

COMPASS

DAILY DEVOTIONAL

**FOR
FEBRUARY
2025**

**NOT
FOR
SALE!**

Temiloluwa Ola

Practical thoughts for a productive day

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- FEBRUARY 2025 -

COMPASS

DAILY DEVOTIONAL



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Practical thoughts for a productive day

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Introduction

Welcome to February!

This month, the Hand of the Lord will do you good. His goodness will keep you greatly.

This month, I want to encourage you that devotion is not just about devotionals. It is a heartfelt fellowship with the Lord. Spend time in the Word. Spend time in Prayer.

Beloved, when devotion drops, distraction rises and the devil finds an opportunity to strike. Do not let the truth of God's Word slip from your heart.

I admonish you by the mercies of God that you also press in the place of prayer. When you think you have prayed enough, that is when you should push in prayer some more.

Grow in Grace.

Grow in Faith.

Stay on course.

The Lord bless you

temilOluwa Ola

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

DAY 01

WHY COMFORT COULD UNDERMINE YOUR PRAYER LIFE

Text: Ephesians 6:18 NIV

And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord's people.

I had a meeting with a couple of proteges, and I focused on those who had left Nigeria for other nations. As we interacted over their spiritual growth, one common trend among all of them was, "Pastor, our prayer life is not as strong as before." I knew something was not right.

It took some weeks, but a statement I often heard struck me differently. People often use it to describe the "prayerfulness of Christians" in our nation. What is the statement? "When you travel out, you will realise that ninety per cent of your prayer points are answered because they have a system that works".

There are people whose prayer altars are now gathering dust. They find it hard to pray, fast or study. In the worst-case scenario, some have abandoned what they call "this God thing".

Friends, if your prayer life dips because you are now in a place where your needs are met, there is a challenge with your doctrine of prayer. Remember, the doctrine is the regulator of character.

That assertion is based on the premise that "Prayer is transactional". Most people go to God because of their needs. If prayer is basically because of your needs, you will stop praying once your needs are met.

It is the "lost son" syndrome. You will go to the father saying, "Give me". Once you get it, you forget the father. The only time you remember the father is when there is another need. It is a transactional relationship.

But prayer is more than transactions. Transactions are fine. At least Jesus taught us to ask for "Our Daily Bread" and "Deliverance from Evil." But remember that was never the starting point.

Prayer is first and foremost relational and not transactional. Even when I have all the bread

and I am delivered from "road accidents", and "armed robbery" because I am now in a system that works, I do not forget that prayer is about:

- **OUR FATHER**- This points to a relationship. He provides. He protects. He heals. He delivers. But the finest revelation you can have of God is that He is our Father. I pray because I have a Father with whom I love to relate with.

- **HALLOWED BE YOUR NAME**- This points to reverence. Even if all my needs are met, I pray because I revere Him. I adore Him. I know what it means to honour and fear the Lord.

- **YOUR KINGDOM COME**: This points to the royal life of a believer. I am a prince of God's kingdom. There are a lot of things that do not look like the culture of His kingdom. I stay in prayers to see souls saved, saints edified, and revival breaks out wherever He has planted me.

- **YOUR WILL BE DONE ON EARTH**: This is God's desire, and it must be your drive. It is not everything in your vicinity that looks like the will of God. Why don't you pick up a list of those things and pray? Comfort has closed down churches. Picnics have replaced prayer meetings. Nudity is driving out modesty. Witchcraft is disguised as prophecy.

Can you see that prayer is not just transactional now? If you stop having prayer points because you are now in comfort, you are already defeated. Comfort can be a form of persecution that kills passion for the Lord and His will. Deal with it.

CONFESS I O N

*My prayer life is not regulated by conditions.
I pray by the strength of the Holy Ghost.*

DAY 02

PRAYER IS NOT TOO MUCH

Text: 1 Thessalonians 1:17 KJV

Pray without ceasing.

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 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 later 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 9:21-22 NLT

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.

CONFESS I O N

I am given to the life of prayer. I am strengthened in the place of prayer.

DAY 03

LET THAT STRANGE DESIRE DIE ON THE ALTAR

Text: Leviticus 6:13 NLT

Remember, the fire must be kept burning on the altar at all times. It must never go out.

One of my brothers gave his car to someone else to drive. The car overheated. The person did not see the warning signs. He kept driving the car until the engine stopped running. Obviously, that led to greater problems.

Coming to the altar reveals tendencies within us that require attention. A man who avoids the altar continues to display fleshly tendencies, ignoring the warning signs.

When the issue arose between Lot and Abram about pastureland, the tendencies of Lot began to manifest.

It was obvious that Abram had been to a place and touched a reality that Lot had not. It was clear that Lot had missed an opportunity to crucify the flesh.

What tendencies did Lot manifest?

He showed that he valued things more than he valued God or God-ordained relationships. He did not care. Abram said there should be no strife. But for Lot, strife was not a big deal. He passed on that contentious spirit to his staff members.

Lot also showed that he was carnal. He would make destiny decisions in carnal ways. He looked and chose a land that looked exactly like Egypt. The Egypt desire was still living strong within him. The taste and longing of Egypt were still alive in him.

Before Abram made it back to the altar, he had the same tendencies that Lot had.

He made destiny choices with a carnal mind. He went down to Egypt in famine without seeking the mind of God. It was a survival move.

He did not mind negotiating with covenant relationships. He placed Sarah in his arms because of his plans. He was not bothered at all. He was comfortable riding over Sarah's well-being to have his way.

The difference between Abram and Lot was simple. One had been to the place of the altar while the other had not. One had laid down his tendencies in submission and worship. He had surrendered his desires. He submitted his choices to the Lord. His emotions were now under the Lordship of the One who called him. He would not make flimsy choices again.

Lot battled with various works of the flesh:
Galatians 5:20 TPT

[20] chasing after things instead of God, manipulating others, hatred of those who get in your way, senseless arguments, resentment when others are favoured, temper tantrums, angry quarrels, only thinking of yourself, being in love with your own opinions,

Abram had laid it all down at the altar.
Genesis 13:3-4 NLT

[3] From the Negev, they continued travelling by stages toward Bethel, and they pitched their tents between Bethel and Ai, where they had camped before. [4] This was the same place where Abram had built the altar, and there he worshipped the Lord again.

Some tendencies can only be dealt with when you offer yourself a living sacrifice. That is the place of transformation. Your mind is renewed. The tendencies you have to misbehave are brought under the Lordship of Christ.

The man of the altar went ahead to become so great, but the man who lacked an altar started to blow until he burst. There was nothing to show in the long run.

He took all the signs for granted. He ignored the warnings. God rescued him from Sodom, but he still went back there until he lost all – marriage, family, and all he had acquired.

What tendencies do you have?

Are you still moving on like it is no big deal?

Have you decided to boycott the place of the altar?

Are you building a house that will last or a house of cards?

Show me your altar. I will show you a man that will last. Show me a man who lacks an altar, and I will show you a man who will soon expire.

Which are you?

CONFESSION

I awake to my priesthood. I gain revelation and insights in my altar affairs. I am not stranded.



IT IS POSSIBLE TO LIVE ABOVE SIN!

Text: Romans 6:14 NKJV

For sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are not under law but under grace.

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."

CONFESSION

I have a new heart and a pure spirit. I do not have a heart of stone. I have a heart that desires to fulfil God's will.

DAY 05

RUN AWAY FROM FRIENDS WHO EXCUSE SIN

Text: Proverbs 1:10 NIV

My son, if sinful men entice you, do not give in to them.

A young man narrated once how he had a friend who earned significantly less than him but would always invite him to the bar. His friend would order drinks and bring girls. This young man would be the one to pay the bills. There were times he would have no business spending the night at a hotel but he would pay for his friend who stayed back with 'his girls'.

His freedom came the night he had reason to leave his friend at the bar. He went home. His friend kept calling him to come and pick up the bills. He said, "Sir, I could not imagine I was using my money to sponsor the lifestyle of a man who did not have the means. Sir, there were nights I paid as much as three hundred thousand naira".

If you will overcome temptation, you must run away from any company that indulges and excuses sin or sinful patterns. Most men who fall into sin are surrounded by a company that excuses sin.

Let's track it scripturally:

Judah was in a bit of a rough season. He had lost his wife. To refresh himself, he decided to spend some time away visiting with a friend who was shearing sheep.

