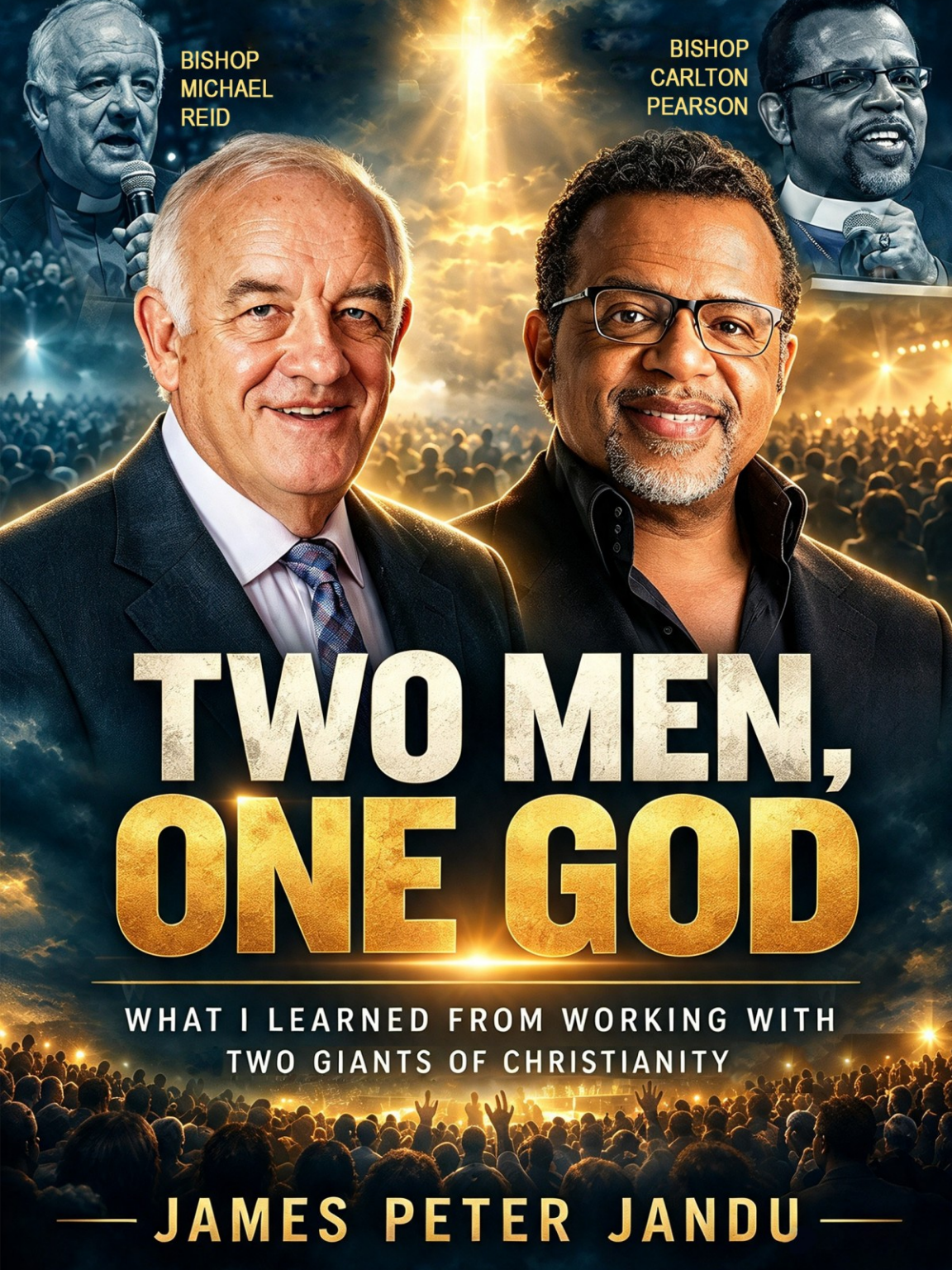

BISHOP
MICHAEL
REID
BISHOP
CARLTON
PEARSON
TWO MEN,
ONE GOD
WHAT I LEARNED FROM WORKING WITH
TWO GIANTS OF CHRISTIANITY
JAMES PETER JANDU

TWO MEN, ONE GOD

What I Learned from Working with Two Giants of Christianity

JAMES PETER JANDU

2026

COPYRIGHT

© 2026 James Peter Jandu

All rights reserved.

No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, without prior written permission of the copyright holder, except for brief quotations used in reviews or other permitted uses under applicable copyright law.

First edition, 2026.

James Peter Jandu

Global Gospel Fellowship

www.globalgospelfellowship.net

Contents

Introduction 1

Chapter One – "You'll Learn": My Years with Bishop Reid.....4

Chapter Two – Right Road, Wrong Way: Working with Bishop Pearson 34

Chapter Three – Two Men, Many Lessons 54

Appendix..... 69

Introduction

"You're not a pastor; you're a disaster! You're a witch!" Those were the words Bishop Michael Reid said to me during our first in-person meeting.

My first encounter with Bishop Pearson was a very different experience.

I was privileged to work closely with two giants of the church world, Bishop Michael Reid and Bishop Pearson. Even today I pinch myself when I think of how God brought it about. It was nothing short of miraculous.

I never went looking for opportunities or positions, but when we are in Christ, our steps are ordered by God.

Two Spiritual Sons

The great Oral Roberts had two spiritual sons, Bishop Pearson and Bishop Reid. Both were mentored by him.

Roberts took the healing revival onto television and carried it into homes across America. In 1963 he founded Oral Roberts University in Tulsa. Bishop

Reid once told me that Roberts was offered $2 billion for it, and refused to sell.

I did not know that I would one day work closely with both of his sons, but that is what this book is about. They were very different men, and what they taught me was just as different.

About This Book

This book is about two men who were, in many ways, opposites: one blunt and feared, the other warm and rejected. One taught me to hold on. The other taught me what happens when you let go. I worked with both, I loved both, and I disagreed with parts of both.

In this short book I will explain my experience with these two great ministers and what I learned. They were different in so many ways, and I think that is what the Lord wanted to show me. Both of them taught me so much. Their wealth of experience was enormous. Their influence stretched across the length and breadth of Christianity worldwide.

Bishop Reid taught me to hold the line. Bishop Pearson showed me what it costs to cross it. When I sat in Bishop Pearson's apartment and he said, "He

was a hard man," I understood then that I was holding two stories at once.

Here is what I saw and experienced.

Chapter One

“You’ll Learn”: My Years with Bishop Reid

(From: Chapter 23, ‘I Am Alive: The Bishop Michael Reid Story’)

“You’re not a Pastor; you’re a disaster! You’re a witch!” These were his words to me during our initial meeting.

My encounter with Bishop Michael Reid embodies all the elements of a divine appointment, most notably the impartation by laying on of hands that he and Dr Reid later affirmed privately to my wife and me. Before I go into the details, I will explain the journey that led to those profound encounters.

I don’t recall how I first learned about him, but my earliest memory is when a friend mentioned their

discussions with him on doctrinal matters. After researching his ministry, I decided to visit, which only led to more visits in the late 1990s and early 2000s. Back then, I had no idea about the divine plan that would unfold.

Early Meeting and Attending Events

I never spoke with him during those initial visits, except for a brief encounter, but I greatly enjoyed his teachings and those of visiting ministers like T.L. Osborn.

I vividly recall his humorous talk about weight loss struggles, joking about working with a personal trainer instead of going to a gym: “Frequenting a public gym might just put your marriage at risk!”

At one event, T.L. Osborn recounted an incident when he inadvertently deleted a book he was writing. In a remarkably generous act, he invited anyone interested to receive the new unedited file. I was fortunate to obtain a copy, complete with his handwritten corrections and notes.

Astonishingly, I received confirmation of my revelatory insights through Bishop Reid and T.L. Osborn’s sermons; they taught things I hadn’t heard from anyone else. This further piqued my interest.

Consequently, I often invited ministers to meet with him, and several took up the invitation. I purposefully avoided being in the room, aiming to let the others have the same encounter I had through his ministry. I recall dropping off Bishop Jonathan Ansar for his stay and studies, and the warmth of the people there left a lasting impression on me.

