

SERIES ONE

WORD FOR THE MOMENT

A Daily Devotional Guide



EMPOWERED MISSION FOR CHRIST COMMISSION

WORD FOR THE MOMENT

A Daily Devotional Guide

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FOR CHRIST COMMISSION

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INTRODUCTION

God, we were told in the book of Genesis 1:1 created the Heavens and the Earth out of nothing, even out of that we called nothing or think invisible to the eye is God's. He is the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the ending of all things. "And of His fullness have all we received, and grace for grace." In Him we move, in Him we live, and in Him we have our being. God is worthy of note, worthy of our attention, He is a jealous God because He is always loving. He shed His love abroad in that while we were yet sinners, His only begotten Son died for our sins. He created all things, but delighted to create man in His own image and likeness. He empowered man to behave like Him. He is a Spirit and those who must worship, serve Him must do so in Spirit and in Truth. Therefore, to do a proper worship and acceptable service to God, you must desire to know Him (Who, What, Where, How of God). It is then that you can offer unto God acceptable and perfect sacrifices.

You must desire a knowledge of Him, which means have awareness of Him and familiarize yourself with Him. The level of God's awareness you have determines the level of power available to you in doing whatever you plan here on earth. If He knows you through your daily and constant familiarization visit to Him, He will be readily available when you need Him. In the affairs of the World, God is a BIG factor; He is the BIG deal for anybody that wants to do exploit. You must acknowledge Him in all your doings and goings (Proverbs 3:6). For if you desire to do greater works for Jesus, it is under must you know Him. Moses desired to know Him, He became a mighty deliverer and a great prophet (he parted the Red Sea, brought water out of the rock, saw God in glory and many more). If you desire the great exploits of Moses and that of Daniel in the land of bondage, where he ruled and reigned, you must have daily and constant relationship with God. You must be with Him in season and out of season, by this; you will know how He works, how He walks, and how He speaks, in short, you will know His way, not just His acts.

You can imagine Daniel getting another man's dream and interpreting same, he never shared the same bed with the king and yet relaying a forgotten dream. He was able to do this because of his close relationship with his God; he knew God and he could get the secret overnight. The secret of the LORD is with them that fear him; and he will shew them his covenant (Daniel 11:32; Psalm 25:14). Abram desired to know God; he became Abraham and father of faith. Joseph had His awareness; he became a Prime Minister in a strange land and ruled over the world affairs. Time will fail me to tell of Samuel, Deborah, David, Elisha, Elijah and the Apostles, because

these men knew their God, they were never stranded; they did great exploits in their lifetime. May God open your understanding to know Him (Amen).

DAY 1: THE PEOPLE THAT DO KNOW THEIR GOD

TEXT: 1 SAMUEL 17:24-58

God, we were told in the book of Genesis 1:1 created the Heavens and the Earth out of nothing, even out of that we called nothing or think invisible to the eye is God's. He is the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the ending of all things. "And of His fullness have all we received, and grace for grace." In Him we move, in Him we live, and in Him we have our being. God is worthy of note, worthy of our attention, He is a jealous God because He is always loving. He shed His love abroad in that while we were yet sinners, His only begotten Son died for our sins. He created all things, but delighted to create man in His own image and likeness. He empowered man to behave like Him. He is a Spirit and those who must worship, serve Him must do so in Spirit and in Truth. Therefore, to do a proper worship and acceptable service to God, you must desire to know Him (Who, What, Where, How of God). It is then that you can offer unto God acceptable and perfect sacrifices.

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MIND THIS: The level of God's awareness you have determines the level of power available to do great exploits for God.

WORD AFFIRMATION: Thou shalt also be a crown of glory in the hand of the LORD, and a royal diadem in the hand of thy God – Isaiah 62:3 (Don't just say it, mean it).

Empowered Mission for Christ Commission (EMCC)

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DAY 2: MARK THE PERFECT MAN
TEXT: PSALMS 37:1-40

In a society where men of integrity are scarce, where stealing, robbery, kidnapping, banditry and corruption are the order of the day, how do we mark a perfect man? Are you one? Oh! Would you say no one is perfect? Some people will even say God knows human beings are not perfect, but His Book says, “Mark the perfect man... “ (Psalm 37:37). If men cannot attain unto perfection, God will not demand perfection from us”. It was still the same world that God found His servant Job and bragged about him to the Devil that we live in today. How many people can God vouch for or brag about in front of the devil in today’s world? Abram received the Promise at seventy-five, twenty-four years later; he had yet to receive the Promise but God was still telling him, “...to walk before Him and be perfect” – Gen. 17:1

Roman 12:1 shows a need to present your body as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to the Lord. In verse 2, He says, “... be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God. As a Christian, you must STAND OUT from the crowd, away from whatever other people around you are doing. You are the light of the world; therefore, you must shine and shine brighter too. Never mind, if no one recognizes you, walk upright. You are not others; you do not have to behave like them (Job 8:20). Remember, God is taking note.

In deeds and actions, you must NOT conform to this world. Wickedness abounds and increases every day, people are committing all manners of atrocities to survive and to become famous, but if you can trust in God the Almighty (absolutely), He will bless you beyond measure. The Psalmist warns us not to fret ourselves at evil doers; God will never forsake the righteous. It may look as if God has forgotten His own people, no! If you read our text for today, you will realize that the wicked is cursed already. The wicked shall soon be cut off like grass no matter the position they occupied today and withered like herbs. As a believer who fear God, trust in the Lord and do good and you shall be fed in the land and “If you are

willing and obedient, you shall eat the good (the best) of the land” - Isaiah 1:19.

No matter the situation, be ready to live a righteous and holy life. You know the end of the wicked; it shall NOT be well with them so say the Lord. As for the upright and perfect man, the word of God says, their end is peace. Peace can mean so many POSITIVE things, so I declare you shall experience the peace of the Lord and His blessings shall come upon you and yours. Have a perfect and glorious day.

MIND THIS: As a Christian, you must STAND OUT from the crowd, away from whatever other people around you are doing.

WORD AFFIRMATION: Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright: for the end of that man is peace - Psalm 37:37 (Don't just say it, mean it).

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DAY 3: CASTING DOWN IMAGINATIONS
TEXT: 2 CORINTHIANS 10:3-5

Imagination is a special ability and God's DNA in every man. We reason with our heads, think with our hearts, speak with our mouths and imagine with our eyes of heart. Imagination is the seen pictures or images; it is what you can call, "as far as you can see". It is so powerful that nothing can stop it not to become a reality. It is forming a new idea or creating a new image with nothing except with our minds. It has creative power, for everything God creates, He first saw. Whatever you imagine about your life or environment as long as there is concentration and focus shall surely happen. Nothing can stop it, not even God except it come contrary to His agenda, knowledge and will.

Imagination can be good or evil. Evil people does not necessary have to make incantation before they effected one with their agenda, as long as they keep forming their evil agenda against such, if care is not taking, it will surely happen hence the admonition of Apostle Paul to you this day, to cast down evil imaginations. Remember this prophecy, "No weapon formed against you shall prosper". Think about this again. Many Christians pray with their mouths and hearts but both do not correspond with what they see (imagine). To have a quick answer to your prayers, your heart, mouth and imagination (what you see) must correspond. If you are praying for wealth, think about wealth but not forming wealth with your mind, one will be poorer than church rat. Becoming must first happen in your subconscious. There must be a constant picture in the spiritual before it happen physically.

Talking about the evil aspect of imagination, you do not know the kind of opinions your neighbours are forming against you, and you wonder why your prayers are not been answered; someone may have formed negative imagination against you. If God open your eyes to see what image people close to you forms about you, it will surprise you. Therefore, do not slack in casting down evil imaginations. No matter how good you are, any man you know have an image about you. Never thought that all the people around you mean well, I do not say you should term people as your

enemies but never allow any negative imagination whether you know or not to come to pass. Rebuke it daily, remember, the weapons of your warfare are not carnal so also that of the enemies, but yours is more potent. So cast down every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God in your life. The knowledge (thought, final say) of God concerning you is of peace, good and to give a brighter future; anything contrary to this MUST not come to pass.

In Genesis 11, God was sitting on His Throne when the world imagined building a tower reaching the Heavens. If God did not rise up in time to confuse their imaginations, the tower of Babel would be built as planned. That's God the Almighty, He had to leave His throne without hesitation to come to see what the people were doing and since it was contrary to His command in Genesis 1:28, He countered it. You may not know, that wish you are going through may not be foundational curse but just someone's evil imagination, cast it down today before it is too late. Imagination do not operate at lower levels, it operates on high, so you must do a casting down. When we pray, we expect God to answer but when we imagine a thing, we are using the power that the God Almighty has giving to create and enforce certain rules here on earth; and whatever we formed, stand. So what do you see? Anything contrary to good shall not come to pass in your life. You must not allow evil imaginations, cast them down.

MIND THIS: If God did not rise up in time to confuse their imaginations, the tower of Babel will be built as planned.

WORD AFFIRMATION: And the LORD shall help them, and deliver them: he shall deliver them from the wicked, and save them, because they trust in him - Psalm 37:40 (Don't just say it, mean it).

DAY 4: WHAT ARE YOU DOING IN PADANARAM? (1)
TEXT: GENESIS 28:10-22

Jacob received his father's blessings twice within twenty-four hours and God also gave him several promises on his way to Padanaram when he fled from the presence of his brother Esau, who had purposed to kill him. God met him on his way, in the dream God stood on top of a ladder in which Angels ascending and descending to bring Jacob up, but he never climbed! The Word of God is God and His Words created all things, in Him (the Word of God) we live, we move and have our being. This was the same Word that came to Jacob to bring him into his destiny. But from his utterances after this encounter, one will know Jacob did not comprehend what the Word of God actually is. He said, surely the Lord was in this place and he knows not and he began to setup stones to call it the place of God. He never climbed the ladder to his destiny; he did not understand the promises and left on his journey contrary to the Will of God for his life (Genesis 29:1). He postponed his divine, original destiny (as it is in Heaven); the journey that supposed to take him not more than twenty-four hours took him more than twenty years to accomplish. Jacob was never going to be the same again and he was never Jacob because he left the plan of God for Padanaram. He postponed God's rising on him, the sun that set on him in Genesis 28:11 (which supposed to rise within twelve hours) never rose until twenty years after (Genesis 32:31). He wasted the best part of his life, pay for it dearly and answer foolish question at his old age.

Jacob's case look like that of many of us today, we think we can achieve anything on our own. Many are cutting corners to achieve their plans, stealing, robbing, etc. The kind of attitudes and behaviours of some people shows that God is not involved in their Journey. They cannot say, this is what God want me doing. God is saying come, Jacob misplaced where God is talking to him as the house of God forgetting what God want to do. Buying a car, building beautiful houses and all of good things may be in the plan of God for your life but you have achieved that in your own way, by your strength, not by God. I am here to let you know that even Jacob achieved all those but none of it entered into the Promised Land with him, he entered his divine destiny as a person with disability. The wife he

wasted his over twenty years of his life for died prematurely on the way (even in his journey). His sun never rose until after twenty years.

If you do not have more years to waste, today is the right day, now is the acceptable time to turn to God and climb your own ladder of destiny. There is one thing to achieve your goals, there is another to receive the glory of God over your life, for the glory of God makes the difference. There is nothing you can become apart from what the Words of the Lord says, you might think but I am prospering, I am an achiever, just wait and see. You will soon realize that the Almighty is God Over Destinies (GOD). His promise to us today is to arise and shine, for our light is come and His glory has risen upon us.

Like Jacob, you never come to the light of God's word. You never come to Jesus, thinking God is with you; if not why are you prospering. You will soon know. So before it is too late, come to Christ today so that you can fulfill your divine destiny. God want you to become a car dealer, but because you are driving a car around, you thought you have arrived, you are not in the plan of God, you are in Padanaram. Padanaram is a place of no destiny fulfilment, it is a place where powers that be frustrate one's glory; it is a place where destinies are captured. May God deliver you from such place today, Amen.

MIND THIS: None of what Jacob achieved in Padanaram entered into the Promised Land with him, he entered his divine destiny as a person with disability.

WORD AFFIRMATION: And my soul shall be joyful in the LORD: it shall rejoice in his salvation - Psalm 35:9 (Don't just say it, mean it).

DAY 5: WHAT ARE YOU DOING IN PADANARAM? (2)
TEXT: GENESIS 29:1-35

Many people today have not yet understood the things of God and how He works. Many desires the gifts rather than the Giver and lots in the church want His acts and not His person or Way. In addition to this, many people think they can buy Him with their tithes, offerings and sacrificial giving when the source of their wealth is questionable. A lot of people are in the house of God to enjoy God's grace, thinking their deeds and services will cover their sins, as they want to continue in their sinful way and never come to repentance.

God in His infinite mercies called unto Jacob due to His love for His fathers and covenant relationship He had with Abraham. He revealed the blueprint of how Jacob's future will look like to him but he never understood or pondered on it for a second. Immediately, he woke up from his sleep, the next thing he did was to erect stones and called it a house. Is God not everywhere or is He living in a house built with stones? Many people behaves like Jacob today, they have never heard from God and yet ventured into ministry, maybe they only saw God's flashing, they never wait to hear what He (God) want to say, the next thing is to start a ministry and giving themselves title. It is a pity; many people have lost God long ago.

In Genesis 28:15, God had already said to Jacob that He would be with him and keep him in all the places he wanted to go and bring him safely back home. God continues, "For I will not leave thee, until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of." But because Jacob had missed the promised, listen to his prayers: "If God will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on, So that I come again to my father's house in peace; then shall the LORD be my God: and this stone, which I have set for a pillar, shall be God's house: and of all that thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth unto thee."

God said, he had blessed Jacob, but he (Jacob) was making requests God had already answered. Most people do not hold on to God's word and

never understood the Word of God, this is the real problem confronting the people. Many people are holding Bibles, go for Bible studies but has never encountered the Word of God. God had already told Jacob He will be with him and keep him, but he was saying, "if God". Because he had set out his mind to go on his journey, all what God said was nothing to him. According to Jacob, God will never be his God until He gives him what to eat and what to wear. Are you not going to church or serving God because of what to eat and what to put on? It is an irony that many people have turned the houses of God to welfare and orphanages, many goes to services where they will get food items and things, pretending to love God and His works. Alas! They never seen the Word of God, even though they do carry Bibles all around, it is what to eat and what to wear, they are busy looking for, and such will never climb the ladder of grace.

Jacob prayed to God; God, it is when you bless me with foods and raiment that you can be my God. Now that I am struggling, you cannot be my God; that is the implication of his prayers if you read this passage carefully. God cannot have his all except ten percent as if God is hungry and needs his money. God was not looking for tithe and offering from Jacob, what God was looking for was Jacob himself. God had created nations in him but Jacob is seeing bread and raiment. Many of us have removed God from our journey hence when we pray there is no answer. We never pray the heart of God, we never asked for what God want concerning our matters. We go to prayer meetings, to mountains and to even disturb our pastors with our challenges. We never climb the ladder of grace when God was calling hence the reason why we are spending years in that situation. I pray that God opens your eyes to see what He want you to see and do what He want you to do in the name of Jesus Christ, Amen.

MIND THIS: It is an irony that many have turned the house of God to welfare and orphanages, many goes to services where they will get foods and things pretending to love God and His works.

WORD AFFIRMATION: And it shall come to pass in that day, that his burden shall be taken away from off thy shoulder, and his yoke from off thy neck, and the yoke shall be destroyed because of the anointing - Isaiah 10:27 (Don't just say it, mean it).

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DAY 6: WHAT ARE YOU DOING IN PADANARAM? (3)
TEXT: GENESIS 29:1, 9-11

Padanaram is NOT paradise; it is “Destiny Haram”. Let’s look at what usually happens in Padanaram when the one with divine mandate misses his way to the land. From the account of Jacob, the very first thing he did was to grab Rachael and kissed her. It is strange, Jacob was meeting somebody for the first time and the next thing to do is to begin to kiss a stranger, even before Jacob revealed his identity, he and Rachel had gone deep in kissing each other. It is not him; it is because he was in a strange land, a land that consumes one’s destiny. Let me tell you, such relationship do not last. One will soon regret it.

It is impossible to take right step in a wrong location; Padanaram is a land of mistakes. The very first mistake Jacob did was to kiss Rachael. In Genesis 24 when Abraham sent his chief servant to go and pick a wife from the same Padanaram, before Elieazar entered this same city, he prayed targeted prayer unto God of his master but do you remember Jacob’s prayer, “if God will give me bread to eat and raiment to wear.” He had forgotten the message of his father Isaac to go and pick a wife, and the divine destiny God had in plan for him. A servant prayed and did his assignment within twenty-four hours; Jacob, a son prayed amiss, began to kiss and missed his destiny for over twenty years. He chose his wife by himself, not God. In as much as the child remains a baby, he differs not from a servant – Galatians 4:1.

Beloved, your present location where you are living now, is it by God’s instruction or your own plan? Wherever you are and whatever you are doing, can you boldly claim that it is God that sent you to the land or ask you to be doing what you are doing? There may be a well of water and the city is giving you what you want at the initial stage, a time will come when situation will not be the same and you begin to question your existence in the land or on the job. You cannot reside in Padanaram and fulfil God’s destiny, you must go out. SIN simply means, “Simple Instruction Neglected”.

Many people ordinarily will not do certain things, but sometimes it is strange to see them doing what they do not love at all. There are some people who do not like fornicating but unknown to them they just do it, there are people who hate adultery with passion but will never know when they find themselves on the internet watching pornography. It is strange; it is because you are not in your location. When you are living in the land the Almighty divinely allocated to you and you are living in His will as laid in the book written of you in heaven, you will live a godly life no matter what others are doing in Padanaram. However, if you are not in your right location, as you kissing Rachael, you will be dating Leah and have more than enough concubines. Gradually one is going, gradually, he is missing his original destiny.

My message to you this day is this; it is NOT too late to come out of your Padanaram. For a man with divine destiny, Padanaram is not the right place to be. Anything can be your Padanaram, it maybe the course you are studying or the work you are doing; it may also be wo(man) you wish to marry like Jacob and/or the house you are living. It may even be your birthplace, it may be anything. Pray to God to open your eyes and reveal your original to you. May you find God's purpose and fulfil His Will in Jesus name. No matter how nice or kind you are in Padanaram, you will never be spared with their evil agenda. May God in His infinite mercies make a way of escape for you. Amen!

MIND THIS: For a man with divine destiny, Padanaram is not the right place to be.

WORD AFFIRMATION: And I will strengthen them in the LORD; and they shall walk up and down in his name, saith the LORD - Zechariah 10:12 (Don't just say it, mean it).

DAY 7: WHAT ARE YOU DOING IN PADANARAM? (4)
TEXT: GENESIS 29: 14-24

You will discover the real meaning of Padanaram in Genesis 28, Padanaram was the birthplace of Abraham and his ancestors, in the days of Abraham, it was formerly called Mesopotamia. The intention of Jacob was to marry only one wife, but in Padanaram he ended up marrying four. Every right step a man takes in a wrong location is equal to mistake. Devil does not have good intention for any man living in Padanaram (wrong location, will, vision and idea), his only intention is to steal, to kill and to destroy. Laban asked Jacob what his wages would be, the later replied, “I will serve for Rachael, your younger daughter”. And he indeed served for seven full years, at the end of these years, Rachael was withheld from him, by the time Jacob would realize, he got Leah as his wages. If truly Laban loved Jacob as claimed, he supposed to have informed Jacob at the negotiation table (seven years before) that young man, in Padanaram, we do not give the younger ones in marriage before the elders but because deceit is in their blood in Padanaram, Laban betrayed the trust Jacob had in him; he waited and allowed him to serve for seven years before he told him the real truth. By this time, Jacob had already married wrongly.

Earlier in this series, I said Jacob would never remain the same for life. No one leaves the presence of God and get peace anywhere. In the Bible, you will find in different verses, I am the God of Jacob and in another, God will say, I am the God of Israel; but those statements do not mean the same thing. When God speaks about Him being called, the God of Jacob, He is referring to the past but when He called Himself or He been referring to as the God of Israel, the Bible is talking about the future. In Padanaram, one does not understand quickly the gimmicks of the Devil or the ruler of the land. No matter who they are, they may be your relatives, uncles, aunts, sisters, brothers, and the likes; the real intention of the ‘power that be’ in Padanaram is to use and dump. You can imagine, a man served faithfully in order to get what he loved but at the end of the day, he got what he disliked. Marrying Leah was not the problem, not been in the will of God was Jacob’s problem but he did not realize this in time.

Beloved, it is impossible for you to live in Padanaram, no matter how 'fireful' or powerful you are, and come out intact; the lord of the land knows the game more than you do. The instruction to Jacob from his father, Isaac was to go marry a wife; but in Padanaram, he ended up marrying four wives and his wages were changed several times. The truth is, in Padanaram, destiny is always tied and lives wasted. Haven't you noticed in your life that no matter the efforts you are putting into your business or anything you are doing the results are not corresponding to the efforts? Do take a deeper look today, consider your ways and check if you are living in Padanaram or not. If you discover your location, you will get your allocation. Whatever God want to make through your life, it will never come to pass in Padanaram because it was not God's intention for you to live there in the first place. Approach God today, ask for His direction, and pray to Him to lead you in the way you should go. If you are living in the plan and will of God, a little one of yours shall become a thousand (Isaiah 60:22). May you live in the plan of God for your life, Amen.

MIND THIS: The real intention of the 'power that be' in Padanaram is to use and dump.

WORD AFFIRMATION: For the people shall dwell in Zion at Jerusalem: thou shalt weep no more: he will be very gracious unto thee at the voice of thy cry; when he shall hear it, he will answer thee - Isa 30:19 (Don't just say it, mean it).

DAY 8: WHAT ARE YOU DOING IN PADANARAM? (5)
TEXT: GENESIS 31:1-13

Not until one is tired and restless to reject Padanaram, the game will keep going; the lord of the land knows how to play it. To escape from this land, one needs divine intervention, for it is impossible to beat them in their own deception. It was God's intervention that set Jacob free from the land. He had to flee and escape for his dear life. There is no good intention for a man of destiny in Padanaram. There are great lessons to learn from the story of Jacob in Padanaram, but no matter how the situation may be, if one has the God of Abraham and Isaac behind him, your Jacob will escape. God appeared to Jacob in a dream and told him what to do, if not, the agenda of the lord of the land in Padanaram is for Jacob to go back home empty. They did all to frustrate his life but because of God's intervention, there was a way out for him. Beloved, if you want to breakthrough and break-free from your own Padanaram, there are some steps to take:

1) You must ask genuine question(s). Jacob asked, when shall I provide for my own house? – Genesis 30:30. From asking yourself thought-provoking questions, it is possible to come out of your life challenges; 2) You must make the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob your own God. God is a BIG factor in all things; He is the Creator of the Heavens and the Earth. In Him we move, live and have our being; without Him, nothing was made. For you to enter into your land of rest, you must run back to the God of Israel. Jacob neglected God to his own peril, if not for God's mercies and covenant with Abraham; Jacob would have died a non-entity in Padanaram. If you do not want to die unfulfilled in this life, you must go back to God today.

3) You must climb that Ladder of Grace that God Almighty set up on the earth, which is Jesus Christ. Without Him, you cannot access the Father. He said, "I am the Way, the Truth and the Life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." – John 14:6. Ensure you climb the Ladder in order to enter into your divine destiny; the ladder is the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. 4) In order not to come out of Padanaram empty, you must ask God for His revelation, God does not like people to come out empty in their

own land of bondage, you must carry the spoil. Take your lot along; do not negotiate with the Devil. Make it fire for fire. You must pray your way out. It is not going to be easy, but you must fight the good fight.

5) Know that the enemies will pursue but God will fight your battle. Laban pursued after Jacob when he left Padanaram. Remember also, the Egyptians pursued after the Israelites. That is how the enemy operates; they do not want people to be free; 6) Know that your night to wrestle must come. For your destiny to now speak and for you to enter into your original, it is not going to be easy this time but you must stop the enemy. It is now by fire, by force to obtain your destiny. The good thing is, your original is with God and learns to wrestle with Him in prayers and you are already a conqueror.

7) Never mind, not all that are with you are for you. Rachael never entered into the original of Jacob. She died on the way, she stole the idol of her father; she was an idol worshipper. You must let go of what you love for what God want you to become; 8) You may enter your original as a person with disability if care is not taking. Never mind whom you become in your original, it is much more important than what you become in Padanaram; 9) You must know that you are a sojourner, you owns nothing; then it will be well with you. I see you in your original.

MIND THIS: To escape from Padanaram, one needs divine intervention, for it is impossible to beat them in their own deception.

WORD AFFIRMATION: O LORD, be gracious unto us; we have waited for thee: be thou their arm every morning, our salvation also in the time of trouble - Isaiah 33:2 (Don't just say it, mean it).

DAY 9: ONE DAY AT A TIME
TEXT: GENESIS 1:1-5

Everything looks good; you know what to do but what you have on ground do not tally with your vision. You may now be in God's plan for your life, that does not mean everything will be rosy and splendid. You must begin to start living one day at a time, therefore, to live by God's instruction. In the beginning, God created the Heavens and the Earth but the earth was void, formless and darkness permeated everywhere even the Spirit of God did not even have a place of rest. God Himself had to learn how to live one day at a time.

There is no perfect day; you just have to make it perfect. Jacob entered into his destiny leaping even though he had won the war but the battle still waiting. He went through series of troubles but he learnt how to live one day at a time. As believers, to live successfully in this hopeless world, one must exchange his strength for that of God; you can never win the battle of life by your own strength. You must rely on the power, person and presence of God to defeat your battle.

God spoke the Word, 'let there be light' to address the situation that confronted Him. You too need to speak the Word of life to your situation and bring it to subjection. Never see the situation, see what God is seeing. God saw light, not darkness and there was light. Even at that, he separated the night from the day, that's means you must be able to manage situations properly. For God, His evening and His morning became the first day. You must know that life is full of vicissitudes and it is in your own interest, so manage every situation and turn it to your own advantage. If indeed you want to enter into your rest, you must learn to live one day at a time.

God has a vision of what He wanted to do at creation but as problems began to show itself, God was able to manage them to get to His Day of rest. A voided and formless earth became a beautiful world that God can say and it was good. Richard Bachman said, "If people just took it a day at a time, they'd be a lot happier." Happiness is achieved when you stop

waiting for your life to begin and start making the most of the moment you are in.

I live you with the song of Daniel O' Donnell - A live performance titled, One Day at a Time:

"I'm only human. I'm just a wo(man). Help me believe in what I could be and all that I am. Show me the stairway. I have to climb. Lord for my sake; teach me to take One day at a time. One day at a time, sweet Jesus that's all I'm asking from you. Just give me the strength to do every day what I have to do. Yesterday's gone sweet Jesus and tomorrow may never be mine. Lord helps me today, show me the way. Do you remember? When you walked among men? Well Jesus you know if you're looking below, it's worse now, than then. They're pushing, shoving, and crowding my mind. So for my sake, teach me to take One day at a time."

MIND THIS: Where the presence of light do not take away your own darkness, do turn the darkness into your night life and who knows may be it then that you have your brighter stars and great light. God did.

WORD AFFIRMATION: And wisdom and knowledge shall be the stability of thy times, and strength of salvation: the fear of the LORD is his treasure - Isa 33:6 (Don't just say it, mean it).

DAY 10: I CAN DO ALL THINGS
TEXT: PSALM 82:1-6

I can do all things is said to be a personal statement of the mighty and a powerful one that each and every believer must hold as his/her watchword, for greater exploits and works are the mandates giving to us by the Lord of All. No matter what life presents and whatever you might be passing through, God has endowed you with needed abilities to do the impossible, anything you think you can't is much more within your reach to accomplish; the only hindrance to the accomplishment of such goal is your thought. Never entertain any fear; pursue, you shall overtake and recover all. Do not entertain the impossible, the only place impossibility exists is in the dictionary of a fool.

Doing the impossible will not come on your own power and abilities, note that you can only achieve your dreams and pursuits by the strength of God. Apostle Paul could do all things through Christ which strengthened him, this was his resolved and the reason why he did great exploits in his days and left legacy behind. Through whom are you performing what you are doing, through your own efforts or evil powers? Jesus said to the Pharisee confirming the word of the Psalmist that you are gods and all of you are sons of the Most High, which means you can do all what God can and can also do more. The greater works Christ want you to do for Him are to look out for the interest of others, to love your neighbour as yourselves and to be upright at all times. If you cannot do anything at all, He wants you to do this: judge justly and never accept the persons of the wicked, defend the poor and fatherless: do justice to the afflicted and needy and deliver the poor: rid them out of the hand of the wicked and Christ will rise on you – Psalm 82:2-4.

Many people have initiated great ideas and became great in life using the talents God has endowed them with and you might think you have no such ability, there is a good news for you, you can do these little, simple and small things if you can make a resolution today - to defend the poor and deliver the needy. This act will never go unnoticed; God will reward you accordingly and He will defend your cause. If you think you CAN'T add any value, just do the little things mentioned above and I see you over the top.

May you have the courage to do the impossible, especially touching the heart of God in spreading the Gospel of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ to the lost, love the fatherless and lift the hands of the feeble. May you find grace to do the impossible now and always, Amen!

MIND THIS: Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works, when you light your candles, place it where it can be seeing.

WORD AFFIRMATION: Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me - Psalm 23:4 (Don't just say it, mean it).

Empowered Mission for Christ Commission (EMCC)

DAY 11: AND THEY REMEMBER HIS WORDS (1)
TEXT: LUKE 24:1-8

In 2019, the Believers Today Newspapers carried out a research on how many days it will take to read the entire Bible from Genesis to Revelation. It was a revelation to realize that the entire Bible can be read under sixty-seven hours. Alas! Every one of us has three hundred and sixty-five days in a year to ourselves, which is about 8,760 hours and what one needs to read the Bible is not up to 1% of our time in one year. Many people have different versions of the Bible but how many people open theirs, daily? Many people wake up, eat, and sleep without reading God's Word. How are they surviving? How can they survive without the Word of God? These are living corpses unknown to them.

