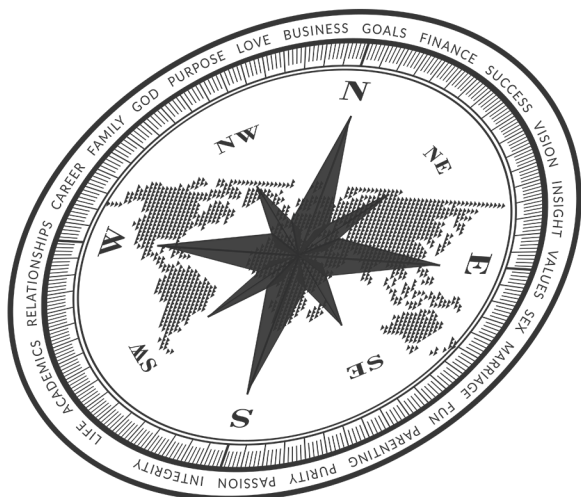




COMPASS

DAILY DEVOTIONAL

**FOR
JANUARY
2025**

**NOT
FOR
SALE!**

Femilolucwa Ola

Practical thoughts for a productive day

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Introduction

Welcome to December!

This is the crowning month of the year. The Lord said it is. You should be on the lookout for crowning testimonies. It will be exactly the way God said it will be:

Psalms 65:11-13 NKJV

[11] You crown the year with Your goodness, And Your paths drip with abundance. [12] They drop on the pastures of the wilderness, And the little hills rejoice on every side.

[13] The pastures are clothed with flocks; The valleys also are covered with grain; They shout for joy, they also sing.

The year is crowned with the goodness of God. Yes, it is!

What will you see?

Abundance. Your paths with drip with abundance. It means everywhere you look, you will see the blessing of God.

Things to Rejoice Over. You will dance and shout for joy. Yes you will! As you rejoice over one, another testimony will break out.

Your Challenges will become partners in thanksgiving. Your valleys will be filled up. Your mountains will become plain. Crooked places will be made straight.

Why would all this happen? The Glory of the Lord has been revealed. Christ, our Saviour, settled it all.

This month, all He has promised that you have waited for shall be sealed and delivered.

Thank you for reading COMPASS all year long.

See you again on the other side with greater joy.

We love you.

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DAY 01

TRUST THE PILOT

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.

We were travelling by air and it was raining just at the point of landing. It was a bit turbulent as we descended. I told my brother by my side, "Can you imagine that we trust the pilot to get us to the ground safely even when we cannot see him?" He got the message. No one was running around. However, you can see the tension in the faces of some.

In tough times, you need to trust God even when you cannot see Him. If you are not the pilot of your own life, you need to rest in the massive hands of the Lord. If you know that you did not bring yourself this far, then you should rest in the one who has brought you this far.

The challenge comes when you think you can actually take over the driver's seat and get yourself a safe landing. What's my point here? You do what you are meant to do. Let God do what only He can do.

Worry wants you to hijack the wheels from God when you are meant to trust Him. Trust means "active obedience". Trust is not just sitting down and looking. Trust means you follow every instruction in the middle of the crisis even when it does not make any sense.

Worry would hint to you that Moab is better than Bethlehem. It will make you hustle without the hand of the Lord. If worry hijacks the wheel, it can hinder the will of God. Refuse it.

How do I refuse to worry?

First, know that God is not harassed by your cares. Trust Him.

Second, stay in worship. It helps your heart to focus on how great the Lord is and not how huge the challenges are.

Hear the words of Peter:

So, humble yourselves under the mighty power of God, and at the right time he will lift you up in honour. Give all your worries and cares to God, for he cares about you.

1 Peter 5:6

One way to humble yourself before the Lord is by giving your worries and cares to Him. It simply means that handling it yourself by worrying is pride. Let God handle it.

CONFESSION

I am not ruled by worry. I cultivate the habit of worship. My trust is in the Lord.

DAY 02

TAKE NEW TERRITORIES PROPHETICALLY

Text: Joshua 14: 12 NKJV

Now therefore give me this mountain, whereof the LORD spake in that day; for thou heardest in that day how the Anakims were there, and that the cities were great and fenced: if so be the LORD will be with me, then I shall be able to drive them out, as the LORD said.

For a while this year, we decided to spend time praying for the influence of the church to extend to one of the sectors of our community. It had been a battle for almost four years. We took it seriously this year in intercession.

A few weeks into interceding, the barriers began to crumble one after the other. We began to see tangible results in that area. Folks began to come to church and get serious about discipleship in the church also.

Friends, prophetic fulfilment follows prayerful commitment. If we are not committed to praying, we are not ready to see the fulfilment of the prophetic.

You cannot possess new territories by simply wishing for them. You take possession first in intercession. Intercession must birth action.

When Moses was wrapping up his work as the leader over Israel, he said to them what the Lord said to him:

“Beginning today I will make people throughout the earth terrified because of you. When they hear reports about you, they will tremble with dread and fear.”
Deuteronomy 2:25 NLT

We definitely cannot doubt that Moses picked those words in prayer. He was a praying man.

Those words were fulfilled in the days of Joshua. Joshua sent spies into Jericho and Rahab made a confession that

shows prophecies birthed in prayer will always be fulfilled.

“I know the Lord has given you this land. We are all afraid of you. Everyone in the land is living in terror. No wonder our hearts have melted in fear! No one has the courage to fight after hearing such things. For the Lord your God is the supreme God of the heavens above and the earth below.

Joshua 2:9

Dear believer, take praying seriously. Use prayer to build a bridge between the prophetic and its fulfilment. Use prayer as the steering wheel for a generation that you will necessarily not be a part of. Pray until you see what looks so hard and difficult become possible.

Pray to give the divine permission to permeate the affairs of humanity. Leave nothing to chance. Study data, discern patterns but do not explain them away. Take it to God in prayer.

Today, every barrier is removed. Your influence is enlarged in the name of Jesus.

CONFESSION

I am given to the life of prayer. I take possession and command possibilities through prayer. I come into my season of fulfilment.



IT HAS BEEN A WHILE I HEARD YOUR VOICE

Text: Psalm 55:17 NKJV

Evening and morning and at noon I will pray, and cry aloud, And He shall hear my voice.

As I lifted my voice in prayers, in less than five minutes, I heard the Lord say to me in a loving tone, “It has been a while since I heard your voice”. It sank into my heart. I knew what the Lord was saying. I was getting overwhelmed with activities and I lost touch with fellowship.

Even if you are called to ministry, you must constantly remember that the “work” must not replace the Lord. It is possible to be committed to the work and not committed to God. It is possible to go for Him and not go from Him.

There is a chain of intimacy that must never break. Ministry must be an overflow of an intimate relationship between you and God. You must settle it fast that fellowship is priority. There is nothing else that is fruitful if it is not done from fellowship.

Look at the structure of how Jesus called the disciples and let us learn from it:

And he goeth up into a mountain, and calleth unto him whom he would: and they came unto him. And he ordained twelve, that they should be with him, and that he might send them forth to preach,
Mark 3:13

First, He called them to Him. Your calling is first to God. Love him. Spend time with Him. Adore His presence. Do not joke with the fact that he called you to him.

Second, He ordained that they should be with him. Did you see the word “Should”? It means being with him is a priority. It is compulsory. That is your life.

Third, “And that He might send them out”. Did you see the word “Might”? It means it is a probability. If He has not sent you, calm down and simply be there with Him in prayer, worship, study and learning. The chain of intimacy must never be broken.

When you break the chain of Intimacy, frustration will set in. You will begin to use schemes to get results. Your goals will become self and no longer God or the kingdom. You must refuse it.

CONFESSION

I prioritize intimacy with God. I sustain the chain of intimacy. I give myself to fellowship with the Holy Spirit.

DAY 04

PRAYER IS NOT TOO MUCH

Text: Luke 18:1 KJV

And he spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint.

As we began to pray, I said to my team in the ministry “This feels so good”. I then added that it had been a while since we had prayed together. As I mentioned that, I began to ask myself why.

