November 2, 2026



Am Watching

Things that make me say, 'Hmm.'

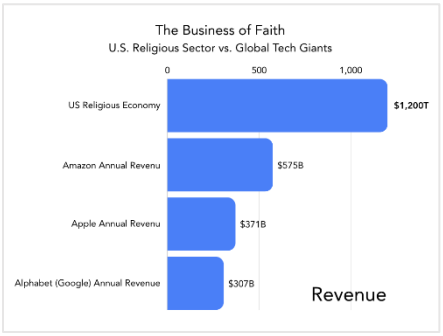
PROPHECY IN DAILY NEWS

Knowing Bible prophecy is an essential lens for viewing daily news. Yet, it is **impossible** to keep up with it all. So, frankly, I don't try. However, I do set aside time to listen to specific sources that are biblically sound, gifted in discernment, and able to piece together varied news headlines to see the bigger picture. I then research these topics while seeking God on which issue(s) are important to share. The following is a topic I have been observing for a while now. And as we watch news headlines uncovering growing corruption within today's churches, from fraud to sexual abuse to myriads of false teachings, it has been highlighted to me even more so now. This also aligns with my mini-series blog: So Went Israel, So Goes the Church. Let's watch, be aware of, and pray about this growing trend as we navigate today's world, which is currently being burned and reshaped around us.

"I have seen a fearful evil, his inherent nature flourishing (green) laid bare (naked, ū·mit·'ā·reh [6168]). He crossed over, and behold, he was no more. Indeed, I sought him, and he could not be found." Psalm 37:35-36 *(Literal translation based on my deep study of these verses in Hebrew.)*

BRANDING, INFLUENCERS, AND THE RELIGION BUSINESS

Modern churches increasingly feature branded materials and host large gatherings with influential teachers, pastors, and authors of popular books. The "Christian" music is often carefully staged to create an "emotional" experience for attendees who often pay a hefty price for admittance. The message and music *resonate* on a deep emotional level that can be purposefully hypnotic, leading *many* to rush forward for prayer and/or to rush to buy the numerous products on display. After all, they have felt a great move of God in their midst. Yet one has to wonder, is it really God, or just a high-quality, emotionally driven production?



This has been and continues to be a growing trend. From mega-churches to medium and smaller assemblies, *many* are jumping in and building a kingdom here on earth in the name of God and Jesus Christ, rather than laying up treasures in heaven. Those who don't are slowly dying out. Religion has become a big business, an organization that attracts people from *many* walks of life. People flock to these events to see influencers and listen to popular "Christian" musicians, hoping for a revival. The sad part is, though *many* attend again and again, they typically go home to their regular routines without any real transformation in their lives. Some wonder why things aren't happening for them like they thought it would and fall away; others find a non-traditional way to assemble. While *many* continue with the emotional ups and downs by consuming more emotionally driven experiences and stuff, becoming almost "cult-like" followers of influencers, thereby falling away in deception.

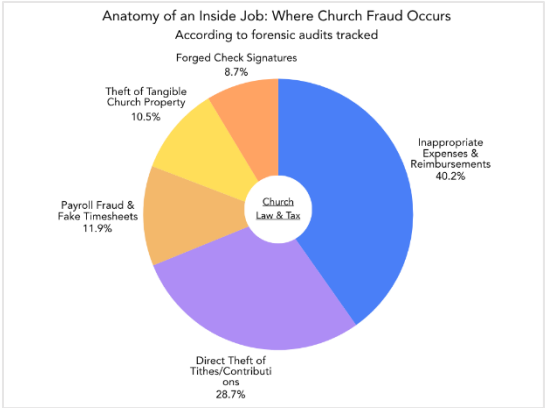
Consider what God warned the kings of Israel, and understand this is just as true for us today. Deuteronomy 16-17: *"But the king must not acquire many horses for himself or send the people back to*

Egypt to acquire more horses, for Yahweh has said, 'You are never to go back that way again.' (17) He must not take many wives for himself, lest his heart go astray. He must not accumulate for himself large amounts of silver and gold."

We read in Psalms 127:1: *"Unless the LORD [Yahweh] builds the house, its builders labor in vain. Unless the LORD [Yahweh] keeps the city, the watchman stays awake in vain."* In Matthew 6:19-20, Jesus said, *"Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroy, and thieves do not break in nor steal."* In Luke 12:15, Jesus warns, *"Beware, and keep yourselves from all covetousness. For a man's life does not consist in the abundance of the things he possesses."* Yet here we are, where *many*, in the name of Jesus, are doing just that. All without accountability or transparency about the money they are raking in or how it is being used, which often contradicts what they say.

I know one thing: evil will be exposed. As it is written: *"There is nothing concealed that will not be revealed, and hidden that will not be made known."* (Luke 12:2). We need to hear this, because even in our own lives we are warned, *"Therefore, whatsoever you have spoken in darkness shall be heard in the light. And that which you have spoken in the ear in inner rooms will be proclaimed on the housetops."* (Luke 12:3).

The intent of this message is not to criticize those with money or possessions. Money itself isn't evil; it is the "love" of money that is evil. Nor is this meant to discourage true believers who enjoy a godly gathering. Rather, it is simply to expose and call us to be discerning with this growing trend. The church, in essence, has become a business rather than an organism united together, built and assembled by God. And I don't believe this is what Jesus Christ had in mind for His disciples, then nor now.



