the value and potential he saw when others despised him. I am quite sure that the man of God is familiar with having a small Church having been so before.

He still displays the value he places on the work of God however small it might be by honoring invitations from what we would term for all intents and purposes 'Small churches or ministries!' You quite never know a man until you see how he deals with small men! How you deal with those who can never reciprocate kindness with good deeds or pay you back shows your inner stature. It's easy to gravel to the ground when in the presence of greatness but quite another thing to do the same with people who have no stature or reputation.

Bread of life Church has had very humble beginnings. From a local membership of 120 to over 10,000 members is quite an incredible achievement. This has been due largely to the man at the helm of this incredible work, his ability to not despise the days of small beginnings. Take for instance how the TV ministry started? One camera and two support staff with Mr. Mwale as the lead cameraman.

When you consider just how this ministry (TV) has burgeoned over 30 years, it's down to the vision of the Bishop and his team, keeping their eyes on the ball including seeing the bigger picture. People are near sighted and phony. When you have reached the pinnacle of your career, ministry, vocation or business isn't the time to tell who believes in you! It's when you are in the dumps, riding a bicycle, meetings in a classroom, garage, living room or

storefront Church that you know those who truly believe in your vision.

Now everyone clamors to the Bishop because he has succeeded and is at the very pinnacle of success but would they do so if he still had a congregation of 120? Your guess is as good as mine! You must believe in the potential of your business, career, vocation or ministry to grow. If you do not believe in your own potential to outgrow your current conditions, who is going to believe in you? You must believe in the ability of God to grant you opportunities that will enhance and encourage your growth. God is faithful, He will never leave you without significant help or helpers to aide your upward mobility, but it's down to you believing in your own potentials. Never let people look down or despise you for being small.

All great things begin small, then grow greater incrementally. Never be intimidated to start small, even Jesus had to be born as a baby but He didn't remain so forever. He grew from somewhere. You must grow your roots somewhere. You won't suddenly grow great from nowhere, that's why it's imperative that you value your small experiences that have the hidden potential for growth. Be planted somewhere and be willing to spread your branches and dominate your space with your brand. I have seen how Bishop grew and put down roots when it wasn't fashionable to preach in one location and staying faithful. The same people now clamor for him and his attention when just thirty years ago, they wouldn't have wanted to have been near him.

The evolution of Bread of Life Church International from a small congregation of 120 members to 10,000 member strong Mega Church with over 80 Branch Churches across the length and breadth of the Country plus a host of other International Branches proves exactly the point I have made why we must never despise small beginnings. Small

beginnings are the very underpinnings of Bread of Life Church International. Among the many factors that immensely contributed to the phenomenal growth of Bread of Life Church International was the democratic winds of change in the 1990s and riding on those political tides was the spiritual awakening that gave rise to that growth. It has been proven in history that people's emerging from autocratic and draconian regimes whose freedoms of religion and association had been greatly stifled, explode in collective hysteria where newly acquired liberties brought on by democracy eventually crescendo into spiritual awakening. Revival in Zambia in the 1990s rode the crest of new political realities far removed from the Country behind the Iron Curtain of the Former Soviet Republics termed Perestroika.

This fact can never be discredited and discounted as it is a proven fact. At the time of writing this book, however, it is self-evident that the gigantic Spiritual wave once ridden by the Zambian Church has ebbed in momentum and depth. We are crestfallen in the wake of such downgraded spiritual and political undertones. Having read a wide range of doctrinally diverse materials on revivals historically, I can attest that whenever and wherever revival touches nations and Cities, there is an appreciable upward mobility in the economic and social dimensions of the people.

Zambia, in the wake of the revival aforementioned and documented, had sustained economic and social development deemed the 'new culture' under President Frederick Chiluba. Admittedly countless Zambians employed in the parastatal sector a government controlled one, lost their jobs when most of those entities were defunct and liquidated. It can still be proven empirically, that large investment came into the country's into Mining sector a major economic driver in our country.

The dismantling of the parastatals and eventual sale of

those assets brought untold misery to our people which in hindsight had to be so. The privatization program either way, hastened what would have naturally been the eventual end of those entities as they lacked investment, good corporate governance systems, botched systems, nepotism and tribalism which were rife. Government interference in the corporate governance as well as in human resources was another impediment that led to incompetence and loss of revenues. We usually hear a glamorized view of our manufacturing and industrial base of the Kaunda era, but what we never really hear about in a critical manner are the bottlenecks these entities faced in their day-to-day operations and the indebtedness to suppliers.

These entities weren't ran prudently and profitably; it was just a matter of time before they would have had their eventual demise. Their inevitable end was hastened by the privatization program of the Chiluba Administration largely blamed for the manner in which that program was implemented. I am aware that the merits and demerits of privatization aren't necessarily my focus merely to underscore the residual economic benefits that were occasioned by the wind of change. What is also undeniable is that, every change has both casualties and beneficiaries.

Those who had anticipated this change and aligned appropriately; reaped colossal benefits like the Churches who transitioned from reformed theologies to the Pentecostal/Charismatic ones including among others, Bread of Life Church International. in the business and economic sector, other smart businessmen like our current President Hakainde Hichilema benefited by purchasing the former Mosi-o-Tunya Hotel that became Royal Zambezi Sun. Hakainde Hichilema or HH as he's fondly known is a part shareholder of Zambezi Sun. He was the valuator who did due diligence of most of our parastatals and other entities

and recommended to the then Minister of Finance Edith Nawakwi who carried out the actual disposal of those assets. The president aligned properly and leveraged his vast networks of friends for maximum profits nothing wrong with that if you asked me.

As I pivot towards the end of this chapter, it is pertinent that I underscore this fact that history sometimes is difficult to replicate and repeat but not entirely impossible for those who study it conscientiously. The circumstances and the context that occasioned the monumental growth numerically for Bread of Life Church and other Pentecostal Churches can never be replicated. At the very least, we could re-enact them in theatre but never in real life. Massive numbers of people gave their lives to the Lord who flooded these Churches as a result of the wave of glory that simultaneously moved side by side with tectonic movements of political dimensions with the demise of United National Independence Party (UNIP) and the emergence of the Movement of Multiparty Democracy (MMD).

11 | HOUR OF BLESSING

The Hour of Blessing is the flag ship carrier of the Church's message to Zambia and now when the signal can be broadcast via the web, worldwide on www.znbc.tv.co.zm This telecast dates back 30 years when like I alluded in the previous Chapter, started in humble ways with one TV handheld camera along with a very long cable that needed someone to stretch it whenever it got tangled in between pews or people as they sat to listen to the message. One person as I recall had the unfancied job of rolling the cable as the cameraman and his crew of two moved around the building.

Vivid memories of their movements are permanently etched on my mind. One moment I used to relish whenever the cameraman would spend his time longer than usual, the helper would nudge him to move over. It really was intriguing to watch but those are the humble ways things evolved. The Hour of Blessing content is edited and choreographed at Bread of Life Church video and TV studios for an hour on Zambia National Broadcasting Corporation (ZNBC.)

Since its commencement, the program has been airing for an hour featuring Bishop Joe Imakando on Saturdays at 1700 to 1800 hours. This program has been and still is a household name that most viewers across the Country and beyond watch religiously. Many lives have been impacted and transformed by the messages that are aired on it. Testimonies abound to that effect. The famous one among many is the one that featured Ali Simwinga then Kitwe Town Clerk when according to him was helped when things were quite bad in his work situation. He currently serves as

a Commissioner on the Electoral Commission of Zambia.

The program draws its major sponsorship from Bread of Life Church international members spread around the Country and abroad. Members are challenged to consider a monthly contribution of any amount ranging from K500 for Gold Partners, K400 Silver Partners and K250-K100 for Bronze Partners. Partners are encouraged to renew their commitments every year during Three Days of Power Conferences held in various branch churches.

Over the years, the viewership of the program has increased dramatically. Because of the wide range of topics handled by the Bishop on this telecast, we have seen an assortment of viewership ranging from none Christians, and Christians drawn from all denominations watch the program. The program is alone responsible for introducing both the Bishop and his Church to viewers beyond the four walls of the Church. The role that this program has played in catapulting Bishop Imakando's ministry to the wider viewership can never be underestimated. It has had a tremendous influence on many people who have even joined his fold as a result of watching the telecast. There are even people who have decided to be following the program and use it as a Church of last resort than actually going and joining a Church somewhere.

We have had Roman Catholic priests support the program on a monthly basis owing to the way they have been impacted and encouraged by the Bishop. This program has been very instrumental in influencing large swathes of people who have in turn spread the word around thus bringing Thousands into the Kingdom of God. Whenever people unfamiliar with Pentecostal Churches have had questions on pertinent issues regarding these Churches, they have in most cases resorted to watching the Hour of Blessing content to gain clarity.

Issues to do with false prophets involving prophesying on house numbers, gate numbers, cell phone number and miracle money, people have gotten firm answers on the Hour of Blessing. Bishop gives clarity to an assortment of varied issues that concern people's lives thus guiding, counseling and influencing them in making prudent decisions in their lives. Many times Bishop has told his pastors that when preaching, a minister can use the platform to offer counseling services to his members to a point where they wouldn't even frequent them for counseling. He has counseled that it is important to deal with matters of concern to members in one's sermon.

Many pastors from across the denominational spectrum have learned how to preach and teach on topical themes as the famed Clergyman does on the Hour of Blessing. Any minister who desires to learn the art of preaching and teaching the word of God can easily derive those aspects from watching the Hour of Blessing. Over the span of 30 years I have seen firsthand how this powerful tool has been used to grow the Church, council members, disciple them and launch many into various fields where they are productive. In short, it cannot be debated the kind of influence and impact this program has had on the development and propagation of the Christian doctrines to the world.

Additionally, etiquettes of how to minister and package one's message can all be gleaned from watching this program. For those who haven't had any formal training in Bible school or seminary, this platform can be very helpful in formatting you so you fulfill your calling. I encourage you to dutifully watch this program on ZNBC on a weekly basis to grow your spiritual life. We thank God for this powerful tool through the media of Television.

Lastly, as I pivot towards the end of this chapter, let me

underscore here, the importance of financially supporting such worthy causes for the Kingdom of God. Those of us who watch this program can help with a monthly, quarterly and annual financial donation to keep this most important and highly effective program on the air. Keeping this program is very expensive and requires thousands of Kwacha to screen an hour's content on ZNBC. May God continue raising partners for this most auspicious of programs to have ever captured the air waves of television.