It struck me that the challenge was that the hours of congregational prayers had increased as instructed by the Lord for the year. But I learnt a major lesson that “prayer is never too much”.

I wondered how much Moses and Samuel prayed that in Jeremiah’s prophecy, the Lord said that even if Moses and Samuel stood in the gap for the people, he would not need their cry.

Then the Lord said to me, “Even if Moses and Samuel stood before me pleading for these people, I wouldn’t help them. Away with them! Get them out of my sight! Jeremiah 15:1 NLT

Do you know what Samuel the Prophet called prayerlessness? Sin! That is how seriously Samuel took a lifestyle of prayer.

Moreover, as for me, far be it from me that I should sin against the Lord by ceasing to pray for you; but I will instruct you in the good and right way.
1 Samuel 12:23 AMPC

Would the results of Samuel would then be surprising? He began to hear God at a young age. God bypassed the priesthood of the day to speak with him. The nation of Israel waited on Prophet

Samuel for a Word. None of His words fell to the ground.

He was used by God to institute monarchy in Israel. He prophesied kings to the throne and prophesied a king out of the throne. What was his secret? Prayer is not too much!

Let no one lie to you that you are “over-praying”. In prayer, be patient enough to receive spiritual intelligence that you will deploy in whatever your hands find to do.

As I was praying, Gabriel, whom I had seen in the earlier vision, came swiftly to me at the time of the evening sacrifice. He explained to me, “Daniel, I have come here to give you insight and understanding.
Daniel 9:21

A man who truly prays must be a man of insight and understanding. Daniel surely was that type of a man. Do not think you have prayed too much. We must not stop praying. After praying, we pray again. Even in the execution of God-given plans, we do not cease to pray.

Let nothing reduce your prayer hour- not even corporate praying! Pray in church. Pray on your own.

CONFESSION

I live a regimented life of prayer. I receive the spirit of supplication and intercession. I gain insights and direction through prayer.



DAY 05

PLACES YOU ARE NOT PERMITTED TO STAY – “NEAR SODOM”

Text: Galatians 5:1 NKJV

Stand fast therefore in the liberty by which Christ has made us free, and do not be entangled again with a yoke of bondage.

At one point, I realised that when you watch a video on social media, there would then be a series of videos that will show next or will be suggested. Sometimes, after watching a live prayer session, the next suggestions were quite suggestive and unedifying. It was so tempting to stay on skits.

There are places you must never be. Some things that will attract you will lead you to places that will reduce you and if care is not taken, can destroy you.

When Lot chose as regards the lovely land he saw (as he was about to separate from Abram), the scriptures let us know that he settled near Sodom.

So, Abram settled in the land of Canaan, and Lot moved his tents to a place near Sodom and settled among the cities of the plain.
Genesis 13:12 NLT

He was not in Sodom. He was living near Sodom. However, by the time, God would make a move to judge Sodom and Gomorrah, Lot was already living in Sodom.

That evening the two angels came to the entrance of the city of Sodom. Lot was sitting there, and when he saw them, he stood up to meet them. Then he welcomed them and bowed with his face to the ground.
Genesis 19:1 NLT

He was not just living in Sodom, his daughters had prospective husbands from the land. He was so mixed with Sodom that he was going to miss Sodom.

He even chose to settle in a town closer to Sodom when God rescued him from there.

There are choices you can make that can look like “Near Sodom”. To fall into a pit, you must be close to the pit.

If you love to counsel the opposite sex alone in questionable places and at questionable times, remember that to fall into a pit, you must be close to the pit.

If you love receiving gifts from all and sundry under the guise of “I did not ask for it”, remember that to fall into a pit, you must be close to it.

If you love endearments and the emotional adrenaline that comes from the attention you get from the opposite sex, remember that to fall into a pit, you must be close to it.

If you see no need to set boundaries with spiritual daughters or sons as the case may be you go out alone with them on ministrations. They now can hug Daddy with such ease. Remember that to fall into a pit, you must be close to it.

You have no business being near Sodom. Deal with it now before it wrecks your reputation and worse still tarnishes the image of the kingdom of God.

CONFESSION

I stay in order. I do not wander out of my covering. I will not lose my soul to Sodom.

DAY 06

PLACES YOU ARE NOT PERMITTED TO STAY – Micah's Shrine

Text: Philippians 3:19 NIV

Their destiny is destruction, their god is their stomach, and their glory is in their shame. Their mind is set on earthly things.

I was having a conversation with a minister a while back and I realised that every one of his thoughts and words revolved around money. It was simply about the physical attractions of ministry. I had to warn myself that I would never be like that.

A dear teacher once said that a minister of the gospel has no business having a desire to be wealthy. Tough words. What is the point? Your focus must be contentment. Paul charged Timothy the same way:

These people always cause trouble. Their minds are corrupt, and they have turned their backs on the truth. To them, a show of godliness is just a way to become wealthy. Yet true godliness with contentment is itself great wealth.

1 Timothy 6:5

Then he pointed Timothy to Contentment again:

After all, we brought nothing with us when we came into the world, and we can't take anything with us when we leave it. So, if we have enough food and clothing, let us be content.

1 Timothy 6:7

However, in the Old Testament, there was a young Levite who took on the work of ministry. The ministry he joined was a shrine:

Micah set up a shrine for the idol, and he made a sacred ephod and some household idols. Then he installed one of his sons as his personal priest.

Judges 17:5 NLT

He took on the work because he wanted to survive. His concern was the shelter and the salary:

One day a young Levite, who had been living in Bethlehem in Judah, arrived in that area. "Where are you from?" Micah asked him. He replied, "I am a Levite from Bethlehem in Judah, and I am looking for a

place to live." "Stay here with me," Micah said, "and you can be a father and priest to me. I will give you ten pieces of silver a year, plus a change of clothes and your food."

Judges 17:7

Some men came along and noticed that there was something different about him:

So, the men of Dan chose from their clans five capable warriors from the towns of Zorah and Eshtaol to scout out land for them to settle in. When these warriors arrived in the hill country of Ephraim, they came to Micah's house and spent the night there. While at Micah's house, they recognized the young Levite's accent, so they went over and asked him, "Who brought you here, and what are you doing in this place? Why are you here?"

Judges 18:2

Did you notice their questions: Who brought you here? What are you doing in this place? Why are you here?

The first question pointed to the place of covering and counsel. If you are well-trained and guided, there are places you will never be found. The second question may seem like it is asking for a job description but no! It is a statement of shock. And the final one was a question of when the purpose is defined, there are things you will never settle for.

This young Levite was simply in it for money. If you are called to ministry and you see that money is making the decisions now, you need to repent and retrace your steps before it is too late.

CONFESSION

I am not a slave to Mammon. God is my source and sufficiency. I am content with the resources provided by God.



WEIGHTY QUESTIONS Part 1- “Where are you?”

Text: Genesis 34:1 NKJV

Now Dinah the daughter of Leah, whom she had borne to Jacob, went out to see the daughters of the land.

One of the things I learnt from my Pastor when I was serving was the answer to the question “Where are you?” Typically, the answer for most people will be “I am on my way”, “I am coming” or “I will soon be with you”. He will insist that the answer should always be “I am in so and so place now”. I still miss it at times though.

The first person God asked “Where are you?” in the scriptures was Adam. It was a question that wanted to know the true location of man. God wanted to know whether he was still in the state that He made him.

It was not as though God was unaware, God simply wanted man to come out clean rather than pretend or shift blame to any other person. God wanted Adam to admit that he had messed up. But just like us, Adam went on to say words that portray that he was not ready to own up to his sin.

Then the Lord God called to the man, “Where are you?” He replied, “I heard you walking in the garden, so I hid. I was afraid because I was naked.”
Genesis 3:9

The only reason why we become fearful and refuse to be truthful is that we have something to hide. We have forgotten that “sin will always find us out”

But if you fail to keep your word, then you will have sinned against the Lord, and you may be sure that your sin will

find you out.

Numbers 32:23 NLT

Sin is a location disruptor. Sin wants to drive you far away from divine signals. It does not want you to hear the voice of your saviour. It wants you to become dead to the correction of the Holy Spirit.