On the way from the field, Judah saw a woman dressed as a prostitute:

Judah noticed her and thought she was a prostitute since she had covered her face. So, he stopped and propositioned her. "Let me have sex with you," he said, not realizing that she was his own daughter-in-law. "How much will you pay to have sex with me?" Tamar asked.

Genesis 38:15-16 NLT

He began to negotiate with the valuables in his life and his friend still did not warn him or stop him. He went ahead to sleep with a 'prostitute' and his friend, Hirah, did not stop him:

"What kind of guarantee do you want?" he replied. She answered, "Leave me your

identification seal and its cord and the walking stick you are carrying." So Judah gave them to her. Then he had intercourse with her, and she became pregnant.

Genesis 38:18 NLT

Guess who was willing to bring the payment so they could recover Judah's identification seal and its cord and the walking stick? You guessed right.

Later Judah asked his friend Hirah the Adullamite to take the young goat to the woman and to pick up the things he had given her as his guarantee. But Hirah couldn't find her. Genesis 38:20 NLT

Do not hang around 'sin-enablers'. Do not hang around those who excuse the things that should die in your life. Do not keep the company of those who even suggest it or give a hint of it to you. If you are surrounded by compromising men, you will soon compromise.

What killed Amnon? It was a strange desire that was supported and fanned into full-blown obsession by a strange counsel his cousin gave. The same cousin came to announce his murder to King David.

Remember the proverbs:

Walk with the wise and become wise; associate with fools and get in trouble.

Proverbs 13:20 NLT

Check your company today. Do you have 'sin-enablers' around you? Why not begin with an audit today?

CONFESS I O N

I sever from sin-enablers. I am blessed with godly associations.

DAY 06

HAVE NO CONFIDENCE IN THE FLESH

Text: Philippians 3:19 NIV

But God forbid that I should boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.

There was an episode about eleven years ago. We were preparing for a major meeting. After a young man volunteered to drop off some of the stewards who worked till late that evening, a young man, a young lady, and I were left in the church.

The young man approached me and said, "Good night, sir." He lives just beside the church. I asked the young lady to wait so I could drop her off. The street to her house was a lonely one and it was late. It was about a minute's drive. I wanted to ensure she was safe.

But the Holy Spirit intervened, prompting me to ask the young man to wait. This way, we could drop the lady off together, and I could return him to his destination afterwards. Thus, I would avoid being alone with the lady.

You would understand if you knew the size of the community I was pastoring. It would have been absurd to see a young unmarried pastor dropping off a single young lady about 9 pm. That day, I would have known the difference between "Pastor, good evening sir" and "Pastor, Pastor, good evening sir" or "Passsssttttoooooorr, good evening."

I always ask three questions:

Was she a bad girl? Not at all.

Was I a bad boy? No! But you must not put confidence in the flesh.

Could anything have happened in a short one-minute trip? Yes! Yes!

The devil does not need a minute to sow the seed of lust. If the devil succeeds in sowing a seed, he will return to look for the harvest.

There is no wisdom in dancing around a pit and boasting that you are skilled at avoiding pitfalls. The wisdom you need is to stay far away from the pit. If you have to start explaining it, then you do not need to start it at all.

For we are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh. Philippians 3:3 KJV

There is an unfortunate cycle that many people get caught in.

It begins with overconfidence. Overconfidence says things like, "It can never happen to me," but ends up saying, "I did not know how it happened." At times, it is "I can handle it" but ends up saying, "I thought I could handle it". Pride still goes before a fall.

It continues with a fall. Overconfident men will always end up falling into a pit. Afterwards, you have the phase of regret and condemnation. The person feels down and demoralized. Often than not, the person backs it up with a vow like, "Lord, kill me if I do it again" (thank God for prayers God did not answer). After a while, he is trapped in overconfidence and back in that same cycle.

Peter boasted in the flesh that he would never deny Jesus Christ. He ended up denying Jesus three times in one night. If you become bloated by overconfidence, you will likely end up in the dust.

Listen to the warning of Apostle Paul:

So, beware if you think it could never happen to you, lest your pride becomes your downfall. 1 Corinthians 10:12 TPT

Do not be caught in that trap. Lean on God and His grace.

CONFESS I O N

I am not trapped in questionable situations. I do not trust in my flesh. I put my trust in the Holy Spirit.

DAY 07

HOW TO KEEP YOURSELF FROM FALLING

Text: Jude 1:24 GNT

To him who is able to keep you from falling and to bring you faultless and joyful before his glorious presence.

I did about eight months in a State University and I knew that every seed that my parents planted in me as regards the fear of the Lord was under intense attack. I was surrounded by various vices that could derail a teenager leaving home for the first time.

In those eight months, I had the opportunity to drink alcohol, get loose sexually, get lost in lust and many other things.

There was just one thing that kept me sane. I travelled home at least once a month. It was a solid reminder of where I was coming from and who I am. I may not have grown so much spiritually but it kept me from falling into a slimy pit.

One of the strategies of the devil to get a man into sin and keep him in sin is isolation from fellowship with God and men who can hold him accountable.

Before Judah married a Canaanite and slept with his daughter-in-law (thinking it was a prostitute), there was a departure from his brethren.

It came to pass at that time that Judah departed from his brothers, and visited a certain Adullamite whose name was Hirah.
Genesis 38:1 NKJV

A man who will fall would first take a walk away from all eyes that can probe or ask him questions. A man who will fall will begin to distance himself from fellowship

and friendships of accountability. When he begins to skip meetings, trouble starts brewing.

If you have a job that takes you constantly from home and your home church, you need to double up on your accountability structures. Create a mode that will ensure the bridge is not burnt. Be generous with information. Join a circle of believers early anywhere you are.

If you travel out and you need to leave your family for a season, make sure you do not say things like, "At last, I can rest from church". That is the mindset that the devil is attracted to.

If you lose touch with home, you will likely forget your home training. Beware!

Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling, And to present you faultless Before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy, To God our Savior, Who alone is wise, Be glory and majesty, dominion and power, Both now and forever. Amen.

Jude 1:24-25 NKJV

CONFESSION

I stay in touch with my spiritual training ground. I do not swell in isolation. I will not stumble.

DAY
08

BE SHAMELESS IN THANKSGIVING

Text: Psalm 13:6 NKJV

I will sing to the LORD because He has dealt bountifully with me.

Sometime in August 2021, I led the church to our landed property. We went to praise God on the land before the commencement of the project. While giving thanks, I felt prompted to lie down right there amidst the shrubs. Goats occasionally strayed onto the property.

Interestingly, it was the first time I had worn that lovely white shirt. My first thought was of the shirt and the potential for it to get dirty. I initially resisted, but eventually, I obeyed. I lay down right there on the bare ground. I gave God thanks and handed over the project to Him. He took it all over from there.

Beloved, when it comes to thanksgiving, please hold nothing back from the Lord. Thanksgiving is one of the ways that we show our gratitude and acknowledge the Lordship of God in our affairs. As a matter of fact, thanksgiving deflates pride.

King David was not one to hold back his thanksgiving. It was a major part of his life.

He praised the Lord at all times:
Psalm 34:1 KJV

I will bless the LORD at all times: His praise shall continually be in my mouth.

He had a pattern of dancing with all his might:
2 Samuel 6:14 KJV

And David danced before the LORD with all his might; and David was girded with a linen ephod.

He praised the Lord in ways others thought that he was losing it. He did not care. He said I will do it even more.
2 Samuel 6:20 NLT

When David returned home to bless his own family, Michal, the daughter of Saul, came out to meet him. She said in disgust, "How

distinguished the king of Israel looked today, shamelessly exposing himself to the servant girls like any vulgar person might do!"

David's response was simple yet instructive:
2 Samuel 6:21-22 NLT

[21] David retorted to Michal, "I was dancing before the Lord, who chose me above your father and all his family! He appointed me as the leader of Israel, the people of the Lord, so I celebrate before the Lord. [22] Yes, and I am willing to look even more foolish than this, even to be humiliated in my own eyes! But those servant girls you mentioned will indeed think I am distinguished!"

How should you give thanks?

First, do it for the Lord. Dance before the Lord. Be conscious that it is for Him. Consciousness helps your attitude.

Second, do it in reflection of His goodness to you. Think deeply about what the Lord has done and what He will still do. Celebrate before the Lord.

Finally, be willing to look foolish before the Lord so He can make you look good and great before men. If you package before the Lord, you will lose that tiny reputation you are trying hard to protect.

