

- JANURAY 2024 -

COMPASS

— DAILY DEVOTIONAL —



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Temiloluwa Ola

Practical thoughts for a productive day

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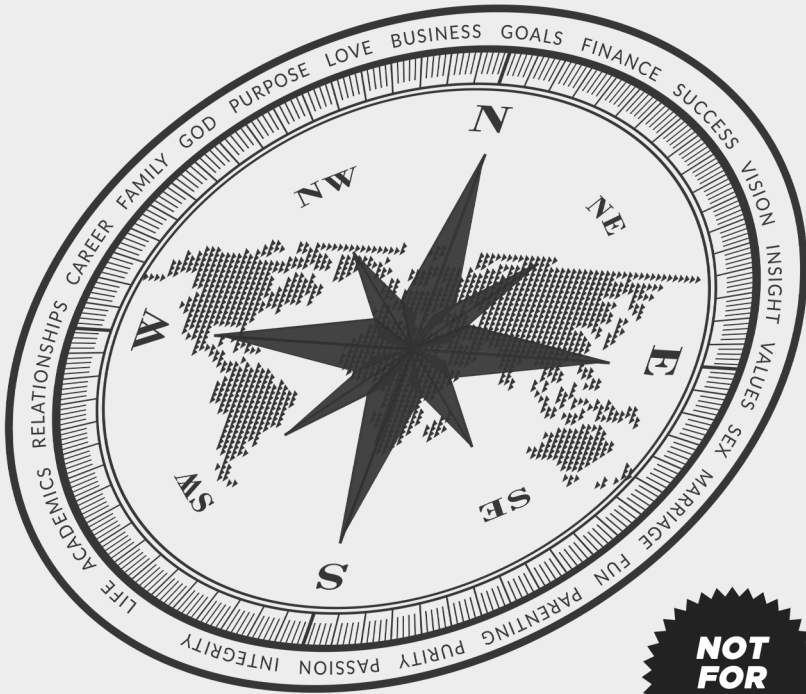
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Practical thoughts for a productive day

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Introduction

Every day has a lesson hidden in it. We can only draw it out if we are patient enough to look closely! Our pains can become a point of thanksgiving. Our smiles can become another's push for another mile.

What do you gain reading this devotional? There should at least be a practical thought that can make your day productive.

The story should lift your spirit. The letters should come to life. You can spot where you are in the middle of a simple story. But more, you can spot who you will be at the end of a thought.

I simply want to be a part of your story-
See you smile when you would normally frown;
See you grow instead of standing on a spot;

See you choose what is right without a fear of what might go wrong;
See you pursue life with a cause just like Christ who died on the Cross;

See you read up God's love letter to you as you beam with smiles each day;
See you love your dear ones and dare your limitations and obstacles;

See you run this race to end while taking each day with grace;
See you when time ceases to count and give you a high five that we finished the race with Joy!

I write because I love God and I love you.

Do not forget! The Compass Devotional is not a substitute to your Bible Study. It is only a complement of it.

The Lord bless you and multiply you all around.

Feedback

God bless the day(March 10th 2023) I stumbled on your tweet on - "THOSE YOU DROP THE STANDARD FOR". Thank You Sir for giving out value for FREE. I was so blessed that I quickly followed, screenshotted the tweets and clicked the link to join the WhatsApp group.

When I noticed you drop the daily devotional, I was so happy that I began sharing on my status, and to my siblings group.

People would read and enter my DM, thanking me for posting, sharing lessons gleaned and how blessed they are.

Even my class representative, when I was in school, had to add me to his group and asked that I share the daily devotional with them. God is using you Sir to bless lives. Keep up the good work.

How you begin each devotional with captivating stories with spiritual instructions, especially the ones about you and your Beloved "Irewamiri" - I love Godly marriages and homes. God Bless you, Sir. When I saw the link to download COMPASS, my joy knew no bounds. Every morning, I look forward to what God has to say to me through you. Keeps me wondering how Lawyers become great Ministers of God. Thank you for answering and honouring the CALL OF GOD on your life.

More Grace, fresh anointing and fresh fire upon you Sir! God bless you for me.

- CHISOMAGA, ABUJA

I look forward to the devotional every morning because each message has been refreshing and instructive. The first time I shared it on my WhatsApp status, someone pleaded that I keep sharing it. Just last week, someone else chatted me up and told me the devotional I share has been a great blessing to her. Well done, sir. The Lord bless you and the ministry. His grace abounds towards you. You will not run dry. I pray Kingdom financiers (including me) arise to support this.

- JUSTINA OYEDEJI, ILE-IFE, OSUN STATE

To the glory of God, the devotional is relatable and very practical. It has really kept me in check. Especially the one entitled " Why do you have to check it? It's a blessing.

TGod bless you, Pastor.

- MICHAEL, GHANA

Thank you so much sir for what God has blessed us with through you. It has been an amazing journey. I started reading from someone's status, got your link, and started posting on my status as well for others to see I posted late one day and someone noticed.

It's been a good journey for me, with so much wisdom and depth. God bless you, sir! They come with relatable stories and lessons from each day. I can't get enough of them. God bless and increase you, sir!

- TOLULOPE, IBADAN

I usually read the devotional on my friend's WhatsApp status, and then as I was reading one day, I saw a link to join the WhatsApp group on the flier. I have been so blessed by the devotional and nuggets too. One of your posts came timely last week, I was in a very bad place and didn't know what to do, your write-up was the answer I needed. Thank you Pastor for writing these devotionals in a way that I could relate with. Thanks for the graphic titles and stories too. God bless and strengthen you sir. Thank you for yielding to God sir.

- ESTHER AMOS, ENUGU

I got to know you from Twitter just a few months ago. The devotionals on marriage have made me get a different perspective on marriage and my roles therein. Not yet married, but believing to be soon, and I'm going to be the best wife to my husband.

- DESIRE, UGANDA

I've been following you for a while now and your content captivated me. My walk with God improved when I started reading them. I always look forward to reading them as it has become part of my bible study. God has really really helped me and I'm blessed. A close friend of mine also testify to knowing you from his days in Eruwa(poly) and he testified that you are a child of God and he also loves your content. I have been posting since day one and my contacts have been greatly blessed. God bless you, sir. More grace and unction to function in Jesus' mighty name. May you continue to be on fire for the Lord. May your marriage continue to be sweeter and sweeter in Jesus' name

- INIOLUWA, OGBOMOSHO, OYO STATE

Feedback

After my morning prayers, this devotional is my next activity and I always share the image version of it on my WhatsApp status and it has been blessing lives.

One of the days, I just felt like not sharing it, after some hours that morning, some persons on my contact list messaged me asking for the devotional of the day. In their words, it has been blessing them too. I felt so fulfilled that day and I also shared the group link to some of them.

Most times the devotional speaks directly to what I am going through personally and as a family with my wife. Sometimes I and my wife always end up our morning conversations with the message of the day from ATOM devotional.

May God continue to bless and enrich you and your wife and also grant you all your heart desires for the family and your ministry in Jesus' Name, Amen.

- JEREMIAH UGWULEBO, PORTHARCOURT

Your messages have blessed me in no small way sir, I'm someone that has battled with unforgiveness/anger for a long time, although the Holy Spirit to a good extent, has curbed me and cut out the excesses over time. I read a particular devotional where you addressed unforgiveness, saying the devil always come around those who have his package. I made a resolution from that instant, and it has become my favorite daily quote - (offences will always come, but I choose not to be offended, I don't keep the package of the devil). Since then, I let go of hurt easily.

Not just the forgiveness aspect, I have gotten encouragement countless times from the devotional, that sometimes I just keep scrolling through to re-read them. I also post on my WhatsApp status some times, and I get amazing replies from my viewers.

Thank you so much sir. You're a blessing!

- REBECCA OSEYI, EDO STATE

I am Marie Laurel from cameroon. I love and appreciate the way God used you to speak especially to me everyday. It has been doing much good to me at all times and making my crooked really straight. More grace to you sir.

- MARIE LAUREL, CAMEROON

This devotional has really been a blessing. After my quiet time, the next thing I check out for on my phone, is the devotional. I have also been sharing and my sisters and a lot of my contact list are part of the devotional community.

Every devotional always comes with power and as though they are written to address every season in my walk with the Lord.

Thank you Pastor and Mummy for this impact. The Lord keep you and may His anointing over your life keep increasing. Amen!

- NANCY GABRIEL, NASARAWA

The content from the devotional goes beyond here, I share and post on my status as a way of spreading the gospel. I enjoy the relatable stories and it is very relevant to present days as well as historical and biblical, honestly holistic.

Thank you so much Sir

- OPE POPOOLA, UNITED KINGDOM

Thank you for the wonderful devotionals that you do send to us every morning. Sincerely speaking, each devotional relates to my life in one way, and I am happy because I get answers from the devotionals and also directions. I thank God for bringing you my way. And I pray that God will continue to anoint you and your oil shall never run dry. God bless you and the ministry tremendously, sir. Thank you very much.

- OLUWABUSOLAMI, LAGOS

Pastor Temiloluwa and everyone working with you, thank you for your consistency in delivering the word through this devotional. I came across your tweets and everytime I read, I would be encouraged. I am encouraged to also start sharing the image version of the devotionals with my contacts.

- DUDLEY CHIDZIVA, ZIMBABWE

This devotional has been a great blessing to me and those around me. It is like my daily manna. Thank you for yielding to God, thank you, sir; for sharing your life experiences and how you react to them by the help of the holy Spirit to instruct us. More of God's insight and grace.

- PATRICIA, ABUJA



LORD, I CAN NOT WEAR THIS SHIRT

Text: Proverbs 3:6 NLT

Seek his will in all you do, and he will show you which path to take.

The Lord had shown me that Irewamiri was going to be my wife. One evening, I wanted to visit after work hours. I went home first to at least have a bath and change my clothes. As I pulled a shirt out of the wardrobe, the Holy Spirit said to me, "Wear that shirt". My response was sharp, "Lord, I cannot".

I had to ask the Holy Spirit, "Who wears the shirt that has a brand of a previous relationship with a lady you are eyeing?" I eventually obeyed.

