

Bezael Enlite

# Don't Quit The Army

Living by the Overcoming Spirit as Christ's Servant



Pastor Bankie

**Dr. Bankole Olusina**, fondly called Pastor Bankie, is a teacher of the Word of God. The emphasis of his teachings is the separation of the Church from the world by obedience to the truths of God. He is a member of the Light of Christ Community Alumni Fellowship (LOCCAF) Ministers Forum, and the Pastor-Teacher of Kingdom-Word Ministries which he founded with his wife and partner in ministry, Ufuoma.

## Bezael Enlite

Christians are the people through whom the Lord will pass His power for change into the societies around. That is what it means to be a part of the army of God. Every child of God is on a military posting wherever he or she might be, and each should bear it in mind when making decisions. The life of the Christian is not primarily about enjoying blessings but about fulfilling the duty of each military posting. Yes, sometimes it will be hard but that is just the life of a soldier. The soldier does not just change posting because things are hard. No, each soldier is trained to endure hardship.

Christians, enough of being babies, looking for where the milk is flowing fastest, where the pasture is greenest; it is time to get up, firm up and serve the Lord no matter what. We are tougher than hardships outside, because we have the Spirit of Christ.

**WARNING:** Do not read this book unless you want to serve the Lord.

ISBN: 978-978-49309-6-3



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# **Don't Quit the Army**

*Living by the Overcoming Spirit as Christ's Servant*

Copyright © 2016 by **Dr. Bankole Olusina**

First Printing 2016

Published in Nigeria by  
**Bezalel Enlite (Publishers)**  
P. O. Box 2273 Enugu, Nigeria  
bezalelenlite@gmail.com

**ISBN: 978-978-49309-6-3**

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Bankole Olusina



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## CHAPTER 1

### **The importance of Man in God's plan**

If we understand how important we are in the plan of God we will handle our lives differently. For this reason it is good we start the exposition in this book by emphasizing this reality. The book of Revelations gives us a glimpse.

*“The ten horns you saw are ten kings who have not yet begun to rule, but who will be given authority to rule as kings for one hour with the beast. These ten all have the same purpose, and they give their power and authority to the beast. They will fight against the Lamb; but the Lamb, together with his called, chosen, and faithful followers, will defeat them, because he is Lord of lords and King of kings.” Rev 17:12-14 GNT*

Please note that the Lord went into battle with His called, chosen and faithful people. We will come back to that in a moment.

God is great and sovereign, no doubt, but we must be careful not to continue to misunderstand the sovereignty of God to mean that He does anything He wants to do at any time He wants to do it, no matter what we humans feel about it. We often think that since the Lord is sovereign, His will gets done all the time; if we so desire we may cooperate, if we are not so inclined we may refuse, but whatever He wants to do will get done in any of these situations. That is the impression most people have of the idea of divine sovereignty, but the truth is not like that at all.

It surprises many to learn that we as humans can adversely affect God's

plan for our lives and for the earth. I do not intend to go into explaining in details the meaning of the sovereignty of God in this message because that is a full topic in itself, but suffice it to say that the Lord has by Himself set the rules for the operations of things on the earth and in this dispensation; He has so set it that almost nothing can be done without the involvement of the people therein. About the only thing that I am aware of that the Lord does without involving any man is total destruction and severe judgment on the earth; this only happens when He doesn't have anybody anymore on the earth who listens to Him; at such times He just withdraws His Spirit and the whole earth, with everything on it, collapses. Every other thing the Lord wants to accomplish requires human participation.

There are two verses of the Bible that I will quickly refer to so as to make this point clear for everyone to see.

*The heavens are the heavens of the Lord; but the earth He has given to the sons of men. Ps 115:16*

*The Sovereign Lord never does anything without revealing his plan to his servants, the prophets. Amos 3:7 GNT*

These two verses summarize the way the Lord relates with the earth with mankind in view. He has handed the headship of the affairs of the earth to them, and even though He is the sovereign Lord, He communicates with His people on the earth before He does anything. He requires their participation before the things are done. The primary participation is through prayer and the prophesying of the prophets. Prayer and prophesying are the methods by which we routinely give our 'power and authority' to the Lord. As we can see in the portion of the book of Revelations quoted at the beginning of this chapter, the kings of

the earth do the bidding of the beast (Rev 17), but we give our own spiritual power and authority to the Lord Jesus as we pray according to His revealed will and as we prophesy His word and His plan into the air around us.

I seek to emphasize here that we must not ever think that the Lord will move on this earth without us. We are crucial to what He wants to do. As I mentioned earlier, the only thing He does without asking anyone to join with Him either by prayer or by prophesying is to destroy. Once no one is working with Him, then His indignation is poured out, and destruction, the type we saw with the generation of Noah, becomes the only thing to do. We are crucial to what He wants to do and that is why He prepared for Himself an army composed not of angels, but of His people. He has an angelic army or host, but they have a different function from that of the church army. We must live our lives like something will go wrong with the big plan of the Lord if we personally fail Him. This thought causes me to live in holy fear these days. I am important, and I may not be so easy to replace. This does not beget pride but fear —godly fear. I do not want to fail Him.

### **His army**

Who are the people in the army of the Lord?

The people of God who are walking and working with Him are the ones that make up the army. This is the army with which He will face the enemy (which is typified in that verse of Rev. 17 by the beast). Notice in that verse that the Lord goes into these battles “*together with His called, chosen, and faithful followers.*” He doesn’t walk in with angels or with just anyone. We know that the Lord can use anyone and that indeed the angels have roles which they play, but the real spiritual battle is fought by the saints of God with the Lord Jesus being the head of the army. Also



note that every single person in the Lord's army is a king and a lord. That is why He is called the King of kings and the Lord of lords. Each one in the Lord's army is purified and prepared to reign in life and is therefore rightfully called a king and a lord.

Please I am endeavouring to make clear to every child of God that the Lord's battle to reign on the earth cannot be won until His people are ready. What He is doing every time is to recruit, train and prove His people so as to get them ready to move into the battle. *Until the people of God have been trained and proven, they are not useful in battle.* Now, that is where the problem lies, and that is what this book is about.

### **Enlisted**

See, as soon as we commit our lives to Christ we are enlisted into the army of God. Every single child of God is a soldier in the army of God. After we become believers, the Lord starts training us for our roles and our positions in His army. The training is not a day's job; it is actually a very long process which requires patience and endurance. It is required that we endure the training and be patient with Him.

The purpose of our lives is not to be blessed and to be able to enjoy the things of this life. No; those are the things that are added to the main thing (Matt 6:33). We are being prepared through everything for what the Lord destined for us to be. He is not trying to make us rich; He is preparing us to be conformed to the image of Christ and for our individual roles in the army of God. If we understand this we will behave differently and respond to the things of life in a way that will marvel those who do not believe. It is ignorance of the true purpose of God in our lives that makes people react in ways that are against the will of God. We are often so focused on what the Lord can do for us that we easily get discouraged when things do not go the way we want them to go.

