

A portrait of a smiling Black man, Niyi Makinde, wearing a dark suit jacket over a light-colored striped shirt. The image is the background for the entire cover.

NIYI MAKINDE

VOLUME 1

MINISTRY ETHICS

Learn the moral principles that govern ministry

NIYI MAKINDE

Ministry Ethics



NIYI MAKINDE

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Preface

A major aspect that is not often discussed in ministry is ethics. Often times, we talk about the spirituality of a minister or the essence of spirituality in ministry but overlook crucial matters that are essential and fundamental to the progress, success and advancement of a minister in ministry.

Ethics is seldomly discussed. For the fact that we will always have people who will be ordained and leaders who will be appointed in ministry, it is of utmost importance that we know about ministry ethics.

There are different aspects of ministry ethics that can be discussed. There are:

1. Leadership Ethics for Ministry

This deals with basic principles leaders must know and apply in ministry. The formation and behavioral conducts of leaders in ministry is different from that of politics. Those in the church or ministry sphere should be model for others to emulate.

2. Finance Ethics for Ministry

What are the guiding principles for finance in

ministry? This is an aspect that financial ethics for ministry deals with. This simply explains how finance of the church or ministry should be handled – received, saved, spent on projects and so on. This is not for church accountants alone, pastors and leaders need to really understand this essentially.

3. Work Ethics for Ministry

Sometimes referred to as code of conduct, this shows how workers should behave and conduct themselves within and outside the church or ministry. Church cultures is created for the effectiveness of this ethics. This reveals that workers should not behave anyhow, they have to be told how to behave. In other words, there should be a guiding protocols that can be read or taught on how workers are expected to behave themselves in the church.

What is in this book is a general overview of ethics, for anyone who finds themselves in ministry.

Understanding the Fundamentals

Ethics refer to moral principles that influence a person's behavior. Ministry ethics then refers to the moral principles that govern people's behaviors in ministry. These principles are areas of specialization in ministry that have their own set of rules and lay down procedures for activities and responsibilities.

I will only share a general overview that is appli-

cable to everyone that finds themselves in the work of ministry regardless of their specialization.

1 Timothy 4:12

[12] Let no one despise your youth, but be an example to the believers in word, in conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity.

Obviously, this is a major aspect written by an apostle, which is emphatically stated in scripture to a pastor. Paul wrote the books of first and second Timothy to pastor Timothy. In the passage above, apostle Paul instructed pastor Timothy to be an example to the believers in speech and conduct.

Ministry ethics is all about conduct – how we should behave when appointed by God for ministry assignment. You need to learn these principles which governs ministry. We should be examples to believers in conduct, speech and faith, such that believers would be able to learn how to behave just by observing our behaviors.

Unfortunately, knowledge of basic ministry ethics is rare today. I believe strongly though, that there are still some ministers and servants of God who are practical examples to other believers in conduct.

The fundamentals you need to understand is that as a person who has a role in ministry, you should be an example to other believers in conduct. Other believers should be able to look at you and find new things to learn. The whole purpose of the insight

here is to make you an example to others in conduct.

In this volume, I discuss twelve ministry ethics you have to learn and be knowledgeable about. I believe that every minister of the gospel, especially those in church ministry assignment need to read this book. Lead pastors of churches and leaders of various units should recommend this book to their leaders and workers. The practical wisdom shared in this book will save ministers lots of stress in repeating certain wisdom verbally.

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12 Fundamental Ministry Ethics

Keep Secrets

Keeping of secrets is an important moral principle that should not be abused in ministry. Deuteronomy 29:29 says: *“the secret things of the Lord belong to God.”* This tells us that God has secrets. If God keeps secrets, who are you as a minister not to keep secrets? There are some things that God makes known to His servants that He doesn’t make known to believers, because He believes that ministers should have a higher level of understanding than believers. So, if you find yourself in ministry, you have to learn to keep secrets. If you are a pastor, you should be able to keep secrets. Just like in governmental affairs, political leaders will never divulge all information to their citizens because certain matters require decision making. And since all citizens don’t have equal level of understanding, it is expedient that they don’t divulge everything to the

citizens but discuss it among the members of their cabinet. Likewise, as a minister or leader in ministry, you are not to divulge all information to people except the ones they need to hear. Information should be dispensed according to ranks and levels. Special matters discussed in the pastorate shouldn't be discussed with members.

Financial secretaries and treasurers should learn to keep financial records secret. If you find yourself working in the financial department of a church or ministry, you must learn not to divulge information of the ministry's finances that are not made known to the people. You should not divulge the balance of the ministry's account. You should not be careless with financial records, too. Pastors should teach their financial secretaries and treasurers to keep information, because if they are not taught, some of them may divulge information that should be kept secret. One time a treasurer told a member of a church the amount in the church account. The member who didn't know the monthly expenses of the church concluded that the pastor is spending the church money for his personal matters. That member was ignorant of the fact that the pastor didn't collect salary and that the pastor even gives more money to the church from his personal money. But if you are to examine the matter critically, it was the treasurer that caused the issue. He was the one

who shared information that should be kept secret. It was years later when that member grew in the faith and joined the pastorate that he got to know that the church had huge monthly expenses and that the pastor wasn't spending the church money. The question is that what if that member didn't grow to join the pastorate? He would be there thinking their pastor was spending church money. That is how some church officials like that treasurer have created problem unknowingly in some churches and ministries.