It was a great evening. But as I left her house, she spotted the name behind my shirt and asked, "Pastor, what is the meaning of the name behind your shirt?" I was almost like, "Holy Spirit, did you hear that?" I had to explain that it was a combination of the name of my ex and me.

She asked, "Ex! What happened?" I responded, "If you were the one that a young lawyer tells that he is abandoning his practice to come to serve the Lord in Eruwa, would it be that easy for you to follow him?"

She took a deep breath and said, "Eruwa is not that bad" and she added, "Pastor, I will be praying for her. She will come back". I smiled and drove off. I already knew why the Holy Spirit asked me to wear that vest. It was to show me Irewamiri's heart.

No matter how much vogue our generation brings into Christianity, one thing remains sure-God still speaks today and He is interested in ordering the steps of our lives and there are times it will be in the tiniest details.

Hear what the Psalmist said: The Lord directs the steps of the godly. He delights in every detail of their lives.

Psalms 37:23 NLT

Did you see "every detail"? God is interested in

your decisions. If you will permit Him and follow His prompt even when it seems senseless to you, you will be well guided.

You make decisions by looking at your experiences yesterday. God brings your future into your present to give you a healthy advantage in destiny by showing you adjustments to make.

Prophet Jeremiah said to us: I know, Lord, that our lives are not our own. We are not able to plan our own course. So correct me, Lord, but please be gentle.

Jeremiah 10:23-24a NLT

I know you are in the season of planning and projections. Take your map from what the Lord has said to you or revealed to you.

Is the Lord against you using your mind? No! Not at all. Our Father wants us to be able to make decisions according to His will, plan, and purpose for us.

Stop gambling your way into destiny. Let the Lord lead you. Let Him direct your steps. Take the coordinates from Him and get set for a flight in destiny.

CONFESSIO N

I submit to the leading of the Holy Spirit. I am not a gambler in destiny. My steps are ordered by the Lord.



DO THIS EVERY TIME YOU ARE ANGRY

Text: Ecclesiastes 7:9 NKJV

Do not hasten in your spirit to be angry, For anger rests in the bosom of fools.

We were in the middle of a conversation. Irewamiri said something that got me angry and I decided to hold my breath. She did not realise it though. I walked away from the place where we were having the conversation.

I paused and spoke these words to the Lord: “Lord, help me to choose the right response in the middle of all of this. Help me to show genuine love. Help my heart in Jesus’ name. Amen”. It seems a stone was rolled away. In a few minutes, I was back to my wife hugging and playing with her as we spoke. I told her what happened days later.

Anger is not the driver of your decisions. Do not let anger control you. Once you are disappointed in anything or anyone, anger wants to take over the wheels of your decisions, do not accept.

Paul told the Ephesians:
But don’t let the passion of your emotions lead you to sin! Don’t let anger control you or be fuel for revenge, not for even a day. Don’t give the slanderous accuser, the Devil, an opportunity to manipulate you!
Ephesians 4:26-27 TPT

Whenever anger is allowed to take the wheels, the consequences can be damning. Simeon and Levi had a problem with anger. At the end of the days of Jacob, hear what their father said to them:

Simeon and Levi are two of a kind, ready to fight at the drop of a hat. I don’t want anything to do with their vendettas, want no part in their bitter feuds; They kill men in fits of temper, slash oxen on a whim. A curse on their uncontrolled anger, on their indiscriminate wrath. I’ll throw them out with the trash; I’ll shred and scatter them like

confetti throughout Israel.
Genesis 49:5-7 MSG

One type of friend that you must avoid is the angry friend:

Sensible people are careful to stay out of trouble, but stupid people are careless and act too quickly. People with a hot temper do foolish things; wiser people remain calm.

Proverbs 14:16-17 GNT

There are marriages where anger took over the wheel, broke down communication and introduced what they named “Irreconcilable differences”.

Anger took over thriving partnerships in businesses and two people who needed each other to survive split ways and went into oblivion.

Anytime you see anger attempting to take the wheel of anything you are committed to, fight back with the Spirit of Grace and Supplication. Ask the Holy Spirit for help. He sure will help you.

Anger has no dominion over you. You have the right attitude in tough times.

In the name of Jesus, you recover every foothold that anger had given to the devil in your life and relationships.

CONFESSION

I am not given to anger. The Devil will not manipulate my heart. I have the right attitude at all times. I give the right responses at all times.



SOLUTIONS THAT LEAVE GREATER DAMAGES

Text: Proverbs 3:7NKJV

Do not be wise in your own eyes; Fear the LORD and depart from evil.

Once I concluded the tests, the Doctor said she wanted to see my glasses. I would not know what she looked for but they said to me with so much confidence, "You took these glasses from the roadside". I could not lie. She added, "Do you have frontal aches after a while wearing it?" I had to admit it was true.

Then she said, "If you had not come for a routine check here and you kept using it, it would have caused great damage to your eyes. It would work for you but there is an element that the roadside quack would never be able to give you because of the cost." My presumed solution to replace a broken pair of glasses was cheap and affordable but the consequences were quite grievous.

Do not fall into the trap of fast solutions that will cost you greater pain. Do not be in a hurry to solve a problem that you create a bigger problem. Some people were in a hurry to marry and the marriage is now as terrible as hell. They grabbed the solution that they found and now it is tearing them all apart.

There are times that God's answers to your prayers will look like roads you do not even want to take but it does not make it less than an answer from the Lord. The pit, Potiphar's house and the prison were bus stops on Joseph's path to the palace.

Beloved, do not sacrifice the ultimate on the altar of the immediate. Do not carry a miracle that leaves a scar. The devil's option may be fast but it will always be a case of "robbing Peter to pay Paul". If he is giving you a thing, watch out for what he has stolen from you. It can take years for anyone to understand it. The answers of God will not offend the ways of God. The ways of God will be consistent

with the Word of God. The Word of God will show forth in the fruit of the Spirit. If it does not show the fruit of the Spirit, you got it from the wrong tree.

Some situations are giving you a headache right now but you know it was caused by your haste and impatience.

What do you do now that the ache is persistent? Go to the right source. Go to the Lord. Return to the Word and the instructions from the Word. Check where you got it right and where you missed it.

This is the prophecy of Isaiah to you:

For thus says the Lord God, the Holy One of Israel: "In returning and rest you shall be saved; In quietness and confidence shall be your strength." (But you would not,) Isaiah 30:15 NKJV

Will you or will you not?

CONFESSION

I do not seek solutions in the wrong places. I patiently wait for God's intervention. I hold on to God's promises.

DAY 04

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOU ARE TIRED?

Text: Ephesians 5:14 AMP

For this reason, He says, "Awake, sleeper, And arise from the dead, And Christ will shine [as dawn] upon you and give you light."

A dear mother was recuperating. She needed to have some break from the routine of ministry. She went to stay in a new area. In about a month, she had started a children's Bible club- leading young ones to Christ! She was also already visiting villages in that area sharing the gospel of Christ. One question struck me- What do I do when I am tired?

One of the legitimate excuses we have for taking our hands off the plough of the gospel is tiredness. We wish to sleep and rest. There are times when some become cranky and display a bad attitude.

Was Jesus ever tired? Yes! What did he do when he was tired? Look at this account:

"Jacob's well was there; and Jesus, tired from the long walk, sat wearily beside the well about noontime." John 4:6 NLT

But right after this episode, he struck up a conversation with the Samaritan Woman. Tired Jesus transformed a life. His hunger and weariness disappeared. Even the disciples were shocked. Tired Jesus won an entire city.

Your tiredness is not an excuse for a bad attitude. Your tiredness is not an excuse for your laziness in kingdom assignments. That's the lie of the devil.

Kingdom assignments are our gym for the renewal of strength. Soul winners are always spiritually fit. Physical weariness is not an excuse for spiritual laziness.

Let the passion for the kingdom light up your spirit, fire up your soul and bring new spring into your steps. Do not just sit down and lounge. You can take a break from activities but you cannot take a break from being a kingdom ambassador.

Tiredness that stops you from studying and praying is an attack on your spiritual walk,

growth and impact. Deal with it!

When you are tired, let the things that fire you up be tied to the kingdom. Weariness disappears with the joy of soul-winning. Our excuse was the motivation of Jesus.

Lord, I quit excuses today!

Let what stirs you also touch my heart.

Give me an unquenchable flame for souls.

Use me in my weakness for kingdom profit.

Amen.

CONFESION

I am not slack in kingdom work. My heart is aflame for the kingdom mandate. I am not tired. I am refreshed and strengthened.

DAY 05

PREGNANCY WILL CHANGE YOUR TASTE

Text: Habakkuk 2:2 NKJV

Then the LORD answered me and said: "Write the vision And make it plain on tablets, That he may run who reads it."

When we step out of our house, we always see an array of snails at various points on the fence of the house and in other areas of the estate. Iremawiri began to keep some really big snails. She did so well that she inspired my parents to build a snailery in their compound.

Then she got pregnant and the unexpected began to manifest (smiles). She became nauseated at the sight of snails. Every single one she had raised had to be relocated. We were all surprised. What happened? Pregnancy shifted something in her. It affected her taste.

First, I desire to say a word of prayer for every family waiting on the Lord: The Lord that makes impossible situations become a testimony will visit you. You will carry your seeds. Medical complications will become miracles of divine intervention. You will laugh. You will celebrate.

Every time you are carrying a vision, something will shift on your inside. There is a state you must be in for the vision to be carried to term and delivered to your world. If you value the vision, you will not joke with the changes.

There will be two types of changes:

First, the recommended change. There will be recommended changes. This will come from those who are guiding you to stay in shape for the delivery of the vision. They will tell you what you need to eat, and things you should avoid.

In the same vein, you need to stop feeding on certain things and begin to feed well on other things to build a solid vision. I learned at age 80, Papa Kenneth E. Hagin was still studying the word for five hours a day. That is a huge sign of a man carrying a vision to teach the Word to his World.

His son said that there were times they would leave him at his study table in the morning and still find him there when they returned from school. And if they wake up at night, they

will likely find him studying.

Second, there will be demanded change. There will be changes that will not be recommended but the vision itself will demand.

