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Conduct of Pentecostal Ministers and Its Influence on African Congregational Character Development

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ABSTRACT
This paper attempts to show the conduct of the African Pentecostal ministers as critically important in influencing the character development of their congregation, which has multiplier effects on national development and, by extension, on the continent's development. The topic is motivated by the recent misnomer of some ministers who probably did not have adequate training and equipment in ministerial ethics or have forgotten the relevance of their training in this respect. One of the assignments the Church shoulders is to point the dark world to Christ, the Savior, and Light of the world. This darkness arguably appears thicker in Africa, a continent rated as being an underdeveloped world. The Great Commission involves the movement of people from the darkness in the world into the light of Christ. This paper advances that with right ministerial conduct, the Minister of God, laden with leadership responsibilities in the Great Commission, will greatly impact the congregation. The paper analyzes the natural tendencies of people who form a church congregation. Congregants in their raw lust and Adamic deprivation, are also people who make up the society. Therefore, unending corruption, terrorism, political instability, colonial mentality, low productivity, extravagant and wasteful lifestyle, ignorance of the Lord's standard, and poverty, among other life vices which aid underdevelopment, can be traced to individuals in the church. The paper posits that it is not enough for the Pentecostal Pastor to preach about and against these anti-development vices, but much more is the Pastor's conduct that will either buttress the message or undermine it. The paper recommends a revamp of ministerial conduct in the interest of congregational character development and the eventual development of the African continent.
Keywords: Conduct, Pentecostalism, Ministers, Congregational Character, African Society.

INTRODUCTION

Over decades, different scholars have converged on what picture spiritual leaders should portray as it concerns the ministry of relating with people, both young and old, male and female, believers and unbelievers. There has been a standing order that a man called a man of God should possess Godly attributes to the maximum possible according to the grace of God bestowed upon him. He is expected to use the Bible as a model of living every moment and day of his life. Apostle Paul expressed a direct and essential concern as he directed his speech to Timothy and all of those who shepherd God's flock in Phil 1:27 (NIV). "Whatever happens, conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ…." In this way, it is germane for ministers of the Gospel to form and openly exhibit a lifestyle that is worthy, understanding, and right for the transforming Gospel, the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. Such fitting attitude and conduct, when put on, are undoubtedly crucial for eternal prosperity and earthly prosperity.

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[1]*PASTORAL ETHICS AND DECORUM, @* HTTP://BAPTISTBULLETIN.ORG/THE-BAPTIST-BULLETIN-MAGAZINE/PASTORAL-ETHICS-AND DECORUM/ ACCESSED ON 25TH MAY, 2017.

The world is increasing in serious pervasion, and the Word of God is being turned around to suit the human mortal mind and flesh. This is consequential on adverse effects on individual life and society, especially in African culture.

It has become of greater essence now that the Called of God should lead the Christian community to stand, to be distinct, and to be of excellent conduct wherever they may be. Being exemplary in reality is a demand upon every Christian to uphold. However, since one of the functions of leadership is influence, it becomes additionally paramount for those who are ministers of God to be exemplary to the body of Christ first, even before the world, especially in this contemporary time. Through this, people in the society can emulate from their neighbours and acquaintances who are Christians what these Christians have imbibed from their spiritual leaders' exemplary lifestyle. The multiplier effects expected from a corrected lifestyle are significant societal developments and prepared minds for the second coming of Christ.

The topic of this paper is motivated by the increasing misconduct of some acclaimed ministers of the Gospel. These probably did not have adequate training and equipping in ministerial ethics or have forgotten the relevance of their training in this respect. This paper attempts to show that the conduct of the African Pentecostal ministers is critically essential in influencing the character development of people in their congregation. A well-groomed church multiplies positive national effects and, by extension, the continent's development. The paper posits that it is not enough for the Pentecostal Pastor to preach about and against anti-development vices; it is also much more critical that the Pastor's conduct buttresses and does not undermine the sermons. The paper recommends a revamp of ministerial conduct in the interest of congregational character development and the eventual development of the African continent.