God gives more grace to the meek. Do not let your heart be lifted in pride. Praise Him when he desires it and how he desires it whether it is convenient for your ego or not.

Will you praise Him shamelessly today?

CONFESSION

I cultivate the culture of thanksgiving. I give thanks in advance for God's blessings.

DAY 09

APPRECIATE EARLY AWARENESS

Text: Psalm 90:14 KJV

O satisfy us early with thy mercy; that we may rejoice and be glad all our days.

I remember the first time I had a pull towards my spiritual father. Some beloved ones were talking about ministry exploits. They shared testimonies of what the Lord had done through him. I did not know that it registered in me. But his name came up in my second year at the university.

When I eventually gravitated towards him, I only extended an invitation to minister at a meeting. About three years later, it was another invitation to minister.

Later on, I related to him as a mentor rather than a father. I lacked awareness about the depth of the relationship. I was getting some answers, but the training I needed for destiny was not as strong as it should be.

In reflection, the moment I understood the dimension and depth of the relationship we were to share, everything changed. At times, I felt so terrible that my awareness was really poor. The blessing that understanding has brought to my life, our marriage, my calling, and my ministry is massive.

Let me begin with a prayer for you- May you enjoy the blessing of early awareness. May you enjoy the grace and privilege of discernment. May you not wake up late in destiny.

There are men who lack awareness:
Hosea 13:13 NLT

Pain has come to the people like the pain of childbirth, but they are like a child who resists being born. The moment of birth has arrived, but they stay in the womb!

The womb that nurtured a child can kill the child if the child does not respond to the signals of labour. Some get assisted. A lack of awareness can kill.

There are men with late awareness. If you wake up late, you will have to run with the urgency of destiny. You cannot joke when others joke. You need to run with the urgency of a latecomer.

There are men with early awareness: Joseph woke up to responsibility at a very young age.
Genesis 37:2 KJV

[2] These are the generations of Jacob. Joseph, being seventeen years old, was feeding the flock with his brethren; and the lad was with the sons of Bilhah, and with the sons of Zilpah, his father's

wives: and Joseph brought unto his father their evil report.

He began to align in that direction and everything about his life is a lesson for us to date.

Jesus, as our example, was operating in destiny awareness as early as the age of twelve.
Luke 2:42 KJV

And when he was twelve years old, they went up to Jerusalem after the custom of the feast.

He stayed back in the temple. He was not being forced to stay in church:
Luke 2:43 KJV

[43] And when they had fulfilled the days, as they returned, the child Jesus tarried behind in Jerusalem; and Joseph and his mother knew not of it.

He interacted with teachers of the law and priests. His love for learning was obvious. He did not have to be forced.
Luke 2:46-47 KJV

[46] And it came to pass, that after three days they found him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them and asking them questions. [47] And all that heard him were astonished at his understanding and answers.

He knew what it meant to be a part of the Father's business.
Luke 2:49 NKJV

And He said to them, "Why did you seek Me? Did you not know that I must be about My Father's business?"

No matter your season, thank God for the blessing of awareness and discernment. Pray for your children that they will come into awareness early.

God bless you.

CONFESSION

I discern early my defining moments in life. My children enjoy the grace of early awareness.

DAY 10

APPRECIATE CONSISTENCY

Text: Proverbs 22:29 NLT

Do you see any truly competent workers? They will serve kings rather than working for ordinary people.

When a dear one mentioned that he wanted to resign to launch into entrepreneurship. I wanted to ask one or two questions. I asked whether he had already mastered the business end of his current employment. Is he still thinking like an employee or he is now thinking like a business owner?

Do you just see how your salary is paid, or do you also now know how the funds to pay the salary are made? Are you just leaving because you are angry, or do you know how the business works? Do you know how the organisation keeps running when contracts, sales or supplies are not coming in for six months?

Some just want to launch out into ministry because they are hurt and want to prove a point. You are starting on the wrong foot.

You must be a student of systems and structures. One of the things you must master is consistency. Systems speak about the machinery that makes a vision work.

Many have been doing a thing in increasing measures for the past thirty years. When you see such visions still standing, never badmouth them. They started as little seeds, but they have become big trees. Some have become a forest.

In Mathematics, they will always ask you to show the workings. If you do what our generation called “wuru wuru to the

answer” (guesswork), surely time will expose you.

When you see a man taking time to dig the foundation, do not laugh. He knows the height that he is heading. Some houses look similar but with weak foundations. When you look at both, they look the same. However, when storms and crises hit or when tests and trials come, you will know the one that will stand the test of time and the one that boycotted quality assurance. Matthew 7:24-27 NLT

[24] “Anyone who listens to my teaching and follows it is wise, like a person who builds a house on solid rock. [25] Though the rain comes in torrents and the floodwaters rise and the winds beat against that house, it won’t collapse because it is built on bedrock. [26] But anyone who hears my teaching and doesn’t obey it is foolish, like a person who builds a house on sand. [27] When the rains and floods come and the winds beat against that house, it will collapse with a mighty crash.”

Before you abuse any vision in a hurry, sit down and take stock. Look at the years of investment and consistency. Appreciate the consistency. Learn the lessons. Apply it to yourself.

CONFESSION

I build consistency in my business/career. I have the spirit of excellence.

DAY 11

APPRECIATE INTEGRITY

Text: Proverbs 11:3 NIV

The integrity of the upright guides them, but the unfaithful are destroyed by their duplicity.

While we were seeking landed properties for the ministry about eight years ago, we spotted one not too far from the rented property we were using. I eventually got the opportunity to see the owner of the land.

While we spoke and interacted about his property, he said to me, "If not that your father is not a greedy man, you should not be looking for land at all for your church. He could have amassed so much for himself". I understood perfectly what he was talking about. He did not have to say much.

We are in a society where men of integrity are no longer appreciated. But when you notice anyone who stands for what is right and lives in integrity, make sure you appreciate them.

One of the blessings that man must leave for his children is 'a good name'. A good name is a blessing.
Proverbs 22:1 NIV

A good name is more desirable than great riches; to be esteemed is better than silver or gold.

We are in a generation that says funny things like, "I would rather cry in a Range Rover than be happy on a motorcycle". It is weird.
Ecclesiastes 7:1b MSG

A good reputation is better than a fat bank account...

The songs of a generation speak of the spirit of that generation. We now have songs that promote and celebrate

questionable and ungodly things like rituals, theft, cheating and all sorts of vices. Why are we surprised by the strange things we then hear?

Listen beloved, there is a powerful scripture tucked away in the book The Second Kings, it says:
2 Kings 12:15 NLT

No accounting of this money was required from the construction supervisors because they were honest and trustworthy men.

Did you see that? Let's see it in the International Children's Bible:
2 Kings 12:15 ICB

They did not make the men tell how the money was spent. This was because the men were honest.

Can you be this honest?

Can you be this reliable?

CONFESSION

I am a (wo)man of honest report. I am not a person of questionable character. I have the fruit of the spirit.

DAY 12

WALK THE PATH OF HONOUR

Text: Romans 13:7 NIV

Give to everyone what you owe them: If you owe taxes, pay taxes; if revenue, then revenue; if respect, then respect; if honour, then honour.

At a point on the journey of ministry, there was a situation that was hurting. I knew I could not stay in offence, but it was equally tough to express love.

I was arriving in town, and I drove by the office of someone who had hurt me at a point. The Lord said to me, "Turn and bless him with the cash that is on you". That was strange. I was hesitant but I obeyed the Lord. It was not the easiest of all obedience then I must admit.

Greatness will always do what is right. Greatness will always tow the path of honour. Greatness will never undermine those who are deserving of honour or that it has been commanded to honour.

There are tests you are facing today that are simply your audition for greatness. If you are not obedient and courageous enough to tow the path of honour, you will be eaten up.

For instance, David had passed most of the audition for kingship in the first phase – His Father's House. There was a tougher second phase in The Palace of Saul. In the palace, it all started like he was the real star boy but before he could blink his eyes, scheming and plots to kill him began. There was an open display of hatred for him at a point.

How on earth would you keep on playing music for the man who wants you dead? He even threw a javelin at you once. He sent men to your house to bring you dead or alive even though you are his son-in-law. He wiped out an entire clan of priests simply because they gave you bread and a sword (the priests gave you the honour you deserve as an envoy but they paid with their lives and those of their wives and children)

If you get the opportunity to revenge, would you not seize the moment? Yes, you likely would. David was tempted to seize the moment. It was his test.