Two memorable moments from the early days stick in my memory. The first took place during a lunch break at a Global Gospel Fellowship event. I was seated at a table in the large marquee, not far from Bishop Reid and T.L. Osborn. As Bishop Reid stood up and walked past my table, he suddenly came to a halt. His gaze was intense and prolonged. I pondered the significance of this moment, accustomed to prophets singling me out from a crowd and delivering prophecies. Eventually, he casually uttered: "You'll learn," before continuing. Those seemingly casual words would later hold great importance. Many years later, I came to appreciate his perceptiveness; every word he spoke was intentional.

In another situation, I was in the church's front car park with a minister friend. I distinctly remember when Bishop Reid approached us to talk to the minister. He took the book I was holding,

“You Have Not Many Fathers” by Mark Hanby, and began flipping through its pages. He returned it a few seconds later and remarked: “That’s incorrect. ‘Rhema’ and ‘logos’ are used interchangeably in scripture.” This contradicted the traditional teaching among charismatics. His understanding of the scripture was unmatched by anyone I’d ever heard.

I never imagined those visits would lead to a conversation that would change my life. The sequence began in 2008, when, as I approached the pulpit of the church I pastored, God spoke to me: “Dismantle this work; I have something else for you to do.” Simultaneously, my ministry in India unexpectedly evaporated, and within months, under unusual circumstances, I crossed paths with Bishop Reid.

From a Facebook Chat to the Initial Meeting: A Journey of Impartation

I was aware of the events at Peniel, but they didn’t concern me, and I didn’t give them much thought until the evening of Tuesday, 22nd September 2009. As I relaxed on the sofa that evening, my wife’s persistent encouragement to join Facebook drifted through the air. I remained unyielding in my disinterest. “I’ll create an account for you,” she

persisted with a smile as she disappeared into our newly finished conservatory-turned-office, re-emerging moments later. “Come and have a look,” she invited, her voice brimming with eagerness. I peeled myself off the sofa. “I’ll take a look to keep her content,” I mused silently.

I searched for a specific profile, clicked on the chat function, and curiously typed: “Hello.” Unexpectedly, I received an instant reply: “Hello.” I assumed his office assistant was replying: “Is this Bishop Michael Reid?” I was shocked when the reply confirmed: “Yes, this is Michael Reid.” I almost fell off my chair.

“Michael Reid, or a secretary?”

“Michael Reid.”

A visit was arranged.

I walked across his living room. The plush carpet softened each step. It had probably witnessed countless conversations with famous preachers. I seem to remember a framed document on the wall, possibly signed by Spurgeon.

I felt incredibly at ease; he did not exude an aura of self-importance, unlike other ministers. As we settled in for a conversation, he did not hold back. “You’re not a pastor; you’re a disaster! You’re a

witch!" His words hit me like a hammer. Strangely, I laughed. It marked my first encounter with a minister of this kind – one who spoke the truth without an apology or smarmy politeness. By the end of our meeting, I understood why he had a painting of Winston Churchill, the famous wartime Prime Minister known as the 'British Bulldog', hanging in his living room. I was ready to leave, filled with joy.

But there was still something remarkable to happen before our first meeting came to an end.

As I stood to leave, he called me over and placed his hands on me. I stood, attentive to the most child-like prayer I had ever heard, void of any theatrics. Suddenly I saw what appeared to be scales falling from my eyes. They looked like pale strips of paper, drifting slowly to the floor. Then bang! Instantaneously, I grasped the undeniable truth of God's sovereignty with divine certainty; no words can adequately describe it. And then again, bang! In another flash of revelation, the certainty of the unshakeable security of my salvation flooded my consciousness. At the same time, an extraordinary sequence unfolded and I witnessed the entirety of the Bible – from Genesis to Revelation – I cannot articulate this experience in any other way.

In an instant, my theories had vanished, without my permission, request, or debate and were replaced by an unwavering divine certainty that remains until today. Initially, I kept the experience to myself, unsure why I had been graced with that experience. At that time, I was not aware that Bishop Reid, unlike most Christians, embraced God's sovereignty and the security of salvation and possessed an unmatched grasp of the scripture. God's plan was unfolding gradually.

The Unfolding Plan: Dreams, Visions and Revelations

Before meeting Bishop Reid, as I walked past the TV, on my way out of the living room, I suddenly felt prompted to glance back at the screen. A minister was preaching in a tightly packed church: "Why was God drawing my attention to this man?" That man was Apostle Alfred Williams.

As I continued attending events at the home of Bishop Reid, things continued to unfold. A verse that had always held a mysterious significance for me since my early days in Christ took on new meaning when I met Bishop Reid: Psalm 103:7, "He made His ways known to Moses and His acts to the children of Israel." Bishop Reid often stressed the importance of understanding God's ways. I would

reflect: “This emphasis is unique; God inscribed that verse in my mind for such a time as this.”

I noted my mysterious ability to comprehend every word he spoke. This ability finally made sense when God gave me two significant dreams. In the first dream, I found myself seated on Bishop Reid’s cream-coloured sofa. Abruptly, I felt a presence behind me, and when I turned, I was surprised to see Archbishop Benson Idahosa sitting on the back of the sofa. Locking eyes with me, he uttered unexpected words that caught me off guard: “You have been brought here to correct your understanding of the Scripture. You have an apostolic ministry.” Months later, in the second dream, I sat opposite Apostle Alfred Williams in Reid’s spacious conservatory. Apostle Williams spoke with conviction, declaring: “You are an apostle in training.” Until that first dream, I had never entertained such a notion; however, in a flash, everything in my ministerial past made perfect sense.

During my time with them, I refrained from sharing my experiences or presenting myself as a minister despite my long-standing, unmistakable divine calling. By that point, I had been preaching for two decades, covering everything from street corners to numerous pulpits, and eventually, I

hosted successful annual leaders and workers' conferences in India.

Months later, I shared the initial dream with the Reids, sparking Bishop Reid's keen interest in Archbishop Idahosa's words. I also recounted the marquee incident. Once, in his living room, I shared my experience of being baptised in the Holy Spirit with someone and saw Bishop Reid glance upward subtly, listening intently. He could discern my calling without any need for me to declare it. This became evident one day as my wife and I found ourselves seated in the car with them, en route to a destination that escapes my memory.

God Spoke to Them About Me

My wife and I were seated in the back seat, with Bishop Reid at the wheel, while Dr Reid occupied the front passenger seat of their Range Rover. Dr Reid's voice broke the silence: "Since the beginning of our ministry, we've been looking out for someone upon whom his mantle would fall," she began. "Throughout these years, God never directed anyone our way. We talked about it last night. We both believe it's you." Those were not the words I had expected, yet every fibre in my being recognised its truth. I scarcely acknowledged the weighty words she had just spoken, perhaps

because I had never hunted acknowledgement, titles or positions.

The topic wasn't revisited again until an invitation to a restaurant, which I believe was their intention. "What do you want to do in life? What stirs your passion?" they asked me. One answer burned within me: "To preach the Gospel!" I knew their expectations, but inexplicably, I blurted out: "I want to create documentaries." It was true – I wanted to create Gospel-oriented documentaries, a goal I later achieved, including one that featured Pastor Sunday Adelaja, the leader of Europe's largest church. However, it wasn't the answer they had anticipated.

I often wonder why I concealed my strong passion for preaching. Years down the road, I heard Bishop Reid state: "There are always people who want ministry, seek ministry. I always look for the person who's trying to get out of it because he's the called one."

I never dared to teach or preach in his presence. On one occasion, he was late for a service and I started speaking. However, as soon as he arrived and took his position, I handed over the service to him, even though he signalled for me to continue. This unwillingness to preach in front of my mentors

has been my general approach even when I was the main speaker; I don't chase pulpits.

Sharing these experiences openly at the time would have been as unwise as Joseph revealing his dreams to his brothers. Some people in Reid's circle seemed to believe that they held a special status with him and expected his exclusive attention. However, I wasn't there to compete with anyone.