Understanding Pentecostalism

The origin of Pentecostalism can be traced to the day of Pentecost, as recorded in Acts 2:1ff. The Pentecost, baptism in the Holy Ghost after conversion, is usually accompanied by the gift of speaking in tongues (glossolalia and xenoglossia).[2] The dynamic Pentecostal movement developed in the late 1960s and 1970s with the characteristic of the gifts of the Spirit (charismatic). These were evidenced and welcomed in personal and corporate free-flowing and spontaneous worship experiences to respond to the mighty acts of God. It involves worship gestures like raising hands towards heaven, standing or kneeling in songs accompanied with songs and laying on of hands to pray for the baptism of the Holy Spirit and minister healing to the sick. The essence of Pentecostalism is restoring the Holy Spirit in believers in ways with more outward manifestation of the Holy Spirit's transformative function, which directs believers to empower and change believers to become more like Christ.[3] The youth, a group known to be full of vigor, is notably happier to be involved in the wave of charismatic Pentecostal movement than in the former formal liturgical or traditional ways of worship.

Pentecostalism is famous for maintaining traditional beliefs concerning renewal by the Holy Spirit, by which a believer is enabled to bear more spiritual fruits, according to Gal. 5:22-23. Bearing fruits provides the determination against "the moral relativism and permissiveness of the modern society."[4]

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[2]JOHN GORDON MELTON PENTECOSTALISM, HTTPS://WWW.BRITANNICA.COM/TOPIC/PENTECOSTALISM ACCESSED ON 1ST JUNE, 2017.

[3] Paul E Engle, & Paul A. Basden, (eds). *Exploring the Worship Spectrum.* (Michigan: Zondervan. 2004), 139-145

[4] Dela Quampah, *Good Pastors, Bad Pastors: Pentecostal Ministerial Ethics in Ghana,* (Oregon: Wipf and Stock Publishers), 2014, 138.

Pentecostalism has brought many benefits to Christianity. It has illuminated the minds of many, affording believers to know and stand for their faith in Christ confidently. Elucidating these benefits of Pentecostalism, Ogbu Kalu established that the advent and spread of Pentecostalism had come to stay. He stated that globally, Pentecostalism is socioeconomically, politically, and ecumenically advantageous primarily through its ardent style of evangelism and unrepentant effort to reshape society's religious phase.[5] The Pentecostal movement undeniably brought about a degree of revival in Christendom, especially in open identification with the Christian faith. Before the charismatic move, Christians were scorned. Many were not bold enough to identify with Christianity publicly, hid their Bibles, and projected miens depicting humiliation in their faith in Christ. Pentecostalism put a lot of these to rest. Kalu further commented that the general practices in Pentecostalism, the act of raising funds, the transformational experience in members, and the Holy Spirit Baptism, which is expected to open godly behaviours in believers differently from any former flesh character, are all laudable virtues of Pentecostalism.[6]

The newness brought by Pentecostalism marks the difference between Pentecostals and other protestant evangelicals who were opinionated that there were no more charismata. Pentecostalism attested that there is charismatic grace and still emphasizes the valid message that these other evangelicals uphold.[7] Pentecostalism practices and thought in the view of Wolfang Vondey are holistic: its teaching and preaching, revivals, ecumenical conversations, and even scholarly works have roots in the Holy Spirit, in charismatic manifestations, spiritual gifts, and discernment in the contemporary world.[8] In furtherance of his discourse, Wolfang explains the definition of the Pentecostal holistic ministry as the one that cuts across all aspects of cultural, communal, and religious life.[9] He posits that Pentecostalism is known for the kind of spirituality mainly centered on the Spirit epistemologically, existentially, and ontologically.[10]

In Africa, Pentecostalism did not carry the name 'Pentecostalism' in all regions. Some African believers might not have heard of the Azusa Street Experience that led to the outburst of the Holy Ghost called Pentecostalism. Nonetheless, the wave impacts Africa and is being called different names. In Nigeria, those who permitted the charismatic flow are called Born-Again Christian. They are 'Bakristu' in Congo Kinshasa, Charismatic churches in Ghana, and Revival churches in Congo Brazzaville.[11] Another nomenclature is not as common as these, but all point to the new wave of the Holy Spirit. Pentecostalism is not just a Western world occurrence but also a local and global occurrence.

African Pentecostalism has brought a shift from emphasizing race and social ethics. It has incorporated some strategies to help members engage with the realities in their environment.[12] Afro-Pentecostalism has also gained popularity through social networks and media, like mainstream cable television channels that transmit across continents. This makes only a few uninformed about the African-American movement called Pentecostalism.[13] The contribution and relevance of Pentecostalism to African society are many. Among them are cultivating honesty virtues, ethical characters, industry and modest living, spiritual formation and discipleship, life-skills training and education, community service, social activism, and political engagement.[14] The ministers who are Pentecostal leaders are laden with furthering this beneficial outcome of Pentecostalism in the lives of the congregants.

