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— MOVING PEOPLE IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION —

# Focusing on the Black Church

By

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(An Assessment of Where We Are)  
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*From the desk of*  
**Bishop Larry H. Jordan, Sr., D.D.**

## PREFACE

If a Caucasian minister spoke out against the erroneous doctrine and stand of the black church with regard to our consistent focus on materialism, then he would be condemned and called prejudice. So as an African American Pastor I have been inspired to address the issues of the black church. I am commissioned to speak the truth and help bring forth change concerning the role of the black church with regard to material wealth, civic associations, social responsibility, and the mentoring and molding of our teenage population. I'll be one of the catalysts to organize platforms where propaganda is discarded and concrete resolution to our issues is conceived and followed through to better our understanding, our purpose, and roles in our communities.

As I define my point of view, I am not saying all black churches are off focus and the simple mission of salvation is being lost. However, there are too many black churches where greed has established a false doctrine and strong following. Our forefathers did not come out of slavery by seeking money from God, but by prayer and seeking deliverance from God. Every opportunity blacks had to attend church they sought God for deliverance from slavery and injustice. African Americans and the Jewish race have the same history of how through seeking God for deliverance through prayer, the bondage of slavery was removed. Today the black church must go back to

its history of experiencing God's power of deliverance at times of worship. We understand Luke 4:18 as a message for a body of people in America. I love this country, and I want to see the black church be responsible in building the black communities with a message of deliverance, salvation of God, redemption, and responsibility. We have a great history with God about faith to overcome adversity. I'm just a voice trying to reach out to my people for the Kingdom of God to improve a culture for the United States of America.

*What happened in December 2005*

*Materialism*

I do not condemn prosperity or anyone who seeks to be prosperous, but I do speak out against teaching people how to covet in life. The focus of the black church is not on the challenges of the community in which it is supposed to be serving. The black church has too much of its membership labeled as recycled Christians. These types of Christians focus their attention on attending conferences, seminars, and camp meetings whose primary agendas deal with "how to obtain wealth" with little or no emphasis on revivals to bring forth salvation to address sin and the immorality that plague our lives and those we love. The black church focuses too much on teaching people how to obtain expensive cars, homes, jewelry, and designer clothing. We have been indoctrinated to believe that our possession of these items, or the like, defines us as blessed or favored of God. I am not opposed to wanting or having things that are nice and of quality, but I am opposed to the preaching of doctrine that makes anyone who is unable to obtain these items as one of little faith, or lesser value. When doctrine is taught that one should live to obtain these things to be defined as one who has an abundance of faith, the elite is being created and no focus is on the elect of faith.

The world has motivational speakers, but the church is supposed to have inspirational speakers that motivate you to want to be saved and live a life of sanctification. If an African American has ambitions to become an entrepreneur, then why would he attend faith conferences? Instead, his time and attention would be better served in forums where experienced businessmen with education, enterprise and

economical backgrounds can deposit principles for success in entrepreneurship. It would be in his best interest to receive information from successful, established businessmen already affiliated with Corporate America concerning business trends and plans, not some hyper-illusionary faith, self wonder-working pastor who has little knowledge or experience, just faith with very few works. Entrepreneurs have faith, what they need is a business plan of action and organizational structure.

*Social Responsibility*

Some African Americans are disillusioned and lack understanding with regard to where we are in society, education, healthcare initiatives, crime, economics, politics, employment, and housing. We have lost a generation of African American teens whose lives are plagued by broken homes, absentee fathers and poverty. Society labels them as "no good" while the black church preaches about cars, money, luxury homes and abundant lifestyles. Our teens are not prepared for the future, and some have no hope for having a successful future. Their plans are the immediate and the now. Too many black churches keep teens in the past, dancing for entertainment and recreation instead of preparing them with instructions on proper attire for employment interviews, good moral ethics, and how to build in America as opposed to just receiving and being received.