This all happened when I was around 37 years old. Some years later, the Lord revealed to me that once I turned fifty, there would be a significant shift in my calling – and indeed, there was.

Seeking Assistance, Yet Offering Support

I met with Bishop Reid to seek his support, but the tables turned and I ended up providing support to him. As a result, he remained entirely unaware that 2009 marked the start of the darkest period in my life, which began after God gave me a Word of Knowledge dream and enabled me to emerge victorious in all things.

During my visits, I observed several conversations about the events at Peniel; however, I would politely exit the room as if I were a guest. Nonetheless, the fragments I did overhear unveiled a clear truth – genuine support was lacking. Once I

became aware of his predicament, I was deeply compelled to offer assistance. Upon committing to his ministry, I shut down my website and ceased all ministry-related activities, incurring financial loss. My focus was to safeguard his residence, which his former church was seeking to evict him from.

I organised a petition as one of my initiatives, hoping it would generate publicity. Despite opposition, a determined group of us, which included Bishop and Dr Ruth Reid, Apostle Williams, my wife and several others, successfully delivered the petition to 10 Downing Street, the Prime Minister's office. A local press article that followed invited childish hostility. As I walked near the Peniel Church, a passing car splashed water on me, and moments later, I saw the same car in the Church's car park.

We assisted with Michael Reid Media Productions, a platform for online content streaming. I accompanied him and fellow team members to acquire the necessary equipment, and even hosted broadcasts occasionally. My family and I made regular trips from Bedford to Brentwood. Over time, these visits turned into extended stays, sometimes lasting for months.

Although we owned a house in Bedford, the difficult circumstances I was facing led to the eventual loss of the property. Meeting him during this tumultuous time became my lifeline. It's truly miraculous that just as circumstances became difficult for him, my life too simultaneously turned chaotic. We supported each other, and God's intervention through this remarkable man rescued me during a critical period. I kept the loss of my house private and gladly assisted him, cherishing the profound impact of his ministry over material goods.

Our sons, Joshua and Michael, often joined Dr Reid for walks with the dogs, Sienna and Badger. I treasure many moments including when we went out together, only to discover when we returned that we'd accidentally left eight-year-old Michael home alone for hours. Unaware of our absence, he snuck into the kitchen for biscuits. We returned to find him on the couch, happily watching TV in the living room, unaware that he had been left all alone.

Equally amusing was the evening when Bishop Reid discreetly asked my wife for toast after dinner. While taking it to the living room, she unexpectedly ran into Ruth. Bishop Reid secretly signalled for her to leave and conceal the toast. While I was writing this book, she brought it to my room and later

returned to make more toast for him, despite Ruth's efforts in managing his strict diet.

Questionable Individuals

People flocked around Bishop Reid, but I sensed hidden agendas, insincerity, gossip and discord-sowers among them. Some claimed gatekeeper status due to their longer ministry tenure or extensive sermon consumption. Others, including church leaders with the facade of importance, tried to create a rift between me and Bishop Reid.

The most concerning individual was Sithole, who falsely claimed to be "U.K.'s youngest black billionaire" and promised to purchase properties and cars for the ministry. Once, he met us at Pizza Hut – he came using public transport, which was odd given his supposed wealth.

He extended an offer to purchase a car for us, but I feigned disinterest. Initially baffled by Reid's lack of awareness of the shenanigans, I had a revealing moment, when, during a restaurant visit, Bishop Reid mumbled: "Something is strange about him."

At times, I subtly alluded to Reid about others, but looking back, I regret not being more direct. I was puzzled about why he couldn't perceive their deceptive behaviour, or if he did, why he didn't

distance himself. Perhaps he possessed a wisdom that I lacked. Over time, I came to understand that when Bishop Reid sensed deception, he would engage further to discern the person's motives. He was no fool: "I watch corrupt people; they'll sit amongst you. I know who they are. I'm not a fool…" Similar to Jesus with Judas – being aware of his actions yet retaining him – it depicted the coexistence of wheat and tares.

Then came the final straw. Contrary to my usual habit, I voiced concern about a man whose presence bothered me. Having collaborated with ministers from his nation for over a decade, I knew their tactics to extract funds. This upset me, so I withdrew and spent most of my time alone, keeping myself locked away in the bedroom.

After significant persuasion, I eventually spoke with the Reids in their bedroom. It was a cosy room, the kind you would expect of an elderly couple who had spent many years together: lived-in, comfortable and quiet. I sat down knowing I was about to say something I could not take back.

For some reason, I picked a fight over giving money to the poor. Bishop Reid disagreed with me. It was several years before I acknowledged he had been right. The truth was that I was angry. The poor

were not really the issue. I was uneasy about the people around them, and I did not know how else to say so.

Since being filled with the Spirit, I had operated in the discerning of spirits, and here it was getting me into trouble. I was only trying to protect them.

They seemed hurt. Dr Reid was firm: I had no right to question their choice of friends. Bishop Reid agreed with her. Neither of them was harsh, and they spoke firmly yet kindly, but the message was clear.

When we left to go home to Bedford, it was with the intention of coming back. Inside, though, I knew I might not. I still remember standing on the doorstep saying goodbye. It was awkward.

On the drive home, my wife and I were somewhat disappointed, and sad for them.

Unfortunately, while we were away, we received news that made us feel unwelcome. The disappointment was compounded by negative remarks fuelled by gossip. In the end, I left and never returned for an extended period. While I was away, I was unaware of Apostle Williams and Bishop Reid's plan to meet me, or of Dr Reid's trip to

Bedford. I did receive a text from Apostle Williams inviting us to his service.

Contrary to any claims, I did not reject any meeting requests. My departure held no malice, unlike the backstabbing knife used by betrayers and twisted without tears. Abandoning them, when they were surrounded by circling sharks, left me feeling awful, yet God had a plan.

Following My Departure

According to our original plan, we sold our belongings and relocated to India with an open-ended plan. I closely followed his progress as best as I could and kept in touch.

An email dated Saturday, July 30th, 2011, provided me with health updates:

"I'm spending more time now looking after Bishop & Mrs Reid (sort of like a career). It's rewarding being able to give something back to these pioneers of the gospel. Most of my time now is being their hands and feet, so I don't spend as much time in the office, just an hour here and there. Mrs Reid is stable, she has good days and bad days – Bishop's heart is

doing great, but his body needs some resting for a few more weeks."

During this period, I frequently shared Bishop Reid's ministry with others. I encountered a preacher who had attended an event in Dubai and remembered Bishop Reid's bold statement, "Life can be a bitch sometimes." Yes, that was the Bishop Reid I was familiar with!

We had extensive travel plans for the end of February 2012, including speaking engagements planned in multiple U.S. states, as well as events in Dubai and Spain. However, everything changed when we received devastating news. After a year in India, we learned of Dr Reid's passing. We decided to sell our belongings and return to the U.K. on December 26th, 2011. We spent Christmas on the beach, surrounded by coconut trees and the next day, we flew back to England. My main concern was ensuring Bishop Reid's well-being.

Before fully recommitting to assisting with the ministry again, I wanted to gauge if I would receive a warm welcome. I planned to offer him my speaking engagements in the U.S., all expenses covered. My wife and I were fully prepared to support him, having discussed it before our arrival. In hindsight, I should have visited him once before

relocating to England, but I was convinced I needed to assist Reid since his wife was absent. Our affection for him was genuine.

Shortly after arriving, Bishop Reid ushered me into his office; the privacy felt reassuring. In our one-on-one interactions, he would often speak openly. Those familiar with us were mostly warm, though a few displayed caution, which I anticipated. However, unfriendly comments from unfamiliar faces hinted at pre-arrival discussions about us, which left us feeling unwelcome. More importantly, I was satisfied he had sufficient support, which relieved me, so we returned home.

Final Letter

On January 9th, 2012, I typed a letter to him, expressing that our relationship had become "awkward." I told him that in March 2011, just before we left his home, I had two clear dreams where the Lord revealed that we would meet again, but without Dr Reid present – and this is exactly what occurred when we reunited.