As valuable as Pentecostalism is portrayed above, it tends to cause abuse to godly standards. While mainstream Christian churches approach many Christian issues with extreme caution, Pentecostalism

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[5] Ogbu Kalu, African Pentecostalism: An Introduction (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 6.
[6] Ogbu Kalu, 7.
[7] Ibid, 8.
[8] Wolfgang Vondey, *Pentecostalism: A Guide for the Perplexed* (London: Bloomsbury Publishing PLC, 2013), 27, 31.
[9] Ibid, 34.
[10] Ibid, 33.
[11] Ogbu Kalu, 14-15.
[12] Amos Yong & Estrelda Y. Alexander (eds) *Afro-Pentecostalism: Black Pentecostal and Charismatic Christianity in History and Culture*. (New York And London: New York University Press) 2011, 5.
[13] Amos & Estrelda, 6.
[14] Ibid, 7.

came with some extreme extemporaneity. The mainstream may be seen as inhibitive, that is, forbidding and suppressing the free flow of the expression of God the Holy Spirit amid God's people. However, some overly free expressions in Pentecostalism with no hold-barred teachings can also be charged as extreme. Pentecostalism depicted "as the Spirit leads," which is not always positive in connotation; some "once saved, forever saved" phrases that may whisper subtly "continue to sin, you are covered"; and liberation theology thoughts with tones of rebellion. The devil uses these in his many schemes to go about his tasks. Some "firebrand" claim that the devil does not exist or matter in an honest attempt to abate him may prevent people from needing caution against the devil who "prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour" 1 Peter 5:8. Furthermore, the claim that God gives unconditional love may make believers overstep the boundaries of grace and mercy.

Additionally, the devil's subtlety may consider the intellectual evolutionary idea as true and absolute. It can give sin an estrangement, and another coloration such as sin is psychological, not moral; it is environmental, not part of man; it is social, not personal; sin is a concept, not a fact, and worse still, sin is presented not as sin but the absence of good. Some of these ambiguous claims are traceable to the advent of Pentecostalism. The Minister must let the God of truth be true to him as His Minister. The Minister must not embrace this watered-down, guilt-motivated wrong coloration of sin lest he develops a stony heart and perverts conduct in ministry.[15]

Pentecostal Pastor And Ministerial Ethics

Right from the Bible periods in the Judeo-Christian religion, ethics is projected through Old and New Testaments themes like righteousness, holiness and fairness, the sanctity of life, justice, self-control, faithfulness, and compassion for the vulnerable. These same moral concerns are still emphasized today as they are still the primary source of exemplification for those involved in leadership, especially for Christendom's Ministers.[16] Jesus, in his Sermon on the Mount in Matthew chapters five (5) to seven (7), stresses inner attitudes such as humility, purity of heart, compassion, and willingness to sacrifice personal rights and endure suffering to identify with Christ as a faithful follower.[17] God has set in place His expectations in all aspects of life; humans likewise have taken cues to put in place what they deem or perceive as right and wrong. These issues are often embraced with many terminologies such as rules, laws, customs, morals, ethics, and norms, depending on what they are addressing. They all serve as guiding principles that make people stay within the boundaries that will give meaning to life, relative peace to the environment, and glory to God. In the contemporary church, many ministerial ethics are available to guide the Preacher in ministerial conduct and much more in personal conduct to afford a successful ministry.

Ideally, having been called of God into the Ministry of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the Called persons must submit to be trained and equipped for ministry. One of the core courses in ideal theological colleges and seminaries for equipping ministers is Ministerial Ethics. Ethics is derived from the Greek word '*ethos'*, which means custom, habit, that which relates to character, and why certain practices are regarded as right and good or wrong and bad.[18] A relative twin to ethics is morality. Moral is derived from the Latin word *moralis,* which means the manner of living or living out of what one believes to be right or wrong. While ethics has to do with theory, morality has to do with specific actions.[19] Every profession has its distinctive ethics. The distinctives being considered here is God-based, revelational, decision-oriented, scriptural, and explicit to Ministers of the Gospel to direct their life and conduct.[20] Secular ethics may be

[15] John Wilson, *Pity my Simplicity*, Hertfordshire England: Evangelical Press 1980, 134.
[16] Dela, 65.
[17] Dela, 69.
[18] Sam O. Oyedele, *Ministerial Ethics: A Practical Guide for Pastors and Christian Leaders*, (Ikoyi, Nigeria: Amazing Grace Publications, 2012), 6.
[19] Roger H. Crook, *An Introduction to Christian Ethics*, (USA: Prentice Hall, 1990), 14.
[20] Jacob K. Ayantayo, *Fundamentals of Religious Ethics*, (Ibadan, Nigeria: End Time Publishing House, 2009), 23.

deprived in some ways, but Christians are called to be the society's standard as God purposed it.[21] Hence virtuous standards are embedded in ministerial ethics.