During His time on earth, Jesus revealed to the disciples the heart and mind of God, expounding and interpreting the Old Testament and bringing fresh revelations to them daily, teaching them to observe all things, but immediately Jesus was crucified, everybody to their own tents and forgotten the word of God which Christ revealed to them. They were busy looking out for Jesus, not until the Angel of God reminded them of His word; it is then that the disciples remember His words.

What is your attitude to God's words? Do you remember to read or study the Word of God daily? Having a Bible does not mean having the Word of God. Many people never open their Bibles until maybe during Bible reading time in the church. How can you survive in a world made by the Word? The Word of God is quick, sharper and powerful. What is it that you are looking for? The word of God can find it for you. From Genesis to Revelation, the Word of God is full of God's promises and principles and there is nothing that you are looking for that cannot be found. Many people will never attend Bible Study in their different denominations, they will never open their Bibles in the morning before going out or in the evening when they return and yet complaining that things are not working. How will things work when they have neglected the anchor, the finder, the Bible, the Word of God?

If one's life is not in line with the Word of God, such will experience hopelessness and miss the daily blessings therein. Do not allow the Devil to hinder you of God's blessings and truncate your destiny. The Word of God is vital to the fulfilment of your destiny. I live you with the Word of God, may you be found in His Word, Amen.

MIND THIS: Go back to Him, the Word of God. Your solution is as simple as finding yourself in the Word of God.

WORD AFFIRMATION: He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters - Psalm 23:2 (Don't just say it, mean it).

Empowered Mission for Christ Commission (EMCC)

DAY 12: AND THEY REMEMBER HIS WORDS (2)
TEXT: LUKE 24:1-12

After the death of Jesus, the women in His circle were busy preparing how to care of Jesus' body; they had prepared spices to decorate His body but had to wait till the early hours of Sunday to go to the sepulchre. On getting there, they found the stone rolled away and the tomb empty. It took the Angel of God to remind them of all the words of Christ and what had actually happened. The Word of God cannot be held by the grave, the Word carries life and he is alive forever more. Those women were busy looking for the body of Jesus, went to His graveyard thinking of finding His body, forgetting it was the Word that became flesh (body), the grave could no more hold Him. Many believers profess to love Jesus but have His word not in their hearts, there is need for genuine believers who want to prosper in the world and the world to come, to go back to the study of the Word and act the Word. What makes us to be believers is our belief in the Word of God, which is the Person of God.

Many Christians today share the same attitudes with the first disciples, they do not understand the Word of God, and have placed activities above His Word. Many Christians will not forget their daily activities but hardly can they quote a single scripture. This is sad. None of Jesus' disciples could discern the event of the time, because Jesus had been crucified, they did not know what to do. What is the first thing you do when challenges confront you? What is your reaction to situation? Your reaction to situation shows where your heart lies, do you run to the Word of God to find out what you are actually going through or do you at any time remember God's Word after you might have acted foolish?

It is the one that get himself familiar with the Word of God that remembers His word when unexpected situation arises. The disciples completely forgot the Word of God; it took the Angel of God to remind them. They never understood everything that Jesus did was in fulfilment of the Word of God. In Hebrews 10:7, He said, "I come in the volume of Book written of Me". He came to the world to fulfil the Word. He is the Word Himself, John the Beloved wrote, "In the beginning was the Word, and the

Word was with God and the Word was God.” – John 1:1. As Christ came to fulfill the Word, likewise you come to fulfill same.

At this time, the disciples were in total disarray, perplexed and dominated by fear, when the Angel of God even reminded them of the fulfillment of prophecy by the resurrection of Jesus, Peter and the rest did not believe. The Bible says, “And their (the Angels) words seemed to them as idle tales, and they believed them not”. For the Word of God to prosper you, you must take the word as a person, set aside time to know Him. Many people are suffering today not because they do not know how to pray but because they do not know the Word. The Battle of this world can only be handled by the Word. Go back to the Bible, which is the written Word of God. Are you waiting till when an Angel appear to you and give instruction before you act on the Word of God? If you do not believe in the One written, even when you see an Angel you will never recognized. It will be like an idle tale to you too. Have a change of attitudes to the Word of God. What is it that you value most? I urge you to place high premium on God’s Word, then thou shall prosper and above all be in good health.

MIND THIS: The battle of the World can only be handled by the Word.

WORD AFFIRMATION: In God is my salvation and my glory: the rock of my strength, and my refuge, is in God - Psalm 62:7 (Don’t just say it, mean it).

DAY 13: AND THEY REMEMBER HIS WORDS (3)
TEXT: LUKE 24:41-46

The death of Jesus was a big blow to the disciples, even when Christ had revealed himself, his mission, sufferings, death and what will later happened to them; the events after the death of Jesus showed that the Word of Jesus was not in their hearts. Angels had to remind the women of the prophecy of Jesus that He would rise the third day. The eyes of the two disciples returning to Emmaus had to be opened by Jesus Himself, He had to work hundreds of miles with them before they could be back in the Word. Not only that, even when the eleven disciples of Jesus gathered and he appeared to them, the Bible says, they believed not even when Jesus was present bodily. He took Jesus another round of preaching and physical demonstration for them to believe.

What is your reaction to life's situation? Where and who do you turn to when challenges arise? Unbelief, doubt and fear filled and fuelled the lives of the disciples, forgotten that the Word is alive. The Word came, eat and dine with them yet they do not believe. Unbelief is a great disease. A double-minded person will not receive any good thing from God. Beloved, I urge you this day to have faith in the Word of God, whatever He says He will do, will surely come to pass (James 1:6-7). The word of God can never fail. Based all your requests, prayers and supplications on the Word of God and have a strong faith in Him and you will see your desires coming to pass.

Do not behave like the disciples, even when they saw Jesus, they never believed. Remember, Peter obeyed the Word of Jesus, he walked on the water but when he looked away from the Word, he drowned. Make the Word of God your mirror, shield and covering. Ask God to open your understanding about His Word, God is the Word and so the Word is He and therefore everything in this world must conform to the Word. Rely on what is written concerning you and not what you are going through and all shall be well with you.

Christ lives and because He lives, you can face any life's situation, you have been empowered. Build your life, your home, your marriage, your finances

and everything you do upon the Word of God. If the Word of God is available, every other thing will be. Strive to receive the Word of God concerning any situation of your life, ask God to speak concerning the matter and once He speaks that settles it. Never forget the Word of God.

MIND THIS: The Word of God can never fail. Based all your requests, prayers and supplications on the Word of God and have a strong faith in Him and you will see your desires coming to pass.

WORD AFFIRMATION: The righteous shall be glad in the LORD, and shall trust in him; and all the upright in heart shall glory - Psalm 64:10 (Don't just say it, mean it).

Empowered Mission for Christ Commission (EMCC)

DAY 14: AUDACITY OF GOD'S WORD (1)
TEXT: LUKE 24:44-46

Money is a defence (Ecclesiastes 7:12) but more than money is the Word of God. He gives assurances and our entire lives depend on Him. The Word of God formed all things on earth and in heaven, but I discovered that many people are living far apart from the Word of God, not because they do not have the Bible, but because they do not have "the Word". Many people lives not as written of them. NOTE THAT I ALWAYS USE THE WORD, "HIM" FOR THE WORD OF GOD; THE TRUTH IS THE WORD OF GOD IS A PERSON.

The Word of God is potent and will accomplish what which He sent to do; He has great capacity and ability to bring to pass and enforce orders and promises of God the Father upon any individual. He has the mandate to make or align things, situations, powers, authorities, persons and institutions to work together in fulfilment of God's plan for one's destiny. The challenge of many believers is they do not pray the Word, in their personal study time; in collective gathering, what they do is to consult prayer physicians who dole out prayer points. Even when praying is going on in the church, many do not pray, what they busy doing is to write prayer points hence no meaningful results. If you want to see God performing wonders and miracles as of old, you must have encounter with the Word of God. It is only the Word of God that can settle you and settles that situation.

The events that happened at the death and resurrection of Christ showed that the disciples did not have the Word of God with them; they believed not and doubted the Word of God. Jesus said to them, "These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the Law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, CONCERNING ME." The Word for the Moment for you is that all things must be fulfilled: the ones written in the Law, in the Prophets and in the Psalms, concerning YOU. The power of God's Word will surely bring them to pass.

So do a thorough check of your life: what's it that you are looking for or going through; when you have discovered your problem, gather enough of God's Word from the Bible and begin to pray it into fulfilment. Remember this, I did not say you should gather bible verses, I said gathered the Word of God from the Bible. Not all written is for you. Be committed to praying the Word of God, do not be carried away by other activities and events around you, seeing to praying the Word until you see evidence, definitely your life will improve and you will see results.

MIND THIS: It is not the Bible that makes you a Christian; it is the amount of the Word of God in your inside.

WORD AFFIRMATION: All the horns of the wicked also will I cut off; but the horns of the righteous shall be exalted - Psalm 75:10 (Don't just say it, mean it).

Empowered Mission for Christ Commission (EMCC)

DAY 15: AUDACITY OF GOD'S WORD (2)
TEXT: 2 KINGS 7:1-10, 16

The Word of God is Yea and Amen; He is the Beginning and the Ending of all things. The Word of God does not sleep, ever busy and never idle. Right from the beginning of the world, He has been working and never stops working. He (the Word of God) is Ageless, Timeless and Expireless. If anything is missing, the Word of God has the capacity to find it. The situation of Samaria at the time of second Kings was so bad; people were eating their sons due to famine and the besieged of the land by Benhadad king of Syria. Benhadad gathered his host, went up, and besieged Samaria. There was so great famine in the land and the King determined to kill Elisha (2 Kings 6:24-33). Wickedness and evil will always prevail where there is no Word of God. Their experience even right from the king's palace to the city centre was the same: no food, no money; to the extent that women were killing their sons for food.

Through Prophet Elisha, the people received the Word of God and the Man of God prophesied; he did not provide food for the people, he only shared the Word and that in the next 24 hours, the impossible will become possible. People were experiencing great affliction, no rain, no food, nothing but the Word of God was talking about abundance in the next few hours. The king's special adviser could not comprehend the Word spoken by Elisha; he used his head and certification to calculate the Word of God. Elisha said by this time tomorrow, a measure of fine flour would *be sold* for a shekel and two measures of barley for a shekel, at the gate of Samaria. Beloved, if you locate the Word of God or the Word finds you, how the Word will come to pass is not your concern, all what you need doing is to receive and hold on to Him. For without doubt, it will surely happen, except if it is not the Word of God. It has capacity to become true.

Four lepers at the gate of Samaria were used by God to fulfil His Words; there is nothing too small or great that God cannot use to bring His Words to pass in your life. The four lepers decided to enter into the Word of God and went to the camp of the Syrians. By rising up, their steps became mighty ones; for the Lord had made the host of the Syrians to hear a noise of chariots, and a noise of horses, *even* the noise of a great host: whereas

it was just four lepers that were walking towards the camp. As at the time the four lepers went to the camp of the Syrians, Elisha the Man of God who spoke the Word was sleeping in his house while the Word of God was busy working and walking around. The Word of God will always prosper those who are ready to take steps with Him. There was no food, but the Word of God said there is. A lord on whose hand the king leaned could not provide solution to the situation but have the audacity to question the integrity of God's Word; anyway, he saw the manifestation but never tasted the fulfilment.

Before 24 hours, the Word of God has come to pass. How you treat the word of God determines how the world will treat you. If you have faith in the Word, you will enjoy the benefit therein. No matter the situation stand on the Word of God, never move, let the confidence you have in Him be so strong that even in the face of death, you are not shaking. If you discover your Word, claim and pray it until you see result. Our problem is not that we do not have the Bible; our problem is we do not know the Word. The Word lives in eternity while we live in time; use the Word of God to your own advantage. Do you want to prosper, go by the Word of God?

MIND THIS: Our problem is not that we do not have the Bible; our problem is we do not know the Word.

WORD AFFIRMATION: The LORD will fight for you, and you shall hold your peace – Exodus 14:14 (Don't just say it, mean it).

DAY 16: AUDACITY OF GOD'S WORD (3)
TEXT: ACTS 8:26-39

Look at this checklist if you think you have fasted, prayed, studied and read the word and nothing seem working in your life. You might as well look at it to double-check if the Word of God is already working for you. Remember, you may have different versions of the Bible and the Word of God is not living with you.

1) Many people do NOT recognize the voice of God and so could not understand Him when He speaks. Many have had about God and His wonders but have missed Him somewhere. God does not walk, work, think and speak the way we do; you must train yourself spiritually to know about God and the way He behaves. You must train your spiritual ears to be in tune with the voice of God. The voice you are hearing matters. There is no day that God does not speak. Has He speaks to you today? If no, then what have you been listen to?

2) Many people do NOT go in the might of God's Word: There is one thing to be an officer, wear the uniform and there is another thing for you to operate in the authority of that office you represent. There are spirit and letter behind the Word, when the Word of God comes to you at a particular moment, there is need for you to run with the Word until He accomplish the purpose by which He is sent. For example, let says, you discover a scripture from the Bible, you might have been reading this particular verse but at this time, it is more meaningful to you, then begin to quote, pray and meditate on the Word; the Word has now come to you, never let it go, begin to behave the Word as if you are drunk.

3) Many people do NOT know the Word. Many people who quote or pray the Word do not know Him and when the Word supposed to work for them, the Word behave strangely. It is not when you need a relationship that you start one, you relate with the people that you will need before you actually need them. What is your relationship with the Bible you bought with your money? When was the last time you open it? Moreover, if you open it, did you ever pray to God to open your eyes to see His Word? Remember, the Ethiopian Eunuch was committed to reading the

Bible but never found the Word until Philip came (Acts 8:26-39). Here was a man who travelled a long distance to worship in Jerusalem, he never saw the Word, and if not for God, his service would have been in vain. Going to church does not mean you will find the Word. You must make yourself available to the Word. Let the Word of God find you. When it comes to the matter of the Word, do not claim to have experience.

MIND THIS: God is NOT limited to the Bible. There is no day that God does not speak.

WORD AFFIRMATION: For the LORD your God is He who goes with you, to fight for you against your enemies, to save you - Deuteronomy 20:4 (Don't just say it, mean it).

Empowered Mission for Christ Commission (EMCC)

DAY:17 AUDACITY OF GOD'S WORD (4)
TEXT: LUKE 10:38-42

Why does it look as if the Word of God not working in some people's lives? We learnt some points yesterday; let us consider some more today.

4) Many people do NOT gather enough word or pray the Word meant for their lives: When a lawyer is defending a case, he will not win his case based on mere arguments. He will win based on certain references he made in the law, evidences available and citing of previous cases. You must know what has been written concerning you and use it to your advantage (ee Jesus and Satan - Matthew 4). Do not just pray prayer points that are not back up by the Word of God. In order not to pray amiss, when you understand the challenges you are going through, look out for relevant scriptures and begin to pray them. It does not matter if you cannot memorize them, open your eyes widely and begin to pray the word, be committed to this for like six months and before this time, you will surely see a change in your situation.

5) Many people do NOT take action to fulfil the Word: For every action, there is an equal reaction. You cannot just sit down, fold arms and expect the Word of God to come to pass just like that. Are you in need of jobs, then in faith apply, even the one that you are not qualify for. It is better to be a walking leper when it comes to the Word of God than to be an experienced adviser or a sleeping king.

6) Many people do NOT enforce the Word: When you are confessing the Word, you are not fighting with flesh and blood; you are actually wrestling with principalities and powers, the power that be, the rulers in the heavenlies. They do not want the Word of God to prosper anyone, so you must be ready to enforce the Word of God at all cost. Do not be tired to repeat the Word of God until you see results.

7) Be ready to sink with the Word: Do you know that when you are proclaiming the Word of God, the battles you are facing will be more tensed? At this time, it would seem the Word is not working. He is actually working; the Word of God is like a hammer, with the first strike something

has happened, so keep striking until you see the evidence. Do not let the Devil deceive you that the Word of God is not working, keep at it, keep saying it and even if you cannot see the evidence, it is still better to sink with the Word.

8) Many people love activities more than study the Word: How many believers attend Bible Studies in their different churches? However, go and check the population of those who attend revival hour and Bible studies, you will be surprised. People love miracles more than the Word, forgetting that it is the Word of God that produces the miraculous. You and I must have a change of attitude to the Word of God for Him to prosper us.

MIND THIS: It is better to be a walking leper when it comes to the Word of God than to be an experienced adviser or a sleeping king.

WORD AFFIRMATION: This poor man cried out, and the LORD heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles - Psalm 34:6 (Don't just say it, mean it).

Empowered Mission for Christ

DAY 18: AUDACITY OF GOD’S WORD (5)
TEXT: JOSHUA 10:1-14

For few days now, Holy Spirit has opened our eyes to what we suppose to know and do as related to “Audacity of God’s Word”. So today, it is time to dare the Word of God concerning that situation; it is high time you begin to demonstrate the Word of God. Job 22:28 says, “Thou shalt also decree a thing, and it shall be established unto thee: and the light shall shine upon thy ways.” So what are your decrees? Begin to confess it, positively confess what you want to see in your life. Remember, as you are confessing the Word, your imagination must be in tune with what you are saying. Beloved, enter into the Word of God now and begin to declare and establish the purpose of God for your life. If you do not know what to confess, look out for scriptures relevant to your situation and begin to declare it, put the Word at work and never mind how it will come to pass, that is not your headache. Remember, Elisha was sleeping when the Word of God was busy working.

If you are sick in your body, take your body into the Word of God; the Word of God says, you are healed by His stripes and the Word wishes you above all things to prosper and be in health. With confidence and boldness in your heart, ask the sickness to leave your body. Your body is the temple of the Almighty. There is power in the Word of God, use that power now, swallow the Word of God this day, that is your medicine for healing and you are healed already. In today’s text, Joshua was yet to fight any battle but God said to him, “I have delivered them into thine hand” – Joshua 10:8. The Word has finished the battle even before Joshua mobilized his troops.

What is that your situation beloved? I declare total and permanent solution to it in Jesus name. Are you looking for a life partner or the fruit of the womb? And you think that you are getting old day by day, NO! You are not getting old, you can reverse your age by the spoken Word, you can tell your body to reverse to the age you want. You can be sixty years old now. You can ask your body to become that of twenty years and that you want to get married or give birth to your own children. Your body must obey and it must listen to your voice, therefore speak with absolute power. If

you think you are ageing, the Word of God is ageless. It is the same yesterday, today and forever, therefore, it is timeless. So put yourself in the Word and you will see what He will do in your life, for the Word of God is 'expireless'. So do something with the Word of God at your disposal now, make something happen by the spoken words and never be tired of God's Word because He is tireless.

MIND THIS: If you think you are ageing, the Word of God is ageless.

WORD AFFIRMATION: Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the LORD delivers him out of them all - Psalm 34:19 (Don't just say it, mean it).

Empowered Mission for Christ Commission (EMCC)

DAY 19: AUDACITY OF GOD'S WORD (6)
TEXT: JOSHUA 10:1-14

There is no solution you are looking for that the Word of God does not have, the Word is the Solution Himself. Whatever you want God to do, His Word has accomplished it before the world began. Therefore, when God told Joshua, "I have delivered them to thine hand", Joshua was yet to fight the battle. If the Word of God says you are fruitful, you are even when there is nothing to show for it. Never mind the devil, put yourself into the Word and relax, be rest assured that the word has come to pass and definitely, will. Operate by and in the Word, not with the world.

Something remarkable happened in Joshua Day 10, God had fulfilled His Words and Joshua was winning the battle, but Joshua spoke to the Lord, and he commanded the sun to standstill and moon to stay, it has never happened in history that any man stopped the sun and stayed the moon. I do not know what the heart of Joshua was at this time, why would he command the sun and the moon to stop and stay. The bible says, there was no day before it or after it that the Lord hearkened to the voice of a man. Today, God will hearken to your voice, all what you need doing is to declare the Word in faith. With Jesus death and resurrection, all things are yours and everything is possible.

For the fact that the Word of God has not been working in your life before does not mean that the day the Lord will hearken to your voice will not come. Actually, the day has come and the Word for the moment is, now is the day of salvation, and today is the acceptable time. Speak the Word beloved, your Word will surely happen. Try it, demonstrate it, and see it (Matthew 8:8).

While the Word is not manifesting in your life may be due to selfishness, if what you asking God to do via His Words has selfish motive behind it, you will not see the manifestation. If you want to get married and you want to get married for wrong reason, if you like quote the Word of God until Jesus come, you will not receive anything. You want to get married because you are getting old or because your mates are getting married and you begin to worry and praying (in anxiety), beloved, don't let me deceive you, you

will not get any result. Let your motive be right, you want to get marry because it is the will of God for your life and in His time, it will surely come to fulfilment. As long as the Word of God is concern you are already married, so just enforce the Word and move confidently around.

Lastly, you can call everything around you to agree together for your own good, as long as you can think of it, the Word of God is capable of bringing it to pass. I say to you this day, by the Word of God, you shall prosper. Whatever that you are not up to today; you shall be more than tomorrow. Remember, there is power and authority in the Word of God. Train your heart and mouth to speak the Word, never see your present situation, see what God is seeing and voice it out, angels are waiting to enforce it. Stop cheating yourself, all what you need is the Word of God. May the Word of God lead you today to your place of destiny, Amen.

MIND THIS: With Jesus death and resurrection, all things are yours and everything is possible.

WORD AFFIRMATION: He shall send from heaven and save me; He reproaches the one who would swallow me up. Selah. God shall send forth His mercy and His truth - Psalm 57:3 (Don't just say it, mean it).

DAY 20: AUDACITY OF GOD'S WORD (7)
TEXT: LUKE 5:1-9

I hope by now you have understanding about the power and authority in the Word of God, I urge you to always pray and act the Word; this is the secret of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ and that of the great (wo)men of God living or dead, even though they died yet speaks.

Let's look at some of the things that will make your words and that of God to be effective. For you to say a thing and come to pass you must do or have the following:

1) You must have a firm and constant relationship with God through His only Begotten Son, Jesus Christ. Jesus is the Way, the Truth and the Life. To have access to God, you must make His Son your best friend, let Him introduce you to His Father as His best friend and whatever you are looking for from the Father, you will get, even by your own words (John 14:6).

2) You must have an encounter with the Holy Spirit. Peter denied Jesus thrice before cockcrow. Remember, Peter had seen Jesus (the Word), had encountered with Him, walked with Him and he was a great follower, but at this time, he lacked power (Read Luke 5:5-9, Mark 14:58). The same Peter when the Power of the Holy Spirit came upon him (Acts 1:8; 2:1-4, 14-41) preached with boldness and power (his best message) and in one meeting, three thousand (3000) souls repented from their sins and became followers of Christ. Do you want God to honour your words always or you want the Word of God to prosper you? You need the baptism of the Holy Spirit and you must regularly ask for the fire and power of the Holy Spirit, Holy Spirit is the best friend of the Word of God.

3) Don't be selfish. As I said in previous parts, your motive is important when dealing with the Word. That which you are asking God to do, what is the purpose? Is it for the general good or for your selfish interest? If what you are asking God to do prosper many people around you or will be used for God's purpose, you will definitely see the evidence of the Word.

MIND THIS: To have access to God, you must make His Son your best friend.

WORD AFFIRMATION: A thousand may fall at your side, and ten thousand at your right hand; but it shall not come near you - Psalm 91:7 (Don't just say it, mean it).

Empowered Mission for Christ Commission (EMCC)

DAY 21: AUDACITY OF GOD'S WORD (8)
TEXT: LUKE 5:1-9

Continued from yesterday, let's conclude on the remaining ingredients for experiencing the power in the Word of God:

4) Have strong faith. Mary said, "Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word." (Luke 1:38, Hebrews 11). For without faith, it is impossible to please God, for he that cometh to God must believe that He is, and *that* He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him. If you need evidence of God's Word in your life and wants your words to be confirmed in season and out of season, you must have strong belief in the Word. Against all hopeless ends, you must have endless hope; Abraham staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief. Stand firm on the Word of God no matter the situation, no storm can remove a (wo)man standing on the Rock of Ages, the Word Himself.

5) Do not joke with the Word of God. Reference and honour the Word at every occasion and in all instances. Where others are playing and joking about the Word of God, flee. It is evil to joke with the Word. If you are joking with the Word, speak sluggishly about the Word, you will pay for it and you shall give account on the day of judgement – Matthew 12:36.

6) Be a man of praying. Spend some times in praying; be conscious of the Word even when you are walking or working. Elijah prayed, Jesus prayed, Peter prayed and the rest Apostles; you too must pray. Pray until you become a prayer and at anytime you speak the Word, you will see instant answer.

7) Be a praise addict. Be addicted to praise, wherever praises and thanksgiving to God is, definitely the Word of God must come. Beloved, if you want to enjoy God and want His answers quickly; dress yourself with garment of praise and make this your attitude, nothing can stop you from getting anything from God. Do you remember David? Be like him.

MIND THIS: Where others are playing and joking about the Word of God, flee.

WORD AFFIRMATION: The fear of man brings a snare, but whoever trusts in the LORD shall be safe - Proverbs 29:25 (Don't just say it, mean it).

Empowered Mission for Christ Commission (EMCC)

DAY 22: LET NOT YOUR HEART BE TROUBLED
TEXT: JOHN 14:1-14

Jesus not long just washed the Apostles' feet, something that a master does not suppose do, not only that, He gave them a new commandment contrary to the ones they understood, and revealed the hearts of His disciples. Judas Iscariot, the treasurer will soon become a betrayer, Peter the leader, the rock will soon turn to a denier (John 13). None of them knew who was next to receiving His verdict; they were troubled and perplexed but Jesus who knows the intent of the heart of man said unto them, let not your heart be troubled (John 14:1).

Therefore, let us consider the statement, "Let not your heart be troubled."

YOUR: "You that are my disciples and followers, my redeemed, chosen, sanctified ones, however others are overwhelmed with the sorrows of this present time, be not you so, for you know better. Christ's disciples should do more than others, should keep their minds quiet, when everything else is unquiet.

HEART: "Though the nation and city be troubled, though your flock and people around are troubled, yet let not your heart be troubled. Keep possession of your heart when you cannot keep possession of nothing else." The heart is the main stronghold; whatever you do, keep trouble from your heart, keep this with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life. The spirit must sustain the infirmity; therefore, see that this be not wounded.

TROUBLED: Be not so troubled as to be put into a hurry and confusion, He did not say, "Let not your hearts be sensible of the grief, or sad because of them" but, "Be not dishevelled and discomposed, be not cast down and disquieted.

You are living in already troubled world, there can be no peace in this world; the only place where there can be peace is with Christ's disciples, Jesus left His Peace with you His follower. Do not be troubled when you

hear wars and rumour of wars. You will hear about unimaginable events, but keep your heart with all diligence. Do not let your heart be troubled, only believe in God and believe also in Christ Jesus, He will soon return.

MIND THIS: Christ's disciples should do more than others, should keep their minds quiet, when everything else is unquiet.

WORD AFFIRMATION: The fear of man brings a snare, but whoever trusts in the LORD shall be safe - Proverbs 29:25 (Don't just say it, mean it).

Empowered Mission for Christ Commission (EMCC)

DAY 23: FAITH BY WORKS (1)
TEXT: DANIEL 3:1-30

Evangelist Niyi Adedokun in his evergreen song titled, “Olorun Semi” (God Offends Me) shared a story of a king who wanted to know a true and genuine man of God. In the song, he narrated a story of a king whose daughter is ready to get marry, the princess approached her father and told him, it is time for me to get marry and I would love to marry a man of God, so as my father, I need your counsel and direction. The king promised the princess that he would get a man of God for her to marry, but who is a man of God the king pondered. The king called on the chief hunter in the town and told him, God offended me and I will love to revenge. Therefore, the king commanded the chief hunter to help look for a man of God next Sunday service. What you will do is to carry cutlass, knife and gun and stand in the city centre, any Christian you see that want to enter the church, ask such that is he a man of God because God offended you and you are here to take a revenge. Whosoever that do not deny God, bring him unto me.

To cut the long story short, very early on Sunday morning, the chief hunter went to stand at the entrance of the church; all the choir members including the instrumentalists denied God and ran away at the face of death. Women, men, elders with their big Bible did not also wait; the elders said, we are just elders and not God and since we are not God, we cannot take God’s punishment. The pastor in charge surprised many, when the chief hunter threatened to kill him; he changed his voice, he said, I am just a mere missionary here and did not sign death warrant by accepting to serve God.

It was not long that a brother called Faith enters with songs of faith in his mouth and as usual, the chief hunter bragged, threatened this man, and asked if he is a man of God, and that he is ready to kill anybody who professes to be a man of God. Brother Faith answered in affirmative, I am a man of God, whether in life or in death, nothing will separate me from the love of God. At the end of the day, the king gave out his daughter in marriage to brother Faith for proclaiming his faith, even in the face of death. The above story is the case of most Christians today, they profess

Christians but in practice, unchristian. Many Christians had bowed to mammon, fame, promotion and opportunities and many have turned to herbalists for help, many people have joined secret cults and many are scam businesses. Are you a Christian? What evidence do you have that people can call you a (wo)man of faith? Check yourself and consider your ways.

The three young Hebrews refused to bow to the golden image king Nebuchadnezzar had set up, in the face of the burning fiery furnace and intimidation, they totally trusted in their God and proclaimed that He is able to save them and if he refused to save them they are ready to die for what they believe. Do you have the same kind of faith? Where is your faith? Is yours a living faith? If you cannot demonstrate your faith in the face of trial, hunger, temptation, scarcity, poverty and jobless, then you are a mere Christian. Heaven do not recognize you. What surprised me most about the three young Hebrews, in the face of the burning fiery furnace, they confidently told the king, we are not careful to answer thee in this matter; our God is able to save us.