It is not actually wrong to tell people the financial records of a ministry; however, it becomes an issue when you are not able to make some explanations. Ministries will sometimes spend lots of money on certain expenses and the likes. If you cannot reveal information on how money was spent, and you go about revealing the amount the ministry has in her account, you may force some members to think that funds have been mismanaged, if they believe that the ministry should have more. That is the reason church financial record must be updated. Personally, a decision I made from my inception into full time ministry was that I will not involve myself in the church account. In fact, I am not part of the signatories to the church account.

Secretaries and personal assistants should learn to keep some matters secret. Contents of minutes of

meetings, certain kinds of decisions, especially matters concerning executives, among others, should not be made known to the people. One of the things that can be done is to ensure that the minutes or records of the church are carefully kept, in such a way that restricts access to it.

If you are close to the senior pastor or leader, you must learn to keep some information from the public. Some people may always want to find out certain information from you. You have got to learn to keep certain kinds of information.

Male ministers should discipline themselves on what they share with their wives. This is not saying you shouldn't open up to your spouse. The fact is that women are emotional. There are things you may share with your wife that stir reactions. This is not all women though. There are women who are very mature and can handle information without sentimental reactions.

A special warning to ministers is to be very careful and ensure that they are faithful and sincere. Integrity really matters. You must never think because secrets are kept in the ministry, you can do as you like. No! If you do the wrong things, even if the people keep it, God will expose you. A minister of God cannot be immoral and expect such to be kept secret. Never! If the people around you keep it secret, God will shame you publicly. You cannot

steal from the church money and expect that to be kept secret. Even if the church or ministry treasurer or accountant help you to keep it secret, God will expose and shame both of you. I pray that God will help you to be an example of good conduct to other leaders by keeping good secret, secret.

Dress Well

To dress well, you don't have to buy expensive clothes; you only have to use and maintain what you have in an excellent way. Appearance matters a lot. You shouldn't wear slippers or sandals to services; you should wear good shoes. How do we define a minister, assistant pastor, pastor, reverend and bishop wearing slippers or sandals to church? That's not done! It isn't a balanced ethics. Of course, there are times informal services are held and everyone can dress informally to church. For regular services however, you should dress formally. Put your nicely polished shoes on. Avoid excesses like wrist bands; wear a nice wristwatch instead.

I was cracking a joke with someone one day, and he narrated to me how he visited a place and someone asked him, "Are you an idol worshipper or one who performs rituals?" The question was

asked him all because of what he wore on his wrist. Of course, I know that must have been said by the other person because of the level of his exposure, but sometimes, in order to maintain a mature appearance, you must not wear anything other than a watch on your wrist. It is not a sin to wear those things; it's only for the sake of maintaining a mature appearance and following the laid down principles of the church that you have to adhere to refraining from wearing them.

Also, if you sweat a lot and you notice that your body tends to give an odor, you should always use a nice perfume. You don't have to get the expensive ones; a pretty affordable one is good for you.

The point is, you must always maintain a mature look by dressing well and formally. Do not wear rumpled clothes, unpolished shoes or excesses. Let your looks always give glory to God and compel others to do the same.

Do Exactly as You Are Told

Most times, when I see some unethical displays, I just smile grievingly. I don't talk about them to those who commit them since they have not been trained. It was many years ago while at a Christian organization that I noticed some wrongs, and realized that it was necessary to train people on ethics. After training was done for those at the organization, they adhered to the principles they were taught and didn't commit the wrongs they used to. Learn this also; sometimes, when you expect people to do some things and they are not doing them, what you need to do is to teach them. Teaching should come before correction.

It is an important ethics in ministry to always do exactly as you are told to do, and not otherwise. If you are asked to lead prayers, don't go up and start worship. It is a great blunder to be asked to lead

prayers for fifteen minutes, and you go up and sing for ten minutes, then now attempt to lead prayers for the fifteen minutes. That is not done. If you would sing a song at all, it should not go beyond a few seconds. You have got to concentrate on the exact things you are told to do. The reason some people sing for long while leading prayers is because they do not prepare. One of the things I do when I have to minister is to write out prayer points that I want to lead. I always have them written in a notepad. It is very important that you always prepare before you go for any ministration.

At Rebirth Global Church, a system we often time use at services across some places is to have prayer points already written and given to each minister that will lead prayers, so they would only come and call the prayers from the note and everybody prays. Of course, the ministers have to be skillful in that they don't fix their eyes to the notes, but to the people. Since you prepared yourself for the session, you should already know each prayer point, and so it should only take you a glance or two to know what next prayer point to call. You are to call it out loud, while your eyes are fixed to the people. You can also check out the next prayer point to call while the people are praying the current one.