Minister and Ministry have their roots in the Greek words *diakonos* and *diakonia*, respectively. They are both in line with rendering services of various kinds to the community of Faith, providing spiritual guidance to the community, and seeing to the achievement of the special purpose in God's mind, which is the Salvation Agenda.[22] God who owns the ministry is infinite, holy, infallible, and incorruptible, while the persons He uses as His hands, mouth, legs, and spoke persons are finite and prone to many fallings due to his humanity. The Minister, serving as a servant of God, is faced with dealing with his field of assignment: the Earth. This field of his duty is already a cursed and polluted place, and when that is embraced in addition to his failing human tendencies, the success rate becomes more difficult. As if this is not enough, the people he is to minister also have militating human depravity that may not make them yield easily to the Minister's guidance to godly standards. Apart from their Adamic corruption, the congregants have different tastes, needs, challenges, natures, and backgrounds.

In the African setting, some traditional ways of doing things inherited from our ancestors, which are against God's ways, are difficult to part with. Africans' religious mindset is also more on survival strategy rather than personal, intimate relationship with the Saviour because of cultural and religious experiences like Spiritism, communication with divinity, and sacred mediation and intervention during crises.[23] Furthermore, the devil who was the tempter from the beginning is still at loose in the world and the job of tempting men. Pastors are not excluded from his catchment targets. Ministers of the Gospel are part of the devils' primary targets. In Africa, Pentecostal and charismatic churches may be found all over major cities.

Ministerial Code of Conduct: this is the standard of conduct, behaviour, and manner of living expected of the Minister of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Ministerial code of conduct provides a set of measurement standards for conduct in pastoral situations. Because of the grave responsibilities associated with pastoral work and positions, they are held to higher standards of behaviour than other professional codes of conduct. Ministers must comply with the standards of behaviour in the Code of Conduct and, in addition, avoid the appearance of impropriety in the scope of their ministry. While the public and private behaviour of ministers can inspire and motivate people, their misconduct can much more scandalize and undermine people's faith.[24] Some of the codes of ethics include high outward reputation, integrity, never deserting his people in the face of danger, self-control, not measuring his work by his salary, modesty, must not encroach on the field of other professions, and must serve God as Jesus did.

Influence Of Pastoral Conduct In Building Congregational Character

This equipping is vital since the serving role of the Minister is distinct from that of deacons, although deacons too serve as ministers.[25] It is worth mentioning that the place of assignment of the Minister is called. Therefore for him to be fit to do God's mission along with God, he will need to be equipped in proper ethical standards so that he will not misbehave. While every church leader is expected to be a model of upright conduct, the Pentecostal Minister who projects the indwelling of the Holy Spirit louder by the name should be far more. As the Pentecostal Minister upholds the proper behavior that the members emulate and live out in the society in the Pastoral Epistles (Titus and Timothy), Paul did not mince words to encourage and admonish proper ministerial conduct. Pentecostal Pastors are also at the forefront of Christian ministries these days, especially considering their prominent place in the media

[21] Don Fleming, *World's Bible Dictionary*, (Iowa Falls USA: World Bible Publishers, 1990), 120.
[22] Christiana Onu, *Beyond the Iceberg: A Case for Emotional Healing*. (Bloomington: iUniverse, 2012), 101.
[23]Kwabena Asamoah-Gyadu *African Pentecostal/Charismatic Christianity: An Overview* Issue: 08-2006 https://www.lausanneworldpulse.com/themedarticles-php/464/08-2006 Accessed 11/6/2017
[24] Diocese of San Bernardino, *Safe Environment Policy for the Protection of Children and Young People and Code of Pastoral Conduct* http://www.docyp.org/pdf/docyppastorconducteng.pdf, Accessed 11/6/2017.
[25] Don Fleming, 294.

through their conduct could influence the building of African society negatively or positively. If good moral conduct is found wanting in our African Pentecostal churches, there is no way it will be found in the African community because the church is the people, the worshippers, and not the building and the same people that make up the church still hold one position or the other in the society. In addition to the misconducts stated in this paper, others have been adapted from the list of negative behaviours.

