

*Apostle Michael Orokpo*



# **DOCTRINE OF THE CHURCH**

## **PART. 1**

*(Origin And Structure)*

*Transcribed and Published by [Livingsermons.com](http://Livingsermons.com)*

# Doctrine Of The Church Part. 1

*(Origin and Structure)*

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**By Apostle Michael Orokpo**

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# Foreword

*The Church is one of the most spoken about realities in Christianity, yet it remains one of the most misunderstood. To many, it is merely a gathering place, a denomination, or an organisation. But in this powerful teaching, the deeper dimensions of the Church are unveiled with striking clarity.*

*This book presents a rich and layered understanding of the Church as God intended it: first as a living organism, sustained by the life of Christ; secondly as an institution, governed by divine order, ordinances, and structure; and finally as the universal body of Christ, transcending denominations, territories, and generations.*

*The insights captured in these pages will challenge many assumptions. They will call believers back to spiritual maturity, to honour for divine structures, and to a greater appreciation of the global body of Christ. Beyond doctrine, this teaching presses the reader into practical alignment—showing that life, order, and submission are not optional in the Kingdom; they are foundational.*

*It is our prayer that as you journey through this book, your understanding of the Church will be expanded, your heart will be aligned with God's order, and your place within the body of Christ will become clearer than ever before.*

*The Church is alive.*

*The Church is ordered.*

*The Church is universal.*

*And the Church belongs to Christ.*

*May this truth shape your walk and strengthen your service in the Kingdom.*

**— Wisdom Epsi**

**Chief Editor, LivingSermons.com**

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## *Publisher's Note*

This book is a faithful transcript of a live sermon delivered by the preacher under the inspiration and unction of the Holy Spirit. Every effort has been made to preserve the preacher's exact words, tone, flow, and spiritual authority, while carefully proofreading and formatting the message into a clear and readable ebook format.

The message you are about to read was originally ministered in a live congregational setting. As such, it carries the weight, urgency, and atmosphere of that sacred gathering. Minor grammatical and structural adjustments have been made solely to enhance readability, without altering the substance, intent, or power of the original delivery.

Watch the live sermon from which this message was transcribed on YouTube at the [\*\*Apostle Michael Orokpo Official Channel\*\*](#)

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— *Livingsermons.com*

*A Spirit-led Publishing Stewardship*

# ***Main Message***

*Begins Here*



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## *Introduction*

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This evening, I want to begin a teaching series that I will be taking for maybe three weeks—every Tuesday for the next three weeks—just to help give us understanding and perspective because of the significance of this subject matter.

Some of us were born into it. Some of us have engaged in it all our lives. But it is always important for us to have accurate understanding. That is why I want to do a bit of teaching on this subject.

Many years ago, based on my study as a scientist, I came to a conclusion that assumption is the lowest level of knowledge. Anything you have based on assumption—the moment it is challenged—your conviction will fail you.

So I made up my mind to always press deeper, to gain accurate understanding of things so that I can know their veracity and also apply them to make existential impact. There is no value in merely being excited about realities that cannot make a difference when there is a need for proof.

Unfortunately, there are many believers who are excited about many things they cannot prove and that cannot impact their everyday lives. And it is fascinating that they are so hopeful about eternity when they cannot prove the veracity of those realities in time.

That is not the plan of God.

God is not afraid to prove the veracity of the things He affirms. And those realities should be proven to the degree that they impact our everyday lives.

Glory to Jesus.

So I want to teach on the subject of the church—the doctrine of the church, what we call *Ecclesiology*—the study, doctrine, and teaching concerning the church.

Most of us have been in church, some were born in church, and some have engaged with church all our lives, yet we do not truly know what the church is.

This evening, I want to take time to introduce the subject, and then we will build on it for three weeks to see how far the Lord will take us.

We will frame our teaching around some critical components of this subject:

- The identity of the church
- The nature of the church
- The order of the church
- The power of the church
- The purity of the church
- The mission of the church
- The destination of the church

We will conceptualise these things and break them into parts so they can have meaning.

# ***Why Study the Church?***

To begin, I want to justify why this study is necessary. Why is it important to study the subject of the church?