A great number of black churches do not focus on education, the cost of living, the skyrocketing cost of housing or real estate, and construction development. They are most certainly not focused on regentrification that pushes minorities out of their communities because of soaring housing costs and property taxes. When pastors of the black church would rather teach fabrications and show African Americans that

altering their lifestyle to pursue material gain is the way out, it does not change anything. When a pastor has taken the truth of God's word and created catchy phrases and cliches that inspire one to give to support their lifestyle and not towards changing the community, then what is the purpose of the church? The idealism of reaping to help build a spiritual atmosphere is not real for the community. Pastors are called to serve the people, to nurture parishioners and to instruct them in the rudiments of society. An article in the Washington Post enlightened readers as to how advertisers are now embracing the purchasing power of the African American community and its churches. According to the Washington Post (2005) several corporations co-sponsored Mega Fest, a conference hosted by Bishop T. D. Jakes, pastor of a Dallas mega-church with a membership of approximately 30,000. Ford Motor Corp. displayed vehicles during the event, which drew 200,000 attendees. Corporate sponsors which also included Bank of America Corp., American Airlines Corp., and Coca-Cola Inc. contributed tens of millions of dollars in return for the right to hold seminars and display products. (Section A, Start Page A.01) Now where would such financial resources of that magnitude be best utilized, but in the community in which T.D. Jakes' ministry is located. What I noticed from these major corporations, Ford Motor Co., Bank of America, American Airlines and Coca Cola; was how they could economically tap into the African American attendees of Mega-fest. African Americans and the black churches are predominantly the attendees of this function and these companies studied how they could market their products using the proven and well documented spending habits of African American consumers. No matter how you look at this scenario you have to clearly see that what was

envisioned as a spiritual conference for Christians has now become a commercial venture.

It would be great if the aforementioned corporations would spend some time and effort creating agendas that focus on the black churches that may solicit them for financial contributions as a 501(c)(3) Corporation to improve the care of senior citizens, education, housing, or any type of rehabilitative program in our neighboring communities. Instead, we're sent rejection letters stating that monetary contributions or donations are not disseminated to churches. But I find it interesting that they show up at a predominantly African American attended, black church hosted function such as Mega-fest, advertising, promoting, and offering seminars about their merchandise and named as co-sponsors. The black church is denied their resources to help build our communities when asked directly, but indirectly they'll support a black conference, if we'll cut them a piece of the proverbial pie. They want access to our purchasing power, and it appears that they have received it.

Every year thousands of individuals attend these types of conventions to be spiritually enlightened, equipped and inspired to live better lives in the sight of God while corporate deals are being struck to make money off of their good intentions. While believers are attempting to become profitable to the Kingdom of God, major corporations have found us profitable to them. We are merely consumers, a market in which the bigger, wealthier corporations have now found useful to achieve their financial goals. All we wanted was more of God and what we've been inundated with are products, sales pitches and schemes to get us to buy merchandise. According to the article, African Americans spent \$723 billion in the year 2004, so Mega-fest posed as a



way to tap into the possibilities of our spending for 2005. Pour millions of dollars into Mega-fest for the right to display products and hold seminars; it's a great marketing strategy. Ford Motor Corporation knows that we need transportation, American Airlines knows that people fly to certain destinations, Coca-Cola products are displayed and purchased throughout the event, and all of your banking needs can be discussed with representatives of Bank of America. The black church brings in millions of dollars every year to Bank of America, but when we need a loan to purchase property to build a church, we are met with such opposition. Why doesn't Coca-Cola focus on contributing to educational and recreational programs to be structured by the black churches that really need their resources in our communities? The only reason the corporations have focused on TD Jakes' yearly event and co-sponsored it is because he is able to draw thousands of people into one place at one time and it's a marketing dream. Souls have been reduced to some corporations' vision of revenue and a bottom line. Tens of millions of dollars were given in support of this one event from major corporations. Why wasn't more time spent with sponsorship strategy for black churches that have a heartfelt interest in improving their community? Why can't these corporations have forums for black churches to attend so that our building programs can be viewed, and what some smaller black churches are attempting to accomplish? We are trying to build and organize to improve our culture and to make a financial contribution to our communities. Why focus on a one year event of a church that is clearly already established and doesn't really need their financial resources? Mega-fest has now become a commercialized event with Bishop T. D. Jakes receiving a big check from his corporate sponsors.