12 | THE ROLE OF CONFERENCES

Conferences over the span of 30 years of Bread of Life's existence have had a telling influence and effect on the growth of the Church. It will suffice to give you a litany of conferences that Bread of Life Church have been conducting since its inauguration in 1992. The flagship and premier conference for the Church is undoubtedly, Word Explosion conference that takes place at the Headquarters annually in the month of August at the Blessing Center. This conference runs for no less than seven days. Delegates and attendees are drawn from all Bread of Life Churches within Zambia and across the plethora of Branches spread across the world.

These Branches come along with their respective pastors and members to this annual festival of sort and a celebration of the Church's achievements for the span of their existence. The next conference is the Easter Conference. This one though open to any branches is mainly for the local membership domiciled in Lusaka. It runs for the duration of Easter which is three days. It begins on Good Friday, Holy Saturday and Easter Sunday itself which crescendos with the actual resurrection of Jesus Christ. Sermons have historically taken and used the themes of Easter as a clarion call.

The next conference in equal measure is the Three Days of Power (3DP) conference which is held in all provinces of the Country at regional Headquarters of the Churches. Bishop Joe Imakando usually travels to these regions to minister for three consecutive days. These conferences over the years have been very impactful for the branches as well as the broader body of Christ. Clergy from all spectrums of the denominational divide have graced these celebratory

assemblies for their own edification and growth. Their members have also been blessed to attend these conferences. This conference has endeared Bishop to the larger community of the Saints who have close proximity to him when he travels to the regions to minister the word.

The next conference is the Faith Explosion conference held in the Copperbelt province of Zambia. This conference usually alternates venues between Kitwe and Ndola respectively. Bishop usually ministers alongside foreign speakers like Bishop Emma Isong from Nigeria and other prominent speakers for no more than 3 days. The last conference on the annual calendar of Bread of Life is usually the Youth Global Convention where youths of the Church converge on the Blessing Center to enjoy the ministry of the word. This too is a very important and strategic conference targeting the youth as our future arrows in the quiver to trail blaze the message of the gospel to the next generation. Women also hold their annual women of Integrity conferences in Lusaka and in the regional churches to spur the women to commit to serving the Lord.

My earliest recollection of conferences captures Rev. David Newberry, a Texan from the U.S.A who used to teach on the power of the Holy Spirit. The Bishop tasked him with running revival camp meetings in Lusaka West at the (Youth with a Mission) Camp Site. Large numbers of members were baptized with the Holy Spirit at the Camp site. He was used greatly by God to entrench the ethos of the life in the Spirit in the nascent Church. The benign Evangelist from America can be credited with introducing Ron Kusmoor, another American Evangelist who further took the mushrooming Church to higher heights in consolidating the spiritual realities of the Holy Spirit. These teachings had such a powerful effect on members who had recently been under the reformed influence of John Calvin's teachings. It was

quite literally for all intents and purposes, a pivotal moment for us. I was recently introduced to the Church by a cousin of mine and had been saved at a time when the Church was under transition. Bishop Chali Kasonde then our Resident Pastor had since left the Church and in his place Bishop then Reverend Joseph Imakando who had been an elder under Kasonde took the reins of the Church.

People who have been under the influence and spell of religious indoctrination once they taste the aromas of the Spirit of God and the attendant ensuing liberties, explode and venture into the throes of the Spiritual life headstrong. We as youths at that inflection point of transition were absolutely blown away. I started a group of over Zealous youths we dubbed "Power Team" comprising Brothers Crucial (Pastor Emmanuel), Stephen Musonda, Joseph Nakwa, Rabson Banda, Nigel Banda, Steve Kanyinji and Kelvin Tembo. These youths were very hungry for the move of the Spirit of God and were used of God to bring many youngsters to the ministry. We began tarrying meetings where the youths were filled with the Holy Spirit with the evidence of speaking in tongues.

This caused hysteria and commotion in the Church to the point that elder Amos Lwabila now late came to investigate the hullabaloo among the Youths. When he saw that what was happening among us was authentic, he gave us the go ahead however cautioning us to be strictly doctrinal and well behaved, two things we were keen on observing. Folks would be so taken up in the Spirit to the extent of climbing on pews and shout on top of their voices in hysterics attributed to the Holy Spirit. Incidentally, all those youths under my ambit of Spiritual guardianship are still serving the Lord mostly as Pastors with the exception of brother Joseph Nakwa who sadly went on to be with the Lord. These youths were revolutionary in their approach to the things of God.

They quite literally scared people with their spiritual escapades and zeal. You must understand that some pockets of the 120 membership were still ardently Calvinistic and held to his reformed theologies drawn from the Reformation of 1517! These kids influenced large swathes of youths to join the youth ministry where I served as the Vice Chairperson under the Youth Director Pastor Lisulo.

The other prominent speaker that graced the Church in those formative years was Alphonso Berlin an African-American from the U.S.A. He also ministered powerfully often punctuating his ministry with power soulful renditions of worship. This preacher with an afro was quite instrumental in galvanizing our spiritual fortunes. The other preacher of noteworthy credentials to have graced us with his talismanic gifts was Hendell Leslie a black Caribbean minister who had immigrated to Uganda. This man focused on financial literacy messages that buttressed the Church's understanding of financial stewardship principles. Those teachings helped us know what giving and receiving entailed and the role of giving in the life of the believer. Many of our members grew on their stewardship roles as a consequence of that powerful man of God.

The next notable preacher was of Nigerian descent in the person of Apostle Mbenga a tall and towering man who spoke with a husk and powerful voice that at times seemed to shake the building. He spoke on giving and receiving. He was used powerfully by the Lord to further deepen and enlarge our understanding of Christian stewardship. In my estimation, Reverend George Adeboye is among the most influential clerics to have ever graced the pulpit of Bread of Life Church International. The first time he came, other than his astuteness and proficiency at recalling huge volumes of Scriptures.

Rev. George Adeboye from Ilorin, Nigeria, is a man famed

for his Bible quotations. He imparted in us at that time, the grace to memorize and quote from memory voluminous amounts of Scriptures then expound them meticulously. He is a deeply studious man and holiness oozes out of the man of God. It was said of the Lord Jesus Christ according to the evangelists in their Gospels, that Jesus was a man affirmed with miraculous powers and full of the word. When one takes a systematic and thematic study of the New Testament Scriptures to track the life and times of Jesus of Nazareth, it immediately becomes apparent that the man of studious who spent time to study the Old Testament scrolls in their entirety, it's no small wonder, he could quote from various books of the Old Testament.

He read Scriptures that testified about Him. He found where they Scriptures of old pinpointed His identity and works. Take for instance, on one particular occasion in the Synagogue, as was his custom, the aide gave him the scroll of Isaiah in which he read where the Scripture states that the Spirit of the Lord is upon me for He has anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor, gave sight to the blind and preach the acceptable year of the Lord.

He then handed over the scroll to the helper, waited for all to be hush, then he proclaimed that, "Today this Scripture is fulfilled in your hearing!" The Jewish religious establishment were exasperated, some even tore their flowing garbs when they heard in their view-blasphemy! They people in that Town all descended upon Him even though no one could lift a finger against him or stone. They took Him to the edge of a cliff but couldn't tip him over, for His time had not come. They made way for Him and slipped through them unharmed.

Such was Rev. George you could see clearly where he drew his power to minister – the infallible word of God! Let us all draw from the same divine stream from whence Rev.

George Adeboye draws his ethereal power.

It is my experience in ministry for over 30 years that much study and meditation of the word of God, longer hours spent worshipping Jesus Christ the resurrected Lord, praying long hours in tongues makes and culminates in manifest power that delivers people the instant they come into contact with you. That is how the tangible presence of God is contacted and transmitted by his servants. Even tangible miraculous supplies of God are communicated the same way. When I went to South Africa for Bible training, I only had money to last me 2 weeks of stay in that Country.

God had made it clear as daylight to me that He had gone ahead of me to South Africa. My cousin had also told me to travel to Bible School to await her sending the Tuition Fees while there! I don't know and quite understand why she suggested that? In hindsight though, I clearly see what the Lord was developing in my life and ministry. He was developing trust, growing my faith and confidence in God. Now here is what I want you to see. Even though the Lord had given me His word, I still had to activate the word by waiting and tarrying long in His presence for His promise to actualize. Long after other Bible School students have lumbered home, I would be waiting in the prayer room at Bible School activating His power. Straight from there, someone met me outside of the prayer room and told me that the Lord directed him to me to give me R100.

Now, you have to have lived in South Africa to know that those people cannot give you dime unless and until the Lord has spoken! I saw miraculous supplies of the Lord. I cited earlier that I barely had enough money to last me a mere 2 weeks. Here is another miracle that happened. When I got to South Africa, I stayed with a certain Zambian lady and her family for those 2 weeks in their apartment just opposite Rhema Bible School off Rabie and Schoeman Road in

Randburg. I considered her an aunt back home in Zambia. She used to frequent Aunt Cathy's home so I knew from there, unfortunately when we got to South Africa, she changed. She gave me an ultimatum to leave on a particular day. On that fateful day, however, the Lord spoke to one Black student hailing from Uganda. His name is Stephen Iraka. He and his parents lived in Pretoria, so he used to drive down from there to Johannesburg every day and back. He simply approached me and asked me to follow him home.

I had never shared my predicament with him, in fact no one knew my situation in my entire class. So, its plausible to conclude that God spoke to Stephen. Imagine he made that decision without even consulting his parents! God is powerful. His word produces miraculous supplies. Rev. George has similar weighty testimonials of miraculous supplies as a direct consequence of God's word. Never attempt to move in the miraculous without a serious studious approach to your spiritual life, it will be an absolute disaster beloved.

God had used him to introduce the Church to "Holy Laughter." Members including the Bishop and his elders where among a host of people that got drunk in the Spirit and sprawled over the polished concrete floors of the Old Church unable to walk. People were so inebriated with the power of God they couldn't drive back home. Some couldn't locate their homes while yet others spent the whole night at Church dazed by the Spirit of God! Tell me, do you see such spiritual phenomena today? These are the kinds of supernatural occurrences we grew up under as young people, and were greatly influenced by them to minister for the Lord. Radical transformation of members took place as a result of the ministry of Rev. George Adeboye from Nigeria. Brother Alphonsias Hamanjanji after those meetings was dubbed the

‘moving Bible’ as he became synonymous with quotations of Bible verses like his mentor Rev. George Adeboye!

Another one of the conferences then that had a lasting transformative effect on us as a growing Church was one of the Easter conferences conducted by Pastor Cronje from the Republic of South Africa. He came twice teaching of the overarching themes of the Suffering Messiah. Those teachings further entrenched us in our evolution as youths and as a congregation desirous to move into the spiritual journey towards maturity in the Lord. There is no doubt whatsoever, that the template of judicious use of anointed servants of God has been pivotal to the growth and renown of Bread of Life Church International.