I will advance ten reasons.

## **1. The Church Is Central in God's Eternal Purpose**

One very central reality in God's agenda is the institution called the church.

### **Ephesians 3:10–11 (KJV):**

*"To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God, According to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord:"*

What Paul is saying is that the wisdom of God and the power of God should be demonstrated through the church. By the church manifesting the purpose and wisdom of God, every creation—including principalities and powers—will see, experience, and understand the wisdom, power, and purpose of God.

This is the reason Christ came to birth the church.

God wants to use the church as the theatre for showcasing His wisdom, His power, His glory, and His purpose.

So the church is very important.

That is why we are doing this study.

If you do not understand the church, you cannot understand God's eternal purpose. You cannot participate in God's agenda, and you cannot reflect His power, grace, and glory.

## **2. Christ Died for the Church**

Christ gave Himself to birth the church.

He did not merely come to die to save you. He came to die to save and birth you so that the church could be born.

Glory to God.

### **Ephesians 5:25 (KJV):**

*"Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it;"*

The reason Jesus died was not merely to save you as an individual. He saved many of us, but beyond that, He died so the church could be born.

When He died, was buried, rose again, and ascended into heaven, what emerged was the formation of the church.

Why?

When He died, the price for sin was paid. Therefore, the devil could no longer lay claim on us.

When He was buried, we were separated from the world. The world ceased to be our home.

When He rose from the dead, He gave us eternal life.

When He ascended, He took the position of authority.

The moment these four things were accomplished, the church was born.

This means:

- The church is no longer guilty of sin.
- The devil has no claim over the church.
- The church is separated from the world.
- The church is alive by the life of God.
- The church is God's system of authority on earth.

When Jesus died, was buried, resurrected, and ascended, He was creating an institution that would represent God's interest on the earth.

This is why we study the church.

If Jesus had not ascended, the church would have no authority.

If He had not resurrected, the church would be dead.

If He had not been buried, the church would still be mingled with the world.

If He had not died, the church would remain a puppet of the devil.

### **3. Our Identity Is Rooted in the Church**

Outside the church, we have no identity.

Everything we say we are is possible because there is a framework for it.

I cannot say I am part of Christ if I am not part of the church because the church is the Body of Christ.

**1 Corinthians 12:27 (KJV):**

*"Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular."*

So I find my identity in the church.

That is why I must understand what the church is.

**Ephesians 2:19 (KJV):**

*"Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God;"*

Without the church, I am a stranger and a foreigner.

The reason I am part of Christ and part of the household of God is because of the institution called the church.

## **4. Purpose and Functionality Are Defined in the Church**

My purpose and my functionality are defined within and from the church.

Outside the church, I have no purpose in God.

Outside the church, I have no functionality.

There are things I do in the church that define the meaning of my existence, and there are things I do from the church that also give value to my existence.

This means my purpose and functionality are within the context and allowance of the church.

**Ephesians 4:11–12 (KJV):**

*"And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers;*

*For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ:"*

Whether you are in the fivefold ministry or you are simply a member of the Body, it is within the church and from the church that purpose and functionality are discovered.

Most of us do not know what the church is.

That is why we have no role in the church.

At best, some come because they want miracles or breakthroughs.

But it is deeper than that.

There is a function.

There is a purpose.

You are part of the church because there is a purpose and functionality that the church gives you a platform to express.

## **5. The Church Is the Ground and Pillar of Truth**

The church is the only place where truth can be found.

**1 Timothy 3:15 (KJV):**

*"...the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth."*

There is a difference between fact and truth.

Fact is not truth.

Fact fluctuates based on factors.

Environment can change facts.

Situations can alter facts.

But truth remains constant in every environment and under every situation.

You cannot find truth unless you are exposed to the church and the things that happen in the church.

This is why the world is confused.

They do not know what to do.

They do not even know who they are.

They are moved by trends, modified by civilisation, and manipulated by fallen spirits.

But when you come to the church, you encounter eternal realities.

Truths that transcend time.

Truths that remain even when the world comes to an end.