I'm encouraged that Bishop T. D. Jakes has the business savvy and intelligence to delve into Corporate America as an African American Pastor and he has done a great work in Dallas, Texas. However, I have a problem in that innocent Christians are not made privy to the fact that it is not all about their spiritual growth, but their money as well. When are we as a black church going to wake up and see that God doesn't exploit people? Our focus as Pastors has got to be shifted from ourselves back to our people and where we are as a culture.

*Resolution*

When will black churches create forums to instruct seasoned pastors and our younger pastors to focus on the African American community as a whole?

I recall on November 30, 2005, a councilman invited 300 Pastors to a prayer breakfast and only about 25 actually accepted the invitation. There was no pastoral representation from any of the "Mega Churches" in this area. There was no unity to meet and discuss how Pastors could help make a difference. Prince George's County, Maryland is known as the wealthiest black county in the nation and only the smaller churches had an interest in the forum to improve the communities of which they serve.

Pastors in Prince George's County need to focus more on the community as a unified front. Pastors, if they are willing and concerned enough should meet collectively with elected officials to discuss reform and any political agendas that effect their communities. There is a need for these types of forums. The needs of the family, in all aspects of it, need to be addressed along with finding ways to eradicate crime. We have got to place our attention on building the community through civic associations,

town meetings that are inclusive of our elected officials who are privy to a great deal of the problems occurring in our communities.

I am but one voice crying out in the wilderness, but I will not stop until we impact change in this county and our great nation. When we seek to save someone else, we are in turn helping ourselves. The black church has got to acknowledge the error of its ways and right the wrongs before it is everlasting too late.

*December 2010*

*Message to the Church*

The book of Revelation reveals what the world will face for the end of Satan's rule. In this great book of prophecy, the Lord Jesus Christ speaks to seven churches to endure until the end. These seven churches are a point of reference as to how churches of today are evaluated for works, conduct, and character to be judged as to where a church stands with God. If most pastors today would evaluate their church based on the work, conduct and character of the seven churches, leadership and membership would be at a greater level of righteousness before God. Remember in the first three chapters of Revelation, out of seven churches only two were received without having to repent. Smyrna and Philadelphia were the only two churches received by Jesus Christ as faithful and strong spiritually to serve Him. As Christians, it is important to review these seven churches to see where we are in fellowship and obedience unto God.

One of the reasons today's church has become so dead is because of the prosperity message of wealth. The prosperity message has massacred Christians from growing in the knowledge of God. When the pastor and their partnering ministers only preach about money, they do not know anything about the Bible to bring forth truth, so how can you preach about something you do not know? If you do not have any bible knowledge it is impossible to preach the gospel of Christ. This is when saints become massacred by the preacher. Hundreds of thousands of saints are dead spiritually because of false doctrine. The avaricious minister will never preach Jesus Christ. Just listen to them when they preach! The Lord that saved them, called them, gave them a