There are times that God would use men that he has placed in spiritual authority over you to ask you probing questions. They may become concerned about your steps or actions. If they see that you are acting like you have things to hide, they can confront you.

You must be grateful to God for spiritual leaders who do not shy away from probing when it is necessary. Make sure you are not driving fast down sin lane without the brakes of accountability. The end is always disastrous.

So where are you?

What is your state spiritually?

CONFESSIO N

I do not wander away from God's presence. I am open to divine and godly counsel. I am grateful for spiritual leaders.

WEIGHTY QUESTIONS (2)- “What are you doing here?”

Text: 1 Kings 19:13 NIV

...Then a voice said to him, “What are you doing here, Elijah?”

I came out one morning and I saw some of my sons and daughters waiting for me right at my door. The first question that leapt out of my mouth 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.

CONFESS I O N

I stay with the covenant location for my destiny. I am not in the wrong place or spot. I am strengthened for the journey ahead.

DAY 09

HOW TO GET ACCESS 1 (THE POWER OF THANKSGIVING)

Text: Psalm 89:1 NIV

I will sing of the LORD's great love forever; with my mouth I will make your faithfulness known through all generations.

I wore a pair of shoes and remembered that someone gave me as a gift some years back. I sent the person a message of gratitude. His response was "It is time to get you another pair".

Thanksgiving can always bring another one. Many times, we are in a hurry to rush into making requests with God while we skip the Thanksgiving part. Jesus did not show or teach us so.

In the multiplication of the five loaves and two fishes, Jesus began with thanksgiving. He gave thanks for what was available. At the tomb of Lazarus, he started with thanksgiving. It was a hopeless case but God turned it around.

Adonijah was plotting to become the king even though David was not yet dead. Bathsheba had a promise already from King David that her son, Solomon would be King after him.

Nathan the prophet was the one who gave the needed push for Bathsheba to go into the King. Even though Bathsheba had a sure word from the King, the first thing that she did when she got to the King was not to throw the weight of the words around. No! She did something we should all learn to do. She worshipped.

"Bathsheba went to the king in his private room. The king was very old, and Abishag from Shunem was taking care of him. Bathsheba knelt and bowed down in front of the king. "What do you want?" the king asked."

1 Kings 1:15

Even though you have a Word from the Lord, go in first with a heart of thanksgiving. A bended knee in worship is very powerful. A mouth of thanksgiving is quite potent.

Those who know the protocol of Thanksgiving do not stay stranded at the gates of the palace. The Psalmist knows this well:

Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him, and bless his name. Psalm 100:4 KJV

Every time there is a gate, do not let its size harass you. There is no one who knows how to wield the weapon of thanksgiving that the wars of life ever buried.

The prison walls fell. Paul and Silas stood above it. Leprosy and all its accomplices bowed when the leper returned with a loud voice of thanksgiving.

Put a song in your mouth. Let your heart bow in worship. Give God all the praise. Thanksgiving works.

CONFESSION

I cultivate a lifestyle of thanksgiving. I am not attached to ingratitude. I give thanks always.

DAY 10

HOW TO GET ACCESS 2 (THE POWER OF THE SECRET PLACE)

Text: Jeremiah 33:3 NKJV

Call to Me, and I will answer you, and show you great and mighty things, which you do not know.

Many years ago, my spiritual father was preaching in the city of Uyo, Akwa-Ibom State, Nigeria. I was in the congregation. There was no way he would know I was there. It was a church with a heavy protocol system.

I succeeded in catching his attention before he left the auditorium. He was surprised to see me. He held me by the hand and every door that opened for him opened for me also. No one could stop me.

A believer who refuses to connect to all of Heaven's power resources by praying will be the one who will be stranded on earth.

In teaching us what is now called the Lord's prayer, Jesus made it clear that there is a will of heaven that can be enforced on earth by men who are willing to pray.

For instance, there had been no access to the king for 30 days and you cannot go to the king without an invitation. If you do, you will be killed. Esther had to take a risk. But she first summoned the nation of Israel to prayers:

"All the king's advisers and the people in the king's provinces know that no one approaches the king in the throne room without being summoned. By law, that person must be put to death. Only if the king holds out the golden sceptre to him will he live. I, myself, have not been summoned to enter the king's presence for 30 days now." "Assemble all the Jews

in Susa. Fast for me: Do not eat or drink at all for three entire days. My servants and I will also fast. After that, I will go to the king, even if it is against a royal decree. If I die, I die."

Esther 4:11

Esther approached the king by faith. What raised the King's sceptre? Do you think it was the beauty of Esther? I doubt it! That beauty did not work for thirty days. It was the force of prayer backing up that decision.

There will be doors that will remain shut if we do not know how to connect to our source.

The Apostle John made us know that greater is he that is in us than he that is in the world.

Smith Wigglesworth said, 'I am a thousand times bigger on the inside than I am on the outside'.

When everything around you seems to make you feel small, stay calm. It is making a demand on what is within you. Press into prayer. Connect with heaven's unlimited resources. There are angels on standby. There is the anointing. There is the grace of the Lord. You cannot be stranded.

CONFESSION

I am a creature of prayer. I command divine resources in prayer. I am not stranded.

DAY 11

HOW TO GET ACCESS 3: (THE POWER OF COMPETENCE)

Text: Proverbs 22:29 GW

Do you see a person who is efficient in his work? He will serve kings. He will not serve unknown people.

A dear sister of mine narrated how she got a call from the White House. She laughed and thought it was a scam. They had to use other means to reach her eventually. Her competence earned her a seat with the President of the most powerful nation on earth.

Competence has a voice and it speaks loudly. If you are praying for open doors to palaces, make sure you are also building competence behind the scenes. A lot of people who pray for open doors have not honed their skills.

Let us see examples of the requirements from palaces:

In the days of Daniel and the three Hebrew boys who ended up as top officials in Babylon, there was a published requirement.

“They were to be young men who were healthy, good-looking, knowledgeable in all subjects, well-informed, intelligent, and able to serve in the king’s palace. They were to be taught the language and literature of the Babylonians.”
Daniel 1:4 GW

Can you see areas to work to become attractive to kings: Are you strong and healthy? How good do you look or do you belong to the “I don’t care” gang or the female version of “Who is looking at me?”. How many subjects can you take on confidently? Are you aware of global developments?

Maybe the standard there was too high, let’s see what was said of David when Saul had a vacancy in the palace staff

that must be filled- His Personal Assistant of Emotional Restoration.

See the Curriculum Vitae of young David who got the appointment:

Saul told his officials, “Please find me a man who can play well and bring him to me.” One of the officials said, “I know one of Jesse’s sons from Bethlehem who can play well. He’s a courageous man and a warrior. He has a way with words, he is handsome, and the Lord is with him.”
1 Samuel 16:17

Wait- What is one thing that you are good at and you can do well? Do you talk like the palace or do you just speak anyhow?

Some people are just like, “Introduce me and let me meet that person”. When you are introduced, would you be able to deliver competently? Or will you just leave with a selfie for social media?

Joseph was introduced to Pharaoh because he was competent and he sure could deliver. Aside, he also would not appear just anyhow.

That customer you treated badly can be twenty referrals lost. Develop competence. Pray. Build your competence also.

CONFESSIO

I build competence in my work and profession. Doors of opportunities are opened to me. I will deliver to my world.

DAY 12

HOW TO GET ACCESS 4 (THE POWER OF GIFTS)

Text: Proverbs 11:24 NKJV

There is one who scatters, yet increases more; And there is one who withholds more than is right, But it leads to poverty.

We were in a conference where the speaker made a reference to how a relationship I connected them with in the city they are in has blessed them tremendously. I began to meditate about how I got into that relationship with a dear father:

I returned from a speaking engagement and met his wife in Eruwa. I had not heard from this father in years. I heard he was now a Bishop. I sent a gift to him. It was a necktie that I was given as an honorarium. He was so amazed. Today, I have a perpetual open door in his home and I can say in his heart.

Friends, gifts are door openers. Jesus lamented once that the children of the world are smarter in their ways than the sons of the kingdom.