This is where we can tell you:

- Sin leads to hell.
- Without Jesus, there is no life.
- Life exists beyond biological existence.

There is *bios*.

There is *psuche*.

There is *zoe*.

You cannot find the knowledge of *zoe* in the university.

It is in the church we tell you that absence from the body is presence with the Lord.

When you die, you are not finished.

You transit.

That knowledge is crystallised in the church by the Spirit of Christ.

## **6. God's Power and Glory Are Expressed Through the Church**

God's power and glory are expressed in and through the church.

There is no other institution under heaven authorised to express God's power and glory.

When you become part of the church, you are apportioned the power and glory of God to define you and to be expressed through you by faith.

This is where these possibilities are found.

Most people who do not love the church are hearing the voices of rebellion and offence.

And because of that, they are angry and no longer come to church.

But that is because they do not know the church.

If you truly know the church, nobody will dissuade you from it.

When people leave church out of anger, many times it is because they were part of a religious gathering, but they never truly understood the church.

The church is like a dry-cleaning press.

Some clothes have just arrived; they have not yet been washed and ironed.

You have been washed.

You have been ironed.

And maybe the person handling administration mistakenly places an un-ironed cloth on you.

You do not get angry and leave.

It was in that same dry-cleaning press that you were washed.

And it is there you remain to keep being washed and ironed.

If you go out, your faith can become like clothes that just arrived at the dry cleaner—untreated and vulnerable.

Do not be surprised when you meet people in church who have not yet encountered the reality of the church.

Some are here, but they have not yet known the church. They came in with ideologies, and it is only after they stay awhile that those ideologies begin to change.

If such a person steals your phone, you do not get offended and say, “*What kind of church is this?*”

No.

It is a dry-cleaning house.

Some people even come to church looking for girlfriends.

They hear that this church is filled with young people, so they come looking for fun. They move around pretending to be busy, waiting for one particular person. The moment you walk in, they follow and sit beside you. During prayer, they close their eyes and act spiritual, but they are only trying to impress you.

And when the pastor says, “*Shake somebody by your left and right,*” they seize the opportunity to trigger a conversation.

But hear this:

They can come the way they are. The doors are open.

But the day church truly touches them, they cannot remain the same.

Because the church is the ground and pillar of truth.

This is where the power and glory of God are manifested.

That is why at some point demons begin to cry out. A command is given and things begin to shift, because God is working on them.

That is the church.

They may enter the building, but they may not yet have touched the church. But when they touch the church, they touch power. When they touch the church, they touch glory.

When they touch the church, they touch eternal truth. And it will change them. They cannot remain the same. This is why when I come, although I appreciate the atmosphere, the building, the serenity, the excellence, the elegance, and the grandeur—

Those things are not the church.

They are good because they help remove distractions. But beyond all natural parameters, I must touch the church. I did not come merely to a building. The church meets in the building.

But I must move beyond the building and participate in the church.

Because when I touch the church, I touch power.

I touch glory.

I touch truth.

That is why I came.

Glory to God.

## **7. The Church Is God's Family and Kingdom Community on Earth**

The church is God's family and kingdom community on the earth.

### **Ephesians 3:14–15 (KJV):**

*"For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named."*

Paul tells us that we are part of God's family on earth.

And because of this, we have a connection to heaven.

God is our Father.

The church is God's family and God's community on earth.

### **Hebrews 12:22–23 (KJV):**

*"But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, To the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven..."*

This means we are not alone.

When you become part of the church, you have relatives in Zion.

You are in the company of innumerable angels.

You are in the company of God, the Judge of all.

You are in the company of the spirits of just men made perfect.

This is why the resources and arsenals available to us are beyond counting.

A man who understands the church knows that when under attack, help can come from dimensions unseen.

God can respond.

Angels can intervene.

The spirits of just men made perfect can bring wisdom.

These possibilities are real.

When Jesus stood on the Mount of Transfiguration, Moses and Elijah appeared.

What were they doing?

They were strengthening Him concerning what He would accomplish in Jerusalem.

That means you can draw encouragement from those who have gone ahead.

Church is still active beyond the building.

The gathering may end, but the church continues.