There are two main ends for which Father-God is working in our lives, and if we realize this we will be different in the way we react to things in life. He is working in us so that we can *be* something, and so we can *do* something. Those are the two ends of His purpose. We are to *become* replicas of Christ the Son who is Himself the image of God the father, and we are to be ready to take our places in the army of God. The latter is the *to do* aspect of it. We are to be tough enough to handle the difficult situations of life. We were not born or called for the easy life.

*And He is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature, and upholds all things by the word of His power. When He had made purification of sins, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high...Heb 1:3*

*For it was fitting for Him, for whom are all things, and through whom are all things, in bringing many sons to glory, to perfect the author of their salvation through sufferings. Heb 2:10*

The glory we are being brought into is the image of Christ fully formed in us.

We need to understand these things which the Lord is doing in our lives and we must judge everything and make all decisions according to these thoughts. He is actively raising for Himself an army of *faithful* people. He is training them through His word and through the trials they go through.

Yes, we are trained by two main methods: by words and by trials.



## CHAPTER 2

### **Training method 1**

*And now I commend you to God and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up and to give you the inheritance among all those who are sanctified. Acts 20:32*

The first method through which the Lord builds us up and trains us is through the entrance of His word into us.

He sends us His word daily. It is our duty to pay attention to those words. The word builds in us the strength for battle. We get our power from the word of God and from nowhere else. That was what the Lord was teaching to Joshua in the early part of the book named after him.

*Be strong and courageous, for you shall give this people possession of the land which I swore to their fathers to give them. Only be strong and very courageous; be careful to do according to all the law which Moses My servant commanded you; do not turn from it to the right or to the left, so that you may have success wherever you go. Josh 1:6-7*

Joshua was told to be strong and courageous so that He could fulfil the part that God had for him in bringing the people of God into the land which He had promised to give them. His part in the army was to be the leader; the Good News Translation renders verse 6 above as “*you will be the leader of these people as they occupy the land...*”

Despite what it may seem like on the surface, the commandment to be

courageous was actually not a hard one to keep. The Lord never asks us to do what is hard for us to do. If anything appears hard, it is because we have missed something and so we are not doing what we are actually supposed to be doing. It is likely such a person finding things hard is doing the part that God said is His own to do. I say the commandment to be courageous given to Joshua was actually not hard because this General of the Lord's army was actually supposed to derive his courage through reading and meditating on words—the words of Moses. That was not hard to do, unless of course we consider reading and concentrating on the book of the Law a hard thing.

The strength Joshua needed was in the words of Moses. He was to use the little strength he had as a mere man to grab the Law and read. He was to engage his natural strength to get into the word and be bathed in it by meditation. Think about it, is it rational to command a man to be strong? Either he has strength or he doesn't. Yes, you can command someone to use the strength he or she has, but that is as far as is humanly reasonable. But with God, things are different. The reason why the Lord can command strength is because *the very words of His command is strength for the hearer*. He has provided a method to derive strength, and that is from His words.

Courage and strength would come into Joshua as he would spend time and energy meditating on the words of the law as given by Moses. He was not to primarily try to be strong in battle; he was to exercise himself in being strong with the word of God. He was to make sure that the word did not depart from His mouth, but to talk to himself in it day and night (vs 9).

*This book of the law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according*

*to all that is written in it; for then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have success. Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous! Josh 1:8-9*

Just as it was for Joshua, the strength of the soldier of Christ comes from feeding on the word of God.

The mistake we make often is that we think zeal and natural ability will help us, but that is not the way of victory for the child of God. The strength with which we succeed and overcome in life is a derivative of the word that has been inserted deep into us. That is what is called grace. The more we spend time with the word of God, the more we have strength for victory over every circumstance in life. The Lord Jesus told us in simple words that *the measure of thought and study we give to the truth we hear is what determines the measure of virtue (or power for victory) that comes back to us* (see Mark 4:24 AMP).

We easily quote the words of Zechariah to Zerubbabel, that it is not *by power or by might, but by the Spirit of God* (Zech 4:6). Of course it is easy to understand that 'by the Spirit of God' means the Lord will by Himself supply to Zerubbabel the strength to overcome; He will level mountains before Zerubbabel, open doors for him, bring him help and favours of all kinds, etc. But are we careful to note how the man was to contact that Spirit of God? The man had the responsibility to contact the Spirit, but how?

Read the visions carefully in Zechariah chapter 4. You will notice that the lampstand was being fed by oil from the two olive trees beside it. It was later explained that these olive trees represent the prophets who were supplying the oil of God to Zerubbabel. The oil was the prophetic words that the man was paying attention to. As long as he would pay attention



to the prophetic words, he would have the strength to succeed. This was the same thing taught to Joshua. Let us see the application in the verses below.

*When the prophets, Haggai the prophet and Zechariah the son of Iddo, prophesied to the Jews..., in the name of the God of Israel, who was over them, then Zerubbabel... and Jeshua... arose and began to rebuild the house of... and the prophets of God were with them supporting them. Ezra 5:1-2*

*And the elders of the Jews were successful in building through the prophesying of Haggai the prophet and Zechariah the son of Iddo Ezra 6:14*

The child of God does not succeed without paying attention to the word of God as it is coming forth. That is the way of grace; it is the method of the Lord by which He infuses us with energy, ability, favour and every thing that we need to overcome in life.

When the Lord reveals something and you have the understanding of it, the power to get that result enters into you and creates in your life what that word promised. Your body experiences health when the word of God concerning healing is revealed to you and you believe it. This is taught to us in the book of Proverbs:

*My child, pay attention to what I say. Listen carefully to my words... for they bring life to those who find them, and healing to their whole body. Prov 4:20-22 NLT*

In any area in which the word of God comes to you, in that area you will experience victory. Marriage or business success is not by striving or by

learning human methods; it is by finding the applicable word of God and believing it. That is what it is about. Actions are provoked by the word that has entered after the word has by itself created the spiritual atmosphere for success. Without the word, all struggle is like tilling a ground that is cursed.



## CHAPTER 3

### **It is first a call to discipleship**

So we see that it is by His word that God starts to train the soldier that is with Him. The call of God for the life of every believer in Christ is actually first of all a call to discipleship. It is not first about working.\*

One major reason why Christians fail in the battle of the spirit is that they are not first built up in strength with the word of God; they are therefore not armed with the weapons of the spirit. They rush into fighting without being properly trained and without carrying adequate amount of ammunition, which is the word of God. They jump straight from recruitment into battle, and they end up being severely wounded; then they lose hope and run away from the army. They think the battle is too hard. Many of us wonder why many men of God fall for temptations of all sorts like common people. We erroneously think that since he is a man of God, he should have the strength to resist temptation more than the normal person. But it is not so. Either you are strengthened by the word or you are not. The anointing on the man does not make him more resistant to temptation than other people. The anointing only puts more demand on Him. He still must be careful like every other Christian.