Through this trend, both influencers and those influenced, we are seeing two sides of prophecy being fulfilled. On one side, there are leaders, well-known pastors, teachers, and musicians influencing *many*. On the other hand, many are the people influenced who no longer endure sound teachings. The growing spiritual experience outweighs the desire for true heart-rendering transformation. New Age, New Thought, and "Christian Mysticism" have effectively infiltrated *many* churches through influencers. Often, mega-church pastors emphasize giving through legalistic pressure on their congregation, leading to a form of godliness without the Spirit of God. Scripture references include: 1 Timothy 1:3-7; 2 Timothy 3:1-8; 2 Timothy 4:3-4; Revelation 2-3 (the letters to the Churches by Christ Jesus).

This issue has grown steadily since Rome institutionalized Christianity as a religion through the unity of the Roman Government and the Catholic church. It has simply grown and spread its effects through *many* evangelical churches and religions. As the intensity concerning this topic increases, we can see God allowing the world to transition from the "Church" age into this coming Golden Age, which is of the Beast, the coming man of lawlessness, known as Jacob's Trouble or the Day of Yahweh (the LORD).

I love, however, what Paul writes by the inspiration of God's Spirit in Philippians 1:15-19: *(15) "Some indeed preach Christ out of envy and strife, and some also from good will. (16) The latter one indeed out of love (agapes), knowing that for the defense of the Gospel, I am set (firm). (17) The former, however, out of strife (contention, intrigue, selfish ambition), are proclaiming Christ, not purely, supposing to add tribulation to my bonds. (18) What then? Only that in every way, whether in pretense or in truth, Christ is proclaimed. And in this I do rejoice; yes, and I will rejoice."*

It is God who ultimately moves on someone's heart and saves them to rebirth and true transformation rather than a temporary emotional experience, regardless of the venue. And it is God also who will lay bare (expose) things hidden in darkness to bring them to light. There is no doubt that many wolves in

sheep's clothing know how to quote and use Scripture really well. Music and the lights and ambience lend to our natural emotional euphoria. Indeed, we need to discern whether one's feeling of the move of the Holy Spirit is genuine, or an imitation through highly emotion-driven worship entertainment.

We are called to be held accountable, to be transparent, and to expose and shine the light on the darkness. So, shouldn't we ask a few questions, such as:

- Is everything a true move of God's Spirit? (Consider 2 Corinthians 11:4-15)
- What is the biblical definition of "church"? *(A link to my personal study and reflection in answering this question is linked below.)*
- How have church buildings become big business marketplaces?
- Would the church you attend be found well-pleasing before the Lord Jesus? Or would the church be one where Jesus would come in and flip the tables of commerce, the stage sets/displays, and the money changers within it?
- How far has the "church" evolved from its biblical beginnings?
- How has the term "Christianity" changed from the biblical meaning to a broader diversity of all faiths, somehow reflecting a shared heritage through ecumenism, which seems now to have broadened its shared heritage with Mormonism, Latter-day Saints, and a growing number of other religions in the name of uniting all in one faith under God, regardless of what name they call him, or how they practice their faith?

May we seek the truth, as we lay bare our hearts before our Lord and Savior. I encourage you to join me in watching The Religion Business documentary by Nathan Apfeel, a Christian investigative journalist and documentary filmmaker. He exposes how religion has been turned into a big business and corporation, often without accountability or transparency through their "religious nonprofit status". And though he is exposing *many* things within different "religions", including evangelical churches, he clearly states, "We're not here to destroy the Church. We're here to shine a light on what needs to change." In his documentary, he uncovers abuses, mass cover-ups, and more. Maybe we, as followers of Christ, do need to ask these questions in the lateness of this last hour we live.

Documentary Resources: The Religion Business | The Documentary They Need You to Watch (The Religion Business Documentary Trailer) / The Religion Business | Season 01 – Full Documentary Series (Free) Premiers November 5th (The Religion Business YouTube) / Elevation Church's Marketing Machine | TRB Minidoc (The Religion Business) / The Business of Eleven22 | A Religion Business Investigation (The Religion Business) / Every Church Is at Risk for Fraud. Here's Why. (Church Law & Tax) / 6 Discouraging Trends in Global Christianity in 2025 (Lifeway Research) / Faith-Based Fortune: The 41.2 Trillion Impact of Religion on the U.S. Economy (Michigan Journal of Economics) / Tracking $62 Billion in Ecclesiastical Crime (Overseas Ministries Study Center) / Types of Sexual Assault Within the Church (Fileabuselawsuit.com) / What Does Church Really Mean [Analysis by L Kennedy]

***Disclaimer** While I value these resources and documentaries that I share, I may not fully agree with all their views. Let each of us be like a Berean, seek understanding personally through God's Spirit within us, and remain open to growth and discussion. Let's continue to seek God's wisdom and validate everything through His Word, study, and watch. May we use these topics to encourage discussion rather than cause division. May we grow together, staying teachable, as iron sharpens iron, as it is written in Proverbs 27:17.*

WAKE UP GEAR FOR LIFE:

Wake Up Gear For Life YouTube continues to slowly but surely add new videos to: *Beginnings, A Journey Through the Bible* / *We Are Here – Bible Prophecy Unfolding* / Blog *Am Watching*, a different kind of blog, providing a Biblical perspective on world news and Biblical Teachings for the readiness of the appearing of Jesus Christ / *Wake Up Gear Shop* – Proclaiming Our Blessed Hope through quality, sustainable, durable comfort, sharing our inner faith out! Don't be shy: contact-me@wakeupfromslumber.com. I would love to hear from you all out there!