## ***Church Beyond Denomination***

Many people were taught denomination, but not church. We have become too occupied with logos, symbols, and names. But church is deeper than denomination. Church is not about logos.

Church is not about the size of buildings.

Church is not about crowd numbers.

Church is about stature.

**Hebrews 12:23 (KJV):**

*"To the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven..."*

The question is:

Where are you standing?

Where is your congregation standing?

Where is your lampstand?

Ten people with stature can shake a city.

A million people may simply become another statistic.

We are part of a mystical organism.

We are not earthlings.

We walk here as ambassadors.

Our roots are in the Spirit.

That is why nothing can shake us.

We are immortals.

**2 Corinthians 5:8 (KJV):**

*"We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord."*

We do not die.

We translate. Because our reality is locked in another dimension. We need to know who we are.

## **8. Every Believer Has a Ministry**

Why do we need to study the church?

Because we all have a ministry, and ministry only makes sense when aligned with the church.

### **Ephesians 4:11–12 (KJV):**

*"And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers;*

*For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry..."*

Every fivefold minister must align with the church for their ministry to be accurate.

And every believer must be disciplined accurately by the church.

If you are disciplined wrongly, your ministry will be wrong.

There is no way around it.

That is why we must understand the purpose, essence, and meaning of the church.

## **9. Error in the Church Produces Error in Life**

This is where your ideology is formed.

Your understanding of God.

Your understanding of life.

Your understanding of eternity.

That is why you must understand what the church represents.

So that you can filter what comes out of it and test whether it aligns with God's purpose.

If we do not know what the church is, we will adopt anything.

And that is what is happening today.

The church is beginning to look like the world.

We import things from the gutters into the sanctuary.

Worship has become entertainment.

In some places, you can no longer tell the difference between a church and a club.

Modesty has been swallowed up.

People now dress without understanding the sacredness of worship.

If we knew what the church was, we would identify foreign elements immediately.

**Jude 1:3 (KJV):**

*"...that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints."*

This is the heritage of the church.

We contend for *the faith*.

Not trends.

Not culture.

Not worldly adaptations.

# *The Sanctity of Worship*

Worship is sacred.

This is not a concert hall.

This is not a music school.

This is the ground of worship.

We worship through music.

But music itself is not worship.

Do not talk to me about genres.

Do the angels in heaven have genres?

Is that how they worship?

When Solomon dedicated the temple and the priests blew the trumpets, the glory fell.

Men could not stand.

When Ezekiel saw God, he fell as a dead man.

When John saw worship in heaven, the twenty-four elders cast their crowns and fell before Him.

And it is that same God we are worshipping.

There is order in His house.

There is reverence in His presence.

## 10. Eternity Finds Meaning in the Church

The future—eternity itself—has no meaning outside the church.

At the end of time, the civilisation of God is the church.

### **Revelation 19:7 (KJV):**

*"Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready."*

At the end of all things, there will be harmony between the Head and the Body.

The church is not only our present reality.

The church is our eternal destination.

If you do not know the church, you do not know where you are going.

That is why we must study the doctrine of the church.

Many of the things we do now may shock us in eternity when tested by fire.

Paul said our works shall be tried.

Many works will burn like chaff.

That is why we must return to the patterns, ordinances, order, and structure that God established.

We need to come back and study this subject.

Much of what we do today does not outlive the general overseer because it was built on excitement, miracles, or transactional gospel.

But true church is built on eternal patterns.

May I not get to heaven and discover that what God used me to build brought reproach to His name.

This is a holy moment.

When God walks in on us, every gaze must be fixed on the Lion and the Lamb.

When the glory comes, there will be no words left to say.

Only worship.

And when you hear teachings like this, don't begin to nod your head and start counting churches you think are wrong. Our own case is even more perilous. Do you know why? Some of the churches you may be criticising have at least existed for forty years. Some of us started just two years ago, and we are already getting it wrong.

So the hope of even surviving forty years will itself require mercy.

At least some of those churches can still call for early morning prayer and thousands will gather. We who just started yesterday struggle to gather people to pray. At least in some of those churches, people still serve God sincerely. In many places today, people cannot serve unless they are paid. At least some of those churches still evangelise and win souls. Many of us in this generation can barely win souls.