Commoners can bear witness to some of the deeds of some Pentecostal pastor. In fairness, some ministers intend to show the glory of God but fail to think of what observers are reading. Vices like title obsession and attention shifting to self which is a form of worldly narcissism, are traceable among ministers. This is self-proclamation growing where the Gospel proclamation ought to be growing. Others include but are not limited to:

- fixing big pictures of self and spouse on billboards, handbills and flyers in almost every program of the church;
- making the font size of the texts that proclaim Christ smaller than the font that carries the name of the Minister, picture, t
- aking bigger portion on the space available than edifying words that can begin the work of soul winning;
- building materialism mentality subtly in members through superfluity in dressing and extravagant lifestyle;
- creating fear of death and wrong notion that may appear to present God as limited in power through raised prayer points.;
- not being exemplary in moral conduct through giving in to lust of the eyes, lust of the flesh and pride of life thereby contravening the reverence for God and His holiness;
- corrupting the sense of belonging and hope in the less-privileged members through preferential association with the rich;
- not calling the erring notable to accountability before God;
- wearying the members by tasking them beyond their capability, and
- confronting them more than comforting them.

The list is inexhaustible. There have been several dimensions of this seeming loss of integrity among ministers today. It has ranged from misconducts relating to issues of abuses of position, which has to do with the Minister making use of his privileged position for his own end; counseling abuses which has to do with the inability of the Minister of God to keep to counseling ethics; financial misconducts which relate to a minister's failure to handle corporate money transparently, the unjust and ungodly ways some ministers employ to make money, sexual transgressions which relate to improper handling of the relationship with the opposite sex and the unacceptable means some have adopted in an attempt to get the power needed for ministry.[26]

In some congregations, it is conspicuous that the members dress, speak, and gesticulate as their Pastor does. This goes to show that pastors impact their congregants not only spiritually but also physically. In a life that beckons for worldliness, lusts, and all forms of Adamic allurements, unswerving teachings, keen praying, and right leading, many Christians are guided to remain focused on the Lord. In a world that deceives and presents a path of least resistance, though corrupt, as rewarding beyond the seemingly challenging righteous route, a pleasure of sin that deceives that there is no punishment to wrongdoing, it will be efforts down the drain if the Pastor is a bit careless to suggest the slightest of approval in any of these things. However, many things some Pentecostal pastors engage in now depict subtle and loud endorsement. The absence of love is the presence of the lack of fear of God, in which Tanu (2012:252) compares the sins of Eli's sons with the immoral acts of ministers of God in Nigeria. While sons of Eli

[26] Abosede O. Oderinde, "Ethical Misconduct among Nigerian Church Leaders in the Context of 1timothy 3: 1 – 7" in *Research on Humanities and Social Sciences.* www.iiste.org ISSN (Paper) 2224-5766 ISSN (Online) 2225-0484 (Online) Vol.4, No.17, 2014. 28 – 30.

defiled innocent women, today children and women are being defiled by the priest who is supposed to be their guiding parent and spiritual leader.[27]

A pastor's success is not measured by personal accomplishment but by the transformation of the flock under him. He channels his ministerial objectives to meet needs specific to individuals and peculiar to society. In African society, among the common challenges the Lord will probably want the man of God to focus upon would be the challenge of poverty. With the Pentecostal grace and equipping, the Pastor helps the believers to stand more importantly for righteousness even in the poor state while awaiting alleviation. He helps the believers know that God remains loving caring and is at work still over the less privileged lives. A pastor busy with self-aggrandizement this will be a far fetch goal.

One distinctive feature of Pentecostalism is mind illumination. Many of those who follow the Pentecostal wave do so because the movement was able to release their mind from confusion and led to God's light. Through vibrant teachings, spiritual, complex, secular career, health, financial and all manner of ignorance will be lifted. God does not only give the laws but empowers man to obey while obedience to God's laws is accomplished through the ministry of the Holy Spirit. Ray in Quampah suggests that "the Spirit provides an internal source that assists in decision making and enables one to mature spiritually.[28] Maturing spiritually will not fail to yield the fruits of maturation in other areas of life too. Dela comments that the Bible's emphatic and significant ethical focus projects a moral standard that is high and as well no one in the Christian ministry can choose to derail from. Still explaining, a school of thought suggests that God ordains Christian moral values because they are good and that God's commands should be consistent with his character and must be seriously connected with His general revelatory manual, which is the Bible. Amos and Estrelda hold the position that the Holy Ghost filling a man is activated supernaturally to live a holy life and accomplish works that promote righteousness that accurately represents God's kingdom life.[29] Titus 2:10 calls shepherds of flocks to ensure their manner and message match "so that in everything they may adorn the doctrine of God our Savior".[30] The Pentecostal Pastor is not to neglect or minimize the benefit of either the word of God and the Holy Spirit for right personal conduct and guidance of the flock of God.