I conveyed that we were "eternally grateful to God" for his ministry's profound impact on us, noting that I had experienced a "devastating year before arriving." Upon hearing about his

challenges, I hesitated to burden him with my "personal struggles." Further, I clarified that our involvement had postponed significant plans, such as moving to India: "God knows the details of the numerous other sacrifices." I outlined how foreign ministries would overcharge Western counterparts for events, travel and other costs to defraud them; now I chuckle as I recall writing, "There were others who were advising you, who we felt had no spiritual experience with God beyond eating a chocolate chip cookie from Mars." On a more serious note, I expressed that our departure must have caused him pain as well, though that was never our intent and that despite our strong desire to be with him, we reluctantly chose not to return.

I expressed our pleasant surprise at the care he was receiving but warned him that individuals around him might impede his progress: "Fighting for rank and status is a childish game we shun." I clarified that we did not sense an atmosphere of acceptance from others, and our intention was always to avoid becoming an obstacle in his endeavours. However, I emphasised our commitment to listen to his sermons remotely and potentially attend GGF events. Finally, I concluded by stating: "My availability to assist you is an open-ended offer," and that "this letter may be shared

openly." The letter ended with the words, "Your son in the Gospel."

Sadly, people leaving ministries often face harsh treatment. During my ten years as a pastor, I supported congregation members in finding a new church when they wished to leave ours. Similarly, Bishop Reid extended kindness to me, and any discord I experienced with him solely stemmed from my ego.

U.S.A. Trip

In February 2012, my family and I spent three months in the U.S., ministering in churches, and it was during that time that we met Bishop Pearson. Oral Roberts had two notable spiritual protégés, Bishop Pearson and Bishop Reid. Bishop Pearson's ministry played a pivotal role in launching well-known preachers like Bishop TD Jakes and Joyce Meyer. Like Bishop Reid, Bishop Pearson experienced a significant loss of ministerial status. Our meeting resulted in years of close collaboration. A Netflix movie called "Come Sunday," featuring A-list actors, was eventually produced based on the life of Bishop Pearson.

Bishop Reid's Personality: The Man I Experienced

Sometimes a few bad experiences can unfairly shape how we see someone. I've found the four personality types useful for understanding people: Sanguine, outgoing and enthusiastic; Melancholic, thoughtful and analytical; Phlegmatic, calm and peace-loving; and Choleric, driven, decisive and sometimes domineering.

Bishop Reid was definitely a Choleric.

Not understanding a person's type can lead us to dislike them for no reason or try to change them when we shouldn't. We need to understand people based on their personality type. Things become clearer when we stop expecting them to change and instead learn to navigate diverse personalities.

God made him a natural-born leader. He was uncommon, and I have never met another church leader quite like him (and I'm still searching). He was decisive. Ask him anything and he seemed to have a quick, intelligent answer. He was assertive and never afraid to express his beliefs. He was also tough-skinned. I saw and heard some of the things he experienced, things that would have destroyed many others, yet he kept going.

He was effective too. He seemed to know what God wanted and, by the grace of God, he got the job done. At times, his leadership could border on dominance, which not everyone appreciated. But I believe his ministry mandate required precisely that kind of leader.

Misunderstandings often arise from misinformation, including personal experiences. Meeting people in person can challenge negative depictions, and our reactions may reveal our level of maturity as well as our internal state.

In him, I saw a man who possessed both confrontation and kindness, embodying strength and fragility. His tough exterior stemmed from a distinctive biochemistry and hidden insecurities. Peter Embling, a former Peniel Church member, accurately described him: "...full of compassion and love and concern. You might have a tiger in your tank, but you are a shepherd in your heart."

Rev. Dr Samuel Sao, the senior minister at Christ City Church, offers crucial insights: "As a student at the Peniel Bible College, I admired Bishop Reid, but I struggled to grasp why he spoke so sternly, particularly to ministers. One day, during a customary unannounced class visit, he was questioned about his direct communication style.

His response, explaining that he spoke that way to discern those genuinely called by God, left me satisfied with the explanation."

His fatherly presence and tough love could overwhelm delicate individuals; however, at his core, genuine concern prevailed: "…even when I was in plain clothes, the villains would say, 'Hi Tiger' as I walked down the street. They all knew me…." His humour broke through his tough exterior. At a GGF meeting, I initiated a question with the words: "I once read a book…" Reid playfully hinted that I didn't read much. While I chuckled, some found this humour offensive, as it could bruise egos. For me, his abrasive words served as refining sandpaper.

Perhaps God allowed his unconventional nature to help reveal and smooth out our rough edges. I'm reminded of Isaiah being sent [partially] naked to convey God's message, and the rugged John the Baptist yelling, "Repent!" John was beheaded at the request of Herodias' angry daughter. According to the Talmud, Isaiah endured martyrdom by being sawn in two, on the orders of Manasseh. Those sent by God are frequently assassinated in the court of public opinion, if not murdered, simply for attempting to fulfil the call of God in their life. Bishop Reid's love compelled him to speak the unvarnished truth despite knowing it might invite

backlash. His occasional severity stemmed from a profound commitment to the Scripture. Although he did occasionally falter in expression, after all, he was only human.

Unlike most, Bishop Reid did not intimidate me. Being known by God, I stand unshaken. Rarely did I directly question him, and when I did, my objections were often driven by ego and bitterness. This was evident on one occasion when I contested his view on helping the needy; looking back, I admit he was right, as usual.

Expecting perfection is a mistake typically made by babes in Christ or the unregenerate, resulting in disappointment. Julian and Everton affirmed this during my interviews with them. Julian: "...some people put Bishop on a pedestal and almost treated him like he was God. It's essential to have a personal relationship with God, and Bishop never preached, 'Worship me, worship me'."

Everton: "People treated him as if he was more than just a man of God. I think, personally, they put him on a pedestal. Man makes mistakes, and they had him up there like he was God..." Following [his] affair becoming public, Everton stated: "I sensed the hatred come out of them straightaway, saying things like, 'How can he do this? Who does he think

he is?' But I said, 'Hold on, he's a man and no man is perfect'."

His presence held power that compelled individuals to seek his approval. People yearned to earn his favour, to be in his proximity, to soak in his abundant blessings, and to be chosen by the chosen one. Men, women and children would work hard to gain his approval. In my opinion, this approach stemmed from their misguided insecurities.

Based on my observations, his presence made everyone feel alive and his relatable speech commanded attention. He spoke authentically, devoid of pretence, embodying the hearer's essence while maintaining deep scriptural understanding. And oh! how some loved him while others despised him! He was indeed an extraordinary, imperfect man with an impressive memory. He could effortlessly locate references from his bookshelf; his ability to recall historical details was remarkable. We once drove past a pub: "Dick Whittington used to frequent that place." After a pause, he remarked, "Not that anyone's interested to know." I detected his sense of unappreciated knowledge. If we listened carefully, we'd notice he was just like us – human.

He openly acknowledged being a work in progress, with his theology evolving. He humbly admitted his limitations and credited God, frequently quoting 2 Corinthians 4:7, to emphasise this point: “But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.” Like us all, he was a student of love, but not the counterfeit version.

I also saw a man who deeply loved his wife: “…my wife was one of those people who was never, ever rough with me. She loved me, and it didn’t matter what I did or said, she loved me. And I’ll tell you something, I loved her. It didn’t matter what she did or said. Love covers a multitude of sins… A husband is totally to give his life for his wife. Now, when you talk to husbands, they expect the wife to give her life for them. No, no, no, no…” (September 23rd, 2013). This is what I expect from a good man.

Final Thoughts

When among ministers, I distinguish between the called and the self-appointed. We had a profound mutual understanding that went beyond appearances; we spoke the same language and were eternally connected – irrespective of time and distance. In regard to Dr Ruth Reid, I still remember

how her eyes sparkled with excitement as she talked about the goodness of God.

Despite not seeing Bishop Reid for a while, my loyalty remained steadfast. Given my connection, John Sweeney, the former BBC Panorama reporter, met with me to inquire about a recording of a meeting between Bishop Reid and MP Eric Pickles, since I was present. Eric later served in David Cameron's Cabinet as Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government. Even if I had such information, I would never betray Bishop Reid's trust; his well-being mattered the most.