When he cut a piece of King Saul's garment, his conscience would not let him rest. That is the kind of heart that passes the audition for greatness.

In God's hall of greatness, the finest ranks are reserved for broken men and not just brilliant men. They are men who will follow through in obedience even at the expense of being seen as "foolish".

David still called King Saul, "My father". David still showed honour. His men would have wondered why he was not seizing the moment.

"God has surely handed your enemy over to you this time!" Abishai whispered to David. "Let me pin him to the ground with one thrust of the spear; I won't need to strike twice!" "No!" David said. "Don't kill him. For who can remain innocent after attacking the Lord's anointed one? Surely the Lord will strike Saul down someday, or he will die of old age or in battle. The Lord forbid that I should kill the one he has anointed! But take his spear and that jug of water beside his head, and then let's get out of here!"

1 Samuel 26:8-11 NLT

Some opportunities will look like the perfect clapback moment or the time of vengeance. If you look closely, you will see your examiner standing close by. Most times, it is a test of your heart.

Can you speak a blessing over someone who has hurt you deeply? You cannot go up while you exert effort trying to hold somebody down.

What you are doing is purchasing your freedom from the poisoned arrows that can mar you for life. Once you respond with love and walk in honour, you have left the track that the poisoned arrow is travelling on. Poison does not travel on the highway of love and honour. There is no way you would meet. If you stay in bitterness, the arrow will pierce your heart and you will not like who you become.

Will you walk the high road of honour?

CONFESS I O N

I walk on the pathway of honour. I do not operate in dishonour.

DAY 13

KNOW WHAT TO IGNORE

Text: Matthew 6:22 KJV

The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light.

When I got into ministry in Eruwa, there was one person I was scared of meeting. Why? I was not sure how he would take it when I told him that I had decided to abandon legal practice so I could serve the Lord full-time in ministry. Truly, I was scared.

As destiny would have it, I ran into him one evening heading home from work. There was no escape route. I had to spill the beans that day. This beloved cerebral visionary looked at me and said:

"Temi, a lot of people may not understand the decision you have made. They will likely call you names like stupid, foolish, or zealous for nothing. Do not mind them all". I was surprised. He then added, "When I was coming to Eruwa thirty-three years ago (as it then was), all my mates thought I was mad. But 33 years down the line, none of them have a better legacy than I do". It was a liberating conversation. I left him with wings ready to fly.

Beloved, greatness comes with huge demands. You must know what you want. You must know what to ignore. There are times it is painful but you must trudge on in faith. Sometimes, those who are closest to you may not even understand the purpose or vision you are running with.

Do you know we are the ones who read about Jesus Christ and see the awe of all that he did? For a long time, his family did not believe in what he did. There is a particular episode that sends shivers down my spine every time. They told Jesus that he was beside himself (simply put, he was acting insane). Reading it in my language (Yoruba) got me scared.

Then Jesus went home, but once again a large crowd gathered around him, which prevented him from even eating a meal. When his own family heard that he was there, they went out to seize him, for they said, "He's insane!"

Mark 3:20-21 TPT

While he was pursuing his vision and running after the assignment, his family called him 'insane'.

It was not just the only time. There was a time when his brothers told him that if he knew that he could do miracles, he should have shown himself to the world.

For no one does anything in secret while he himself seeks to be known openly. If You do these things, show Yourself to the world." For even His brothers did not believe in Him. John 7:4-5 NKJV

If you stop to attend to all situations, you will never become great. You must know what to ignore. You must know that there are some answers that only the future can give. Let the vision that speaks at the end settle the contention. The siblings of Jesus Christ eventually became a part of the early church.

Until the rod buds, the murmuring will continue. A budded rod is the answer to many contentions.

Buds will sprout on the staff belonging to the man I choose. Then I will finally put an end to the people's murmuring and complaining against you." Numbers 17:5 NLT

Focus on growth. Focus on the vision. Care genuinely about people. Walk in love with others but do not allow sentiments to cause you to derail on the path of greatness.

CONFESSION

I walk the journey of destiny with intense focus. I am not distracted. I will not derail.

NO SMALL THINKING

Text: Proverbs 23:7 NKJV

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

Some years ago, I called one of my beloved ones working in the ministry office to get me a sachet of milk. I handed over a thousand naira to him. He came back with the tiniest sachet of milk and plenty of change.

I was shocked. I needed the bigger size that cost almost a thousand naira then. He also said he was equally shocked and said he kept wondering why I gave him a thousand naira for a small sachet of milk.

He said it did not even occur to him that it was the bigger size. He had been used to buying the smallest sizes for many years. It was a mental shift for him that day.

Beloved, you will always shrink opportunities to the size of your mind. A small mind cannot birth big things.

When the Bible says "Be fruitful", it was meant to encompass all dimensions of a man's life.

You should have a fruitful spirit. Walk in love. Draw with joy. Live at peace with all men. Be patient in your dealings. Show kindness. Exercise self-control and others.

You have a fruitful body. There is the fruit of the body. This has to do with biological children.

We seem to forget that there is the fruit of the mind. Have you heard about the word "Brainchild" before? Your mind is meant to birth things. It was someone's mind that birthed the airplane. The telephone was someone's brainchild. The internet was someone's brainchild.

We must bear the fruit of the spirit. We must bear that of the body also. However, we must bear that to understate the fruit of the mind. It is the key to innovation and

transformation. It takes a fruitful mind to bring a chair out of a tree.

You cannot be great when you are lost in the world of small thinking. That was the error of the ten spies. They demeaned themselves because of their small mind:

And they gave the children of Israel a bad report of the land which they had spied out, saying, "The land through which we have gone as spies is a land that devours its inhabitants, and all the people whom we saw in it are men of great stature. There we saw the giants (the descendants of Anak came from the giants); and we were like grasshoppers in our own sight, and so we were in their sight." Numbers 13:32-33 NKJV

Their perceived status led them to small-mindedness. They said, "We are not able".

But the men who had gone up with him said, "We are not able to go up against the people, for they are stronger than we." Numbers 13:31 NKJV

But as for Caleb who had an exceptional mind, his thought was different. His mind captured the victory. He told the people, "We are well able"

Then Caleb quieted the people before Moses, and said, "Let us go up at once and take possession, for we are well able to overcome it."

Numbers 13:30 NKJV

What is the size of your mind? Broaden your scope. It will help even your faith.

CONFESSION

I am not small-minded. I think according to God's ability to work in me.

DAY 15

HOW THE HOLY SPIRIT SAVES YOU FROM STRESS

Text: Hebrews 12:25 NKJV

See that you do not refuse Him who speaks. For if they did not escape who refused Him who spoke on earth, much more shall we not escape if we turn away from Him who speaks from heaven.

Earlier in the day, as I walked from the living room into the bedroom, I noticed a small eraser on the floor. I had a prompt in my spirit to pick it up and keep it. I told myself, "I will pick it up later." I never did.

Later in the evening, Danielle made a mistake in her homework, and we needed an eraser. We began to look for it and we could not find it. We looked for others and found none. I realized that the Holy Spirit's instruction earlier in the day was to save me from stress later in the day. Eventually, Irewamiri found the eraser somewhere else and gave it to us.

Every instruction from the Holy Spirit is to save you time and energy. It will surely save you from stress. The Holy Spirit is our guide and teacher. You will surely land in trouble when you try to do things your way.

If you are a Child of God, you must know that you are not ordained to direct your steps. You must ensure that you do not take the prompts of the Holy Spirit for granted.

When you begin to allow your flesh to govern your life, you will see corruption and limitations showing up. The Holy Spirit will surely save you from troubles.

You must keep the communion of the Holy Spirit a constant feature of your life. Talk with him all day. Engage the Spirit of the Lord. Ask questions, and you will

get answers.

Often, I find myself searching for something, and only after a while do I remember that I should have asked the Holy Spirit. The very moment I say, "Holy Spirit, I need your help," there is a light that comes to my heart as to where it can be found. It has happened several times. Now, I would rather ask the Holy Spirit for help first.

Likewise, you can ask the Holy Spirit for strength to pray. He helps us in the place of prayer. You will discover that you have strength. You are not dozing as you pray. You can ask Him for help in the study of the Word of God. He is the Author. The scriptures will come alive. You can ask him for help with your marriage, parenting, ministry or business.