MIND THIS: By not having strong faith or wait to the end, many have lost promotion; many have lost their miracles and wasted their destinies just because they could not hold on to God and His words.

WORD AFFIRMATION: The LORD your God in your midst, the Mighty One, will save; He will rejoice over you with gladness, He will quiet you with His love, He will rejoice over you with singing - Zephaniah 3:17 (Don't just say it, mean it).

DAY 24: FAITH BY WORKS (2)
TEXT: DANIEL 3:1-30

As Christians, we must give emphasis on behaving Christian rather than on becoming Christian. The three Hebrews said, we are not careful to answer thee in this matter, O Nebuchadnezzar. In Daniel 3, there are three important things to look at for any of the king's subjects to faithfully say I obey the king's commandment completely: 1) the golden image, 2) the king's decree, and 3) the bow. If there must be a bow, then it must be in line with the king's commandment. It was not just the three Hebrews that failed to bow down to the king's golden image; some people within the music band of the king's palace did not actually obey. *Here is the decree, "That at what time ye hear the sound of the cornet(1), flute(2), harp(3), sackbut(4), psaltery(5), dulcimer(6), and all kinds of musick(7), ye fall down and worship the golden image that Nebuchadnezzar the king hath set up:"* – Daniel 3:5.

Let us look at **the call** to tell you that the three Hebrews were not guilty of the offence: "Therefore at that time, when all the people heard the sound of the cornet(1), flute(2), harp(3), sackbut(4), psaltery(5), and all kinds of musick(7), all the people, the nations, and the languages, fell down *and* worshipped the golden image that Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up" – Daniel 3:7. Is it deliberate that instrument number 6 (dulcimer) was omitted during the call? No! There are some Hebrews or some other people within the king's camp who refused also to bow to the king's image; check also Daniel 3:5,10,15, you will realized that it was only during the call that instrument number 6 which is dulcimer was omitted. Somebody did not play one of the instruments, the king's commandment was not complete and these Hebrews were aware. So these young men could base their arguments on this fact but refused to defence themselves, rather chose to defence the name of their God and their faith. By implication, they shew their faith by their works.

Beloved, if you claim you have faith, where are the evidences? What are the things you have done for God, fellowman, or woman that you can show as a Christian? Abraham offered Isaac to God and it was counted unto him as righteousness. Can you boast of paying 100 naira or 200 as

offering since the time you gave your life to Christ and you are calling yourself a Christian? When was the last time you helped somebody? When was the last time you visited the poor or the orphanages? People will know you as a Christian when you behave your Christianity. Your fervency alone in church does not make you a child of God.

Did the God of Heaven not reward the Hebrew boys? He did! Therefore, God will also reward your acts of faithfulness and stand with you during the period of trials and temptations. He said, fear thou not, I will be with thee – Isaiah 41:10. Again, he says, “When thou passest through the waters, I *will be* with thee...” – Isaiah 43:2. Rely on the Word of God, rise up and defend your faith today. if any man claims to have faith but does nothing, that faith is worth nothing. Faith like that cannot save anyone.

MIND THIS: People will know you as a Christian when you behave your Christianity.

WORD AFFIRMATION: So we may boldly say: ‘The LORD is my helper; I will not fear. What can man do to me? - Hebrews 13:6 (Don’t just say it, mean it).

DAY 25: FAITH BY WORKS (3)
TEXT: JAMES 2:14-26

James 2:14-26 is self-explanatory, what the passage is trying to say is that you must behave your Christianity. Christianity is not by becoming alone, it is also by actions, by good deeds. Faith without works cannot save anyone. You cannot see a hungry man and say to him, God bless you and you walk away; he will mock your prayer. Jesus went about doing good and multitude pressed on Him to hear more, if Jesus behaved like the Pharisees who taught people without any good deeds, His Ministry would not go beyond Nazareth. You cannot neglect the welfare of your people and claim to love God; they will mock your God. Moreover, God will not accept your worship, how can you say you love God and you do not love your neighbour. Remember, Christianity is a way of life and not religion. Do not be over spirituality to forget to help your fellow and brethren within and outside the church.

Faith alone is not enough; our faith is justified by our works. If you believe that, there is one and only true God, devil also believes, so what makes a difference in our Christian journey is our good deeds; if you say you are a believer, and so what? Devil also believes. In the Hall Fame of Faith, Rahab the harlot was mentioned, not because she was a woman of prayer, a choir member or an usher, but because of her good deed; she received the messengers (spies), and sent them out another way when her own people wanted to kill them. She preserved a generation by her action and God reckoned with that, her faith saved her and her entire family; she perished not with unbelievers.

Mary's name, Jesus said will continue to resonate and mention wherever the Gospel is preached, just because she poured her alabaster box of very precious, costly ointment on His head. Jesus said, wheresoever this Gospel shall be preached in the whole world, *there* shall also this, that this woman hath done, be told for a memorial of her (Matthew 26:6-13). Mary believed in Jesus, she had sat at His feet on many occasions and Jesus recognized her but she believed that she must shew her faith, the Person she believed in and she poured her costly ointment on Jesus. Remember, her sister Martha did great service to Jesus, she was busy cooking but

there was no place that Jesus said, Martha's name would be mentioned wherever the Gospel is preached. If you want God to reckon with your faith, do well.

What has your Christianity cost you? Has it cost you your money, time, and resources? If Christianity has not cost you anything, you are not worthy to be called a follower of Christ. Some people cannot boast of giving anything to God, when they are building God's house, you will see them no more in the church. From Year in and year out, you cannot point to something that you do for those you know or know not. If you say you have faith, do show me your works. Abraham offered his only son, God offered His only begotten Son: what have you offered to God or to any man in the name of God that God say, hey! Here is a (wo)man of faith? Evangelism is dying not because churches are not spending money, but because Christians lack good works. Is your action not the same with unbelievers? You must have a change of attitude, today.

MIND THIS: Evangelism is dying not because the churches are not spending money, but because Christians lack good works.

WORD AFFIRMATION: They will see his face. God's name will be written on their foreheads - Revelation 22:4 (Don't just say it, mean it).

DAY 26: A WORTHY HOME (1)
TEXT: EPHESIANS 5:22-29

This day, I write to you husband and wife to love and submit to one another as commanded by God the Almighty. At a meeting recently, I heard a friend explaining to us what people are going through in their marriages; it is alarming that man and woman that supposed to be best of friends are enemies of their souls. Most women today are tired of their relationships, and some of them are dying in silence, they cannot open up to anybody, those who opened up could not find meaningful solutions to their marital challenges. The current divorce rate in Nigeria is becoming alarming, separation rates in 2018 saw a 14% increase across the whole population, according to Nigeria population by Marital Status 0.72% of the entire population are divorce, 0.86% separated, 1.97% widowed, 50.01% Married and 46.44% Never Married (see <https://nigeria.opendataforafrica.org/yjdggyg/nigeria-population-by-marital-status>). The rate of divorce and separation is not good for the peace of any society.

Many people have said problems in any marriage are more of behavioural than of spiritual, but I will rather say problems in marriage is all about lack of spiritual understanding than of behavioural (Genesis 3:1-20). God instituted marriage and according to our memory verse, the essence of marriage as instituted by God is that husband and wife presents their marriages to God at the end of their life's journey, a glorious church - not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish. There are so many spots in marriages today, some marriages are wearing wrinkled outlooks, many marriages are already ruined and if you read newspapers daily, you will see how husbands or wives are filing for divorce or separation world over. How do you want your marriage to be depending on your level of understanding, spirituality and God's Word at your disposal?

In real sense, the mind of God for you is to have a worthy and honourable home. There are different kinds of marriages today and in the Bible, so whatever that is happening in homes and marriages today is not new to God. David, a man after God's heart had eight wives (so you might see a

pastor who is having another woman somewhere else, it is not new), his son Solomon, according to the biblical account, he had 700 wives and 300 concubines (also (wo)men having extra-marital affairs). His grandson, Rehoboam took eighteen wives and sixty concubines while Abijah David's great grandchild married fourteen wives (1 Kings 11:3; 1 Chro. 14:3; 2 Chro. 11:21; 13:21). These are homes and marriages in the Bible and what many people in our days refer to, saying David was a man after God's heart and did marry more than one wife, how come, why can't I marry more than one woman? Beloved, whose reports will you believe, the One who instituted marriage or those who copied marriage to suit their selfish desires? God who instituted marriage established it between one man and one woman (Genesis 2:18-25). Therefore, seeing a Christian who marries more than one wife or husband is not of God. Husband and wife make your home a worthy one.

MIND THIS: How do you want your marriage to be depending on your level of understanding, spirituality and the Word of God at your disposal?

WORD AFFIRMATION: He healeth the broken in heart, and bindeth up their wounds - Psalm 147:3 (Don't just say it, mean it).

DAY 27: A WORTHY HOME (2)
TEXT: EPHESIANS 5:22-29

God is a jealous God and in life's issues, whether purpose, marriage, vision, mission, ministry, etc.; His concern is nothing but that no man should share His glory with Him (Isaiah 42:8). However, the problem in marriages today is not that couples are uncommitted but that they shared in the glory of God. You will hear a man boasting to his friends, family members or telling his wife to her face, when I married my wife, she was only having school certificate, but today she is a Master degree holder. I paid for her WAEC, I bought JAMB form for her, and sent her to university, and today, she is a Master degree holder. Beloved, if you are in this position, you are sharing in the glory of God and this may later be the source of your marital problem. The reason why many marriages are not experiencing positive results is due to pride and arrogance. God who gives that (wo)man wanted to present the marriage unto Himself; but due to lack of spiritual understanding, many spouses are ascribing God's glory to themselves, each partner thinking they are the alpha and omega in such marriage. Thinking without me, s/he cannot become anything. Repent!

Equally, I have listened to women on several occasions, they will say behind every successful man there is a supportive or praying woman and the head of that woman will be swelling up. This is true but if care is not taking, Satan can penetrate, so do everything to the glory of God. Without the woman, the man can still achieve anything with God. Therefore, it is the God of the woman that glory should be ascribed to, but because many women lack spiritual understanding, they do not know why God instituted marriage, their heads will swelled up and some will even be telling their husbands, if you make any mistakes, I will deal with you. I will pray to my God, He will destroy all that you have achieved. Stop this attitude; no man can make man except God is involved. Don't let God deal with you because you are sharing in His glory. Iron out your differences first, if no headway, turn to God in humility.

In a worthy home, appreciate your spouse but give all the glory to God and you will see your life progressing the more and your marriage become Heaven on earth. Whatever you achieve in your marriage, run away from

sharing the glory of God; humble yourself. Whatever you do for your spouse is just by the grace of God and not by your own strength. No two marriages are the same, individual personalities from different backgrounds are involved. If you want God to glorify and honour your marriage, place your marriage on the foundation God established it. Building of a worthy home is between a man and a woman, anyone that says David was a man after God's heart but he married more than one wife, ask him who instituted marriage. Is it David or God?

MIND THIS: Anyone that says David was a man after God's heart but he married more than one wife, ask him who instituted marriage. Is it David or God?

WORD AFFIRMATION: Now the Lord of peace himself give you peace always by all means. The Lord be with you all - 2 Thessalonians 3:16 (Don't just say it, mean it).

Empowered Mission for Christ Commission (EMCC)

DAY 28: A WORTHY HOME (3)
TEXT: EPHESIANS 5:22-29

To sincerely enjoying your marriage as established by God in the Garden of Eden before the devil came in, you must: 1) ensure to give all glory to God in whatsoever you and your spouse achieved; 2) know that God want to present your marriage to Himself as a glorious church; 3) be conscious of no other person except your spouse; 4) walk in love like Christ and give yourself as an offering and sacrifice to one another – Eph. 5:2; 5) know that whatever you do in your relationship, you are doing it unto God; 6) based everything you do in your marriage on the Word of God, trust and rely absolutel-y on the Word of God. Whatever the Word of God cannot do for you in your relationship, nobody can; 7) whatever you might be passing through in your relationship, know ye that it is to the glory of God (Romans 8:28); 8) never rely on your intelligence, but rather pray for the Wisdom of God to guide you in all you do; 9) place the leadership of your home and relationship on Christ and make Him number one priority; 10) Be happy and enjoy every moment with your spouse.

Jesus, His mother and disciples were invited to a wedding in Cana of Galilee, I guess Jesus noticed that it is just a mere invitation (John 2:1-12), the couples did not seek for counsel from Jesus, He was not consulted but just by privilege they knew Mary the mother of Jesus, so by that virtue Jesus was invited. Do you know that this couple made all the preparation, bought all they thought they would need without Jesus? They made use of their imaginations and intelligence to buy all what they need, the good wine, foods, cake, decorations, etc but could not imagined that their wine would got finished at some point.

Jesus response when His mother came to Him showed that the appearance of Jesus in that wedding was due to His mother, He was not a special guest of honour, so when they ran into trouble, they could not run to Jesus for help. Unlike Martha and Mary when Lazarus died, they sent for Jesus and ran to meet Him when He eventually came. This couple could not do that, they had to seek for Jesus help through His mother. Never behave this way; the best is always with Jesus. He has the solution to every situation and He is the solution. This couple ran to Jesus when their

intelligence failed them, your prayer today suppose to be, oh Lord, punctured all my egos and my intelligence so that I can rely on you. You might not know when the next meal will come for your family, but if you have solely relied on the promise and person of Christ, He will never put you to shame.

Before the fall of man, God always come to fellowship with Adam and Eve, meaning, He (God) values relationship and so each day before the fall, Adam and Eve presented themselves to God without spot or wrinkle. Every day before the fall, they are always happy to meet with God because they carried the glory of God, but the day sin entered into their lives, they were hiding from God who happens to be their father. Never hide anything you are going through or you want to do from your Creator, He is aware but He want you to call on Him. Analyze every situation or development with your spouse in all humility and sense of responsibility and jointly take it to God in prayers (Genesis 3:1-24). Doing all of these and more, your marriage will be a worthy home and reference point.

MIND THIS: Whatever the Word of God cannot do for you in your relationship, nobody can

WORD AFFIRMATION: I will both lay me down in peace, and sleep: for thou, Lord, only makest me dwell in safety - Psalm 4:8 (Don't just say it, mean it).

DAY 29: GIRLFRIENDS OF GOD (1)
TEXT: ESTHER 2:1-18

Late 2019, I saw an advert with the inscription, “Miss Gospel Beauty Pageant” and I asked, “What are we turning Gospel into? The Gospel that cost Jesus the Only Begotten Son of the Father His life, paid with His blood, in which the apostles and fathers suffered and died for, is now being turned into a beauty parade? The greatest mistake in Christendom is to believe that the churches need entertainment to pull crowd. The Kingdom of God is not about the multitude; for narrow is the way that leads to eternal life. Spiritual things cannot be reduced to mere activities, money and fashion and expect righteousness to reign supreme in society.

To sisters, aunties, daughters and mummies, are you aware that naturally you are beautiful more than when you put on those costumes? Just take a look. The problem is, the Devil has blindfolded one’s heart to think that without those costumes you are not beautiful or handsome as a man. The reason for costumes is that many people have forgotten to ask for the glory of God to overshadow them. It is not what you put on that matters, it is your positioning in God. Moderation is the key, too much fashion is bad, and fashion is very tricky, complicated in the sense, there is nothing fashion enters into that it will not mess up.

On my way to church one beautiful Sunday morning, this event caught my attention; this particular man was already in church as a traffic controller, directing vehicles here and there. At the time that I arrived, there was this bike rider who brought two ladies, the man was harassing the bike rider, can’t you see? You cannot park here and drop passengers. When the passengers alighted from the motorbike, the man couldn’t believe who he saw. Behold, it was his daughter and a friend of hers. Right away, in the presence of the people, he exclaimed, what is this? He couldn’t believe what he saw. If you see the way the girl dressed and with the heavy make ups, you will know that this one is dressed to kill. The father was so ashamed of himself. Do you place more emphasizes on fashion, outward appearance and how you look; God does not look at that; He looks at inner beauty.

Esther rode on the horses of beauty pageant to bring glory to God, but many people are organizing or participating today in such today to depart from the glory of God. When a young girl loses her virginity it shows on her face, therefore keep your virginity and beauty for God. God is still looking for an Esther, a Mary and a Martha.

MIND THIS: Fashion is very tricky, complicated in the sense that there is nothing that fashion enters into that it will not mess up.

WORD AFFIRMATION: Mercy unto you, and peace, and love, be multiplied
- Jude 1:2 (Don't just say it, mean it).

Empowered Mission for Christ Commission (EMCC)

DAY 30: GIRLFRIENDS OF GOD (2)
TEXT: ESTHER 2:1-18

Beauty fades, never let your beauty be your captivity; the Bible preaches moderation, feed the man within and you will see your life ever shining. Having the presence of God, the glory of God over your life is far better than putting on expensive ornaments. Vashti lost her position, not because she was not beautiful, but due to pride; Esther came on board not just because of her outward appearance but of her inner beauty. Esther's Hebrew name Hadassah, meant Myrtle. Hadas means myrtle tree. Hadassah means compassion. It could not have been easy for Esther to retain her sweet simplicity amid the corruptions of her time, but her Persian name means "a star," as though she were a garden enclosed, encircled by the atmosphere of the divine purity and protection.

The Bible recorded that Esther was fair and beautiful (Est. 2:7), not because of her costume but of the glory and light of God upon her. Right before her appearance, she had obtained favour from the keeper of the women, her things for "purification" were given to her and she was kept in a preferred place. The king was not doing a beauty pageant; he was actually looking for a queen, somebody of his status. God is looking for his beloved and He is not looking for the ones who are fair and beautiful within, those who have kept themselves from the corruption of this world. The question is, "Can God recognizes you the way you dress?" How great is the influence of Christianity in raising our standards and pervading the world with a loftier morality!

Each maiden spent twelve months in seclusion, six months with oil of myrrh, and six months with sweet odours, and with other things for the purifying of the women. If indeed the search for a queen was beauty pageant like that of today, this one was with a difference. For the maidens were not using costume for twelve months, they only have items for purification. Instead of you buying beauty costume, why can't you ask the Heavens to customize you for His glory? It is only the glory of God that can make you beautiful. You may have different set of make ups but if you lack God's glory, your beauty is nothing. Esther did not spend a night with the king before king Ahasuerus set up the crown on her, the glory and favour

of God shown upon her, inner beauty showed up at the right time. What is the essence of beauty without knowledge? Beauty alone did not just bring Esther to the throne; attitude and knowledge of God brought her to limelight. How much of the Word of God do you have in your inside as a (wo)man? Beauty may bring someone into a position, but if such lack skills and knowledge, s/he will soon be disposed.

There are so many maidens who spent the night with the king but will never see him again; they become king's concubine, fit for a night, but not for the throne. But Esther kept his identity; she had fed her inner beauty, and became a woman of courage who understood season and time. She had been with a mentor, who mentored her in the way of the Lord. Esther never disappointed the Heavens with her beauty, she received purification items like that of the wise men that visited Jesus, and not costume pack. If you want to be the bride at the Marriage Supper of the Lamb, feed your inner beauty with the things of God and purify your soul for God to be used, then your glory will come up and God shall be your everlasting light.

MIND THIS: Beauty alone did not just bring Esther to the throne; attitude and knowledge of God brought her to limelight.

WORD AFFIRMATION: For thou shalt eat the labour of thine hands: happy [shalt] thou [be], and [it shall be] well with thee - Psalms 128:2 (Don't just say it, mean it).

DAY 31: GIRLFRIENDS OF GOD (3)

TEXT: 1 PETER 3:1-6

Everything God created was good except when He formed man in His own image, He saw that man being alone was not good, therefore, He created a help meet for the man. When God created the woman, the Bible says, God rested from all His works. The world became perfect and everything was fine until the man left the woman behind. The world is still paying for Adam's error, for leaving the woman behind while devil struck. Sisters, aunties, mummies, mothers and daughters, you are in the world to make the world better but at every time you mess up, the world will be in disarray. Take your place! **For every wayward child you see on the street, a woman has messed up somewhere.** Woman, you are valuable, therefore, mind what you do and take your positions in God, you are God's beloved, the last of His works, the bottom pot, the sweetest part; you are His beautiful bride. So therefore become the woman that God created. You are His useful vessels, shine forth (Gen. 2:18-23).

The King (God) is still looking for fair young virgins, the ones He would loved to decorate with His golden crown, therefore, do not hide your identity under artificial beauty materials. Keep your identity and brood on it so as to become a better person, not just a woman of fashion, but a woman of substance whom God can rely on at anytime. A woman like Deborah who judged and led the people of God righteously and victoriously, the essence of your beauty is for the glory of God to shine abroad, to penetrate into any gate in order to save God's people from calamity. Women arise and take your positions for God. Leave the mundane thing of fashion and clothing for those who are not ready to do exploit for God.

Misuse of natural beauty has caused more damages to purpose and plans today because many young women failed to understand the essence of their creation. Many young women have not asked God, why did you create me? God, what do you want from me? Why am I like this? No, they rely on their beauties and body shapes and begin to transact with it. God created everything for His glory. Let me remind you, beauty fades with age, so if you are more concerned about your outer appearance, you will

be unhappy when the wrinkles come and the number on the scales goes up. You will be surprised that at age 20, the sign of aging may show up. If you place a young woman whose beauty is limited to physical beauty, say age 18 who loves fashion and put much emphasis on revealing dresses, place her side by side with another young lady, average looking who loves God more than anything, she is more beautiful in the eyes of God and will be sought after by men.

Apostle Peter upon whom the Church was built admonished that beauty should not come from outward adornment, such as braided hair, the wearing of gold jewellery instead it should be that of inner man, the unfading beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit. This does not mean it is wrong to braid your hair or wear nice clothes and jewellery, it is to warn you not to follow the pattern of this world who spend hours doing their hair and makeup rather than working on their inner beauty, the kind that lasts forever (1 Peter 3:3-4).

MIND THIS: For every wayward child you see on the street, a woman has messed up somewhere.

WORD AFFIRMATION: And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper - Psalms 1:3 (Don't just say it, mean it).

DAY 33: GIRLFRIENDS OF GOD (4)
TEXT: ESTHER 2:1-18

Seven maidens were given to Esther as part of her purification packages; the question is, who are your friends? Who do you have around? Those who fuels your inner beauty to attract the glory of God or those who always fan your physical beauty until you commit fornication? Who and what you have around determines how far you go in life, if you do not have friends that talks about the things of God around you always, except the ones who behaved fashionable, asking for your adornment pack always and telling the latest in the world of beauty, beloved, I am afraid, this your behaviour will not allow you to cross to the other side of glory and real beauty. It is not until you walk naked that people sees your beauty, you see some ladies who unashamedly indulge in revealing their bodies whereas the same people passworded their phones, lock their SIM cards with PIN codes and fight against whosoever that invade their privacy online. And what they supposed to protect, their physical bodies are what people see freely. Tell slay queens to repent before beauty send them to lake of fire.

Sarah, the mother of faith was a beautiful woman but never lost the plan of God for her life, she was always there for her husband and household (Genesis 12:11, 14; Hebrew 11:11; 1 Peter 3:6). Rebecca also was said to be a beautiful damsel, she never truncated the plan of God for her life, her virginity was intact at the time it was required, she met the condition of a woman who must be the carrier of God's heritage and fit for the plan and many more women in the Bible such as Ruth, Rachael, Deborah, Abigail and Esther. These ones understood the purposes of God for their lives that it is more than beauty. Somebody said, "A beautiful woman is one with a beautiful heart. She may be covered with mud or sores but only her foot fit the glass slipper".

Esther became the queen and stepped into God's purpose for her life, the reason why she came on the throne showed up, which was to preserved her people. She saved her people with uncommon faith, courage, prayers and wisdom. Esther was not an empty vessel, she carried something, she went to the king's presence by faith and obtain a new decree to save her

people alive and destroyed God's enemy, Haman by her uncommon skills and knowledge. Girlfriends of God, this is the reason why God created you wonderfully and beautifully to save many men alive, take them to God, and not to hell with your beauty. A Crown of Glory awaits you, if you diligently follow His purpose and willingly obey.

Romans 14:12 says, "Every one of us shall give account of himself to God." You will give an account of your stewardship to God, all what you do with your beauty, handsomeness, time and resources. To become a ruler of many cities in the Kingdom of God, use your beauty, talents and time for the things of God. To the rest of us, the marriage supper of the Lamb is prepared and ready, the Bridegroom is bidding you to come whether you are a woman or man. Will you come today? Revelation 19:7-9 says, "Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to Him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and His wife hath made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints. And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed *are* they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God."

To join the Maid of Honour, you must give your life to Christ, you must be born again and you can only be born again by confessing your sins, ask God for forgiveness and repent totally from your sins; then confess Jesus Christ as the Only Begotten Son of the Father and make Him your Lord and personal Saviour. Welcome to the household of God, the Girlfriend of God.

MIND THIS: Who and what you have around determines how far you go in life.

WORD AFFIRMATION: Then answered I them, and said unto them, The God of heaven, he will prosper us - Nehemiah 2:20 (Don't just say it, mean it).

DAY 34: INTEGRITAS(1)
TEXT: PROVERBS 4:25-27

What is your Alma matter's slogan? Mine is, "Integritas." In my school days, we echoed, "Integritas" passionately without even know what we are saying; it was several years later that I began to ask for the meaning of this word, "Integritas" which is a latin word, meaning Integrity. When I got to know the meaning, I said, oh! This was why the school principal then and other teachers would be on our necks not to cheat, to be punctual and do things right. Today, many people claim integrity but lack such in reality. People tell lies like water to the extent one do not know who to trust. Many believers have abandoned their churches just because a brother or a sister duped them. If a trustworthy person cannot be found in the house of God, then where do we get one, in the market or at petrol station? Are you a (wo)man of your words? Can anybody within your family or friends' circle bank on your words and go to sleep? If you are told, a program is by so and so time, what time do you appear, early or late? It is impossible to NOT honour your own words and expect God to honour His. Whatever you sow, you shall reap.

Integrity may not give you money at times, but it will give you a good name. it looks foolish at the initial stage, but pay higher at a later date. What do you stand for as a child of God? Where do you stand when it comes to the truth? Joseph stood for God in his days. He always report his elder brothers to their father when those brethren misbehaved, he left his garment and fled from Potiphar's wife and decided to suffer rather than enjoying the pleasure for a moment. Joseph stands for the truth put him in trouble many times, but this virtue eventually profited him. It matters not the name people called you whenever you stand for the truth, your own cloth of many colours may be taking away, but not your colourful inside; never mind, higher and better hands will decorate you soon in the presence of your haters.

Many people have lost their destinies and opportunities due to lack of integrity. Can people trust you? Can you be trusted with money or with women? Many people, civil servants, employees, employers, public servants, politicians, pastors and imams have become something else in

the face of money and fame. Will you join them or are you part of them already? God's judgement and rewards are coming for those who stood for Him and sell not their conscience. Have a truthful day!

MIND THIS: It is impossible to NOT honour your own words and expect God to honour His.

WORD AFFIRMATION: And you, be ye fruitful, and multiply; bring forth abundantly in the earth, and multiply therein - Genesis 9:7 (Don't just say it, mean it).

Empowered Mission for Christ Commission (EMCC)

DAY 35: INTEGRITAS (2)
TEXT: ACTS 5:1-10

TRUE LIFE STORY: A story was told of a man who claimed to have integrity; he bid for a contract worth millions of naira and the Director General (DG) of the Commission invited him to his office. On this fateful day, he came for the meeting on a bike, he has kept his integrity in business all this while; as he entered into the complex and straightaway he was ushered in into the DG's office. The DG greeted him and said, I was told that you are a man of integrity and that you never compromised. The man said, yes Sir, I have made integrity my watchword ever since I was born. The DG said to him, yes, I will gladly give you the contract; we need a man of integrity like you in our nation. But first I saw via the CCTV camera that your bike man is still by the gate, so go and despatch him, give him this one hundred thousand naira and come back for the continuation of our talk and possibly sign the contract papers.

He collected the one hundred thousand and on his way downstairs he thought to himself, one hundred thousand naira for a bike rider I know from nowhere? The bike fare is not up to two hundred naira, why this huge amount of money. So he came to the bike man and gave him five thousand naira and pocketed the remaining sum. He then rushed back to the DG's office and the man asked him again, "Do you say you are a man of integrity. He answered in the affirmative, yes Sir. The DG now called his personal assistant to bring the bike man into his office, unknown to him, the DG has told the security man immediately the man came that they should not allow the bike man to go until he finishes with the contractor. The bike man was brought in and the DG asked him, how much this man gave to you, the man said, five thousand naira Sir. The DG asked the contractor again, "Are you still a man of integrity?" Though according to, this was his first time this man would indeed compromise his integrity, he lost a multi-million naira contract in compromise. What a pity!

Do I need to tell you integrity pays? Yes, it pays to those who stick to it to the end; never live a double standard life. Appreciate whatever you have and thank God for it. Do not copy a man who is earning one hundred and fifty thousand naira as monthly salary and he is building mansions here

and there. Don't let it be your concern; what concerns you is how to please God. Each and every one of us shall give account of himself to God, whatever a man gathered by fraudulent means, he will by the same way lose it. Devil does not have free gift, such a man may be making the money, but where is he spending it. Check his life, consider his family; you will surely know there is no free gift from the devil; he's losing something unknown to him.