Another point is when you are told to give announcements, don't go up and preach. Announce-

ments are not sermon! Let's say the preacher just finished preaching before you are to give announcements, and you begin to say things like, "You know, while preaching, the preacher said so and so which struck my heart, and I wrote them down in my note..." You have just done the wrong thing. That's not what you were told to do. Here is a great way to begin giving announcements – "Praise the Lord. We thank God for the word. Now, let us listen to the following announcements" – and then you read out the announcements. When you are done, round off, leave and go back to your seat, or go on to do the next thing you are told to do. Never preach when you are told to give announcements. Don't sing or do some other things, also.

I learnt this among other things while I was the assistant pastor of a church in 2010. I would always commit the error of digressing into other activities on the pulpit, until I was corrected by one of the elderly pastors, and since then, I diligently adhere to the principle that even when I got admitted into the university, I applied the principle at the campus fellowship I attended.

I also know this – sometimes, you are asked to give the closing prayer and while on the pulpit, some things come to your mind to do. Don't go ahead to do those things. Just go up, give the closing prayer and leave. Only the senior pastor or authority is

permitted to temporarily digress into other things. It should be after the service that you go to meet the senior pastor or whoever is in charge to discuss what came to your mind or meet with whoever you are lead to meet. Since you are dealing with the general body, you have to get straight to what you are told to do.

I remember something that happened at Living Faith Church (Winners Chapel), one day. I was there when it happened. Someone was asked to take testimonies and the person digressed into something else entirely. A testifier came up subsequently and the session-host was about to give the microphone to the testifier when Bishop David Oyedepo sternly said, “No! Time over.” The testifier had to go back to his seat and the session-host put down the microphone and left. I just knew within me that for the Bishop to have done that, something had gone wrong. He said before the whole congregation that the time for the session was up. Certainly, some form of punishment will be given to that person, because he did not do as he was told to.

When you are told to give announcements, take testimonies or offerings, or any other session, don't digress into preaching, giving word of knowledge, prophesying and teaching. Just get straight to what you are told to do. Of course, when you are told to take offerings, you also make a prayer. In such case,

just prepare the people to give their offerings, make the prayer, ask that the offerings basket be passed, or they dance as the choir lead a praise, or whichever way it is decided to be done; simply lead the people to give their offerings, and leave. You should not go on to call prayer points and lead prayers, as if it is a prayer session. When you are told to preach, don't go about laying hands on people.

Let me establish this – this principle is not a way to quench the Spirit; it is being ethical. Whatever the Spirit of God puts in you, you must always deliver it. It just isn't required that you deliver it when told to take a single responsibility. Carry out your responsibility, leave and then, subsequently, maybe after the service, you can go ahead to do whatever the Spirit of God puts in your heart to do. For instance, if the Spirit of God puts in your heart to tell something to someone, you can notify the senior pastor who will then find a way to get across to the person personally, or through the notice board (for bigger churches), or meet the person during the week. In other words, there is no reason for you to deviate from doing exactly as you are told to do on the pulpit.

Before you conclude that this ethical approach will kill the move of the Spirit, you must always remember that it was that same Holy Spirit that taught Paul that order has to be established in the

church during service. Paul told the Corinthian believers that they should do everything in order.

Don't Talk about Pastors of Other Churches or Ministries Programs on Your Church Pulpit

There are certain things we do that are permitted, but are not ethical to do on the pulpit. An associate pastor or departmental leader in the church shouldn't think that because his or her pastor mentions the names of ministers of other churches or ministries on the church pulpit, he or she can go ahead to do the same. No!

Let me share an insight I learnt from someone. Some people left some churches as a result of unmet expectations at those churches. So, when they attend another church, and hear the preacher at their new church talk about the pastor of their former church, even if it's in a good way, they feel offended. Some believers who have issues agreeing

with some ministers on some doctrinal matters will immediately disconnect their hearts from you when you mention the names of those ministers. We are one in Christ but doctrinal differences has created a wide gap among us.

Sometimes ago, a Pastor was invited to minister at an annual program. During his ministration, he mentioned the name of a senior minister, referring to how he learnt some things from that minister that have greatly blessed him. Something then happened. I noticed that more than half of the congregation turned their hearts away from him and his message. I'm sure they must have been thinking "we don't associate with people who are related with that kind of pastor." In fact, towards the end of the ministration, the minister himself told the congregation that he noticed some people turned their mind away from all he said since he mentioned the name of the senior minister. If at all, you will mention names, you should mention the name of a minister that is accepted in that ministry. In order to save you the stress of researching whether a minister is accepted or not, you should not bother to mention any name.