I can attest as a founding member of the Church that choice of conference speakers and the frequency with which strategic conferences are held all play a role in galvanizing the spiritual fortunes of members thereby helping to enhance their faith and grow the work of God. Bishop Imakando has mastered this art over the years. Young and upcoming ministers of the Gospel can use this template perfected by the clergyman over the span of 30 years.

13 | THE ROLE OF GOOD LIEUTENANTS

This critical role that loyal and dedicated lieutenants play in helping the ‘Set man,’ achieve his vision, can never be underestimated. As I have been writing the manuscript of this ground breaking and landmark book, *The Forging of A Mega Church: An Eye Witness Account*, I have often reminisced with my wife Inonge, the role the revival played in 1990 and the intervening years helped galvanize a hitherto unforeseen level of commitment and dedication in members of Bread of Life Church international. As a matter of fact, my wife recalled how she once traveled by foot from Chelstone to Emmasdale to attend Praise & Worship team rehearsal.

The level of dedication is unparalleled and unprecedented in our days. Our members these days aren’t cut from the same cloth as we were then! Another Gentleman, Mr. Richard Malanda, now deceased recounted how he also walked from Chelstone to Emmasdale Church to attend the service on Sunday! He was an elderly man; it took a toll on him to have traveled such a long stretch to Church. I trust there are many with similar testimonies of people walking from Chilanga, Makeni, Lusaka West and other far flung places to attend meetings at 136 Chinyunyu Road, the birthing place of the vision of Bread of Life Church International.

The level of commitment and dedication of the Lieutenants who worked under the Bishop then are inextricably intertwined with the epic changes politically that happened in Zambia in 1991 as well as the ensuing Revival that also rode the crest of the wind of change. The mold of these leaders under the Bishop that included myself and a

host of other leaders was that of change agents and revolutionaries. You could term them ‘fundamentalists or in rare cases extremists,’ because their dedication to the work was phenomenal. I recall a time the late Pastor Liswaniso Kamuwanga, Johnstone Chirwa and Rev. George Msendo would spend the whole day in one of the Vestries at the Old Church praying in tongues and reading the word.

I joined their group, in those formative years and was greatly molded as a result of my interactions with them. These people would spend six days of the week the whole day praying and studying the word of God. Who witnesses that level of dedication nowadays? These three brethren were heavily influenced by the late Morris Cerullo, Alex Ness, Paul Trulin, Kenneth E. Hagin and Dr. Derek Prince in their praying and expounding of the word of God. That to some extent rubbed off on me and led me to pursue intensive excursions into most of the reading materials of the aforementioned writers of note in Christendom. The hunger and spiritual fervor of these brethren was contagious like a plaque.

Sovereignty graced the Reverend Joe Imakando then with leaders or lieutenants with exceptional talents and dedication to serve under him and helping bring thousands into the Kingdom of God. I have in mind the late Amos Lwabila, Pastor Frank Mulenga who first served as Church Secretary and elder on the original Council of Elders at the main Church. These two leaders displayed an unparalleled commitment to Bishop and the Church over the span of the ministry.

I cannot forget the services of Elder late David Chitundu whom I used to personally intercede with in places like Youth with a Mission Camp site for weeks, Elder late Mutwale who led the Marriage Counseling Ministry along with his late wife, Elder late Kachaka we worked with in the

Evangelistic ministry. Elder Chiwele, an ardent servant of God who was our Area elder in Olympia Park when I used to live with the late Sister Cathrine Imakando, the elder sister to the Bishop. Evangelist Chingumbe also comes to mind as one whose dedication and devotion to the Evangelism ministry was legendary.

We also had leaders in the Deaconate like Deacon Nyendwa, Deacon Chibwe, Deacon Harry Kanyama, Deacon Godfrey Mwelwa, Pastor Carol Kyakilika, Pastor Lizzy Banda and Deaconess Mirriam Besa, Deaconesses Rose Kapilikisha, Yutah Nchoba, Helen Nyungwi and Ekless Banda and a host of others whose levels of dedication was unrivaled. Reverend Friday Fumbilwa now a Minister in New Zealand was equally instrumental in the Praise and Worship team as the Lead Worship leader. Bishop Fortune Mwiza and Andrew Sandala were also quite useful as worship leaders as well as Mrs. Susan Nyondo, Sister Mwangelwa and Cecilia Nyendwa.

Other notable Brethren that come to mind whose works will precede them to the Judgment Seat of Christ, are the following, Jones Mwewa, Desmond, Media Mweemba of the (Intercessory Ministry), Brother Arthur Ngoma, Brother Muwowo (a man of the Spirit and keen follower of Brother Hagin), the late Brother Austin whom we worked with in the Youth Fellowship and others too numerous to mention. These men and women are personally known to me and can vouch for their commitments towards both the Bishop and the work of ministry.

A litany of pastors who served in the pastorate then are as follows (This litany is not entirely exhaustive but tentative and it’s not in order of seniority but random):

1. Pastor Friday Fumbilwa
2. Pastor Lisulo Lisulo

3. Pastor Liswaniso Kamuwanga (late)
4. Pastor Johnstone Chirwa
5. Pastor Carol Zaaza Kyakilika
6. Pastor Lizzy Banda
7. Pastor Constain Manjanji (late)
8. Pastor Charles Mwewa
9. Pastor Patrick Simushi (late)
10. Pastor Edison Katete
11. Pastor Musakanya
12. Pastor Sikazwe
13. Pastor Felix Mwape
14. Pastor Sibuzza Mapate
15. Pastor Jato Phiri
16. Pastor Peter Vumisa
17. Pastor Teddy Kamfwa
18. Pastor Kangwa Mumba

These titles used here may have changed over the years, however, I used the titles these person had at the time in history.

Without sounding segregatory, let me pick out a few servants of God whom in my view went beyond the call of duty in their devotion and works for God under Bread of Life Church International. I note two of them here.

Let me hasten to state, unfortunately, that both these servants of God are demised, so we honor them posthumously: Rev. Manjanji and Rev. Patrick Simushi.

Rev. Manjanji

Rev. Constain Manjanji got saved at the Matero open Air Evangelistic Crusade of Evangelist Nevers Mumba. From the moment he got saved, he got committed in all programs

of the Church. He quickly enrolled in both the Foundation Classes and thereafter the Baptism Class. Immediately after that a Cell Group was launched at his house in Chaisa. This Cell became like a labor ward at the Hospital. Lines of people used to meander from the house for miles without end. People from all walks of life would wait in line to be prayed for hours until their turn came. He was gifted in the area of deliverance. Few people if ever failed to get their deliverance through his ministry. The man of God was a joyful and cordial man who loved people and the Lord.

I used to frequent his house group as they met on a different day from ours in Garden. What I witnessed was a man on fire for God, who cared very little about protocol or material things. That man was anointed by God with proven miraculous endowment from God. He was quite an inspiration to behold him in ministry. People would fall under the power of the Holy Spirit. The presence of the Holy Spirit would wrap the whole place in a tangible canopy that ministered to the people even before the man of God prayed for them. Sensitivity to the Spirit was his hallmark.

Soon after he was appointed Pastor by Bishop Joe Imakando and in no time, he was sent to take over the running of the Kanyama Bread of Life branch in one of the Compounds of Lusaka. The Church grew rapidly in leaps and bounds. The church was noted for singing traditional Christian Rhumba songs and had a huge choir that used to grace the monthly joint Miracle Meetings Bishop used to conduct. The man of God was used by God to set very high standards of ministerial excellence. His works shall surely precede him to the Judgment Seat of Christ for well-deserved crown of glory which the Lord shall bestow on all those who love His Appearing. May His Soul Rest in Eternal Peace.

Rev. Patrick Simushi

Rev. Simushi is another one of those luminaries who will not go unremembered or eulogized by those of us who knew him or were familiar with his ministerial excellence, zeal for the Lord, love of fasting, deliverance ministry and intercession. He also majored on demonology and was masterful at conducting deliverance. The man of God was pivotal for establishing many if not all the Branch Churches in all the Districts of Western Province. He was passionate for souls and evangelism. Anyone who knew him like my wife Inonge who was with him for 6 years in Mongu District of Western Province.

He was equally passionate about Holy Ghost revivals and healing. He was a man of integrity through and through. He wasn't tainted by the love of money or avarice. His loyalty to Bishop Joe Imakando was unflinching and unquestionable. I know this because whenever I traveled to see my parents I would spend nights at his home where we would have fellowship into the wee hours of the night.

Rev. Simushi took over the running of Bread of Life Church, Mongu from Pastor Victor Chingumbe.

His works have definitely preceded him to that celestial city whose pearly gates are open to the Saints who disdained evil in preference to their Heavenly Friend the LORD Jesus Christ. May His Soul Rest In Peace.

One other notable aspect worth detailing at this critical juncture is this;

Just as irreducible are the events that set in motion the wind of change far removed from Zambia, in the Iron Curtain, so are the events that brought about the bringing together of the type of leaders around the Bishop at the time, their tenor of spirit, temerities, peculiarities, and devotion. These leaders of which I am part, are a rare kind, you would

have to search the whole world and never find such a mix and plethora of leaders and how motivated collectively they were to make Bishop successful.

Many including myself served voluntarily as unto the Lord without ever thinking of reward. Why? It was the spirit of the times. We were molded by Kenneth Kaunda (KK) our founding President whose philosophy of Humanism had shaped our worldview of Ubuntu where we marshaled our collective efforts in gifts, talents and other resources to make Bishop 'King' as the Hebronites were determined to make David King over Judah and eventually over all of Israel. Such leaders are hard to come by, only God can give a set man like Bishop Joe Imakando such a mix of leaders drawn from all walks of life, with varied experiences and skill sets. People worked as one man to make the Church successful.

On one occasion, someone brought a demon possessed man to one of the vestries where we had been praying with the people I alluded to earlier on the chapter on good lieutenants. Those people were desperately in need of their relative's deliverance from powerful demons that had completely taken over the mind of that individual. He was so strong, no one could pin him down or restrain him. The moment they dumped him into the vestry, we sprang into action. Late Pastor Liswaniso Kamuwanga, myself, Johnston Chirwa and George Msendo all in unison hollered at the demoniac commanding him to go out of the man. Instantly the demons left the man. Praise God. We led the man to the Lord and gave him details how he could join the Church. He was later followed up and asked to join a house group near his house. The relatives were all elated and went home with the delivered man in his right mind.