Let me close with the prayer of Paul:

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all. Amen.

CONFESSION

*I am attentive to the voice of the Holy Spirit.
I discern the mind of God for every situation
in my life.*



HANDLING STONES IN THE MEAL

Text: Ephesians 4:32 NLT

Instead, be kind to each other, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, just as God through Christ has forgiven you.

We were enjoying a great meal of rice, beans, plantain, and chicken. While savouring the sumptuous meal, my teeth had an unwelcoming crunch on a stone. I could not swallow the meal nor continue to munch on it. I stopped and walked from the meal to the nearest bin to spill the whole meal in my mouth. But I still returned to the meal to finish it all. The fact that there was a tiny stone in a spoon does not mean it is a meal full of stones.

One of the finest things about relating with people is that disagreements can be like your teeth meeting a piece of pebble. It should not be the end of the relationship. Deal with the pebbles and move on with the great meal. The only time it becomes a major issue is when it becomes a pebble in every spoonful of meals. You know that is a pattern.

This is also one of the amazing things about our Christian faith. A Christian may not be perfect, but he also does not take pride in shortcomings and sin. He deals with it decisively.

What are the chances that you will knock your feet against a stone on a short walk? Maybe a little chance. But if you return to tell us that you knocked your feet against the stone ten times on a short walk, we would conclude that you were practising football (or soccer).

Beloved, do not make a pattern of sinning and justify it. That is no longer you falling into temptation; you are already swimming in it. A driver who

keeps using the car to hit every obstacle cannot claim to be making a mistake. There is something more that is not right. Do not make a pattern of sinning and say it is a mistake.

John the Beloved told us:

Anyone who continues to live in him will not sin. But anyone who keeps on sinning does not know him or understand who he is. But when people keep on sinning, it shows that they belong to the devil, who has been sinning since the beginning. But the Son of God came to destroy the works of the devil. Those who have been born into God's family do not make a practice of sinning, because God's life is in them. So they can't keep on sinning, because they are children of God.

1 John 3:6, 8-9 NLT

And for the married ones, there may be pebbles that show up once in a while. Do not throw away your home. Address the issue and return to enjoying your marriage. Do not keep the pebble in your mouth. Do not store the issue in your heart. If you keep the pebble in your mouth, you cannot take another spoon of the meal. If you keep offences in your heart, you will not be open to receiving your spouse's love. Throw out the pebble. Throw out the offence. Focus on the sweet meal.

CONFESSION

I do not give place for offence. I relate to people by the wisdom of God.

DAY 17

MUMMY'S COUSIN AND THE DILUTED SOUP

Text: Matthew 13:25 NKJV

But while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat and went his way.

My mum shared a funny story with us some years ago. They had gone on vacation with her grandmother. Grandma would always prepare very rich "egusi" soup for them. It was always thick and full of fish. Once it was time for lunch while grandma was away, they would dish their meal and savour the delicacy.

But something strange began to happen: the standard of Grandma's egusi soup began to drop. They would come back to a watery-like soup and tiny pieces of fish. They managed it for a while, thinking Grandma made a mistake, but when it became a pattern, they voiced out and made a discovery.

Their older cousin would get home before them, he would feast on the rich egusi soup and the fish. When he has taken the best portion, he then adds water to dilute the rest. The reason why it was no longer rich was that a thief had entered the mix. The thief did not steal it all; he took a portion and diluted the rest.

First, the devil is also a thief. However, he is a unique kind of thief. The devil does not steal from you by taking away everything abruptly. He steals by diluting the original that God has prepared for you.

The strategy of the devil is not to necessarily stop you from praying, studying, or being consistent in church. He waits right after you have done all that to dilute all you have done. So, after you have prayed and fasted, he comes to tell you to turn stones into bread.

How does this 21st-century devil do it? He will offer you the option of binging on unedifying social media content. You will laugh at close-to-porn skits and even shake your head in disgust at times, but that is the diluting going on. You have turned stones into bread. Your hunger is legit but you have satisfied it through the wrong means.

Have you ever wondered how fast you can switch from a sermon that blessed you on a Sunday service to songs that do not edify your soul? He will let you listen to the sermon,

but he will dilute it with lewd lyrics that feed your soul while you just nod your head to the rhythm.

Watch closely: Do you remember the parable of the wheat and tares? A farmer sowed wheat all day. He went to sleep. When he woke up, he discovered that there were tares on his farm. He said an enemy had done this.

Kindly note that the enemy did not uproot the wheat. No! He left it there. He only sowed tares amongst the wheat. Have you ever eaten sweet beans and crunched on a tiny stone before? Exactly! You will most likely spit it all out. Is it clear? The enemy knows that once it is diluted, it will all likely get lost.

When did the enemy sow the tares? While men slept. When did Delilah scrape Samson's Hair? After lulling him to sleep. When did Jael give a deadly blow to Sisera, the army commander? When he slept.

Wake up! You cannot watch everything (skits, movies, etc).

Wake up! You cannot listen to every song.

Wake up! You cannot binge on all content.

Wake up! Do not take that diluted soup.

Your life can be richer than this.

Your walk of faith can be stronger than this.

Your prayer altar can be hotter than this.

Your desire for godliness can be stronger than this.

What diluted soup are you taking?

CONFESSIO

I keep watch over my territory. I defend against the Devil's infiltration. My hands are strengthened for exploits.

DAY 18

DISTRACTION, A SILENT KILLER OF INTIMACY

Text: 2 Kings 4:29 NKJV

Then he said to Gehazi, "Get yourself ready, and take my staff in your hand, and be on your way. If you meet anyone, do not greet him; and if anyone greets you, do not answer him; but lay my staff on the face of the child."

I did terribly as a young husband. One evening, I returned from work, and as my habit was, I picked up my phone and began to press it. I did not know Irewamiri had called me three times in an attempt to tell me something. I was so distracted that I did not know when she left our bedroom to another room. When I went to meet her, she was already angry about the whole thing. I had to start apologizing.

You can only sustain intimacy if you are focused. Distraction is a deadly weapon that has killed the flames of many relationships. There are distracted believers. They are children of God, but they have no focus on him. It is hard to sustain a time of prayer and study. Whatever distracts you have already conquered or defeated you.

In marriages, some men are so distracted that they do not notice the changes in their spouses. They do not notice when they make new hairstyles. They do not notice when they need their attention. Attention stolen is affection lost. You cannot sleep beside a sobbing spouse unawares. Wake up!

Some are distracted by work. In a bid to make ends meet, you lose the touch you have with your home. Be careful. Calm down. You need to find that string balance. Create time to rest and get refreshed. Do not get lost in the chase for survival that you lose what you already have.

A distracted husband can wreck an entire household. The distraction of David began a downward slope that caused great issues at home. He had sons that he did not correct. One ended up raping his sister. The second killed the rapist and planned a rebellion. The third that was never corrected almost staged a second rebellion. His home was a huge mess.

A distracted spouse is a ticking time bomb. It slows down the growth of the marital union.

Focus on the Lord and draw strength to focus on one another.

I repented that evening. I went to her and began to apologize. She did not accept my apology and kept pushing my hand away. I did not get angry.

Listen! It is manipulative to be wrong and still be angry at the same time. It is terrible. Why would you be the offender and still be angry? You have turned your anger into a tool of manipulation. Stop it. Change that pattern.

What is affecting the intimacy you have with God?

What is affecting your intimacy with your spouse?

Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder. Matthew 19:6 KJV

Beloved, it is a man who can put asunder. If you are that man, repent!

CONFESSION

I stay clear of distractions. My home grows in intimacy. My profession/business enjoys progress.

DAY 19

REFUSE TO GET INTO UNNECESSARY COMPETITIONS

Text: 2 Corinthians 10:12 NIV.

We do not dare to classify or compare ourselves with some who commend themselves. When they measure themselves by themselves and compare themselves with themselves, they are not wise.

As we walked towards the car that evening, Olive ran ahead to the car. As we got to the car, she called out to her sister and me, saying, "I got to the car first." Danielle's response was simple but profound. She said to her, "I am not in competition with you."

If you will overcome distraction, you must get rid of that strange pattern of unhealthy competition. It is absolutely unnecessary. Once a man is overwhelmed with competing, there are things he will lose sight of.