Ananias with Sapphira his wife sold a possession and wanted to be recognized as a generous couple, but was not what they appeared to be. They lied to the Holy Spirit and to the first Church and they paid with their dear lives. Have you compromised too? Can people trust you? When you are asked to resume at 8 O' clock, what time do you resume? Maybe you don't even go at all? God is watching you. As for those who are honest, never let this virtue leave you, keep at it, your day will come. You may not have enough money now, people may be mocking you, but do not compromise. The righteous God will visit you at the appointed time.

God came for Joseph, he was elevated to the post of a prime minister and when God came for Ananias and Sapphira too, they died in their prime. Little that a righteous man has is better than having much with no peace of mind (Proverbs 15:6). In more than 131 verses, God mentioned the rewards that will follow a righteous and wicked man. You need to consider your life and imbibe the virtue of integrity in all that you do. Say to the righteous, it shall never be removed: but the wicked shall not inhabit the earth.

MIND THIS: Can you say like the Psalmist, "The LORD shall judge the people: judge me, O LORD, according to my righteousness, and according to mine integrity that is in me"?

WORD AFFIRMATION: And I will make thee exceeding fruitful, and I will make nations of thee, and kings shall come out of thee - Genesis 17:6 (Don't just say it, mean it).

DAY 36: INTEGRITAS (3)

TEXT: MATTHEW 23:1-7; 13-33

It is absurd, a lot of people expect others to do the right thing yet do not want to do it themselves, they are like the Pharisees. Jesus cursed them in His days, He said, "Woe unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness." – Matthew 23:27. We have leaders who want citizens to obey the law of the land but they themselves are not ready to align by the law. Don't be like them, as Christians, we obey the law not because of its consequences but because of Christ. You as a person do not want people to lie to you but you tell lies to others. Your steps and behaviours are not in line with what you say, you are a hypocrite.

At a time when integrity was so scarce in this nation, a government agency designed a project tagged, "Do the Right Thing", and one day as I was driving on my way to the office and usually there is heavy traffic on our road, especially on the road from my house to the office, hardly you will not experience traffic on this road during weekdays. So on this day, there is too much traffic and the staff bus of the agency that champions this "do the right thing" project was also passing and boldly writing on the bus was, "DO THE RIGHT THING". While other road users go slowly to navigate their ways, the drive of the Do the Right Thing Bus just manoeuvre and climb the pavement beside the road and drove through it. For me, I felt bad and did not want to abuse him, I realized he is carrying the staff of the agency as well, I just asked the driver and those staff, "Are you doing the right thing? You want citizens to do the right thing but you are ready to tow the same line." None of them could say a word. It is so sad that we want change but nobody is ready to change.

God called David a man after His own heart, never ever in the history of man did God called a man after His own heart, even Adam that He made in His own likeness and image, God did not call him, a man after my heart. With all the wisdom, power and strength that God endowed Adam with. Generations past before David as mentioned in the Bible from Genesis up to first and second Samuel, it was only David (1 Samuel 13:14; Acts 13:22).

What did David do for God? I guess it is not just praise; it is also because David walked in the Way God walked, and he followed and patterned his life after God's. Can God called you a (wo)man after his own heart? Are you a (wo)man of your words? You may be a man of truth but you work and walk contrary, retrace your steps back and hold on to the value of integrity.

In the midst of the corruption in the world at the time, God saw Job and boasted about him to Satan, this is the same devil that many Christians bind and loose today. Job was a man from the East, the headquarters of corruption at the time, even his friends could not believe Job did not commit sin, but he remained a righteous and faithful man, and God took pride in Him and showed him to Satan. Satan, you think I cannot get a righteous soul on earth? See my servant, Job. No matter how Satan tried, Job did not disappoint God, he was resolute and never compromise his stand with God. Can God be proud of you in the midst of the corruption and unrighteousness that permeates our world today? Can God find you His own servant?

MIND THIS: Can God be proud of you in the midst of the corruption and unrighteousness that permeates our world today? Can God find you His own servant?

WORD AFFIRMATION: For now the LORD hath made room for us, and we shall be fruitful in the land - Genesis 26:22 (Don't just say it, mean it).

DAY 37: INTEGRITAS (4)
TEXT: JOHN 1:45-49

Philip, one of the Disciples of Jesus found Nathanael, and told him, we have found Him, of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph. And Nathanael said unto him, "Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth? Philip saith unto him, Come and see." What has happened to Nazareth that Nathanael wrote it off like that? The land and her people must have been leaving contrary to God's Word, but Philip said in this same land, we have found a Man we can rely on, the One that we can place our lives on, the Man of truth.

When Jesus saw Nathanael coming to Him, He was so proud and excited; Jesus said concerning Nathanael, "Behold, an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile! You mean Nathanael was a true "Israelite" – not cunning; no craftiness in him? What a recommendation! Jesus testified about the person of Nathanael, can anyone around testify about you like this? Between Malachi and Matthew, there was a 400 year of silence; God did not speak with anyman. So how did Nathanael developed himself to the point that even Jesus, the Messiah could say, here is a true Israelite in whom there is no guile (John 1:45-48). Can heaven called you a true and faithful Christian?

Many Christians have heard different messages many times, attended revival hours on countless occasions, bible studies many times, have different versions of the Bible and had read the Bible from Genesis to Revelation; yet Jesus cannot boldly say, here is a (wo)man in whom there is no guile. Such a life is a disappointment. If after all of these heavens could not recognize you as a child of God; you are not fit for the Kingdom. You need to change; God and the Heavens suppose to be happy that righteous men are on earth and not to be sad. God could not find just ten righteous men in the entire Sodom and Gomorrah and the cities were destroyed with fire.

Beloved, never think you are going to make heaven with this negative lifestyle of yours, frankly, no sinner, unrighteous person is going to hell, because hell itself will not make it on the last day (Revelation 20:14). If you

fail to repent, lake of fire is the destination, but I urge you to go back to God, renew your mind and become what He want you to be.

MIND THIS: If there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.

WORD AFFIRMATION: And God Almighty bless thee, and make thee fruitful, and multiply thee, that thou mayest be a multitude of people - Genesis 28:3 (Don't just say it, mean it).

Empowered Mission for Christ Commission (EMCC)

DAY 38: INTEGRITAS (5)
TEXT: DANIEL 6:1-28

Daniel was a perfect man in a strange land, the Bible says, men who ruled the world at the time sought to find occasion against him concerning the kingdom but found none; forasmuch as he was faithful, neither was there any error or fault found in him – Daniel 6:4. Believers are called to the highest of morals, principles and standards. We cling to doctrines but grapple and struggle almost constantly with living lives of integrity. Christian command to integrity is a command to both talk and walk in the way of Jesus. “For the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous and his ears are attentive to their prayer, but the face of the Lord is against those who do evil.” That definition of integrity calls us to walk in the path of Christ, and to steer clear of hypocrisy.

For many people, a life that matters seems to mean important meetings with important people making important decisions. However, this is not the life to which God calls many of us. To be sure, there are some who are called by God to do important things with integrity, but many of them have mistakenly equated goodness with greatness. And that can lead to a life or ministry where someone knows all the right things to say, do, or write to gain a following, but everyday life isn't really impacted. Ever since as a nation, we have been battling with corruption and bribery, these permeate every institution and community; hardly will you see a transaction without a label of corruption in it. Today, many people doubted many testimonies because one does not know what the testifier did to get his/her testimony.

Daniel was thrown into the den of lions but he came out unhurt because of his innocency and integrity with God and man. The king trusted Daniel to the point that he couldn't sleep. Are you a (wo)man that can be trusted? Do you give bribe or your body to get to the position you are now? Better to repent now, the day of judgement comes and no one will be spared. Daniel's day of judgement came and his innocency set him free.

I challenge you today to live a life of integrity and become a (wo)man that Heavens and earth can boldly say, behold, a Christian indeed, in whom

there is no guile! I live you with Psalms 37:37, “Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright: for the end of that man is peace.”

MIND THIS: Christian command to integrity is a command to both talk and walk in the way of Jesus.

WORD AFFIRMATION: And God said unto him, I [am] God Almighty: be fruitful and multiply; a nation and a company of nations shall be of thee, and kings shall come out of thy loins - Genesis 35:11 (Don't just say it, mean it).

Empowered Mission for Christ Commission (EMCC)

DAY 39: THE STREETS ARE EMPTY
TEXT: ZEPHANIAH 3:1-7

The world is becoming a dangerous place to live, different events are happening at different times that no one can explain. Wars, news of war, disease outbreaks and economic meltdown permeates the world you and I live in. On the 31st December, 2019, while believers and the rest of the world were holding vigils and rejoicing to welcome a new year with hope and joy, in the Wuhan city of China there was an outbreak of deadly corona virus also known as COVID-19.

Many people believe it will not spread beyond Wuhan but today it has claimed many lives world over. World economy nose-diving at a fast rate, cities being lockdown and businesses shutdown, the entire city of Wuhan with over 11million people lockdown. Italy, majorly the worst hit on total lockdown and quarantine, tourist attraction sites in Paris, Geneva and host of others countries were totally deserted. African countries were not left out, schools, churches, mosques, bars and clubs were shut down.

Who knows Eiffel Tower will be deserted, almighty Vatican City in Rome hold no mass, national borders closed indefinitely including airports, all to prevent the spread of this deadly disease. But before now, God had warned the nations of the world to repent from their evil ways and turn to Him, people never yielded to the call, they are just doing what they like, cinema centres, football stadia and clubs would be filled to the brim; many did not yield to God but today can many of them go out of their homes? There was no room for Jesus in the inn; the Saviour of the world was born in a manger. Is there still room for Christ in your heart today? Check! When God come the nations of the world will hear and obey Him by force and He has come. Do you want to hear God by force or you will willingly surrender to Him today?

In Zephaniah 3, God cursed these filthy and polluted nations; they obeyed not His voice, received not correction, trusted not in the LORD and drew not near to the God of Heavens and earth. Many atrocities were being committed by the nations and government of the world everyday against innocent souls and Christians and God calls to them to repent but all to no

avail and in His fury, the prophecy in verse 6 of Zephaniah 3 is coming to pass: to cut off the nations of the world, make their towers desolate and made their streets waste and deserted, that none passes by and to destroy their cities, so that there is no man to inhabit it. Is it not happening in our very eye? Warn your families and friends to not joke with the things of God. Now is the time to move closer to God and repent from your evil ways.

This time is telling us all to repent and turn to God; search and amend your ways. Christ may come at anytime, the events in the world is pointing to His coming. How are you standing? I urge you to be in good standing with God, repent and turn from your evil ways and come to Jesus today. When God's wrath comes, definitely the streets and cities will be emptied for fear and for judgement. In verse 7 of our Scriptures, God said, surely, these people will fear Him and receive correction. When God comes everybody will be sober and knows the truth. Don't wait till Judgement Day before you repent, it will be too late.

MIND THIS Don't wait till Judgement Day before you repent, it will be too late.

WORD AFFIRMATION: And the children of Israel were fruitful, and increased abundantly, and multiplied, and waxed exceeding mighty; and the land was filled with them - Exodus 1:7 (Don't just say it, mean it).

DAY 40: TAKE A STAND
TEXT: EPHESIANS 6:10-17

The Bible made us to understand that God has not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind, but the outbreaks of COVID-19 or whatever name given to it has made many including Christians to dissolve and melt away like ice. Different reports from social media and other sources reveal that more than 341,000 have contacted the virus worldwide, as of today there are 14,753 deaths resulting from this virus, 99,041 recovered so far and 227,902 people are currently infected worldwide. (source: <https://www.worldometers.info/coronavirus/>).

As a child of God, there is no need to panic. In addition to whatever precautionary measures being put in place by government, there is need for you to take your stand in God. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers in high places and so you must stand up to send the virus and its agents back to the pit of hell where it came from. It does not matter whether it is man-made or something else, there is no need to be afraid, you have the Sword of the Spirit which is the Word of God to defeat this satanic sponsored disease. Declare to your nation, decree to the world, make an order over your life and establish God's presence over your family. Coronavirus has no power over anyone, you and I can put a stop to it, the plague can be stayed by the Word of God in your mouth and by the Blood of Jesus Christ shed on the Cross of Calvary. This is the time that we will know whether there is a God who rules in the affairs of men or not.

You and I need to rise and pray, not just for God's mercies but for His intervention while standing on His words as our weapons. Church buildings may be closed down but the real Church is NOT. You are the Church and I am the Church, so speak the Word. The Church prayed for Apostle Peter, he was released from the prison and Paul and Silas prayed inside the prison, freedom came. You have the Keys to God's Kingdom, whatever you bind on earth, shall be bound in Heaven. Heaven is waiting for your command. How far will this virus go depend on how we permitted it in our nation. Don't let anybody deceive you; let government and

scientists be doing what they know best. What you know is God and we must rely on Him and take a stand in Him with our faith intact. If the people of God can humble themselves and pray, God will heal their land (2 Chronicles 7:14). You can stop this plague, I can stop it too but it requires our praying and faith in God. This is not the time to speak about the virus, it is the time to celebrate the faithfulness and the power of God. Our God reigns over all the earth. With Him, we can defeat this monster called, COVID-19.

No matter what human beings are doing to destroy the works of God, it cannot stand and it will not stand. Only believe and act in faith and you shall see the glory of God. What this plague need is just for a man to stand in the gap and declare the Word of God against it. I am confident that this plague shall not touch you and your families, only be in God and obey His command.

At this time, take up the full armor of God so that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. Take unto you the whole armour of God that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Girt your loins with the truth and make righteousness your breastplate and be ready to spread the gospel of peace; and above all, take the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. This is not the time to spread negative news; it is the time to speak the Word. The plague is over. I declare no plague shall come near your dwelling. Remember, take a stand.

MIND THIS How far will this virus go depend on how we permitted it in our nation?

WORD AFFIRMATION: For I will have respect unto you, and make you fruitful, and multiply you, and establish my covenant with you - Leviticus 26:9 (Don't just say it, mean it).

DAY 41: RESET
TEXT: ACTS 1:1-14

God has been a seeker right from the Garden of Eden, every day He fellowship with Adam and Eve, even on the day they fell He was still there to check their estate. Since the fall of man God has been looking for a way to fellowship with man his creature. He found Noah, Enoch, Abraham and the rest and later chose the Israelites to be His own people. God's love towards mankind is immeasurable and cannot be comprehended (Romans 5:8), He loves mankind so much that He gave His only begotten Son to die for the sins of the world because He was seeking for true relationship (John 3:16).

But many profess to love God today but in reality their love for Him is deficient in the sense that it is what they want to collect from Him that they are after, not Him as their Father. By their actions, some want Jesus to be their Lord and not their Saviour; likewise some want Him to be their Saviour and not their Lord. The way you behave and act in your neighbourhood, can anybody called you a child of God? Christians today are full of church activities but lack God's revelation. We have mastered the system like service day: opening prayers, praise/worship, testimonies, bible reading, choir ministrations, message and benediction, we know what next during service but never known what next in our lives. This is how some Christians live their lives, they are fervent for the things of God but not God Himself, and many can go for choir rehearsals but will never open their Bibles. Revival hours, prayer meetings, group meetings, they will never want to miss but ask them when was the last time they hear from God; they will be like what are you saying. Many are present in church but absent in God's presence. If you are among, you need a spiritual reset, you need to reboot. This season has presented an opportunity to restart your journey with God.

Check your appearance when you go to church or outside the church, check your motive in going to church, the position you are holding if your pastor suddenly bring another person junior to you to come heading that department, what will be your reaction? Some can leave their shops for fellowship and church services but simple obedient they do not have.

Some talk more about their church than Christ, can quote their pastors more than the Scriptures. The reason why our generation is not seeing God is because we are too comfortable, common question we will not ask and many of us are not behaving like the Berean women; we just believe anything and take anything, hook, line and sinker. We need to return to God wholeheartedly.

Now that Coronavirus is sending everybody home and spend many hours indoor, it is time for you to spend this time to seek the only true God. God needs your attention, He want to speak with you but your work, academics, business, career, clubbing, football, etc has not allow you, now that there is a stay at home order, may be you will have time for God. The virus is creating an avenue for you to have quality time with God, unlike your usual habit of waking up in the morning, then spend few minutes in the presence of God and off you go, it is time to refresh, it is time to seek the Lord. Press that reset button, you need to refill and 'refire' for God. If you are still using this period to watch Africa Magic, Zeeworld, WWE, etc you are not using your time well; it is time to retreat and rest in the arm of the Almighty.

The disciples fellowship with Jesus Christ for 40days after His resurrection and while leaving, He admonished them to go to Jerusalem to wait for the promise of the Holy Spirit and before He finished His speech He was taken away from them and the Angels of God reminded them that the same Jesus is coming back again but if they need the fellowship and relationship with the Father, they must go to the upper room, there they stayed to receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit. How many hours do you spend in the presence of God daily? Do you really have time for God? Now that government is asking you to stay at home, won't you use this opportunity to come to God and re-equip yourself for the days ahead? No one knows what will happen next, like the Angels said, Jesus is coming back. His coming is imminent and can be at anytime. Are you ready? Do you prepare for Him at all? If Christ comes now, will you reign with Him? In order not to be like the foolish virgins who did not have extra oil for their lamps, it is better to wisely prepare your heart and household for God as Christ can come at anytime.

Beloved, this disease has made us to understand that nothing matters in this world. As of today, what matter to you and I is our lives and our families. Suddenly, offices announce stay at home, school closed, airports shut, no movement in some parts of the world, nothing matter to us all now except our lives. Will you love the world and things thereof to lose your soul? God forbid. In order to be friend with God again, you must press that reset button. Ask God to come into your life, rededicate your life to Christ, study the word of God regularly, pray and commune with God, have fellowship with the Holy Spirit, do the work of an evangelist, spread the Gospel, read good books and let your family knows you are around then you can be reuse by God and be useful to Him. Welcome back.

MIND THIS We need to return to God wholeheartedly.

WORD AFFIRMATION: [Is] it not yet a very little while, and Lebanon shall be turned into a fruitful field, and the fruitful field shall be esteemed as a forest? - Isaiah 29:17 (Don't just say it, mean it).

DAY 42: TIME TO TURN
TEXT: 2 CHRONICLES 7:13-14

From the Garden of Eden till the present generation, men have messed up. While acknowledging the efforts of all the medical practitioners and emergency workers at this time, their efforts can only be effective if God is involved. Skills, wisdom and power has failed, therefore, what the world need at the moment is a total turn to God Almighty. It is time to turn to our Creator, humble ourselves and tell Him we have goofed. We have sinned and He will surely show us mercy. If the world thinks there is a solution, the virus will ravage us till death but if we turn to God, He will be kind to us all.

Acknowledging God at anytime will always bring God's presence and intervention, your role at this moment is to acknowledge the leadership and rulership of the sovereign God over your life, your nation and the world. God is God whether you acknowledge Him or not, but you need

Him more now and therefore, invite His presence in humility to intervene in the affairs of the world. Pray that His Kingdom comes.

He told King Solomon, if He shut up heaven that there is no rain, or if He commands the locusts to devour the land, or if He sends pestilence among His people; which is normal to God when He want to bring His people to order. But if “His people”, not everybody now, the people of God, those who trust Him as a Father, that bears God’s name shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek His face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will He hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.

What you need to do as a child of God is to humble and repent from your sins. Sin whether personal or national destroys, forgiveness is necessary to save you and our nation from the inherent destruction that sin brings. Hurricanes, tornadoes, earthquakes, forest fires, floods including coronavirus are events that are generally looked at as natural disasters, which they are, but God allows them in order to get our attention. As a nation we have turned from God, we are guilty of all kinds of national sins, we are worshipping the gods of pleasure , politics, fashion and sex and the thought of righteousness and God are openly ridiculed daily on radio and television.

To put an end to all these calamities in our world, we must humble ourselves, pray, seek His face and turn from our wicked ways, then God will hear from heaven, forgive our sins and heal our land. For the Israelites, there were many times that they turned their backs to God, rebelled against His commandments and worship other gods. The results were always disastrous. When a nation forsakes God, God forsakes the nation. They ultimately were conquered by other nations and went into captivity. But as a people or as a child of God, if we or you can seek His face through His only Begotten Son, Jesus Christ, this plaque will be over. We shall not experience the wrought of God any longer; it is devastating if we seek His face not and pray. Have a wonderful day.

MIND THIS When a nation forsakes God, God forsakes the nation.

WORD AFFIRMATION: And said, My Lord, if now I have found favour in thy sight, pass not away, I pray thee, from thy servant - Genesis 18:3 (Don't just say it, mean it).

Empowered Mission for Christ Commission (EMCC)

DAY 43: THE END IS NOT YET
TEXT: MATTHEW 24:1-14

I had listen to different conversations why the doors to our churches were locked and people are not allowed to go in to their churches to pray, some believed if the church is opening, Christians can stay and stop the virus. I believe too! But the problem is how many people are genuinely born again in the church today? In those days, people are genuinely born again and can call fire from heaven, but with the multitude in our churches today, how many are the genuine children of God. A lot of the people in churches today do not have the fear of God, some are coming to the church from their (wo)man or boy/girl friend's houses and we expect fire to fall, already there is a strange fire in the church. We cannot be deceiving ourselves and expect God to come down, of the various plagues and diseases that has ravaged the world, coronavirus has been the one that has exposed the true state of the church world over. I hope you and I will think about our walk with God so far and amend our ways and put our houses in perfect conditions before it is too late.

Fear has filled every heart and hardly you will see a (wo)man whose mind is at rest at this period, but Christ is saying to you today, let not your heart be troubled, the end is not yet. Throughout history many plagues and diseases have caused fear and death. For example, consider the following outbreaks: The Black Plague, Ebola, SARS, MERS and the recent Coronavirus (COVID-19), Jesus didn't come back in the past because of these plagues. However, as epidemics including the coronavirus occur more often and become more deadly, we should pay attention as these are warning signs that Jesus is coming back soon.

Do not let your heart be trouble, it is just a sign that our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ is coming soon, what should be your concern is to adequately prepare and have extra oil because He may come at the unknown time. So in these trying times, pray and ask God to remove your fear and anxiety; to surround you with His Presence; then take a deep breath and relax, knowing that your life is in the hands of God who created you. In addition to this, be ready.

Jesus and His disciples were walking outside of the temple in Jerusalem when the disciples, in admiration, commented on its beauty. They were shocked to hear Jesus say that the temple would be demolished, the city destroyed, and its people scattered. Jesus' prediction came true in AD 70 when the Roman armies, led by Vespasian and his son Titus, surrounded Jerusalem and captured it after a terrible five-month siege and the temple was destroyed. The disciples, troubled by Jesus' words, came to Him privately and asked: "Tell us, when these things will be? And what will be the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?" (Matthew 24:3). Jesus gave several "signs," or evidences, by which we can know when His coming is near. Other Bible prophecies help fill in the picture, detailing world conditions just before Jesus returns.

I urge you to study today's text and other Bible references to gain understanding about the time, do not be afraid. Even though it is the beginning of the ending of the world, your Saviour and mine is coming. Halleluyah!

MIND THIS As epidemics including the coronavirus occur more often and become more deadly, we should pay attention as these are warning signs that Jesus is coming back soon.

WORD AFFIRMATION: And the LORD gave the people favour in the sight of the Egyptians, so that they lent unto them [such things as they required]. And they spoiled the Egyptians - Exodus 12:36 (Don't just say it, mean it).

DAY 44: IS THE LORD THY GOD?
TEXT: DEUTERONOMY 28:58-63

Is the Lord your God? If indeed you have the only true God as your Lord, you will do His will, walk in His ways and dwell in His love. For God so love the world that He gave, this love many have abused and taken for granted. Our case is like that of a man who had a beautiful wife with godly character, before the man say a thing, the wife knows what to do. She cherished her husband so much and would not allow anything to happen to him, but as much as this woman keeps trying to please her husband, the man never appreciated, but always abuses her. Never mind, the day the woman was taken away from him, his entire world collapse, he sought for her with tears but couldn't get. Many of us are like this man to God, we have always taking God for a ride and for every time God is calling us we tend to ignore his friendly love and abuse the privileges we have in Him. We are like immature man who takes the love of his life for granted until there is no godly woman to marry.

If you know the God of the Bible you will realize He is a loving, jealous and fearful God, I wonder at the behaviours of the so called children of God today and I say to myself, are we serving the same Lord the older generations served in the Bible? He is a no nonsense God. When God led the Israelites into the promise land, he gave them laws, statutes and commandments to observe, and he warned them on many things. He told them through Moses that if they failed to observe to do all the wordings of these laws and fear His glorious and fearful name, THE LORD THY GOD; He will bring upon them wonderful plaques (Deut. 28:58-59). God is dynamic and it is not somebody that anybody can lead you to, your pastor can only show you the way but you must find Him yourself. It does not matter whether you are a pastor, a chorister or a worker in the vineyard of God, if you truly do not have a personal encounter with this God, you will think Christianity is a ruse. He is a God of principle, a loving Father but also a consuming fire.

Do you and I observe the word of God? Do we examine to put it into practise? Do you truly fear His name? How many hours do you have to study or read the Word of God in a day talk less of doing His will? If you

read today's passage, you might wonder why this present plague is ravaging the world. The world including you have neglected God, don't claim you are not, if God open your eyes to things you suppose to do and that you are not doing, you will humble yourself. The world has neglected God for the god of soccer; did it not happen in this nation when some churches took televisions to church to watch football? How are our services, special programs or youth meetings different from worldly clubs and partying? Has it not happened that in some churches they held beauty pageant shows? Comedy shows in churches were the order of the day before now, even at a time, the church were inviting Nollywood actors and actresses to come and preach, all in the name of commanding crowd. I am afraid the church has raised men for the devil. God is watching and we have burnt our fingers. Read Deuteronomy 28:58-63 and you will understand why we are in this mess. Just one plague has messed our entire system up, with one plague seat of power are collapsing and school shut and somebody was asking, is there no man to call fire from heaven and stop the plague? Why can't you call fire from your years of comedy in the church? The truth is, it will take a man that the Lord is his God to do so. How many can genuinely boast that the Lord is my Shepherd? We only recite Psalm 23; many of us do not mean it.

You know what you did to build that your house (how many people you defrauded); you know what you did to buy that car (the number of files you converted as a public servant), even the phone in your hand, who bought it for you? Maybe your boy or man friend, is it the same person that will call fire from heaven like Elijah? Beloved, is God your God? If God is your God, why are you misbehaving? Why are you pleased in your sins? I sense you need to take time to know this God. Paul the Apostle, a man of passion, the one that wrote half of the New Testament, who planted church in the house of Caesar after many years in Ministry cried out one day, "that I may know Him (God, Christ) and the power of His resurrection." If it is the same God Paul served that you think you are serving, I think you need to recheck. The one who have used his entire life for the things of God, still praying to know God, then, who are you? Is the Lord your God indeed, I ask again. Please check.

MIND THIS If you know the God of the Bible you will realize He is a loving, jealous and fearful God.

WORD AFFIRMATION: And of Naphtali he said, O Naphtali, satisfied with favour, and full with the blessing of the LORD: possess thou the west and the south - Deuteronomy 33:23 (Don't just say it, mean it).

Empowered Mission for Christ Commission (EMCC)

DAY 45: REVIVAL IN YOUR HEART (1)
TEXT: JUDGES 6:11-13

One thing that this issue of COVID-19 will do for as many as God calls His own is to spring up revival in their hearts. While leading a prayer meeting of 5 men recently, before now, these 5 men usually gathers every weekend to pray, equip ourselves and ask for God's intervention in life, family, business and ministry; so I asked and said, with the Coronavirus outbreak ravaging now, if I raise a prayer point that God should change our stories, bless us with goodly cars or fulfills our heart desires, how many will pray the prayer, nobody signified because what matter to us all now as human beings is our lives. And I said, we have read about God in the Bible, but it is time to experience that God in reality. We have been preached to in churches about one invisible God who rules in the affairs of men whether He is real or not; this is the time we will know.

After 40years of peace in the land of Israel (Judges 5:31), the Israelites did evil in the sight of God as always and God punished them by allowing the Midianites to torment them up to the point that they threshed "wheat by winepress" to hide their harvests from their enemies. There was a man called, Gideon, the son of Joash the Abiezrite who threshed wheat by winepress at Oprah, the Angel of the Lord came and saluted him saying, "Hey, mighty man of valour, the Lord is with you." Like many of us will react when our friends hailed us, "Chairman, money too much and you know that they are only teasing you". Gideon said to the Angel, "Me, mighty man of valour threshing wheat by winepress? If the Lord is with me where is the God now? Where is the God that was preached to me, that my pastor said, He parted the red sea? If there is God, why am I suffering? Why are these calamities befalling us? Where is the God that was preached to me that He healed the sick, raised the dead? Where is the God of 1930 if truly the Lord is with us? If this is your situation, you are not alone, it happened to Gideon when he could not see the God that was preached to him.

We have found ourselves in the same situation like that of Gideon, many of us are asking if truly there is God why is Coronavirus ravaging the earth and killing people like this? Beloved, it is because God want to show

Himself to you or to other people who wish to know this God. We are not desperate enough hence the reason why we are experiencing the less of God in our days. If believers are desperate enough, desire to know this God personally and stop the gimmicks in the church, we will see the God of the Bible and He will rule and act in our days. In our individual hearts, many of us are asking if Jesus Christ actually came to die for us because of the level of suffering in the land. It happened to Gideon, you are not alone.

In those days, men carried revival fire to church but today, we carry fire extinguishers along to church to extinguish the fire. Many thought they can contact the fire from the church, yes, it is possible, but the church is too crowded for the kind of revival God is expecting from us, there are mixed multitudes who quench revival fire in the church. If there will be meaningful revival, it will come from individuals, young or old who are ready to pay the price, not the one who goes to church because of fashion.