“Worldly people are more clever than spiritually-minded people when it comes to dealing with others.” Luke 16:8 GW

Why? The children of the world know the power of access to men of influence. They would use bribes. We have something greater than bribes. We have love. We have wisdom. We must learn to deploy both.

The scriptures spoke about how profanely powerful a bribe can be. Bribes can pervert judgement. We have seen this play out in corrupt systems at times.

“A wicked man taketh a gift out of the bosom to pervert the ways of judgment.” Proverbs 17:23 KJV

“And his sons walked not in his ways, but turned aside after lucre, and took bribes, and perverted judgment.” 1 Samuel 8:3 KJV

However, when you have built relationships and invested in relationships, things that are meant to work in your disfavour can turn out for your good.

Gifts can turn away anger also:

“Try giving a secret gift to the one who is angry with you and watch his anger disappear. A kind, generous gift goes a long way to soothe the anger of one who is livid.”

Proverbs 21:14 TPT

You will be limited in life even if you are a prayer warrior but your relationship with men is terrible – The prophecy of Elisha can help the widow but her relationship with her sons and her neighbours was also a leverage. You must never joke with people.

Be a giver also.

CONFESSIO N

I am not stingy. I am a giver. I give the more, I abound the more in all things. I honour people with my giving.



HOW TO GET ACCESS 5 (THE POWER OF RIGHT WORDS)

Text: Colossians 4:6 NIV

Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone.

A dear daughter and her fiancé paid us a visit and in the course of our conversation, we began to share about how demanding it would be travelling regularly for marriage counselling amidst the challenges of our nation. I began to explain to them how to talk to the host pastor with honour and respect.

A lot of people have lost the privilege to be favoured simply because of how they speak. Even though they have good reasons, they lost great opportunities because they do not know how to speak honourably.

Good reason quoted with dishonourable speech will always end up in disfavour. Why? The dishonour will be such a terrible odour covering the good reason. Eventually, the good reason will be grounded and requests will be denied.

Evil men can have their way because they know how to use deceitful speech and package fake conduct while good men will be stranded with good hearts but lack the ability to speak to the heart of men.

The answer you give will determine whether you will return with joy or not:

A man hath joy by the answer of his mouth: and a word spoken in due season, how good is it!
Proverbs 15:23 KJV

You must regularly cry to God for the blessing of the right words at the right time.

Nehemiah knew how to speak to a King.

He got all his requests answered. Daniel knew how to speak to the messenger of the king, his answer got him and others some respite. Nathan knew how to speak to a king, he got a king on his face in repentance. John the Baptist also spoke to a king but he was imprisoned and was beheaded eventually. There is power in how you say things.

In life's journey, people sometimes are not angry at what you say. At times, it is how you said it that provoked anger.

We have been admonished that even when it is the truth, it must be spoken in love.

But speaking the truth in love may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ:
Ephesians 4:15 KJV

The truth spoken without love will lead to a negative impact. You must learn to speak the truth in love at all times. Speak the truth in love to your spouse, children, colleagues and others- you will win their hearts and get the results you seek.

CONFESSIO N

I am wise in speech. I do not dishonour people with my words. I speak the truth in love.

DAY 14

TWO EQUATIONS THAT YOU MUST NEVER BE

Text: Ephesians 5:16 AMP

making the very most of your time [on earth, recognizing and taking advantage of each opportunity and using it with wisdom and diligence], because the days are [filled with] evil.

I was teaching my young ones in the college. While trying to explain the concept of time, energy, wisdom and seasons to them, we came up with two simple equations.

First: Time Plus Energy without Wisdom equals the life of a lot of young people.

What does that mean? A lot of young people have time and they have a huge dose of energy but unfortunately, they lack wisdom. A young person must invest ample time and high energy into seeking wisdom.

Second Equation: Little Time plus little energy plus regrets equals the life of quite some old people.

What does that mean? Most old people now have a variant of wisdom called regrets. Regret is wisdom that now lacks opportunity for expression. It lacks time and does not have energy. That is the life of many old people. Their words begin with "I wish" or "If I could..." or "If I were your age again".

Friends, when you are young the devil steals your time and your energy. He is a thief of both. He ensures that young people waste time and energy on what does not

count. Why? By the time you become wise, you will realise that you now lack the energy and no longer have the time to execute what you should have done with your youthful life.

What then should be the equation of the life of a wise man? Time plus Energy plus Wisdom equals a productive life. When you use your time and energy with wisdom, it will surely pay off.

Hear what the Proverbs said:

People ruin their lives by their own foolishness and then are angry at the Lord.

Proverbs 19:3 NLT

What choices are you making?

What equation describes your season?

CONFESSIO N

I am full of strength and wisdom. My lifetime is not a waste. I am awake to destiny.



IF YOU DO NOT SWEAT IN PLANNING, YOU WILL SWEAT IN EXECUTION

Text: Romans 12:11 KJV

Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord.

We were planning for our annual convention. In one of our strategy meetings, I said to the team, “Let us walk mentally through all the events of the convention: pre-convention, in-convention and post-convention matters”. It was mentally stretching but we saw the loopholes in advance. We ended up making very minimal adjustments at execution. We did not have to start running around.

Your mind is a gift from the Lord. Engage it! Some believers have abused the grace of God. They are constantly looking for a miracle while they abuse divine principles.

For instance, you ask a Christian who is planning to start a business, “How will so and so get done?”. The common answer is “The Lord will do it”. We agree the Lord will do it but most times, it is a quick cover-up for the inability to process an issue till you get to a point of light. It is a cover-up for mediocrity.

There are Christian meetings that are bereft of an excellent spirit. Why? They gave excuses while planning. They believe a miracle would just happen.

As a matter of fact, thinking is hard work and few people engage in it. If you have been to a meeting where you see the organisers running around at the last minute, you already know that poor thinking was in the background.

Listen, your mind must be fruitful. Engage it. Think through things. Process issues. Look at matters circumspectly. Paul advocated that:

Don’t act thoughtlessly, but understand what the Lord wants you to do.
Ephesians 5:17 NLT

Therefore, do not be vague and thoughtless and foolish, but understanding and firmly grasping what the will of the Lord is.
Ephesians 5:17 AMPC

God wants you to engage your mind. Take time to meditate on that idea, that issue or that business plan or that ambition. Do not use “Christianese” to excuse yourself. Think through and break through.

Those who think before execution get the highest rewards. Those who act without thinking always sweat and get little or no reward for their labour.

CONFESSION

I do not allow mental indolence. As I think and make plans, I am inspired by the Holy Spirit.

ATOM

Anuoluwapo
Temiloluwa Ola Ministry

GROOMS NIGHT

HEART TO HEART MEN'S MEETING

with Pastor Temi Ola

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OF EVERY MONTH**

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DAY 16

DO NOT SUFFER A BLOW

Text: Exodus 32:26 KJV

Then Moses stood in the gate of the camp, and said, Who is on the LORD'S side? let him come unto me. And all the sons of Levi gathered themselves together unto him.

I was visiting a doctor and friend at work when I saw a young lady with a fully swollen mouth. My friend said to me that she had a broken jaw. That was even worse. How did she get it? She got in between two people exchanging blows in a bar.

First, there is no in-between in the things of the kingdom.

You are either good or bad:

For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.

II Corinthians 5:10 NKJV

You are either hot or cold:

"I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot. I could wish you were cold or hot. So then, because you are lukewarm and neither cold nor hot, I will vomit you out of My mouth." Revelation 3:15

Lukewarmness is not welcome in this kingdom.

You are either righteous or unrighteous.

"All unrighteousness is sin..."

I John 5:17 NKJV

You are either serving God or serving Mammon:

"No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon."

Matthew 6:24 NKJV

You must make up your mind early whether you want to be fully committed to God or you want to be a borrowed vessel in the hands of the devil. Do not sit on the fence.

In the game of sports, you rarely see a fan of a football club support another club. It is not permitted in sports. It is not permitted in the kingdom also.

A lot of times, believers cannot live with conviction because they want to live a life of convenience.