I will give a more detailed and comprehensive account of my own ministry excursions at ZAMIM and other works later in my own chapter (Chapter 18).

14 | EMBRACING SACRIFICES

Members of Bread of Life Church International along with the Bishop Joe Imakando as he led by example in precept and deeds, have collectively displayed and demonstrated that nothing is impossible to accomplished when a people are galvanized and propped to build something that is larger than the individuals who built it. The sum of the whole was built by the individual contributions of members. People sacrificed to build the Blessing Center. Many people may not know that the Blessing project began in about the year 2002. It took approximately about 14 to 15 years to finish it.

The seeds of its building were laid much earlier than that. For years prior to its actual construction, the Blessing Center initially named the “Cathedral of Blessing,” existed only on a plaque in front of the Old Church that we became accustomed with painted by an Artist. Bishop planted the “faith picture” of the Blessing Center into our collective psyche and Imagination to the extent that we believed it could be built. Most people used to laugh us to scorn and mock members of Bread of Life and the Bishop for thinking they could build such a mammoth building without the kind of monies that go along with it.

The Blessing Center began by faith. There wasn't a cache of funds somewhere to commence building. When Bishop Charles Agin Asare of Ghana came to do the Ground Breaking ceremony at the site of the Blessing Center, it looked like we were in over our heads to attempt to construct such a colossus of a building, the first of its kind among Pentecostals/Charismatics here in Zambia. The Bishop however, was undaunted and unfazed by the

derogatory and undermining comments people made. He continued to rally the people to build. I remember a theme, "Sacrifice to Build" that rallied every one of us to build the Blessing Center. In that year's theme, we were encouraged and motivated to give sacrificially above our normal Tithes and offering.

We were encouraged to limit some of our indulgences and instead give those savings towards the building. Building something larger-than-life seems insurmountable until we take into account the cumulative efforts of every one of us. It is said of an Elephant carcass that it's almost impossible to eat it alone but it takes the whole village cutting off large chunks to finish it, so it was with the building of the Blessing Center.

Every combined effort of all the giving of God's people brought it to completion. Another thematic emphasis was in the year Bishop coined this theme, "The Year of completion." The big idea was to marshal the big drive towards that final effort to the finish line.

Talking about sacrifices to the Blessing Center, since Bishop himself talked about this publicly, I can merely recount it for those not familiar with it. Bishop placed one of his houses as collateral for the Bank to loan him money he gave into the Blessing center implying that the Bank got the Title Deeds to his house while he was servicing the loan! Talk about commitment and leading from the front!? Imagine the man of God taking such a risk on his family property? He risked on the faithfulness and trustworthiness of God; it's no wonder God came through for him with the actual completion of the Blessing Center. The loan was eventually paid off in full and the Bank gave him back the Title Deeds to his property.

The great lesson for us pastors and servants of God is to see that leadership involves great risks and also leading by

example to our flocks. When it comes to giving sacrificially us servants of God must set the example for others to follow. Bishop Imakando is one of the biggest givers to the Blessing Center project on record. That type of sacrificial giving by the leader of the work releases the same grace upon the followers who also do the same. That sacrifice triggered a reciprocal effect on the entire congregation who also sacrificed as their leader did to complete the colossus of the building. Grace on giving is caught rather than just taught.

The sacrifice Bishop made, released the similar grace for all the people to sacrifice their own 'Isaacs' in order to build the house of God. Today, those enjoying the comforts and ambience that the Blessing Center offers, must know that it took the blood and sweat of its founder and his members for them to enjoy the facility.

We must each catch the sacrificial spirit of our father in the faith, Bishop Joe Imakando who has set the pace for us to follow. He has set the marker so high for us to emulate. We have a set marker who has set the pace for us to follow in his footsteps of faith. The Blessing Center is a faith project of enormous size which is a living embodiment and testament of the faith and resilience of Bishop Joseph Imakando. We are privileged to walk in his footsteps. He must be counted among the great heroes of our faith and a leading luminary in Zambia.

The Blessing Center was officially dedicated to the Lord by the General Overseer of the Redeemed Church of God Pastor Enock Adeboye on 19th November 2011. A commemorative plaque at the Blessing Center is testament to that effect.

15 | BUILDING THE BLESSING CENTER

It would seem like a repetition of the last Chapter to write about the Blessing Center but keep in mind I discoursed the collective sacrifices it took to construct the Blessing Center beginning with the visionary Bishop Joe Imakando and the entire Bread of Life Church International including the Branch Churches. Here I discourse the actual building of the Blessing Center, how it proceeded and some of the challenges encountered in building it. Let me confess that I am not privy to the actual contracts entered into between the Church and the main contractor; therefore, I will not delve into that aspect as I am not in the know. Secondly, I don't know whether the main contractor was also the one engaged to do all the works like the electrical, plumbing, Ceilings, air cons, and all the other works.

I will simply delve into the construction stages one after another as I saw it. Suffice to mention that the Blessing Center commenced when I was at that time at Great Commission Training Center in Nairobi-Kenya under Campus Crusade for Christ as a Field Staff. The year was 2001. By the time the Blessing Center was actually completed with the First Word Explosion conference held there, I was a Pastor under Bread of Life branch in Monze. I was pastor from 2006-2017, that can give you the indication how long the building took to gain completion. When I was inducted as Pastor in Bread of Life in Livingstone by Rev. Kangwa Mumba, it was the year 2006. By the time the Blessing Center hosted the first ever Word Explosion Conference, it was in August 2011.

Let me vividly recount how I saw the building commence. The first thing I remember happening on the site was the

Ground Breaking Ceremony by Bishop Charles Agin Asare of Perez Chapel, Accra, Ghana. A commemorative plaque is testament to that effect which is still at the Blessing center.

The next stage involved graders that went on site to clear it of grass, trees and shrubs in order to dig the deep foundations to hoist the building. The graders came of the fateful day which was punctuated with much joy and celebration by the entire membership of Bread of Life Church International. It was a pivotal and landmark occasion for the Church. You must understand that it wasn't easy for the Church to secure the plot or lot from ZAMTEL Ltd or Posts and Telecommunications Corporation (PTC) who were the original owners of the site. Running battles ensued until finally with much prayer and intercession, Bread of Life secured the lot.

The actual grading took place, then huge foundations to house the pillars commenced. The deformed bars were placed into concrete to set the footings of the pillars. It was all systems go. I remember a picture where Bishop clad in a blue work suit and helmet worked along with the builders in pouring the concrete into one of the footings for the pillars. That was a landmark moment frozen in time. I almost forgot, at the stage area, a Bible was memorialized into it to stake a claim for the work of God later to be done on the pulpit area.

The next stage was the actual wiring of the Blessing Center. The entire wiring was done by somebody I grew to love and respect. His name was the late Mr. Richard Malanda. He once worked for ZESCO and was a professionally trained electrician. He at one time was my member at Bread of Life Church Monze Branch when he stayed at a place called Katimba Rural Health Center. He once wired our Church building for a one day Apostolic visit of the Bishop. I and my family were deeply touched by his

labor of love for us as a family. We dearly miss him as he went on to be with the Lord last year (2021). May His Soul Rest In Eternal Peace.

This man single handedly with his team wired the entire span of the Blessing Center. It is even said he went and bought the wiring materials from China. He actually told me that personally when he was in Monze. He wired the Blessing Center as his labor of love to the Lord. May his works precede him to the Judgment Seat of Christ.

The most fascinating stage was when the first floor was laid. I saw those red nosed bricks we use on windows as seals lined up and placed in concrete with rolls of planks laid while supporters of sticks held the floor. When dried, the molds of bricks were just awesome. The entire top floor has those bricks in molds of concrete. We used to go over to the site on tours with Bishop and the Council of Elders from Lusaka.

The next stage I remember was the fabrication of the roof metal Traces that run the entire span of the Blessing Center. The day the contractor brought the crane to hoist the traces was another momentous occasion for the Church. That crane is a masterful innovation and feat of great engineering. It literally entered the space where the auditorium currently fits and begun hoisting the metal truces one by one until the whole roof was done keeping the metal fabricators busy piecing the pieces together while suspended about 20 meters in the air.

The next inevitable thing to do after the roofing materials were in place was to place the roofing sheets in place. This was done, one could already see that the building came into its own and looked resplendent. After all the roofing structure was in place, the floors were poured into place with concrete. The trucks bringing concrete from Lafarge where kept busy bring concrete until the whole structure was done.

For the rest of the materials like aluminum window and door frames, it was decided that they be sourced from China. People were dispatched to China to purchase these including the floor and wall tiles for Rest rooms and bath rooms. The theater folding seats were also sourced from China.

Glass was also purchased from China too. When all these materials arrived, it meant all that was needed to complete wrapping the edifice was to meticulously install each of these materials one by one. After that was done, next came the painting, tiling, wiring and plumbing works. The outdoors also needed sprucing up, the lawns had to be done and manicured, the spaces were zoned, car park demarcated, then it was decided that concrete be used for the entire road within the precincts of the facility than use tarmac or bitumen as it proved to be quite costly.

I think in hindsight, it was a smart decision, one that requires applauding. After most of these installations were done, it was time to host the first ever Word Explosion Conference that was held in August 2011. It was a dream come true for all members of Bread of Life Church International, one to savor with great pride and a collective sense of achievement. It was also a great sigh of relief especially for the visionary, Bishop Joe Imakando.

16 | INFLUENCING GENERATIONS

It is my firmly held belief and rightly so that no Christian lives or dies to himself; we live for others to motivate, encourage and inspire them for serving the Lord and humanity. Similarly, we also die to the Lord; because He owns us, purchased us and we live to glorify Him. It is in this vein that I believe that a Christian leader of the stature of Bishop Joe Imakando is rightly and strategically placed to mentor, coach, and influence successive generations through his life's achievements, teachings and personal examples of triumphs and losses.

It is for these reasons and much more that I decided to write this book from my own perspective and personal involvement in the life and times of Bishop Joseph Imakando and the evolution of Bread of Life Church International. The first author to have written about Bishop Imakando and BLCI was, and it was rightly so, Prof. Charles Mwewa in his mega tome titled, *Zambia: Struggles of My People*.¹⁶ Indeed, many books will be written by myriad writers about the Bishop and his Church and rightly so, to preserve his legacy and also to lend weight to Christianity in Zambia and beyond.

We Africans, have been noted, historically, for not writing our own stories as we are famed for tale bearing. Unfortunately, that has meant that more often than not, our stories have been written from the biased perspectives of those whose narratives have held sway in portraying us

¹⁶*Zambia: Struggles of My People* (Lusaka: Maiden Publishing House, 2011), see chapters 16 to 19.

unlike we are. This work seeks to avoid those biases and sets the correct record of events as far as I recall them for posterity to learn and maximize their potentials for the glory of God.