When you are ministering, go straight to your message. If you need to mention the name of any minister, you should mention the name of the leader of the ministry where you are. If you need to refer to

a message you listened to that has blessed you, you should refer to the message preached by the leader of the ministry you belong. If you serve in a ministry and you access the pulpit regularly, I congratulate you. let me share a secret that will make you last on that pulpit and will make you a voice and force on that pulpit. Here is it: anytime you want to talk about what God has done, simply talk about what God has done through the man of God over the ministry you belong.

One time, many years ago, during my days at the university, a friend of mine and I were discussing how the people and ministers at a particular church - Christ Embassy – only refer to their man of God, Pastor Chris Oyakhilome. They never refer publicly to other pastors and we were wondering the reason for that. We wondered: is it that they don't listen to other ministers but Pastor Chris? It was not until my third year that I understood the reason for that. Every shepherd is not your shepherd.

Every shepherd cannot be your shepherd. The shepherd to someone may not be the shepherd to you. In other words, only your shepherd should be the one feeding you. You make known who your shepherd is when you refer to that shepherd. So, when you begin to mention all shepherds, you leave people wondering who your actual shepherd is, who your loyalty is directed to. This is a major aspect

that must be understood. It was when I understood this that I realized the reason the people at Christ Embassy always referred to their man of God, Pastor Chris only. He is their shepherd and we thank God for their lives today, as a result of what they learnt from him.

Furthermore, don't talk about past or ongoing programs of other churches on the pulpit. The only programs you should talk about on the pulpit are programs of your church. The reason for this is because there are some believers that may be offended at such programs or the churches that host them. You can say you were somewhere or at a program and you were blessed, but you don't have to mention where or which program.

To talk about your church programs would require that you always attend them. Similarly, to talk about your pastor's messages would require that you always listen to them. A proof that you are in synchrony with your pastor is that you listen to him regularly and consistently. If you don't listen to your pastor's messages that means you are only an attendee at your church, not a member. The fact is, God will always direct you to a place where you will be fed, and one thing is certain; it is only those who listen to the messages of their man of God, regularly and consistently, that will carry the spirit and anointing of that man of God. When you see

some people doing some things in ministry, working some dimensions or are able to do some other things just like their leader, it is always because they listen to their man of God all the time.

Bishop TD Jakes once said at a Pastors and Leaders Conference, that pastors should not be surprised when their members don't value or cherish them. He said familiarity from being with them regularly makes some members lose value for them. He said outsiders will often times value the pastors, more than their members. And I have discovered that to be true. Most times, people don't value you until you leave them, or they see outsiders celebrate you more than they do. Yet, I can say with utmost sincerity and from my observation that this is not the case at Rebirth Global Church. Our people value their pastors. I know how our people relate with me and with their pastors, and I am not being exaggerative. In fact, they don't just value their pastors, they love them.

It is only the anointing you value that will work for you. Get this; other pastors and other churches may be having certain results and testimonies; yet, you should not value other pastors and churches higher than your pastor and church. In your heart, your pastor and church should be the best, because those are God's gifts to you. Other pastors and churches are so highly valued because their people placed that

value on them. Let the value you desire for your church be the value you place on it. Genuinely thank God for the results of other ministries, but know that those results are there only because their people valued God's gifts to them. Remember, it is only the anointing you value that will work for you. Rather than admiring other churches and other men of God for how valued they are, let your loyalty to your church bring the value to it. Admiring results of other ministries is not what will produce results in your life. Let it be that in your heart, your church and man of God are not just God's gifts to you, but who and what you need, and the best for you. They should be invaluable to you. Only then will your church be widely admired by others also, and bring about results in your life. Truth is that the church of God is one. You must not say one church is better than yours.

There is a way you pull the anointing on your man of God out to you; this is real. One of the ways you pull out God's anointing on your pastor to you, is to see him as highly important. You should see your pastor as one through whom God can do whatever He has done through other pastors. You must also be eager to listen to your pastor. You must be very proud of your church and pastor. Celebrate them publicly and on social media.

Someone said something and I considered it true.

He said if others need to put in extra effort to find out who your pastor is or which church you attend; you are at fault. If you talk about your church and pastor regularly, there is no way others won't know them. If you are the senior minister of another ministry, you don't mention the names of other ministers, except the name of your spiritual father and those you revere as mentors.

Take Your Church Programs Important

If you are a leader in a particular church, then to you, your church program is more important than programs of other churches. We are one in Christ, but you don't abandon your church program for another program. You can attend other church programs when your church isn't having one, but as long as you belong to a church and are ordained into an office, you have got to see the programs of your church as important. You don't attend other church programs at the expense of your own church programs. Value your church. Value her programs. You have got to value your church programs highly.

You should baptize yourself into the teaching of the ministry you belong. It's the teaching of the ministry that will release the spirit of the ministry on you. You can't manifest the grace God has

released on the ministry or church you belong if you don't regard the message of the pastor. Jesus said the words I have spoken to you are spirit and life. The words shared in every church or ministry is spirit and life. The exemptions to this are churches or ministries whose leaders are not tuned to the emphasis of the Spirit.

