



...for whereas there is
envying and strife, and
divisions, are ye not
carnal... 1 Cor. 3:3

Can Church Politics Destroy a Ministry?

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*"Righteousness exalts a nation but sin is a reproach to any people" –
Proverbs 14:34*

Aristotle the renowned Greek philosopher defined politics as *"the art of achieving the possible."* Church politics has a tendency to destroy what is possible and leaves carnage and multiple casualties strewn in its pathway. Church politics is fueled by several factors such as the lust for power, dominance, selfishness, greed, avarice, self-aggrandizement, vice and unrestrained wickedness. **1. Church politics** is the sledge hammer that destroys the careers and lives of others without any remorse. An unrestrained lust for power is at the heart of such senseless behavior. The dictum by the Englishman Lord Acton is fitting: *"power corrupts, and absolute power corrupts absolutely."* An unrestrained lust for power in the church has not only destroyed careers but has divided families and in some instances resulted in the death of sisters and brothers in the faith. A church leader once told me that the way to remove a person from office is to withdraw the resources from that particular position. To this day I wonder whether this leader has a clue as to the meaning of deceit. **2. Church politics** is the cancer in the church that turns brothers and sisters against each other for all the wrong reasons. Our church in many ways resembles a divided Congress that utilizes conflict as an excuse for do-nothingism. When a church is driven by constant fighting and bickering over petty personal concerns that are unrelated to the Kingdom agenda, it is time for a change. **3. Church politics** is the poison that seeps into the vital organs of the body politic of the House of God. The gate-keepers are paid to do damage control when a scandal ensues. The poison intended for others eventually will find its way back to its source. **Galatians 6:7** *"Don't be under any illusion, you cannot make a fool of God."* [JB Phillips]. **4. Church Politics** is the potent combustible fuel that sets fire to godly relationships. I have watched Bishops destroy pastors and pastors destroy parishioners who were in conflict with them. **5, Church politics** is a blindness that deliberately excuses friends for grave offenses and punishes enemies for the same offense. There are leaders in the church who find a way to manipulate the judicial system in the church and get away with serious offenses and may never face the consequences of their actions. All one has to do is pay the right person and keep on in ministry as though nothing never occurred. **6. Church Politics** protects inept leaders. We have a dangerous culture in our church that views any criticism of leadership as adversarial. Once you challenge leadership you are labeled a "fighter." Ignorant dictatorial leaders use this tactic as a form of social control. My theory is simply this, *"if you cannot stand the heat, please stay out of the kitchen."* As an apologist for the faith I am committed to constantly speak the truth in love as long as I can breathe. **7. Church politics** is a cankerous sore in the fellowship of the saints. An untreated sore can be the source of massive infection in the human body. Untreated infection can kill a person as well as a church.

It appears that something has happened to the church in our time. We have gained everything we wanted materially, but having a problem trying to figure out how to hold on to it. There is much evidence to suggest that within our collective consciousness we are afraid of our future. Ananias and Sapphira lied and did not make it out of the Temple. We lie today in the church and get a promotion as a reward. Somewhere I read that *"the mills of God grind slowly, but they grind exceedingly small."* We have also lost our sense of identity. Once you lose your sense of identity, then everything goes. Our founding Chief Apostle Bishop Charles Harrison Mason of the Church of God in Christ did not have an identity crisis regarding holiness. There was no middle ground or compromise.

Three years prior to the demise of Bishop Mason, a brief pamphlet was published by the late Bishop Raymond Eugene Ranger, a fearless advocate and apologist for the Church of God in Christ, from Fort Worth, Texas. Bishop Ranger used the title **That Woman Jezebel** to describe the state of the church, which he viewed in chaos and disarray. The health of Bishop Mason was declining as leaders began to position themselves for succession to this great leader. Conflict was rampant throughout the church as leaders developed political clout among their peers. Ranger saw the crisis and used biblical imagery to describe what he saw as a pending unresolved crisis. In the book of Revelation, Jezebel is described as a whore who will be subject to the consequences of the judgment of God. At the demise of Bishop Mason the church went through an informal split that lasted until 1968. Friends became foes throughout the long ordeal. Another denomination was formed and attached the name "International" to its legal name. Bishop Ranger was faithful to the very end of his sojourn and served as an advisor to the late Bishop OT Jones, Sr., the successor to Bishop Mason. When church politics dominates a ministry, choices to serve are made on a personal basis rather than a professional one. Friends and relatives are awarded jobs, promotions and speaking opportunities for the wrong reasons. If a church submits to crass "church politics" it is a matter of time before corruption becomes rampant and the Kingdom agenda is defeated.

Ideally, God's church is *"built upon a rock"* that will withstand the *"gates of hell."* God will not allow "church politics" to defeat His plan for the world. Church politics may thwart, hinder or delay God's will for His church, but never defeat His sovereign will. Church leaders would do well to remind themselves that they are only stewards of the mysteries of godliness in a godless age. We are committed to following the "way of holiness" rather than mere "church politics." We should be riveted by **Haggai 2: 3v** *"Who is left among you that saw this house in her first glory?" and how do you see it now?"* "First glory" saints are needed to combat godless "church politics."

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