ministry, and the promise of His Holy Spirit and they never mention His name or use His name when preaching, as though the Lord's gospel doesn't count. The avaricious minister gives more credit to Abraham and his wealth for life more than Jesus who gave His life as a ransom for salvation and eternal life. If you read Acts 8:5-25 you will see a direct correlation between the avaricious and spurious ministers of today and Simon the sorcerer of yesterday. What's sad is that ignorance causes people from the least to the greatest to think these preachers are great men with the power of God just as the people of Samaria thought Simon the sorcerer was great. Avaricious ministers lie about their ministry, customizing scriptures to alter people's minds to control them with the hope of wealth. Their false ministry of wealth has replaced the anointing of the Holy Spirit. They teach people to buy the anointing of God. Simon the sorcerer had to learn from Peter that 1 Timothy 6:9-10 was his real focus with an evil heart to control the people of Samaria. Peter refused to be a hireling (John 10:12-13) to only work for pay. Peter rebuked Simon, refused his money and refused to be a part of his avaricious mentality. Pastors are hirelings when they partner with spurious ministers that massacre saints that are financially and spiritually poor. Pastors are hirelings when they practice sorcery through false doctrine, modifying scripture to manipulate people into giving. This is witchcraft. Righteous ministers must focus on sound doctrine to expose the rapacious acts and testimony of lies spoken by these spurious ministers.

Mostly black and white ministers that preach the prosperity only message channel in on the communities of African American churches or the black church. This is primarily where the avaricious ministers usually find their prey. Needy blacks that want materialism will readily accept these kinds of ministers. How quick some black

people forget they are viewed by other races around the world as the biggest consumers. That's right! Blacks are known to spend money. The avaricious minister knows this too, so they set up schemes around materialism to get black Christians to give money. They make it their business to modify scriptures to create their "merchandise for profit"- **false doctrine**. Blacks are used to spending money rather than saving. The avaricious ministers know this, so if you go to a church or conference where they preach about money, cars, homes, and luxurious lifestyles you give because these are the things you want in return. It is in these forums God is preached to obtain merchandise and not salvation. Too much time is spent on teaching the black church to use their faith and sowing seed (*a term for giving money*) to bring forth materialism. With this movement so strong in the body of Christ, the black church does not focus enough on bible prophecy to comprehend the times in which we are living.

It is my agenda to address the black church and the body of Christ to grow spiritually in preparation for what has been prophetically written in the Bible. Read Romans 16:25-27 to see the importance of prophetic scriptures. If the oracles of God are not preached in the church according to what Jesus said, then how can you learn the truth as Christians? Aren't we supposed to be followers of Christ? Shouldn't Jesus and His teachings be our focus? Read John 7:17. The doctrine of Christ is what is important. Most black churches where I am invited to minister are not prepared for me as a minister of the gospel of Jesus Christ. They are not used to Christ being preached, but doctrines of men. Bible prophecy and the revelation knowledge of Christ is so void in the church. It is a shame that the gospel of Jesus Christ has been watered down to materialism and so many do not want to hear the truth about sin. It is sad that the book

of Revelation is hardly read, explained, or acknowledged. This is one subject the avaricious and spurious minister will not touch. They can't because they have no knowledge of the book; apostasy does this to preachers. Preachers can become apostates by renouncing the gospel and ministry of Jesus Christ. These types of ministers really do not have faith in God. They do not even have faith to ask God for wisdom according to James 1:5 to explain the book of Revelation. Seriously, the avaricious and spurious ministers do not really know the Bible, just modified scriptures they pull from the Bible to meet their cause. It's time to be taught the word of God and to know about the Kingdom His saints are going to enter. You will never obtain knowledge if you are one of those Christians who follows the avaricious and spurious ministers. These types of ministers teach their congregants that I'm a hater, jealous, envious, have a mentality of poverty, I'm self-righteous, do not believe in prosperity or that I'm broke with a small church. Even though I'm none of those things, I endure these accusations to reach the body of Christ preaching and teaching the gospel to bring a balanced message for spiritual growth. The reason why I brought this message to your attention is because as a Bishop and Senior Pastor of a church it is important to build the church to hear the true word of God. People come to church to hear a message from God and the only way to define the voice of Jesus Christ is through bible prophecy.