So before you start saying, "*Yes, they are the problem,*" don't deceive yourself. This is God speaking to the Church, so that every one of us will take heed.

Sit down. Let us study.

Sometimes if the burden becomes too heavy, teaching becomes difficult. But it is a burden.

# *The Origin of the Church*

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The Church is not man's invention. The Church is God's idea, God's strategy, and God's programme.

It is:

- **God's idea** because He birthed it.
- **God's strategy** because it is His system of invading the earth through heaven.
- **God's programme** because it is His structure for propagating His agenda on the earth.

In **The Gospel of Matthew 16:18**, Jesus said:

*“And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.”*

Notice—He said, *“I will build My church.”*

Not your church.

Not my church.

His Church.

When Jesus asked His disciples, *“Who do men say that I am?”* they gave different answers. But Peter answered:

*“Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.”*

Jesus replied that flesh and blood had not revealed this to him. Then He said:

*“Upon this rock I will build My church.”*

The Church is built on the revelation of Christ. This means three things:

**a. The Church is Built on Christ**

It is not built on a man.

It is not built on gifts.

It is not built on systems.

If the emphasis is not Jesus, something is already wrong. If you stay in a place for years and have not encountered Jesus, then you must question what you are part of.

**b. The Church Must Have Spirit-Life**

Jesus said:

*“Flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee...”*

This means the Church is a Spirit reality.

It is not philosophy.

It is not human intelligence.

It is not mere strategy.

There can be LED screens, air conditioning, and beautiful organisation—but those are not the essence. After a while, you must touch the Holy Spirit, and the Holy Spirit must begin to influence your life.

Otherwise, it is not the Church Jesus birthed.

### **c. The Church Must Advance the Kingdom**

Jesus said:

*“The gates of hell shall not prevail against it.”*

This means the Church is constantly advancing and disarming the works of darkness. If darkness is not being confronted, something is wrong. So the origin of the Church is:

- **Christ-centred**
- **Spirit-powered**
- **Mission-oriented**

Where you find that civilisation, you are dealing with the Church.

## **2. The Identity of the Church**

The word *church* comes from the Greek word **Ecclesia**. It means *“the called-out ones.”*

We are called out.

Called out of darkness.

Called out of the world.

Called out of corruption.

But there is another root word: **Kyriakon**, which means *belonging to the Lord*. So the Church is not just a people called out. The Church is a people called out **to belong to Jesus**. That changes everything. This is why the world can no longer be your home. You cannot claim to belong to Christ and still find your identity in the world.

Jesus said:

*“I will build My Church.”*

That means He is calling a people out unto Himself.

## **The Church is Not a Building**

This must become your primary understanding. The building is not the Church. The Church meets in a building. If we gather under a tree tomorrow, that gathering is still the Church.

Buildings can be demolished.

But the Church continues.

Buildings have lifespan.

The Church is eternal.

So our glory is not in structures.

Yes, buildings can be beautiful and comfortable. We are not animals. But what we are doing is beyond architecture. We are the called-out ones who belong to Jesus.

## ***The Church as a Living Organism***

The first way to understand the Church is as an organism—a living entity.

In **First Epistle to the Corinthians 12:27**, Paul said:

*“Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular.”*

We are alive. We carry God’s life. We are connected to the realm of God. If we stop interacting organically with God, we begin to lose our essence.

# *Four Dimensions of the Living Church*

## **1. We Are His Body**

His life flows into us. We are organic members of Christ.

That is why we declare life over ourselves.

That is why we say we cannot be sick.

His life powers us.

## **2. We Are His Bride**

This means there is a love relationship between us and Christ.

In **Epistle to the Ephesians 5:25**, Scripture shows the relationship between Christ and the Church as husband and bride.

He loves us.

We submit to Him.

Submission is proof of life.

If you claim to belong to Christ but constantly resist His Word, you do not yet understand your identity.

## **3. We Are His Temple**

He dwells in us.

We are His host.