The Lord met with Gideon while alone; when others are sleeping, Gideon was busy threshing wheat by the winepress, this is the most difficult thing to do; ordinarily a farmer separate chaff from wheat on a plain ground and press vine in a shallow ground but in Gideon's case, reverse is the case. The Lord met with Saul who later became Paul on the road to Damascus, Paul did not see Jesus physically during His days but he had an encounter with the resurrected Jesus. But look at what the life of Paul produced, Gideon that did not know God in Judges 6:11, by the time we get to Judges 8:23, he is now talking about God. This is strange. Your heart must be made up if truly you want to see God in your days. If there is going to be revival in our churches, communities and countries, it must first start from individual's hearts.

MIND THIS In those days, men carried revival fire to church but today, we carry fire extinguishers along to church to extinguish the fire.

WORD AFFIRMATION: And the child Samuel grew on, and was in favour both with the LORD, and also with men – 1 Samuel 2:26 (Don't just say it, mean it).

DAY 46: REVIVAL IN YOUR HEART (2)
TEXT: JUDGES 6:11-13

To understand today's lesson, please read, "Revival in your Heart (1)"; this is the continuation. God blessings as you read.

When Gideon caught the fire from Jehovah, the man who did not see himself as a mighty man of valour is now leading the armies of Israel; he defeated the host of the Midianites and won the battle for the Lord. He became a ruler in Israel and turned the Israelites to God of their Fathers. The difference between lukewarm individuals and the hot ones is their hearts. What is your heart panting after? What is your heart calling for?

If there will be any revival in our days, our hearts must be made for God, and we must take up responsibility. You and I must be desperate for God to come. We must be ready to test what we are told and let God know that we are not taking anything less than what we have read in the Bible and even the greater works we must do. We must first make the study of the Word of God our priority to understand the heartbeat of God for our generation. Second, we must assure God that everything will be for His glory; third, we must have unwavering faith in Him, that if we perish, we perish, no matter what people are saying; fourth, we must wait and stay in the place of prayers and fasting and let Him know, there is no one else, no other alternative. We must demonstrate this attitude, "after God is God, after Him is Him and nothing else", then He will appear in our situation and show up where necessary. But if you still have hope or alternative in your business, in sugar daddies/mummies, in your children, jobs, etc you will never experience the True, One and Only God.

This is the time to cut the fire of revival; this is the season that our hearts must be burning for God. My daily attitude has been to read twenty (20) Days of the Scriptures daily in addition to reading of Christian articles and other materials. Before now, I read five Days of Psalms for each day making 150 Days of Psalms in a month, one Day of Proverbs daily to make the 31 Days of the Book of Proverbs for a month. This I do day in day out and every month. It made me to discover that one can read the entire Bible from Genesis to Revelation under 67hours. You too can be this better

and together we can sustain the tempo and like Gideon who in his days brought down the hands of God. If at the end of the Coronavirus Pandemic, we did not see God in our generation, it will be a great disaster.

Beloved, at this time, adhere strictly to the plans laid down by Christian leaders to stay indoor, then use this period to do retreat, get closer to God and study His words. Develop your own message, show the pastor in you to your family and demonstrate the love of God to your neighbours. I see revival happening if all of us use this stay at home order well. We will be happy again; the love for God, His house and other believers will grow again in our hearts and like Gideon, you and I will not be preaching about the God will read or told, we will be talking about God will personally experienced. We can then give firsthand information to our children's children. What a glorious thing it will be to tell your children that at a time when one useless virus ravaged the world, you stood in the gap with other believers and you see heaven opened and saw God on the throne as He command the wind from His presence to blow away the plague. May this happen in your lifetime. Heaven will bow to you and honour your words in Jesus name (Amen).

MIND THIS If there will be any revival in our days, our hearts must be made for God, and we must take up responsibility. You and I must be desperate for God to come.

WORD AFFIRMATION: Thou hast granted me life and favour, and thy visitation hath preserved my spirit - Job 10:12 (Don't just say it, mean it).

DAY 47: CAST DOWN BUT NOT DESTROYED (1)
TEXT: 2 CORINTHIANS 4:7-10

It seems the COVID-19 reality is done on us, our cities are being lockdown totally and many as of now do not still have hope for survival. The good news is, this season will pass and we will bounce back again as a people and as a nation, we will come out together stronger. Initially, when the city authority declared stay at home order, I did not have enough with me, having exhausted my income on a trip recently made, I was a bit troubled but early the following morning I heard a voice which says, "there still windows in heaven". Instantly, I had peace in my inner man and I believe it strongly. At a later time when somebody came to ask about what to do as there's rumour of locking down the entire city, I said to the individual there is still window in heaven but on ground there was nothing. A friend of mine asked what do we do at this time, I said to him; there are still windows in heaven. To God be the glory, I can testify to God faithfulness at this time. There are Angels around waiting for your order.

Beloved, your entire house may look dry, there may be no hope of what to eat, I have good news for you, don't look at the world news, look at the "Word News", which is the GOODNEWS: There Are Still Windows in Heaven. What I want you to understand is this; a genuine child of God can never be stranded. It may look as if the end has come but it is just a bend. Our problem is, we are not persevere enough and always in haste. But I want you to look to the Hill where comes your help, which is the Lord, the maker of the Heavens and Earth. Your government may have lockdown the city without any palliative measures; never look at that but look unto God, because there are still windows in heaven.

In 1 Kings 17:1-7, Elijah predicted drought in the land of Israel that there would be no dew nor rain for three years but the Word of God came to Elijah to go and hide himself by brook Cherith, there God commanded ravens to bring bread and flesh to the man of God. The same God is still alive, who says He cannot send you bread by the wings of a ravenous bird. What concerns you is to believe. At this critical time, anything is possible. Hear God, He said, call to mind the things He had done in the past because I AM is God, and no one else and no one like Him. He continues "I declare

the end from the beginning and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure: calling a ravenous bird from the east, the man that executeth my counsel from a far country: yea, I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed it, I will also do it" (Isaiah 46:9-11). Relax beloved, there is a God who uses the earth as His footstool.

Out there, there are uncertainties and hopelessness; I want you to believe that you will survive it or let me say, we will survive this season. Do not listen to news of recession or job loss at this time, that is not your concern now. Arm yourself with this Word for the Moment: We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed; Let these words be your strength at this time, do not be afraid but have strong faith in God, He will show up.

Peradventure you are among those God have blessed at this time and have enough to eat, I urge you to look around you to see who you can help. The family next door may not have anything to eat, I urge you in the name of God to show them love but if you refuse their help will come from Zion. This is not the time to be selfish, look out for others in need. Remember, we still need one another at this critical time.

MIND THIS Your government may have lockdown the city without any palliative measures; never look at that but look unto God, because there are still windows in heaven.

WORD AFFIRMATION: For thou, LORD, wilt bless the righteous; with favour wilt thou compass him as [with] a shield - Psalms 5:12 (Don't just say it, mean it).

DAY 48: CAST DOWN BUT NOT DESTROYED (2)
TEXT: ROMANS 8:28-39

Towards the end of the year 2019, the Lord told me the year is His year; therefore, on the first day of the year, I declare year to be the Year of God, even up to that moment I still did not understand why God would say this year is His year. I have high expectations as a person and like previous years I wanted to declare year to be year of so and so; but God came to say it is His year. By today, I think I understand why He said Year is the Year of God. The happenings in the world are overwhelming and consuming but thanks to God for His faithfulness and love, even though we are perplexed, not in despair.

Today's world is at its knees begging for God's mercies, death toll from Coronavirus is more than 37,000; the children of God were not spared, the churches of God are under lock and keys, enforcement officers are ready to destroy to achieve their goals, but one thing is sure, we are overcomers and it will be for our good. Do not be discouraged, the end is not yet and if God be for you, who can be against you? God is with you now and always, He that spared not His only begotten Son, He allowed Him to die, therefore, what can He not give freely, the answer is nothing. The one that has the power to pronounce that you are guilty is God, but the same God justifies you. The person that supposes to condemn you is Christ but presently sitting at the right side of God interceding for you. Rejoice, for the battle is not yours.

Beloved, God is nearer and He is with you. But I will not have you ignorant, we are at war and the war is against principalities and powers hence life may be overwhelming most times. If you look at the Book of Romans 8:31-39, you will realize that we are not fighting against "what" but against "who". All what the writer of Romans 8:35 listed are personalities and can break any child of God with their powers: tribulation, distress, persecution, famine, nakedness, peril, or sword is real and confronts believers daily but thanks to God who had given us victory over them. God giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might he increaseth strength. Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall: But they that wait upon the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount

up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint (Isaiah 40:29-31).

Try as much as possible to move closer to God this year and if you look up to Him, He will lighten your face and will never be put to shame. Wait for Him and you will never be put to shame, I assure you.

MIND THIS Do not be discouraged, the end is not yet and if God be for you, who can be against you?

WORD AFFIRMATION: For his anger [endureth but] a moment; in his favour [is] life: weeping may endure for a night, but joy [cometh] in the morning - Psalms 30:5 (Don't just say it, mean it).

Empowered Mission for Christ Commission (EMCC)

DAY 49: CORONAVIRUS VERSUS MUSTARD SEED
TEXT: MATTHEW 17:14-20

As small as the virus called corona or COVID-19 is, one can never imagine that the virus that started in the Wuhan city of China will ravage the world like this and brought the entire world down to its knees. More than 136million has been affected worldwide with 2.94million deaths recorded (Source: Wikipedia). Assuming that you as a believer can have little faith like that of mustard seed or as small as coronavirus, do you know how many people, nations and regions that by now you might have affected or effected? By now, the entire world would have been on its knees too looking up to God and experiencing divine manifestations. As believers, we must pick great lessons from the issue of COVID-19 and allow it to speak to us. If you have little faith you can tell whatever mountain confronting you to be removed.

A certain man came to Jesus, kneeling down to him saying, Lord, have mercy on my son: for he is lunatic and sore vexed: for often he falls into fire, and oft into the water and I brought him to thy disciples, and they could not cure him. Imagine the disciples of Jesus who just returned from a mission work and told Jesus about their supernatural experiences; how they demonstrated God's power in healing the sick and how demons bowed to them. But at this moment, they could not perform such miracle again; as usual they prayed for the boy in the name of Jesus but the demon refused to leave. The reaction of Jesus was so surprising when He returned, He rebuked the faithlessness of His disciples and said, O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you? When the disciples came to Jesus to ask why they could not heal the boy, He said to them because of their unbelief and if they have faith as a grain of mustard seed, they would do the impossible.

The Lord grieves over the unbelief of His disciples. Though they had enjoyed His careful teaching, they had failed to grasp His secret, which He here again elaborates. Faith is openness to God. It is the lifting of the curtain that the healing light may enter. The tiny seed unlocks its little doorway to welcome the entering life of nature; and as this continues to enter, it forces the rootlet downward and the green shoot upward. It is

thus also with the life of God in the soul. Let this life of God in and there is no limit to what it will effect. Do you have faith like a grain of mustard seed, you can move mountain, you can do the impossible and you will definitely make impact in our world.

As a believer, no matter how prayerful and powerful you are in the Lord, anything you do without faith is sin. The devil molests believers not because they do not pray but because they do not act most of the times in faith, sometimes your acts of faith can mean rebuking instead of performing. Satan tempted Jesus to do certain things, but instead of Jesus dancing to devil's tune, He rebuked him sharply. A child of God must be wiser than the devil; no two scenarios are the same. Remember, Jesus' disciples just returned from a mission where they performed, but here forgetting to rebuke because the case at hand was all about faith, not by power or might. Have a faith-filled day.

MIND THIS Sometimes your acts of faith can mean rebuking instead of performing.

WORD AFFIRMATION: LORD, by thy favour thou hast made my mountain to stand strong: thou didst hide thy face, [and] I was troubled - Psalms 30:7 (Don't just say it, mean it).

DAY 50: OVERCOMING GRACE (1)
TEXT: PSALM 106:1-8

God's unparalleled, redeeming grace is a vast topic in the Old and New Testament. Psalm 106 is a song that features a scathing rebuke of eight specific sins committed by Israel; yet it is surprising, transcending thought is that God's grace overcomes sin and overwhelms those who understand it. Nothing in this world compares to grace. The God who was asked to redeem Israel is adept at forgiveness, reclamation, and dealing with guilt. Israel, often steeped in sin, seems to have been a difficult candidate for character recovery. Only the God of all grace could meet the needs exhibited by such a rebellious nation. The writer of Psalm 106 presented one of the brightest and most hopeful pictures of God's enduring mercy in the fewest number of words. Interlaced in the litany of Israel's failures in this text are several attributes of God's saving nature. In the light of what the psalmist was praying here, how should we view God's grace?

First, we must see His grace as overarching. If permitted, His grace can overcome any sin. The list of sins given in the psalm would be difficult to exceed; distrust, idolatry, immorality, impatience, child sacrifice, and rebellion are included. How sordid, disgusting, and revealing the enumeration is! Can God forgive such sins? Yes – and if He could forgive these, then He can work wonders in the life of any penitent sinner who comes to Him.

Second, it is essential that we see His grace as conditional. It is strong enough for any difficulty; however, for His grace to overcome our failures, it must always be coupled with repentance. **God cannot save us without our cooperation.** Salvation is “by grace through faith” (Ephesians 2:8,9). When the nation of Israel saw their need, when they cried to God for mercy, “He remembered His covenant for their sake, and relented according to the greatness of His loving-kindness” (Psalm 106:45). When God's people went into sin, they fell from His grace and found themselves under His strong hand of judgment. When they returned to Him in penitence and obedience, He extended to them His tender hand of forgiveness and fellowship. We read, “many times He would deliver them; they, however, were rebellious in their counsel, and so sank down in their

iniquity.” As we rejoice over the “many times,” we cannot forget the “however.” We must never take for granted the Lord’s grace and fall back into sin.

MIND THIS God cannot save us without our cooperation.

WORD AFFIRMATION: For thou [art] the glory of their strength: and in thy favour our horn shall be exalted - Psalms 89:17 (Don’t just say it, mean it).

Empowered Mission for Christ Commission (EMCC)

DAY 51: OVERCOMING GRACE (2)
TEXT: PSALM 106:1-8

Third, we are to see His grace as having a divine purpose. Connected to the pivotal word “nevertheless” is a reference to the purpose of His grace. (Psalm 106:8). **God does not pardon us just because of His desire to pardon sinners. He is redeeming a people to be His people. He has saved us so that we might sing His praises and serve Him as part of His eternal purpose.** The psalmist wrote, “Save us, O Lord our God, and gather us from among the nations, to give thanks to your holy name and glory in your praise.” (Psalm 106:47, Ephesians 1:4-6).

Fourth, it is encouraging to remember that His grace is ever-present. It is eternal and has an unfathomable depth. His grace arises from His eternal existence. It is stable, continual, and infinite. The cornerstone truth regarding His grace is the fact that “His loving-kindness is everlasting. The Bible says, “His mercy endureth forever.” **What He was yesterday, He is today; what He is today, He will be tomorrow (Hebrew 13:8). God is not only ever ready to help us, but He is also ever-present in His loving-kindness to forgive us (Acts 17:27c,28a). Our physical lives are in His hands, and our spiritual lives are in His heart of grace.**

Therefore, His grace is wonderfully available to us. When we cry, He responds Psalm 106:44-45. Jesus said, “And the one who comes to Me I will certainly not cast out” – John 6:37b. If God can reclaim and sustain Israel, if He can cleanse and heal this sinful nation, restoring it through His grace; He can save anyone who is willing to become obedient. God’s grace is granted only on the condition of penitence; but its coverage is complete, and its spiritual consequences are everlasting. As we contemplate the disposition and behaviour of divine grace, its character should inspire us all to say with the writer of psalm, “Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel, from everlasting even to everlasting” (Psalm 106:48a).

MIND THIS God is not only ever ready to help us, but He is also ever-present in His loving-kindness to forgive us.

WORD AFFIRMATION: Thou shalt arise, [and] have mercy upon Zion: for the time to favour her, yea, the set time, is come - Psalms 102:13 (Don't just say it, mean it).

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DAY 52: LOOSE NOT YOUR GUARD
TEXT: LUKE 24:13-35

The Creator of the Universe is watching the event in the world. Therefore, do not throw away your confidence which have great recompense of reward. Do not be scared and do not be afraid, do not let anybody deceive you, indeed, this coronavirus will bring a new world order and I want you to be prepared and be ready for God's Kingdom which can be at anytime. After now, things will not be the same as before, this event will change a lot of things in the world. Check tomorrow's for the conclusion of this message.

After the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ and when the women went to His sepulchre and told others that He had risen, two of Jesus' disciples left Jerusalem to their village, they have been with Jesus all this while, eat and dine with Him, Jesus death did not make them to leave, but it was the event of His resurrection that brought confusion to them, they were more confused than before hence the resurrected Jesus had to join them on their way down to Emmaus. Beginning from Moses unto Prophets, Jesus began to teach them the event that just occurred and at last He broke bread with them to reveal Himself and open their eyes. These disciples, one of them Cleopas, unfastened their guards and thrown away all they have learnt and received from Jesus because of one event.

Beloved, do not be confused by the event happening in our world today, God may permit it because He has giving the world to men but His Day of Judgement is coming. DO not confused coronavirus with the Judgement Day of the Lord. Everybody will see Jesus at His appearance. Continue to prepare for His second coming in order to reign and rule with Him. By the time Cleopas and the other disciple got back to Jerusalem the good news they supposed to bring to others had become dead news as others have heard about resurrected Jesus. I will not want you to be ignorant of the happenings in the world, as a believer, you must search the scriptures daily in order to equip and engage yourself with the Word. God will never leave His own people nor forsaken them, let us be wise than the devil. Be vigilant.

MIND THIS If Jesus Christ is preparing a place for you, are you preparing your place for Him?

WORD AFFIRMATION: Remember me, O LORD, with the favour [that thou bearest unto] thy people: O visit me with thy salvation - Psalms 106:4 (Don't just say it, mean it).

Empowered Mission for Christ Commission (EMCC)

DAY 53: POWER THAT WORKS IN YOU
TEXT: EPHESIANS 3:14-21

Faith opens the door to the Spirit; the Spirit reveals Christ; Christ fills the heart; the heart begins to understand love; and love is the medium through which we become in-filled with God, for God is love. It is staggering to ask all this; but the God who works in us with such power is able to do more than we ask, more than we think-abundantly more, exceeding abundantly more provided the power of Him. But how do you see that God? Able or Disable? Able to do all what you want when you have money in your purse or pocket? Or disable, powerless when you have a flattened account balance? As a believer, when you pray, your mouth must be in tune with your heart; it is not what you are saying that matter, but also what you are thinking. God look at the heart and respond to smallest thought in every heart. What you say suppose to be the products of what you think but it is an irony that many people shout to God with their mouths while their hearts are far away from God. You cannot be thinking like a dwarf and expect God to make you a giant.

The twelve spies went to the land of Canaan and actually saw giants in the land, that was an honest report but seeing themselves as grasshoppers was fake news in the presence of God (these never allowed God in their thoughts and mind-eyes). Are you seeing yourself the way God is seeing you? Are you looking at yourself the way God is looking at you? It is dangerous to see otherwise. It does not matter who, what and where you are at the present; God always look at every life with an eye of the ending but human being look at themselves with the eyes of the beginning. God is interested in your later end and not where you started from. Never put a limit to your life by the thought in your heart.

Whatever you meditate on grows. Have a picture of a brighter future. Paste your room walls with positive images and meditates on them day and night. Whatever you think on before you sleep will be the first thought that will come to your mind when you wake up in the morning. This is the secret to not having bad dreams, when you want to sleep, open any Scripture of choice, just a verse, think about the scripture, do not think about any other thing, let this scripture be the last thing you think about

before you sleep, one, you will have a deep, sweet sleep and two, the same scripture will come to you when you wake up. The thing is, your conscious mind will take the word and release it to your subconscious mind which does not sleep, and the subconscious will hold the word in a temporary memory until you wake up. Have you been having bad dreams, practice this?

You are a Spirit and powerful individual at that, do not relegate yourself to just flesh. Ask for overwhelming and overflowing power of the Holy Spirit and have a personal relationship with the Holy Spirit, He will equip you. Because God act upon what you ask or think based on the power in your inside. The question is, what or which power do you have in your inside? What kind of power works in you? The power shun out gossiping, backbiting or failures? Do not be surprised if you are praying for breakthrough and you always think of failure and at the end of the day, you experienced failure at the edge of breakthrough, it is not the devil, it is your fault.

Be careful about what you are thinking, for God is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that you ask or think, according to the power that works in you. Which power do you have in your inside, power to kill or to destroy? Or power to build and make alive? Whatever you sow you shall reap. Whatever situation you are presently is a product of the power in your inside which has superior power over what you are saying to the world or to God in your daily prayers. Check yourself today.

MIND THIS: Whatever situation you are presently is a product of the power in your inside which has superior power over what you are saying to the world or to God in your daily prayers.

WORD AFFIRMATION: I entreated thy favour with [my] whole heart: be merciful unto me according to thy word - Psalms 119:58 (Don't just say it, mean it).

DAY54: FROM SLAUGHTER TO 'LAUGHTERS'
TEXT: 2 CHRONICLES 20:24-27

Great multitude of armies came from the neighbouring countries against King Jehoshaphat and the inhabitants of Judah and Jerusalem, the call for war was so sudden which made Jehoshaphat to be greatly afraid. The battle came to consume them all because the enemies were very determined to waste and slaughter them. The King gathered his people, prayed and fasted unto God to deliver them from the trouble at hand, the answer came, and the Spirit of the Lord delivered a message of hope and repentance, and assured them of victory. The Word of the Lord addressed their fear and showed them how to confront their battle.

King Jehoshaphat's prayer was so encouraging and prevailing; it is good for a child of God to

Know how to plead his course in the presence of God. The King and the people sought the Lord they already know and have relationship with, and He answered them speedily. What do you do in your quiet time, bombarding God with requests upon requests? No, that's not the right approach to relationship. Imagine a relationship that's always demanding, today give me, tomorrow, I need this or that; such a relationship will lose its value and the opposite side may design means of avoiding the other. Get to know what your partner is going through and how s/he feels among others, then the relationship will become mutual. Likewise God, He wants a fellowship, He too has needs, and He is looking for whom to send. Ask Him what you can do for Him, ask Him about what He feels concerning a matter and sometimes just surprise Him by acknowledging (worship, praise) His presence, Lordship and Fatherhood, He will also surprise you at all times. We have delayed in our request because we do not know how to service this God.

By the Word of God, Jehoshaphat led a choir to battle instead of an army and the battle was won because God was involved, their enemies were determined to slaughter them but they laughed over them at last. When they got to the battle field, the battle has turned to blessing. Every battle that comes to consume you will turn to your blessings. For good three days, the people of Judah were carrying spoils, rejoicing and laughing and

eventually named the valley of blood, the valley of blessing. Let God be involved in all your actions, ask Him to take over your battle and ask Him to be the Lord over your life and you will see that every battle that want to slaughter you will be unto your laughter and rejoicing. When God steps into a matter, it is over. Whatsoever that looks like battles, troubles and problems around you are over in Jesus name. Do not be afraid, asks God to come into your matter and leave it there with Him.

When the people began to sing and to praise, the LORD set ambushments against their enemies and they were smitten. For the enemies stood up against one another to slay and destroy themselves. God still cares about His people today, just as He cared about the people of Judah. When you seek to obey Him and follow His way, He will give you blessings. But that does not mean you will never have trials or challenges (John 16:33). When those hard, scary times come, you must turn to God—praying, fasting and studying His Bible and do these not just in troubles time but before trials come. You must see that you cannot handle the challenge on your own. You need God’s help and recognize that God has taken care of His people in the past, and He can be trusted to take care of you now. An answer from God might not come as fast or as clearly as it did to Jehoshaphat. Still, when we seek God and do our part to turn to Him, we can go forward, trusting God to take care of us. We might not know how long the problem will last or how much we will be challenged, but we can know that in the end God will save us and turn it all to blessings. For every battle in your life, you shall laugh over them (amen).

MIND THIS God still cares about His people today, just as He cared about the people of Judah. When you seek to obey Him and follow His way, He will give you blessings.

WORD AFFIRMATION: So shalt thou find favour and good understanding in the sight of God and man - Proverbs 3:4 (Don’t just say it, mean it).

DAY 55: CAN YOU STILL TRUST THE BIBLE? (1)
TEXT: JOHN 1:1-5

Can you still trust the Bible in the face of the happenings and negative events in our world today? It may be difficult for people to still trust the Bible. Where is God some people asked? Why did God allow the doors of churches to be shut during lockdown? Why did he allow COVID-19 in our world? Do you still doubt the Bible thinking it is a scam? When you cannot trace God trust Him still, that is Christianity. The Bible which contains the Word of God still has integrity, He can never disappoint. The Bible was given by God. It has been transmitted through the ages and restored in a trustworthy fashion. Therefore, when it is correctly translated and properly interpreted, its message is God's required moral standard. Further, the New Testament is the exclusive doctrine of Christ. The Bible was inspired by God and has divine authority over all situations and circumstances.

The Bible was given by inspiration of God as the Holy Spirit worked within select men, revealing to them the thoughts of God and enabling them to use the appropriate words to communicate divine truth without error. "Inspiration" is from Latin words meaning "breathe in or into" (in and spiro) and from a Greek word meaning "God-spirited" or "God-breathed" (theopneustos). God put the Holy Spirit into the writers of the Bible and, through Him, guided them in the writing of the Bible. Thus "inspiration" may be defined as the process by which God breathed His Spirit into men, enabling them to receive and communicate divine truth without error.

The biblical claims for inspiration are an important part of the data supporting the divine origin of the Bible. The Old Testament makes over 3,800 claims to being the express words of God. This claim is made 2 to 3 times per page in the average edition of the Old Testament. The Pentateuch makes this claim 420 times, saying, "The Lord said to Moses" or indicating that Moses was repeating the words of the Lord (Exodus 17:14; 19:6, 7; 20:1; 24:4, 7; 35:27). In Psalm 119 the writer called the Scriptures "the word [or words] of the Lord" twenty-four times. The prophets claimed what they spoke or wrote was what the Lord had spoken to them. This claim was made by Isaiah 120 times, Jeremiah 430 times,

Ezekiel 329 times, Amos 53 times, Haggai 27 times, and Zechariah 53 times.

Jesus declared the Old Testament to be God speaking. He said to the Pharisees, "For God said, 'Honor your father and mother,' and, 'He who speaks evil of father or mother is to be put to death'" (Matthew 15:4). In this combined quotation (see Exodus 20:12; 21:17; Deuteronomy 5:16; Leviticus 20:9), Jesus declared these writings to be the Word of God. He quoted from Genesis 2:24, saying, "Have you not read that He who created them from the beginning made them male and female, and said, 'For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh'?" (Matthew 19:4, 5) If you understand the Bible, you will not be troubled with the happenings in the world. When you turn your face to the Bible, you will be more enlightened and never will you be put to shame. Let us still trust the Bible, it works with patient.

MIND THIS If you understand the Bible, you will have confidence in yourself and do great exploits for God.

WORD AFFIRMATION: And the sons of strangers shall build up thy walls, and their kings shall minister unto thee: for in my wrath I smote thee, but in my favour have I had mercy on thee = Isaiah 60:10 (Don't just say it, mean it).

DAY 56: CAN YOU STILL TRUST THE BIBLE? (2)
TEXT: PSALM 119:9-18

One supportive evidence for the inspiration of the Bible is the remarkable phenomenon of its survival, translation, and circulation. The Bible survived the destructive elements of time. For an ancient book to have survived the forces of decay and neglect from the time of Moses until now is truly remarkable. The production and the circulation of books written in ancient times were greatly limited by the fact that they were produced entirely by hand and were therefore restricted in number. These ancient books faced fires, storms, insects, decay, neglect, mold, and even enemies. The Bible's survival—coupled with the massive attestation of so many manuscripts, versions, and quotations—is amazing.

The Bible survived great persecution and criticism. From the days of the Roman emperors to more recent-day Communist domination in parts of the world, the Bible has often suffered efforts to stamp it out. It has been persecuted, banned, and burned. It is the martyr among books, but it has survived victoriously and grown in its influence and distribution. After a time of destructive criticism by ancient philosophers Celsus and Porphyry, the Bible experienced one thousand years of peaceful existence.

The Bible became honored by men above any other book. After one thousand years, Thomas Hobbes (1588–1679) and Baruch Spinoza (1632–77) began critical attacks upon the Bible. Then criticism by Jean Astruc (1684–1766) began a series of intense attacks that have drawn attention to every microscopic detail. Bernard Ramm said, “No other book has been so chopped, knived, sifted, scrutinized, and villified.” Although many were likely deprived of access to the Bible by persecution, and many no doubt lost their faith as a result of hostile criticism, the Bible is still the most published book ever written. The Bible is also the most translated of any book. The Bible was the first book translated. (The Septuagint, the Greek translation of the Hebrew Old Testament, was translated in approximately 250 B.C.) It has been translated into different languages and paraphrased more than any other book in existence. These facts support the claim that the Bible is inspired of God.

The only way to know whether or not a bottle of medicine is what it claims to be is to examine its contents. A student can know whether or not the Bible is truly the Word of God only if he tests its contents. The Bible, a Great Miracle. The unity and continuity of the biblical writings indicate that they were produced under the guidance of one supernatural mind. Imagine that forty men living in many lands, participating in varied occupations, having different educational backgrounds, and living at different times spanning fifteen centuries each wrote a few lines of a story. Further imagine that these lines were brought together to form a beautiful and sublime story, with each line continuing the other to tell the complete story. If such a thing could even be accomplished, it would be evident that the authors had been directed by one mind.