Let's begin with Adam and Eve trying hard to become like God when they were already made in the image of God. They lost everything in trying hard to become who they were already. When their eyes opened, they were already stripped naked.

How about Cain? He was blinded by competition. Instead of asking Abel what he did that made him excel in the sight of God, he resorted to competitive jealousy. He killed Abel. There are many fighting those they should be seeking answers from. There is a generation that kills their "Abels." Do not get distracted by competition.

Competition will distract you. Leah and Racheal got into unhealthy competition over their husband, Jacob. You only need to see the extent to which people will go to prove to others that they are better than them. They went to the extent of handing over their housemaids to Jacob so they could score cheap goals. Terrible! It does not end well. It led to a fragmented family. The sons of Leah ended up selling the son of Racheal. Have you checked out the motive behind their names before? You need to check it out.

This is the motive for Reuben: "So Leah became pregnant and gave birth to a son. She named him Reuben, for she said, 'The Lord has noticed my misery, and now my husband will love me.'" Genesis 29:32 NLT

For Simeon: "The Lord heard that I was unloved and has given me another son."

Genesis 29:33 NLT

For Levi: "Surely this time, my husband will feel affection for me since I have given him three sons!"

Genesis 29:34 NLT

For Judah, She eventually decided to praise God: "Now I will praise the Lord!"

Genesis 29:35 NLT

But that praise and thanksgiving short-lived the moment she got into competition with Rachael again.

Rachael gave her maid to Jacob, and when the second son landed, she could not hide the competition:

Welcome Naphtali: "Rachel named him Naphtali, for she said, 'I have struggled hard with my sister, and I'm winning!'"

Genesis 30:8 NLT

Leah fell into the trap and abandoned her praise to God to get her housemaid into the game also:

"Meanwhile, Leah realized that she wasn't getting pregnant anymore, so she took her servant, Zilpah, and gave her to Jacob as a wife."

Genesis 30:9 NLT

It is a strange cycle. This is not how God ordained you to live. You do not need the latest gadgets to prove a point to anyone. Calm down. Be secure in who God has made you. Life is a journey. Be patient. Stop unnecessary competition.

CONFESSIO N

I am not caught in the trap of comparison. I run my race with divine strength.

ATOM

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with Pastor Temi Ola

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DAY 20

WIN THE BATTLE OF 'PHONES' AND SOCIAL MEDIA

Text: James 1:14 NIV

But each person is tempted when they are dragged away by their own evil desire and enticed.

At one point in my journey, I realised that although I had productive tasks to complete, once I picked up my phone, it took time to refocus on what needed to be done. It was getting so bad that my phone became the last thing I pressed at night and the first thing I went for in the morning. I needed to be brutal with my decisions about this distraction.

Moreover, it took a toll on our marital bonding. I can imagine the miracles that would occur in many marriages if couples agreed to do away with phones at particular hours of the evening.

There are temptations you are naturally delivered from once you are away from your phone.

What can be done?

First, do not deny the fact that you spend excessive time on the phone. Come to terms with the fact that your phone and social media have become a distraction. If you are in denial, you cannot overcome the menace.

Second, as believers, we are used to fasting food, but you can also fast on your phone and social media. Make up your mind not to touch that phone or go near social media for certain hours of the day. You can fast until 6 p.m. for a week. Touch it for just an hour afterwards. Call it your retreat week. You will be surprised how your creativity will be unlocked.

Every weekday, I put aside my Android phone. I have found alternative devices without social media applications and now rely on email for communication instead of platforms like WhatsApp. As a result, my productivity soared, my mind became clearer and I gained more time for reading.

Listen, when if you are battling with indiscipline at any level, you must be brutal. If you are not, you will soon end up in greater issues:

- You will soon be struggling (if you are not already) with lust, sexual promiscuity and unfaithfulness in marriage

- You will have addiction challenges. Phone and social media is already proof that you have issues.

- You will find it hard to be financially disciplined. You will not be able to save or stick to a budget.

- You cannot stick to a routine.

It is really not about your phones and social media; it is the offshoot of a greater issue—lack of self-control.

But if you can begin by doing away periodically with your phone and social media, it would be a great win.

Try it. Find an accountability partner. Be faithful. You will see improvements.

Do not forget what the preacher said:

To everything, there is a season, A time for every purpose under heaven:
Ecclesiastes 3:1 NKJV

And remember this warning also:

People ruin their lives by their own foolishness and then are angry at the Lord.
Proverbs 19:3 NLT

Grace!

CONFESSION

*I am not controlled and ruled by social media.
I maximise the diverse opportunities it offers.*

DAY 21

LET IT END WITH YOU

Text: Ephesians 4:27 ESV

And give no opportunity to the devil.

I was walking down the staircase in Fajuyi Hall during my university days. A young man suddenly ran into me from the back forcing me down the stairs. I struggled to maintain a balance. When I got my stability, I turned around and smiled at him asking if he was not injured in any way or if he was fine. I continued my walk.

The young man ran after me and said, "Who are you please?" I still smiled and wondered why he asked. He then said, "I left my room angry. I was looking for who to provoke so I could transfer the anger. I am shocked you did not get angry. Please, who are you?" I smiled at him again. I walked away leaving him in his awe.

Beloved, you are a conduit of divine things. Refuse the devil the permission to use you as a means to transfer anything ungodly. You only carry and transfer godly things. Let nothing that is not of the Lord have a space to flow through you.

The devil needs vessels to transfer his product. Do not let him transport anger or lust or bitterness or envy or jealousy or hurting words through you. Do not become a borrowed vessel.

If you allow the devil to transport his products through you, you would lose divine things. For instance, anytime he succeeds in using you as a borrowed vessel for anger, you will lose peace. If he uses you as a vessel to transport lust, you have lost self-control. If he uses you to transfer hatred, you have lost love. If he uses you to transfer bitterness, you will lose joy or even kindness. Refuse it. Be a conduit of divine things only.

Now, you have to stop telling yourself that "Someone made you do it". The remote control of your emotions is not in their hands. Does it mean when they press "angry", you just get angry? Tell yourself: the remote control of my emotions is not with anyone. I choose divine response.

If a man is carrying water in his cup and I bump into him, it cannot spill oil. It will spill what he carries. Carry an overflow of love and graceful speaking. If people bump into you at any time, let graciousness flow from you. You are the blessed of the Lord. You are a conduit of divine things.

Jesus did not pass on the hurting words they threw at him on the cross. It ended with him. He transmitted love. He did not pass on the pain of the betrayal of Judas or the desertion of those who promised to stand with him. He passed on blessings.

What has to end with you today? You are God's Ambassador. Refuse to be a spokesperson for hell.

CONFESSION

Anger does not rest in me. I embrace meekness. I do not give the Devil a chance.

DAY 22

ARE YOU TRACKABLE?

Text: 2 Kings 5:26 NKJV

Then he said to him, "Did not my heart go with you when the man turned back from his chariot to meet you?..."

In the era just before mobile phones became popular, my mum travelled to see my sister at the university. She returned with great joy, and I heard as she shared with my Dad:

Upon arrival at the school, they went to look for her in her hostel. When they announced her name over the Public Address system, another student came out who was not her daughter. The Hostel Warden said she should be in the academic area, most likely the library.

They proceeded to the library. She described my Sister to the attendant, who said, "I think I know her. She came in some minutes ago. I know where she sits to read." He returned with her a few minutes later. Mum returned home so proud of her daughter.

Friends, one of the ways that you earn trust in life is by living a life of accountability.

Dear husband, can your wife always say with certainty where you are? When you return home late and are questioned, remember that anger is not the appropriate response. The response to that question is not "cover-up anger." She is asking because she is worried. However, if this pattern continues, her questions will soon arise from eroding trust. If you refuse to change and she keeps quiet, you do not win at last. Perish that thought! You are already losing your wife and your marriage.

There are young ones who complain that their parents do not trust them. Have you forgotten that trust is earned? How will they trust you when you bolt your door behind like a strong room right under their roof? They have to wait for about three minutes before you get to the door. Do you know they have questions already?

Now you really think they will trust you when you say you are going to a place. Why? You have not earned it. Trust is earned.

If you are in a church family, you will also need to earn that trust. You cannot be trusted with responsibilities when you appear and disappear at will. Even your ministry head cannot speak about where you are.

People who lose their place and trust always begin with "hiding things." That was how Samson began his decline:

And the Spirit of the Lord came mightily upon him, and he tore the lion apart as one would have torn apart a young goat, though he had nothing in his hand. But he did not tell his father or his mother what he had done.