See, it is not the battle that is hard; it is that they missed the right order. They were not built up or trained properly. Many pastors, not knowing better, actually encourage this habit. They quickly promote people who they think show zeal and commitment, something that Paul specifically warned against (1 Tim 3:6). *They should first be trained.* That is what is

called discipleship.

### **The disciple**

A disciple is a student, a learner. He is one who is avidly being filled with the knowledge of God's will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding. It is as he learns that he can walk in a manner worthy of a soldier of the Lord, to please Him in all respects, and to bear the fruit of victory in every battle (Col 1:9). *The major arena where many fail in this warfare is in this area of discipleship; they neglect to be disciples.*

Many like to fast. They like to pray. Actually it is more appropriate to say they like to talk plenty since we are not sure they are actually praying; the ability to pray is a product of learning. This is why the Lord's disciples came to Him and said, "Teach us to pray" (Luk 11:1). If you are one who love to pray but who don't love to learn, then know that a lot of your prayer time is wasted time. The Lord must regularly be giving you words to take to the place of prayer otherwise your prayer won't work. Hosea the prophet, explained this principle of prayer to Israel at a time. He told them to take words to the Lord when they are going to pray.

*"Take words with you and return to the Lord. Say to Him..." (Hos 14:2)*

Reading the context of that portion of Hosea will reveal the specific words that Hosea prophetically told the people to take to God in prayer if they wanted to have results. *See, without adequate learning, there is no effective prayer.*

*Guard your steps as you go to the house of God, and draw near to listen rather than to offer the sacrifice of fools... Eccl 5:1*

When people do not take the proper place of disciples they rush off in

zeal. Instead of sitting down to learn, they rush off to preach. They rush off to missions, acting on zeal alone. Those who are not so wise counsel them wrongly that they are being good Christians, but the truth is that they are exposing themselves to the enemy needlessly. They will be wounded because they are not trained soldiers. They are likely to quit when the battle gets rough as they did not take time to put on the armour of God.

We have weapons for our battle as Christians, and we must learn how to put them on. There is a *how* for everything. That is what training is about —the putting on of the armour. Paul wrote to the church at Ephesus about the whole armour of God (Eph 6). Those letters of Paul are like technical manuals in handling the armour. In them he taught about faith; he taught about prayer, fruit and gifts of the spirit, etc. Without the knowledge of these things, there is no armour put on. *True and effective soldiers are first students of the word.*



\*For more on this please see my book, '*How to Receive from God*'

## CHAPTER 4

### **The problem of ineffective prayers**

Let us look at a few examples of how lack of proper learning makes prayer ineffective. I will start with how people handle the matter of the devil.

The Bible says we are to resist the devil if he is to run away from us. The word of God clearly puts the ball in our courts in that matter. We are not to pray to God to do something about the devil; we are the ones who have the authority and the responsibility to resist him. If we do not do so, no matter how long we pray, he will not go away. When people do not realize this, they waste a lot of time in prayer thinking they are doing something about the devil.

God is not the one to remove the devil from your life; you are the one who is supposed to resist him.

Also, it is good to point out that the devil does not respond to statements like, 'I resist you devil.' No, he actually responds only to the declaration of the word of God. 'It is written' is the key phrase when we are resisting the devil. If we do not know what is written, how can we tell it to the devil and so be able to resist him? Many have wasted hours in battle, worn themselves out because they did not take up the sword of the spirit, which is the spoken word of God.

You can only discover by learning, and that is the matter of being a disciple which we are examining.



I remember how the Lord helped my brethren and me in those days to know this truth. We learnt the word of faith from the books and tapes of that prophet and teacher of blessed memory, Kenneth E. Hagin. The book, 'The Believer's Authority' by this man of God showed us how to do spiritual battle against evil forces. For this reason I have never, not even once, prayed against witches and such things in my life. I know how they operate and I know the authority that I have over them because as a child of God I am in Christ. I know that greater is the one that is in me than the devil that is in them, so why should I be wasting my time praying about them? Again and again we won clear victories over the attacks of the devil in the homes of brethren whom we prayed with. I remember one of our brothers who told us of how false prophets had scattered his home. We had a prayer session which lasted only 15 minutes or less, and we commanded the devil to disappear from that home with all his troubles. That very week, all those troubles in the home settled. We called the devil to order as he was trying to destroy the lives of young relatives of our brethren, and he stopped.

These days I see Christians busy in battles fought in ignorance. They are ignorant of their place in Christ and the authority they have in His name. Many do not even know their real enemies. Contrary to what the word of God teaches, they now take flesh and blood as their enemies. They wrestle against flesh and blood (that is, human beings like themselves) who they call witches and enemies of progress, when the word of God tells us clearly that our battle should be against principalities and powers and the wicked spirits in the spiritual realms.

*For we are not fighting against human beings but against the wicked spiritual forces in the heavenly world...Eph 6:12GNT*

For many who are not conversant with this verse, their enemies are

mothers-in-law, grandmothers, and neighbours in the market. They stay up all night fighting ignorantly. They pray against people who they call witches, and do not realize that those neighbours and colleagues of theirs are also praying against them believing they too are witches. They get into the realm of the occult by practising all kinds of evil praying, commanding with fervour that human beings should die. This is something we can't find an example for in the life of the Lord Jesus or in the acts of the early church as recorded in the Bible. One sometimes hear people bragging on the death of someone, that their prayers have consumed their enemies, when the godly response was what David set as an example for us when he lamented at the death of Saul. Saul was not an imaginary enemy to David as most of these people's enemies are; Saul was literally trying to kill David. Yet David lamented at his death and even avenged the death upon the man who sought to profit from it (2 Sam 1). Also, the word of God clearly teaches that we shouldn't rejoice if things are going bad for our enemies and when the Lord is punishing our adversaries (Prov 24:17). We can rejoice at the deliverance of the Lord but we are not allowed to celebrate anyone's death. Ignorance makes us hurt the people the Lord said we should be praying for, and we rejoice at their sufferings. That is not the way of the child of God. This is the word of the Lord Jesus about it:

*But I say to you, love your enemies, and pray for those who persecute you in order that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven; for He causes His sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous. Matt 5:44-45*

Yes, that settles it. Love your enemies and pray for them!

### **How to receive from God**

Receiving from God is another area where ignorance has made people

ineffective as soldiers of Christ. They go to the war of prayer but forget the righteousness of God and the power of the name of Jesus. Yes, they call the name quite all right, or so it seems, but it is not backed with the power of understanding.

What do I mean?

