Now, it was my turn to ask the judge a question. “Judge, you still there?”

“Don’t use God”

Ooowee!

“Hello, hello, is this Bishop Moultry?”

The caller, on the other end of the phone, had a joyful, upbeat tone to their voice as I quickly took a slip of coffee. I put my mug down and closed my book of morning prayers before responding, “This is Bishop Moultry.”

I looked at the time on my watch. 10:05a.m.

The caller continued, “Bishop, I can’t believe I got you on the phone the first try. How’s your morning going, Bishop?”

“Blessed,” I joyfully responded.

“This is Judge (won’t mention name) and here in my courtroom standing before my bench is a young man that I’ll be sentencing to either serving three years in prison for the offense he was found guilty for or put him on probation which he is able to go on after reading the report that he

can be put on probation."

I responded laughing, "I do understand judge but what does all this have to do with me?" Laughing, the judge quickly states, "Well, when I asked the young man if he had anything to say before sentencing, he stated that he is a member of your church, that he does a lot of work around the church weekly, that he sings in the choir and never misses Sunday Services and that he's been with the church for five years and was baptized by you at the same time. You also baptized his baby's mother."

Trying to go back six years, since so much as happened since then, as well as trying to figure out who he is since he's been helping around the church, I was getting ready to ask the judge was his name "CASPER the FRIENDLY GHOST" cause I had not seen that person she was speaking of.

"Bishop, are you still there?"

"Yes Judge."

"Bishop, I'm so impressed with this young man giving back to the community at your church, I'm considering placing him on probation as well as let him work his fines off by allowing him to do his community service work at the church as well since he's so faithful and since your church is on file as a Court Community Service Agency."

Once again, the judge asks me, "Bishop, are you still there?"

"Yes Judge, I'm here but is the young man's nameCasper?"

The judge quickly responded, not knowing why I asked, giving me his first and last name. Once again I went into another ZONE, thinking and finally remembering who this individual was.

“Bishop, you still there,” the judge asked while telling those in her courtroom to stop talking.

“I’m here judge and the young man standing before your bench I did baptize about five years ago. I not only baptized him, but also his baby’s mother as well. Matter of fact, judge, I’ll never forget when the young man came up out the water his mother jumped up and down, crying, shouting ‘my baby’s is saved’ and dancing all over the place. I thought she was going to fall in the pool.”

As the judge laughed, I continued, “Judge, the reason I asked you was his nameCasperwas I was thinking ofCasperthe Friendly Ghost. The baptism took place on a Saturday and he didn’t even show up the next day, for Sunday service, to receive his right hand of fellowship into the Christian faith and his new church but we’ve been holding his Baptism Certificate for him and his girlfriend since then. I have not seen him or his girlfriend for I guess five years when he was baptized.”

Now, it was my turn to ask the judge a question. “Judge, you still there?”

Ooowee! Stay tuned to Part II of this Bishop Speaks column as I share with each of you, my readers, the outcome of this individual. But, in the meantime, let me ask you this question which is why was this young man USING GOD, USING THIS CHURCH as well as lying to the court? Ok, that’s an easy question... to save his BUTT from going to prison. Well let’s see what happens next week as I continue to share this true story like all the other stories I’ve shared with you in Part II. E-mail me and even share what you think the judge will do with this individual. Did he head down 271 South to a prison institution or was he placed on probation? What would you do if you were “Da Judge?”

You can e-mail the bishop at bishopspeaks@aol.com write him at 969 E. 140th St, Cleveland, Ohio 44110. You can also call the church at (216) 761-7100. Check out the Bishop on Facebook under Bishop Prince J. Moultry. You can join the Bishop at 11 a.m. Sunday Praise Service or 6 p.m. Wednesday Bible Class also at the above address off 140th St. Clair in the heart of the Collinwood community.