There are things members can do which may not be a concern to the leadership because as long as they have not climb the ladder of leadership, they can still be excluded from certain expectations. If a member doesn't attend a church program because her neighbor has an event, you know that is welcomed. But such may not be welcomed for a leader except on rare occasion. How can a leader say he or she won't come to church on Sunday because his or her neighbor wants to celebrate birthday? Why will your neighbor celebrate birthday during church hour on Sunday morning? The moment you become a leader, you have to ensure nothing affects your church programs and nothing hinders you from attending your church programs.

The amazing side is that when you attend a program or service, you are the one that will get blessed. Many don't understand the power behind a corporate gathering. Well, the hypocrisy among many leaders in many ministries has blinded the mind of many to the fact that when believers gather

for fellowship or service, they are blessed. The fact is that every time believers gather with an open heart, blessings are meant to flow there. To gather for service is to gather for blessings.

You have to get to that height where it is obvious to all that you regard your church programs above your life issues. Yes, you can pray in your house and God will answer, but you need to understand that God performs the unimaginable when believers gather together.

The moment you become a worker or leader in your church or ministry, it is expedient of you to regard the program of your church more than events out there.

Be Time-Conscious on the Pulpit

Personally, I needed to work on this aspect myself. When I go for ministrations at other churches, I am time-conscious although it took a while for me to master it. At Rebirth Global Church though, I always want to pour out my heart to the people. Yet, it is still important to always keep to time during ministrations. So, I had to put myself under a new governing decision to demonstrate this ethic in our ministry.

If you are asked to lead any session on the pulpit, you must keep to the time permitted you. If you do otherwise, you have only taken authority into your hands as though nobody can instruct you. In fact, it would be amazing if you can wrap up whatever you asked to do within a minute or two lesser than the stipulated time.

Workers and leaders should always get to church

on time before the service commence. To do this, you only have to always time and plan yourself. You should know the time it takes you to get to the church from your home and plan yourself to meet up to time. Don't treat the church as a cheap place where you can misbehave. It is not polite to always get to church late when you don't get to work or school late.

In some cases, for certain kinds of meetings and before a certain kind of congregation, it may be permitted to use more time than stipulated. For example, when we attend 'Connect Confluence' at our church, I may spend more time at the night sessions because the program is a very special one – a spiritual launching into the New Year – and the people are desperate for some specific things. It is necessary to dispense what God has for the people considering the type of program it is. I have always trained myself to go with such flow. Connect Confluence is a meeting for serious and intentional people who want to start their year with God. Our program, 'Rebirth School of Ministry (RESOM)' is such a special program too for mature people. So at such meetings, it may be necessary to go on with the flow of God considering the kind of meeting and congregation they are.

However, for Sunday services, new members, business executives who don't have time to waste,

and other kinds of individuals will make up the congregation and it should be known that it is impolite to waste people's times. What is the conclusion? Ensure you keep to time. Don't waste time when given a responsibility.

Never Correct People Publicly

1 Timothy 5:20 says “Those who are sinning rebuke in the presence of all, that the rest also may fear.”

The text above clearly instruct that some people should be corrected publicly. Who are those people? Evidently, you can see for yourself that this scripture is simply referring to those who are sinning. In other words, those who are committing several evil and atrocities. Apostle Paul expected his dear son in the faith to rebuke such. Paul didn't mean that those who are ignorant or not perfect at some task should be rebuked publicly.

Don't correct people publicly for a slight mistake they make. Mistakes are different from sin. Don't correct them on the pulpit either. Don't correct errors on scripture quotations or grammar in public, rather do this in privacy. For instance, when a preacher commits an error on a scriptural passage

reference, don't go to the pulpit and correct the error. Don't say something like "Praise the Lord. Before I go on into the order of the session, I would quickly correct the preacher. He meant to refer to another scriptural passage when he mentioned this..." You don't have to do that. Well, nobody has done that to me before, because I always ensure the passages I reference and quote are accurate. I only believe that ethic has to be taught.

It is not polite to correct people's errors before the congregation. It goes beyond errors in speech but in acts also. People feel loved when they are corrected in privacy. You should complement them in public but correct them in privacy. This aspect has nothing to do with spirituality but with people's skills. You may be highly anointed and yet lack people's skills. Those who correct people in privacy are the ones that have people's skills.

Another point is that there are matters you don't bring into the public awareness. You shouldn't mention another person's error in the presence of another. People should trust you for keeping secrets. Couples need to learn this too. You are not to correct your wife or husband in the presence of a third party, not even in the presence of your children. You have dishonored anyone you correct in public.

I understand that there are times you will have to confront a matter instantly. But in that case

too, it will require that you master your emotions. Management of emotions really matter in doing some things. If you haven't conquered talking or responding to all, you have not mastered your emotions.