Judges 14:6 NKJV

From that singular action, his decline began. It was easier to return to the same place.

After some time, when he returned to get her, he turned aside to see the carcass of the lion. And behold, a swarm of bees and honey were in the carcass of the lion.

Judges 14:8 NKJV

He did not stop there; he became comfortable consuming honey from the carcass and even shared it with others.

He took some of it in his hands and went along, eating. When he came to his father and mother, he gave some to them, and they also ate. But he did not tell them that he had taken the honey out of the carcass of the lion.

Judges 14:9 NKJV

Embrace the culture of full disclosure. Do not say half-truths. Do not get lost in strategic rationalizing. There are times I would buy Irewamiri a gift, and she would ask, "Darling, where did you get the funds for this?" I have to say it all.

One of the ways to survive the devil's antics is to build a strong sense of accountability. Sin does not always start as sin. It begins with breaking codes of consecration. You will do things that are not sinful but are also not expected of you. If you are not confident to mention it, do not start it at all.

It will help you.

CONFESS I O N

*I am accountable. I am not a vagabond.
I build systems of accountability around me.*

DAY 23

DO A FINAL CHECK!

Text: 2 Corinthians 5:16 NLT

So, we have stopped evaluating others from a human point of view. At one time we thought of Christ merely from a human point of view. How differently we know him now!

We needed a hotel to use for our guests during one of our major meetings. We decided to check out one that we had never used before. We went there some days before the conference to do a random check. We concluded that while it was not ideal, it was manageable.

However, just before we made the payment a day before the commencement of our conference, the team decided to do a final check- this time around, it would be at night.

It was not the same place we saw as manageable during the day- something had changed. The entire reception had the thickness of smoke. There were topless young men smoking from pipes and tubes, and it was not even the weekend yet. We knew we would never use that place. We moved on.

It is the same with commitment to new friendships, new business partners or any other thing in life. Do not be in a hurry to commit yourself to anyone or anything without an adequate revelation of who or what they are.

One of the sincere prayers you must pray before putting your all into anything or anyone is, "Lord, reveal this person to me." You cannot bank on your physical senses alone. It is a scriptural warning not to know any man after the flesh.

So, from now on, we refuse to evaluate people merely by their outward appearances. 2 Corinthians 5:16a TPT

You must exercise spiritual caution before you commit to anything or anyone. Let your discernment wake up. Even in friendship, you must exercise caution. Do not let excitement overwhelm your discernment.

A righteous person is cautious in friendship...

Proverbs 12:26a WMB

The righteous choose their friends carefully, Proverbs 12:26a NIV

Before you commit to anything or anyone, never joke with that restraint you sense in your spirit. Do not take the red flags for granted. If, indeed, you are a child of God, do not be in a hurry out of excitement. He who believes does not make haste. When anyone is putting pressure on you to do it now, buy it now, say Yes to their proposal now or whatever it is, do a second check to confirm if, indeed, the hand of divine favour is on it.

There is a concept that the previous generation called "buying a night product in a night market." It means you bought it in a hurry without an adequate check. When light dawns, you realise that what you bought was really "trouble."

If it unsettles you, check again.

If you are disturbed about it, check again.

If you sense a restraint, check again.

May the Grace of the Lord keep you from terrible mistakes that cannot be corrected.

CONFESSION

I discern the right relationships. I will not be entrapped in wrong associations.

DAY 24

THE DANGER OF “DISTANCE”

Text: Proverbs 27:17 NLT

As iron sharpens iron, so a friend sharpens a friend.

When we were done talking that day, he said to me, “Thank you for calling me, sir. I have been feeling very far, and I do not know what to do about it. This call has made a whole lot of difference.”

A relationship is serviced by communication. If you are not intentional with communicating, you will realize that intimacy begins to wane. If you do not become deliberate about prayer and study of the Word, your relationship with God will drop in quality.

I have had relationships that died a “natural death” because of the communication gap that was built. One of the things that begins to happen is that you realize that the longer it takes to reach out to such persons, the harder it becomes to reach out. Quality relationships can be lost to such patterns.

There are relationships you must never allow to wane- you must always give it your best. When the devil also wants to destroy a man, he ensures that he is far from voices that can hold him accountable and caution him in trouble.

The trouble of Samson did not begin with Delilah. Not at all! It began the day he started withholding important information from his parents. When he killed the lion, he said nothing. It was easier to go back to the same place to draw honey and lick it. It is always a “gradual” decline till it becomes a mess.

You are blessed when people who should hold you accountable still come into your space to encourage or warn you. There are times when it can be an uncomfortable conversation. It can be about a pattern of behaviour that they

have noticed. Take it humbly as great feedback. Work on it!

No matter how busy I am, there are relationships that I will never take for granted, and there are places and meetings that are a must for me. Why? They are voices of rectitude. They are places of instruction. They are people who stir me to deeper things.

If there are calls you must make today, do not postpone it till tomorrow. I ran into a dear one once. She was in shock. I was excited to see her. She kept apologizing about how distant she had been. I led her to Christ and discipled her as a young convert. Over time, there are patterns that I have seen that are not Christ-like. That is part of the strategy of distance. For some seeds to grow in your life, there are some people that the enemy will isolate you from.

I know another person who also stopped going to church for months. I just did not love the gradual slope I was seeing with her moral standard. I knew something was wrong. Distance is a devilish trap when your spiritual health is concerned. Maybe you should wake up! Make that call today. Build that relationship again today. It is already dying. Go and water it.

CONFESSION

*I am blessed with the right associations.
I am intentional about building relationships*

DAY 25

WHEN SIBLINGS HURT

Text: 1 Peter 2:17 NLT

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

Bearing with one another, and forgiving one another, if anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you, so you also must do. Colossians 3:13 NKJV

It was just the two of them, but the wedge between them seemed to get bigger. It was fanned by a financial disagreement that lingered just beyond normal. During the season, a near-fatal disaster happened to one of the siblings. A distant relative called and said, "Your brother said that you deserve whatever your eyes see."

Without confirmation, they both maintained a radio silence except for the occasional pleasantries exchanged on the phone. Someone in the family had to inform the older about the statement that had widened the communication gap. He was surprised. He said he had not seen or spoken to the informant in months. The enemy was exploiting the gap in communication between the two siblings. The older one had to make the sacrifice of seeing his younger one to iron out matters. At least it closed the gaps a little bit.

Some hurts have been transferred from generation to generation. I know families where the nieces and nephews have been warned not to talk to certain uncles and aunts. I know families that are already isolated because of the fear of diabolic attacks. Some sons inherited their parents' hurts and prejudices. They have transferred bitterness from generation to generation. It is always a painful sight to behold as the enemy tears families apart.

One person that has the right to be hurt is Joseph. Joseph was sold by his siblings because of competitive jealousy. The plan was to kill him. They only had a rethink and sold him as a slave. You can imagine the hurt and pain that Joseph must have had. If it were you, you would have been loaded with bitterness. Joseph showed signs that he was pretty hurt also:

When the Lord turned everything around, he became a ruler in Egypt and had his first child. Do you know what he called his son? Manasseh. What was his reason? The Lord has made him forget his father's house. Who were those who afflicted him? His brothers. "Joseph called the name of the firstborn Manasseh: "For God has made me forget all my toil and all my father's house." Genesis 41:51 NKJV

He wanted to wipe away that painful memory. It was a painful one for him. When he had a second child, he called him Ephraim. What was his motivation? "And the name of the second he called Ephraim: "For God has caused me to be fruitful in the land of my affliction."

Genesis 41:52 NKJV

They sold him into affliction. Do you know that Joseph did not just miraculously love up on his brothers the moment he saw them? He wanted to show them "some pepper," and he did.

He acted as a stranger and spoke harshly to them: "Joseph saw his brothers and recognized them, but he acted as a stranger to them and spoke roughly to them. Genesis 42:7 NKJV

Have you felt the same way before? Do you now act like a stranger with your siblings? Do you speak angrily when you have to talk? Or do you just choose the silent treatment?

Joseph threw them all into Egyptian prison for three days. It was more like, 'Have a taste of your own medicine.'

"So he put them all together in prison for three days." Genesis 42:17 NKJV

It took the fear of God for Joseph to begin to allow the Lord to intervene in the matter and trust that God had a plan.