Jonathan loved David but he did not want to leave his father, he did not reign with David as he prophesied. He died in battle alongside his father. There is no neutrality. Choose your ground.

In the battle, there is no middle ground. The one who stays in the middle without choosing a side lacks defence and is the worst hit.

Like Moses asked, let me ask you also: "Who is on the Lord's side?" Friend, there is no neutral ground.

CONFESSIO

I pledge my allegiance to God. I am given to kingdom service. I am on the Lord's side.

DAY 17

PRAY IN MEN, PRAY OUT MEN

Text: Numbers 22:9 NIV

God came to Balaam and asked, "Who are these men with you?"

I was in the office just some six weeks after I stepped into Eruwa to answer the call of God into full-time ministry. Every vision needs men even though I did not know it in this manner then but God showed up faithful.

A dear one whom I had known from my teenage years walked into the office and mentioned it was his birthday and God said he should come and see me. The rest today is history. He is also working with me full-time in ministry.

There is nothing God has committed into your hands that you will not need to pray men to join the vision and pray out some men who will want to hinder the vision. You must begin to do it very early in the vision.

The devil attacks the vision from infancy also. Herod told the wise men that he wanted to also worship the newborn king. The plan was not to worship. The plan was to terminate the programme of redemption. Divine plans were bigger than demonic moves. However, it took a sensitive father and obedient wise men to outsmart their scheme.

The easiest time to infiltrate a vision is always when it is still at the commencement phase. As the visioneer plants, the enemy will also want to add his seed. You must reject the seeds of the enemy.

The devil fights first by infiltration and

not opposition. Even when the Israelites left Egypt, there was a category of the huge exodus that was called the mixed multitude. They joined the movement from the beginning.

The Psalmist gave us an example of prayers to pray in this regard:

Send thine hand from above; rid me, and deliver me out of great waters, from the hand of strange children; Whose mouth speaketh vanity, and their right hand is a right hand of falsehood.

Psalm 144:7

There are strange children. They are vision destroyers. They do not build with you but are ready to tear down whatever you are building. May you enjoy the gift of discernment.

Before anything starts – ministry, business, career, marriage or whatever it is, remember to pray in men and pray out men.

CONFESSION

In the name of Jesus, I am blessed with a discerning spirit. I enjoy the blessing of the right men in my life's journey.

DAY 18

NEVER SAY WITH PASSION WHAT YOU ARE MEANT TO SAY WITH WISDOM

Text: Proverbs 12:18 NIV

The words of the reckless pierce like swords, but the tongue of the wise brings healing.

We were having a friendly talk over dinner when we remembered an incident that happened. We had a bad generator and Irewamiri was not happy about it. I told her that night, "Do not let it get at you. Let's rejoice in the middle of it all". We had a good laugh when we remembered how quickly matters degenerated into a disagreement.

In retrospect, we concluded that what is meant to be said with wisdom must never be said with passion. Passion is good. Wisdom is better. It is not the energy that is needed but the result that is required.

Never say with passion what you are meant to say with wisdom. Communication is not just about what is said but about how it is said and when it is said.

If you are strategic with words, you can get what others struggle to have. Daniel made us know that there is such a thing as speaking with tact.

Then Daniel returned an answer which was full of prudence and wisdom to Arioch the captain or executioner of the king's guard, who had gone forth to slay the wise men of Babylon.

Daniel 2:14 AMPC

The answer Daniel gave saved his life and bought him more time to find a solution to the crisis in the kingdom. Good intentions wrapped in unwise words will lead to disaster. Watch how you speak.

There were two prophets who delivered messages of correction and warning to kings. The situation was similar. They had both taken another man's wife. One even killed the husband to cover his tracks.

Prophet Nathan went to King David and he got the king to repent of his hideous act. He became a regular part of the king's decisions from then.

Then David confessed to Nathan, "I have sinned against the Lord." Nathan replied, "Yes, but the Lord has forgiven you, and you won't die for this sin.

2 Samuel 12:13 NLT

John the Baptist spoke to King Herod about Herodias. He ended up in prison and eventually, he was beheaded.

For Herod had arrested and imprisoned John as a favour to his wife Herodias (the former wife of Herod's brother Philip). John had been telling Herod, "It is against God's law for you to marry her."

Matthew 14:3

Even when you have a message from heaven that is burning heavily in your heart, it is important to ask God for wisdom to deliver it to your generation. Passion must not replace wisdom.

Nathan delivered a bitter truth in the capsule of a parable. David sentenced himself with his mouth. John the Baptist said the truth definitely but the reaction of the king was different yet the king was actually afraid of the popularity of John.

Herod wanted to kill John, but he was afraid of a riot because all the people believed John was a prophet.

Matthew 14:5 NLT

Passion is great. However, never say with passion what you are meant to say with wisdom.

CONFESSION

My speech is dictated by wisdom. I am not ruled by emotions. I am ruled by the Spirit of wisdom.

DAY 19

THAT IS NOT HOW THEY GOT THERE

Text: Hebrews 4:11 NKJV

Let us therefore be diligent to enter that rest, lest anyone fall according to the same example of disobedience.

I was awake when it was time to sleep. I really wanted to sleep but I could not. I picked up my phone and started scrolling through social media.

It dawned on me after a while that I could use that time to pray. Well! That I began to do. The first thing I perceived in my spirit after praying for a while were these pinching words:

“That is not how they got here”

I knew what the Lord was saying. He was making me know that champions are not groomed by distractions. The more distracted you are, the less honour you receive.

Whatever is a distraction to you is already eating deep into your role in kingdom advancement. It takes distraction for the strong to become a victim of less. Whatever wins your attention is stronger than you.

It is a “Lord” that you cannot say no to. Whatever you cannot tell “no” has become your Lord. If it is hard to shut down your phone and focus on your growth, you know who your lord is. When it is hard to say no to roaming eyes to focus on your purity, you know who your lord is.

How are kings defeated? The answer is simple- when their attention is stolen. And who is in the best place to give counsel to a king? Someone who has raised a king.

The sayings of King Lemuel contain this message, which his mother taught him. O my son, O son of my womb, O son of my vows, do not waste your strength on women, on those who ruin kings. It is not for kings, O Lemuel, to guzzle wine. Rulers should not crave alcohol. For if they drink, they may forget the law and not give justice to the oppressed. Alcohol is for the dying, and wine for those in bitter distress.

Proverbs 31:1

You are a king but the question is “What is distracting you?”

Pay attention to those who have gone ahead. Find out about their sacrifices. You will not be expected to pay less.

CONFESSION

I am committed to my vision. I rid myself of distractions of all forms. I am not given to distractions.

DAY
20

YOU WILL NOT STAY LONG BEFORE THE PORTALS OPEN

Text: Jude 1:20 NIV

But you, dear friends, by building yourselves up in your most holy faith and praying in the Holy Spirit.

I was with a beloved one and I began to ask questions about their marital journey. When we got to the point on communication, he said that it had dropped. That it has declined so badly that when they sit together, there is not a lot to say or talk about.

I asked how it used to be. He mentioned that it used to be fluid. I asked why it was no longer the same. He mentioned that it was because they did not sustain the flow of communication.

It is the same with our relationship with God. Do you notice that if it has been a while since you prayed, the longer it has been, the tougher it is to reconnect to God?

One realm that you should desire to get to intimacy with God is the realm where your thoughts carry the weight of prayers. Also, desire the realm whereas words are been spoken, heaven is backing it.

And it shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear.
Isaiah 65:24 KJV

There are times you pray for about five minutes and you hit the gushers of the Spirit and there is an overflow. Why? There has been consistency built over time. It comes with a unique advantage.

However, when you have not spent time in prayer for a long time, it can take one hour and at times even more to hit the gushers. Why? Distance and time have caused a dryness in spirit.

When a cup is full and you give it a slight push, the content will spill. Some believers are like that. There are however some that would need to be filled first. They are not in an overflow season at all.

Consistency bridges the gap in the Spirit. Do not be discouraged. The best thing to do when you have not studied and prayed in a long time is to study and pray. Do not let feelings keep you away. You will get back into the depth.

Fight for consistency. Pick an hour of the day and consecrate it to the Lord for a start. It works.