The truth about receiving from God is that the premise upon which we receive is the love of God and the power of the name of Jesus, but human religion teaches us that God gives because of what we first do for Him. That is nothing but praying like the Pharisee the Lord Jesus spoke of in Luke 18, and who He told us was not justified. To be justified in that context means to have one's prayers acceptable before the Lord. This practice is a common one these days and it has robbed our prayer of the power which the Lord actually wanted it to have.

Our prayers cannot have power with God if we are waving tithe booklets and offering receipts to Him because we think that will make Him remember our sacrifices. It is very wrong for anyone to think he will be heard because of what he or she 'did for God.' The fact is that we receive from God because He loves us and because the Lord Jesus offered Himself up for us on the cross.

Any soldier going into prayer battle armed with the knowledge of his or her good works is going in rubber bullets. Yes they fire and they make a lot of noise but the weapons are not lethal against the devil.

Pay attention please and let me state these facts again: you cannot go into prayer battle as a child of God carrying your records of good works with you. Your tithe booklet and stubs of cheques with which you gave to God do not have any place in the place of prayer. Only the name of

Jesus, with the righteousness of faith in your heart, comes near there. Come boldly because Christ Jesus made a way for you by His cross, and come boldly because He promised that God answers His children just for coming. Quoting your good works removes power from you in the time of prayer.\*

My emphasis at this time is that every soldier of Christ must be equipped by learning. Zeal is not the first thing as a soldier, training is.

*He trains my hands for battle, so that my arms can bend a bow of bronze.  
Ps 18:34*

Take books and read. Sit down under the ministry of a teacher and under people who have gone ahead of you in this walk of faith. Get books and CDs, and patiently study. There is no alternative to this. Allow the Holy Spirit enlighten your heart so you can have knowledge. Without it you are running blindly and boxing the air. The word of God states clearly thus:

*Also it is not good for a person to be without knowledge,  
And he who makes haste with his feet errs. Prov 19:2*



\*For more on this please see my book, *'How to Receive from God'*

## CHAPTER 5

### **Training through adversity**

We have seen the fact that discipleship is the first thing about being a soldier of Christ. We know now that without learning we will not be effective soldiers.

Remember we said that there are two methods the Lord uses in training us to be effective soldiers, and that the second one is through tests and trials. The words of James are just appropriate here to introduce this part of it.

*Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance. And let endurance have its perfect result, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing. James 1:2-4*

Soldiers are not just trained in lecture halls but also through practical sessions. The Lord takes us through the tough challenges of life so that we can be effective soldiers for him. When we are facing those challenges, life may appear hard but it is actually for our good. He did this with the nation of Israel when He settled them in the Promised Land. He wanted to toughen them up for all the challenges of life, and how did He do it? It is clear in this verse.

*So then, the Lord left some nations in the land to test the Israelites who had not been through the wars in Canaan. He did this only in order to teach each generation of Israelites about war, especially those who had*

*never been in battle before. Judg 3:1-3GNT*

People often misjudge these things. Part of the problem arises from the fact that many times we misinterpret the faith message. People often think that faith means we will not have troubles anymore, but it is not so. The Lord Jesus is the author and finisher of faith and yet the Bible tells us that He learnt obedience through the things He suffered.

*Although He was a Son, He learned [active, special] obedience through what He suffered. And, [His completed experience] making Him perfectly [equipped], He became the Author and Source of eternal salvation to all those who give heed and obey Him. Heb 5:8-9 AMP*

It is not necessarily a sign of unbelief to pass through hardship, even though hardship many times result from unbelief. There are indeed different types or causes of hardship.

Let me quickly explain that there are three reasons why Christians pass through difficult times and through hardship. The first reason is ignorance of the promises of God, as it is written, *"My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge"* and *"...you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."*

Many people are in lack today simply because they do not understand that prosperity is a promise of God which can be activated by faith. Others are in ill health because they do not understand that there is a power of resurrection available to them and that the same Spirit that raised Jesus Christ from the dead living in them is giving life to their mortal bodies (Rom 8:11). They do not understand that our experiences must be compelled by faith to conform to the promises of God. The fact that they are ill does not make that sickness the will of God; the kingdom



of God is entered into by spiritual aggression.

The second reason Christians have problems is because of what the word of God calls 'the just recompense of reward for disobedience' (Heb 2:2). It is all too common for Christians to have challenges because they do not follow the precepts of God in what they are doing. Everything we do has a God-ordained order concerning how to do them and moving away from the order produces problems. Let us take an experience in the life of David as an example.

David had a lot of troubles when he was trying to bring the ark of God back to its proper place in Jerusalem. On the way the oxen stumbled, and Uzza, one of the drivers, died. David was so upset by the troubles, including the death of his man Uzza, that he abandoned the ark in the house of Obed-edom. But what was the cause of all the troubles? It was simply because he and the people with him did not do what was right. They did not obey the due order prescribed by the Lord for the carrying of the ark; that was all. It was not the devil, nor was it their enemies.

*...consecrate yourselves both you and your relatives, that you may bring up the ark of the Lord God of Israel, to the place that I have prepared for it. Because you did not carry it at the first, the Lord our God made an outburst on us, for we did not seek Him according to the ordinance. 1 Chron 15:12-13*

The order of God was that the ark should be carried by the priests but that first time David had it carried on a specially prepared vehicle. He thought he was doing something special for the Lord but the Lord is never interested in any special thing we do for Him; He is only concerned that we follow His prescribed order or ordinance. That is a major reason why Christians often have problems. Sometimes we think we are doing

a work for God but we do not search from the scriptures and from godly counsel how the work of God should be done, and we end up with a lot of problems.

Now there is another reason why we may have troubles and challenges, and that is the one that is important in the context of this book.

Sometimes our troubles come simply because of what James called the trial or testing of our faith, not because of ignorance or disobedience to due order, but because our faith is being tested. That is when we pass through hardship ignited by faith.

In the course of following the word of God and the will of God for our lives, there are times we pass through difficult times, and these difficult periods are actually necessary for our faith to grow. Without these times we are not proven as true soldiers of Christ. As much as faith and obedience will deliver us from a lot of troubles, at times troubles are ignited by the life of faith and obedience we have chosen; the aim is so that we may be *perfect and complete, lacking in nothing*, using the words of James.

Hardship will happen as part of our training to be among the called, chosen and faithful soldiers of Christ. Troubles are not actually there to make us fail; they are there to correct us, sharpen us, make us tough, help us see and experience the power of God (a good experience for sure), and to help us launch to a new level. Every challenge we overcome takes us to a new level; it never leaves us on the same level we were on before it. Take the story of Asa as an example; this man lived in peace for decades of his reign; then one day trouble came to his doorsteps, and he misunderstood it. He thought it was trouble that came because of lack of human connections, so he used human help to solve it. Asa

had a large army attacking him, an army bigger than his own, so he ran to a larger human army for help, a thing that was displeasing in the eyes of God. The Lord actually wanted to use that experience to totally destroy an enemy for Asa, but Asa misjudged it because of his weakened faith. He should have turned to the Lord, repented if necessary, and he would have seen a power greater than those of humans work again on his behalf (the Lord had done such for him before). The prophet Hanani explained it to him.

