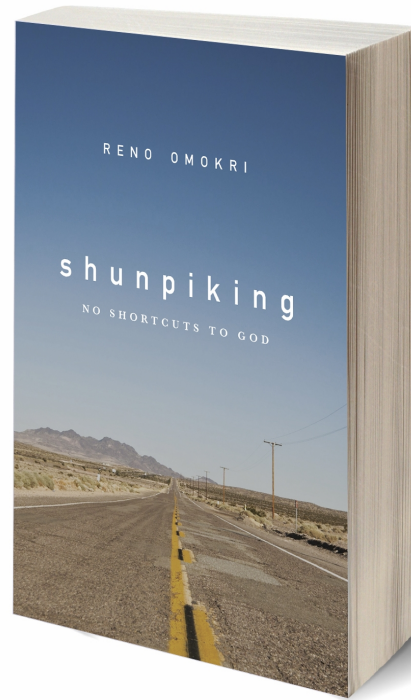


Shunpiking
No Shortcuts to God
Reno Omokri



“Reno is a passionate visionary. He has worked at the highest level of politics and has never lost focus for why he does it—to improve the lives of ordinary people guided by his values of peace and justice. I’ve known Reno for a long time, and it’s obvious how his faith in God through Jesus Christ inspires him—spiritually, professionally, and personally—and it will inspire all who read this book.”

—**Joe Trippi**, author and campaign manager/adviser
to former British Prime Minister Tony Blair and Howard Dean



In the 1800s, the term *shunpikers* was coined for drivers who avoid toll roads at all cost, going out of their way, sometimes many miles, to avoid paying a small fee. The ironic nature of shunpiking is that it usually costs the driver more in time and money than the toll would have. Sometimes, the driver winds up lost and never even arrives at their desired destination.

In ***Shunpiking: No Shortcuts to God***, Reno Omokri says many believers want the blessings of God without paying the “toll.” When God’s children accept the price of applying biblical principles to their lives, they avoid the headaches and heartaches that come with trying to find their own way.

Reno Omokri has enjoyed a long career in politics in Nigeria, where he now handles media relations for the president. In the same vein as CS Lewis, ***Shunpiking: No Shortcuts to God*** is a series of essays and lessons to all believers on applying biblical principles to our lives. At one time or another, all Christians struggle with veering off the path, leading lives of missed opportunities. Omokri shows you how to get back on the road God set before you, to attain the blessings He promised.

“Well worth reading...Reno teaches us that only by returning to the precepts and principles of God’s Word can we find fulfillment and success for daily living.”

—**Pastor Andy Cochran**, senior pastor, Brentwood Bible Fellowship Brentwood, CA



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Biography of Reno Omokri



Reno Omokri is currently a Special Assistant (New Media) to the Nigerian President, Goodluck Jonathan, and is the founder of *Mind of Christ Christian Center* where he teaches the word of God on a regular basis. Prior to this appointment he worked as Vice President (Africa) at Trippi and Associates, a U.S. Political Consulting firm.

Sometimes called the “Internet Pastor,” Reno takes the Word of God to the unsaved via Facebook where Mind of Christ Christian Centre has a following of over 33 thousand.

Reno has seen believers become frustrated after holding on to biblical promises and expecting them to work in their lives, without obeying the instructions tied to the promises.

He writes based on Hosea 4:6 where God speaks through the prophet Hosea by saying “*My people perish from a lack of knowledge.*” He says that many believers do not understand that the Bible is a book of principles and promises written by God. Principles—settled laws that will work for any person irrespective of their state of salvation; and Promises—that are only applicable to His children who believe *in* Him and believe Him (which are two different things).

He says, “From studying scripture, I discovered that to activate any promise God makes in the Bible, you first have to obey the instruction tied to it. God is not moved to fulfill His words if we cry, get angry or rail. Everything in creation is held up by the integrity of God’s Word.”

He writes to help the believer understand the application of biblical principles and promises to everyday life to the end that we may have the abundant life that Jesus promised us in John 10:10.

Reno has an undergraduate degree in law from the Edo State University as well as a BL from the Nigerian Law School and a Masters Degree in Law from the University of Wolverhampton.

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Suggested Interview Questions for Reno Omokri author of
Shunpiking
No Shortcuts to God

Q. You are the special assistant to the Nigerian President Goodluck Jonathan, and have a degree in law. What led you to become the founding pastor of Mind of Christ Christian Center?

A: I've always been close to God since I was a child. One Sunday at age 6 my parents left me at home to teach me a lesson because I was always making everyone late to church. But I got dressed and walked past two towns and surprised my parents when I turned up on foot at church.

So to answer your question, I've always had a passion for God. In 2010 I started a prayer fellowship at my home in California and it grew until it became the Mind of Christ Christian Center.

Q. You reside between the United States in California and in Abuja, Nigeria. How would you compare the two locations as places of work in the Lord's vineyard?

