



Why I Am A Celestian

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I Am Still a Celestian

Every human being must decide to worship something: either God or himself. Fyodor Dostoyevsky, the Russian novelist, wrote, “So long as man remains free he strives for nothing so incessantly and painfully as to find someone to worship.”¹ As for me, I have made the decision to worship Christ, and Christ only. Regardless of my denomination, I am a Christian. To choose to become a Christian is the most important decision I have ever made.

Why Am I Christian?

My first motivation, my early aim, was to win out over troubles, transcend over enemies. I wanted to be saved from all kinds of enemies that would impede my immediate goal of getting rich, and being on top of the world. In my youth, I noticed very early on that the world is a dangerous, unfriendly place. There are enemies and unforeseen problems, and I was consumed with the question of how I could overcome them. I concluded that I needed a savior—a god that trumps other gods.

I saw two saviors, and I have encountered both of them. I got inundated with a sense of urgency from friends and foes about the need for help or a savior. So they offered recommendations, and I took them.

One of my friends introduced me to a herbalist. After many years of practicing herbalism, I could still see no progress in life. My frustration with herbalism was driving me crazy, and so I pursued another god. I met the second savior. I was told that He is

¹ Fyodor Dostoyevsky, Russian novelist and writer, 1821-1881.

supreme all over. This is the story of my journey of encountering the second savior, the Supreme God.

Who Am I? Am I A Christian?

It is interesting to know the right way and to follow through—this is the slogan of Christians. So because this God is the supreme, the right way, I decided to become a Christian. After a while, I became interested in the question of who is a real Christian? Dr. Millard J. Erickson, one of the leading Christian thinkers of this century, cites James Orr:

He who with his whole heart believes in Jesus as the Son of God is thereby committed to much else besides. He is committed to a view of God, to a view of the purpose of God, to a view of man, to a view of sin, to a view of Redemption, to a view of the purpose of God in creation and history, to a view of human destiny found only in Christianity.²

Without doubt, a Christian must do all these things. All these things I believe with all my heart.

The Bible says:

Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do? Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.

For the promise is unto you, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord

² Millard J. Erickson. Christian Theology. 21.

our God shall call. And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation. (Acts 2:37-40).

It was the Celestial Church of Christ (CCC) that saved me from running into the world (the world of herbalism and mediums) for assistance. During my untold suffering in Lagos, my uncle, deceased Assistant Superior Evangelist Ebenzer Akinduyo, took me to the shepherd. He asked me three times if I believed in Christ, and I answered yes, yes, and yes. The shepherd categorically warned me and said, “Chris, you must once and for all abandon all spells, and cut all ties with all herbalists.” He further instructed me that “In CCC, you cannot practice any other religion because the Holy Spirit will reveal and punish you.” Those threats haunted me for so long.

At Last I am A Christian:

Many years later, Senior Evangelist Idowu Akomoje baptized me. Senior Evangelist Akomoje was one of the staunchest Christians I have ever met. Just before I was baptized in the stream at International Airport Road, Evangelist Akomoje warned me of an impending danger if I did not accept the responsibility to believe in Christ and Christ alone. I was not naïve but determined to give my life to Christ since I would be saved by Him only.

What is more perplexing is how I became a Christian! This is my interest and I want to share the story every minute of my life!

Something in me changed, so that I began to like Christ and the church. Paul words in Romans 7:18 describe my own initial stage—“I’ m nothing—a fool, a sinner, vile, rotten.” In Galatians 2:20, Paul also describes the new nature after being accepted

into the family of Christ—“I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.” It was not a mere change of mind, but my entire lifestyle changed forever. It fascinates me every day. Martin Lloyd-Jones, the great British preacher, says,

They think Christianity is a spirit of friendship and benevolence and desire to do good. As we have seen, some modern writers say that whenever you find love or kindness, you find God. But I repeat, that is far removed from what we find in the book of Acts. Here is something entirely different. Here are 3,000 people who passed from there to here, from this to that. What happened to them?³

Jones was trying to emphasize the works of the Holy Ghost in the hearts of those 3000, because “They were pricked in their heart” (Acts 2:37). A Christian is more than a mere person; he is a spiritual person—Christ is central in his or her life.

Bertrand Russell, an atheist, points out that “The word Christian is used these days in a very loose sense by a great many people. Some people mean no more by it than a person who attempts to live a good life.”⁴ True, for many people, life is meaningless, but to the Christian, life is a gift from Christ. If I am really a Christian, am I only trying to live a good moral life as others have done? Living a Christ-like life is far more than the mere goal of accomplishing a good life. It is about who I am, why I am here, and where will I be going after this life. Living as a Christian has an attitude to it, a zeal to finish a race.