*At that time Hanani the seer came to Asa king of Judah and said to him, "Because you have relied on the king of Aram and have not relied on the Lord your God, therefore the army of the king of Aram has escaped out of your hand. Were not the Ethiopians and the Lubim an immense army with very many chariots and horsemen? Yet, because you relied on the Lord, He delivered them into your hand. For the eyes of the Lord move to and fro throughout the earth that He may strongly support those whose heart is completely His. You have acted foolishly in this. Indeed, from now on you will surely have wars. 2 Chron 16:7-9*

How we handle our challenges determines what our regular experiences will be afterwards. God always rewards overcomers. Overcoming is not by struggling; it comes from holding unto faith even in the face of trials. Unfortunately, because of lack of understanding, this is where many people miss it; they run.

### **Beyond training**

Apart from training, most times our assignment from the Lord entails hardship. Life is definitely not always easy for a soldier in a war, and we are soldiers in an army. Paul was one who understood this spiritual truth.

In this portion of the word of God quoted below, I request of you to note what Paul was using as proof that someone is a servant of Christ.

*Are they servants of Christ? (I speak as if insane) I more so; in far more labors, in far more imprisonments, beaten times without number, often in danger of death. Five times I received from the Jews thirty-nine lashes. Three times I was beaten with rods, once I was stoned, three times I was shipwrecked, a night and a day I have spent in the deep. I have been on frequent journeys, in dangers from rivers, dangers from robbers, dangers from my countrymen, dangers from the Gentiles, dangers in the city, dangers in the wilderness, dangers on the sea, dangers among false brethren; I have been in labor and hardship, through many sleepless nights, in hunger and thirst, often without food, in cold and exposure. Apart from such external things, there is the daily pressure upon me of concern for all the churches. 2 Cor 11:23-28*

If you back up to the sixth chapter of that letter to the Corinthians, you will notice that he had given this same instructions to the leaders of the church there.

*...giving no cause for offense in anything, in order that the ministry be not discredited, but in everything commending ourselves as servants of God, in much endurance, in afflictions, in hardships, in distresses, in beatings, in imprisonments, in tumults, in labors, in sleeplessness, in hunger, in purity, in knowledge... 2 Cor 6:3-6*

Oh, the proof that he was a servant of Christ was not in the material prosperity or even the anointing that marked his ministry; it was in the things that he suffered in the course of preaching the gospel of God. This is what we must realize as Christians. The mark of Christianity is the ability to make sacrifices; that is true apostleship.



## CHAPTER 6

### **Endure hardship**

Like I mentioned earlier, the time of hardship is when a lot of people walk out of the army of God. They simply desert the army.

See, being a soldier entails hardship. Christianity does not at all mean a life of ease and a bed of roses. No, no, no. One thing that must mark out Christians is the ability to endure hardship.

*You therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus... Suffer hardship with me, as a good soldier of Christ Jesus. No soldier in active service entangles himself in the affairs of everyday life, so that he may please the one who enlisted him as a soldier. 2 Tim 2:1-4*

Actually, this is the main thing I want to pass across in this book. Remember I mentioned earlier that there are basically two things that the Lord uses to train His soldiers, and these are His word and the trials of life. Trials are the difficult things that we must pass through in life. They are not pleasant but they are not bad. This was why Paul wrote to Timothy that he must endure.

Bear this in mind; to be told by the Lord to endure a situation means that He Himself knows that it is not pleasant. It is at such times that we are actually strengthened; that is how our faith is purified. James said we are to be glad when we go through these trials. He said we are actually to consider ourselves fortunate when all kinds of trials come our way. Why? Does it mean we are to be gluttons for punishment? No; it is

because we know that when our faith succeeds in facing such trials, then we develop the necessary spiritual fortitude for real victory in life (Js 1:2-4).

This is a terrible misconception these days with many Christians. They think that being a person of faith means you always have money plentifully and you will always live in a good environment. But this is so unfortunate. The mark of a true believer is the ability to endure hardship. It is not at all the ability to grab anything the body needs by the so-called faith. Faith means we are totally submissive to the Lord and His will for our lives. Faith means 'I go wherever He wants me to go.' It does not mean I go to where the grass is green and the land is good. Not at all. We must never forget that it was by faith that the Lord Jesus went to the cross.

The cross was a difficult place to go, because it was a place of intense pain and suffering —physical pain, but more so a spiritual one. He was to carry the sins of the whole world and endure the wrath of God. It was not something to look forward to. But how did He react? See His words:

*Now My soul has become troubled; and what shall I say, 'Father, save Me from this hour'? But for this purpose I came to this hour. John 12:27-28*

Yes, His soul was troubled, but a life of faith is a life of purpose. It is not the life of enjoyment at all. It is to know that I am in the place of the calling of God for my life. A large faith is not at all reflected by the quality and volume of material things or the comfort around us. Yes, our Father indeed gives us things to enjoy, but these are not the primary things of life at all. To be in the centre of the will, call and plan of God is more important than having material comfort. The Lord Jesus did not shy

away from the cross, and this was because He understood that it was the plan of God for His life. What He did with His faith was to pray until He tapped into the grace to *endure* the cross. No, He did not enjoy the cross; He endured it. That was the goal —endurance.

*...let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. Heb 12:1-2*

In his letter to the Philippians, Paul said we should have this very attitude of endurance and sacrifice in us which Christ Jesus had.

*Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, who, although He existed in the form of God ... emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men... He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. Phil 2:5-8*

We are to be willing to let go of our comfort and endure hardship so as to fulfil the call of God for our lives. But what do we have a lot of times? Christians often think that once there is not enough money and other comforts of life, we are supposed place. They look at any place of hardship as a wrong place to be. “What are you still doing in that country?” you often hear people ask, as if being in a place without the development of America and Europe means you are not in the will of God. No my brother; no, my sister, Christianity demands that we can endure hardship.

### **Callings and geography**

Let me say something a lot of people do not realize. Calling is tied to



geography. A Christian does not just move from one place to another because of comfort but must have a background attitude of being in God's will. It is possible to walk out of the army just by recklessly changing geographical location. God has a specific place He wants you to be at each time and it is not at all dictated by what you consider comfortable and prosperous. Even in the pursuit of prosperity and escape from famine the Lord specifically told Isaac where to stay if prosperity was what he really desired. Everybody was going to Egypt, which was the centre of prosperity at that time, but that was the very place the Lord did not want Isaac to go.

