

10 Baseless Practices in the Contemporary Church

As someone who has served in the church for over four decades, I've witnessed movements come and go, trends rise and fall, and innovations that either served or sabotaged the mission of Christ. Yet, in recent years, it seems as though the line between orthodoxy and novelty has become so blurred that the average believer struggles to discern the sacred from the absurd.

In this article, I want to address 10 baseless practices that have emerged in contemporary Christianity, some of which are rooted in ignorance, others in spiritual arrogance, and still others in a distorted understanding of Scripture and church tradition.

1. Seeing the Bible and the Church Through the Lens of the NAR

We are living in an age where discernment has devolved into paranoia. For many, the so-called New Apostolic Reformation has become the new bogeyman. There are legitimate theological concerns within certain NAR expressions, but what's equally problematic is the rise of a counter-movement that sees everything—from political engagement to the word “apostolic”—as evidence of a nefarious global conspiracy. Every sermon, every book, every preacher is suddenly suspect. The tragedy is that instead of seeing Christ in every passage, some now see the NAR. The lens has shifted from Jesus to fear. This is not discernment; this is theological McCarthyism.

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2. Prosecuting Fellow Believers Through Online Platforms Without Ecclesial Process

The apostle Paul instructed the church in Corinth to judge matters internally (1 Cor. 6). Today, however, the church has outsourced judgment to the Twittersphere. Believers now play judge, jury and executioner without due process or any semblance of ecclesial order. Social media has become a tribunal, and reputations can be assassinated with a single click. This practice not only bypasses biblical structures of accountability but also reveals how biblically illiterate and spiritually reckless much of the body has become. The church is not a mob. It is a family governed by elders, not online outrage.

3. Presumptuously Calling for a “Court of Heaven”

For over a decade, the “courts of heaven” teaching has gained traction in certain charismatic circles. The idea is that one can summon a heavenly court to break generational curses and demonic strongholds. While there are kernels of truth—God is a righteous Judge—nowhere in Scripture do we see mortals initiating heavenly court sessions. In Isaiah 6, 1 Kings 22:19–23 and Revelation 5, it is always God who opens the courts, not man. To presume otherwise is to cross a line into spiritual presumption. We do not command heaven; we respond to it.

4. Scheduling Heavenly Visitations

On more than one occasion, someone has told me they could arrange for me to visit heaven—via a person they follow on Facebook. Let that sink in as if heaven were a destination managed by a prophetic travel agent. This is not only absurd but spiritually dangerous. Scripture is filled with reverence and trembling in the presence of divine encounters. Paul himself was reluctant to speak of his vision of heaven (2 Cor. 12), and yet today, people are scheduling it as if it were a conference call. This practice trivializes the holiness of God.

5. Claiming Titles With No Fruit

We live in an era where many claim the titles of bishop, apostle or even doctor—without the corresponding fruit, character or qualifications. Titles without transformation are empty. If one has not been tested, mentored or affirmed by credible spiritual authority, then claiming these roles is nothing short of self-deception. Worse, many now flaunt degrees from unaccredited “diploma mills,” which undermines the credibility of true scholarship and ministry. The kingdom is not advanced by titles but by substance.

6. Communing With Departed Saints

Necromancy was condemned in the Old Testament (Deut. 18:10–12), yet Today, some leaders openly claim to receive counsel from dead saints. (See also 1 Samuel 28.) Others promote the practice of praying to saints, despite the New Testament’s clear instruction that we come to the Father in the name of Jesus alone (John 14:6; 1 Tim. 2:5). There is one mediator between God and man—Jesus Christ. To commune with the dead or invoke their intercession apart from Christ is not just unbiblical—it’s spiritually reckless.

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7. Using the Hebrew Calendar to Guide the Church

In recent years, prophetic voices have increasingly drawn guidance for the church from the Jewish (Hebrew) calendar, declaring divine mandates for each year based on its numerical or mystical significance. While the Old Testament calendar has deep historical and redemptive meaning, to use it as a primary tool for church direction is to conflate covenants and lapse into a form of Christianized Kabbalah. The New Testament church is led by the Holy Spirit and guided by Scripture and apostolic tradition, not Jewish numerology.

8. Giving Unaccountable Prophetic Words on Social Media

First Corinthians 14:29 commands that prophetic words be judged by other prophets and leaders. Yet today, untested voices with no visible accountability or ecclesial connection are releasing words to thousands on social media. Who are their pastors? Who mentors them? What lifestyle do they live? This lack of context and accountability is not prophetic; it is spiritual anarchy. True prophetic ministry is rooted in the local church and must pass the test of community, Scripture, accountability and fruit.

9. Building Churches Around Mega-Personalities Instead of Christ

We've built platforms bigger than pulpits, and personalities people highlight more than the Lord they claim to serve. When churches are built around the charisma of a person rather than the character of Christ, collapse is inevitable. We are witnessing the fallout—celebrity pastors burning out, moral

failures and congregations that disband once the star leaves the stage. Paul said, “We preach not ourselves but Christ Jesus as Lord” (2 Cor. 4:5). The church was never meant to orbit a man.

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10. Basing Success on Crowds Rather Than Disciples

Nowhere in the sacred text or apostolic tradition are we commanded to draw a crowd. We are commanded to make disciples (Matt. 28:19). Of course, evangelism is essential—winning the lost is the beginning of the process—but the church has often mistaken attraction for transformation. A full building does not equate to a full heart. The early church in Acts didn’t build around events but around spiritual formation and covenantal community. If we measure success only by size, we will fail to measure what truly matters.

Conclusion

These practices, though diverse, share a common flaw: they replace biblical fidelity with man-made innovation. They reflect a church that, in many cases, has lost its moorings. The answer is not in swinging to reactionary extremes but in returning to Scripture, to Christ-centered orthodoxy and Spirit-led wisdom rooted in the historic faith. Let us reform not with suspicion but with clarity and conviction, grounded in truth and tempered by love.

Let the church be the church again.

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