About forty authors from almost every walk of life—Moses, a political leader, educated in Egypt; Joshua, a military general; Solomon, a king; Amos, a herdsman; Daniel, a prime minister; Nehemiah, a cupbearer; Luke, a physician; Matthew, a tax collector; Peter, a fisherman; Paul, a rabbi; and others—wrote sixty-six books or letters during approximately fifteen hundred years that spanned sixty generations. They wrote from different locales—Moses, in the wilderness; Jeremiah, in a dungeon; Daniel, on a hillside and in a palace; Paul, inside prison walls; Luke, while traveling on land and sea; John, in exile on the isle of Patmos. They wrote during great joy and during the depths of despair. They wrote in Hebrew, Greek, and Aramaic. They wrote material that includes hundreds of controversial subjects. These authors wrote one continually unfolding story of man—his origin, fall, redemption, and eternal destiny—with harmony and continuity from Genesis to Revelation.

If you are suffering because of your belief in the Bible, remember, the Bible has endured so great tribulations because of you. Therefore, for every truth you believe, you will be tested and before the day of trial, make a firm belief that the Bible contains the Word of God and He is your shield and guide in all situations. Above all, trust also the voice behind the Bible.

MIND THIS: If you are suffering because of your belief in the Bible, remember, the Bible has endured so great tribulations because of you.

WORD AFFIRMATION: And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God - Luke 1:30 (Don't just say it, mean it).

Empowered Mission for Christ Commission (EMCC)

DAY 57: HOW TO SURVIVE BAD TIMES (1)
TEXT: 1 SAMUEL 18:6-16

The headlines may be scary, you do not sure of what next and how to navigates the road ahead. Bad times may have come into your live and you think no one cares. Relax; it is for your own good. Life is full of ups and downs and the world is full of troubles but Jesus said, “be of good cheers, I have overcome the world.” So how do you navigate the bad times or what do you do when you do not know what to do? Note these ten do’s and don’ts for surviving the hard times:

1. Don’t be surprise when bad times come. Even when you are doing your best, bad times may still show up. The curve may be at the edge of the straight line, arm yourself with this truth. Even when God is with you, the bad times may come. God was with David every step of the way, bad times still come. Jesus was in the boat yet the storm came, the storm did not refuse to come because the Lord was inside the boat. Troubles have no respecter of person.

After killing Goliath, David was made the commander of a thousand but when those women sang, his troubles started and his boss who appreciates his presence before, now became his sworn enemy. Saul pursued David and the Bible says, “Thus Saul was David’s enemy continually” (18:29). The NIV has “he remained his enemy the rest of his days.” Can you imagine having a father-in-law who wants you dead? When the bad times came, perhaps you, too, cried out, “What have I done to deserve this?” The point is that David had done nothing to deserve Saul’s hatred—but still the bad times came.

David was doing his best physically and spiritually and the Lord was with him in all he did. Still the bad times came. If it happened to the man after God’s own heart, it can happen to anyone. You can be an elder, a deacon, a preacher, or a Bible class teacher—and your children can get on drugs and break your heart. You can be a loving Christian wife or husband, doing all you can to make your marriage work, and your mate can leave you for someone else. You can be an honest Christian businessman, doing your best to make your business a success, and you can lose everything. You

can be a faithful Christian, putting your heart and soul into serving God, and the doctor can tell you, "You have three months to live." Don't misunderstand me. Being a faithful Christian will improve your opportunities to have a good marriage, a happy home, and even financial security and good health. You need to understand, however, that even faithful children of God are not immune from the bad times.

My advise to you this day is to have David's attitude, behave yourself wisely in all that you do and in the presence of the people. This time will soon pass. Do not hold grudges against anybody, always look unto God for help and remember it is for your good. The Lord is with you.

MIND THIS: Troubles have no respecter of person.

WORD AFFIRMATION: And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God - Luke 1:30 (Don't just say it, mean it).

Empowered Mission for Christ Commission (EMCC)

DAY 58: HOW TO SURVIVE BAD TIMES (2)
TEXT: 1 SAMUEL 21:1-15

The second one is, “Don’t be surprised if you act foolishly at first.” Why did David flee from Saul? David, you had stood up to lions, to bears. You had faced Goliath. You had won many battles against the Philistines; what make you to flee? David was a military hero. Why then didn’t he stand up to Saul instead of running for his life? It is because for the first time in his life, David did not know how to handle the situation. To this point, his way of handling opposition was to kill the opposition. He killed the lions and the bears. He killed Goliath. He killed Philistines. Saul, however, was God’s anointed king. David could not kill the Lord’s anointed. David did not know what to do, so he ran. It is significant that as David began his life as a fugitive, he ran desperately, without much plan or purpose, doing some really foolish things.

He first lied to the Priest, Ahimelech and thereafter ran to Philistia, to the city of Gath. David realized that he had more to fear from Saul than from the Philistines. (Unfortunately, it is often true that we have more to fear from our “brethren” than from our “enemies”) He ran to Gath to seek asylum, which was a really dumb thing to do! Do you remember where Goliath was from? Gath. Here came David—who had killed Goliath, who had killed two hundred Philistines and mutilated their bodies to get the bride-price for Michal. David perhaps thought he could remain anonymously, but there was no mistaking his red hair! David had to be at the top of the “most wanted list” in Philistia! They seized David, and he panicked. “So he disguised his sanity before them, and acted insanely in their hands, and scribbled on the doors of the gate, and let his saliva run down into his beard” (21:13). God’s chosen one, the next king of Israel, was acting like a lunatic!

Even though David gave the Lord credit for delivering him but if David’s thought processes had not gone askew in the first place, he would never have been in a situation which required him to act like a madman to save himself. If bad times happened to David, they can happen to you and me. We may think we would never become irrational if any unpleasant thing happen, but we just don’t know. I know how I would like to react, how I

hope I would react, but it may not be that way at all. I'm saying this so we will not give up if at first, when such a time come, we act foolishly. That's how life is wired.

Who knows before now that coronavirus would ravage the entire world? Who know that the great cities of the world would shut down? The Pope once worshipped alone on Easter Sunday, church doors and gates were once under lock and human activities remain limited. What was your reaction at first? Who do you run to at first when you heard about lockdown? You realize that there is no food at home and the city will be shut down for weeks. What do you do? What many of us will do is to check our account balance and forget that God is in heaven who can open the window. You have acted foolishly if you think about many hills before you think about the Hill of God at anytime you need help (Psalm 121:1). The point is the problem of life master us before he visited, the only thing to do is to think about God first, always be on your guard, be a man of worship, always in rejoicing mode, allow God in your action, fellowship in and with the Spirit and take action based on God's words. Do not act foolishly.

MIND THIS: You have acted foolishly if you think about many hills before you think about the Hill of God at anytime you need help.

WORD AFFIRMATION: And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man - Luke 2:52 (Don't just say it, mean it).

DAY 59: THIS SAME JESUS
TEXT: ACTS 1:1-11

Luke informed Theophilus (the name means “a lover of God”) that his Gospel told the story of what the Lord began to do and teach. Evidently the Book of Acts is a continuation of His deeds and words. It ought to be called “The Acts of the Ascended Christ.” The Gospel tells of what Jesus did through a mortal body; and this Book what He did through the Church, which is His body, “the fullness of Him that filleth all in all.”

Here we learn that the time between the Resurrection and the Ascension was forty days; that our Lord issued commandments, no doubt about the ordering of the Church; and that He spoke with the Apostles of the coming kingdom of God-that ideal society which is God’s great objective through the ages. It would not be established by the sword of the soldier, but by the witness-bearing of the evangelist, Acts 1:8.

Then the Lord rose before their eyes, and passed within a cloud, which dropped like a curtain before Him. He passed into heaven, Heb. 9:24, to make intercession, to guide the course of His Church, and to sit at the right hand of the Father till His enemies should be made His footstool.

Beloved, this same Jesus is coming back likewise, are you preparing for His coming? The events that are happening in the world are pointers to the second coming of Christ. He is coming as a Judge and every eye shall behold Him. Never put your hope and trust in this world of sins, but hope for heavenly Jerusalem. Jesus said, “I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.” (John 14:2, 3)

The present event in our world is just a warning that He is coming, as this warning came, government asked everybody to stay at home without adequate provisions, the events after rapture will be worst than this COVID-19 pandemic. Beloved, what to come will be worst that this hence the need to prepare yourself to reign with Christ. Be like the wise virgin, who had oil in their lamps and made provision for extra oil. Don’t be cut unaware. He is coming. Are you prepared?

MIND THIS: He is coming as a Judge and every eye shall behold Him. Never put your hope and trust in this world of sins, but hope for heavenly Jerusalem.

WORD AFFIRMATION: And delivered him out of all his afflictions, and gave him favour and wisdom in the sight of Pharaoh king of Egypt - Acts 7:10 (Don't just say it, mean it).

Empowered Mission for Christ Commission (EMCC)

DAY 60: SURVIVING BAD TIMES (3)
TEXT: 1 SAMUEL 22:1-23

Today, we shall be looking at the third strategy to surviving bad times, which is, “DO ACCEPT RESPONSIBILITY FOR YOUR OWN ACTIONS”. David became a fugitive, after his display of insanity, he ran to the cave of Adullam where he wrote the book of Psalm 142. God gave David emotional support. He provided David with his family. Then God gave David practical support. He gave David a job to do. Instead of sitting around feeling sorry for himself, God gave David the challenge of organizing one of the most unlikely armies imaginable. The “three D’s” began to gather around David: The Distressed, the Debtors, and the Discontented. These were not men trained for battle. This was group of malcontents, many of whom could probably not get along with anyone.

How would one even start to shape this group of misfits into something resembling an army? I do not know, but David accepted God’s challenge. Soon David was busy again, active in fulfilling the will of the Lord. He was building the power base for his kingdom. He was developing leadership that would stay with him throughout his reign. When 2 Samuel 23 tells of David’s “mighty men,” we read, “Then three of the thirty chief men went down and came to David . . . to the cave of Adullam” (23:13). When David became king, his “cabinet” came from those he had trained and learned to trust as they fought side by side in the wilderness. When the bad times come and we act foolishly, one of the best ways to get our heads back on straight is to concentrate on the challenges God places before us—to get busy helping others and stop feeling sorry for ourselves.

Finally, God gave David spiritual support. 1 Samuel 22:5 notes: “And the prophet Gad said to David, “Do not stay in the stronghold; depart, and go into the land of Judah.” So David departed and went into the forest of Hereth.” At some point Gad joined David’s forces and became one of his advisers. After David became king, Gad was his “seer.” Eventually, Gad was one of the chroniclers of David’s reign. Saul killed eighty-five priests of the Lord, Abiathar, a son of Ahimelech escaped and came to David. David did not blame Saul, Abimelech or Doeg; David, however, placed the blame nowhere else and made no excuses. He said, I am responsible.

Any of us might act foolishly when the bad times come—but that does not mean we are not responsible for our foolishness. When we finally come back to our senses, let us be honest enough and big enough to accept the responsibility for our own actions. Let us not blame others for how we act; let us not blame the situation; let us accept personal responsibility. It is possible we may need to face someone we have hurt, as David faced Abiathar. We may need to say, “I’m sorry, but I lost my head. I acted a bit foolishly for a while; I have no excuse for what I did or said. I hope you can find it in your heart to forgive me.” We cannot survive the bad times with our integrity intact without accepting responsibility for our own actions.

MIND THIS We cannot survive the bad times with our integrity intact without accepting responsibility for our own actions.

WORD AFFIRMATION: Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places – Ephesians 1:3 (Don’t just say it, mean it).

DAY 61: SURVIVING HARD TIMES (4)
TEXT: 1 SAMUEL 23:1-29

The fourth strategy to survive hard times is DON'T BE SURPRISED IF PEOPLE LET YOU DOWN. David was finally out of the cave, a band of supporters surround him, but that did not mean the hard times were over. It was not long until David learned again the hard lesson that when the bad times come, people often let you down - people you have never harmed, maybe even people you have helped. Keilah was an Israelite city behind enemy lines, thus doubly vulnerable to attack. It was Saul's job to fight the Philistines, but he was wasting his time looking for David instead of fighting the enemy. Therefore, the people came to David seeking help. By God's instruction David went to the battle and defeated the Philistines. He settled in Keilah thinking that he had gotten a place of rest, but it was not long before Saul discovered his location and when David enquired of the Lord, he was told that the people of Keilah will deliver him to Saul (1 Samuel 23:12).

Here was a city delivered by David—their city was intact; they still had their produce and livestock; their families were safe—and yet they were ready to betray their deliverer. Perhaps they had heard of Saul's destruction of the city of Nob and knew he would not hesitate to destroy them if they sided with David, but it still was a bitter pill for David to swallow. David, however, did not retaliate. He and his men, about six hundred, arose and departed from Keilah" – 1 Samuel 23:13. David and his company went next to the desert of Ziph in Judah. The Ziphites were from the tribe of Judah, the same tribe David was from. These were his own people! No doubt he felt safe here. Again, however, David was betrayed by people he had never harmed, perhaps had even protected. The Ziphites went to Saul and told him where David was, and offered to surrender David into the king's hand. Only by divine intervention did David escape.

It was not the first time David had been betrayed, nor would it be the last time; but no matter how many times it happens, it still hurts. You probably know exactly what I am talking about. You put your confidence in someone. You would have trusted him with your life. Then he betrayed your trust. He let you down, and you were filled with pain. Times like these

impress upon our minds that our reliance must not be in men, but in the Lord. Paul, the battle-scarred warrior of the Cross, once said, “At my first defense no one supported me, but all deserted me; But the Lord stood with me, and strengthened me” (2 Timothy 4:16, 17). Arm yourself with this truth, if you focus on the people, they will let you down, so always look up to God and put your total trust in the Lord. God is safer than men, all the time.

MIND THIS: God is safer than men, all the time.

WORD AFFIRMATION: Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is - Jeremiah 17:7 (Don't just say it, mean it).

Empowered Mission for Christ Commission (EMCC)

DAY 62: SURVIVING HARD TIMES (5)
TEXT: 1 SAMUEL 23:15-18

The fifth strategy to note is DO BE THANKFUL FOR FRIENDS WHO DON'T LET YOU DOWN. While Saul was madly pursuing David to take his life, while the men of Keilah and the Ziphites were ready to betray David, we have the brief account of Jonathan coming to David to "encourage him in God." Friends that will stay with you no matter what are few and far between, if you have a friend like that, thank the Lord for that friend. You will need friends beyond your association if you are to come out of any hard situation. The people you have in your circle of friends determined how far you will go in life. If the only people you have as friends are just your mates, you may not go far in life. David surrounded himself with six hundred trained men including priest and prophet. Who do you have in your association? Iron sharpens iron; so a man sharpens the countenance of his friend (Proverb 27:17).

To have a balance circle, you must have those who are older than you, those you are older than and your mates. You must have people who can lift you up in times of need in your association, not just your mates. Do you have a doctor as friends? Do you have an accountant or a banker? You must have at least someone in all fields as friends; this will help you when you need assistance, you may have such to call on as pertains to their profession when needs arise. The people in your association, do they have the same level of spirituality with you? You must company with those who will be there for you in times of need. Don't just company with everybody, you do not need everybody to become somebody. You only need few and genuine individuals around, those who talk you into becoming what God want you to become, not those who talk you out of your vision. Not those who talk you down or have not seen anything good about you. Look for men on the throne, outside the throne and men like sons of Issachar who understand seasons and times. Women like the Berean women who search the scriptures and a friend like Philip who looked out for his friend, Nathaniel when he found Jesus the Messiah.

Beloved, who is he that is looking after you? The Bible says, "Two are better than one; because they have a good reward for their labour. For if

they fall, the one will lift up his fellow: but woe to him that is alone when he falleth; for he hath not another to help him up. Again, if two lie together, then they have heat: but how can one be warm alone? And if one prevails against him, two shall withstand him; and a threefold cord is not quickly broken.” – Eccl. 4:9-12. As you long to have important people in your circle of friends, do you have Jesus as friend? The best relationship any man can have here on earth is to be a friend of Jesus. You will be glad you do. Do not forget, also thank God for friends who have not let you down, they may be your parents, brothers, sisters, colleagues or anybody. They are your angels.

MIND THIS: Who you have in your circle of friends determined how far you will go in life. If the only people you have as friends are just your mates, you may not go far in life.

WORD AFFIRMATION: The Lord bless thee, and keep thee: The Lord make his face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee: The Lord lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace - Numbers 6:24-26 (Don't just say it, mean it).

DAY 63: SURVIVING HARD TIMES (6)
TEXT: 1 SAMUEL 23:14-26

The sixth strategy to surviving hard times is DO BELIEVE GOD WILL NEVER LET YOU DOWN. How does one escape when the resources of an entire nation have been mobilized to destroy him, when those around him are eager to betray him? 1 Samuel 23:14 make us to understand that David did not escape Saul's traps because he was the most clever and resourceful fugitive that ever lived, nor because he had six hundred well-trained men to protect him. David escaped because "God did not deliver him into his hand." When David had nowhere else to turn, he could always turn to the Lord. Many of David's psalms relate to this turbulent period of his life. In times of stress, some people keep a daily journal that helps them to keep things in perspective; David wrote songs. At a time most of us would have been overcome with despair, David expressed not only his fears but also his faith in unforgettable poetry.

Saul's army of thousands was encircling the mountain from both directions; David and his six hundred were squeezed in the middle. It looked as if there was no way David could escape. Then God stepped in. "But a messenger came to Saul, saying, 'Hurry and come, for the Philistines have made a raid on the land.' So Saul returned from pursuing David, and went to meet the Philistines" (23:27, 28a). It is impossible to read those words in the light of verse 14 and say, "It just happened." Or, "Wasn't David lucky?" Everyone understood God had helped. Later a memorial was set up at the spot. "Therefore they called that place the Rock of Escape" (23:28b).

No matter how dark the night, keep your faith in God. David, who field tested this truth in the wilderness, wrote: "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble" (Psalm 46:1). Underline the word "present." God is present in time of trouble; He is there with you in your problems. You may not see this right now, but stay close to the Lord. Five years from now . . . or ten years . . . or twenty . . . you may be able to look back and see God's hand clearly. Hold on to the Lord; He will not let you down!

MIND THIS: No matter how dark the night, keep your faith in God.

WORD AFFIRMATION: The Lord bless thee, and keep thee: The Lord make his face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee: The Lord lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace - Numbers 6:24-26 (Don't just say it, mean it).

Empowered Mission for Christ Commission (EMCC)

DAY 64: SURVIVING HARD TIMES (7)
TEXT: 1 SAMUEL 23:1-28

Let us consider the remaining four strategies to surviving hard times: seventh is DON'T BE BITTER. We can learn many other principles from David's survival of the bad times. One of the great dangers of the hard times is that our hearts will be filled with bitterness. It is important to keep the "root of bitterness" from "springing up" in our hearts (Hebrews 12:15). If Esau overcame his, you too can. He felt cheated by his brother Jacob and he was ready to kill him. Jacob ran to Padanaram and after twenty years, he returned home and on his way back, Esau met and show kindness to his brother. Esau forget Jacob's misdeeds and at a glance (Genesis 27:41; 33:4,5).

Eighth strategy is DO BE FORGIVING. The way to escape bitterness is to learn to be forgiving.

Let all bitterness be put away from you, and be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other (Ephesians 4:31, 32). Number nine is DO UNDERSTAND THAT NOTHING LASTS FOREVER. You must know that nothing lasts forever, whether good times or bad times. At a later time, David a fugitive became the King of Israel and reign for forty years. You will come out of whatever challenge you are strong and better. Whatever affliction or challenge in your life is to make you a better person, learn the lesson and become expert in handling life's challenges.

The last strategy to consider is DO UNDERSTAND THAT GOOD CAN COME FROM BAD TIMES. Never forget Romans 8:28; grip it tightly. Consider what God was doing in David's life during those dark days: God was continuing to shape David, preparing him to be king. Taking care of sheep was the undergraduate course. Fleeing for his life was the graduate course. We cannot know God's plans and purposes, but it is possible that one thing God was doing was removing all the things David depended on (all the "crutches" he leaned on), to teach David to depend solely on Him. We have followed David as he lost his home and Michal's love; as he saw Samuel for the last time; as he parted tearfully from his friend, Jonathan; as he was separated from God's tabernacle. We heard his plaintive cry in Psalm 142: "No one cares for my soul".

Beloved, I am not saying you should desire the hard times to come rather I am saying that, when they do come, our attitude toward them can make all the difference in the world. We can come out of those times bitter or better, shattered or shaped. Let us try to keep a positive attitude when the bad times come, because good can come from them. Learn from David, and also from Joseph, forgive people who had wrong you in the past and know that whatever that's happening around you presently is to make you and for your own good.

MIND THIS: The way to escape bitterness is to learn to be forgiving.

WORD AFFIRMATION: Grant thee according to thine own heart, and fulfil all thy counsel - Psalm 20:4 (Don't just say it, mean it).

Empowered Mission for Christ Commission (EMCC)

DAY 65: THE BEATITUDES (1)
TEXT: MATTHEW 5:1-12

Christian journey is easy, lighter and not burdensome if undertaking based on the laid down principles set up by our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. For some, Christian journey is burdensome having run the race with their own strengths, knowledge and moving the ancient landmarks. Christ did not come to heap heavy loads on His followers; He came to lessen the burdens. How come it seems difficult for some people to follow Christ and become like Him? How come many believers are full of good deeds but having bad attitudes?

Jesus said, "Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light" - Matthew 11:30. But it seems the more people follow Christ, the more the problems. In a conversation recently, somebody said, "It seems God is no longer interested in His people, He has left the people to their own fate and so He is not answering people's prayers anymore". My response was rather than pointing accusing finger at God, our problem today as a people is, we want to live our lives the way we want, not according to God's pattern and still expect Him to bless us. Not until we meet up with His standard, His goodness will elude. The Book of Proverbs 28:9 concur, "When people do not listen to God's teachings, he does not listen to their prayers".

Therefore, when men do not understand Christianity, prayers become burdensome, fasting becomes difficult, and giving becomes a fraud. Many people find activities in Christendom burdensome because they do not really understand what Christianity is all about. Christianity is not about which church you attend or what position you occupy. Christianity is what you become and behave. It is dead to self and taking up the life of Christ. To receive new life, one must die to self first. Many people are still living in their sins while taking up the life of Christ, that is not Christianity. Christianity is living a New Life in Christ.

So it is of great importance for Christ to teach us in order to have a proper perspective and understanding about the ultimate goal of God for man

which is to make Heaven and enter into His rest. When He opened His mouth, he began to preach a message of right attitudes so as to attain God's goal. In this series, we will be taking in lessons from the Sermon on the Mount as delivered by our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. So when Jesus saw the multitudes coming to Him, the first sermon He preached was to address their attitudes.

Beatitude which is from a Latin word, "Beatus", means "blessed" or "happy." In the more common translations, each verse begins with the word "blessed." "Blessed" is a translation of the Greek word, "Μακάριοι" (Makarios), which basically means "blessed, happy." In my own words, I will rather say, the Beatitudes are the attitudes of the believers, the core behaviours of Heaven-bound Christians. Almost every teaching of Christ went contrary to worldly wisdom and Jewish thinking. Therefore, it is important for us to consider this teaching so as to measure up with Christ's standards of living. We shall begin to examine these attitudes one after the other as from tomorrow by God's grace.

MIND THIS: Christianity is not about which church you attend or what position you occupy. Christianity is what you become and behave. It is dead to self and taking up the life of Christ.

WORD AFFIRMATION: Commit thy works unto the Lord, and thy thoughts shall be established - Proverbs 16:3 (Don't just say it, mean it).

DAY 66: THE BEATITUDES (2)
TEXT: MATTHEW 5:1-12

“Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.” – is a confusing verse, for spirit is a good thing but being poor is bad; so how can we combine the two to make heaven? Here Jesus was not talking about spiritual poverty, it was not also talking about being rich; He was actually referring to a state of the heart whereby one count himself to be as nothing in Him, no matter who you are and what you are. Jesus was talking about a state of humility. To understand this statement better, let’s replace the word ‘poor’ with ‘humble’: Blessed are the humble in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.’ God will give the keys of the Kingdom to a (wo)man who is humble, He gives grace (His Kingdom) to the humble and oppose the proud. We can learn this from Moses and Peter, Moses left his degrees and business to see God in glory; Peter left his fishing business on a day he caught great multitude of fishes to become a fisher of men (the Kingdom of God upon earth is built on him).

Many of us in life are giants when it comes to the things of this world, some of us we have cars, houses, fat bank accounts, exposures, great careers; some are professors, governors, directors, bankers, millionaires, etc. We have become great and achieved so greatly; we have been made and become wealthy. Even those who are not in the categories of people mentioned above, talented individuals who sings, led praise/worship during service, play organs/pianos or whatever instruments in churches, people who man one thing or the other have become something and standing at a level with an advantage. Somehow they have become rich in one area, if care is not taking, pride may set in and if one is in such category, one might miss the Kingdom.

We do pray, fast, give offerings and tithes and also carry out some other assignments in the church; we have become giants. Each and everyone can be so proud and take pride in whatever we have become and doing for God, especially when somebody who is not up to us in age, in exposure, in experience or in achievement is made the head of department. Imagine, as a chorister, you go to rehearsal regularly, you lead praise/worship session, people already know you in the church and one day, your leader,

maybe he is just a nobody talk to you anyhow and you decided that you are no longer coming for rehearsal, you saw that incident as an embarrassment; beloved, all what you are doing has made you spiritually rich, but you become poor in spirit (humble yourself) to gain the Kingdom. But if you think otherwise and say, who is he (your leader), look you met in this church, infact, you are not my mate in any level, you are going away from the Kingdom. You are too rich for God to be in His Kingdom. Repent!

For example, a director in government ministry, maybe on level 16 or whatever level, he commands respect in and out of office. But here is the man, a director serving as an usher in the church; the man was so rich in public life, there is nothing that he is looking for in life that he cannot get based on his position as a director, but look at him in the church, standing why others are sitting, directing people in the house of God. He was so rich but because he wants to gain God, he became humble in God's presence, he became poor in spirit. He is a director out there but here in the church just an ordinary usher or choir member. It will take a man that has been broken or that has met Christ to drop his pride/title and become an ordinary usher in the church. To a director out there who is not born again, he can never do such a thing. It will look as if you are relegating him/her, as a principle in the Kingdom, anyone that must be great, must become the servant of all; but in the world, anybody that is great must be celebrated and honoured. Pride is a problem for all; everybody has his own pride or ego, but to inherit the Kingdom, we must become and behave like a child. Humility is the key.

Yet to exhaust this teaching, we shall continue tomorrow. We shall learn from Jesus Christ himself, He left His glory and throne to come to die a shameful death on the cross. Also from Satan, how he became so proud and lost the Kingdom and even from the day to day activities we do in the church as children of God, how relevant is this verse to all of them. See you tomorrow and God bless.

MIND THIS: Pride is a problem for all; everybody has his own pride or ego, but to inherit the Kingdom, we must become and behave like a child. Humility is the key.

WORD AFFIRMATION: And ye shall serve the Lord your God, and he shall bless thy bread, and thy water; and I will take sickness away from the midst of thee - Exodus 23:25 (Don't just say it, mean it).

Empowered Mission for Christ Commission (EMCC)

DAY 67: THE BEATITUDES (3)
TEXT: MATTHEW 5:1-12

“Blessed, happy are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.” Concerning earthly wisdom, this verse conflicts with what is considered necessary for “getting ahead” and “being somebody.” Regarding Jewish thinking, it was contrary to tradition. The Jews were a proud people, and they were proud that they know they were proud and having understood his audience, which includes the Jewish, Galileans, Samaritans and the Gentiles, He had to address the pride in their hearts so as for them to be able to enter into the Kingdom of God which is at hand.

What “Poor in Spirit” Does Not Mean? We should first note that Jesus did not say, “Blessed are the poor in pocketbook.” It is true that those who are poor regarding material things are more likely to be poor in spirit (consider 1 Corinthians 1:26–29), but it is possible to be impoverished and still have a proud, haughty spirit. Then there are those who have been blessed financially who are as humble and dependent on God as it is possible to be. Money is not the decisive factor. God does not automatically condemn prosperity or bless poverty.

In Bible times there were primarily two classes of people: the rich and the poor, the “haves” and the “have nots.” In our text poor does not refer to those who have little; it refers to those who have nothing. It evokes the image of a beggar lying by the side of the road—a beggar depending entirely on the grace of others, a beggar who knows he has nothing and will die if no one shows mercy to him! You and I must become spiritual beggars if we are to see the kingdom of heaven. We must recognize that we are spiritually poor. Jesus said, in effect, “Blessed are the ones who, in their self-estimation of their moral and religious capabilities, are beggars, knowing their spiritual desperation.”

A good example of what it means to be “poor in spirit” is found in the parable of the Pharisee and the publican (Luke 18:9–14). On the one hand, the Pharisee was self-righteous. He recognized no spiritual faults in himself and felt no need for divine help. On the other hand, the publican was poor in spirit. He realized he was a sinner, in desperate need of God’s mercy. He

prayed, “God, be merciful to me, the sinner!” Jesus concluded, “I tell you, this man went to his house justified rather than the other” (v. 14a). There is no indication that the Pharisee was inaccurate in his list of virtues, but his prideful attitude condemned him. A man can be clean in morals, honest in business, and generous in giving, yet still be rejected by God if he is not “poor in spirit”.

One who is poor in spirit has taken an honest look at himself and, as a result, has put his trust in the Lord instead of in himself—and the Lord will not let him down. However, according to our text, the chief reason the poor in spirit can be blessed, happy is that they have a special promise: “Theirs is the kingdom of heaven.” This promise sustains them, regardless of what life may bring.

How does being ‘poor in spirit’ help us to receive the kingdom of heaven? Remember the basic meaning of the word “kingdom”; it has to do with the reign of God. No man is ready to enthrone God in his heart until he first dethrones himself. No one is ready to live the faithful

Christian life until he is poor in spirit. When Jesus diagnosed the church in Laodicea, He told them, “You say, ‘I am rich, and have become wealthy, and have need of nothing,’ and you do not know that you are wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked” (Revelation 3:17). They thought they needed nothing when, in reality, they needed everything.