*Now there was a famine in the land... So Isaac went to Gerar, to Abimelech king of the Philistines. And the Lord appeared to him and said, "Do not go down to Egypt; stay in the land of which I shall tell you. Gen 26:1-2*

God can bring prosperity to anyone anywhere if we locate where He wants us to be. A good land does not always remain good forever. During the course of a lifetime many changes can occur. The troubles of Naomi started when Elimelech moved her and the children from Israel to Midian, and Lot's later troubles began when he went towards the plains of Sodom because they looked well watered, like the garden of the Lord. Don't ever let immediate comfort make you walk away from the place the Lord wants you to be even if the place appears hard at present; be willing to endure hardship.



## CHAPTER 7

### **Demas phenomenon**

There was a Christian man who was working with Paul. This fellow, Demas, was mentioned in a number of Paul's letters as being among those sending greetings to the believers (Col 4:14; Philm 1:24), but a time came that the man left Paul. He relocated so he might have a better life.

*Demas has deserted me because he loves the things of this life and has gone to Thessalonica. Crescens has gone to Galatia, and Titus has gone to Dalmatia. 2 Tim 4:10-11 NLT*

The message is so clear in this translation. We are not told why the other people left, men like Crescens and Titus; I suppose Paul sent Titus to do something. But we know why Demas left. He wanted a better pay; he needed better job security. He wanted a better bed to sleep on and to be able to save up money for retirement. Having worked with Paul all the years he was not able to build his own house. Maybe no one was even sending him offerings or inviting him to preach. He was concerned about tomorrow and about the affairs of life, so he left. See, the 'Demases' of this life do not have to stay with the 'Pauls' forever, after all Crescens and Titus also left, but why each person leaves is what the Lord is checking. Demas left for a reason that was not right; Paul called it loving the world.

### **Loving the world**

Please let's clarify something here which we often overlook as

Christians. Loving the world is not fornication, adultery, murder and such things; those things are often products of loving the world. They are the evil that the love of money is the root of. Loving the world is just what I have outlined in the preceding paragraph as the possible reasoning in the heart of Demas as he departed from Paul. The love of the world is very reasonable to the average person you meet. It is the concern for your future and your material progress. It is the simple desire to have some good things of life. The Lord Jesus called it serving mammon.

We have often equated the serving of mammon with the desire for having plenty and becoming rich, which is covetousness; however if we look carefully at the words of the Lord Jesus, it will be clear that we are not right in thinking so. What He called serving mammon is actually quite subtle. They are the things that are considered legitimate by the average good man that you meet on the way. Here are the words of the Lord Jesus:

*No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will hold to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon. For this reason I say to you, do not be anxious for your life, as to what you shall eat, or what you shall drink; nor for your body, as to what you shall put on. Is not life more than food, and the body than clothing? Matt 6:24-26*

Please notice that it was the need for assurance concerning how the basic things of life would come apart from trusting in God that the Lord Jesus called serving mammon. In simple terms, when people make decisions for their lives with those things in front of their minds, our Lord said they are not serving God but are serving mammon. This is penetrating truth. This was what Paul was referring to concerning

Demas. Do not think for a moment that Demas left so as to go to parties and marry an unbelieving Thessalonian beauty he met on one of those trips. No, I think he just wanted to be comfortable and have 'a better life,' and Paul said he was in love with the present world.

### **An illustrative story**

I think the story of Oretha Hagin will help me illustrate this point.

Her husband, the man Kenneth Hagin, was most often away from home as he went about obeying the assignment of God for his life, and she was alone those times with her two children. The Lord had told him not to pastor a church but to go around as a prophet and teacher holding meetings in various churches, and for this reason he would be away for weeks at a time with only brief visits home in between those engagements.

Because of their growing children it was difficult for Oretha Hagin to go with him most of the times, and being apart from her husband for such a major portion of the times was not such a nice experience. Of course the woman wanted him to stay at home like every other husband around, and she complained about it so often. He too was not particularly excited about such a life, with all the disappointments that one may face (money was so tight many times), so he finally agreed with her and decided to settle down. He went to accept the pastorate of a local church.

Please notice what was going on here; they were not asking for much, just a little comfort away from running to and fro; who wouldn't want such a little thing? But it was what Paul called Demas-falling-in-love-with-the-world. He wanted some comfort for his soul. This man of God, Hagin, almost died for that decision.

On the visit to accept the church his heart stopped and he collapsed. They tried to revive him with little success. When his wife was called, she immediately understood what had happened and she began to repent. She told the Lord she was sorry and He could take him as often as He wanted, that she would never complain again. Actually before then she had heard a warning by the voice of the Holy Spirit in which she was told that if she didn't stop complaining, the husband could be gone and never return. After her prayers he recovered rapidly and ended up dying only after about 50 years later, having touched the body of Christ worldwide and serving the purpose of God in his generation.

I have used this story to show that loving the world, and serving mammon, doesn't have to be those big issues, but are first in the very little things. These brethren only wanted some comfort, and that was Demas's problem too, in all probability.

### **Who is like Demas?**

Quite a number of us today are like Demas. We make decisions because we love the things of this life. We change jobs just because the pay is better without asking if where we are currently is where He wants us to be. We thus operate without the sense of purpose —the sense of being enlisted in an army. That place where you are right now is a military posting, but you are entangling yourself like Demas with the affairs of life. You want to drive a good car and live with constant electricity supply, and you do not care whether you remain in the call and position of God for your life or not.

Many preachers who are not called by God to start a church have started one because of regular offerings. They want that source of income that is quite predictable.' This evangelist or apostle's life is not paying at all,' they think. I recollect the story of a minister who started a church simply

because of the honour he was being denied when he would go to gatherings to minister among other men of God. He admitted he wasn't called to start a church but that he got tired of being treated like a second-class minister when all the pastors of churches would be well honoured. See, he was a singing minister. He considered it, and like Saul said then to Samuel, he forced himself and started a church. He loved the honour of men and so departed from the will of God. I was also counselled in a similar fashion when I started Kingdom-Word Ministries. I told people that my plan was to start a teaching ministry and not a local assembly or church; I was told by different people that the only way to get money for the work I had in mind or to get honour for myself was to have a church base. "People will not respect you unless you are pastoring a church," one person said. Starting and pastoring a church, I was not opposed to, but the motive was just so wrong that I didn't need the Lord to tell me to decline the advice.

But many ministers still follow this Demas' example. They have relocated from a small city to a big one because offerings are bigger over there. A preacher who was formerly based in one of the eastern cities in Nigeria was asked why he relocated to Lagos, the commercial capital of Nigeria. He said it was because most of the ministry support he was getting was coming from Lagos, and so he decided to 'follow the money.' That is Demas in ministry. It is not the moving that is the problem; it is the reason why. Like someone said, 'we are more concerned about our discomfort than our disobedience.' We quit the Lord's army and yet we want the Lord to win His battles in redeeming things in our nation and on the earth. How can He when His soldiers are deserting everyday like Demas? They are unable to endure hardship as true military people should.