I was pleased when the church acquired a £465,000 residence for him, granting him a lifelong, rent-free arrangement that began when he was sixty-nine. I couldn't help but chuckle when I heard he called the property a 'hovel'.

Towards the end, the faces of Bishop and Dr Reid were a roadmap of wrinkles that told the story of a long, well-lived life. I felt a strong urge to tell that story and carry forward the teachings I had gleaned from him. After over a decade, I yearned to reunite with him, discuss the impartation from his laying on of hands, and convey: "Woe be unto me if I do not preach the Gospel," and receive his final blessing by laying on of hands. In February 2023, I turned fifty

and by mid-2023, the urge to connect with him intensified again. I searched online and was stunned to learn of his passing. Though my heart sank like a stone in water, the timing illuminated the meaning of the final words I heard in a dream the night before: “Never forget what you’ve been taught.” It felt like the invisible mantle I had carried on my shoulders since being with the Reids had suddenly become irresistibly, yet pleasantly, weighty.

The Funeral I Was Not Invited To

I felt a profound sadness that I had not been told in time to attend his funeral. I would have travelled any distance to be there. What makes it even more painful is that I did not even know he had passed away until months later. No one informed me, as I would have expected them to.

Surprisingly, I felt an even stronger connection with him after his passing. The Lord frequently brings him into my dreams, where God imparts revelation from the Scriptures. To this day, profound love for a remarkable couple overwhelms me; I miss their presence, yet I sense it beside me. I have a sneaky suspicion that God orchestrates events, personas and timing to accomplish His will. Although it may appear chaotic and agonising from

our perspective, as we drink from His cup, His purpose unfolds.

While for many, their departing from this earthly life signified the end, for me, it marked the beginning.

Chapter Two

Right Road, Wrong Way: Working with Bishop Pearson

“James, how ya doing? Pleased to meet you!”

Bishop Pearson said it with his hand already outstretched, and I knew within seconds that I was not meeting the man I had read about. I had no idea that I was about to work closely with him. God had a mysterious plan, and our story went back further than either of us could have imagined.

Bishop Pearson came to Tulsa in 1971 to study at Oral Roberts University, and Oral Roberts invited him to join the World Action Singers, and he later became an associate evangelist with the Oral Roberts Evangelistic Association in 1975. He went on to found Higher Dimensions in Tulsa, which had about 6,000 members by the turn of the century.

He also counselled several US presidents and international leaders. Bishop Pearson told me that when he first went to the White House, he was

surprised to discover that they already had a substantial file on him.

Bishop Pearson's Azusa Platform

Bishop Pearson's Azusa Conference in Tulsa, Oklahoma, became one of the most influential platforms in the American Pentecostal and charismatic world during the 1990s. The Azusa Conference gave a platform to many well-known preachers and gospel singers. The Azusa platform was so influential in propelling ministers into Christian stardom that, on one occasion, a preacher reportedly offered Bishop Pearson $100,000 to speak at the conference. When Bishop Pearson told me this, I was tempted to ask him who it was. Did Bishop Pearson accept the offer? Did he tell me who made it? More on this in a later section—and what I learned from it.

As mentioned, for many emerging preachers and gospel artists, appearing at Azusa was a major stepping stone to national and international recognition. Pearson's platform helped make their ministries and music known to a far wider audience.

Among the preachers propelled into the limelight by the Azusa platform were T.D. Jakes, Joyce Meyer,

Juanita Bynum, Myles Munroe, Michael Pitts, Rod Parsley, Noel Jones, Clarence McClendon, Paul Morton, Richard Henton, Vernon Ashe, and Jackie McCullough. Without the exposure and platform Azusa provided, many of them may never have become as widely known as they eventually did.

The platform was also significant for gospel music. Artists and groups associated with Azusa included Donnie McClurkin, The Clark Sisters, LaShun Pace, Ricky Dillard, Hezekiah Walker, Shirley Caesar, Jonathan Nelson and Brian Courtney Wilson. For many of these artists, as with the preachers, appearing at Azusa helped carry them to a much wider audience and contributed to the national and international recognition they later enjoyed.

Some appearances were particularly significant. Donnie McClurkin, for example, described Azusa as an important bridge in his move beyond his local ministry into a much wider national and international audience. T.D. Jakes is perhaps the clearest example among the preachers. His appearance at Azusa gave him exposure to a much broader audience at a crucial stage in his ministry. Jakes himself acknowledged the importance of Bishop Pearson and the Azusa platform in helping bring his ministry to a much wider audience.

Later, his teaching of the "gospel of inclusion" — a form of universalism that does not recognise hell — brought a painful split with his mentor and cost him much of his congregation. The congregation dwindled from 6,000 to just a handful. It was after this that I met him.

How I Met Him – On The Right Road, Going The Wrong Way

In 2009, I emailed Bishop Pearson and heard nothing back. I had written because I'd heard how the church had rejected him. I didn't necessarily agree with everything he taught, but in my opinion, we should not kill our wounded soldiers.

Around that time, I had just met Bishop Reid. My family and I were considering leaving the UK, but we weren't sure whether to move to India or the USA, so we decided to spend time in both before choosing. After a year in India, we were shocked to hear of the death of Dr. Ruth Reid. We sold up and returned to the UK to make sure Bishop Reid was cared for. We found that he was, and not long afterwards, we travelled to the US for three months. We flew into Chicago and stayed in South Bend as guests of Lucas Miles. The person who had originally invited us to the US ghosted us, but thankfully Lucas stepped in and helped.

Then something amazing happened.

In 2012, three years after I wrote, I received a reply to my 2009 email, written as though I had sent it the day before. Even better, we were now only a short drive from him. When I called his PA, she insisted he couldn't meet us. Eventually, she asked him, and he agreed. So, we drove to Chicago.

As we neared his home, we got lost. When we finally arrived, he came downstairs to meet us. The first thing I noticed was his smile. It arrived before he did, warm and unhurried, the kind that makes a stranger feel expected. He was a man in his later years, but there was nothing tired about him. His dark hair, threaded with silver, was swept back from a broad forehead, and a neatly kept goatee, gone mostly grey, framed his mouth. Thin, rectangular glasses sat across his face, and behind them his eyes were attentive and kind, the eyes of someone who had spent a lifetime listening to people as well as speaking to them. He dressed simply and relaxed, the high collar of his shirt open at the neck. There was no pulpit, no microphone, no robe, only a man at ease in his own home, offering his hand.

"James, how ya doing? Pleased to meet you!"

His handshake reminded me of an experience I had while pastoring. A Christian who had left another church visited ours and later told me that when I shook their hand, it was unlike anything they had ever experienced in a church.

In many churches, a handshake can become little more than a cold gesture of duty, something we do because we are supposed to. But a genuine welcome is different. It communicates, "I'm genuinely glad you're here."

That was how Bishop Pearson shook my hand. There was warmth in it. It felt genuine. It was as though he was not simply going through the motions of greeting me. He was genuinely pleased to see me.

His apartment was a dim, upscale lounge lit by a stone fireplace. I apologised for being late and explained that we had got lost. "Bishop, we were on the right road, going the wrong way!" I said, without realising what I had just said. He caught it at once. "Right road, wrong way," he said, smiling. "I like that!"

When I mentioned that I was with Bishop Reid, his face changed slightly. His jaw tightened and his gaze slid away. "He was a hard man."

Yikes. My head lowered to hide my eyes. He did not seem to like Bishop Reid much, though I did. Bishop Reid never beat around the bush, so perhaps they had disagreed. I was still carrying wounds from before I had ever met Bishop Reid, and I knew this was going to be an interesting meeting. I did not yet know it would bring healing in ways I could not have planned.

Working with the Man Behind the Headlines

We talked, and here was a man who did not misjudge people.

Often, when I am in the presence of preachers, there can be a lot of play-acting. Ministers pat each other on the back, everyone is careful about what they say, and you can sometimes feel that people are measuring their words.