For instance, if you are a minister of the gospel, especially called to raise a local church, you may initially be excited by invitations to one place or the other. But soon, you will realize that the work needs you more than you can imagine.

If at that point, you are tempted by the allure of honourariums and not the vision that is growing on your inside, you would have missed out on something very important. You will have a great itinerary but birth a weak vision. You cannot be a great pastor and a powerful itinerant preacher at the same time. The vision will demand you.

Whether it is recommended change or demanded change, the focus is safe delivery.

Let the one who carries the vision be very wise.

Do not eat everything.

Do not go everywhere.

My Grandpa in the Faith told me that if he will start ministry again, he would have three major priorities: "Build the people. Build the people. Build the people".

Does that not sound like, "Focus on the vision? Do not abandon the pregnancy. Do not jump around"?

Be blessed.

CONFESSION

My God-given vision will not die in my hands. I will not engage in what kills visions. I will deliver safely to my world.

CHURCH WILL BOOST YOUR CAREER

Text: Psalm 92:13 NKJV

Those who are planted in the house of the LORD Shall flourish in the courts of our God.

When he got into the church as a young chap, all he wanted to do was to join the choir. He went through training and expected that he would be posted to the choir. Well! After his first class in church, he was posted to the media department. He was shocked, but he began to serve faithfully.

He was groomed. His skill in graphics and other media-related things was honed. The seed of creativity rose to new levels. He designed every day and kept getting better. Every single job he had after his service year was all Media related:

- He did creative designs for a branding and marketing company.
- He did creative designs for Media houses.
- He worked as a Media Aide to a Top Government Functionary.
- He served as a Communication Manager for a Company.
- He built his own Media Agency.

Friends, if the devil succeeds in lying to you that the reason why you are not advancing in life is that you are committed to the church and the work of the Lord, he has shortchanged you.

I shake my head when I see students, businessmen or women, and those in careers who assume and believe that the church is a distraction- you have been successfully deceived by the devil. He has gotten you exactly where he wants you to be.

A father in the faith shared the story of a young lady who was brilliant but not committed to the church. The year she got committed to the church, she failed a course in medical school so she dropped in her commitment. The following year, she failed woefully again. So, they eventually had a conversation but she did not change.

Some years later, he read her obituary in the newspapers and was very sad because he knew by visions what the Lord wanted to

do with her life through career and ministry. It was too late. She died very young and not in active service to the Lord.

The church is the safest laboratory on earth. You are allowed to experiment and hone your skills while you are encouraged and not sacked.

If you put your career growth ahead of your spiritual growth, you have dug the grave of your spiritual walk with the Lord. The quality of your decision in life and career can never be better than the quality of your growth. The first quality decision you must make is to grow spiritually.

For Joseph, his walk with God was a plus in his career. For Daniel, his consecration was needed for his rise in Babylon. He escaped sack letters and rather got promoted. He gave solutions that many could not give. Hear his testimony:

There is a man in your kingdom (company) in whom is the Spirit of the Holy God. And in the days of your father, light and understanding and wisdom, like the wisdom of the gods, were found in him; and King Nebuchadnezzar your father—your father the king—made him chief (CEO)...Since an excellent spirit, knowledge, understanding, interpreting dreams, solving riddles, and explaining enigmas were found in this Daniel, whom the king named Belteshazzar, now let Daniel be called, and he will give the interpretation.”
Daniel 5:11 - 12 NKJV

What is your excuse?

CONFESSION

I give myself to training and growth in my church. I do not stand aloof and idle. God blesses the works of my hands.



BUILD VALUES BEFORE OPPORTUNITIES

Text: John 8:14 NIV

For those who are led by the Spirit of God are the children of God.

A dear brother who is also a minister of the gospel shared an experience that blessed my life:

He had to counsel a couple who had infidelity issues. They travelled to his base to see him. When the session was over, the husband brought out a seed. He wanted to give it to his pastor. The pastor refused the seed. He said to him, “I do not need the seed. What I desire is a changed life and a marriage that works”.

In my early days in ministry also, someone dear to me visited me. Some days later, he called that he agreed with his spouse that one of them would send their tithe to the ministry. I was already very excited. The next day as I prayed, God said I should reject the offer. Why? I was not their pastor and I had never pastored them before. If they want to sow any seed, it should not be their tithe. It was tough but I obeyed. I imagined what their tithe would do in a young ministry every month.

To drive it home, one day I was refuelling our generator. As I did, a fly was dancing all around me. Suddenly, it flew into the open tank. That was the end. The Holy Spirit said to me, “Temi, not all open doors are yours”.

Beloved, if you are always led by opportunities and not by values built on scriptures, you will soon run into grave

danger. Your life must be guided by scriptures and solid biblical values.

Why? It makes it easier to recognise opportunities that are not for you. It makes it easy to know whether the timing of a “seeming breakthrough” was right or wrong. It ensures that you do not end up collecting Naaman’s seed and eventually carrying his leprosy. It will keep you away from the mesmerizing look of Mrs Potiphar and the desire of men to make a King out of you when God had not ordained it to be so.

What you share as a breakthrough testimony, kindly ask yourself if indeed it is the Lord that opened that door. The devil can open a door to shut up a man forever! Was that door indeed the Lord?

CONFESSIO N

I am not led by open doors. I am led by the Spirit of God. I am not swayed by opportunities created by the Devil. I discern opportunities by the Spirit of God.

DAY 08

“DADDY, YOU TAUGHT US...”

Text: 2 Timothy 3:15 NKJV

And that from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.

Danielle walked into my room with an activity book in her hands. She said, “Daddy, I am sorry. I accidentally tore my book while I was drawing on it”. I told her, “Girl, that’s fine. Be careful next time”.

The next thing she said was what shook me to my bones, “Daddy, you taught us that when we do not cover our wrongs, we will enjoy mercy”. My sleepy eyes cleared. I smiled at my daughter and said, “That is true”. She smiled and walked out of the room.

Dear parents, you cannot use scriptures to correct a child you did not raise with scripture. That would be pure manipulation. There are parents who begin to quote scriptures to children that they never sat with to load with the Word of God. If you shirk your responsibility of loading them with the word, it would be manipulative to use it as a tool of correction.

Dear parents, statements like “Is that what you are taught in school?”, or “Is that what they teach you in church?” is a lazy cover for foundations you did not lay. The question should be, “Do you remember what we shared at devotion last week or yesterday?”

Please, if you do family devotions, you can tailor them to meet the spiritual needs of your children. You can have “adult devotion” sometime later. Remember, no one else will teach them. Take a verse of the scripture and keep expounding on it for a week. It helps. We were reviewing Luke 6:31 when my conversation with my

daughter happened.

Now to Daddy- What will your children say that you taught them? Do you know that you are already teaching them something by not teaching them? You are teaching them that fathering is only about going to work early, coming back late, eating dinner and talking about bills.

Dear Daddy, do not bribe your seeds with gifts to cover up for the guilt you feel about your shortcomings. Money is a waste to a generation that was not raised. Sit down with them so they can stand for God and you can smile at your outstanding children. Find 15 minutes in a day to teach them. Lay hands on them.

Hear the words of Proverbs:

My child, remember my teachings and instructions and obey them completely. They will help you live a long and prosperous life.
Proverbs 3:1-2 CEV

Daddy, what teachings will your seed remember? What instructions will be engraved on their heart? Will you do it or should TV, Social Media and Cartoons take your place?

CONFESSION

I invest God’s words into my children. The seed of godliness is planted into them. They shall carry on the heritage of righteousness.

DAY 09

HOW TO KILL A VISION BEFORE IT TAKES OFF

Text: Proverbs 11:14 NKJV

Where there is no counsel, the people fall; But in the multitude of counsellors there is safety.

As I sat with another young pastor, I asked him, “Kindly describe what you feel about ministry in one word”. He took a deep sigh and said, “Frustrating”. He had “invested” so much in buying expensive gadgets. His handbills are top-grade. They were lovely to behold but he did not ask himself whether it was sustainable and what was the real cost of what he was building.

Beloved, whenever you are starting on the journey of vision, there are very essential instructions that you must never joke with:

First, listen to your midwives. Midwives are those who have been where you are now but who are also standing where you desire to be. There is no pregnant woman who is in labour who despises the role of a midwife. Your midwife will give you life-birthing and life-saving instructions. Ask God to lead you to destiny midwives. They are key.

Second, you must ask yourself two simple questions:

Question 1: “Can I start it?”- You look at what you desire to buy or use to drive the vision. Appraise it by asking whether you can start it. If the answer is positive, then the next question is key.

Question 2: “Can I sustain it?” – There are things you can start that you will not be able to sustain in three months. Why? You will be back to square one. It is better to grow things organically. Do you know the taste of fruits that we’re forced to get ripe before their time? It looks like it but the

taste is not the same. Patience is a major factor in building a vision.

Third, do not load the vision with what it cannot bear. If you start by borrowing, you have started in a graveyard. It will take resurrection for the vision to live. The pressure that will be on you too will be needless and avoidable if you follow simple instructions and guidance.

When Pharaoh wanted to go after the Hebrew boys at birth, he consulted with the midwives. He knew that the growth of that vision was a major threat to his kingdom. This is a midwife’s counsel. That vision that the Lord has given you can live but you need to ensure you do not kill it with your own hands.

One of the prostitutes in Solomon’s day slept on her baby. She was in snooze mode and placed a weight on that seed that led to death by suffocation. Do not be careless with what God has blessed you with.

May the vision live.
Be blessed.

CONFESSIO N

I will not strangle God-given vision with my own hands. I enjoy the blessings of counsellors.

DAY 10

"I DON'T KNOW BUT JESUS KNOWS"

Text: 2 Timothy 1:12 NKJV.

... For I know whom I have believed and am persuaded that He is able to keep what I have committed to Him until that Day.

My Mum once shared a story: When I was still a toddler, my brother was pushing me around in a baby pram. An accident happened. The baby pram stumbled. I rolled out. I fell. I shrieked and went quiet.