A: California is just the loveliest place in the world. It is a place where you can easily get complacent because it is a land flowing with milk and honey. Abuja on the other hand is a growing capital city and Nigeria is currently faced with an Islamic insurgency so there are a lot of Muslims in Abuja and Nigeria who are beginning to be disillusioned with the situation and this makes it a very fertile ground for evangelism. That's my passion and is what I do whether I'm in California or Abuja.

Q. Nigeria is a country where radical Islamic terrorist have vowed to destroy Christianity and where many churches have been bombed and Christians killed. How does this affect your ministry each day?

A: Initially, we thought church attendance was going to be down, but boy were we wrong. As I said, the Islamic insurgency has made a lot of Muslim question things that they would not ordinarily have questioned so there is a window for The Lord to work on their minds.

But on a practical level, there are challenges. We have to meet on Sundays under armed security provided by the police. Churches have been bombed and people have died coming from and going to church, but The Word of God still presses on.

Q. Has there ever been any conflict between your calling as a pastor and your job as Special Assistant to the President?

A: Yes, there has been. Many people expect me to be docile because of my faith. But Jesus was not docile. He was meek, but not docile. He stood up in defense of God and God's people.

By being a pastor as well as one who speaks for a President, I face situations where I have taken controversial decisions. My mentor in life is Jesus Christ. He spoke for His Father. In fact John Chapter One calls Him the Word of God. People who opposed Jesus opposed Him because they were controlled by forces in opposition to His Father. Those forces are in opposition to His Father because they want to take His Father's place. Jesus being a perfect Son will not stand idle while His Father's enemies speak ill of His Father. And in defending His Father Jesus was considered controversial. So, when I face conflicts, I am comforted by this knowledge.

Q. How do you cope with the negative news about Nigeria in the media?

A: I am guided by The Bible which says in Hosea 4:6 that people perish for lack of knowledge. The reason why there is such negative news about Nigeria is that, yes, there are some negative things happening, but more importantly, Nigerians and Africans in general have not invested in owning media that can project their stories beyond their borders. The Arab nations have succeeded with Aljazeera and now the conversation about the Middle East is changing because they are in charge of telling their own stories.

Africa and Africans have to be in charge of telling their stories. We have to rebrand and the most effective rebranding is using your a medium you control to project to the world positive things that are already happening to counter the negative from the foreign media. I believe this is what Jesus meant in John 8:32 when He said "And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free".

Q. Can you give us some examples as to how God is at work in Nigeria?

A: There are many, but the most profound is this. The Islamic terrorists in Northern Nigeria targeted churches deliberately, because they wanted Christians to retaliate and use that as a pretext for a religious war. But Christians in Nigeria showed maturity and were guided by Romans 12:21 which says "Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good". This action by Christians have caused many non Christians to question their faith and it has led to many leaving the religions they were born in to confess Christ. This in itself is a fulfillment of Jesus' admonition to His disciples to let their lights shine that men may see it and glorify God in heaven.

Q. Are the people of Nigeria open to Christianity or afraid of the repercussions of following Christ?

A: In the Southern and Middle Belt parts of Nigeria the people are very open to Christianity. Very open indeed. In the North, the centuries old Islamic culture makes it more difficult to evangelize and because of the fear that they could be ostracized or even killed by their families many are afraid to confess Christ even though they believe in Him.

But consider that Reinhardt Bonnke had to be ran out of Kano, in the heartland of the North 25 years ago because in just one of his crusades there literally hundreds of thousands gave their lives to Christ. Since that time it has been difficult penetrating the core North for Christ, but we continue to press on as the body of Christ in Nigeria.

Q. What is shunpiking and what are the dangers of us as Christians becoming 'shunpikers'?

A: Shunpiking simply means taking shortcuts that end up being more costly than the approved route. In much of Christendom today people are in search of miracles and easy fixes without taking time to increase in the knowledge of God and how to please Him. People want to seek God second but want the rewards of those that seek Him first. People want to seek God casually but want to get the benefits of those that seek Him diligently. As such, they set themselves up to be taken advantage of and their faith suffers and they allow a root of bitterness set in. Other people are not aware of the correlation between what we think and what we say. We need to align our words and our thoughts with The Word of God.

Shunpiking is a book that brings out the principles and promises of The Word of God and in very simple and easy to understand language tells you how to apply them in your life because The Word works only when you work it.

Q. What happens when we hold on to the promises of the Bible, with the expectation those promises will work in our lives, but we choose not to obey the instructions tied to those promises?

A: The legal concept of a contract originates from the bible and specifically from covenants. Now for a contract to be valid, both parties need to fulfill the covenants in the contract. If one party fails, then he is in breach and the contract is not valid. Biblical promises are the same way. There is no stand alone promise in The Bible. Every promise comes with a corresponding action. If you do not understand and obey the requirements of the promise, you will not get the benefits promised. God is not moved by emotions. He is moved by principles.