Bishop's Role as a Mentor to Tens of Thousands

The Bread of Life vision espouses bringing Tens of Thousands of people into the Kingdom of God. Assuming all those Tens of Thousands actually did come. Who is going to mentor them as Disciples? It's not good to simply want people to come and not go beyond them coming and actually mentor them, equip them, build capacity in them; thereby developing their capabilities for service in the Kingdom of God and elsewhere.

I believe that Bishop Imakando does mentor many people on his Telecast broadcast every Saturday on ZNBC TV, as well as on other online platforms like Twitter, Facebook and YouTube. His YouTube channel has a large following and is watched by a captive audience of thousands around the world. That is mentorship which translate into influence. He also does the mentoring in his own Church where those who attend are trained, equipped and developed through the systematic teaching of God's word.

The Concise Oxford English Dictionary defines the word Mentor as an experienced trusted advisor; an experienced person in an organization or institution who trains and counsels new employees or students. When one takes a hard look at this definition or explanation, one quickly notes the following:

1. Experienced and trusted advisor
2. Experienced person in an organization or institution

3. One who trains & counsels new employees or students

If when factor all these aspects to Bishop's role, we immediately see how all these fit into the Lord's Discipling Model as gleaned from Matthew 28:19-20.

There's absolutely no doubt in anybody's mind that Bishop is experienced and a trusted Advisor so in that sense, he fits the mode of who a mentor ought to be in one's life. He has been Pastoring since the early 1970s surely that makes for experience, then he has gained enormous wisdom and experience at working with myriad individuals over the span of over 40 years in ministry. He has even been on several Commissions of Enquiry in the past working with other distinguished Commissioners gathering up people's recommendations to Government that helped in good governance and the growth of our civil society.

The third aspect pointed out an experienced person who trains and works with new employees or students. This fits perfectly into the Discipling template of the Lord as espoused in Matthew 28:19-20. We are to go into all the world and make Disciples teaching them to observe all that He has commanded us, lo He will be with us unto the close of the Age. (Paraphrase mine). New employees or students are learners or disciples. Bishop in his ministry spanning over 40 years has had myriad opportunities to counsel, train and equip new believers. That puts him right in the mix of life transformation and development expert. Many of us have been mentored by him to minister, dream big dreams, soar above many storms, developed many and raised other ministers to reach the world for Christ.

Bishop's Coaching Role to Tens of Thousands

Again, I will draw an explanation from the Concise Oxford English Dictionary which defines the word Coach as a Tutor who gives specialized teaching or one who trains others. When this explanation is pitted against the Discipleship model of the Lord Jesus Christ as gleaned from Matthew 28:19-20, we see how it fits right in.

You will clearly see that any minister of God including Bishop Imakando must tutor new disciples by giving them specialized knowledge of the Bible in themes that are tailored towards maturing them in Christ. Every servant of God does coaching roles to his congregation every Sunday. He trains his people to be great husbands, exceptional leaders in government and civic spaces, great Fathers and prudent businessmen.

A pastor wears many hats; on one occasion, he wears that of a mentor, another time he wears that of a life coach teaching and passing on life skills on how to navigate one's marriage in the 21st Century, how to possess a ten-year financial plan that makes one financially independent, how to plan for retirement or how to live your life with one's spouse after the children have left the nest for instance? All these various scenarios must be handled by a prudent pastor to his congregation that's what makes him a trusted advisor and a life coach. How do we manage crises that pounce on us unannounced? No one goes to school to prepare one for crisis management 101 tailor made for one.

Yes admittedly, crisis management in general can be taught in schools but one that is tailored or skewed towards a peculiar situation unique to oneself may be a far-fetched prospect. That is where one adapts to the situation with custom designed wisdom from God or from His word. God's word is more relevant and current than today's

newspaper. It distills relevant wisdom that is applicable to any problem, conundrum, difficulty and crisis. The reason for that is the Bible is God's manual for living. It's a living and breathing word applicable to all of us. Coaching is vitally important to us if we are to navigate the changed terrain in finances, marriage, parenting, business, career, work relationships and family dynamics involving siblings.

The Bishop has been doing all this for years and is still doing it for those keen enough to pay attention. How you counted how many times the writers of the Hebrew proverbs challenge us to pay attentions to our Father's or mother's advice? It is a major theme in proverbs. Statements like, "My son listen to your Father's instructions, or pay attention to your mother's advice?"

I deduce from such maxims that, there is wisdom to be gleaned from the words of the wise. Sages and gurus always ask their protégés to pay attention to their wisdom packaged as words. Let us pay close attention to our spiritual reservoirs like Bishop Joe Imakando. They have been around the block and back, so they can distill to us age old wisdom to manage life's unplanned for crises. This now takes me to the last role that Bishop plays in our lives if we will collectively let him.

Bishop's Influence on Successive Generations

It is God's will for us to have a great name. He promised Abraham our father in the faith, that He would make his name great and He did. Abraham's progenies are Arabs through Ishmael his first son through Haggar; Jews through Jacob and Born Again Saints through the New Birth experience in Christ. So there we have it. Abraham is claimed by three world religions or faiths, namely; Islam, Judaism and lastly Christianity. It is self-evident to all of us that Bishop

Joe Imakando has a great name. Only God can make one's name great. Greatness stems from God. Do you remember after Abram then, rescued his nephew Lot from the marauding tribes? After rescuing him safely, the tribes that Abram rescued in gratitude wanted to give him a handsome share of the spoils. Abram requested that they share the spoils among the men with Lot and not him. He said lest you say, you made Abram rich. Abram was aware that only God can truly make a man rich. He didn't want to discredit God by taking from man what only God could bestow. We also learn a critically vital life lesson here against greed or hoarding stuff that doesn't belong to us. If Abram had a penchant for gain, and was greedy for filthy lucre, he would have plunged headlong into that loot or cache of funds.

God truly made Abraham plenteous in gold, silver, bronze, camels, sheep, goats, menservants and female servants as He promised. God has also blessed Bishop Joe Imakando from humble a background to a wealthy man though, it hasn't gotten to his head. People who do not even possess half the things God has bestowed upon his choice servant, do not talk to people kindly or courteously as he does! That is a mark of great humility in the man of God.

God also promised Abraham that He would make him into a great nation of Israel. Take into account that when God made that glaringly ludicrous promise, Abraham didn't have Isaac! This promise was to be fulfilled about 300 years later! This promise applied to Jacob, Abraham's grandson later to be born but God spoke to Abraham as though it was already done. When God gives you a promise, it is as good as done when you believe it. Abraham believed God and it was credited to him for righteousness. He was made righteous by his faith in God. Jacob begat Israel the 12 Tribes.

God keeps His promises. God has equally kept His word

to Bishop Imakando, for those of us who know him personally can indeed confidently attest that God keeps His promises. That legacy of faith in God is one that needs urgent passing on to successive generations who must go much further than Bishop and his contemporaries have gone. Why? Because we have them as our mentors, coaches and have been influenced by them to dare to believe God as they did. We can soar above the storms and glide on the tidal waves with ease because we have been trained well and equipped with life tools to navigate any storm, wind and the rain.

17 | ROLE OF A YOUTH LEADER

In this chapter in which I discourse my formation as a youth leader, I want to dabble down into specifics until I make a touchdown; a euphemism in American Football nomenclature. I was born again on 26TH June 1991 in the Vestry of the Church. I feel like young Samuel who lived with old Eli in the vestries of the holy sanctum of the God of Israel. I was led to Christ by Rev. Friday Fumbilwa who was then our Music Director at Emmasdale Church. He also followed me up often to disciple me and befriend me. He played a significant role in my spiritual formation and amalgamation. He also introduced me to the Youth Fellowship where he was a leader. I grew rapidly in my faith and began showing much promise.

A week after giving my life to the Lord, I was introduced to the Evangelism Team headed by Pastor Victor Chingumbe. He gladly welcomed me with open hands. I joined this team along with my two very close female colleagues, Fridah Msendo and Linda Chibamba Phiri.

These two were equally as zealous for the Lord as I was. So we spurred one another towards good works in Christ. Let me get back to how pastor victor helped to format me and my gradual evolution into a minister of God. A week after my conversion, pastor victor trained me to conduct door-to-door evangelism. Immediately after, we went with him to witness firsthand as he shared his faith. He told us that's me, Linda and Fridah to observe and take note as we were going to do the same the following week.

Imagine, a week after conversion! That's exactly what happened the following week. Before that could happen, however, I spent that week in intensive personal Bible study

familiarizing myself with evangelism scriptures. The very following week as promised, Pastor Victor asked me to share my faith with prospective believers. I did share my faith and actually led that person to faith in Christ. That experience changed my life forever. I have never since looked back. I started preaching and speaking my faith wherever and whenever an opportunity presented itself. At this juncture, I recall how the Lord saved Sister Samba Milingu.

I had been at the Church praying for a while, The Lord told me to go out of the Vestry and look straight to the East. I obeyed, went outside, looked to the East and saw a tall slim young woman walking down on Chinyunyu Road towards Banker's Houses. The Lord told me to share my faith with her. I did, she prayed and asked the Lord to be her Master. To this day, Sister Samba now Mrs. Lawrence Kapafu is still a believer and serving Him gladly in South Africa where they live with her family. She is my spiritual daughter begotten by prayer and obedience to God's instructions.

As I developed spiritually, I kept up my reading, meditating, and study of God's word. I also sought God intensively and had a life changing encounter with Him. I got baptized in the Holy Spirit with the evidence of speaking in tongues on my own in my closet. My faith began to burgeon rapidly, eventually, I was elected to be the Vice Chairman of the Youth Fellowship. This got me to experience leadership under the leadership of Pastor Cornirus Lisulo who then was our Youth Chairman.

When the Ministry grew exponentially, Bishop then appointed Pastor Lisulo as the Youth Director at par with Youth Pastor for the entire Youth Generation Ministry. Brother Mutelo was appointed as Chairman while I continued to deputize him. I meanwhile continued preaching and mentoring youths of all sorts and drawn from various backgrounds. It was during that time that I was

involved with preaching at the Lunch Hour Fellowship at Professional Center in Lusaka Town where the Church used to target professionals to join the Church.

I must confess that at first, I used to ferry instruments to the Professional Center for Bishop to minister. Eventually, other servants in the pecking order under Bishop like Pastor Kamuwanga, Pastor Fridah Fumbilwa, Pastor Lisulo and other began preaching there as Bishop had other more pressing matters to attend to. It was such scenarios as I have narrated above, that gave rise to me to also preach at the professional Center. Many professionals eventually joined our Church as a result of those impactful meetings.