CONFESSION

I exercise my spiritman in prayer. My spiritual senses are activated. I discern the mind of God per time.

DAY 21

PREPARE FOR OPPORTUNITIES BEFORE THEY COME

Text: Proverbs 16:1 NLT

We can make our own plans, but the LORD gives the right answer.

A protege reached out to me and said, “Pastor, we need to open a domiciliary account. Some people may want to give to you in foreign currencies to support the work”. I felt a bit bad but promised to work on it. I had the opportunity to open one earlier but ended up not pushing through at that moment.

Years ago, when we used to get water when it rained, if we were leaving the house, we positioned buckets at the edge of the roof so we could have some water if it rains. We also have water channels for gathering water running from the roof into big drums or tanks. We had not seen the rain but we were always prepared.

Life is about preparations. The fact that you have not seen it does not mean you should not prepare for it.

Faith is also about preparations. The fact that it is not yet seen does not mean it does not exist. You must begin to prepare for what you desire.

Now faith is the assurance (title deed, confirmation) of things hoped for (divinely guaranteed) and the evidence of things not seen [the conviction of their reality—faith comprehends as fact what cannot be experienced by the physical senses].
Hebrews 11:1 AMP

Most young people will always say they want a God-fearing person and they add a long list of other qualities they desire. The question is when it rains, are your buckets already outside? That is, do you have the same qualities that you are looking for? If not, it is just a mere wish.

If you are trusting God for enlargement, you must be extending your territory and creating room for more.

“Clear lots of ground for your tents! Make your tents large. Spread out! Think big! Use plenty of rope, drive the tent pegs deep...” Isaiah 54:2.

If you want a job in a multinational, are you following those working there also on Social Media platforms? Do you check to see the requirements that the company is putting out? Or are you lost in irrelevant platforms engaging in unproductive things?

No matter how much the pastor prophesies over you, a prophecy that interacts with preparation is the one that leads to a promotion.

If you desire a promotion, work for the new level that you desire. Do not do the work of a manager and expect the post of a senior manager. Do your best. Over-deliver.

Keep the buckets out. It will rain. If possible, build a reservoir. If you can, dig a well. Be prepared for your opportunities. Your preparation can end up creating your opportunities.

CONFESSION

I position myself for greater things. My opportunities will not meet me unprepared.

DAY 22

HOW YOU TREAT PEOPLE IS AN IMAGE OF WHO YOU ARE AND NOT WHO THEY ARE

Text: Matthew 7:12 NLT

Do to others whatever you would like them to do to you. This is the essence of all that is taught in the law and the prophets.

He spoke with entitlement. He believed that the way he treated the person and the issue was normal. He would not allow anyone to speak to him anyhow. He replied to every abusive word with a dose of his own also. I felt his pains but would not choose his ways.

I asked him, "Can a Samsung remote control work on a Panasonic television set?" He responded in the negative. I asked why. He responded, "Because there is no component of the Panasonic television set in the Samsung remote control".

Beloved, how you treat people is not a reflection of who they are but who you are. When you treat people with dignity, it is a sign that you are a dignified person. When it is otherwise, you also portray the same.

Jesus treated people with dignity from childhood till death. Fame was never a barrier. Even on the cross, he was still treating people in a dignified manner.

Even if you are the boss, the way you speak to your employees speaks volumes about who you are. Correction and rebuke do not have to be done in profane words. You do not have to talk to them the same way that you were trained- with abusive words.

Anytime I spend time with artisans and craftsmen, I am appalled at the volume of curses that are exchanged as jokes or as corrections at times. The order must change. Your words tell the volume of who you are.

Here is the word for masters when relating with apprentices but can apply to employers relating to employees and to all believers in

extension:

Masters, it's the same with you. No abuse, please, and no threats. You and your servants are both under the same Master in heaven. He makes no distinction between you and them.

Ephesians 6:9 MSG

No abuse.

No threats.

If you are privileged, even when you are trying to help the "less-privileged" (I use the word with some caution), do it with honour.

When you read the story of how the rich man treated Lazarus, it said much more about the rich man than Lazarus. At first glance, you will forget the state of Lazarus but will be appalled at the wickedness of the rich man. Why? How you treat people says so much about who you are.

No matter how people treat you, let your response show that you are a person of dignity and honour. Insist that you will not get into mudslinging with anyone.

As a believer, Christianity places you at a unique height, let nothing (no offence, no disrespect) pull you down to levels that demean the price that Jesus paid for you- His blood!

CONFESSION

I treat people around me with dignity. I do not walk in dishonour.

DAY 23

YOU DO NOT NEED A TITLE

Text: Acts 9:10 NIV

In Damascus there was a disciple named Ananias. The Lord called to him in a vision, "Ananias!" "Yes, Lord," he answered.

The day I was leaving Akwa-Ibom State after my service year, I remember that it was the Corps Members' Fellowship Bus that helped me to the airport. Amazingly, it was a full bus. I still remember the disappointment on the face of another colleague when she saw that the bus was already full.

When we got to the airport, one of the staff asked, "Who is travelling?" When he realised that it was just one person, he was forced to ask, "Are you the outgoing 'papa' (the president)? They said "No". "Was he an executive member?" It was still a No. Someone added, "We could have been more than this". We had a good laugh. I did not occupy any office.

I even have a little journal of things that colleagues and friends wrote about me. Someone went around with a journal saying, "Temi is leaving, write a note about him". I was really grateful.

I realized that my service year was dedicated to impact. On my last Sunday as a teen teacher in church, a teenager walked up to me squeezed something into my hands, and whispered, "Please do not stop praying for us". They were all shocked that I was already leaving.

You do not need a title or an office to be a blessing. When God needed someone to reach out to Saul, the one who persecuted the church, he did not send an apostle or any of the pillars of the early church, it was a dear brother called Ananias. Ananias did a great work with the assignment of the Lord. He was initially scared, but he obeyed the Lord.

Now there was a certain disciple at Damascus named Ananias; and to him the Lord said in a vision, "Ananias." And he said, "Here I am, Lord."

Acts 9:10 NKJV

Can the Lord trust you to impact lives without a title? If your Pastor can find an "Ananias" in you, he would be so relieved and grateful.

What will make you an Ananias?

First, you are a disciple. It means you have made a commitment to hear, obey, and practice the teachings of Jesus. Such people do not need any prodding to serve the Lord.

Second, you are committed to your devotion. You know the discipline of a quiet time. You are devoted to praying and the study of God's Word. You are disciplined. What a joy you will be. Ananias heard the Lord speak to him. What a joy to have someone who knows when the Lord is speaking. They are led by the Spirit of the Lord as sons of God.

Third, you are a disciple who can disciple others. You are constantly on the lookout for new souls to follow up till they are strong and rooted in Christ and the Local Church. Christ will surely be proud of you. Your pastor would have been relieved of great work also. The work of ministry and impact will also multiply that way.

You do not need a title to make any impact. All you need to be is a disciple. Disciples are men who follow Jesus Christ and are willing to go the extra mile for the Lord. They do not need titles.

Will you say to The Lord, "Here I am" also just like Ananias? That is all that is needed

Grace.

CONFESS I O N

I am an impact maker. I make impacts for the kingdom wherever I find myself.

DAY 24

HOW TO CONQUER STRANGE HABITS

Text: Hebrews 12:1 NIV

Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us.

I grew up seeing the changes in the world of technology. I saw the diskettes and some of the “big box” visual display units. I saw how these things began to change right before us.

As a young boy, I was visiting with an uncle during that era. He had a computer and internet linked to it. When I got the opportunity to browse one day when I was alone at home, the links I looked for were pornographic.

Being an amateur, someone discovered when they saw the history list on the system. I denied it.

During my first stint in a university, I had my first access to pornography. My roommates had video discs of it staring at you in the face. Now, here is my hypocrisy – I will go and hide when they are watching. But when they are not around, I indulge in it. They thought I was the good boy.

These are the days that pornography is accessible at a click. You carry it with you anywhere you are. You are drawn to it at the click of a button. It comes for you so hard that it seems so difficult to stand. Listen! You can win the war.