*No soldier in active service entangles himself in the affairs of everyday*

*life, so that he may please the one who enlisted him as a soldier.*

Are we actually concerned about pleasing Him who loved us and gave Himself up for us? Do we realize that our comfort is not the primary thing He is doing in this life? He will supply our needs, please don't get me wrong, I am however pointing out that we cannot be effective as true soldiers when we are not ready to endure hardship. I think one of my best verses in the whole Bible is that written by Paul to the Philippians in chapter 4 verse 11. I will quote from a little known translation of the Bible known as the Way's translation.

*No, I have learned in whatever condition I am, to be independent of circumstances. I am schooled to bear the depths of poverty; I am schooled to bear abundance. In life as a whole, and all its circumstances, I have mastered the secret of living —how to be the same amidst repletion and starvation, amidst abundance and privation. I am equal to every lot through the help of Him who gives me inward strength. (Phil 4:11)*

Please read the verse again; if you can please print it and place on your wall; let that word be in you. That was what made Paul the Paul we all read and reference today. He was not running up and down just because the pay was better.

Thank God many people learn the truth and stay in the place of divine calling. Thank God the Hagins in that story repented and were restored. Thank God Moses didn't have to die as Zipporah did the right thing when she circumcised her son (Ex 4). But let me tell the story of a young woman who did not.





## CHAPTER 8

### **Don't quit the army**

A young lady went to work for a hospital in a rural area as a health worker of some sort. She was a Christian lady who was zealous for the Lord. The salary was poor and the work much, and she was unmarried. Being a zealous believer she started a bible study in her home and this grew rapidly. As it was growing and affecting the community, persecution came with it as light was penetrating the darkness. That was to be expected anyway, but the church in her home kept growing. It started with the women but the men began to attend too. Ministers would come from elsewhere to help minister to the flock of God gathered in this church in the home and in the community. This lady was the centre of what God was doing in the area.

But her family couldn't understand what she was doing with her life living in a rural area without a husband and earning a low income.

And then the income became even lower. The mission which owned the hospital where she worked said they couldn't afford to pay her wages anymore and were willing to let her go except she accepted an even lower pay. This was tough. She informed the brothers who used to come to help out with the ministrations in the bible study/church she started. They, fearing that the work might suffer if she left, accepted to gather money and pay her the difference which she would lose on the new lower pay.

But her family wouldn't let up. They kept telling her she needed to come

back to the city and get a better job, and of course get married.

### **The voice of Satan**

See, the voice of Satan often manifests through the voice of loved ones who are sincerely watching out for your welfare. No matter how sincere they seem, it is still the voice of Satan asking you to love the world and serve mammon. This was precisely what Peter did with the Lord. He didn't want anything bad to happen to Him. When the Lord Jesus said He would be punished and crucified, Peter said, "God forbid; nothing like that will happen to you." But the Lord said that was satanic talk.

*But He turned and said to Peter, "Get behind Me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to Me; for you are not setting your mind on God's interests, but man's." Matt 16:23*

Any counsel that is concerned about your personal interest rather than the interest of God's call in your life is of Satan. It may come from the mouth of your parents, your spouse, your best friend, or even your pastor. It doesn't mean they are bad people; it just means they yielded for a moment to Satan to use because they looked away from God and to you. Any person can yield to Satan; after all it was the same Peter talking for Satan now who Jesus said was receiving revelations from the Father just a few verses before. There was a time the relatives of Jesus decided He was mentally ill and should be called in. They selected a committee to go and take Him away from His ministry, and this committee was composed of His brothers and His mother. Please don't be angry with Mary that she accepted to come; the pressure of extended families can be great.

When the Lord's family came, He just simply refused to listen to them because he knew what was pushing them. It was a satanic assignment

they were on. They actually planned to take Him forcefully (see Mark 3:21 AMP)

*...and they said to Him, "Behold, Your mother and Your brothers are outside looking for You." And answering them, He said, "Who are My mother and My brothers?" And looking about on those who were sitting around Him, He said, "Behold, My mother and My brothers! For whoever does the will of God, he is My brother and sister and mother." Mark 3:32-35*

Anyone can yield to Satan; it is your personal responsibility to guard yourself from satanic counsel and learn to rebuke it when it comes. Satan gains a foothold in our lives once we are focused on ourselves.

This young woman whose story I am telling did not rebuke Satan nor did she turn away from the counsel of her natural family. She eventually quit the job, relocated to the city, and the church that began in her home withered and eventually died. She got a better paying job in the city and later got married. A few years later she became ill and died not too long after. Remember that the keeper of the vineyard had said, *"If we get figs next year, fine. If not, then you can cut it down."*

At the end of it all, everybody lost out. She lost, her family lost, the church lost, the people of that community lost, and the army of God lost! No wonder the Lord Jesus said this:

*If anyone wishes to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. For whoever wishes to save his life shall lose it; but whoever loses his life for My sake and the gospel's shall save it. For what does it profit a man to gain the whole world, and forfeit his soul? Mark 8:34-37*

Let us be ready to suffer for the sake of Christ and the call of God for our lives.

*For you have been given the privilege of serving Christ, not only by believing in him, but also by suffering for him. Phil 1:29 GNT*

### **Take heed to your spirit**

Before you exit a place and head for another, take heed to your spirit and ask yourself a number of questions.

- Why exactly do I want to move? Is it based on a sense of purpose or need for better comfort?
- Can I really say the cares of this world and the matter of riches are not directing me?
- What can I do better in the service of the kingdom in line with my calling where I am heading for?
- Am I blessing people where I am right now in such a manner that they are feeling God through me? Is my grace flowing here, or it seems hindered?
- Am I being persecuted in such a manner to warrant moving to the next city? (Yes, there is a kind of persecution that the Lord Jesus said should make us move. But note that the movement is so that we can cover more grounds with the preaching of the gospel. This persecution He refers to is when it comes because people are refusing to heed the gospel as a society so that abiding there further is a waste of gospel time. Matt 10:23)
- Okay, do I have a genuine supernatural manifestation which I can present before mature Christians to judge instructing me to move?

Asking these questions is what it means to take heed to your spirit. Once we take heed to our spirits, that is to decide what is really pushing us,

then recognizing the will and plan of God for our lives is a very easy thing. We will walk into those things naturally. The will of God is not something you hear supernaturally, see in a vision or have revealed in a dream. The will of God is a natural walk of the heart that is sanctified. You are walking in the will of God if your heart is right and the motives for doing the things that you are doing are purified and made to align with the word of God. That is what is called walking in the will of God. That was why Paul said we can understand what the will of God is (Rom 12:2; Eph 5:17).\*



\* For more on this please read my book *'Guided by the Spirit'*

## CHAPTER 9

### **Salt of the earth**

So why take such hardship as we are speaking of? Why does the Lord want His soldiers in the midst of difficult places? What is His purpose in it?