Those meetings met the spiritual hunger of many from mainline and nominal Churches. We prayed for them to receive the Baptism of the Holy Spirit with the evidence of speaking in tongues. Others sought to be delivered from demons and yet some felt they needed more time to be counseled. Its then that we asked them to come to Church where we could devote them more time. When they came however, they decided to stay.

Around the same time, I also used to minister in Overnight prayer meetings with Pastor Kenny Mwansa in places like Avondale and Chelstone. Those meetings were Inter-denominational and drew large crowds of people whom we ministered to with the Baptism of the Holy Ghost, prayed for their healing, delivered some from demons and so on. Pastor Kenny used to organize those meetings and arrange for musical instruments and musicians to sing. It was like having Church in many locations of Lusaka.

I also extended ministry excursions into places like Chilulu near Garden Compound at the home of Br. Rabson Banda where we prayed for his mother who has arthritis problems. The Lord healed her instantly to His glory. In those Overnight type meetings, I used to be flanked by the

power Team members like Rev. Steve Musonda, Br. Stephen Kanyinji and the late Br. Joseph Nakwa. Those meetings were characterized by great manifestations of the Holy Ghost with phenomena like ‘Holy laughter’ and dancing in the Spirit. We used to have prolonged praise and worship sessions that would let the Holy Ghost literally take over the services.

The other works involved my teaching the Foundation and Baptism classes. Many Saints like Rev. Shadreck Chisulo and Rev. Thole and others from Chaisa underwent our training in those classes. The late Pastor Liswaniso Kamuwanga asked me to assist him as he mentored me along with Pastor Carol Kyakilika who eventually took the Foundation Class for new Believers while she passed them on to me to take them through Baptism Class culminating into them being Baptized with the Holy Ghost with the evidence of speaking with tongues as Hagin used to say.

Suffice to mention, that many of those ministries were happening concurrently or one after another. Point here is that, I was extremely zealous for the Lord. I also had a short stint with the Praise and worship team. I sang tenor while at other times, in the formative stages of the Praise team under Pastor Friday Fumbilwa, I actually sang baritone, LOL! I eventually settled long term for Evangelism, Baptism Class and ZAMIM Fellowship.

The ZAMIM Fellowship responsibility was assigned to me by Pastor Lisulo. As we started student fellowships all around the City of Lusaka, it became apparent that we couldn’t all go to all the fellowship on student campuses around the City. It was devised that each of the leaders take up responsibilities to spearhead works at various campuses. The Youth Fellowship made an evangelistic blitz into ZAMIM that won us some Bread of Life students that I was tasked to work with every term and ensure that they came to

Church on Sunday. I started going to ZAMIM every Friday evening with Mini Buses paid for by the Church and minister to the students in the evening. I would then sleep over at the Campus and leave with the school bus the following morning with the students as they went into Town. Talk about commitment.

I also appointed an executive team with Mady Tshibambe a Congolese student leader I appointed as the Chairperson. Her role was to ensure smooth communication with me of any changes at the Campus, organize meetings, raise awareness of Bread of Life among students and finally make sure students came to church on Sunday. Every Sunday, I would be on the lookout for students and meet them. I would find out what challenges they had in order to assist them.

Many of those students are still members of Bread of Life to date. Sister Yvonne Chileshe was my Evangelism secretary in charge of evangelism at ZAMIM campus. She is now with Tabernacle of David Assembly under Bishop Harrison Sakala. Yvonne Chileshe works with World Vision in Juba, South Sudan in Accounts. Br. Lango Sinkamba was a member of my student’s Bread of Life fellowship. I used to sleep over in his room on Friday evenings after ministering powerfully to the students. He is still my friend. Incidentally, Grace Gondwe was also one of my student leaders at ZAMIM. I don’t have information as to where she is at the moment.

While carrying out my ministry duties at ZAMIM Chilanga Campus, I made friends with quite a number of colleagues there. These being the Late Kuchunga, Rev. Bruce Msidi, Leo Chitulangoma, Raymond Msumara, and a host of other folks. These folks belonged to Chi-Alpha Fellowship. I began fellowshiping with them whenever they had over-night prayer meetings which were normally

choreographed with singing, dancing, praying for the sick, conducting deliverances and preaching. Those fellows had preaching machines! Kuchunga was one of the fellows who used to be their lynchpin and talismanic figure, followed by Rev. Bruce Msidi, and another fellow I think his name was Rodrick (had a name with an Angolan/Portuguese) tone to it. These people were such a blessing and breathe of fresh air spiritually speaking.

In time, as we got to know one another better, we began inviting them to our Youth Fellowship at the Main Church, while they also reciprocated the gesture by extending invitations to me as well to minister at Chi-Alpha fellowship meetings. Most of these guys were hitched with some pretty lasses if you know what I mean? In my recollection, almost all of the dudes were hitched and would always travel with their Girlfriends wherever they went for ministry. It was quite a spectacle for some of us who weren't hitching up on anyone!

As our student ministries grew, we found it convenient to gather them at central locations to harness their individual strengths.

There were times we converged on a particular college to win souls. We used to go over to the University of Zambia main Campus and Ridgeway Campus where we had Dr. Andrew Kumwenda, Dr. Silishebo Sumbwanyambe and Dr. Sumbukeni. All these Brethren used to organize meetings for us at their campus for us to minister to them as well as invite them to come to Church on Sunday. Buses would be organized by the Church hierarchy to bus the students from all over the colleges as well as universities to attend Church services in Emmasdale.

Permit me to cite two remarkable experiences we once had in Northmead High Rise Flats near the shopping Center. I was in the company of Pastor Sibuzza Mapate and Nigel

Banda. We had gone to one of the Flats on the third floor on request that we pray for someone. As we began praying however, it seemed like the entire Flat from top to bottom was engulfed in what could only be described as the cloud of the Spirit's power. Somebody on the ground floor manifested demons, the relatives heard us praying on the top floor, they came and fetched us to cast out those evil spirits. We did, the man was set free from demonic oppression. Praise God.

On yet another occasion, we boarded a mini bus with the late Pastor Liswaniso Kamuwanga after having been in the presence of God at Church. It was at Chaisa Bus station. The moment we stepped into the bus, someone started screening on top of their voice manifesting demons! We rebuked the Devil and delivered the woman from demonic oppression. Praise the Lord.

The last incident cites another episode we shared with Sibuzza Mapate; it was at Chaisa Bus station again. This time, we wanted to buy boiled ground nuts, you know the ones old women sell in large metal dishes. As we stooped over to taste and gave the money to the old lady, she slipped over to one side and started manifesting Demons! We simply cast them out and the old lady was instantly set free from demonic oppression. We praise God for the works of redemption wrought at the cross of Calvary.

The last part of my ministry as a youth leader involved how I pioneered House groups in Garden Compound. At the time, I was staying with Aunt Cathy, Bishop's elder sister. I initiated a House group in her home in Olympia Extension. Apparently her house was situated right opposite my late Uncle's house on Mapompo Road in Olympia Extension. My late Uncle was Mr. Pumulo Sii, the immediate elder brother to my late Dad Mr. Mwibawa Sii. The person that introduced me to Emmasdale Church was Nalukui Sii, my

cousin, Mr. Pumulo Sii's last born.

Let me get back to the House group incident. After I started ministering in that house group, many adult working people, very prominent people began attending. Some were Bank managers and CEOs, unfortunately for me at the time, I wasn't working. I was being kept by Aunt Cathy. It was felt that they needed someone who was elderly to shepherd them. So a decision was made to appoint Deacon Njovu to take over the nascent and burgeoning cell group.

It was then that I decided to leave that cell and got over into Garden to pioneer my own cell group at the Ndhlovu's. It was at that cell that I first met Pastor Edson Katete, resident pastor of Choma Bread of Life. That cell split many times until the whole of Garden Compound had Bread of Life cell groups. At that time, I started sensing the Lord calling me into full time pastoral work.

It became imperative for me to go for formal Bible training. At one of the occasions when my cousin, Bo Muwindwa Doreen Kathurima came down to Zambia from Botswana for a visit. I went over to welcome her at her Mom's place in Hillcroft (National Provident Fund now NAPSA flats in Emmasdale) the place where I used to stay when I met the Lord.

She asked me what I was intent on doing- "That's Bo Muwindwa," I told her I wanted to go to Bible School in South Africa. She committed to pay my tuition Fees R10,000 in total for a whole year. The year I entered Bible School was 1998. When I finally bid farewell to the Cells in Garden, I left Pastor Katete in charge while elder Isaac Ndhlovu now serving in Mufulira Bread of Life as Elder was his assistant. The rest as the English say is history.

I went on to study at Rhema Bible Training Center. Around that time, I had been employed by Campus Crusade for Christ as a Film Evangelist. God gave me that job just

two years prior to my going to Bible school. I went to Bible School by faith. God spoke to me to go. His matching orders were sufficient to pay my entire school fees, accommodation (R5,900), transport to and from Bible School and food rations for a whole year. Suffice to mention that it was in 1998 that I went a whole year without eating pap or Nshima in South Africa! The following year, a white South African fellow student of mine Louis pledged to pay my fees for the entire 2nd Year at Bible School. The whole R12,000 was paid by him to the glory of God. God was paying me for all the ministries I did prior to my going into Bible School. This white brother, asked if I could bring him to Zambia to see the world heritage site the famed Victoria Falls.

We drove down here from South Africa straight to Lusaka and down from there to Livingstone. He booked us into Fairmount Hotel for 2 nights, including food and beverages. He then left me transport money to get back to Lusaka after I saw him off at Vic Falls Town in Zimbabwe. I have seen the faithfulness of God throughout my Christian life. I have seen God move financial mountains in my life as a result of my following hard after Him.

I have followed few fathers in my Christian walk that I consider my Dads. The First is Bishop Joe Imakando whom I have followed for 30 years and counting, the next is Pastor Chali Kasonde who baptized me in water at the old Church baptismal pool. He was our pastor at the time before the transition that brought Bishop into the fray of BLCI. Other than those two, others have been my mentors through their books, on television and still others like Pastor Ray McCauley of Rhema Church have closely mentored me in the walk of faith. Rev. Kenneth E. Hagin also inspired me to get into Rhema Bible School after studying his many publications on the Faith walk.