She was in shock. She carried me to the bathroom and poured water on me. I jerked to life. She administered painkillers. I kept crying at intervals. It was the same all night. She carried me at night and kept singing, "I don't know but Jesus knows". It was then I slept off peacefully.

Are you going through a season where you lack explanations? It seems all human explanation has failed. I am sure men like Joseph and David were in such seasons several times.

Joseph must have looked at his dream and his reality; such a huge disconnect. David must have remembered the day that Samuel poured the oil and the night out in the cave running for his life; such a huge disconnect.

One of the seasons, when faith is tested, is on the days that you would have no idea of what to do humanly to change the narration. Friends, those are the days that teach us to trust.

Think of Abraham. He went without knowing: It was by faith that Abraham obeyed when God called him to leave home and go to another land that God would give him as his inheritance. He went without knowing where he was going. Hebrews 11:8 NLT

What did Abraham do during all those moments?

And being not weak in faith...He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God;

Romans 4:19-20 KJV

When you are in seasons or moments where what you say is "I don't know", do not stop giving glory to the One you know; God.

There is only one way to feed your faith when unbelief and doubts rage. There is only one way to strengthen your faith; keep giving glory to God.

When life beats you so hard, convert it to a seed of worship. Most of what is written in the Psalms today are words of David giving glory to God when "he did not know".

He wrote a Psalm when he was running for his life from his son, Absalom. How do you explain that your son wants you dead? He wrote a Psalm the day the Lord rescued him from Saul. He wrote a Psalm the day he had to pretend to be a madman, drooling all over in front of Abimelech. Have you been in such situations?

Beloved, if you know how to convert your storms into songs, the wind will not last. If you can look barren situations in the face with singing and dancing, you will force them to produce fruitfulness.

The devil hates people who sing in the midst of their mess. He knows when God is exalted, hell loses its grip on any man. Why? Heaven is too high for hell to reach. Change the narrative.

CONFESSION

I convert my storms into songs. My victory will emerge from my praises.

DAY 11

YOU LOVE IT BUT IS THAT EXACTLY WHAT IS INSTRUCTED?

Text: Exodus 25:40 NLT

Be sure that you make everything according to the pattern I have shown you here on the mountain.

I rewamiri was working in the kitchen. I stepped in and found a small pot on the fire. The heat already dried the pot. I assumed she wanted to boil something. Since I was about to carry a kettle of hot water, it struck me that I could pour some into the pot. I only wanted to be of help.

But it occurred to me to ask her if I should pour some water into the small pot. She responded in the negative. She said it was oil she wanted to pour inside. I would have thought I was helping her until I actually asked her.

In your walk with God especially if you are called, you must confirm if you are just doing what you love or if you are doing what has been instructed. Acting in love without confirming instructions can result in undesired outcomes.

Moses at age 40 would love to save the Israelites from the bondage of Egypt and he kept at it with youthful zeal. In divine direction, it is not just about being driven by needs you see, it is about being instructed to do it.

David was not comfortable that the ark of God was sitting in a tent. He expressed a desire to build a temple. He even told the prophet of the Lord who commended the move. If he had built it, he would have been celebrated. But God sent the prophet Nathan back to him that it was the next king, his son, who would build the temple. God appreciated the intention and blessed it but he halted the execution.

There are times when doing things out of sincere concern can be disastrous. Uzzah supported the stumbling ark and he did not live to tell the story.

God told a minister of the gospel to stop giving a particular minister seed support. He was surprised and asked the Lord why. God told him that he was sponsoring the minister's disobedience and every time that seed comes, the minister sees it as though God is with him and as a confirmation.

A father in the faith was already ordained to start work in a particular city. When he went to give thanks to God after his ordination in preparation to go to the city. God asked him, "When did I tell you about this city?" He was surprised he could not trace it. God told him that years back as a young man, he had built a desire to live in that city. It was not as God instructed.

In this kingdom, we soar and fly by instructions. We stay connected to God's watch tower. Do not take off without clearance. Passion is not enough. Love is not enough. Instructions are essential.

Have you been instructed to do it? Do not wait for the donkey to speak. Obey God now.

CONFESSIO N

I do not walk with God by assumptions. I walk with God by instructions.

DAY 12

PHOTOGRAPHERS AND PARTY PICTURES

Text: Zechariah 4:6 NKJV

This is the word of the LORD to Zerubbabel: 'Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit,' Says the LORD of hosts.

There are many times that I have attended functions and I had to tell commercial photographers not to bother taking pictures. Despite all the caution, there will still be some who took my pictures without asking. They begin to look for me after the event to collect and pay for pictures that I did not give my nod to. Sometimes, I end up paying out of pity, but sometimes I insist that I did not request their services.

Beloved, God is only committed to what he has commissioned.

"And I am certain that God, who began the good work within you, will continue his work until it is finally finished on the day when Christ Jesus returns". Philipians 1:6 NLT

Can you imagine getting to your building site and meeting a ton of cement? Then a man approaches you while you are thanking God for the miracle saying, "I saw you are building here so I brought you to cement for today's work. Can I get my money?" You will ask him who commissioned him.

Beloved, when Adonijah wanted to make himself King, he had to do everything by himself.

About that time David's son Adonijah, whose mother was Haggith, began boasting, "I will make myself king." So he provided himself with chariots and charioteers and recruited fifty men to run in front of him. 1 Kings 1:5 NLT

If you begin it with effort, you will sustain it with effort. If you begin it because it is commanded, you can ask for help from the

commissioning officer.

A bricklayer may be concerned that there is no more material on site but the headache of how the material is gotten is that of the owner.

On the contrary, when Solomon was selected by King David as his successor, they got things ready for him.

"So Zadok the priest, Nathan the prophet, Benaiah son of Jehoiada, and the king's bodyguard took Solomon down to Gihon Spring, with Solomon riding on King David's own mule."

1 Kings 1:38 NLT

Finally, did you notice that Adonijah got himself Chariots, Charioteers and 50 men but Solomon rode on King David's mule?

Listen, one mule with the seal of the King means more than hired chariots. The chariots will look more glamorous and if you are not careful, you can fall for its glamour without realising that it does not have the glory of the King in it.

CONFESSION

I will patiently wait for what You alone can bring even if it is a mule. I refuse to package chariots that do not have your approval.



WEIGHTY QUESTIONS – “What are you doing here?”

Text: Isaiah 40:31 NIV

Even youths grow tired and weary, and young men stumble and fall.

I came out one morning and I saw some of my sons and daughters waiting for me right at my door. The first question I asked was “What are you doing here?” Why did I ask that? I did not expect to see them that day at all. They came to pull a surprise on me.

You can surprise a man but you cannot surprise God.

When God asks the question “What are you doing here?”, it means a lot; God wants to either define the purpose of a season to you or God wants you to see that you are in the wrong place physically or spiritually.

When God asked Elijah that question, it must have been referring not just to a physical location; because it seems Elijah already is familiar with that location. He must have been there a couple of times before. At least, he was not just wandering around. He went to the mountain.

So when God asked Elijah “Where are you?”, it must have been about the state of his mind. Elijah was definitely burnt out. He had all the signs of a minister or believer who was burnt out with the volume of work that had been done.

First, the same gods he shamed on Mount Carmel were used to threaten him and he could not read between the lines.

Second, he was so tired that he kept sleeping even when an angel woke him up. If you have ever lost appetite for everything except sleep, you will understand this

perfectly.

Third, his words showed depression. He was speaking down on himself and talking about dying.

Beloved, when what you would normally handle becomes a heavy task, or you see that sleep becomes a desire over work or the worst of them, you speak condescendingly and depressingly about your call, career, marriage or yourself, you need to answer that question of “What are you doing here?”

Find out how you got there before you make permanent damaging decisions. Once Elijah said he was tired, God requested that he should go ahead to anoint his successor. He signed his resignation letter that day.

However, the most important thing is ensuring that you are not in a state of burnout at any time. Do not burn out. Anytime that question of “What are you doing here?” is asked, make sure you have an answer of hope and strength leaping out of your mouth.

CONFESSIO N

My response revives hope in me. I am not crushed by situations. I arise with vigour and the strength of the Lord.

DAY 14

MEN'S PROMISE OR GOD'S WORD- BE SURE!

Text: Jeremiah 17:7 NLT

But blessed are those who trust in the LORD and have made the LORD their hope and confidence.

I began to have a ministry itinerary in my third year at the University. A dear one was so excited about how the Lord used my friends and me in a teenagers' camp meeting. He said to me, "When next you have such a trip, please let me know. I will foot the bill for transportation".

I was very excited. We used to charter cabs. It was always a great outing, but demanding for our youthful pockets. I was really grateful. Some weeks afterwards, I called this beloved one to inform him about our next trip to the same place he mentioned. His tone on the phone was dismissive. It was so cold that I was wondering if it was the same person who made a promise with so much excitement.

One of the things you must learn as a believer but much more if you are called into the ministry is total dependence on God. You must learn how to trust the Lord with all your heart. It is a major curriculum that you must master.

At times, the support system you built for self-sustenance will collapse before you. No one and nothing else must be able to take glory for what the Lord is doing. It is wisdom to build systems and support but if your trust is in them, you will be shocked the day the system collapses.

There was a day I was thinking of some financial obligations in ministry and I mentally noted that some funds would come in at a particular season and just carried on. The Lord said to me, "So you believe in your structures and systems now". I repented. I worshipped. I danced before him. That

month, the whole system collapsed but God supplied more than enough to meet the need before it became a burden.

Beloved, where is your trust? In men! Is it your job security? Is it your business investments? Is it your family inheritance? Where is your trust?

The crutches you are leaning on will be taken away. You will learn to lean on the guidance of God.

Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; And lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, And he shall direct thy paths. Proverbs 3:5-6 KJV

Jesus told them when he sent them out: Don't take any money with you, nor a traveller's bag, nor an extra pair of sandals. And don't stop to greet anyone on the road. Luke 10:4 NLT

People know when your greeting has become a sign of begging. You know the way you announce to Uncles and Aunts you will be travelling in some days as a gentle reminder of your financial needs. You cannot do that when you trust God.

Trust God. Build Systems but do not lean on them.

May you enjoy divine help.