One day, I was invited to minister in a particular church, it was actually a vigil. Then, I preached on a particular matter and further explained that believers shouldn't sing certain songs. Could you believe that the next speaker after me came and told the whole congregation to stand up and disregard my message. Actually, that person was someone I revered so much. It was that day I disconnected my heart from that person. He told the whole congregation to stand up and sing that song again. I sat there at the ministers' seat alongside other ministers. Certain people in the congregation were looking at my face and towards my direction. They wanted to see my reaction, but I didn't react. I wasn't even moved with such actions. To the person, he had done the right thing, but according to scripture, he has done the wrong thing. What would it cost him to call me into privacy to share his thought with me? Ephesians 4:15 says "speaking the truth in love..." You shouldn't speak the truth in anger or with the aim of shaming others. If that man claimed to speak the truth that day, from scripture, he didn't speak the truth in love. You may ask what did I do? Well, I did

nothing. In fact, I went to greet him after the service and appreciated him for bringing the correction. I did that because I didn't want to keep any grudges with him. I later went to study the scripture to find out if I was correct or wrong. I realized that I was correct. Eventually, I had to let go of the matter.

Don't be proud over what you know. You may be the one at fault in the end. If anyone make a mistake, don't correct it publicly, bring correction into privacy. People will love you more when they know you are such that cover their nakedness in public. When a person make mistakes publicly, correct such privately.

Avoid Cracking Insulting and Embarrassing Jokes

Most people don't take this aspect serious. You don't use your pastor as an example of a negative character in a joke. It's not done. We should be lively but there are some "funny" expressions that shouldn't be made. Never make anyone above you a victim of a joke. Don't mock the speaking styles of people. There are lots of instances I have seen. You don't make statements like "How many people have noticed how this person prays?" Why would you mock the praying style of people? Are you a comedian? I mean, some comedians do that but you don't do that as a minister or leader. Regardless of the person's status, if who you are talking about is a minister or leader, it is embarrassing to mimicked them.

Don't ever make the mistake of mocking how a

person speaks in tongues. Don't mock the praying or speaking styles of people. Whoever does that lack ethics. Don't mock the writing style of people. Don't mock the presentational styles of people. Don't joke about how a person holds the microphone. Also, it is very embarrassing to mock how people dress.

Some comedians refer to some pastors in their jokes but always share nice things that are not always embarrassing. There was a time I watched *The Experience* and I saw how some comedians cracked some jokes. They mentioned the names of some pastors, even the host of the program. Everyone laughed, including the host himself because the jokes were not embarrassing.

Be free with people in a honorable way. Don't shout at people. That too can be very embarrassing. Don't stereotype people with bad habits, character or actions. Let your language always be filled with honor. I have seen certain things some people do to others that were very embarrassing and insulting. I have had to apologize in private to some people. The people that make the mistakes were not trying to do that intentionally; they just wanted to share some jokes and be lively.

Never use the appearance, stature, dressing style, walking style of a person to crack joke. It affects the self-esteem of some people. Whatever you do or say should appreciate the esteem of others not to

depreciate it. Never tell a congregation to imagine how a member or worker shakes his head when he prays. That is embarrassing to the person. The person may smile or laugh, but you need to know the thoughts going on in the heart of that person. Therefore, be wise.

Don't Talk about Your Past Experiences at a Different Ministry from Where You are Ministering

I have been to many church denominations in the past. When I am on the pulpit and need to refer to a past experience at a church denomination, I don't mention the name of the denomination. It is a blunder to do so. Instead, I begin with a statement like "I was **somewhere** many years ago..." Somewhere can be anywhere. But when you now say, I was in this church (and you mentioned the name of the church), you have violated a principle.

Pastors and leaders should learn this; don't mention the name of other denomination when ministering. Simply mention the name of the church on whose platform you are. This is very applicable to itinerant ministers. You have got to train yourself

to that level that you can speak without mentioning names not well accepted. Don't mention whichever background you come from. Keep such information to yourself. Like I said previously, some believers have a disagreeing mindset towards certain denominations or their doctrines.

Don't mention the names of people outside your denomination and places in your past. This is ministry ethic that top pastors in other denominations too know. If you just mention the name of certain ministries on certain platform, you have broken an ethical protocol. You have to know where you are so as to know what to say.

If you are speaking on a ministry platform and you wanted to refer to an experience you had at a program recently in another ministry, you have to dexterously watch how you present your words. You can say "in a program I attended recently..." You don't have to mention the name of that program. You should leave inquisitive minds to go find out the program themselves. This is the reason ministry matters require certain form of wisdom. One statement you make can disqualify your acceptance on a platform. You see, speaking on platform is more than what to say, it is more about how you say what you say.

Apply Self-Control

Never frown at people; always smile. Never respond to people angrily. I used to be an angry person in the past but I learnt that self-control is one of the fruits of the Spirit. Yes, you can control yourself. In fact, no emotion should control you and don't be hypocritical about it that you control your external response but boil in anger in your heart or plan a vengeful response.