Planting Bread of Life Church International, Monze Branch

Upon my graduation from RBTC (Rhema Bible Training Center) in Randburg, South Africa, in 1999, I did itinerant ministry in eSwatini for some time. I eventually worked with Apostle Steve Mbua from Cameroon for a year until 2000. He was my senior at RBTC. After that stint as an Associate Pastor at Apostle Steve Mbua, I went back to South Africa where I tried to get a residence permit but it didn't work out. In hindsight however, providence didn't grant that I live in South Africa for a purpose. Someone even dangled another carrot to me, that I consider taking up a pastorate position as a Youth Pastor in Bloemfontein but God made it clear that I needed to come back to Zambia.

I packed my bags and came back to Zambia. Having away from Zambia that long, close to 3 years, meant that some of my properties had gone missing like my Bed, cache of classical Books and a host of other things. I quickly settled in with my good friend Pastor Sibuzza Mapate in Emmasdale actually along Chinyunyu Road close to where the Old Church was. I stayed there while surveying what to do next. I finally reconnected with my previous employer Campus Crusade for Christ at the time under the leadership of Rev. Dr. Teddy Kamfwa as National Director.

I joined as Field Staff a senior position of the Staff that run the organization as well as providing leadership to the entity. As a custom, once you come on Staff, you must undergo orientation and training at one of the Great Commission Training Centers dotted around the continent of Africa. I used seconded to Nairobi, Kenya at their Training Center. In Kenya Campus Crusade for Christ was using the Acronym LIFE Ministry standing for (Lay Involvement for Evangelism). I went to Kenya in 2001 and studied Evangelism and Discipleship, Counseling and

Philosophy. That orientation also taught me Fund Raising and Friend Raising for ministry effectiveness. Campus Crusade for Christ Field Staff raise monthly financial Support known as "Support Raising" from Believers to meet financial goals for one's ministry and living expenses. We learnt all those things while in Nairobi. While there I was attached to the Campus Team working with students at the University of Nairobi. I won students to the Lord while there and disciple them for six weeks using our Discipleship manual for new Beginners. I was assigned a team leader who monitored me and my work at the University of Nairobi. We met weekly to discover personal challenges, financial goals and ministry plans relating to our work at the university. His name is David Sonye a Luo by Tribe.

Our Great Commission Training Center (GCT) Director was Steve Sandagi. We also did a lot of Mission's work in Tanzania and Uganda while at GCTC. I added to our portfolio as Field Staff. CCC believes in holistic personal development thus all these missions trips as part of our training programs.

During our training which lasted 9 months, we were placed on salaries of KSh10,000 to meet living expenses like electricity bills, laundry, food and transport. We lived at the GCT accommodations in South B. initially, when we got to Kenya, we found that the earlier intake of Field Staff involving Dr. Ronald Mwale and his wife still had three (3) months left of their training so we couldn't immediately occupy our residence at the GCT facility, therefore the Training Center found us excellent accommodation at the Millennium Apartments in South B. The Place was exquisite and fun to be at. We used to commute to and from the Apartments to the Center via a van (mini bus) from the Center. It was after the earlier Staff graduated six months into our training that we settled into the Center's

accommodations for the remainder of the six (6) of our training.

Sometime while at the Training Center, we embarked on a Week's training in a place where the Director of the Center hailed from in Kathaka. We dubbed it "Kathaka Mission." It was a week of training Churches in Evangelism and Discipleship, sharing their faith using the 4 Spiritual Laws Booklet, and open Air crusade using the "Jesus Film" in Kiswahili. Where there we also did door-to-door evangelism. We stayed in Tents. It was an eventful occasion and spiritually refreshing.

We won so many people to the Gospel and also exposed many countless ones to the claims of Christ. At the end of our short term Missions' stint lasting a week, the in-laws to the Director feted us *nyama ya mbuzi* (roasted goat meat). They slaughtered the goat and allowed us to individually barbeque it. It was after that we departed for Nairobi. Graduation finally came, it was a colorful occasion. We were 5 Trainee students in total a couple from Suriname (Marjorie and Wendell Hasselbaink and their daughter Shanique), Philomena from Tanzania, myself and Cecilia Mwanza both from Zambia. That's why I use the pronoun "we" because of Cecilia.

During my nine-month stay in Kenya, I also was attached to the sports ministry of Life Ministry. Under that ministry, Bernard Rodi was my trainer. We helped to launch Athletes-in-Action in Kenya along with the team from South Africa who came to train us in Sports ministry. We learn how to integrate sports ministry into a soul winning program for sportsmen and women. Through this sports ministry I, Charles Shula and Chris Musonda (current National Director for CCC-Zambia) traveled to the AFCON tournament held in Bamako, Mali. I was the program Director of Athletes-in-Action then working with my two

colleagues.

The guest speaker, Danny Lynch, came all the way from the Southern and Eastern Area of Affairs (SEA) office in Zimbabwe to grace our graduation ceremony. The graduation was held at Africa Leadership and Management Academy (ALMA) Campus in Nairobi owned by Campus Crusade for Christ International. Suffice to mention that Erick Wafukho¹⁷ the National Director was also present including our GCT Director Mr. Steve Sandagi and all our Trainers that's David Sonye, Beryl Aidi, Bernard Rodi and Steve Sandagi's wife.

Myself and the colleagues I mentioned, five in all, were awarded certificates for attending GCT in our SEA area of affairs which is acknowledged in all Campus Crusade for Christ branches worldwide.

After our graduation, we flew back to Zambia aboard Ethiopian Airlines. Upon arrival, I was seconded to Campus Ministry and Athletes-in-Action. I worked with the organization from 2001-2005.

I must make mention that I married my wife Inonge while still with Campus Crusade for Christ in 2002 upon my return from GCT. In January 2006, I joined Bread of Life Church International in Lusaka. After being employed, I was appointed to work in District 3, later District 4, before being appointed on probation for six months as Provincial Pastor (what is now Regional Overseer) for Southern Province.

I was inducted by Rev. Kangwa Mumba¹⁸ at the Livingstone Bread of Life Church branch in January 2006. I served in that Church for only six months.

¹⁷ Eric Wafukho is currently the Chief Administrative Secretary, the National Treasury and Planning of the Republic of Kenya. He was National Director for Campus Crusade for Christ when I trained at GCTC-Nairobi, Kenya.

¹⁸ Rev. Kangwa Mumba has since been designated Bishop awaiting actual ordination and confirmation in August at the Word Explosion Conference 2022.

Planting of Bread of Life Church International,
Monze Branch.

I was then transferred to Monze with a view to planting a new branch of the Church. We planted the Church in August 2006. Our first service was held at Sunset Lodge, a place where the Church held service until 2016 when we relocated to our Church plot along Mazabuka/Livingstone Road. While here, we purchased land for the Church, raised elders, deacons, Ministry leaders and the youth. We also planted a satellite branch in Gwembe through a week's crusade where we traveled with the entire congregation. After a week of ministry, we appointed elder Nawa to run the work for some time. To avoid rentals, we also built a temporary structure where the Church currently meets for services.

The then Regional Overseer for Southern Province, Rev. Bambe Makiseni, appointed me to oversee the newly planted branch at Pemba that was under the leadership of late Pastor Dennis Mweene. Pastor Mweene was brought into Bread of Life Church as a pastor through my recommendation. I and Bishop designate Bambe Makiseni vouched for pastor Mweene to be brought into the pastoral ministry while he was still an ordinary member at the Mazabuka branch of the Church under Pastor William Kumwenda.

Pastor Mweene and his family finally relocated to Pemba a town along the Mazabuka-Livingstone Highway. I helped him with the running of the branch church though he eventually left the branch after experiencing myriad challenges he couldn't manage. He finally left Pemba to settle in Choma under the leadership and care of Pastor Edson Katete. Pastor took him into his confidence and oversight. He mentored him and even sent him on a reconnaissance mission trip to Namwala with a view for him

to settle there and plant a Bread of Life Church branch. Unfortunately this never happened as Pastor Dennis Mweene went to be with the Lord sometime in 2015. I did conduct his funeral rites at the Mazabuka cemetery in Southern Province of Zambia.

During my tenure as Resident Pastor, we contributed to the Blessing Center as all branches did and participated in all annual conferences like 3DP, Easter conferences, Word Explosion conferences. We also took delegates to all these conferences and met our quota in terms of obligations. I have been a dutiful son in Bread of Life Church International. It has been a great honor to have been given the rare opportunity to have served God under the leadership of Bishop Joe Imakando. I was also granted, by government gazette, to solemnize marriages in 2006 as well as ordained to the office of Pastor by Bishop Joe Imakando and the Ordaining Council at a solemn ordination service at the Blessing Center on August 30th, 2015.

During our eleven-years unflinching services in the pastoral ministry, we saw many people join Bread of life Church International from other churches within Monze and some who were non-Christians convert to faith in Christ. Many lives have been transformed through the powerful and anointed messages of me as the servant of God.

I flow in the grace of transformation, prosperity and the prophetic. When I say the prophetic, I don't necessarily mean the one where I spend the entire time picking up on people on tiny bits of personal information already known to the individual. I mean a powerful rendition of the Word of God with divine revelations that catapult people into their God-intended destinies. I remember the way we found some of our prospective members who eventually became some of my ardent elders. Some were mere eking out an average

existence before we came. After eleven years, most now have several houses with some on rent, some operate international corporations like Sydney Muyamba who runs an international engineering company called Manjanzi Engineering Company under MEF Group of Companies INC. Some are medical doctors, two to be precise. One is still my member at Dominion Chapel International.

I am sure some might ask: What's the big deal about two medical doctors? In a large church two doctors may not mean much. For a small town like Monze where I reside, it is a huge deal especially when you consider the fact that these two were clinical officers when they joined our church then. They aspired for much more because we used to stress the need to elevate one's education and excellence. These brethren latched on the messages and went for higher tertiary education in Lusaka. At the time, they mentioned to me that they would be going for further education to study medicine it looked far-fetched but fast forward to 2022, they have since graduated from the university and are deployed in our hospitals in Zambia serving the citizens. Hallelujah to God.

Others are running their own private schools of great repute here in Monze. From a small derelict school with one classroom to a large school with several buildings and a wall fence, installed borehole, many teachers and pupils is simply a colossal achievement for Bertha School. I used to pray for this school in its formative stages. The proprietor of the school is the mother to one of my former elders. As a consequence of the phenomenal increase in pupil enrolments at Berthas' School, in appreciation, the School board granted my three children a fully sponsored scholarship for them to learn at Berthas' private school from Grade 5 to 7 for Sepho, from Grade 4 to 7 for Zoe, and from nursery to Grade 5 for Naleli.

We are eternally grateful to the school management for such generosity granted to our children. Such are the great exploits we saw while serving in the pastorate in Monze.