In **First Epistle to the Corinthians 6:19**, the Bible says:

*“Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost...?”*

Your body is not your own.

You cannot use it carelessly.

This is why Scripture says:

*“Flee fornication.”*

You are carrying God.

Your body belongs to Him.

#### **4. We Are the Household of God**

In **Epistle to the Ephesians 2:19**, Paul said:

*“Ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God.”*

We are one family.

This means:

The person sitting beside you is not your enemy. We are interconnected. Church relationship is deeper than biological relationship because it is eternal. Biological relationships end at death.

Church relationship continues into eternity. We are family in heaven and on earth. This is the mystery of the Church. And this is why we must understand it. There is no relationship in transaction. That is not how it works here.

Here, there must be the communion of the Spirit.

He wants to hear your voice.

He wants to hear your heart.

He wants your presence.

He wants intimacy with you.

When church becomes merely transactional, it loses its meaning. It means the church is no longer alive.

There has to be love.

There has to be affection.

There has to be submission.

And if it no longer matters what we do with our bodies, then it means we do not understand that we host Him.

The Scripture says:

*“Flee fornication.”*

You cannot do anything you want with your body. Your body is His house. You are His host. Your body must therefore be cultured and patterned in a way that can host Him.

And if we are alive, then we must be connected to one another. I cannot claim that both you and I host God, yet remain strangers to one another. The Bible says we are no longer strangers or foreigners. We are part of one household. So the first definition of the church is that it is a **living organism**.

This living organism operates in four dimensions:

- The **Body of Christ**
- The **Bride of Christ**
- The **Temple of Christ**
- The **Household of God**

This is why you are church.

I am church.

We are church.

Whether individually or corporately, we are church.

# *The Church as an Institution*

But it does not stop there. The church is also an **institution**. As an institution, the emphasis shifts from life to:

- Order
- Governance
- Structure
- Doctrine

Because we are corporately united as church, there must be order. There must be a structured way of engagement. There must be governance. There must be a clearly defined belief system. The church is not just a people called out and alive unto God; it is also God's institution on the earth.

In **First Epistle to Timothy 3:15**, Paul said:

*“That thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.”*

There is an orderly way to behave here. You cannot come here naked and expect to remain like that. We will not reject you, but we will not leave you unchanged. You cannot come speaking vulgarity and expect that to be normal.

There is order.

There is doctrine.

There is structure. Paul even taught how young men should relate with young women—with all purity.

Why?

Because the church is an institution.

# *The Church Preserves Vision Through Structure*

God has an agenda. But His agenda cannot be stewarded without systems. That is why He created an institution. A vision cannot be immortalised unless it is institutionalised. This is why the church has systems of correction. In **The Gospel of Matthew 18**, Jesus taught that if a brother errs:

- Speak to him privately.
- If he refuses, take witnesses.
- If he still refuses, tell it to the church.

Why? Because the church has authority. The church is God's institution on the earth. It is a place of order. It is a place of doctrine. It is a place of alignment. All of us came with baggage. But in church, we are aligned. The purpose of the institution is to model Christ into your life until His ways become your way of living.

Do not claim church membership if the life of Christ cannot be seen in you. A denomination may give you an ID card, but only the life of Christ proves you belong to His church.

If you belong to the church:

- The power of Christ should be visible.
- The character of Christ should be visible.
- Submission to Christ should be visible.
- Sanctification should be visible.
- Love for brethren should be visible.

If the life is there, it will show. If people still have to beg you to seek God, if they still have to pamper your ego before you obey Christ, then something is wrong. Church is life. And life must be visible.

# *The Ordinances of the Church*

The church as an institution is powered by ordinances. Without order, glory cannot rest. The glory of God does not descend simply because people pray. The glory rests when order is attained.

God said:

*Build according to the pattern shown on the mount.*

When the pattern is obeyed, glory comes. When everything was set in order, the priests ministered, and the glory descended.

This means:

Order in worship matters.

Order in conduct matters.

Order in spiritual alignment matters.

There are moments when God is moving, and somebody interrupts carelessly. That is disorder. There are moments when the Spirit is touching hearts, and someone breaks the atmosphere without discernment.