Know this- You can never overcome any strange habit that you keep hiding. Temptation thrives on the ground of secrecy. As long as it is hidden, it is powerful. It loses its power when you stop denying and hiding.

In your intent to become accountable and open so you can win the battle, do not look for someone that you will be “comfortable” with and “anonymous” with. Let it be someone who can hold you by the hand and ask you tough questions. Tell a mature person in Christ around you. Let that demon lose its sting on you.

Sin is comfortable when your ego keeps it hidden. It feeds on your ego but then bites hard again, and you fall harder every next opportunity. When sin sees you trying to escape, it fortifies its walls all around you. Break the hold by refusing it a place to hide.

Hear the word of the Lord:

You must catch the troubling foxes, those sly little foxes that hinder our relationship. For they raid our budding vineyard of love to ruin what I’ve planted within you. Will you catch them and remove them for me? We will do it together.
Song of Songs 2:15 TPT

There is a blossoming relationship between God and you. Will you let the foxes destroy the vine?

CONFESS I O N

I sever from sins that entangle. I am free from all addictions. Christ has made me free.

DAY 25

HONOUR GIVES BIRTH TO HONOUR

Text: 1 Peter 2:17 NLT

Respect everyone, and love the family of believers. Fear God, and respect the king.

On my way to preach, the Lord reminded me of a vital lesson I learnt years back listening to the Father of the faith who pioneered the ministry that invited me. The Lord then instructed me to hold on to a “Thank You” Seed. I obeyed as I was instructed.

Interestingly, this Father in the faith got to hear about what I did and blessed me with more than triple of what I brought to him as a seed. I was shocked.

First, never stop appreciating people from whom and places from where you have learnt major lessons in life. Take a review and find a way to say Thank You. Grateful people are scarce. Most people say Thank you in their hearts but never express it as an action. Out of the ten lepers who were cleansed, only one came back to say Thank You.

Gratitude is scarce. Do not become part of the statistics of ungrateful people. Outsiders, at times, are more grateful than insiders. The only leper who returned to say Thank You to Jesus was a Samaritan. Most pastors are better honoured outside their churches. Turn the table with you. Say thank you today to your pastor.

Second, it is very rare to outgive fathers. God gave us Jesus Christ. We can never outgive that. It is impossible. Abraham gave all he had to Isaac. That record cannot be

beaten by whatever Isaac has to offer. Fathers will always outgive you. Do not hold back when you have opportunities to give to a teacher and father. Do it well. Do it without expecting a thing in return. Just say Thank You.

Honour would always give birth to honour. Gifts open the door of access to the heart of kings. Most people hang around kings thinking of what to get. When you hang around a king, please think about what you can give and contribute. That is the password into greater and deeper realms. Be a giver.

Honour your teachers.

Remember the charge of Paul to Timothy:

Give double honour to spiritual leaders who handle their duties well. This is especially true if they work hard at teaching the word of God.

1 Timothy 5:17 GW

Who would you love to say “Thank You” to today?

CONFESS I O N

I have a heart of honour. I honour my God-ordained father and teachers with my time and resources.

DAY 26

THERE IS A POSITION THAT RECEIVES

Text: Genesis 35:1 NIV

Then God said to Jacob, "Go up to Bethel and settle there, and build an altar there to God, who appeared to you when you were fleeing from your brother Esau."

I had an appointment to keep with my spiritual father but it seemed it was going to be a bit of a hectic day for him. I reached out to his Personal Assistant. He explained how the day had turned out to be very busy but he made a very important statement:

"Pastor, please stay here. This is where he will pass, once he sees you, the matter is settled".

That made it easier to see him.

Friends, there is a place to stay so you can receive. You cannot just be anywhere and expect to receive the blessing of the Lord.

You cannot stay in sin and expect the grace of God to abound. You cannot stay in dishonour and expect the hand of God to be upon your life. You cannot be in mediocrity and expect the honour of those walking in diligence. There is a place.

Zacchaeus as a strategic thinker had to find out where Jesus would pass through. It may look casual but the things of God have channels they flow through. If you are wrongly placed, you will get nothing.

Second, there is also a posture for those who will receive. Elisha knew that placement was important. He wanted to stay by the side of Elijah. But Elijah then told him that posture is also important:

"You have asked a difficult thing," Elijah replied. "If you see me when I am taken from you, then you will get your request. But if not, then you won't."
2 Kings 2:10 NLT

Simply put, you need to concentrate so you can receive. If you are distracted, you will get nothing.

Can you imagine that I left the place where the Personal Assistant told me to stay? Can you imagine that Zacchaeus did not see placement as important? Can you imagine that Elisha decided that he needed to focus on other things at the time? No!

Life requires attention. Encounters require attention. Assignments require attention. That is why the devil fights with distraction.

Do not leave where God has told you to stay. Do not leave where the Lord has placed you. Stay there. Have the right attitude. Surely, your time will not pass you by.

CONFESSION

I remain in God's placement for my life. I will not miss my season of opportunities. I am rightly placed.

DAY 27

LATE YET LOADED

Text: Proverbs 27:3 NKJV

For as he thinks in his heart, so is he...

I was late for a flight. By the time I arrived at the airport, the counter was already closed for check-in. Fortunately, I knew someone working with the organization. When he was trying to convince his colleague, the question the colleague asked was, "Do you have any luggage to check-in". I quickly replied in the negative when I saw her attitude. Everything on us could be carried as hand luggage.

In life's journey, some arrive early but some arrive late. There is something worse than arriving late- it is having the baggage of bad attitude, unresolved unpleasant issues and ungodly patterns.

A lot of people end up sabotaging themselves. Some people blame every other person they have met in life yet see nothing they have to improve on. They are simply perfect and without blame.

Some things must be quickly dealt with when you realise that you are running late in life. Sit back and ask yourself- What am I doing inappropriately? What has to change?

There are times when it is the mind that has to be renewed. There are people desiring wealth but with a poverty mindset.

There are times that it is hurt and bitterness. The mind has been so affected that everything is seen through the screen of pain and hurts. Before they realise it, the pattern has repeated itself.

Some people desire great homes and marriages but all they saw were dysfunctional families. Once the image is poor, the outcome will also be poor.

The scriptures spoke about the nation of Israel thus:

If they had longed for the country they came from, they could have gone back. But they were looking for a better place, a heavenly homeland. That is why God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he has prepared a city for them.

Hebrews 11:15

If the mental image says "poor" and a man is trying and working hard, the reality will be "poverty". Why? As a man thinks in his heart, so he is.

What do you have to deal with now? There are flights ready for you in destiny but what baggage are you carrying?

The man at the Pool of Bethesda had gotten used to the condition that when he was asked whether he wanted to be made whole, he could not even say "Yes". He had a picture of the method that God should use. Mercy prevailed.

Work on your mental image. Deal with that hurt. Then get ready to fly.

CONFESS I O N

I walk the journey of life with a healthy mindset. My heart is postured for greatness. My mind is daily renewed.

DAY
28

EVEN RIVERS NEED THE RAIN

Text: Ezekiel 34:26 NKJV

I will make them and the places all around My hill a blessing; and I will cause showers to come down in their season; there shall be showers of blessing.

As we passed by the bridge that was at the border to our town, Irewamiri said, "Wow, the water level has risen". I responded, "It is because it has been raining".

When it rains, the rivers overflow.

Naturally, the rain makes a lot of difference. The rain impacts the soil and causes dry land to become fertile ground. The rain touches the rivers and causes them to overflow. The rain brings some coolness by reducing the heat of the day. The rain is the joy of farmers.

Jesus said to us that there is a river of living water in the belly of every believer. The river of living water is a reference to the Holy Spirit.

He who believes in Me [who adheres to, trusts in, and relies on Me], as the Scripture has said, 'From his innermost being will flow continually rivers of living water.'" John 7:38 AMP

The rivers of your belly will not flow when there is no connection to the rain of the presence of the Lord.