When you don't learn to control yourself, people won't admire your presence. When you don't learn to control your emotion, people won't desire your presence. There are people that I find difficult to relate with on certain matters because they have not conquered their emotion. Some people will call it mood swing. Why should you have mood swings when you have power over your emotion? Even when people do things that anger you, just smile

in that moment. You can later call them privately to correct them. Watch how you talk. Don't shout. You have to always talk politely. Never say behind people what you can't say before them. For me, I had to train myself to always let go of some things immediately. It can be very painful when some people you don't expect say some offensive things behind you. People who are close to me know that I am the kind of person that operates the Elisha anointing. I can be far away from people and know what is being said about me and those involved in the conversation. I just control myself not to give attention to some offensive talks about me because they were beginning to cause me to pick offences at people and God did not open me up to that prophetic dimension in order to pick offence at people. God opened me up to that dimension in order to be a blessing unto people. So, I learnt to let go of offences.

Here is the lesson I want to pass across. Never say behind people what you cannot say before them. Most of the time, people say to me that I keep secrets a lot. The reason I do that is because I don't want to say behind people what I cannot say before them. I would rather be quiet on a matter than say bad things about people even if they are true. Whatever you hear from me about a person is what I can say before anyone else including the person concerned.

Most times, people hear me just say “Well, all is well” or “Wow” when I’m requested to participate in a conversation. I say such because I don’t want to say certain things. You have train yourself to always keep quiet on some matters. Don’t be hypocritical, hailing people before them and criticizing them at their backs.

Another important part of self-control is to never have an entitlement mentality. The entitlement mentality has destroyed many people. Let me say this – the church is about you serving God only. Nobody owes you anything. Even God owes nothing. Just go about your life and make it in life.

Let me share this with you how God delivered me from entitlement mentality. I was in an organization sometimes ago and I saw myself becoming an executive in that organization. In fact, I knew the position I should occupy. Many people too already thought I was going to occupy that position. Unfortunately, I was not appointed into that position. Sincerely, it was very painful because I thought I should occupy that position and many other people already did too. You see, when that happened, I was called to a number of private meeting with several people asking for my view on the issue. I was just said all was well, even though I was really pained. I had to let it go. One day, I realized the state of my mind. It occurred to me that I was pained because I was after

positions and not the service of God. I had to go on my knees to pray to God to take the selfish desire away from my heart and I believe God answered that prayer because till now, I have never been after positions. I'm not moved by positions. In fact, there are many board I should chair, I appointed others to be the chairmen. There are some positions that I should occupy that I nominated others to occupy. God took the desire for position out of my heart.

You are not in God's service for any position. God can lift you up without positions. In God's service, never see yourself as the one who is supposed to take one position or the other. The reason many people are not making advancement in ministry is because they keep looking on to certain positions they feel entitled to whereas God is trying to show them something bigger that He wants to give them. As long as their sight is on those positions, they can't see what God is trying to show them.

The entitlement mentality can be very bad. It makes you believe your position was given to some people. Nobody can take your position in life. As a believer, you must always sustain this mentality. Whatever position you are not given is what God does not want to give you. Even if you deserve a position and you are not appointed into it, you must know that the reason God permitted it is because He has a bigger position he wants to give you. It

may even be that there is no position for you to look towards because it hasn't been created. There was no position of the prime minister in Egypt before Joseph became one. God created that position for Him.

Let me tell you this – it was during that moment of my life when I didn't get that position I thought I was entitled to that I had more time to pray and study the word of God. It was in that time that I listened to God to find out about my future. I see now that most times, it is in the future that you tend to understand the things that happened to you. God permitted the position not to be given to me because He wanted me to grow. If I had been appointed into that position, I wouldn't have had the time to grow and advance as I did then. Now I even thank God that I was not given that position, whereas, I was angry then. You see, you need to go to God and ask Him to take away the entitlement mentality from your heart, because as long as you have it, you won't be able to receive some revelations or even remember the ones you received; God would not be able to discuss your matter with you that ought to create positions for you either.

Submit to Authorities

God doesn't consider the age of people before He makes them authorities. He lifts up whoever He chooses to lift. Spiritual authorities represent God. So when you submit to an authority, you do not submit to the person but the authority backing them up, that is, God. If a friend of yours is made a leader over you, you have got to submit to him or her. You may continue to see that person as your friend, but you must also submit to him or her. When you submit to other authorities, God will move the hearts of others to submit to you when He lifts you up.

You have got to give double honor to spiritual authorities. The reason for this is because God is backing them up. Never question an authority sensitive questions in public. Ask sensitive questions privately. Of course, there are reasonable questions

you can ask authorities in public that will not lead to controversies when answered.

Also, if you are made an authority, you must not become proud as a result of your position. Never think you are more important than other people. God did not decide that you are important before He lifted you; He just chose you and you have got to acknowledge that. He can decide to give others double promotion if you misbehave. That's the way God operates. You have got to be humble. God gives more grace to the humble.