MIND THIS: A man can be clean in morals, honest in business, and generous in giving, yet still be rejected by God if he is not “poor in spirit.

WORD AFFIRMATION: The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters - Psalm 23:1-2 (Don’t just say it, mean it).

DAY 68: HUMILITY, THE KEY TO THE KINGDOM
TEXT: MATTHEW 5:1-12

‘Blessed are the poor’, the poor here means somebody who decided to make himself/herself poor (nothing) for something greater/better. It is not that s/he is not somebody, but to gain something, s/he decided to take a poor form (humble position) hence Jesus said, “Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the Kingdom of heaven (God)”. Let us look at Christ example and how He fits in into this verse: Jesus had already shared glory with God before the world began, in His departing words, He looked unto the Heaven and prayed (in John 17:5), He said, “And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was”; but the Lord Jesus left this glory (and His throne) to save mankind, He was so rich and wealthy but in order to save you and I; He became poor. 2 Corinthians 8:9 says, “For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich.”

Apostle Paul was admonishing the Philippians and he gave the example of Jesus, Who being in the form of God (So rich with authority), thought it not robbery to be equal with God: but made himself of no reputation (became poor), and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Jesus made himself of no reputation, His name was not mentioned in the beginning of the world, even though through Him the world was made, he took the form of a servant to gain additional glory (remember: theirs is the Kingdom of heaven). Due to His humility, since His death on the cross, yesterday, today and forever, every knee must bow and every tongue must confess that Jesus is the Lord. God has highly exalted Him, given Him a name that above every other name. Jesus had a name before He came to the world but for making himself of no reputation (became poor in spirit), God gave Him a greater name, the name, Jesus – Philippians 2:1-11.

Satan wanted to enthrone himself above God, he lost his throne and glory, he thought he was rich in spirit and the kingdom of heaven never his. Are you enduring persecution, hardship, suffering in that your department?

Never mind, it for you to gain the Kingdom, therefore, humbles yourself. You know your class but you must declass, make yourself of no reputation so as to enter into the Kingdom of God, which is the ultimate goal. Whosoever you are, never rob shoulder with your leader, your boss or pastor; they may not be your mate in age, size, experience, exposure, and finance; but like Jesus said to John when the later forbad him, Jesus understood leadership and authority, He said, "Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness" – Matthew 3:14,15. Whatever God is using you for or do in your officce, wherever, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men. Man can only pay you salary, it will take God to pay your wages (Read James 4:6; Proverbs 29:23; Mark 10:15). Humility is the key to the Kingdom.

MIND THIS: Whosoever you are, never rob shoulder with your leader.

WORD AFFIRMATION: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen - Philemon 1:25 (Don't just say it, mean it).

Empowered Mission for Christ's Commission

DAY 69: THE BEATITUDES (5)
TEXT: MATTHEW 5:1-12

“BLESSED ARE THEY THAT MOURN: FOR THEY SHALL BE COMFORTED”. Each beatitude is in opposition to what the world believes, for the foolishness of God is wiser than men. That which seems like foolishness to the worldly-minded - such as the Beatitudes - is actually the epitome of divine wisdom. Those who have embraced the Beatitudes and all that is involved in them can testify that they do result in blessing, peace of mind and great happiness.

Human wisdom sees little value in mourning and sadness. Few like to weep. We pay comedians to make us laugh. Nevertheless, Jesus said, “Blessed are those who mourn.” “Those who mourn” is from *penq̄z̄w* (*pentheo*), which means “to mourn for, lament.” This is “one of the most striking words for mourning in the ancient Greek language, portraying sorrow of the acutest kind. It was “commonly used for mourning for the dead.”

Concerning this verse, Jesus did not intend that blessedness be pronounced upon people simply because they weep. There is no special virtue in the act of crying. God always wants His people to be happy. Proverbs 17:22 says “A joyful heart is good medicine” and Paul wrote, “Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice!” (Philippians 4:4). Further, the Bible definitely teaches that some mourners will not be comforted. This is mourning because of the consequences of one’s actions, with little or no mourning for the action itself. This idea might be illustrated by the student who is sad when he receives bad grades because he did not study. Jesus did not promise that lazy students who fail and are “mourning” will be blessed and comforted.

Another group of mourners who will not be comforted are religious mourners unwilling to accept God’s revelation in the New Testament. An example of this is the Jews who gather at the Western Wall in Jerusalem, the wall known as “The Wailing Wall.” The last category of mourners who will not be blessed is a group closely related to those already listed: those who mourn over their sins but do nothing about them.

Who are those mourners then that Jesus is talking about? The verse itself does not say, but the context indicates that Jesus had in mind spiritual mourning, spiritual concern. Mourning over our own sins should also cause us to mourn over sin in general: to mourn over the effect of sin on the world, to mourn over the sins in the lives of others that will send them to hell. When Paul thought about His Jewish brethren who were lost, he said, "I have great sorrow and unceasing grief in my heart. For I could wish that I myself were accursed, separated from Christ for the sake of my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh" (Romans 9:2, 3). When we have this intense kind of mourning for the lost, it will cause us to reach out to them with the gospel (Romans 1:14, 16). There is nothing funny about sin!

MIND THIS: Mourning over our own sins should also cause us to mourn over sin in general: to mourn over the effect of sin on the world, to mourn over the sins in the lives of others that will send them to hell.

WORD AFFIRMATION: Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God:

I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness - Isaiah 41:10 (Don't just say it, mean it).

DAY 70: THE BEATITUDES (6)
TEXT: MATTHEW 5:1-12

“BLESSED, HAPPY ARE THOSE WHO MOURN, FOR THEY SHALL BE COMFORTED.” This sound strange but any formula for joy and happiness must take into account the fact that there will be unhappy days. Life does not always lead us through green pastures; we often encounter valleys and shadows. When we recognize our spiritual destitution (the first beatitude), a natural result is mourning over our spiritual needs (the second beatitude). The first beatitude underlines the fact that we must depend on God and not on self, while the second beatitude is an initial step toward God. Mourning over sins produces a penitent heart which leads to obedience and forgiveness. The closer we draw to the Lord, the happier we shall be.

In this life, we have at least two sources of comfort. First is comfort from promises found in God’s Word. For instance, I have already noted that sorrowing over one’s spiritual condition will result in repentance, which will result in obedience to the Lord, which in turn will result in being forgiven of past sins. Another source of strength for the spiritual mourner is God’s providential care and protection. Paul wrote, “And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose” (Romans 8:28).

In bad times, we should take this verse to heart that we shall be comforted also here on earth; Jesus said, “...In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world” – John 16:33. No matter what you are going through, even when you are in the valley of life, God said, “I will be with you” – Isaiah 43:2. It is already a verdict in your favour that you shall be blessed when you mourn (when things turn), when God turns your captivity, it will be like a dream. For he that sows in tears shall reap in joy. He that goes forth and weeps, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him – Psalm 126. Remember that spiritual mourning requires a proper sense of values. If our priorities are right, we will not be so unhappy over matters that are really unimportant. Keep in mind that the emphasis in the beatitude is that true and lasting happiness will come from the promise of the beatitude:

We can be happy when we mourn because God has promised us comfort (2 Corinthians 1:3, 4a; Isaiah 61:1-3, Luke 4:16-21).

The Bible is littered with stories of how Jesus comforted people during His earthly ministry and He is still in the same business and while He was leaving this world, He gave us an assurance that He will send us a Comforter which is the Holy Spirit. To be truly comforted in this hopeless world, you must have Holy Spirit in your inside; He is the greatest Comforter (John 14:16, 26; 15:26; 16:7). Weeping is not a permanent visitor; it is here for the night, then gone, and singing comes to take up residence. In this life, there will always be the succession of weeping, then joy, then weeping, and then singing, and so on (Psalm 30:5). It is only in heaven that joy will have permanent residence in our hearts. Life is full of ups and downs but God has giving us the Holy Spirit and His Words to flatten the curves. Whatever sorrow you may experience on your journey towards heaven, be rest assured that God will wipe away your tears on the last day – Revelation 21:4.

MIND THIS: Mourning over sins produces a penitent heart which leads to obedience and forgiveness. The closer we draw to the Lord, the happier we shall be.

WORD AFFIRMATION: But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint - Isaiah 40:31 (Don't just say it, mean it).

DAY 71: THE BEATITUDES (7)
TEXT: MATTHEW 5:1-12

“BLESSED ARE THE MEEK (GENTLE): FOR THEY SHALL INHERIT THE EARTH.” In one of the Pastor Sam Adeyemi’s broadcasts I watched recently, he was describing the kind of temperament in humans and each and every one falls into the four temperaments he mentioned. Since Jesus knew the kind of persons we, human beings are, He had to devote His time to give us acceptable characters that pleases God and man in His Sermon on the Mount. Are you therefore impatient, domineering, or hot-tempered? Then listen as Jesus gives the third requirement for true happiness, the spiritual temperament we need to have to inherit the earth and the Kingdom.

In our world today, we attach little value to being gentle and meek. The beatitudes of the world are more like this: “Blessed are those who assert themselves, for they shall get their way”; “Blessed are those who promote themselves, for they shall be noticed”; “Blessed are the aggressive, for they shall succeed.” Nevertheless, Jesus said, “Blessed are the meek/gentle, for they shall inherit the earth.”

Christians are to “put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience” (Colossians 3:12). There is a word that has largely lost its original meaning; it is “gentleman.” Today, that word is primarily used to distinguish between a male and a female, but at one time it referred to a man who was actually gentle in dealing with others. Gentleness/meekness has the element of humility. The meek to whom the inheritance is promised in Matthew 5:5 are those who acknowledge the great and gracious will of God. One sees himself as nothing and God as everything (the first beatitude). He mourns over his spiritual condition (the second beatitude), which causes him to repent and turn to God. Then his spiritual poverty and deep sorrow result in a gentle, meek, yielding spirit (the third beatitude), which accepts God’s will without question. Paul told Titus to remind Christians “to be peaceable, gentle, showing every consideration for all men” (Titus 3:1, 2).

Meekness/gentleness is not a weak quality. To some people, being meek meant that a person is timid and afraid to stand up for himself, that he

allowed people to mistreat him and take advantage of him. But the gentleness/meekness Jesus is talking about can be thought of as “strength under control. Meekness/gentleness is not an attitude of mind that is tolerant of anything and everything, even that which is wrong and immoral. Some people are thought of as meek and gentle because they never disagree with anyone. They go to great lengths to avoid any kind of unpleasantness. It is true that the gentleness/meekness of Matthew 5:5 implies an individual who seeks peace, but this does not mean that he is indulgent of evil. To fail to oppose sin and error is not gentleness/meekness.

Meekness is not a “natural” disposition of mind. It is true that some individuals naturally exhibit some of the characteristics of meekness and gentleness. These individuals are sometimes referred to as “mild-mannered.” This is not what Jesus had in mind, He was advocating a quality that every Christian needs to develop, whether or not s/he is “naturally inclined” to it. He was speaking of an attribute that requires divine help to develop. In Galatians 5:22, 23, Paul spoke of “the fruit of the Spirit.” Included in Paul’s list of fruit is “gentleness,” or “meekness” (v23). We become gentle/meek people in the biblical sense only as we yield ourselves to the Lord and let His Spirit work in our lives.

By tomorrow, we shall be looking at the examples of the people in Bible who have this quality and the possibility of inheriting the earth as promised by Jesus in Matthew 5:5.

MIND THIS: We become gentle/meek people in the biblical sense only as we yield ourselves to the Lord and let His Spirit work in our lives.

WORD AFFIRMATION: My flesh and my heart faileth: but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion forever - Psalm 73:26 (Don’t just say it, mean it).

DAY 72: THE BEATITUDES (8)
TEXT: MATTHEW 5:1-12

“BLESSED ARE THE MEEK (GENTLE): FOR THEY SHALL INHERIT THE EARTH.” Moses was a man the Bible described as very humble, more than any man. He was the meekest man alive, but was he weak? Could a weak man have led two to three million people out of Egypt? He had yielded his spirit to God’s spirit, and that affected how he treated others. He was not gentle or meek when it came to opposing disobedience to God, but he was still characterized by humility. In the New Testament, we find the greatest example of gentleness/meekness anywhere, anytime: Jesus Christ. In 2 Corinthians 10:1, Paul referred to “the meekness and gentleness of Christ.” Jesus Himself said, “I am gentle and humble in heart” (Matthew 11:29). Why was Jesus described as “gentle” or “meek”? He had totally yielded His will to that of the Father (John 6:38; Matthew 26:39). He had emptied Himself of divine rights and privileges and had become a servant to God and mankind (Philippians 2:5–8). Jesus was strong, but His strength was controlled. It was tempered by reverence for God and love for people.

Does the promise mean that those who are gentle and meek will inherit the earth in a legal sense? If anyone think that this literal earth is what Jesus had in mind, then the meekest man who ever lived failed to receive the promise. Moses wandered with no home for forty years hoping to inherit the promised land, but he only got to look at it [Deuteronomy 34:1–5]. The Bible tells us also that Jesus was a meek man and yet far from inheriting the earth literally. [Jesus] said, “Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests; but the son of man hath not where to lay his head” [Luke 9:58].

The promise has a twofold fulfilment: partial fulfilment in this life and complete fulfilment in the life to come. All worthwhile things of this world are the possession of the meek. They may not legally own a square inch of land, but they recognize that the entire earth is God’s and that all its beauty and grandeur is theirs to enjoy. It is not the abundance of possessions that makes us happy, but our attitude toward life. Don Humphrey noted that the “real enjoyment of blessings is for those who hold earthly things lightly, who rank them inferior to spiritual blessings.”

He noted that a meek person is not burdened by his possessions and is not consumed by the fear of losing those possessions.

Do you want to “inherit” the earth—to enjoy the best of what this earth has to offer and look forward to the “new earth”? Then you must be gentle and meek. If you are not a child of God, or if you are an unfaithful child, show your humility by coming to the Lord today in order to possess your benefits here on earth and reign with Him in the Kingdom.

MIND THIS: It is not the abundance of possessions that makes us happy, but our attitude toward life.

WORD AFFIRMATION: I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me - Philippians 4:13 (Don't just say it, mean it).

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DAY 73: THE BEATITUDES (9)
TEXT: MATTHEW 5:1-12

“BLESSED ARE THEY WHICH DO HUNGER AND THIRST AFTER RIGHTEOUSNESS: FOR THEY SHALL BE FILLED (SATISFIED).” – In His Sermon, Jesus was talking about hunger and thirst for right-being (God), right-living (personal) and right-standing (with people) -a complete righteousness which leads to greater satisfaction in this world and the world to come. In this fourth Beatitude, we will be checking our spiritual thermometer and conduct clinical examination of our spiritual lives.

Citizens especially in developing nations during the COVID-19 lockdown cried about hunger in the land hence they pressured their governments to ease the lockdown. What if they turn this hunger and crying towards righteousness before now or going forward, we would not find ourselves in this situation and God would have given us early satisfaction as promised in His words. Christian who strives for right-being and right-living will be in good standing with God. We need heart-hunger and thirst for God Himself—the desire to have a vital relationship with the One who loves us and cares for us. David wrote, “As the deer pants for the water brooks, so my soul pants for You, O God. My soul thirsts for God, for the living God” (Psalm 42:1, 2).

When Jesus spoke of hungering and thirsting, He was referring to the powerful motivation of a starving person who would give anything for a scrap of food, or someone who was dying of thirst and would give anything for one swallow of water. The question each of us should ask is “Do I have that intensity of hunger and thirst for God, His way, and His will?” Here are some tests that might help you determine whether or not you really hunger and thirst for righteousness:

1. Are you more concerned about physical things or spiritual things? Is being close to God more important to you than acquiring possessions? Is being right with God of greater concern than being popular with people? Are you more desirous of living a godly life than you are of being successful? What are your priorities? Some find it difficult to sit still to

read the Word of God, while they have little trouble sitting for hours of entertainment.

2. Do you take advantage of every opportunity to be “fed” spiritually, to learn about God and His way? An old farmer told a preacher, “You seem to spend a lot of time urging people to come to Bible classes and worship. I never have to urge my cows to come to the feeding trough.” A starving person does not have to be begged to go where food is available.

3. Are you on time for spiritual “meals,” or do you show up late? A really hungry person is waiting at the table when mealtime is near.

4. Is your spiritual appetite growing and maturing? Are you starting to enjoy “solid food,” or are you still on a “milk” diet (check Hebrews 5:12–14; 1 Corinthians 3:2)?

See you tomorrow as we continue Matthew 5:6: Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.

MIND THIS: Christian who strives for right-being and right-living will be in good standing with God. We need heart-hunger and thirst for God Himself—the desire to have a vital relationship with the One who loves us and cares for us.

WORD AFFIRMATION: He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might he increaseth strength - Isaiah 40:29 (Don’t just say it, mean it).

DAY 74: THE BEATITUDES (10)
TEXT: MATTHEW 5:1-12

Yesterday, we performed an honest examination of our spiritual lives, today, let us look at what is lacking in our relationship with God. Does this honest examination convince us that we do not hunger and thirst after righteousness as we should? What can be done to help us have hungry hearts? One useful plan is to work our way through the first three beatitudes. If we recognize our deep spiritual need (the first beatitude), we will be filled with profound sorrow (the second beatitude), and we will be ready and anxious to yield ourselves to God and His will (the third beatitude). Surely, this will make us cry out, “God, I want You in my life. I want more of You. I need You in my life. Please, tell me what to do, and I will do it!” This is hungering and thirsting after righteousness (the fourth beatitude).

If we do not have healthy spiritual appetites, what can we do? Again, an important goal for Christians is to develop—with the help of God—the attributes described in the first three beatitudes. To do this, we can use techniques similar to those used to improve physical appetites.

(1) Recognize the need for spiritual nourishment. In the Sermon on the Plain, Jesus said, “Blessed are you who hunger now, for you shall be satisfied” (Luke 6:21a). Then He added, “Woe to you who are well-fed now, for you shall be hungry” (v. 25a). In other words, “Woe to you who feel no spiritual hunger, for you shall stand before God spiritually starved!” Take care that you do not become like the Laodiceans who said they had “need of nothing” (Revelation 3:17).

(2) Develop an appreciation for spiritual nourishment. Is there some physical food you enjoy now that you did not enjoy the first time you ate it? Perhaps you had parents who insisted you eat it, so you gradually learned to like it. Perhaps, as an adult, you discovered you needed certain foods for good health and have persisted in eating them until you now enjoy them. Even as we can develop an appreciation for physical food, so we can develop an appreciation for spiritual food.

(3) Improve your spiritual appetite by spiritual exercise. Nothing makes food taste better than a hard day of physical labour. Even so, spiritual exercise will make us long for and enjoy spiritual food. Paul told Timothy, "Exercise thyself . . . unto godliness" (1 Timothy 4:7,8).

We shall consider the remaining three techniques to improve our appetites for the things of God tomorrow.

MIND THIS: Where hunger for God's Word is lacking, the primary fault is not with the speaker, but with the hearer.

WORD AFFIRMATION: For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind - 2 Timothy 1:7 (Don't just say it, mean it).

Empowered Mission for Christ Commission (EMCC)

DAY 75: THE BEATITUDES (11)
TEXT: MATTHEW 5:1-12

Today, we are looking at the three remaining techniques to improve our appetites for the things of God. You can check the Beatitude (10) for the first three:

(4) Improve your spiritual appetite by “eating” regularly. A person who does not have regular mealtimes may lose his appetite or fill himself with “junk food” which destroys his appetite for healthy food. Spiritually, we need to have regular “mealtimes.” The Bereans were complimented by Luke because “they received the word with great eagerness” and examined the Scriptures “daily” (Acts 17:11). We need to be present for congregational “mealtimes,” and we also need daily times for personal study and prayer. Regular study will enable us to handle the Word accurately (2 Timothy 2:15).

(5) Beware of appetite killers. Even as physical junk food can destroy one’s appetite for healthy food, mental junk food can diminish our interest in God’s Word. We can so fill our minds with worldly matters and worldly entertainment that spiritual food loses its appeal for us. Some people long for things of this world which cannot satisfy the soul (Isaiah 55:2).

(6) Here is one more suggestion: It may help to share your “meals.” Widows and widowers lose the incentive to prepare proper meals after their mates die. They lose their appetites when they have to eat alone. If you are having trouble stimulating your spiritual appetite, sharing your spiritual meals may help. Husbands and wives can study together. A family can have family devotionals. Sit down with a friend and talk about the Bible. Perhaps a group of friends could get together for times of study and prayer.

Do you long for a clearer understanding of God, His way, and His will? Jesus promised, “And you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free” (John 8:32). If you do hunger and thirst for righteousness, you have the opportunity to show how intense your desire is. You can confess your faith in Jesus (Romans 10:9, 10) and be baptized into Him (Galatians 3:26,

27). You shall be greatly satisfied if you thirst and hunger after God, His Kingdom and its righteousness (Matthew 6:33).

MIND THIS: You shall be greatly satisfied if you thirst and hunger after God, His Kingdom and its righteousness.

WORD AFFIRMATION: For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind - 2 Timothy 1:7 (Don't just say it, mean it).

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DAY 76: BE WILLING
TEXT: GENESIS 22:1-19

Many of us that claim and sing “Abraham’s Blessings”, can we truly do what Abraham did before he got the blessing and became a Blessing? Many of us have not done an ounce of what Abraham did before fainting or begin to complain and ask ‘why me’. The truth of the matter is, in this journey of Christianity, you will be tested and your motive be weighed on right scale of God whether you truly love Him or you are only doing high service.

Abraham did not hesitate to obey the call of God, his obedience was immediate, at age of 100, and he must sacrifice his only begotten son, travelled on a three-day journey and unto a pagan land, a pagan country, a pagan mountain where people sacrificed their sons. Abraham responded to God’s call, woke up in the morning, saddled his donkeys and embarked on the journey of obedience. He never discussed it with his wife; he was ready to do the will of God no matter what. The Abraham’s Blessings will sing and seek for, did not just come on a platter of Gold, but on the mountains of sacrifice, personal discipline, total obedience and unshakeable faith in the invisible God.

The circumstances Abraham found himself in those days similar to ours, God did not appear to him physically, it was through dream and the land where Abraham lived and the land he came from were pagans countries, all of them had one god or the other they served, but Abraham came with ‘the idea of God’. God said to me, I should leave my father’s house, the God that he had never seen or people had heard about; this was the same God Abraham put all of his faith and trust in. it is the same God who told him in a dream to go and sacrifice his only son to him. What a strange God!

If you are in Abraham’s shoe, what’s going to be your reaction? Yours would not be different from that of Pharaoh who said, “Whose God it is that I will obey His voice” – Exodus 5:2. If you mistakenly discuss it in the ears of a friend or parent, you will hear: which God did you say he said you should go and sacrifice your only son or to quit your job for the work of

the ministry? Because people were not seeing what you are seeing, do not compromise your stand in God due to what people says. It is not your concern whether they believe or not. Abraham never make sense of God's word, he obeyed no matter how foolish it was.

Abraham's obedience was immediate - He arose early in the morning. It was exact - performed in the spirit of worship. It was contagious - for Isaac used the same expression to his father, as he to God - "Here am I." Apparently he had no need to acquaint Sarah with the object of his journey; he was so sure that the divine promise could not fail. He said to his young men, "We will come unto you." If it were necessary, he knew that God would raise him from the dead.

In order for you to experience the blessings of Abraham, you must be ready to sacrifice your all. Stop asking where is the lamb, you are the lamb. God is asking for your time, for your talents, skills and bodies. He wants you to present your body as a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto Him, which is your reasonable service (Romans 12:1-2). A living sacrifice is all that Christ desires from you and on an altar burning for God. If you are willing today, you shall eat the best of the land.

MIND THIS: In this journey of Christianity, you will be tested and your motive be weighed on right scale of God whether you truly love Him or you are only doing high service. Wait for the test result!

WORD AFFIRMATION: But the Lord is faithful, who shall stablish you, and keep you from evil - 2 Thessalonians 3:3 (Don't just say it, mean it).

DAY 77: WHAT ABRAHAM WOULD HAVE LOST?
TEXT: GENESIS 22:1-19

Let's look at what father Abraham would have lost if he did not yield or hearken to the voice of God. The Bible says, obedient is better than sacrifice and to hearken than the fat of rams (1 Samuel 15:22). There are grave consequences for all our actions and inactions and significant rewards for all our complete obedience to God. What would have happened if Abraham did not yield unto God in willing to sacrifice his only son?

(1) He would not have been blessed – even though Abraham was very rich in cattle, in silver and in gold (Genesis 13:2); he would not have been truly blessed (Genesis 22:17, 18). Abraham's name by now would have been forgotten because earthly riches and divine blessings are two different things; having divinely blessed means having an eternal legacy, one may be rich and not blessed but any man that is blessed by God will definitely be rich (Proverbs 10:22).

God's riches come with peace, joy and happiness. God blessings bring no death – they do not kill (Ephesians 1:3). Helping us to see our need for Christ and growing in spiritual understanding of the gospel is one of the greatest blessings God can bestow on any believer. Out of love, He sometimes does this through circumstances that take away the desired of earthly blessings we are prone to seek, replacing them with the greater blessing of knowing Him more. Divine blessing is not tied to riches and wealth, but also being partaker of the Kingdom to come. Not every wealthy person is blessed by God. No matter what we receive or don't receive in the temporal form, we have been given every blessing through the complete work of Christ – His righteousness, resources, privilege, position, and power. But he often works these spiritual blessings into our lives through circumstances that most people would not consider to be blessings.

(2) Abraham would have missed established Covenant of God between him and Him and his seeds; he wouldn't have been referred to today as Father

of Faith. He would have died with his generation and not becoming a reference point in this world and the world to come.

(3) He would have missed the plan of God. If Abraham had measured up to God's standard of righteousness, there wouldn't be any other test at all. All the time God looks at the heart and not outward appearance. We wouldn't be making reference to him as we do today, God would have gotten another substitute.

If you do not want to be replaced in the plan of God, obey Him completely and patiently wait for Him to reward you accordingly. No matter what God want you to do for Him, yield to Him in total obedience and reference to His words. You will never regret it.

MIND THIS: There are grave consequences for all our actions and inactions and significant rewards for all our complete obedience to God.

WORD AFFIRMATION: A little one shall become a thousand, and a small one a strong nation: I the LORD will hasten it in his time - Isaiah 60:22 (Don't just say it, mean it).

DAY 78: INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE RICH
TEXT: 1 TIMOTHY 6:17-18

1 Timothy 6:17-18 offers divine instructions for the wealthy people among us. When your season of material wealth arrives, if it hasn't already, this passage is telling you to do the following four things:

A. Be generous and willing to share. Generous people are synergistic. They build organizations and contribute to the success of others. Think about it: who wants to do business with someone who only takes? Peter called his friends when he caught great multitude of fishes.

B. Be rich in good deeds. A good deed is a free and voluntary act of service toward another person. Doing good deeds for others is the fruit of your salvation in Jesus Christ. "For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works" - Ephesians 2:10.

C. Don't become big-headed. Work hard and become successful in life but don't think of yourself as better than others because of your material wealth. Moses reminds us, "But thou shalt remember the LORD thy God: for it is he that giveth thee power to get wealth, that he may establish his covenant which he sware unto thy fathers, as it is this day" - Deuteronomy 8:18.

D. Don't put your expectation in your wealth. A good job or business and its steady earnings can be here today and gone tomorrow. "Wilt thou set thine eyes upon that which is not? For riches certainly make themselves wings; they fly away as an eagle toward heaven." - Proverbs 23:5.

After being humiliated by the power that be, one of the most influential persons in the world today recently said, "If wealth is the secret to happiness, then the rich should be dancing in the street." But only poor kids do that. If power ensures security, then officials should walk unguarded. But those who live simply sleep soundly. If beauty and fame bring ideal relationships, then celebrities should have the best marriages. Live simply. Walk humbly and always be thankful to God." May we know that only in God can we all have our fullness.

MIND THIS: When it comes to riches and wealthy by any standard, look up to God. He is the perfect Being to look up to.

WORD AFFIRMATION: But I will sing of thy power; yea, I will sing aloud of thy mercy in the morning: for thou hast been my defence and refuge in the day of my trouble - Psalm 59:16 (Don't just say it, mean it).

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DAY 79: 18 KEY LESSONS OF GENESIS 22 (1)
TEXT: GENESIS 22:1-19

Genesis 22 did not just make remarkable impacts in the life of Abraham; it did make timeless meaning to us more in the New Testament Age and the Church of Christ today. Abraham has come to the point in his spiritual journey of radical and immediate obedience to the Word of God. He is an archetype and inspiration to disciples of all ages. Let's take a look at the 18 key lessons from our anchor Scripture for today, Genesis 22:

Lesson 1: The God that called (Gen 22:1): The God that called Abraham in this passage is different in characters from the One that appeared unto him before now, even though He is the same in person. In every Age and times, God presents Himself to people in a new way and with new names. God has revealed Himself to Abraham and his household with the names such as Jehovah El Elyon (The Most High)" - Genesis 14:18-20, 22; as Jehovah Adonai (The Lord, The Master) - Genesis 15:2; To Haggai as Jehovah El Roi (The Mighty One who sees) - Genesis 16:13; in Genesis 17:1-2 as Jehovah El Shaddai (Almighty God or All-sufficient God); and Jehovah El Olam (Everlasting God or God of Eternity) - Genesis 21:33.