CONFESSION

I learn to trust the words of God. I do not put my trust in men. I dwell safely as I hear God's instructions.

DAY 15

SHOW ME YOUR NOTES

Text: Habakkuk 2:2 NKJV

Then the LORD answered me and said: "Write the vision And make it plain on tablets, That he may run who reads it."

We were on break for some weeks; in my university days. One evening, Mum requested that I drive her to church for a sisters' meeting. While they were in the meeting, I sat in our Nissan Primera station wagon underneath some cashew trees. I honestly was not really praying but I sensed the presence of the Lord.

That April evening in 2007, I picked up my pen and my journal because the Lord began to speak to me. He told me eight things about my life. It began with a revelation about the call. The fourth one was a warning and the last one was a call for a consecration.

Everything I am doing today is tied to that evening of driving my mum and taking notes of what the Lord said. I always set aside that day in thanksgiving and adoration to the Lord every year. I still have the original copy of the note.

One of the disciplines of a man that the Lord will use is journaling. You must have the discipline of taking note of what the Lord has said and the instructions he has given you.

The simplest way to begin is note-taking while you study the Word of God. That Bible is your own. Write on it. Make it "your Bible". Note dates that a scripture hit your heart. Note times that light came through a verse. Meditate on it. In our digital days, keep digital notes. Some of us are still hard copy lovers. Make sure you take notes.

The second way is taking sermon notes in church. I have notes from 2006 till date. One of the proofs that you are serious with your life and destiny is how seriously you take keeping a record of teachings. Invest in good hardcover notes. Stop using "Kola hooks Lola" or "Adieu Mama" or "Graduation or Convocation" spiral bound notes that you can easily tear from to keep shopping lists. Keep journals that you can cherish.

Do you realize that we have the Bible because some people did not joke about journaling their

encounters and experiences with the Lord? Pastor E.A. Adeboye has a section on their campground called Open Heavens. We visited once, and we were shown copies of his sermon notes from years back. They were kept and preserved. Bishop Oyedepo brought out a deck of notes at a ministers' conference to challenge our generation. Bishop Wale Oke is always with amazing journals and dates. His shelf has well-arranged sermon notes. You are a minister but you have pieces of paper you preach from. Some are now stained with palm oil. You need to be serious.

God is a generational God. He will not use a man who is not thinking generationally. It is a waste of kingdom investment. Moses went to his presence and returned with words on a tablet. The Angel told John the Beloved to Write. Daniel became restless in Babylon because he read what Jeremiah wrote. Jesus located and declared his assignment from the book of Isaiah. If your note-taking discipline is to become a blessing to a generation a thousand years from now, can the Lord trust you?

Follow the counsel of the Lord to Habakkuk. Write. Make it plain. Some people will read it soon and run with it. Be serious about taking notes in personal studies and meetings you are a part of. Revisit your notes and be stirred again.

Show me your note and will tell you how serious you are!

CONFESSIO N

I seriously handle what God says concerning my life. I pay attention to the details of God's instructions for my life.

DAY 16

THE TESTS WE MUST PASS

Text: Job 23:10 NIV

But he knows the way that I take; when he has tested me, I will come forth as gold.

The day I got a call from the first person who began to partner with us in ministry, I knew it came because I had passed a test. A day earlier, I had no personal cash on me and I needed to make a call for a friend. I could not afford to send a text.

Interestingly, there was some money in the ministry office. My heart went to it but I remembered that it was church offering. I could not take a hundred naira to buy airtime. My friend was a bit angry because I could not make that call.

Words like, “Are you saying you do not have a hundred naira to make a call? Why are you being over spiritual? You can take from the money you have in the office to use”. I could not. Years later, when it dawned on me that it was a test, I asked myself why it never occurred to my friend who needed my help to send me the hundred naira airtime to make the call.

Beloved, behind every test, is a divine promotion. Genesis 22 began with these words:

After all this, God tested Abraham. Genesis 22:1 MSG

God tests our hearts before he commits greater things into our hands. Jesus told us some of the areas of concentration of divine test:

“If you are faithful in little things, you will be faithful in large ones. But if you are dishonest in little things, you won't be honest with greater responsibilities. And if you are untrustworthy about worldly wealth, who will trust you with the true riches of heaven? And if you are not faithful with other people's things, why should you be trusted with things of your own? Luke 16:10-12 NLT

Your test will cover Little Things. If you pass, you can then be allowed to manage greater

things. If you are dishonest with little things, you will be dishonest with greater responsibilities.

Your test will cover Worldly Wealth. If your heart is tied to material things it becomes hard for you to trust God, you can not be trusted with kingdom resources. Why? You already have an idol that you are worshipping. Whatever God cannot ask for is an idol.

Your test will cover faithfulness with other people's things. If you treat other people's properties anyhow without a sense of faithfulness, no one will commit your own to your care.

If you are a minister of the gospel, church money is not your money. Church property is not your own. Draw a line between the two. Even if they call it “Pastor Temi's church” for the purpose of description, do not let it get into your head. The church belongs to Christ.

Do not abuse properties. Do not abuse the men, women, gold, girls and guys of Zion. Treat divine things with reverence. Even if the offering is a hundred naira, it is the Lord's offering. Do not treat it anyhow. It is your test. When the church has five members, do not treat them anyhow. Lead them with faithfulness. Disciple them gracefully. It is your test.

What rewards are you losing because of the tests you are failing?

May the Lord help us all.

CONFESSION

I will not fail in the days of my tests. I have the wisdom of the Holy Ghost and directions by the Spirit in times of trials.



WHY YOU STILL STRUGGLE WITH UNGODLINESS

Text: Galatians 5:16 NIV

So I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh.

A dear teacher shared how he got victory over masturbation and pornography as a young convert. He was a believer but still struggled with sin.

Then one day, he saw what the Word of the Lord said:

“For the grace of God has appeared that offers salvation to all people. It teaches us to say “No” to ungodliness and worldly passions and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age” Titus 2:11-12 NIV

The Word “Say NO” jumped out at him. From then whenever he felt the urge to sin no matter where he was, he would not think it in his mind, he would speak out and say “No”. Sometimes his friends would ask him what the matter was, he would smile and say, “I am settling a spiritual matter”.

Friends, every time you are tempted to sin and suggestions begin to come, simply know that there is a foul spirit hanging in the atmosphere.

Remember, the devil is not omniscient so he does not know what you are thinking. So, go beyond thinking to talking. Do not think back at the devil’s schemes and suggestions- talk back. Say No!

That’s what Paul told Titus, “Say No to Ungodliness”. You don’t battle thoughts with thoughts. You respond with words.

When next you face a temptation, do not do it with an open mind and a shut mouth. Close your mind to the thoughts of the devil and open your mouth and release the sword of the spirit that demoralises hell!

You are not a victim.

You are a victor.

CONFESS I O N

My body is the temple of God. I overcome temptations to sin always. I rest on the strength of the Holy Ghost.

DAY 18

IF GOD CAN HAVE YOUR LIFE...

Text: 2 Corinthians 24:24 NIV

But the king replied to Araunah, "No, I insist on paying you for it. I will not sacrifice to the LORD my God burnt offerings that cost me nothing." So David bought the threshing floor and the oxen and paid fifty shekels of silver for them.

Irewamiri and I had to make a very wise decision early in courtship; we were going to save as much as we could towards our wedding and our marriage. What led to that decision? She had just finished serving the nation and all I had guaranteed every month as a Pastor was five thousand naira! We knew we had to be smart.

Every single dime any of us had was thrown into a savings account. One evening as I was praying, the Lord asked if we could give the savings as a seed. It was tough.

I called Irewamiri and informed her. She said, "Ah! Is it everything?" But then she added a very profound statement that made me love her even more, "If God can have our lives, why can He not have our money". That was how we gave it all to God. We must say that God showed up for us before and during the wedding and He still shows up to date.

Is there anything in your life and your hands that God cannot point to? Is there anything that you hold so dear that would be very hard to give to the Lord? That has become an idol in your life.

Your condition must never hold you back from giving to the Lord. Paul wrote about the Macedonian church and used their act to challenge the Corinthians. He said:

Now, friends, I want to report on the surprising and generous ways in which God is working in the churches in Macedonia province. Fierce troubles came down on the people of those churches, pushing them to the very limit. The trial exposed their true colours: They were incredibly happy, though desperately poor. The pressure triggered something totally unexpected: an outpouring of pure and generous gifts. I was there and saw it for myself. They gave offerings of whatever they could—far more than they could afford!—pleading for the privilege of helping out in the relief of poor Christians.

2 Corinthians 8:1-4 MSG

If giving is hard for you as a child of God, then you have not mastered nor learnt the importance of giving yourself first to God. If you have given yourself to God, it will be easy to give as instructed or commanded by the Lord.

And they exceeded our expectations: They gave themselves first of all to the Lord, and then by the will of God also to us. 2 Corinthians 8:5 NIV

No maturity in the Christian faith will escape the curriculum of giving. Abraham had to pass the divine test of giving Isaac. Why? Isaac was not just an answer to prayers, he was a test for divine promotion and fulfilment of prophecies.

If we fail our tests, we must not expect to be promoted. Behind every test is a promotion.

What tests have you been failing?

What idol are you holding dearly unto?

What can God not point to now?

Deal with it!

And if God has blessed you with a spouse who understands the spiritual principle and protocol of obedience to the Lord in all things, you must rejoice because you are blessed.

CONFESSIO

I do not withhold in giving to the Lord. I am a sacrificial giver. I am a blessing to the work of the Lord.

DAY 19

YOU CANNOT DO LIFE ALONE!

Text: Psalm 68:6NLT

God places the lonely in families; he sets the prisoners free and gives them joy...

I was surprised when I saw that Olive was carried instead of her walking. Looking closely, she had slept off in class. When we got home, she was still sleepy. She attempted to walk but did not find her steps. The most interesting of things then happened:

Danielle turned her back towards her and asked her sister to climb on it. I watched the two and laughed. She carried her right from the front when that attempt was not working. Yes, she did! It was some weight, but she helped her to the house's frontage. Olive was smiling. Danielle felt the weight but was delighted to play the big sister role.