So even Bertrand Russell, the staunchest of atheists, affirms the Bible’s definition of a Christian. He says, “I think, however, that there are two different items which are

³ Martin Lloyd-Jones. *Authentic Christianity*. 48.

⁴ Bertrand Russell: Why I am Not A Christian. [www. Positiveatheism.org/hist/russel10.htm](http://www.Positiveatheism.org/hist/russel10.htm).

two quite essential to anyone calling himself a Christian. The first is one of a dogmatic nature—namely, that you must believe in God and immortality. If you do not believe in those two things, I do not think that you can properly call yourself a Christian. Then, further than that, as the name implies, you must have some kind of belief about Christ.”⁵ At least Russell knew that a Christian must believe in Christ and must desire to follow Christ’s lead. All this I do, and so I am a Christian.

Interestingly enough, the name *Christian* was first given at Antioch (Acts 11:26) to the disciples. C. S. Lewis clarifies the evasiveness of people by assuming that some people are not Christian. Lewis says, “When a man who accepts the Christian doctrine lives unworthily of it, it is much clearer to say he is a bad Christian than to say he is not a Christian.”⁶ In the household of Christianity, some believers enjoy “labeling” other believers as not Christians, and they invariably see themselves as all-knowing. Socrates, the Greek philosopher, says, “I am the wisest man alive, for I know one thing, and that is that I know nothing.” The labeling (a scheme from Satan) is intended to purposefully disunite the household of Christians. Lewis makes a powerful statement: “Human beings judge one another by their external actions. God judges them by their moral choices.”⁷

C. S. Lewis, Bertrand Russell, and the Bible support my claim: I believe Christ, I love Christian doctrines, and I do my best according to Christ, who is in me, to follow him. These have been my practices in the Celestial Church of Christ. I started attending this church in Lagos, Nigeria. Specifically, I joined this church at Shogunle Parish 1.

As soon as I joined this church, because its vibrancy, I experienced the first attack to dissuade me. It came from my fellow Catholics—my previous church before I

⁵ Bertrand Russell: Why I am Not A Christian. www.positiveatheism.org/hist/russell1110.htm.

⁶ C. S. Lewis: Mere Christianity.

⁷ C. S. Lewis,

switched to the Celestial Church of Christ. One person told me that I would lose my salvation if I became a member of the Celestial Church of Christ (hereafter referred to as CCC) because, she said, all Celestians worship snakes and perform other voodoo antics. This theological hostility gnawed at me, and I decided to find out the truth about my salvation through the CCC.

This truth-finding episode first led me to read the literature from the church along with the Bible. I had been told and warned that ignorance destroys (even kills) people, so I decided to find out the truth about the church, knowing that I would one day appear before Christ. The constitution of the CCC is like the Bible in the sense that it lays everything out in the open. It does not hide anything. In the CCC constitution, Pastor SBJ Oschoffa presents everything, openly, for scrutiny. Many details filled the pages of the constitution. As a reader, I could smell the aroma of SBJ Oschoffa's openness.

The Search for Truth:

Also in my early years in CCC, I observed many things first-hand. Things became clearer after I graduated from Bible College. As a matter of fact, I re-read the constitution many times; my original copy is now worn out. In particular, the divine order of CCC has caught my attention profoundly because it is so biblical:

The divine order says:

On the 29th of September 1947, while I was praying in my house with some visiting friends. I saw a strong ray of light rather like that from the headlamp of a car. I then saw a winged being whose body was like fire and whose eyes were tiny, flying towards me behind the beam of light. As it approached me, the beam

of light shortened until the being stood about a yard from me. This being then proceeded to say to me: God wishes to send you on an errand of preaching to the world. Many Christians there are who, during their lifetime, when confronted by problems and difficulties of this world they seek after fetish priests and other powers of darkness for all kinds of assistance. On their death, they think they are Christians, but they are no longer Christians because Satan has left his mark on them. For this reason, such people, after death, cannot see Christ. God wants to send you to the world on a mission of preaching and exhortation, but the world will not believe you. To assist you so that men may listen to and follow you, miraculous works of holy divine healing will be wrought by you in the name of Jesus Christ. These works of divine healing and God's spiritual mark on you will testify to the fact that God sent you.⁸