The Minister is a God-called man. The instruction manual of the Caller is the Word of God. Right from Adam the first man called to manage the Earth, there were guiding principles. Genesis 2:15ff recorded how the first man was to conduct himself, but we discover he could not sustain the ethics of his profession and so fell into misconduct when he ate of the "out-of-bound" tree. As we get to Abraham and other servants of God, they also were expected to give their best to their Lord and be faithful servants Ezekiel 34. The ethical demands of these ministers had similar and specific connotations until the time of Jesus Christ, who is the perfect example because He lived an exemplary life. Ministers from thence are to pattern their calling after Christ in all humility and holiness 1 Peter 1:13-16; 1 John 2:6. Also, any man working for and with God must be perfect as our "heavenly Father is perfect" Matthew 5:48. In furtherance to this, according to Leviticus 23:3-13, Ecclesiastes 4:8-12, 1 Corinthians 5-7 a minister needs all the ethics of his calling if he wants to succeed in ministry.

CONCLUSION

This paper has expounded the theme "Conduct of Pentecostal Ministers and Its Influence on Congregational Character Development," defining terms such as conduct, Pentecostalism, ministers, influence and congregational character development. It has also looked into the concept of Pentecostalism in Africa and the concept of ministerial ethics which is the bases for the conduct of ministers. To

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[27] Tanu, A.. "Prophet Nathan's Ministry: A Model in Church Governance for Contemporary Pastors in Nigeria", in Ayantayo, J.K., Dada, O.A., & Labeodan H.A. (eds) Religion and Governance in Nigeria. Ibadan: Department of Religious Studies, University of Ibadan. 2012.

[28] Amos & Estrelda, 4

[29] Ibid

[30] Tim Jordan, *Pastoral Ethics and Decorum*, @ http://baptistbulletin.org/the-baptist-bulletin-magazine/pastoral-ethics-and-decorum/ Accessed on 25th May, 2017

conclude this paper, the writer would like to recap that the Pastoral growth will affect the congregational and societal growth and these are based on the Pastor's spiritual uprightness because the Minister is always expected to be at the forefront when it comes to moral uprightness. However if a minister fails in cultivating the right conduct before God and man, such church may look conducive for moving forward but it will be to the Kingdom of hell rather than populating the Kingdom of God. The paper analyzed the natural tendencies of people who form a church congregation. Congregants in their basic lust and adamic deprivation are also people who make up the society. Therefore, unending corruption, terrorism, political instability, colonial mentality, low productivity, extravagant and wasteful lifestyle, ignorance of the Lord's standard, and poverty, among other life vices which aid underdevelopment, can be traced to individuals in the church. The paper posits that it is not enough for the Pentecostal Pastor to preach about and against these anti-development vices, but much more is the Pastor's conduct that will either buttress the message or undermine it.

It is good to note that codes of ethics do not guarantee that the Minister will not misconduct, but the principles will be some buffers. Misconduct may not be prevented because the man given the ministry assignment is in his adamic compartment, which, more often than not, wages wars against his divine commission. However, misconduct can significantly be minimized to the extent that its existence can hardly be traced when ethical standards are strictly adhered to. To the writer, the best and most crucial minimizer is actively dwelling in the Word of God. Not just by head-knowledge but through the power of the Holy Spirit. This is a sure way to pull back a minister at the tip of the track of misconduct before fully and regrettably straying into it. Therefore, every ministry must make up his mind and be determined to do well in church by slowing down at frequent periods in the work of ministry to afford himself to look into the Word of God, which is the perfect mirror. Because of the thin line sometimes between ethical behavior and misconduct, this paper recommends:

1. a revamp of ministerial conduct in the interest of congregational character development and eventual development of the African continent;
2. a life of prayer will play itself out as a good life divinely fortified off misconduct;
3. constant and continuous re-training of ministers;
4. living in Call-consciousness to check not to lose the guide and decorum that must accompany the Call; and
5. Keep an active accountability group and be more dedicated to the Call more than ever before.

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