This happens in a biological family but paints a great picture of a spiritual family. You miss a lot when you take your spiritual family (your local church) for granted. You are blessed with people who genuinely care about you.

If you give those who genuinely love you a chance, they are willing to be there for you through different seasons. In this family, we do not turn our back on one another in anger or offence; we lay down our backs to bear each other's burdens. We are willing to bear the pain of the weary.

I remember at a point when we got a call that a young girl was in labour. We had not seen her in months. She was not married as of the last time we knew. But we still rallied as a family around this beloved one. We had questions, but there was a life to rescue first. We even went the extra mile to ensure that she stayed comfortable. We surrounded her with love. We would not let the devil have a family member.

Do not be like Lot, who does not know the value of an Abraham:

– They are blinded to the value that family has brought to them spiritually.

– They do not see that God has blessed them with a relationship that shows how to multiply wealth.

– They do not see that God blessed them with a relationship that does not give up on them even when they make weird choices. Kindness flows instead of blame.

– They do not see the value in the relationship that stays on its knees, so they soared from the judgement of Sodom

Lots can be blind. Lots can be ungrateful. Lots will still return to Sodom after being rescued from it. They feel that Abraham is their problem.

You have left the church for long. You think the church is your problem. No sir. Your pride is your problem. If you allow God to show you how much value had flowed to you but are veiled to, you would not take a spiritual family for granted.

Who carried you in prayer when you were weak?

Who stands with you when you are down?

Who watches your back when arrows fly?

Who wakes you from slumber when you do not hear the alarm?

Who is there when you are taking a beating from life?

You cannot do life alone! You cannot!

CONFESSION

I am not a lone ranger in life. I enjoy the blessings of fellowship with the brethren. I am committed to my local church.

DAY 20

GROW UP BUT REMAIN GOD'S CHILD

Text: Matthew 19:14 NLT

But Jesus said, "Let the children come to me. Don't stop them! For the Kingdom of Heaven belongs to those who are like these children."

Danielle came into our room crying. We wondered what was wrong. She reported that Olive had kicked her in the back. While we were placating her, I asked what she wanted me to do to Olive. She said, "Beat her". I smiled.

It was not up to five minutes when Olive also appeared at our door. As she tried to close the door, she suddenly began to cry. The door had hit her finger. The tears flowed freely. It was angry Danielle who ran over to her sister first. She held her and began to check it up while she wiped her tears.

At that moment, the Spirit of the Lord reminded me of the words of Jesus Christ that a believer will enter the kingdom of God if they have a heart like that of a child.

"The truth is, you must accept God's kingdom like a little child accepts things, or you will never enter it." Luke 18:17 ERV

As you mature in Christ, there is a childlikeness that you must not lose. In forgiveness, remain a child. A child will still run back into the arms of the father even after the father has disciplined him.

Like a child, do not be worried about life. Children do not live in anxiety. Can you imagine your child waking up and looking worried about what everyone in the family will eat? That's amazing!

Like a child, build trust. You must have faith in God and what He can do. Have faith that His words will never fail. Have faith that He will do what he says he will do. Have faith enough to face another day.

It is rare for a child to contemplate suicide. Have child-like faith. Be so innocent that you do not have an idea of death crossing your mind when things seem hard.

Like a child, let your imagination be great things that stir joy and hope. It makes a lot of difference when you live in joy. You can be a father in your home, but you are still a child of God. You may be a parent with bills to pay, but you are still a child of God. You may be an entrepreneur with bills to settle, but you are still a child of God. You may be a couple waiting for the fruit of the womb, but remember you are also children of God.

This is where rest lies. Take a sound rest in the arms of God.

When offended, respond like a child. Do not let it stick. Be kind at the next opportunity you get.

Some marriages are crumbling because the children of God have forgotten how to be His children. Be God's child. Love like a child. Have faith in God like a child. Forgive like a child. Trust like a child.

Grow up but remain God's Child.

CONFESSION

I grow in faith. I grow to maturity in Christ. I do not permit offence in my heart.



THE VALUE OF CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP

Text: Acts 2:42 NKJV

And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers.

My daughter did not get to call me "Daddy" at first. There were times it sounded as though she was even calling me "Temi". I would say call me daddy but nothing happened.

We had cause to visit our friends in Lagos. She heard them call "Daddy". That was all the change we needed. Everything we were struggling to make her know was settled by fellowship.

You can not grow in isolation. The tree cannot grow without the ground. The branch cannot produce fruits without the tree. It would be impossible. We are wired for connection and not isolation. Anything that is isolated will soon lose life.

Listen! You are a part of the body of Christ. You are not the body of Christ. If you are a part, then you will love and function by connection and not isolation.

A young man walked into church a couple of times but I noticed he was not stable. I asked him what the matter was. He said that he attended different churches. I asked him a simple question: "If you plant a tree on ground A today and move it to Ground B next week and take it to Ground C the following week and return it to B again and back to A and sometimes to D because there is a special fertilized ground there and then back to A, what will happen to the tree?" The tree dies.

Some Christians are that tree. They have lost their identity. They are not pastored by anyone. They are not rooted anywhere that

is why rottenness is taking over gradually.

I know that it is for marriage that it was stated that "It is not good for a man to be alone" but you need to remember that the Church is also the bride of Christ, we cannot survive in isolation from Christ.

Focus on fellowship even when offence strikes. The trap of offence blocks you from the flow in Zion (the church). The predator is wired to go after an isolated target. He knows it is easier to defeat the one that has left the pack.

This is a scriptural charge:

not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching. Hebrews 10:25 NKJV

In the pack, you are protected. You are strengthened. You get refreshed. You are defended. You grow in strength. Do not let the enemy deceive you. Whatever deceives you will soon defeat you.

CONFESSION

I enjoy the blessings of fellowship. I enjoy the blessings of corporate grace.

DAY 22

HOW TO CULTIVATE SPIRITUAL APPETITE

Text: 1Peter 2:2 NLT

Like newborn babies, you must crave pure spiritual milk so that you will grow into a full experience of salvation. Cry out for this nourishment...

Like newborn babies, you must crave pure spiritual milk so that you will grow into a full experience of salvation. Cry out for this nourishment... 1Peter 2:2 NLT

The first thing Irewamiri said when I got in was, "Can you imagine what just happened?" I had travelled for about 48 hours. She was pregnant with Danielle. She said that for about 24 hours, she did all she could to get the baby to kick and turn like she would normally do, but nothing happened. She sang. She rubbed her stomach. She played music.

She then mentioned that as I drove in and she heard the sound of the car and then my voice, she began to kick again. We concluded that even a child in the womb knows the voice of the father, delights in it and responds to it. A child in the womb most likely knows when a regular voice has been missing for days.

When the Word of God says, "Like newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the Word that you may grow thereby," it means that a person who is in Christ must crave the Word of God like the baby loves to hear the voice of the Father.

A child must find delight in the words of His father. There is a generation that does not joke with personal devotion. They called it quiet time. They transferred the maxim "No Bible, no breakfast" to us. What a generation. The Scripture to back this up is in the Book of Job:

"I have not departed from the commandment of His lips; I have treasured the words of His mouth More than my necessary food."
Job 23:12 NKJV

Their quiet time translated into family devotion. If you ever grew up in such homes where the bell is rung at 6 am and maybe 9 pm every night or there was a signal for the family to gather, you are indeed blessed. The word is searched together as a family, and Bible stories come alive.

Why must you love the Word of God?

It is your daily bread. In the home of one of my childhood friends, bread was always available. It was never lacking at home. We used to even sneak there to eat bread (Matt.4:4)

It is required for growth. You cannot grow without the Word of God. Sunday sermons are never enough. It is like an appetizer. Dig in daily. It is your course finder. It shapes your character (Joshua 1:8)

It is your nutrient for a fruitful life. You begin to grow and bear the fruit of the Spirit. Such graces do not wither (Psalm 1:1-3).

What should you do to the Word?

Beloved, read the Bible consistently. I carried a New Testament Bible with me throughout my days in the National Youth Service orientation camp. It was a great companion.

Get and read God's book... Isaiah 34:16 MSG
Commit the Word to memory. Some of the Bible verses I know to date are our childhood assignments from family devotion. It is called hiding it in your heart.

Your word I have hidden in my heart...
Psalms 119:11 NKJV

Meditate on the word. You mutter the word to yourself. Bring it from your heart to your mouth to chew on it continually.

Practice the Word. There is the blessing of doing. The person who obeys the Word has a better standing than the person who debates the Word.

If you keep this pattern to heart and practise it, you will soon realize that most of what the world calls "emotional intelligence" is a life that has been shaped by the Word that is bearing the fruit of the Spirit.

CONFESSION

I am devoted to the word of God. I am nourished by the word. I am transformed by God's word.



HOW TO BUILD A HABIT OF PRAYER

Text: Mark 1:35 NKJV

Now in the morning, having risen a long while before daylight, He went out and departed to a solitary place; and there He prayed.

While growing up, we had a neighbour who loved dogs. Their dogs became the neighbourhood dogs- it was everyone's pet. We had Jack, and we had Jill.

Jack had an amazing pattern. A few minutes to 4 pm every weekday, Jack would come to our door and wait- that was the hour my mum would leave for the church to what is called the "Upper Room."

Jack would be right there. As we drove to church, Jack would race after the car, following us to church. It became Jack's pattern.

Anything that will become a pattern for you must be repeated again and again. Patterns are powerful. Positive patterns help our spiritual growth. One of the patterns you must develop is the Hour of Prayer.

First, you should have a company that encourages you to pray. Like faithful Jack, keep friendship with those who pray. Lifestyle can be contagious. If you will contact anything at all, let it be a positive one- prayer is life-changing.

Second, you should have a time of prayer. My mum would go to pray at 4 p.m. every day. She also woke up at 4 a.m. to have quiet time. We renamed the chiming of the clock at 4 a.m. as "Stand up fast hour."

Third, make sure that time is honoured. To do this, ensure it is time you are free from distractions and other demands of life. This

is why I encourage the Jesus pattern of waking up "long before dawn" (Mark 1:35). You have less distraction at those hours. Please deal with that phone and social media distraction!