For as the rain and snow come down from heaven, And do not return there without watering the earth, Making it bear and sprout, And providing seed to the sower and bread to the eater, So will My word be which goes out of My mouth; It will not return to Me void (useless, without result), Without accomplishing what I desire, And without succeeding in the matter for which I sent it. Isaiah 55:10

When there is intercourse between the Word and the Spirit, it leads to remarkable changes. It results in an overflow. It was the effective team that facilitated creation.

Once the Rain of the Word falls on our ground, it leads to an overflow in our spirit that results in thanksgiving.

Let the word of Christ live in you richly, flooding you with all wisdom. Apply the Scriptures as you teach and instruct one another with the Psalms, and with festive praises, and with prophetic songs given to you spontaneously by the Spirit, so sing to God with all your hearts! Colossians 3:16 TPT

A man in the overflow season is a man full of joy and thanksgiving to the Lord. Such a man is unstoppable. Such a man becomes a force.

Until the spirit be poured upon us from on high, and the wilderness be a fruitful field, and the fruitful field be counted for a forest. Isaiah 32:15 KJV

This is proof that the impossible can become possible. The unusual can happen. There will be great multiplication.

CONFESSION

Every dryness around me is over. Lukewarmness comes to an end. I enter a season of abundance of rain. My ground will bring forth life.

I MISINTERPRETED HER KNOCKS

Text: Psalm 120:1 NLT

I took my troubles to the LORD; I cried out to him, and he answered my prayer.

I needed to catch some rest and I wanted to stay away from the children for a while. I got into the room and closed the door. After a while, I heard Olive calling “Daddy, open the door”.

I thought it was one of her tantrums or an attempt to get Dad’s attention. I did not realise that she was heavily pressed and was coming to her potty. She called finally with a different tone and said, “My Daddy”. I knew that call was different. I ran to the door and she was already doing the major right at the door. I felt bad. I apologized. I valued my comfort more than the cry of my seed.

God is not like that. He knows the cry of a son and daughter in need. He hears when a generation is crying for help. God is never far from the cry of the needy.

When in obedience, Abraham sent Hagar and Ishmael out of the house for harassing Isaac, the Lord still watched over them in the wilderness. God is so loving. What Abraham conceived in disobedience was still cared for by God. God loves lives. He heard the cry of little Ishmael in the wilderness.

“But God heard the boy crying, and the angel of God called to Hagar from heaven, “Hagar, what’s wrong? Do not be afraid! God has heard the boy crying as he lies there. Go to him and comfort him, for I will make a great nation from his descendants.”
Genesis 21:17

He heard the cry of the Israelites in Egypt and sent Moses to them:

“Look! The cry of the people of Israel has reached me, and I have seen how harshly the Egyptians abuse them. Now go, for I am sending you to Pharaoh. You must lead my people Israel out of Egypt.”
Exodus 3:9

The Psalmist sure knows this dimension of God. He saw God show up at all times that he penned it down in these words:

God is our refuge and strength, always ready to help in times of trouble.
Psalms 46:1 NLT

And when Jesus was resurrected, he assured the disciples that he would constantly be with them.

“And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”
Matthew 28:20 NLT

Do not let anything make you doubt. God is always with you and He will never leave or forsake you:

“For God has said, “I will never fail you. I will never abandon you.” So we can say with confidence, “The Lord is my helper, so I will have no fear. What can mere people do to me?”
Hebrews 13:5

Men may not know what you are going through but God understands you perfectly. He will not abandon you to yourself. You will not be put to shame. You will enjoy divine strength. It will end in joy.

For the believer, there is not just light at the end of the tunnel, there is light in the tunnel.

CONFESSION

I am not alone. I am not stranded. God is my refuge and help.



COUNSEL FOR THE NEWLY MARRIED

Text: Ephesians 4:29 NLT

Don't use foul or abusive language. Let everything you say be good and helpful, so that your words will be an encouragement to those who hear them.

We have a monthly couples' hangout in our local assembly. One day, we asked ourselves what the first quarrel in our marriages was. Almost everyone had a challenge with communication in marriage in one form or the other. There were simply disagreements over what the spouse said or what the spouse meant.

The importance of communication in marriage cannot be overemphasized. You have someone to share the rest of your life with therefore you must get it right in communication.

What we do not realise most times is that even something as simple as how food is presented communicates worth and value. For instance, there are men who eat better when they are out of their houses e.g. when visiting friends than at home. The spouse wonders what the challenge is.

It is simple- people go the extra mile when receiving guests. They bring out the best plates and dishes. Most people keep the best in their home for visitors. We need to repent.

You must master the use of the right words and speak at the right time. At times, the disagreement is not because of what is said but because of how it was said.

You must master each other's body language. What does that eye signal mean? When we went to visit people, as young ones, and my father began to shake the car key, that sound meant it was time to go. You must master what

the mouth has not uttered also. It may take time but be willing to allow the bonding.

Listening is a form of communication also. You must ensure that you are a good listener. Ask questions for clarification rather than assuming. Assumption breaks down communication. Do not assume. Don't listen to reply; listen to understand.

One major trap that you must outgrow fast is giving the silent treatment. You must never allow a disagreement to degenerate into malice. Your greeting at home must not become formal. Dear wife, your husband is not the Holy Spirit so he may not know your mind but he sure can hear your words when you speak. Learn the art of speaking rather than the silent treatment.

Finally, when speaking avoid the use of words that attack the person rather than resolving the issue at hand. For instance, do not say something like "You always..." Simply focus on the issue at the moment.

Do not allow the devil a little foothold at all. Resolve all matters on time.

CONFESSION

I communicate rightly in my marriage. My words edify and build up my spouse. We enjoy peace on all sides.

DAY
31

WITH THE HELP OF THE HOLY SPIRIT, YOU CAN BUILD YOUR MARITAL BOND

Text: 1 Peter 4:8 NLT

Most important of all, continue to show deep love for each other, for love covers a multitude of sins.

We came back that evening. Irewamiri walked into the kitchen to get our dinner ready. I was tired to the bones and I felt entitled to some rest. At that moment, the Holy Spirit said, "Go and help her in the kitchen". I obeyed. It turned out to be a great evening of bonding.

With the help of the Holy Spirit, you can build your marital bond. The problem is we have people in marriage who listen to their flesh and feelings while ignoring the Spirit of the Lord.

There is no believer who loves the Lord, studies the Word and hears His voice that should struggle with building a great marriage. The challenge is always in these forms:

First, we get too busy to listen. It is possible to go through life and not access the help of the Holy Spirit. We get lost in doing things our way and by ourselves that we lose sight of the help of the Spirit of God.

Second, we think we are smarter than the Holy Spirit. How? You choose your will above his prompts and instructions.

When you are home as a husband and you sense to do what you will not traditionally do, that is the Holy Spirit helping you grow and bond with your spouse. Do not take it for granted. Romance does not have to always be expensive when you listen to what the Lord asks you to do per time.

Think of a couple like Joseph and Mary. I honestly believe that one of the reasons that heaven chose Mary was because of the kind of man that Joseph was. Heaven did not just need the womb of Mary; Heaven needed the heart of Joseph.

So, when Mary says her pregnancy is from the Holy Ghost, God did not want a man who would make a rash decision without thinking or a man who would begin to broadcast without seeking the face of God.

But as he was thinking this over, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, Joseph, descendant of David, do not be afraid to take Mary [as] your wife, for that which is conceived in her is of (from, out of) the Holy Spirit.
Matthew 1:20 AMP

Do you take time to think things over? Do you just make decisions at the spur of the moment? Heaven can speak to a man who spends time thinking but hell can use a man who is hasty and rash in decision-making.

What would have happened to their union and worse, to the vulnerable saviour of the world if Joseph did not know when the Lord spoke or had a heart that was fully yielded to the Lord? We thank God for Mary but we do not take the Josephs in our life for granted.

What is your union like? Is it helped by the Lord or led by your emotions? Two captains cannot stir the ship. Once the Lord sees that you are sold out to your emotions, He will never intrude on your decisions. Make up your mind to have a Spirit-led marriage.

CONFESSION

My spouse and I are led by the spirit of God. We discern the mind of God for every life's moment. We are helped by the Holy Spirit.



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