This is from Christ. The vision, or the agenda, and the means to accomplish it were given to Oschoffa. The prophet of the Lord was available, and Christ, the King of kings, rules by decreeing everything about CCC through the herald. Professor Finney makes a powerful remark on John 15:5: "Now when Christ says, 'without me ye can do nothing,' he doubtless means to affirm that without divine light shining upon the pages of inspiration and upon the works of God—without illumination of the Holy Spirit, holiness is impossible to us. The assertion of the text therefore implies that divine light is proffered to us, and that this light is given by Christ."⁹ If Christ says it, that settles it. No debate or argument follows. All Christians are led by Christ. If we are lead by Christ, the

⁸ CCC Constitution: [www. Celestialchurch. Com](http://www.Celestialchurch.Com). 10

⁹ Professor Finney: The Gospel of truth—Dependence on Christ. www.gospeltrtuth.net

first principle of a true follower of Christ is to listen to him. Dr. R. C. Sproul has a series called “Hath God Said.” Dr. Sproul remarks, “The temptation in the Garden did not begin with promises of wealth or power. It began with an attack on God’s word. Satan continues that challenge today, with devastating results inside and outside the church.” He further continues, “He shows that communication requires an absolute standard of truth—and that Scripture is that standard.”¹⁰ Here I am, and I believe all that Christ told Prophet SBJ Oschoffa.

The Verifiability of CCC’s Vision Statement:

I have not only believed it; it has been verified. Christ, the Messiah, makes a profound statement to His disciples: “And He said to them, “Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation” (Mark 16:5, NASB). The Greek version is as follows: (Kai. ei=pen auvtoi/j(Poreuqe, ntej eivj to.n ko, smon a[panta(**khru, xate** to. euvagge, lion pa, sh| th/| kti, seiÅ). As a Bible student, I have enjoyed Greek and Hebrew languages so much. These languages have helped me to see what the Scriptures meant. In this text (Mark 16:5), Christ is telling the disciples to proclaim (*khru, xate*)! The word in the original Greek language means “to proclaim or preach.” It is in an imperative mood usage, and it is in a command (vocative) voice. This is an idea with an instruction to make people see, know, and hear Christ’s message. The use of the word “preach” would tone down the meaning of *khru, xate*. . . In other words, SBJ Oschoffa must make people “see, know, and hear” Christ’s message. Oschoffa made a lot of people to see, know, and hear Christ.

¹⁰ Dr. R. C. Sproul: Hath God Said. Ligonier Ministries.

Supremacy of Christ: He is in Control:

How would a carpenter in the remote country in Africa know the heart of Christ? And yes, SBJ Oschoffa was a Methodist beforehand and studied the Bible under the then-pastor of his church. Oschoffa did not know about the emphasis on “to proclaim” or (*khru, xate*—pronounced *kerusate*). How would he know it? Christ chose SBJ as herald. Christ is in control.

What would the prophet preach or proclaim? This is the essential part. Prophet SBJ Oschoffa was instructed to proclaim the messages of Christ, and Christ only. *The Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible* puts it this way: “The main words for preaching in the NT ring with authority. The authority lies not in the person of the preacher, but in the message entrusted to him. True preaching does not consist in man’s ideas about God, or in his sanctified religious ponderings and reflections, but in the divine Word of revelation.”¹¹ If we were to deliberate on the “Divine Message” to Oschoffa, we would see what Jesus Christ wanted Oschoffa to do. Basically, Christ wanted him to preach and exhort all people. Then, the question is how? It was assumed that SBJ Oschoffa would preach and exhort biblically—that is it! Christ chose SBJ and told him what to say. Christ is in control.

He got the call, but what about Prophet Oschoffa’s charismata, “The spiritual graces and qualifications granted by Christ to perform his task in the Church?”¹² What about these gifts that flow from Jesus Christ to Oschoffa? What about these gifts of prayer, prophecy, healing, and evangelism that have been so evident in Pastor Oschoffa’s ministry, even in the church until today? The obvious cannot be ignored because

¹¹ Merrill C. Tenney. *Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible*. 844

¹² *Ibid*

parishioners and visitors notice them. Some notorious critics of the church conclude that Oschoffa got his powers from a snake or an unknown place. How was it possible for him to empower others in the church with God's power by using snake power? Interestingly enough, *The Catholic Encyclopedia* defines charisma as:

The Greek term *charisma* denotes any good gift that flows from God's benevolent love (*charis*) unto man; any Divine grace or favour, ranging from redemption and life eternal to comfort in communing with brethren in the faith (Roman 5:15; 16; 6:23; 11:29). The term has, however, a narrower meaning: the spiritual graces and qualifications granted to every Christian to perform his task in the church.