Make it a regular pattern. Push yourself till you master that timing. Let your body clock adjust to the hour of prayer. It should be a sweet time for you, indeed.

Let us close with this simple scripture:

Now Peter and John went up together to the temple at the hour of prayer, the ninth hour.

Acts 3:1 NKJV

- Peter and John – a company of prayer.
- Together – a commitment to the company. Do not keep friendships with all talk and no action friends.
- Temple- A place of prayer.
- At The Hour of Prayer- a fixed time. That is how you build a pattern and consistent habit of prayer. It is that simple!

CONFESSION

I build a system of prayer around my life. The fire on my altar will not go down. I am a priest unto God.

DAY 24

HOW TO BUILD A LIFE THAT STANDS!

Text: Job 34:32 NKJV

Teach me what I do not see; If I have done iniquity, I will do no more.

We had many memories as children. We were the outdoor generation- no phones, TV stations broadcast from 4 p.m., board games needed a playing mate! It was the “go out and play.” I rolled tyres. I participated in high jump with branches from shrubs around us.

One of the things we did with soft sand was to build “birdhouses.” Our foot was the mould. We would put sand on it till it is compacted. We removed our feet gently to make a standing house. Some would fall immediately. We kept trying till it stood. But guess what- no matter how much we tried, it never stood the test of time.

There are two prayers you must pray:

First, let me not destroy the good things I have built. Second, let me not build again the terrible things I have destroyed.

It is possible to destroy the good things you have built. A man spends most of his life building a good name, but the entire thing is lost with one unwise decision, a useless fling, or a silly compromise. There are testaments of wasted legacies. May you not be one.

“Again, when a righteous man turns from his righteousness and commits iniquity, and I lay a stumbling block before him, he shall die; because you did not give him a warning, he shall die in his sin, and his righteousness which he has done shall not be remembered; but his blood I will require at your hand.
Ezekiel 3:20 NKJV

It is also possible to build back the terrible things you have destroyed. Some habits you have bid farewell to can resurface if you are not careful. For if I build again those things which I destroyed, I make myself a transgressor.
Galatians 2:18 NKJV

If you will not be caught in any of the two traps, you must be careful with the association you keep:

Walk with the wise and become wise; associate with fools and get in trouble.
Proverbs 13:20 NLT

Do not allow sin to thrive on the grounds of secrecy. Deal with it in its infancy stage. Give sin a brutal blow. Do not seek accountability where your flesh will be comfortable. An ‘online pastor’ can teach, but your pastor on site who knows you and sees you more often can hold you accountable.

Third, ensure the embers of your fellowship with God by His Word, prayer, the Holy Spirit, and godly brethren are constantly ablaze. Do not forsake fellowship. The lower the attention you give to fellowship, the stronger the grip of sin in your life.

This is the summary that a man who destroyed everything good he built and built back terrible things he destroyed said to us as a warning:

That’s the whole story. Here now is my final conclusion: Fear God and obey his commands, for this is everyone’s duty. God will judge us for everything we do, including every secret thing, whether good or bad. Ecclesiastes 12:13-14 NLT

May we finish well!

CONFESSION

I do not walk in the path of self-destruction. I hack down the life of sin and flesh. I uphold righteousness and godliness.

DAY 25

HOW TO TRIUMPH OVER SIN

Text: Revelations 12:11 NKJV

And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives to the death.

I was visiting with a young lady I just met. We both had a mutual friend. Of the neighbourhood's scarcity of friends, finding someone to interact with was a solace.

One such evening, she received a call from whom I later got to know as her boyfriend. It was an uncomfortable call. She burst into tears right afterwards.

By impulse, my mind and thoughts moved to where she was sitting to console her by holding her close and wiping those tears away. That was my instinct.

But the Holy Spirit took over from there. "Temi, sit where you are." I obeyed. "Temi, tell her it will be fine, and you will return to check up on her some other time to give her room to compose herself and address the issues." I did.

There are instances like this that have led men astray, especially those who have just surrendered their lives to Christ.

There is data that your old man has gathered in your old mind. The natural progression of your thought life is sinful. If you ever put yourself in a position that permits sin, you are already gone. You know the end from the beginning. This ungodly data must be dealt with:

Let the wicked change their ways and banish the very thought of doing wrong...
Isaiah 55:7A NLT

Hope you know that the heart of man is desperately wicked. If you allow those thoughts to lead, you will be in a mess. So what do you do?

Your mind needs to go for a shower in the Word- a real intense shower for cleansing. Do you know how sticky you feel after a long day? Can you imagine not bathing for years? That's the state of the soul without the Word of God.

How can a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed according to Your word.
Psalms 119:9 NKJV

The Word of God cleans your ways- Thought Ways, Word Ways, Action Ways! That natural progression and tendency to sin or walk close to sin is dealt with.

Second, that old data of sin would then be replaced with new data of God's Word for direction, instruction, and course correction so that you do not crash into those strange actions again.

Study the Word.

I study your teachings very carefully so that I will not sin against you.
Psalms 119:11 ERV

Hide the Word in your Heart.

Your word I have hidden in my heart, That I might not sin against You.
Psalms 119:11 NKJV

Regard the Word of God as a Treasure.
I treasure your word above all else; it keeps me from sinning against you.
Psalms 119:11 CEV

When that battle of thoughts comes, you will be glad you have the Word in your heart. Without the word, you will be lost in sin again.

Great solutions always look simple! Do not despise it.
May you not fall again.

CONFESS I O N

I am rooted and established in the life of Christ. I treasure the Word of God. I live by the Word of God.

DAY
26

YOU ARE A “DEAD MAN”

Text: Galatians 2:20 NLT

My old self has been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me. So I live in this earthly body by trusting in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

While teaching a class of young converts someday, I walked up to the first person and pinched him. He responded as he felt it. I went to another person who now knew what I wanted to do and pretended like he would not respond, but he did.

Then I asked them, “What if I pinched a dead man? Would he respond?”. They all had an obvious answer. The dead man does not respond to any form of touch. What happens when we are dead to sin? We stop responding to its touch and its call. No matter how much or how loud or how hard you call a dead man, he does not have the capacity or wiring to respond to you any longer. In Christ, we become dead to sin.

By no means! We are those who have died to sin; how can we live in it any longer? (Romans 6:2 NIV)

In the same way, count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus. (Romans 6:11 NIV)

But you have an assignment and a responsibility. You carry a certificate by the blood of Jesus that says you are dead to sin. You now have to live according to that reality. What do you do?

Do not let sin reign in your body again. Give that ambassador of the devil no room at all.

Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its evil desires. (Romans 6:12 NIV)

You ensure this by not giving any part of your body as an instrument for sin to use.

Do not offer any part of yourself to sin as an instrument of wickedness, but rather offer yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life, and offer every part of yourself to him as an instrument of righteousness. (Romans 6:13 NIV)

Do you remember that right after the salvation of the Jews from Egypt, Pharaoh still came after

them? The devil will come after you because he never wants a sinner to be delivered.

He prefers that you pray in tongues but still curse with the same mouth. He won't stop you from singing godly songs, but he will still ensure that those strange sounds and songs that “turn you on” are still “no big deal” in your playlist. He wants to keep a foot in your space. You must deny him his working tools in your life.

You must insist that no part of your body will be an instrument of unrighteousness. It is your insistence that makes this work. As the devil throws his suggestion, remember that a dead man does not respond.

If a “dead man” is driving in traffic, no matter what happens, no vulgar words can come from provocative moments.

If a “dead man” is seduced by evil, he cannot respond.

If a “dead man” is insulted, he is not even aware of it. A “dead man” knows no pride or lust.

Why? You are dead to sin but alive to Christ. The life you live now only responds to things and signals from your Lord and Saviour.

Lay your life on the altar as a “living sacrifice.” Every sacrifice dies, but this sacrifice is dead yet living. Why? Dead to sin but alive in Christ!

Say it: “_____, you are dead to sin. You are alive in Christ. You respond to signals from your Lord Jesus Christ. You are under the reign of righteousness. Sin is an enemy. Sin is poison. It must be treated as such”. Live in that reality. That is your safe space.

CONFESSION

I am dead to sin. I am alive in Christ. I am a living sacrifice. Sin has no dominion over me. I live victoriously at all times.

DAY 27

“I HAVE HORRIBLE THINGS IN MY PAST THAT WILL CATCH UP WITH ME”

Text: Hebrews 8:12 NLT

And I will forgive their wickedness, and I will never again remember their sins.

A young man walked up to my friend once after he had given his life to Christ and said to him: “I did quite some terrible things in my life. The one I cannot forget is about a lady who laid curses on me after the way and manner I treated her. She said I would not prosper or make a headway in life. I know that curse will still catch up with me”.

My friend opened up the Bible and showed him these words:

Who will bring any charge against God’s elect (His chosen ones)? It is God who justifies us [declaring us blameless and putting us in a right relationship with Himself].
Romans 8:33 AMP

No one can bring a charge against you! You are not just forgiven; you are justified. Justification is more like “It never happened.” It was never in your record. You are given a new beginning.

If you are in Christ, you even have more than a new beginning; you are a new creation in Christ. This is how Apostle Paul, who also had a messed up past, puts it:

I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.
Galatians 2:20 NKJV

If there is no charge against you, then it makes sense that you cannot be condemned. You have to be charged before you can be condemned.

Who is the one who condemns us? Christ Jesus is the One who died [to pay our penalty], and more than that, who was raised [from the dead], and who is at the right hand of God interceding [with the Father] for us.
Romans 8:34 AMP

Listen! The day I realized this, I stopped romancing nonsense. It was the victory I needed over the shame, guilt and condemnation my life as a sinner placed on me.

The reason you have not surrendered your life to Christ is because you do not know how powerful grace is. If you have been touched by grace, you will know there is no other touch that is better.

If grace puts a song in your mouth, you will sing and dance till eternity comes:

Have you ever wondered why the Samaritan woman could not keep quiet in the same city where her history as a bed-warmer for different men was known? Grace restores your lost dignity and gives you a loud voice.