That is disorder. The church must mature as an institution for the full weight of glory to rest upon it.

# *The Church as the Universal Body*

The third perspective is this: The church is the **universal body of Christ**. This means denomination does not divide us. Denominations reveal prophetic emphasis—not separation. The hand is different from the leg. The eye is different from the ear. But all are part of one body. So whether you are in:

- Living Faith
- Deeper Life
- Redeemed
- Dunamis
- Methodist
- Anglican
- Catholic

we are still one body. Each carries a unique prophetic emphasis. One may emphasise faith.

Another may emphasise holiness.

Another may emphasise intimacy.

Another may emphasise power.

But all belong to Christ. Do not be quick to condemn another expression of the Body. If you cut off what looks insignificant, you may discover too late how vital it was. The church is universal.

# *What Does Universal Mean?*

The church is the global, invisible spiritual union of all believers across all ages.

Past. Present. Future.

In **Epistle to the Hebrews 12:23**, the Bible says:

*“To the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven...”*

Those who lived before us are part of this body. Those alive now are part of this body. Those yet to come are part of this body. Whether in Russia, Ukraine, Iran, United States, Nigeria, or Zambia—we are one.

Governments may be at war. But the Church remains one. That is who we are.

If you study Acts chapter 9, verses 4 and 5, Saul received letters from the Pharisees. I wish I had time to speak about the church in the wilderness. They did not recognise Jesus because they were already in a fallen state. Paul received letters from the Sanhedrin to attack the believers—the New Testament church in Damascus.

Then Jesus appeared and said, *“Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?”*

He did not say, *Why are you persecuting the church in Jerusalem?*

He did not say, *Why are you persecuting the church in Damascus?*

No.

Because universally, we are connected as one family. Jesus sees all of us as His body.

We are the general assembly of the church of the firstborn.

Ephesians speaks of the family in heaven and on earth. The church on earth and the church in heaven are one. Universally, we are one.

This is what is truly called the Catholic Church—not the Roman Catholic Church, but the universal body of Christ: the global church across all ages—past, present, and future.

This is the third definition of the church.

You need to understand this because when you do, you will not allow denominational differences to make you fight your brother who is functioning as another part of the same body.

Glory to God.

# *The Headship of the Church*

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Very quickly, let us round up on headship because when I come next, I will begin to speak on governance—the leadership structure of the church.

The church has three basic layers of leadership.

## **1. Christ the Head**

The first is the Head.

Because the church is universal, it is difficult to synchronise physically. Even in the days of the apostles, there were churches pioneered by Peter and others pioneered by Paul.

At first, when there were only the twelve apostles, they could meet in Jerusalem and coordinate. But as the gospel spread and the church expanded, coordination became more complex.

That is why it is important to understand that above every expression of the church is one universal leadership—and that leadership is Christ.

Whether as an organism, an institution, or the universal body, Jesus is the absolute authority of the church.

The Bible says in Colossians 1:18 (KJV):

*“And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence.”*

Jesus is the universal Head.

This is why every true church uses Scripture as authority, because Jesus governs His church through His Word.

The apostles understood that a time would come when the church would spread into many territories, so they left us established truths—foundational doctrines concerning Christ.

Luke spoke of this in Luke 1:1–3 (KJV):

*“Forasmuch as many have taken in hand to set forth in order a declaration of those things which are most surely believed among us...”*

Why is this important?

Because when we say Jesus is the Head of the church, someone may ask:

### **How do we receive instruction from Him?**

Through the Word.

And the things we receive are not the dogmas of men, but the truths most surely believed.

What are those truths?

- There is one God.
- This God exists in three Persons: Father, Son, and Spirit.
- Jesus is the only begotten Son of God.
- He was conceived by the Holy Ghost and born of a virgin.
- He lived a sinless life.

- He died for our sins.
- He was buried.
- On the third day, He rose again.
- He ascended into heaven.
- He is enthroned as Lord and Christ.
- He released His Spirit to birth the church.

If you believe these truths, then you have come under the authority of Jesus Christ.

That is why Jesus is called the Head of the church.

It is only in Christ that we can be one.