Charisma is the theological term for denoting extraordinary graces given to individual Christians for the good of others.¹³

As humble as Oschoffa was in his days, he never spoke haughtily about the gifts of Christ in him. Christ put the charisma in SBJ, and He gave him what was needed to accomplish His message. Christ is in control.

Recent Attacks against CCC

Attack against CCC's mode of worshipping:

It is interesting that a scholar, Dr. Afe Adogame, argues that CCC takes on "elements from Yoruba thought."¹⁴ This is an outrageous conclusion! Why would Professor Adogame relate the church to an African culture? Adogame's claim reduces the church's mission to inside Africa. This professor's conclusion is false because the church has gone out of Africa to other parts of the world, and the church has been slowly

¹³ Catholic Encyclopedia: www.newadvent.org

¹⁴ Dr. Afe Adogame: *Minority Religion, Social Change, and Freedom of Conscience*. www.censur.org

proselytizing other nationals. How on earth can we miss the purpose of Christ in the church in this trend of her diversity? Presently, there are five million members of CCC, and this means a lot to Christ. I am one of the 5 million.¹⁵

Some (including some Christians) say the five million people who embrace the worship of Christ in this church are participating in a cult. The word “cult” has been re-defined by Christians who are scholars and are holier-than-thou for the purpose of judging people.¹⁶ The church critics attack CCC’s mode of worship and everything.

Simply and practically, CCC’s style of worship involves all aspects of the human body. It involves singing many uplifting songs; it involves heavy dancing and praises to Christ.¹⁷ Praying and proclaiming Scripture take center stage during each worshipping period.¹⁸ The prophetic ministry in the church has changed many lives and will change even more people’s lives considerably. This is one of the distinctive features of the church. This ministry edifies people by leading them in the right path, Christ’s path. It cannot be compared to the work of a psychic who would not affirm Christ. CCC worships Christ and Christ only. Some leaders of the church may not be leading rightly, but CCC itself is for Christ.

Critics of the church are busily intensifying their mission by warning people to beware of this “cult,” but they never take the time to get to know the church. I am not saying that this church is without flaws from an operational standpoint, and obviously, the CCC has been plagued by many leaders who did not have the full knowledge of Christ and of the CCC’s essence of being established by Christ.

¹⁵ International Countercult Ministries: www.thecenters.org

¹⁶ The idea of cult will be explore fully in the next write up: Cult and its interpretations

¹⁷ This same incident happened in Christ’s time, too. Luke 19:32

¹⁸ Acts 3:1—Peter and other prayed and proclaimed the Scriptures, too.

Attacks concerning Leadership Transition:

Another source of contention is the leadership issue. Dr. Adogame, an anthropologist, made a big issue out of the CCC's leadership. Other critics joined the professor to say that the leadership problem is a sign of the occult. In other words, if the first leader (founder) dies, the group will not survive. The critics also believe that the founder's lieutenants will not have the charisma of the founder, and for this reason, the group will suddenly end. Dr. Adogame should see the mission of CCC, and how Christ is fulfilling His purpose the church. There is no prominent human leader, but Christ is leading His mission in the church until He determines to choose another charismatic leader to continue to lead the church. All these critics ignore the supremacy of Christ.

Attacks concerning the Syncretistic System of Worship:

The syncretistic system in CCC is seriously appalling and menacing the church. Going through the Scriptures, the problems that critics of the church have highlighted so far have at one time or the other affected the church in general, not one particular congregation. For instance, God warned the Israelites many times about the idols and idol worshipping they had brought out of Egypt (2 Kings 7). This is the same case: Christ gave Oschoffa a diagnosis in the early part of his ministry: "There are nominal Christians."¹⁹ People will not grow up immediately after being accepted into the family of Christ. They will still hold on to their beliefs and gods, at least for a while.

The lack of maturity among CCC's members bothers a lot of critics. The churches in the province of Galatia and Corinth theoretically should have been stopped because

¹⁹ CCC constitution.

they were practicing syncretism in worshipping God. Paul, the Apostle of Christ, proclaimed the Scripture to them because he knew that those believers were “babes in Christ.”²⁰ Of course, a house divided against itself will not survive.²¹ The Christian should abhor labeling others, but instead, find ways to encourage more Christians to grow to maturity in Christ.

I have tremendously enjoyed the benefits of being a Christian in the CCC. It has granted me open access to Christ. The Messiah’s instructions to me for living are perfect. Many other people—5 million in the church—have also enjoyed walking in Christ through the enlightenment of this church.

²⁰ I Corinthians 3:1. Paul used the term “babes in Christ” to identify those Christians’ maturity level in the church.

²¹ Matthew 12:25.