Never Discuss Leadership Matters with Members

Never sit with members to discuss about leaders or leadership matters. Leadership matters should be considered sensitive to members. Don't discuss leadership matters with friends. The church is a spiritual entity, not a corporate organization.

Sometimes ago, I was travelling to a particular city in a commercial transport. I sat in the front row of the vehicle while two other elderly passengers sat in the rear. Then these passengers began talking about some pastors. The interesting thing was that all the pastors they talked about are pastors I know. They mentioned the pastors' names and they were divulging very sensitive information publicly. Although they weren't discussing with other passengers in the vehicle, no one needed to eavesdrop to

hear their conversation because they were speaking out loud. The pastors they were discussing were of other denominations but I was connected to some of them.

What you should share with people are the miracles, signs, wonders, testimonies, love, among others in your church. Tell them about these beautiful things and not the mistakes of pastors and leaders. Members who do otherwise are only untrained. Ministers, Assistant Pastors, Pastors, Prophets, Evangelists and Reverend who do that are immature. When you get married, don't discuss sensitive church issues and offences of church leaders or other people with your spouse. Instead, use the time you have to discuss relevant matters that will add to your advancement. Also, be careful of what you say before your children so as not to plant wrong seeds in their minds. Intending couples should note this as well.

Also, don't be a hypocrite. Hypocrites talk about what they don't practice as though they do. For example, don't tell others to love when you don't love. Don't tell others to give tithes when you don't. Don't tell others to give when you know you don't give. Don't tell others to be consistent in activities, when you are not. Don't tell others to be committed to responsibilities when you are not. Don't tell others to honor people, when you don't give honor.

That is being hypocritical and it is wrong.

Someone once said foolish people discuss other people; average people, issues; but wise people, ideas. Ensure you never speak negative about the leadership of the ministry or church you belong.



About the Author

Niyi Makinde is a leadership expert, quotient coach, consultant, author and a Christian minister with an apostolic calling. His passion is to raise Christian ministers and leaders like himself, as well as to help organizations and businesses maximize their potentials.

Apostle Niyi Makinde has been in Christian ministry for over 15 years. He is the President of Rebirth Global Church, a network of churches across the globe on a mission to empower believers to fulfill their God-given tasks on earth. He is an apostolic oversight and covering for many other ministries, networks and churches.

Niyi Makinde has written many books that are fast spreading across places. His books are always

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Apostle Niyi Makinde has written many other insightful and powerful books, among which are:

1. Divine Instructions
2. 12 Laws of Divine Instructions
3. Breaking Life Code
4. The Revolutionary Apostle
5. The Power to Prosper
6. The Power to Become
7. 53 Laws of Excellence
8. Church Shift
9. Business Sense
10. Dealing with Human Enemies
11. Wisdom for All-Round
12. Wisdom Power
13. Prayer Force (1)
14. Multiply
15. Tithing
16. You Are Different
17. Phronesis for Dating
18. Dating, Marriage and Sex
19. Managing Divine People
20. The Power to Get Wealth
21. Spiritual Fatherhood
22. Managing Divine People
23. Understanding Honor

24. Flourish And Grow (1)
25. Faith Dimension (1)
26. Ministry Laws (1)
27. Secrets to Supernatural (Financial) Abundance
28. Running like the Deer
29. Prayer Force (2)
30. Making Things Happen
31. You Are a Seer
32. 79 Insights Into Favor
33. New Creation
34. Prayer Education
35. 20 Facts about the Human Spirit
36. Supernatural Visions
37. Understanding Church Systems
38. 11 Facts about the Human Mind
39. The Holy Spirit
40. Dominion in the Realm of Abundance
41. Soul Winning Manual
42. Maintaining Sound Health
43. Faith for Abundance
44. New Levels
45. Wisdom for Abundance
46. The Power of Meditation
47. Understanding Supernatural Dreams
48. Stop Multiplying in Affliction
49. Communication Ethics in Ministry
50. Ministry Ethics (1)
51. Warfare for Honor

52. Wave of Increase
53. Praise for Favor
54. Ministers Training Manual
55. Breaking Joy Code
56. The Power of His Name
57. You Are a wonder
58. Roar and Soar
59. The Minister and the Ministry
60. Grace Factor
61. Subdue and Dominate
62. Flourish and Grow (2)
63. Overtake
64. Victory over Afflictions
65. The Power of Patience
66. Stand out to Step out
67. Shining like the Sun
68. 30 Channels of Wealth
69. Breaking into Laughter
70. The Power to Dominate
71. Enjoying Health
72. Stronger than the stronger
73. Battle for Wealth
74. Wealth Transfer
75. Maximum Protection
76. The Power to Be on Time
77. Power Activators
78. The Essence of Obedience
79. The Power of words

- 80. Planting a Branch Church
- 81. Power Dimensions (1)
- 82. The Power to Live Long
- 83. The Power to Deliver
- 84. The Power to Bless
- 85. Raising the Dead
- 86. The Power to Heal
- 87. The Power to Separate
- 88. Your Reality Today (Yoreto)