But with Bishop Pearson, I did not feel any of that.

During my visits to Bishop Pearson's home, I met a unique minister, one you could openly talk to without fear of being judged.

An Unlikely Place to Preach

In those early days, Bishop Pearson would hold a service in Chicago at a Pentecostal Apostolic church.

The fact that he was even permitted to use the venue was gracious. There were other churches that would have turned him away.

The first service I attended, however, surprised me. And it was not because only a few people had turned up.

It was because of something I experienced when Bishop Pearson stood up to preach.

Something I Did Not Expect

Ever since I was baptised in the Holy Spirit, I had operated in the discerning of spirits. I had developed an inner awareness of where God was at work and where He was not.

So, when Bishop Pearson stood to preach, I was shocked.

I experienced that same inner knowing that God was anointing someone.

I cannot stress enough how surprised I was.

Bishop Pearson was simply preaching. He was not saying anything particularly controversial or anything that most people would have considered heretical. Yet as he preached, I had a very real sense that God was anointing him.

At that point, I had no doubt about what I was sensing.

But I need to clarify something about this later, because I do not want you to jump to conclusions about what I am saying. There is more to the story.

Not a Secret Meeting

We spent several hours talking, and I appreciated the opportunity to get to know him.

When I visited him, however, it was not some kind of Nicodemus-style meeting where I was secretly coming to see Jesus at night.

Although, to be honest, if people had known I was meeting with this man, some of them probably would have crucified me!

The truth was much simpler.

I just wanted to see that he was okay.

We had never had any prior contact, but I had read about what he had been through. I wanted to know how he was doing and whether he was still, as he liked to say, "keep, keepin' on!"

Returning to the UK

Eventually, the time came for me to return to the UK.

We stayed in touch, and I had planned to return, but things did not work out that way.

However, not being able to return did not mean I could not help him.

By this point, I could see that his ministry was facing some very practical challenges.

A Ministry in Need of Help

The website was slow, the donate button did not work properly, and the whole thing had been built by a man who was later imprisoned. When changes were needed, they apparently had to get a message to him in prison. You could not make this up.

Bishop Pearson was clearly grappling with some significant challenges in establishing and maintaining his ministry. I recognised that I might be able to help, so I decided to help a brother out.

Five Years of Struggle in One Month

What had felt like five years of struggle was achieved in about one month.

And there was a slight complication: I was in the UK and Bishop Pearson was in the United States.

We redesigned the website and began working on getting the ministry functioning more effectively

online. We also launched live streaming on YouTube.

That eventually led to several years of close collaboration.

But our first attempt at live streaming was, to put it mildly, not exactly a technological triumph.

The World's Worst Live Stream?

Because I was not physically there, it was difficult for me to explain some of the technical matters to the team.

Bishop Pearson's PA, Michelle, did her best. And what a lovely lady she was.

She had such a positive attitude and such a kind smile. Whatever the technical problems, she never seemed to lose that warmth.

Unfortunately, the quality of the live stream camera was so bad that it became impossible to ignore. In fact, a businessman who had watched the stream actually emailed me and said he would be willing to donate money towards buying a new camera. Still, the important thing was that we were making progress. What had previously seemed like years of struggle was beginning to move forward,

and I was glad to be able to play a small part in helping Bishop Pearson and his ministry.

We Drifted Apart

Eventually, we got things going.

Bishop Pearson began hosting a live broadcast each week, and his support on social media grew considerably. We did our best to make everything work with limited finances, limited equipment and only a small number of helpers.

For several years, we worked closely together. But after about six years, around 2017 or 2018, our relationship became rather strained.

The reason was politics.

When Politics Came Between Us

I was openly supportive of President Donald Trump, while Bishop Pearson was very much on the opposite side of the political aisle.

We never actually discussed it.

There was no argument, no confrontation and no dramatic falling-out. We simply began to drift apart.

I suspect he had seen some of my pro-Trump posts on social media, while I had certainly seen his vehemently anti-Trump posts.

To be honest, there were times when I got carried away. I referred to Democrats as “lunatics” on a few occasions. Bishop Pearson may well have seen those posts and gasped!

What I meant was that I thought some of the policies were crazy. I certainly did not mean that every Democrat was literally a lunatic. But social media has a way of making us sound more extreme than we might be if we were sitting across a table having a proper conversation.

Looking back, perhaps politics became one of those unnecessary walls that slowly came between us.

Something I Had Noticed Before

That distance also made me reflect on something I had noticed during the years I knew him.

I sometimes got the impression that Bishop Pearson had been deeply hurt by the way some white people in the church had treated him.

I cannot say exactly what experiences had shaped that impression, and I do not want to put words into his mouth. But there seemed to be, at times, a negative feeling beneath the surface towards some white people.

I remember one occasion when I had used a photograph of myself with my hair styled differently. Bishop Pearson commented that I should have my fringe hanging to one side as I normally did and not comb it back “like the white preachers.”

It was a small comment, but it stayed with me.

Perhaps it reflected some of the wounds he had carried from his experiences in the church. I cannot know for certain. I can only tell you what I observed.

Others Carried the Work Forward

Eventually, other people began helping Bishop Pearson and building on what we had already put in place.

At one point, Bishop Pearson told me that some people had tried to take credit for the progress.

But he reminded them:

“It was James who got us this far.”

That meant a lot to me.

Whatever our later differences, I was grateful that he remembered the work we had done together.

Come Sunday

Bishop Pearson's story eventually reached a much wider audience.

The Netflix film Come Sunday portrayed his life and ministry, with an impressive cast that included Chiwetel Ejiofor as Bishop Pearson, Martin Sheen as Oral Roberts and Danny Glover as Gilbert Pearson.

Watching his story reach that kind of audience was remarkable.

But behind the film, the headlines and the controversy was a man I had actually sat with, talked with and worked alongside.

That makes the story much more personal for me.

The Man Behind the Controversy

Had Bishop Pearson not moved away from the beliefs he had held for much of his life, I believe he was likely to have had a very different future. He had been closely connected with Oral Roberts and was regarded by many as a possible successor at Oral Roberts University.

Somehow, in what appeared to be the wreckage of his ministry, I was given the opportunity to meet and get to know this remarkable man. I do not

agree with much of Bishop Pearson's theology. There are significant things he taught publicly with which I strongly disagree.

Had the church treated him differently, rather than simply abandoning him, I believe there was a possibility that he could have been brought back, at least to some extent.

“Wondering and Wandering”

I had listened to Bishop Pearson in person, up close. I had talked with him and spent considerable time with him.

My impression was that he did not necessarily have everything settled in his own mind.

He once described himself as “wondering and wandering.”

And, honestly, I think there was something very human about that.

He had questions. He was wrestling with things. He was trying to make sense of his experiences and his theology.

That is not the same thing as deliberately trying to destroy Christianity.

What Bishop Pearson had not expected, I believe, was the level of rejection and harsh treatment that followed.

He once told me that a prominent preacher, whom I will not name, eventually admitted to him:

"We did you wrong."

Those words say a lot.

Sadly, the church sometimes has a terrible habit of ruthlessly killing its wounded.

The Secret Conversations

I also heard something else that made me think.

Many people came to Bishop Pearson privately and told him that they agreed with him. But they were unwilling to say so publicly because they feared losing their ministry, their position or the salary that fed their families.

Bishop Pearson understood their position.

He told them that if they felt they needed to remain silent, then they should.

I can understand why.

I have had prominent ministers come to me privately as well. I will never reveal their names.

There are people in the church who can be remarkably Pharisaical. They can be quick to condemn and even quicker to crucify someone who steps outside the accepted line.

And I am not prepared to expose people simply because they trusted me enough to speak privately.

Christianity Is Not Always What It Appears to Be

Bishop Pearson could have told you many shocking stories about church and ministry. I could tell you some too, but they would probably surprise people.

Christianity is not always the perfect institution it sometimes portrays itself to be. Behind the platforms, conferences, ministries and impressive reputations are ordinary human beings, with all the weaknesses, ambitions, fears and struggles that come with being human.