Turning to the ministries of healing and deliverance, a lady once had an ectopic pregnancy after undergoing an operation, she was told she could never have babies. She and her husband came to my office hysterical beseeching my most Ernest prayers. We shared the word and then prayed. After a while, she came back and told me she was expecting a baby. We praised the lord and began waiting for her to finally deliver. She delivered a bouncy baby girl. Suffice to mention that the couple have since had two other children bringing the total to three children. Praise God.

Many and myriad sons and daughters have been raised over the span of eleven years at the pastorate. Some are still in Monze while others are dotted around the country doing various works in the private sector, public sector and ministry. Some have even gone abroad doing an assortment of things. You see, in ministry not everyone you have touched, shaped and sharpened through your ministry is meant to stay with you perpetually. God will move some after six months to a year, other may stay on until God moves them along to do other things. What matters is that they are your sons whom you impacted, wherever they go, they carry your legacy and are your arrows sent into the future to hit bull's eye. It's myopic to expect everyone to stay rooted to you. People belong to God not men. God is the one who decide where He sends His people at a given time.

I left my pastorate in Monze in April 2017 after serving and joining as a member of the Church from June 26th, 1991.

We have made the transition into another ministry—Dominion Chapel, another one of the Lord's folds to shelter His weary lambs and sheep. We are still in the Lord's vineyard and are blood-covenant brothers despite the myriad

labels we might have. The same blood that redeemed them is the very one that has done so to us. We are on the same time, scoring hopefully in the same net.

EPILOGUE

Pharisaical Spirit v Spiritual Men

I have been walking with the Lord now for 31 years, that's three whole decades of solid devotion and commitment. I have, unfortunately, made the discovery that there are two types of people in the Church, in fact, throughout written history as it pertains to the things of God.

There is a stark dichotomy between Sarah and Hagar, Isaac and Ishmael, Israel and Edom or Seir, Jesus and the Pharisees. This age-old battle sets the bounds of a rivalry so fierce only the consummation of time will lapse it. In my experience, when naïve, a young believer thinks everyone is elated that they are on fire for the Lord. The old guard in the meantime are always plotting like the Pharisees of old on how to catch Jesus on the wrong foot and milk the situation.

There are people who are very incensed when God is using you. One is prone to asking why? People who are stuck in life and ministry dislike seeing others on the other hand enjoying ministry and reaping the fruit thereof. These sadists plot, scheme, set up entrapments like those jealous and envious fellows who were out for Daniel's blood but failed. Such fellows are losers who get a kick at someone's misfortune.

I have seen this pharisaical spirit spawned in Pentecostal Churches of all hues where it actively works against someone's rise by speaking awful things against them to the hierarchy in order that such an individual should never see the light of day. What a lifeless endeavor!

Such people make no discernible or appreciable progress

in their spiritually stale lives so their obsession and preoccupation is pouring scorn on those the Lord is using or raising.

This dichotomy has destroyed many upcoming ministers due to fraught egos of those who are intent on maintaining relevance beyond their time at the expense of those the Lord is raising. Apparently the Lord's Army is the only one known to actively gun down its wounded comrades. Our army is renowned for stabbing its fellow comrades-in-arms in the back while whispering sheepishly, 'I love you brother.' Our mad-slinging, maddening jealousy for those gifted in areas we aren't rather than being seen as complimentary to the army's cause and a strategic proposition, is seen as a threat to be ruthlessly snuffed out.

Many slain and bleeding soldiers of the Cross lie helplessly in desperate need of medical evacuation but those who could help are hell-bent on preserving their claimed seat at the high table. When will people gain comfort in knowing that God gave them what He deemed adequate to take them through life's journey without casting covetous glimpses at their neighbor? Why covet thy brother's coat of many colors, when ye have thine own? Why despise thine own coat while thou casts an envious eye upon thy brethren's coat?

Beloved the things written for us in the Bible including stories of the Old Testament are there for our example that we might learn from them. Imagine the callous brethren of Joseph even contemplated killing their own blood brother? How many in the Church do the same thing to their brother? How many of us have martyr's blood on our sanctimonious hands? Always remember that the brother we loath so profusely could be our "Joseph in Egypt" there to save posterity?

Moses the one inspired by the Holy Spirit gives us an insight into the underlying causes behind such hatred the

brethren had for their younger sibling— his dreams. There we have it. Martin Luther King Jr. was assassinated by a sniper's bullet for his dream to see the White and his Black counterparts live together in harmony as God's children and never prejudice one against the other on the basis of color but rather give equal opportunity on the basis of the content of one's character.

The brethren as they did then to poor Joseph, was to sell their siblings for 30 pieces of silver due to envy of the lad's dreams. This happens even today.

God has gifted our 'Josephs' to save our posterity, will we have the temerity of spirit to let them rise before we abruptly snuff out their lantern? Will we admit that we commit such arbitrary acts of desperation against our brothers because we let our fraught and tangled emotions of hate get the better of us?

Our army needs to grow the fruit of love. Many who profess to be brethren, need to grow that fruit, and allow our nascent luminaries sent to us by divinity shine their brand of light and scatter the darkness from our world bereft of love. Love is the antidote to hatred, bigotry, misogyny, tribalism, racism, regionalism, jealousy, envy, pride and arrogance. Let the love of Christ embolden our resolve to embrace each other cordially through the cords of brotherhood.

We have seen so much loose, worsening conspiracies against our own blood brothers. Brothers on the same pew aren't speaking to each other but pretend to do so when the preacher says, "talk to your neighbor and say?" Husbands and wives who aren't sleeping on the same bed, choreograph a smile and hug each other in the holy Sanctums when truth is they can no longer stand one another away from peering eyes of the Ecclesia! (Greek; *Ekklesia* means Church implying those the Lord has personally called out of the world unto Himself).

Clergy who aren't speaking peaceably to one another but happen to be at the same conference as Guest speakers, sheepishly hug one another mimicking love when truth is they are cowards play acting at love.

Sibling rivalry in some churches is fervor pitch, truce makers must readily intervene lest blows be unleashed among brethren. Let the peace of Christ undergird our actions towards one another in the Body of Christ.

As Joseph recognized his brethren, he braced himself for an uncomfortable reunion. He broke the ice, finally after holding back the tears, for he remembered their callousness, indifference to his horrified cries all those elongated years, as they hurled him out of the slimy pit only to hand him over to marauding Ishmaelite's!

His teary eyes and innocent face smacked by their collective hatred couldn't restrain their murderous intent. He finally disclosed who he was, their brother whom they had sold nonchalantly all those years thence to strangers without a thought of what would become of him? That was hatred at its highest expression! Joseph in Christ-like persona, forgave them wholeheartedly and embraced them for God's sake. Their reunion was complete, the family feud was over, family ties reignited and bonds of love restored. That is the Christian way, the love way, the restorer's way, the Pilgrim's way of mimicking our Blessed God and Savior Jesus Christ.

God has given to each one of us what He thought in His All-surpassing wisdom, was sufficient to propel us safely to His desired shores for us. Alas, most of us like a little boy satisfied with his toy until he sees his friend's, ungratefully throws bewildering tantrums to claim his friend's toy.

What went wrong with the toy he was so ecstatic about just moments before he saw his friend's? Greed and ingratitude is what's wrong. There's nothing wrong with his joy to begin with! What's driving him to claim his friend's

toy is ingratitude for what he has. Let's all learn to be comfortable with what divinity has graciously bestowed upon our lives. Most of us, have plenty to be grateful for, our problems lays further than we'd love to admit. We take our blessings for granted! Ingrates are hard to please; their need isn't to be met by material things but by spiritual things.

The pharisaical spirit is the one that gets threatened when a person is promoted, given applause, when they hear news that the Lord is using you and you have influence. They also don't like it when the set man likes you or talks well of you. They are in the church those who play politics with people's lives and all the while playing dumb or innocent. They even show signs of support when in fact they are Pharisees on the prowl.

This same diabolical pharisaical spirit placed Christ on the Cross. It is an insecure spirit that has no clue who Christ is. It feels as though those who take the lime light are exhibitionists and opportunists who want to take away their influence and power. People whose only preoccupation is to serve the Lord and seek God by following hard after Him, have no time for a power grab or craze. People whose hearts are set on pilgrimage are pure at heart. They keep no grudges; they don't engage in endless chatter about other's failures ignoring their own.

As I make a final touchdown, let me draw your attention to the epic and titanic battle that raged between our Master Jesus Christ and the Pharisees, Sadducees and Teachers of the Law. This rivalry was brought on by the insatiable appetite for power, prestige and attention by the Pharisees. This epic battle depicts typically what happens in most Churches where a silent war for dominance is ensuing unbeknown to those less politically inclined or far removed from where the fault-lines are drawn between the antagonists and protagonists. The rude stares, muffled

overtone of rage and disguised loathing of the opponents gingerly plays out night and day further rupturing peppered over wounds with cosmetic greetings we conjure up in the hallowed sanctums of the Lord. This must cease otherwise; we will lose more than we ever bargained for. In life everyone wins when we win! When we win in order for others to lose, that win is usually short-lived. It is cosmetic and unconvincing.

The Pharisees were the Lord's accusers, prosecutors, jurors and hangmen all rolled in one. Their case against the Messiah got off to a rather bad start. They didn't have enough in their prosecution to pull off a conviction, so they brought trumped up charges to rid themselves as they thought, of the fraudster and impostor once for all! What they never imagined was that Christ would resurrect! You can't put a good man down! Good men always have a way of resurrecting in the wake of those who falsely accuse them.

Truth always triumphs over lies. The establishment's jealousy and envious ranting couldn't be disguised before Pilate. He said he found nothing wrong with Christ and wondered why they had brought Him before him? Pilate saw right through those men's phony excuses for hauling Messiah to the gallows. Being a sly political chauvinist, seeking to preserve his hold on power, he let his better judgment overcome by his excessive desire to be loved by the mob! He lost his nerve and sheepishly yielded to the mob's agitations to have Barabbas instead of Christ. People that rally the unruly mob to crucify the innocent do not sleep peacefully at night knowing they have slain the righteous.

Christ was led to the slaughter house, a lamb with defect and without spot. Be wary when the lambs of the Lord are hauled to the slaughter by the mob. The innocent blood of martyrs speaks of vengeance against the perpetrators and instigators of diabolical acts of aggression against the Lord's

anointed. He will not stand idly while his holy apostles and lambs are cruelly led to the slaughter house. He will surely avenge their death a thousand times. Let us all take heed and stop the bloodletting of the Lord's prophets and Saints. Let us all be our Brothers' keepers.

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