But the God that called Abraham in Genesis 22 was Jehovah Elohim (the Creator). It takes someone who's your Creator to command you to do what you cannot ordinarily do. There is a part/side of God we do not all know, we must strive to know Him; for the more we know God the more we do not know Him. Paul the Apostle, after several years in Ministry, with signs and wonders following, he planted churches in Asia and tour the world three times on mission works, one day, he cried out, "that I may know Him." Paul what is it that you still want to know about God after all these exploits. But Paul knew that he only know God in part, there are parts of Him that He did not understand (Philippians 3:10; 1 Corinthians 13:9, 12). There is a part of God you do not know.

In this dispensation, God has giving us a Name that is above every other name; at the name of Jesus Christ every knee must bow and every tongue confess that Jesus is the Lord to the glory of God the Father. There is no other name that we might be saved except the name, Jesus. Jesus Christ is

the only way to God and we must strive to know and called the right name at the right time when in prayer or in trouble. For example, Jabez received quick answer to his prayers because he prayed to the God who changes destinies, he called unto the God of Israel, not God of Jacob, not Jehovah Jireh (see 1 Chronicles 4:9-10, Genesis 32:26-28). The God of Jacob even though is the same, different from the God of Israel; anywhere the God of Jacob is mentioned in the Bible, it is referring to the past while the God of Israel represents the future. He appeared unto the children of Israel as I AM THAT I AM. Be more familiar with God in order to enjoy Him. Remember, engagement is not relationship.

MIND THIS: There is a part/side of God you do NOT know, strive to know Him.

WORD AFFIRMATION: The Lord God is my strength, and he will make my feet like hinds' feet, and he will make me to walk upon mine high places. Habakkuk 3:19 (Don't just say it, mean it).

Empowered Mission for Christ Commission (EMCC)

DAY 80: 18 KEY LESSONS OF GENESIS 22 (2)
TEXT: GENESIS 22:1-19

Today, we are looking at two lessons from the significance of Genesis 22 to Abraham and to us as believers, yesterday we looked at lesson 1 – the God that called Abraham:

Lesson 2: God tempted Abraham (Gen 22:1): If God could tempt Abraham, then you too will not be spared. Abraham received the call at age 75, left his father's house on the idea of a God his people did not know, "He asked me to leave". Who? God of Heaven and Earth! Where is He? He is invisible. He waited for a promised from this same God for good 24years and the same God is testing his 24years' experience in Him with his only child. To become a blessing, you must pass through a test. Job was tested, Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour was not spared. You too must pass through your test. Rejoice when you find yourself in any test of faith and rebuke any form of temptation around you. Temptation is a test of God's word you received, for if the Word of God must produce fruits in your life, it must first of all be tried. Adam and Eve fell for the lie of Satan, the devil tempted and they failed. The battle is not about your person but about the Word of God in your life, that is the truth the devil wants to take away. The Devil must contest the truth you received – James 1:2-4, 4:7; Matthew 4:1-11. He, the devil, did not want the Word of God in you to produce fruits, you must rebuke him and he will flee from you.

Lesson 3: God called unto Abraham (Gen 22:1): The channel of communication between God and Abraham was constantly opened and strong, there was no time that Abraham dialled God's number and He was not available, and there was not a single time when God called on Abraham that he (Abraham) was unreachable. When was the last time you hear from God? If He called unto Abraham, He is calling you as well. God always speak but it seems that the spiritual antenna of a lot of Christians is dead hence the rushing to mountain to meet man of God and the confusion in the land. When was the last time you open your Bible, even when you open to read, what is God's message to you that day. Did you document it or you just think you will remember? If you don't value the Word God speaks to you by having a record book, you will lose your

channel of communication. God is not a talkative, He ever mean what He says (Psalm 68:11; 62:11). So document His promises, His prophesies, His instructions and all that matters as He speaks.

Don't just rejoice and hurriedly leave the presence of God when He speaks to you, ask for instructions on how to go about what He says. A lot have received God's Word truly but have lost the correspondence result because they couldn't wait patiently to listen and receive the instructions in total hence the confusion. But God spoke to me about it, how come it didn't come to pass; the problem is, you did not wait to receive 'the how' to the instructions. You have made fool of yourself, not God.

MIND THIS: The battle is not about your person but about the Word of God in your life, that is the truth the devil wants to take away. The Devil must contest the truth you received.

WORD AFFIRMATION: The Lord is my strength and my shield; my heart trusted in him, and I am helped - Psalm 28:7 (Don't just say it, mean it).

Empowered Mission for Children Commission (EMCC)

DAY 81: 18 KEY LESSONS OF GENESIS 22 (3)
TEXT: GENESIS 22:1-19

Can we review another two or three lessons today? We are considering 18 Key Lessons of Genesis 22 – the Sacrifice of Isaac. I believe Holy Spirit will help to interpret His Word in our hearts:

Lesson 4: Behold, here I am (Gen 22:1): Abraham was ever ready, his readiness is like of a soldier waiting for order from his boss. God did not call him twice, it was only once. God had to call Samuel thrice before he could understand Who was calling, but for Abraham, He recognized the Voice of God and quick in his response. Many are suffering today because they couldn't recognize the Voice of God when He called unto them; many have missed their destinies because they failed to hear from God. Jacob could not recognize the Voice of God; he proceeded on his journey and wasted twenty good years of his life. He exclaimed when he met with Pharaoh and the same (Pharaoh) asked of him, "How old are you?" Jacob said to him, "The days of the years of my pilgrimage are an hundred and thirty years: few and evil have the days of the years of my life been, and have not attained unto the days of the years of the life of my fathers in the days of their pilgrimage." – Genesis 47:9. Jacob's response to Pharaoh was full of regrets because He did not recognize the Voice of God in his early life (see Genesis 28:10-22; 29:1).

Many have mixed the Voice of God with that of a friend hence the confusion they experience in their daily lives. Abraham was ready to obey the next instruction, when God called on Adam (the first man); he hid himself from the presence of God. Adam could not answer, "Here am I". Abraham, Esau, Jacob, Samuel, Isaiah, Ananias, Jesus Christ, Paul, Peter and the other Apostles were the only ones in the Bible that made that short but powerful statement; Check out their lives. For any man that must be useful to God, s/he must answer, "Here am I, Lord".

Lesson 5: Abraham rose up early in the morning (Gen 22:3): Abraham's obedience was immediate. He arose early in the morning to proceed on the journey. If any of Abraham's friends or his servants asked him most times, "Where are you going?" Abraham, most times could not provided

convincing answers, because he (Abraham) never known where he was going. God has not always told him from the beginning his destinations. Apparently, this is the way God deals with any (wo)man He (God) want to use. The promises of God always speak about the end but God will never tell you what you will go through on the way. He took the Israelites out of the land of Egypt unto the promise land of Canaan, but never said that they would encounter the red sea, the wall of Jericho, the battle of Ai and the likes. You are only joking if you are expecting God to tell you everything you must go through before you get to your dream or fulfilling your vision. He only promised that He will be with you (Isaiah 43:2). Is God calling you today? Wake out of sleep and answer Him.

MIND THIS: For any man that must be useful to God, s/he must answer, "Here am I, Lord".

WORD AFFIRMATION: For the Lord your God is he that goeth with you, to fight for you against your enemies, to save you - Deuteronomy 20:4 (Don't just say it, mean it).

Empowered Mission for Christ Commission (EMCC)

DAY 82: 18 KEY LESSONS OF GENESIS 22 (4)
TEXT: GENESIS 22:1-19

We are going to look at three lessons today, we have already considered about five and hope you are taking practical steps related to knowledge gained:

Lesson 6: Abraham journey for three days before he could get to the place where God told him (Gen 22:4): The journey to Moriah took three days, parallel to the three days Jesus spent in the tomb before his resurrection. Jesus said, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up" – John 2:19. The soldier carries his rations with him when he has to make a quick : Let us as Children of God knows that this world is not our home, be ready for the coming of the Saviour. Let not your roots strike deep into this earthly soil, for you must in due time be transplanted; and the more root hold you get to this world, the worse it will be for you. Hold everything with a loose hand.

While you are still on this earth, note that God's instructions will cost you something. You must make sacrifice, prepare, be ready and be quick to obey His commands. You must be ready to accomplish the goal(s) set before you by God. No matter the situation, entertain no excuse.

Lesson 7: Isaac carried his wood for his burnt offering: Gen 22:6; likewise Jesus Christ His Cross, you too must carry your cross. "And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me – Matthew 10:38. Again, He said, "...If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me" – Matthew 16:24. You need to put to death your own plans and desires, and turn your life over to Christ and do His will every day. There is no greater joy in life than following Christ every day.

Carrying one's cross is not about the problem(s) in your life, it is all about dying to self and desires so as to be light and be ready for the task ahead. Likewise, the cross is not a shiny piece of jewelry you put around your neck or put on a church steeple, but rather, it was in the context of following Him, regardless of the cost to our personal lives. Isaac surrender to his

father, we must also surrender absolute to the call of the Cross in order to inherit eternal life.

You see, Jesus doesn't simply call us to believe that He existed, or even to believe that He can save us. He calls on us to commit our whole lives to Him—to trust Him alone for our salvation, and then to follow Him as His disciples. He said, "Anyone who does not carry his cross and follow me cannot be my disciple.

Lesson 8: The fire in the hand of Abraham still burns even after three days journey (Gen 22:6): Are you still burning for God or a life of sins have quenched His fire? You must be on fire for God. If you have ever gone camping, you will understand how important fire is, most especially in the evening. Campers cook their food with fire, keep warm with it, and use it to provide light. If you're a camper in the middle of the woods, the last thing you want to happen in the evening is for your fire to go out. To be on fire for God, the Truth of God's Word must be in your mouth, you must mediate therein day and night. The Word of God is a lamp to your feet and a light to your path - Psalm 119:105. You must not forsake the gathering of the saints; this will also keep your fire burning. Do not forget to be a (wo)man of prayer.

MIND THIS: You must be on fire for God

WORD AFFIRMATION: Thou hast also given me the shield of thy salvation: and thy right hand hath holden me up, and thy gentleness hath made me great - Psalm 18:35 (Don't just say it, mean it).

DAY 83: 18 KEY LESSONS OF GENESIS 22 (5)
TEXT: GENESIS 22:1-19

Lesson 9: He took also a knife (Gen 22:6): Have you attended a birthday celebration and when it was the time to cut the birthday cake, the celebrant or close friends were looking for a knife. Many had cut their birthday cake with spoon or wood, no cutter in sight; it is embarrassing. But not Abraham, he was adequately prepared and ready to fulfil God's instruction; he did not leave any stone unturned. To process God's instructions, you need sound wisdom, knowledge and understanding; many have misinterpreted God's dreams and visions to their own detriment.

When a man of God was praying unto God why He (God) did not tell him plainly was He shown him in a dream, God answered and said to him, "I have never given birth to a foolish child." To understand God's instructions in dreams, visions or revelations, we must be equipped with sound wisdom (2 Timothy 1:7). In addition to sound wisdom, are you keeping the Sword of the Spirit? You must likewise equip yourself with the Spirit of God, for perilous times are here already. It is suicidal for you not to have a defense in the time of battle.

Having a knife can also mean having your thinking cap on, many have turned Christianity upside down. Never foolishly think you can be blessed without no job that you are doing? There is no amount of time you spend carrying out spiritual exercises without corresponding job that we put food on your table. Go out and do something, provide food for your household. In Luke 22:36, Jesus said to His disciples, "and he that hath no sword, let him sell his garment, and buy one." When Jesus was with them He knew the disciples would need nothing (See Luke 22:35) but at a later time when He is no longer with them, they will need provision. So the disciples would need certain provisions, including a knife for preparation of food, cutting wood for fuel, and possibly to fend off robbers for which the area was noted. So, once Jesus' ordeal was over, they should make sure they each had a knife.

Lesson 10: Where is the lamb for a burnt offering? (Gen 22:7): Burnt offering is one of the oldest and most common offerings in history. The first recorded instance is in Genesis 8:20 when Noah offers burnt offerings after the flood. God ordered Abraham to offer his son, Isaac, in a burnt offering in Genesis 22, and then provided a ram as a replacement. After suffering through nine of the ten plagues, Pharaoh decided to let the people go from bondage in Egypt, but his refusal to allow the Israelites to take their livestock with them in order to offer burnt offerings brought about the final plague that led to the Israelites' deliverance (Exodus 10:24-29).

The Hebrew word for "burnt offering" actually means to "ascend," literally to "go up in smoke." The smoke from the sacrifice ascended to God, "a soothing aroma to the LORD" (Leviticus 1:9). God gave the Israelites specific instructions as to the types of burnt offerings and what they symbolized. Leviticus 1 and 6:8-13 describe the traditional burnt offering. A person could give a burnt offering at any time. It was a sacrifice of general atonement—an acknowledgement of the sin nature and a request for renewed relationship with God. The ultimate fulfilment of the burnt offering is in Jesus' sacrifice on the cross. His physical life was completely consumed, He ascended to God, and His covering (that is, His garment) was distributed to those who officiated over His sacrifice (Matthew 27:35). But most importantly, His sacrifice, once for all time, atoned for our sins and restored our relationship with God. Jesus is the Sacrificial Lamb killed for our atonement - John 1:29, 36, Revelation 5:6.

MIND THIS: There is no amount of time you spend carrying out spiritual exercises without corresponding job that we put food on your table.

WORD AFFIRMATION: For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace - Romans 6:14 (Don't just say it, mean it).

DAY 84: 18 KEY LESSONS OF GENESIS 22 (6)
TEXT: GENESIS 22:1-19

Lesson 11: Abraham prepared an Altar on the Mount (Gen 22:9): Abraham prepared to go to the land of Moriah, this place name in the Old Testament refers to Jerusalem, a city built upon several hills on the ridge of the north-south mountain chain (2 Chronicles 3:1). While Abraham is fully prepared to offer Isaac, he also is confident that God will keep the promises that Isaac himself will be heir to the covenant and has descendants (Genesis 17:19, 21; 21:12). Here is obedient faith in action. The writer of Hebrews reflects on the quality of Abraham's faith, "By faith Abraham, when God tried him, offered Isaac as a sacrifice."

The place where Abraham prepared for the sacrifice was a place outside the city of Jerusalem during Jesus' days and a place referred to as Golgotha where our Lord Jesus Christ was crucified. Please note whatever you might be going through today in your daily and Christian journey is a reflection of what's going to happen tomorrow. Abraham might thought the sacrifice of Isaac is personal to me, but God was actually looking beyond and was given a picture of the sacrifice of His only begotten Son for the sins of the entire universe. God will definitely use what you are going through to His glory, if you faint not.

You and I are the temples of the Living God; we must therefore prepare our hearts for Him. Preparing our heart to seek God is a principle found throughout the Scriptures. It is what a thirsty soul does over and over again. We seek to prepare our heart daily, in order to walk in sincerity before God and to do those things that are pleasing in His sight. The prophet Samuel told the children of Israel to "...prepare your hearts unto the LORD, and serve Him only" (1Samuel 7:3b). This exhortation to prepare ourselves is telling us to make our heart receptive and willing to love, obey, and serve the LORD God.

To prepare our heart is to have a heart that is yielded to Father's will, a heart that is willing to be repentant and obedient to Father's written WORD. This requires that we apply effort, and give ourselves to the needed forethought, adjustments, and time required accomplishing our

goal. Acquiring a prepared heart is a process that includes thinking about our goal and planning ahead. It includes making adjustments to our schedule, so that we can have the necessary time to fulfil our goal.

Anytime Ezra would seek the law of the LORD, he would excuse himself from distractions, cares, worries, closed the door to all distractions – distractions within, without and around him. It is not a time to allow your problems or past to set in or weigh you down. It is not the time to think about your debts, difficulties, challenges or assignments undone. Let all business appointments wait, for it is time to seek the LORD - Ezra 7:10.

MIND THIS: To prepare our heart is to have a heart that is yielded to Father's will, a heart that is willing to be repentant and obedient to Father's written WORD.

WORD AFFIRMATION: Through God we shall do valiantly: for he it is that shall tread down our enemies - Psalm 108:13 (Don't just say it, mean it).

Empowered Mission for Christ's Commission (EMCC)

DAY 85: 18 KEY LESSONS OF GENESIS 22 (7)
TEXT: GENESIS 22:1-19

Lesson 12: Lay not thine hand upon the lad (Gen 22:11-12): The Angel who now speaks with the voice of Yahweh stops Abraham. The repetition of his name -- "Abraham, Abraham" -- suggests the urgency of the angel's message, and recalls other urgent calls from God -- "Moses, Moses" (Exodus 3:4), "Samuel, Samuel" (1 Samuel 3:4), "Saul, Saul" (Acts 9:4). God stops him from slaying his son, and then encourages him that he has passed the test. It is easier to condemn those who do not have any offering to give to the Lord, but it is much more condemnable to those whose out of their abundance gives little.

Solomon offered a thousand offering to God, 22,000 oxen and 120,000 sheep, it is understandable because he took it out of the abundance he possessed, it is commendable also for Solomon to think of sacrificing what he had, for some cannot do such a thing, but it is unforgettable, remarkable and indeed honourable to sacrifice the one and only thing one has. Abraham willingly offered his one and only son, the child of promise; he offered his all and best. God was not asking for Abraham's bullock or sheep, Abraham had them in thousand, but He requested for his only son – the beloved and he never thought it twice. Today, God is not asking for your money, He is asking for your heart.

As a believer, you must hold all other love as less than His, and must be ready to yield up the dearest at His bidding. Cruel as the necessity seems to flesh and blood, and specially emotional as his pain was, in essence Abraham's trial only required of him what all true religion requires of us. Some of us have been called by God's providence to give up the light of our eyes, the joy of our homes, to Him. Some of us have had to make the choice between earthly and heavenly love. All of us have to throne God in our hearts, and to let not the dearest usurp His place. Does God have a place in your heart?

In our weakness we may well shrink from such a test. But let us not forget that the trial of Abraham was not imposed by his own mistaken conceptions of duty, nor by a sterner God than the New Testament

reveals, but is distinctly set before every Christian in essence, though not in form, by the gentle lips from which flowed the law of love more stringent and exclusive in its claims than any other: 'He that loveth father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me.' We never know how sweet our blessings are till we have yielded them to Him. 'There is no man that hath left' anything or any person for Christ's sake and the gospel's who will not 'receive a hundred-fold more in this life, and in the world to come life everlasting.'

MIND THIS: It is easier to condemn those who do not have any offering to give to the Lord, but it is much more condemnable to those whose out of their abundance gives little.

WORD AFFIRMATION: Verily I say unto you, There be some standing here, which shall not taste of death, till they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom - Matthew 16:28 (Don't just say it, mean it).

Empowered Mission for Christ Commission (EMCC)

DAY 86: 18 KEY LESSONS OF GENESIS 22 (8)
TEXT: GENESIS 22:1-19

Lesson 13: The Lord provides a ram (Gen 22:13): What do you do when you are faced with life and the problems of life make no sense to you? You do what Abraham did. You do not try to make sense out of it. You depend on the faithfulness of God. Abraham knew that even if the knife went through the heart of Isaac God would resurrect him (Hebrews 11). Abraham dependence was in the faithfulness of God. God has already made provision for every situation, all what you need praying for is the supply. Your own responsibility is to have absolute faith in the faithfulness of God, His timelessness to bring to pass whatever He has promised. God is never bound by time; He's timeless, everlasting and eternal. You are not growing old because you are waiting for God's promises; you are getting old because you do not understand the Word of God. A renew mind will let you understand that you can command your body to behave the way you want because you carry the Word of God.

Abraham was ready to sacrifice his Isaac believing God can raise him up from dead. We might know God as a good God when the going is good but we will never known a great God until we experience His faithfulness in trial and His love in action. You need a personal experience and encounter with God, you must leave the ground of living on the testimonies of others about God to the land of having a personal encounter with your Creator. Don't just know God, have Him. Until the unknown God became the God of Abraham, Abraham did not stop serving Him.

Is God your provider or you still having an alternative? Many of us are not experiencing the wonders of God because we are too calculative and too sensitive for God to handle. We struggle to do things for ourselves, many civil or public servants today are living by the money they stole from public treasury or from bribe collected from a contractor. The funniest thing is, these people often go to church to testify that the Lord made the provision. If people are not aware about the source of their wealth, God knows. We looked and touched upon many hills because we do not trust absolutely in the Hill of God. For the fact that Psalm 121:1 says, "I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help" does not mean

we must all look up to every hill around us, be it the hill of uncles, girlfriends, boyfriends, sugar mummies/daddies or businesses before we should know there is only one Hill where comes our help (Psalm 121:2). God declares, “Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the LORD”- Jeremiah 17:5.

MIND THIS: We might know God as a good God when the going is good but we will never know a great God until we experience His faithfulness in trial and His love in action.

WORD AFFIRMATION: There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death - Romans 8:1-2 (Don't just say it, mean it).

Empowered Mission for Christ Commission

DAY 87: 18 KEY LESSONS OF GENESIS 22 (9)
TEXT: GENESIS 22:1-19

Lesson 14: A New Name for Elohim (Gen 22:14): And Abraham called the name of that place Jehovah Jireh: as it is said to this day, in the mount of the LORD it shall be seen. Abraham had said to Isaac, 'God will provide a lamb,' and the word 'provide' is that which appears in the name he gave to the place-Jehovah-*jireh*. The name, then, commemorated, not the servant's faith but the Lord's mercy, and the spirit of it was embodied in what became a popular saying, 'In the mount of the Lord it shall be provided.' If faith dwells there, its surrenders will be richly rewarded. How much more dear was Isaac to Abraham as they journeyed back to Beersheba! And whatever we lay on God's altar comes back a 'hundred-fold more in this life,' and brings in the world to come, life everlasting.

Many times you have read in the Bible, sing a New Song to the Lord, but you have not composed even a line of song to show your gratitude to the God of Heaven and Earth. Many of us could not sing a new song because we do not see meaning in what we are going through or think we do not deserve all what is happening around us. Your problem is an opportunity to surname God. You are not dying in that your situation, God has a better purpose and plan for you. The situation you are in is not your end, there is a new you, a better you that God is working on. Many songs will sing today like the evergreen songs did not just come because the composer wanted to sing for commercial purposes, it came out of inspiration from situation around them. Many of us have lost opportunity to sing a new song to the Lord, instead we sing songs of complains, anxieties and worries. Repent! Be assured that God will surely supply your needs because there is still window in heaven. He is the Jehovah the provider, and if you cannot see His provision, go to His mountain, because on the Mount of the Lord, it shall be seen or provided.

You must call to mind the power, faithfulness, promises and the words of God during your waiting period and must think about how to turn your unpleasant circumstances to your own opportunity. There are great advantages in adversity. For his anger endureth but a moment; in his

favour is life: weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning - Psalm 30:5.

MIND THIS: Whatever we lay on God's altar comes back a 'hundred-fold more in this life,' and brings in the world to come, life everlasting.

WORD AFFIRMATION: Some trust in chariots, and some in horses: but we will remember the name of the Lord our God. They are brought down and fallen: but we are risen, and stand upright - Psalm 20:7-8 (Don't just say it, mean it).

Empowered Mission for Christ Commission (EMCC)

DAY 88: 18 KEY LESSONS OF GENESIS 22 (10)
TEXT: GENESIS 22:1-19

Lesson 15: The Second Call (Gen 22:15): And the angel of the LORD called unto Abraham out of heaven the second time. Abraham was rewarded by being made a faint adumbration, for all time, of the yet more wondrous and awful love of the divine Father, who, for our sakes, has surrendered His only-begotten Son, whom He loved. Paul quotes the very words of this Day when he says: 'He that *spared* not His *own Son*, but delivered Him up for us all.' Such thoughts carry us into dim regions, in which, perhaps, silence is best. Did some shadow of loss and pain pass over the divine all-sufficiency and joy, when He sent His Son? Was the unresisting innocence of the son a far-off likeness of the willing eagerness of the sinless Sufferer who chose to die? Was the resolved surrender of the father a faint prelude of the deep divine love which gave His only Son for us? Shall we not say, 'Now I know that Thou lovest me, because Thou hast not withheld Thy Son, Thine only Son, from me'? Shall we not recognise this as the crown of Abraham's reward, that his act of surrender of his dearest to God, his Friend, has been glorified by being made the mirror of God's unspeakable gift of His Son to us, His enemies?

God is ever-present in all our situations and sees all we might be going through. A word of reassurance always echo and re-echo in our ears if we patiently listen. "I will never leave you nor forsaken you" is a promise that we can go to bank with. So far it is God; He will definitely come and call. He visited Zechariah and Mary, He will surely visit you. Remember, God did not call unto Abraham when he and Isaac were climbing the mountain. He did not call him when he was preparing the altar and binding Isaac, he only called unto him when Abraham's obedience was complete. Let patience finishes it works in your life and make you perfect – James 1:2-4. If you want to hear from God again and again, obey the last command.

MIND THIS: God did not call unto Abraham when he and Isaac were climbing the mountain. He did not call him when he was preparing the altar and binding Isaac, he only called unto him when Abraham's obedience was complete.

WORD AFFIRMATION: For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith - 1 John 5:4 (Don't just say it, mean it).

Empowered Mission for Christ Commission (EMCC)

DAY 89: 18 KEY LESSONS OF GENESIS 22 (11)
TEXT: GENESIS 22:1-19

Lesson 16: A New Covenant is established (Genesis 22:16): Abraham's obedience was graciously accepted; but this was not all: here we have it rewarded, abundantly recompensed, before he stirred from the place; probably while the ram he had sacrificed was yet burning God sent him this gracious message, renewed and ratified his covenant with him. All covenants were made by sacrifice, so was this by the typical sacrifices of Isaac and the ram. Very high expressions of God's favour to Abraham are employed in this confirmation of the covenant with him, expressions exceeding any he had yet been blessed with.

Note, Extraordinary services shall be crowned with extraordinary honours and comforts; and favours in the promise, though not yet performed, ought to be accounted real and valuable recompenses. Observe,

1. God is pleased to make mention of Abraham's obedience as the consideration of the covenant; and he speaks of it with an encomium: Because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son, Genesis 22:16. He lays a strong emphasis on this, and (Genesis 22:18) praises it as an act of obedience: in it thou hast obeyed my voice, and to obey is better than sacrifice. Not that this was a proportionable consideration, but God graciously put this honour upon that by which Abraham had honoured him.

2. God now confirmed the promise with an oath. It was said and sealed before; but now it is sworn: By myself have I sworn; for he could swear by no greater, Hebrews 6:13. Thus he interposed himself by an oath, as the apostle expresses it, Hebrews 6:17. He did (to speak with reverence) even pawn his own life and being upon it (As I live), that by all those immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, he and his might have strong consolation. Note, if we exercise faith, God will encourage it. Improve the promises, and God will ratify them.

Finally, upon the Cross of Calvary, Jesus Christ made a New Covenant with us by his death; this was the only Sacrifice acceptable by God till eternity.

He is the Lamb that took away the sins of the whole world (Hebrews 8:7-8, 13). And for this cause he is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions [that were] under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance (Hebrews 9:15, Luke 22:20, 1 Corinthians 11:25, Romans 7:6, Romans 6:14).

MIND THIS: If we exercise faith, God will encourage it. Improve the promises, and God will ratify them.

WORD AFFIRMATION: O my God, I trust in thee: let me not be ashamed, let not mine enemies triumph over me - Psalm 25:2 (Don't just say it, mean it).

Empowered Mission for Christ Commission (EMCC)

DAY 90: 18 KEY LESSONS OF GENESIS 22 (12)
TEXT: GENESIS 22:1-19

Lesson 17: Abraham became a blessing (Gen 22:17): Abraham was blessed in cattle, in silver and gold but all of these does not make one a blessing, for one can possess all the good things of life and never affect a soul or make an impact. In God's standard, what Abraham was blessed with if weighed in God's balance before this encounter would not amount to anything. Abraham was blessed with so many things, but he became a blessing via total obedience to God, was made a reference point and whatever heavenly blessing is all about. If you do not know the definition of blessing, remember Abraham. In blessing, I will bless you.

Being blessed is different from being prayed for, some of us had been prayed for by our parents but we are yet to receive their blessings. A person prayed for may not feel the prayers, but it is impossible for the one blessed and the person that pronounced the blessing not to know that virtue came out of the latter to the former. A practical example is, blessing from a parent which does not just come like that, it is not often, it always come when one do something significant to one's parent(s). It is a blessing that come from one's soul, it is like a bewitchment, a kind of positive spell that cannot be reversed (Genesis 27:25, 27-29). It is not ordinary. It is a potent force in breaking barriers and fulfilling one's destiny.

Esau understood this kind of blessing, when he asked his father to bless him after his brother Jacob had deceived Isaac and collected his blessing, Isaac told him I have blessed him, no more reserve and it cannot be reversed (Genesis 27:33-34,36). This type of blessing does not just come by words of mouth, but by oath, by one's entire life; God sworn by Himself to bless Abraham and making him a blessing on the account of the sacrifice. Also, Isaac blessed Jacob on the account that he provided his desired meal. Are you looking for a blessing from God or you want to become a blessing through God, what have you laid on His altar. It can't just happen.

Today, God is not looking for any other sacrifice, what He required in making us a blessing is to just preach His crucified Son to every nook and

cranny, to preach the gospel and evangelize the whole world. By evangelism, in reaching out to others you can become a blessing. It is a blessing for you to be saved, then become a blessing to others by sharing your salvation and gracious gift of God (Proverbs 11:30, Matthew 13:23).

As believers, we receive a renewed blessing. Jesus Christ became poor for us to be rich. He finished the work on the Cross of Calvary, for you to no longer suffer, be blessed and be a blessing. He said, "Blessed art thou" (Matthew 16:17a, Luke 1:28). I so, believe. Maranatha!

MIND THIS: If you do not know the definition of blessing, remember Abraham. In blessing, I will bless you.

WORD AFFIRMATION: And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness - 2 Corinthians 12:9 (Don't just say it, mean it).

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