## **2. The Fivefold Offices**

After establishing His own authority, Jesus established other authorities in the church—what we call overseers.

He created offices and ordained men into them for continuity and discipleship.

Ephesians 4:11 says:

*“And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers.”*

Why?

For:

- The perfecting of the saints.
- The work of the ministry.
- The edifying of the body.

Without these offices, there would be no continuity.

Jesus is physically absent, so He established another layer of authority to continue His work.

Every church must have someone functioning in one of these offices.

There must be:

- Apostles
- Prophets
- Evangelists
- Pastors
- Teachers

Without these, there can be no administration, no order, no governance, and no maturity.

Jesus Himself created them.

Ephesians 2:20 says the church is built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone.

The Old Testament prophets prophesied His coming.

The New Testament apostles revealed Him.

Together, their ministry laid the foundation upon which the church stands.

Where these offices are active, Christ is revealed.

Where Christ is revealed and believed, the church is born.

And where the church is born, these offices remain to develop believers into maturity.

### 3. Ordained Ministers

The third layer of authority is ordained ministers.

When the fivefold ministry establishes a church, internal order becomes necessary.

In Acts 6, when the number of disciples multiplied, there was murmuring because some widows were neglected in daily distribution.

The apostles said:

*“It is not reason that we should leave the word of God, and serve tables.”*

So they appointed seven men full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom.

These became deacons.

But beyond deacons, other subordinate ministers were also ordained.

Titus 1:5 says:

*“For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city...”*

And in 1 Timothy 3, Paul gives the qualifications of bishops.

Why?

Because order must be maintained.

So the structure is clear:

- **Jesus** is the universal Head.
- **The fivefold ministry** carries His governmental authority.
- **Ordained ministers** maintain order and administration locally.

This is how the church functions.

# *The Spread of the Church*

At first, the apostles thought they were the only ones. But the church spread beyond Jerusalem. It became global. Jesus raised Paul.

He raised Barnabas.

He raised many others.

And when the original apostles saw the grace of God upon Paul, they recognised him.

They gave him the right hand of fellowship and sent him to the Gentiles.

Paul then established the same structures wherever he went.

He ordained deacons.

He raised Timothy.

He raised Titus.

He established order.

This is why there are different denominations today. Not because they are wrong, but because God raised different apostles in different eras with different assignments. And as these assignments spread, they ordained faithful men to preserve the truth.

As Paul said in 2 Timothy 2:2 (KJV):

*“And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.”*

That is quality control in the kingdom.

## *Submission to Authority*

So wherever you find yourself, understand the structure of leadership. Whoever is ordained over you, submit to them. They submit to the fivefold ministers over that work. And those ministers submit to Jesus through the Word and Spirit.

This is how the church continues to spread. Hebrews 13:17 says:

*“Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls...”*

Many people know the church as an organism.

Some know it as an institution.

Some know it as a universal body.

But many do not submit to its authority.

And without submission, alignment is impossible.

Align.

So that you can function as a member of the church.

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## *Closing Prayer*

*Father, thank You for what we have received.*

*Cause Your Spirit to breathe upon these words. Let them become life in our spirits. Open our understanding to engage them from the depths from which they came, and cause them to become forces, tools, and instruments through which You transform us and empower us eternally.*

*Take all the glory, in Jesus' mighty name. Amen.*

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## *About the Speaker*

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Apostle Michael Orokpo is a Nigerian apostolic teacher and revivalist widely known for his depth in the Word of God and his strong emphasis on spiritual formation, priesthood, and kingdom influence. He serves as the lead minister of **Encounter Jesus Ministries International**, a ministry committed to raising believers who encounter Christ genuinely and live out the reality of His kingdom in everyday life.

Through conferences, leadership gatherings, and intensive teaching meetings across Africa and beyond, Apostle Orokpo has consistently called the Church to move beyond superficial Christianity into deeper consecration, spiritual intelligence, and transformational leadership. His teachings frequently emphasise the believer's authority in Christ, the responsibility of spiritual gatekeeping, and the need for men and women who can stand as watchmen over territories, systems, and nations according to the purposes of God.



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