"Then Joseph said to them the third day, "Do this and live, for I fear God." Genesis 42:18 NKJV

If Joseph did not see God in the middle of the action of his brothers, he would have injured the plan of God to use him to preserve a generation from death during the famine. His great-grandfather's prophecy was playing out, and he was a significant actor. God must have seen that Joseph would be the most appropriate for that plan.

If it were Reuben or Judah God used, they would have likely slept with Mrs. Potiphar. They both had issues with self-control when it came to the opposite sex.

If it were Simeon or Levi, they would have angrily consumed their siblings. They had a short fuse. They would have acted angrily and maybe dealt with their siblings wickedly before thinking of God's plan.

What if God has seen the heart of Joseph in you? Would you focus on your hurt or look at what God is doing?

CONFESSION

I am free from hurts and offence. I am a peacemaker.

DAY 26

LIVE IN FORGIVENESS

Text: Luke 6:37 NKJV

Judge not, and you shall not be judged. Condemn not, and you shall not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven.

I was teaching a class a while back. When we touched on the subject of forgiveness and why it was important, a young man took a deep sigh and shared his journey:

His father was not the perfect role model. He was a pain to his family. He would get drunk and act in strange ways. The son said he hated the dad's actions. But he made a discovery that day in class. Even though he hated the dad's actions, he was already slipping into the same pattern.

Why? The one who locks a man in prison cannot be far from the prison also. The one who keeps a man down would also have to stay down. He admitted that he was already manifesting the tendencies of his father. That day, he decided to forgive his dad.

Forgiveness is one of God's unique systems of protection. The provocation of men is a temptation. If you do not handle it wisely, it will become a trap for your soul.

Jesus told Peter to forgive as much as possible:

Then Peter came to Him and said, "Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? Up to seven times?" Jesus said to him, "I do not say to you, up to seven times, but up to seventy times seven.

Matthew 18:21-22 NKJV

A Christian brother hated his dad. His dad abused his mother. He would at times beat her up. He hated the man. He had a word from the Lord to forgive but he refused.

When he got married, he began to show the exact patterns of his dad. He was shocked but he was still proud. He ended up marrying a second and third wife. He would chase out one and marry another. He became worse than the man he refused to forgive.

Beloved, the provocation of men is a trap. When Jesus taught the Lord's prayer, coming right after forgiveness was deliverance from temptation.

and forgive us our sins, as we have forgiven those who sin against us. And don't let us yield to temptation, but rescue us from the evil one.

Matthew 6:12-13 NLT

If you do not live in forgiveness, you will soon yield to temptation and you leave your life open for the evil one to come in and exit at will. Unforgiveness is the turf where the devil plays his game. Do not play that game with him. Refuse it. Walk the high road of honour and obedience to the will of God.

CONFESSION

I do not fall into the trap of unforgiveness. I am not easily provoked. I seek peace always.

DAY 27

DON'T EVER TRY THAT AGAIN

Text: Proverbs 1:33 AMP

But whoever listens to me (Wisdom) will live securely and in confident trust and will be at ease, without fear or dread of evil.

I was working in the library. Before I could blink an eye, Danielle had gone inside a shelf and closed the door in a bit to hide from Olive. My fatherly instinct came on. I stood up and opened the shelf and gave them both a stern warning. "What if they tried this on a day no adult was close".

Warnings are instruments of preservation. Warnings are the red flags in our spirit before things go south. A warning is divinity calling our attention to what we are doing. If we heed warnings, we are preserved. When we ignore warnings, we pay heavily.

From the beginning, warning has been a part of man's journey. God warned Adam not to eat out of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil for the day he eats out of it, he will surely die. Man did not heed the warning.

The young prophet was given both an instruction and a warning. He delivered the message accurately but did not heed the warning. The day he rose to prominence was the day he also was buried. He took warnings for granted.

Paul warned them not to set sail. They discarded his warnings and the trip became volatile. They lost everything.

Warnings are important in life. Never despise heaven's gentle tug on your soul. Thanking God for obedience is better than saying "And something told me o".

Obedience is better than regrets. Learn to follow through with the red flags in your soul. Do not keep shoving them aside.

If you are about to say Yes and you sense a red flag, be patient and take your time. You may be accepting the proposal of a married man. Do not shove your spirit man aside.

Do not sign that contract when there is a check-in your spirit man. You may be walking into a deal that will shut down your business.

Restrictions, restraints and releases can be solid divine communication. See Paul's experience:

The Holy Spirit had forbidden Paul and his partners to preach the word in the southwestern provinces of Turkey, so they ministered throughout the region of central and west-central Turkey. When they got as far west as the borders of Mysia, they repeatedly attempted to go north into the province of Bithynia, but again the Spirit of Jesus would not allow them to enter.

Acts 16:6-7 TPT

The warning is a form of divine leading. Do not take it for granted.

CONFESS I O N

I am sensitive to the voice of counsel in my life. My heart is conditioned to discern divine leadings.

DAY
28

THE DIVINE BLUEPRINT FOR A THRIVING MARRIAGE

Text: Romans 12:10 NLT

Love each other with genuine affection, and take delight in honoring each other.

Sometimes ago, in the early days of our marriage, as I drove to the estate gate where we lived, the Holy Spirit said to me, "Go back home and apologize." I made a U-turn. I returned home and apologized immediately to my wife. Interestingly, I did not even know that she was annoyed until the Spirit of God pointed it out.

Friends, no matter how much our world underplays spiritual things, a strong marriage is built on the foundation of the couple's relationship with God and their ability to master His voice.

There were times I would ask my wife amid a conflict, "What is the Spirit of God saying to you?". In annoyance, she would shrug away my question. But when I asked after the conflict, she would say, "The Spirit of God told me to apologize, but I only wanted you to feel the pain I felt too." We would both have a good laugh.

Sir/Ma, you cannot carry on for a day without talking to your spouse and still claim that you are a believer - that is absurd! You cannot say hurting words and carry on as though nothing happened. Does your heart not burn within you?

I remember raising my voice once on my wife amid a conflict, and I was already apologizing even though we had not resolved the issue at hand. Do not keep on justifying nonsense! It is either you have a yielded heart or a hardened heart.

You would not know the importance of marrying a man or woman who loves God, fears the Lord, yields to the Holy Spirit, and is teachable until you get into some seasons in marriage. How sweet it is when I go to the Lord to have a chat about my spouse, and it seems as though God is taking sides when he begins to tell me what I need to improve on. I wanted God to be "my messenger," but he plays his role as a Father indeed.

You do not know how sweet it is when your spouse calls from a meeting or a retreat and says, "Darling, the teaching here has opened my entire file." You cannot get the joy in it unless you know the Lord and you are fully yielded to Him.

Stubborn hearts cannot build strong homes. Submitted hearts will do much more together than stubborn hearts.

And by the way, the Holy Spirit can teach you to be romantic. Do you know you can ask him to help you in any area you are wanting in your marriage?

Everything in marriage will test the fruit of the Spirit in your life:

"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such, there is no law."

Galatians 5:22-23 NKJV

You will love when you do not feel like it. You would have to be patient. You would know that your spouse is not the source of your joy. You will not burden them with a responsibility that is not theirs.

The Holy Spirit will nudge you in the area of your weakness. Your heart will almost pound out of your chest until you hold the hand of your spouse and say, "I am sorry. I love you". Your grandstanding will turn into a broken heart. Pride will be replaced with humility. Ego will fly out of the window. You will hold your peace when you want to actually scream.

What makes your marriage strong is not the gifts of the Spirit; it is the fruit of the Spirit. You can speak in tongues, and the Holy Spirit says to you, "My friend, go and fix your mess." That takes walking in love.

If the devil begins to attack your personal devotion, you will soon notice that you are becoming indifferent to your marital responsibilities.

I remember grumbling once about my wife, and the Lord said to me, "Whatever is wrong in her life is your responsibility." I was shocked. Well, I took my place and began the work of the "bridegroom" and "husband-man." Or do both names not show that you have an assignment to nurture? Focus on your assignment and stop grumbling.

Remember, except the Lord builds a house, the builders labour but only in vain. It takes wisdom and understanding to build a house. Do you know that there is the Spirit of wisdom and understanding? You cannot build a great home without the Holy Spirit.

CONFESSION

*I build my marriage by divine understanding.
My spouse and I grow in the fruit of the spirit.
We are sensitive to the spirit's leading.*



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