One story Bishop Pearson told me concerned a preacher who offered $100,000 for the opportunity to speak on the platform at an Azusa conference.

Bishop Pearson accepted the money, but that night he could not sleep.

He deeply regretted accepting the money.

I do not know whether he eventually returned it, and I never asked Bishop Pearson who the

preacher was. I know that two preachers who spoke at that conference went on to build enormous international ministries. Both became highly prominent in Christian circles, speaking at major events around the world and generating considerable income through their ministries.

I will not name them.

I have my suspicions about one of them, partly because of his behaviour when he preached at the conference, but I cannot prove what happened. So I will leave the names out.

What concerns me is the principle.

Someone can become globally accepted while the way they were brought to prominence may have been anything but godly.

The Hireling Comes In Another Way

Jesus warned about people who do not enter through the proper door.

In John 10:1, He says:

"He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber."

The principle is sobering.

Not everyone who gets onto the platform was necessarily sent there by God.

Not everyone who becomes famous in Christian circles has been approved by God.

And perhaps the uncomfortable question is this:

Why are some people so quick to condemn someone like me for helping Bishop Pearson in a time of need, while unquestioningly listening to preachers whose own methods and motives may deserve far greater scrutiny?

Sometimes we are more concerned about protecting the reputation of the institution than discerning what is actually true.

A Man I Will Not Forget

Despite everything that happened, Bishop Pearson remained a warm and unforgettable figure to those who knew him.

He helped many people.

He influenced countless lives.

And no one can deny that thousands of people came to faith in Jesus Christ through his ministry.

I experienced his kindness personally.

When my father-in-law died, Bishop Pearson recorded a video message for the funeral in the UK, and we played it during the service.

That meant a great deal to me.

He had helped so many people, yet many seemed to quickly forget the way God had used him to help build their ministries and influence their lives.

People can be remarkably forgetful.

Chapter Three

Two Men, Many Lessons

The man who could silence a room of ministers with a single sentence once signalled my wife to hide his toast the moment Ruth walked in.

I smile every time I think of it. It is where this chapter begins, because that is the man I actually knew: feared by some, revered by others, and still a man who wanted toast.

The same was true of Bishop Pearson. For all his gift, he once described himself to me as “wondering and wandering.”

The lessons I took from these two men did not come from books or conferences. They came from living rooms, car journeys and long conversations, and from watching what happens when gifted men are placed under pressure. Here is what I learned.

They Were Men, Not Monuments

Two of the people I interviewed told me the same thing about Bishop Reid. Some people had put him on a pedestal and treated him almost like God. When his failings became public, some of the same people turned on him. That is what pedestals do. They often guarantee a fall and harsh reactions.

A pedestal also isolates the man standing on it. Bishop Reid, who could silence a room of ministers, had to sneak his own toast. Bishop Pearson knew both sides of the coin: a man once admired by thousands was suddenly treated as a villain.

Peter understood this. When Cornelius fell at his feet, Peter lifted him up and said, “Stand up; I myself also am a man” (Acts 10:26). I have tried to follow his example. I honour the people God uses, I learn from them and I thank them. But I test every word against Scripture, and I will not worship a person.

The Gift Is Not the Whole Person

The first time I heard Bishop Pearson preach in Chicago, I was shocked. I had the same inner knowing I have had since I was baptised in the Holy Spirit: God was anointing this man, even though today I disagree with some of what he taught publicly.

Both things were true, and I had to learn to hold them together. “For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance” (Romans 11:29). A gift can remain even when judgement has gone wrong. Samson is the reminder. He was strong long before he was wise, and his gift never protected him from his own choices.

Bishop Pearson told me about the $100,000 a preacher offered to speak at Azusa. He accepted it, and that night he could not sleep. He deeply regretted it. Someone can reach a great platform by a route that was far from godly, and sometimes the conscience is the only one that objects.

I came to know him after his change of theology had cost him a congregation of 6,000, reduced to a handful. I could study that road without walking it. A wise person learns from failures as well as victories, and I have included some of my own in

this book, because I would rather you learned from them than repeated them.

Put it into practice: Before you follow anyone, ask three questions. How do they treat people who can do nothing for them? How do they take correction? What do they do when nobody important is watching? "Ye shall know them by their fruits" (Matthew 7:16).

Learn From Them, Don't Become Them

"You're not a pastor; you're a disaster! You're a witch!" That was Bishop Reid's way, and for him it worked. His mandate required it. I am often the same.

He also taught me to test everything, including what was popular. In the church car park he took a book from my hand, flicked through it and said, "That's incorrect. 'Rhema' and 'logos' are used interchangeably in scripture." He did not accept a teaching because everyone repeated it, and neither should I.

I am closer to Bishop Reid in doctrine and temperament, but I was never meant to be Bishop Reid. Nor was I meant to become Bishop Pearson, though I admired the warmth of his handshake. It

was the same warmth I had once been told about my own, back when I was pastoring.

When David went out to face Goliath, Saul dressed him in his own armour. David tried it on, then took it off. “I cannot go with these; for I have not proved them” (1 Samuel 17:39). He went in the only armour that fitted him, and he won. I have tried to do the same: take the lessons, keep what is good, and be the person God made me to be.

That includes how I carry a platform. When the Reids asked what stirred my passion, I answered, “I want to create documentaries.” It was true, but not the full story, and it was not what they expected. I knew I was called to preach. It was several years beforeI heard Bishop Reid explain why it mattered: “I always look for the person who’s trying to get out of it because he’s the called one.” Moses said, “Who am I?” (Exodus 3:11), and nobody chasing a platform asks that. Once, when Bishop Reid arrived late for a service I had started, I handed it straight over, though he signalled for me to continue. I still do not chase pulpits. Though called to preach, I serve God, not the platform.

Discernment Needs Humility

Sithole arrived at Pizza Hut by public transport, a man who claimed to be the UK's youngest black billionaire and promised to buy the ministry properties and cars. I could see through him. Then, over a meal at a restaurant, Bishop Reid muttered, "Something is strange about him." He had seen it all along. I had been puzzled that he did not seem to notice, but he simply chose to watch, as Jesus did with Judas.

My own failure came later. I was right that some people around the Reids had hidden agendas, but perhaps I handled it badly. For months I only hinted. Then I picked a fight about giving to the poor, when the poor were never the real issue. I was uneasy about the people around them and did not know how else to say so. Years down the road I admitted that Bishop Reid had been right about the poor, too. And years later I discovered that after the disagreement, the Reid's discovered I was right about the person in question and he was thrown out.

A true concern, delivered in the wrong spirit, can cost you the relationship you were trying to protect. Being close to someone does not mean you see everything they see.

Put it into practice: Before you speak, ask whether it is love or anger. Then say it plainly, kindly and early, instead of always dropping hints and exploding later.

You Can Disagree and Still Love

"He was a hard man." That was Bishop Pearson's verdict on Bishop Reid, the moment I mentioned I was with him. I loved them both, so I sat in the middle of that sentence with my head down.

Later, Bishop Pearson and I drifted apart over politics. There was no argument and no confrontation. I had called Democrats "lunatics" on social media, and he had posted his own strong views. Looking back, we built an unnecessary wall one post at a time. Social media makes us sound far more extreme than we would be across a table. It did that to both of us.

Paul once opposed Peter openly: "I withstood him to the face" (Galatians 2:11). Yet Peter later called him "our beloved brother Paul" (2 Peter 3:15). Truth and love were never meant to be enemies.

Bishop Pearson also taught me what happens when the church forgets this. A prominent preacher eventually admitted to him, "We did you wrong." I

have never believed we should kill our wounded soldiers. Before posting a criticism, it is worth asking whether you would say it across a table. If not, pick up the phone instead.

Let the Sandpaper Do Its Work

At a Global Gospel Fellowship meeting, I began a question with, "I once read a book…" Bishop Reid playfully hinted that I did not read much. I laughed. Some people in the room found it offensive. For me, his abrasive words were refining sandpaper.