Have you ever wondered why the Decapolis felt the impact of Jesus Christ through the life of the former well-known madman of the Gadarenes? Grace restores your dignity and gives you a compelling voice. Those who know him bound and witnessed his nakedness could not but say that grace has made a difference.

I know you had a horrible past, but with the embrace of God’s grace, you have a new story. You have a new song also:

Who could imagine so great a mercy?

What heart could fathom such boundless grace?

The God of ages stepped down from glory

To wear my sin and bear my shame

The cross has spoken; I am forgiven

The king of kings calls me His own

Beautiful saviour, I’m yours forever

Jesus Christ, my living hope

Hallelujah, praise the one who set me free

Hallelujah, death has lost its grip on me
You have broken every chain

There’s salvation in your name

Jesus Christ, my living hope

Do you get it? Rejoice! Let the tears of joy flow.

CONFESSION

I am no longer a slave to fear and sin. I am a child of God.

DAY 28

“WILL YOU ALLOW ME TO MARRY YOUR BROTHER?”

Text: 2 Corinthians 5:17 NKJV

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.

As that priceless soul sat before me that day, I heard those words: “Sir, I feel nothing. I have done many things wrong in my life”.

From getting sexually involved with close relatives to having an abortion. She had been through all.

I began to talk to her about God’s love, emphasizing that in Christ, her past is thrown into the sea of forgetfulness, and she is a new creature. I emphasized ‘new.’

Then she smiled. I said, “I thought you had no emotions”. She said, “I sense some great joy”.

Then she leaned forward and asked, “But Pastor, what if I am to marry your brother? With all you have heard, will you allow me?”

What a question!

I replied, “Why not! You are a new creature. You are new. My brother is not marrying that dead one. You are a new one in Christ”.

She was taken aback! She then burst into a great smile.

And that is the truth.

Honestly, you would not understand the weight of some challenges until it is close to home. She brought it home to me. You cannot preach what you cannot live.

Some Christian brothers preach the love of Christ but draw the line because “they cannot marry a non-virgin” even after she is in Christ now. Where is the love?

Family, the love of God is powerful. He wipes away that handwriting of sin, and you become a brand new template of His

love.

He takes a broken soul and brings a global brand out of him.

In CHRIST, you are never your past (Can I say that a thousand times?) You are new!

Whatever keeps reminding you of where you have been and bringing that shame and guilt is a bastard- It is not the Spirit of God.

God never uses our past as a tool to judge us. Only the devil does that. Sometimes, you judge yourself. But you are redeemed. You are new. Jesus died for both your sin and the consequence of that sin.

Sister, Brother, the fact that you had a terrible past does not make you a second-class kingdom citizen, and you now start settling for less in marriage.

There are no second-class gifts in God. You do not deserve lesser love. You have all the love of God.

Whoever (including yourself) looks down on you because of your past does not understand what God has done- the person is still in the past.

Wake up!

You deserve the best.

CONFESSION

My past is gone and forgiven. I am alive in Christ. I am not inferior. I am loved and cherished by God.



THERE IS JOY IN CHRIST THAT NOTHING CAN STEAL!

Text: Isaiah 12:3 NLT

With joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation.

One morning, I woke up to an old song that lighted up my spirit:

Take me deeper

Deeper in love with you

Jesus hold me close in your embrace

Take me deeper

Deeper than I have ever been before

I just want to love you more and more

How I love to be deeper in love.

As I meditated on this song, I realized how much sweetness I enjoy in the Lord Jesus. I would have been a pretender or a hypocrite. I would have been trying to keep up a show. I would have been serving in the church and serving sin. Christ changed that story.

There is a sweetness in Christ that can not be compared to the poisonous pleasure of sin. There is joy in Christ that nothing can steal. There is a peace that passes all understanding.

Whenever I lead someone to Christ, I often hear a deep sigh of relief and a smile on their face. I always ask them why they took a deep sigh. They would say, "It is like a burden left my chest, or I sense this joy or this unusual peace." There is such a thing as the joy of salvation. Glory!

And I am praying that you will put into action the generosity that comes from your faith as you understand and experience all the good things we have in Christ. Philemon 1:6 NLT

Did you see that? There are good things in Christ Jesus. You must acknowledge it. You must believe it. You must confess it. You must dig it out in the Word of God. You must enjoy it.

A- Acknowledge it

B- Believe it

C- Confess it.

D- Dig it out in the Word

E- Enjoy it.

The Psalmist showed us some:

Let all that I am praise the Lord; with my whole heart, I will praise his holy name. Let all that I am praise the Lord; may I never forget the good things he does for me. Psalms 103:1-2 NLT

See the good things here:

He forgives all my sins and heals all my diseases. He redeems me from death and crowns me with love and tender mercies. He fills my life with good things. My youth is renewed like the eagle's! Psalms 103:3-5 NLT

Forgiveness. Healing. Redemption from Death. Overflowing Love. Tender Mercies. A life filled with good things. Renewed Youthfulness.

Do you see why sin depreciates people? There is more in Christ. There is More.

Will you DIG IT OUT?

CONFESSION

I have the joy of salvation. I enjoy the blessings in righteousness. I praise my Saviour all the day long.

DAY 30

IT IS POSSIBLE TO LIVE ABOVE SIN!

Text: Romans 8:13 NKJV

For if you live according to the flesh you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live.

A dear son placed an image on social media, and his friend responded with words that gave glory to God and turned a drug addict into a Christ lover. His story still delights me each time I think about it.

He was coming to church, but he was still struggling with addiction. He would leave the church to smoke his regular joint. The fact that you go to church does not mean that you know the Lord. I sang in the choir and did not know Jesus Christ! I was lost in my addiction.

Every sinner is under the control of the devil. It is his spirit that works and controls the sinner. The sinner is his willing tool. Why? The devil is the father of the sinner. He carries the devil's DNA.

You used to live in sin, just like the rest of the world, obeying the devil—the commander of the powers in the unseen world. He is the spirit at work in the hearts of those who refuse to obey God. Ephesians 2:2 NLT

There are things you will just naturally do. Our children will do certain things, and we will say, "That's just like me." Why? They have my nature.

You will struggle with addiction until you know your victory begins with a changed nature. There will be a change of ways when there is a change of nature. A mango tree can never bring forth orange fruits. One day, the young drug addict left the church and realized he could not smoke

again. Why? The nature changed. The New Life swallowed that nonsense. If you have touched the life in Christ, sin becomes poison.

You will struggle with obedience until you have a "heart surgery":

And I will give you a new heart, and I will put a new spirit in you. I will take out your stony, stubborn heart and give you a tender, responsive heart. And I will put my Spirit in you so that you will follow my decrees and be careful to obey my regulations. (Ezekiel 36:26-27 NLT)

Without His Spirit, you will debate His instructions and find justification for sin. You will call it fancy names- Sin will become weakness; adultery will become extra-marital affair; fornication will become pre-marital affair or cohabiting; prostitution will be hook-up; lewdness will be called groove; nudity will be called fashion. And when you are corrected and convicted, you will say, "Stop judging me."

Lord, give me a new heart and put a new spirit within me! Take away this heart of stone and give me a heart that wants to follow your will. Amen.

CONFESSION

I offer my heart to the Lord. I live above sin always. I receive a new heart and a contrite spirit.

ARE YOU A BELIEVER OR A KNOWLEDGEABLE SINNER?

Text: Romans 5:1 NLT

So Christ has truly set us free. Now make sure that you stay free, and don't get tied up again in slavery to the law.

I was born into a Christian Family. My mum was the evangelism coordinator of the church we attended. Dad served in the church also. Mum had a 4 p.m. hour of prayer at the Upper Room almost daily. I witnessed impartation and deliverance. She jokingly said once that someone informed her to stop conducting deliverance during my pregnancy so that demons do not enter the baby. (Smiles)

As a young boy, the church was all I knew. My parents even launched out in ministry when I was ten years old. All I grew up seeing was church. Sunday evening was always for evangelism. I remember my brother telling my Dad one Sunday evening, "Must we always follow you. I am not going today". Dad smiled. He left him alone. He did not utter a word.

Yet! I still got lost in the world. I had my "Hophni and Phinehas" moments – wrong and ungodly sexual behaviour! Thank God for his saving grace.

You are not saved because you can fill 'Christian' in a form. You are not saved because you grew up in church. You can be singing in the choir and yet not saved. You can be a cell leader serving faithfully, yet you are not saved. You can even be morally upright, and yet you are not saved. Why? Morality is fine, but your good is not even enough.

What makes you a believer?

It is not just believing. Do you know that demons also believe? You believe that there is one God. You do well. Even the demons believe—and tremble! James 2:19 NKJV

It begins with an acknowledgement that you are a sinner. You are a sinner by nature, not just by conduct. A bad tree will bring forth bad fruits.

You see your need for Jesus Christ and salvation. You then make a conscious and intelligent decision to follow Christ. You confess Him as your Lord and Saviour. Repentance is not just remorse; it is a change of nature, attitude, lifestyle, association, and values. Your change is so obvious that your

former company sees it clearly that "Temi is a changed man."

Someone told a young lady that "Temi is at home." She said, "The Temi that came back home is not the one I used to know." I had been in compromising acts in my former life with the same lady.

You must be committed to following the Word of God and obeying the Lord no matter the cost. The salvation that leaves you to talk anyhow, dress anyhow and behave anyhow should be suspected. Salvation straightens you up! It impacts your character.

No matter how much you feed a dog, it can not become a man. Salvation is not a self-improvement programme. There is a total change in nature. Some who say they are believers are only "knowledgeable sinners."

Guess what! Even the devil quotes scriptures. He knows what is written. What does he do with it? He uses it to feed the flesh. That is exactly what an enlightened sinner will do. They will defend their sins with "scriptures." You cannot meet Jesus Christ indeed and abuse scriptures.

What is your salvation testimony? What has changed? Or are you still hiding under scriptures to defend nonsense? The Bible is not a defence for a sinful life!

CONFESSION

I stand in the victory Christ gave me over vsin. I am not a knowledgeable sinner. I am a believer who overcomes sin and the desires of the flesh. I am helped by the Holy Ghost.



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