What did Jesus say in order for us to enter His Kingdom? What did Jesus say in the bible for us to follow and not some made up false doctrine by man? My concern is that membership of the African American churches are not growing in the knowledge of God. The church must get back to Luke 4:18-19, Matthew 5:1-12 and understand Luke

8:11-15. These scriptures reveal the truth about the anointing for ministry, the blessings of God, and the four types of people that come to church to receive the word of God. Matthew 13:18-23, Mark 4:14-20, and Luke 8:11-15 describe four types of people that will always be a part of the church. It does not matter what position they hold these four types of people will be amongst us as Christians in the body of Christ. They will be pastors, evangelists, teachers, members, helps of service, administrators and the list goes on. The parable of the Sower is one of the best definitions of character that people will present in the church. When the seed (the word of God) is sown, how is it being received for spiritual growth? I have seen so much indifference, unbelief, instability, worldliness, disobedience, unfruitfulness, and unrighteousness amongst Christians about the word of truth. There are too many Christians in the church that are not good ground for the seed (the word of God) for growth. If pastors and leaders in the black church would embrace the parable of the Sower for guidance, the black church would seriously impact the body of Christ.

My concerns for the African American church and how blacks grow in God can be likened to the way Apostle Paul had a concern about Israel and the Israelites referenced in Romans 9:1-5. Apostle Paul's heart focused on his Jewish race and nation as a people called by God. He had much sorrow and grief because of their lack of spirituality and disobedience towards God. I feel the same way about African American churches and how blacks must stop focusing on the abundance of materialism. The black churches of America must stop listening to avaricious minister's "*get rich*" schemes. They are causing African Americans to become ignorant and unbalanced with regards to serving God. Their lies about faith and money are an



embarrassment before God. Be a smart Christian and do not yield your spirit to all this wealth rhetoric. Christians that do not read the bible and study to grow to know the Holy Spirit will always be deceived and ignorant concerning the truth. Too many congregants are deceived when it comes to money. The recalcitrant attitude must stop among blacks when it comes to God's structure for the church. Do not go to just any conference, seminar, or church because it is a mega-church, and the pastor is a renowned televangelist. Most of the time, these are your avaricious and spurious ministers. Look at the statistics for scandal and corruption as to who is in the news. The majority of the time it's your televangelist with the mega church. Blacks look to these types of people too much instead of God. 1 Timothy 6:3-10 is the truth for all Christians who want to be intelligent. What you listen to is what you become. As a Christian do you believe what God's word says according to 2 Timothy 3:1-2? In the last days men will be lovers of themselves and money. Are you going to listen to God or the avaricious minister? They love money and want it at any cost to take advantage of ignorant blacks. This is why the black church is not aware of Revelation Chapter 13 nor about a global economy. They are not allowing God to prepare them for a lack of jobs and money in our economy. Instead, blacks are told to use their faith to keep giving their money, so the avaricious and spurious minister can live their lifestyle off of the church. The church is their means of wealth, not God. How money is spent in the church must become a priority among blacks. The tax-exempt status under section 501(C) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code is in jeopardy because of the rapaciousness of ministers within the faith-based community. There are a lot of good pastors out there that balance their congregation with the gospel of Jesus Christ. There are pastors who

oversee their perspective ministries to fulfill the Kingdom of God. Not all black pastors and their churches are bad. There are intelligent pastors who prepare their congregation according to bible prophecy and are living right. There are leaders in the body of Christ that will not associate with corrupt renowned televangelists because they are not in ministry for fame and money. What Christians must do is seek God and allow Him to lead them to the right church. All members of a church do not go to church for the right reason. Therefore, the leadership of the church must represent God for who He is and what He said. We must build ministry according to the times of bible prophecy. There is only one God, one Son, Jesus Christ, and one Holy Spirit. It is your responsibility to grow spiritually to know them. Apostle Paul summed it up for the church in Acts 20:27-35. It is for you to understand the meaning of church. I have expressed the condition of the black church in 2005 and what has transpired through 2010. We will have to see what the future holds for the black church. Will we be more influential for spiritual growth for the body of Christ or still viewed as big money spenders and materialistic?

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