Rev. Dr Samuel Sao recalled that Bishop Reid once explained that he spoke so sternly to discern who was genuinely called. Bishop Pearson sharpened me differently. He was a man I could talk to without being judged, and he made me listen to things I had not lived. Once he told me to keep my fringe to one side, as I normally wore it, and not comb it back "like the white preachers." It was a small remark, but it hinted at wounds I could not fully know. I did not have to share his view to listen to the hurt behind it.

"Iron sharpeneth iron" (Proverbs 27:17).
You do not have to agree with someone to
learn from them. I would rather be
uncomfortable and wiser than

comfortable and wrong. Think of one person who challenges you without winning you over, and sit with them a little longer than is comfortable.

Say It While They Can Hear It

On the first evening I messaged Bishop Reid on Facebook, I asked, "Michael Reid, or a secretary?" The reply came back: "Michael Reid." A man of his stature had made himself reachable. I wish I had always returned the favour. Never forget or abandon those who laboured to nurture you.

I have already told how I learned of his death months too late for the funeral. What matters here is what it taught me. I had wanted a reunion for over a decade. In 2012 I wrote him a letter, and I am glad I did. It ended with an open offer of help and the words "Your son in the Gospel." But a letter is not a visit, and the years slipped by. I never had the chance to thank him face to face or receive a final blessing by the laying on of hands.

Reaching out is never wasted. I once emailed Bishop Pearson and heard nothing for three years. Then one day he replied as though I had written the day before. And when my father-in-law died, he

recorded a video message for the funeral. I will never forget it.

Put it into practice: This week, write the message you keep postponing: a thank-you, an apology or an invitation. Send it before the day ends.

Don't Outsource Your Faith

I watched many people become dependent on a minister. They wanted his approval, his attention and proximity to him. It looks like devotion, but it becomes unhealthy.

God taught this lesson to Israel the day Moses died. "Moses my servant is dead; now therefore arise" (Joshua 1:2). The man had gone, but God had not.

The night before I discovered that Bishop Reid had died, I heard these words in a dream: "Never forget what you've been taught." Only afterwards did I understand what they were preparing me for. The man I most wanted to see was gone, but what he had deposited in me remained, along with the God he had pointed me to.

Put it into practice: Ask what you would have left if the person you depend on were gone

tomorrow. Then build your own walk with God through Scripture, prayer and the Holy Spirit.

What Remains

I do not believe God wastes relationships. Some people teach us what to do, and others teach us what not to do. Some encourage us and others expose us. Sometimes one person does all of these things.

The conversations have ended and the men are gone. But the lessons remain.

You think you are working with people. Then one day you look back and realise God was working on you.

“You’ll Learn”

Years ago, in a marquee, a man stopped beside my table and looked at me for longer than was comfortable. Then he said two words: “You’ll learn.”

I did not understand them then. I understand them now.

When I think of Bishop Pearson, I remember the handshake at his door, and a man laughing as he repeated my words back to me: “Right road, wrong way. I like that!” When I think of Bishop Reid, I

remember hands laid on me in his living room, and a prayer as simple as a child's. The two revelations that followed shape everything I do today.

Both taught me to stand firm. Both showed me what it looks like to be hurt and keep going. I disagreed with parts of what each believed, and I loved them both.

I went looking for neither of them. God brought them to me, and then He let me carry something of each away.

I was told, "You'll learn." I have.

The people were part of the lesson. God was the teacher.

The Final Goodbye

Both men died in the same year. Something tells me there was divine influence in that.

Bishop Michael Reid passed away on January 13th, 2023.

Bishop Pearson transitioned on November 19th, 2023.

When I think about these two men, my eyes still water.

On June 15th, 2023, I heard about Bishop Reid's passing and posted this on social media:

> *"I just discovered that the man who had tremendous, and arguably the greatest, influence on my life passed away in January 2023.*

Just today I was trying to arrange to visit him, knowing he had been unwell, but this evening I thought to search his name online, and it was then I learned this news.

When I relocated to India over ten years ago, his wife passed away a year later, and we immediately travelled back to the UK to make sure he was being looked after.

Prior to going to India, I worked very closely with him and even lived in his home for a lengthy period with my family. Days, weeks and months at a time together. No words can describe what he deposited in me during that time under a great general.

I knew of him previously and met him briefly, but my first proper meeting at his home was memorable, remarkable and the beginning of a relationship I can never forget.

My wife asked me to open an account on Facebook, and I reluctantly agreed and asked her to

do it. As I explored Facebook that first evening, I saw his name and opened the chat box. I couldn't believe it when he immediately replied, and before I knew it, I was in his living room. That day, he battered me with harsh words of correction as a loving father would. I laughed [with joy], but for those medicinal words I'm eternally grateful.

Though he was internationally renowned, his availability astounded me (lesson one).

R.I.P. Dr. M. Reid. I remember when my wife and I sat in a car with you and your wife, Ruth, and she said you had both been waiting and watching for decades for someone upon whom your mantle would fall. From the day I met you in your home, when you laid your hands on me and the scales fell from my eyes, to when I told you about the dream I had while staying at your home, where Benson Idahosa, your long-term friend, spoke to me, explaining the reason I was with you, it was clear our meeting was a divine appointment. I wish I had had the opportunity to say these words to you and for you to lay hands on me one last time.

Now I understand more fully the dream I had last night/this morning. The final words I heard were, 'Never forget what you've been taught.'"

Regarding Bishop Pearson, on November 1st, 2023, I posted:

> *"I have had the privilege of encountering only a handful of individuals with whom I can truly be myself without fear of being unfairly judged. This first meeting at his home was one of those times."*

On November 20th, 2023, I posted:

"Precious memories together. Never forgotten. Eternally grateful."

And then later that day:

"Processing the recent news will take me some time…

As I scroll through emails from Bishop Pearson D Pearson dating back to 2012, discussing ministry ideas and his challenges, I'm moved in ways that will take time to process. I enjoyed every second working with him.

Lord have mercy! I miss this guy and appreciate his input into my life!"

Whatever our theological differences, whatever happened between us, whatever mistakes he made and whatever mistakes I made, both Bishop Reid

and Bishop Pearson were remarkable men who became an important part of my story.

And for that, I will always be grateful.

Appendix

Who Was Oral Roberts?

Oral Roberts (1918-2009) was one of the first evangelists to take the healing revival onto television, carrying his message into homes across America. His fame began in the late 1940s with his healing crusades, huge tent revivals where thousands gathered to pray for the sick, and he became a leading figure of the postwar healing movement. In 1963 he founded Oral Roberts University in Tulsa, which now enrols over 6,000 students, making it the largest private university in Oklahoma. Bishop Reid told me personally that Oral Roberts was offered $2 billion for Oral Roberts University, and he refused to sell.

When you hear the phrase “sow a financial seed,” the name most closely tied to it is Oral Roberts. He is widely credited with popularising the seed-faith teaching, and he wrote The Miracle of Seed-Faith, published in Tulsa in 1970. Bishop Reid once told me, however, that what God spoke to Oral was not what financial seed-faith has become today. Too often it is now abused for financial gain. But that is a story for another time.

You can download a free PDF version of books from our website or purchase on Amazon.

Please consider making a donation so we can continue to provide free resources. HERE

Free resources available on our website.

Join our email list (receive a free book) and social media pages for updates about new teaching materials.

Youtube, Facebook and Tiktok

@waysofgodministries

Global Gospel Fellowship

Ministerial Alliance: Strengthening Local Churches & Supporting Ministers

> *"I think the name itself is wonderful. It's global...It's gospel, that's the good part, and it's fellowship...It's terrific."*

—Dr T.L. Osborn

www.globalgospelfellowship.net

Ways of God Bible Academy

A free online school teaching the ways of God and the importance of God's sovereignty in life and ministry.

Shop

Books that teach the ways of God.



www.globalgospelfellowship.net/shop

Relationship Events

The strength of a marriage affects many areas of life and ministry. Our unique events result in happier relationships.

Leadership Events

The church expands under God-anointed leadership. These events bring clarity to leaders and church workers.

Invite

Invite James to your event: conferences and seminars. Alternatively, organise events in partnership with us.

www.globalgospelfellowship.net

info@globalgospelfellowship.net