To understanding this we must examine again what it means to be the salt of the earth. The Lord said that is what we are as His people.

*You are the salt of the earth... You are the light of the world. Matt 5:13,14*

The use of salt which the Lord was speaking about was not about seasoning of food. He was not talking about us being the ones who give taste to the earth. The use of salt in that statement of the Lord was different. He was speaking of salt being used to prevent decay and also as a fertilizer. One of the major uses of salt in those days was to prevent the growth of germs on the dunghill; it was added in good quantities to the dunghill as a kind of disinfectant. Also it was used as a fertilizer for the fields. These facts are clear from the words of the Lord as recorded in the book of Luke.

*Therefore, salt is good; but if even salt has become tasteless, with what will it be seasoned? It is useless either for the soil or for the manure pile... Luke 14:34-35*

We can therefore understand that the importance of us being salt of the earth is that it is because of us that a place will be preserved both from

the spread of corruption and from the judgment of God. Also it is because of our presence that good can be made to spread.

There is always a hindrance produced by the presence of children of God to the spread of evil in a place. Evil finds it hard to thrive where children of God are actively present, and many times when the Lord wants to judge a place, He looks at the presence of His righteous people and stays the hand of judgment. We can easily remember this effect in the matter of Sodom and Gomorrah. When the Lord came to destroy the places because of the magnitude of their sins, through the intercession of Abraham we observe that the Lord would have spared them from immediate judgement if there had been enough quantity of righteous people present. Abraham asked for ten but the Lord could not find even such a small number.

Let us bear in mind that the salt will have this preserving effect primarily for just being present and being pure. It is not dependent on whether the salt is trying to work; it just needs to be there and remain the salt God made it to be.

What am I saying?

As salt-soldiers of Christ, our very presence is often what the Lord needs to make the changes and win the necessary battles in a place. As an example, God is not necessarily going to change a public school or government parastatal through the work of evangelism even though that has its very important place; the first thing that He needs is to prevent the decay in the place spreading and to prepare an atmosphere in which good can grow. He does these things by placing His salt in there. Once the salt is there and the salt-people live lives worthy of being God's salt, then the place is preserved from judgment, evil is prevented from

spreading and then the Lord can do what He wants to do. The people can then take up the work of being the light and start causing a positive change to happen in the place. It is then that promotion of truth and revival becomes easy.

Bear this in mind; every time the Lord wants to visit a place, He sends His people ahead.

*Now after this the Lord appointed seventy others, and sent them two and two ahead of Him to every city and place where He Himself was going to come. Luke 10:1*

Without the presence of God's people, His visitation can't happen. We must never forget this.

### **Please don't go**

A young lady went to see her pastor; she was excited that she just got a new job in a Christian establishment and was about to leave the company in which she worked up till then. She sought for a new job because she was tired of the unbelieving environment in her office which put her under a lot of pressure as a Christian, and she was the only Christian in the whole place. To her surprise her pastor did not look so excited at the news. When she asked him why, he told her in many words, "You are now about to deny that office the only contact with the salt of God that they have. You are about to voluntarily remove the only witness the Lord has in that establishment." It was a new viewpoint for her and she changed her mind and remained in her old office.

Many times we have been tempted to leave a place which is uncomfortable to our faith; however many of those times the Lord does not want us to leave but to stand against the forces of the world,



maintain our faith and be a light in the place. Bear in mind that the devil wants us to leave that place so that his kingdom will not be disturbed. He likes it when we leave, even if we think we are trying to keep away from temptation. Daniel in Babylon and under the reign of Darius remains our hero and example in this area; he was a government minister in a corrupt environment but he resisted the evil of his day and was the light of God in the high places of government.

*Then the commissioners and satraps began trying to find a ground of accusation against Daniel in regard to government affairs; but they could find no ground of accusation or evidence of corruption, inasmuch as he was faithful, and no negligence or corruption was to be found in him. Dan 6:4*

No, it is not every time we are allowed to leave working for government just because the environment is corrupt; the Lord needs Daniels who will remain there and be the light that is shining in a dark place.

So we see that wherever we are is a military posting from the Lord; our presence is important to what He is doing and we must be careful not to desert our posts in the army of the Lord. Many times we depart from a place where the Lord kept us to be the preserving power; later the place decays and then we start lamenting about the decay. The Lord looks and wonders how we expected Him to overcome when the salt-soldiers who are with Him are departing from their duty posts.

Why do we depart? Just like Demas, it is most often because the place has become uncomfortable. No wonder Paul said we are to be true soldiers of Christ and therefore must endure hardship.

Take a moment to contemplate. Where you are right now, is it the

posting of the Lord or it is the quest for comfort that brought you there? Have you departed from where you are supposed to be salting? Think seriously about it.



## CHAPTER 10

### **Don't walk into slavery**

Remember we were looking at the Demas spirit before we took that example of the young woman in Chapter 8. Let us now examine this Demas matter some more.

What happened to Demas after leaving Paul? Well, we are not told, but I want us to guess based on what I understand happens to people like Demas.

True freedom is only found in Christ. No matter how smart we are in planning our lives, it is only by the mercy of God that things turn out well for us. If we do not tap into the grace given freely to us by the Lord, we will end up in bondage before we realize it. This principle is expressed in the prophecy Jacob concerning Issachar.

*Issachar is a strong donkey,  
Lying down between the sheep folds.  
When he saw that a resting place was good  
And that the land was pleasant,  
He bowed his shoulder to bear burdens,  
And became a slave at forced labor. Gen 49:14-15*

One way or another everyone will become a slave in life; it is whose slave each will become that is the question. To be a slave does not automatically mean suffering; it simply means to be owned and controlled by another person. You suffer if you are a slave to a cruel

master or if you are a slave at forced labour. But it is possible to be a willing and happy slave (Dt 15:16). True freedom comes from being a slave to the right master.

In the Garden of Eden, the principle of eating of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil was that of freedom from the dominion of God. The serpent tempted Eve telling her that they could be their own masters without dying. Unfortunately, they only became slaves of the devil who tempted them. They wanted to be free of the control of God but they ended up being slaves of a false god.

Even today, we see this principle operating as 'modern' men and women shake off the lordship of God in their lives; they become slaves of their flesh and their lusts, and all kinds of things rule over them. They jump from one bed to another trying to find love. Then they demand that men should marry men and women should marry women. They are forever going from one addiction to the next. A middle aged man wakes up and spends thousands of dollars to change his gender to a female because that is what he *feels* like. They become slaves to their feelings fuelled by Satan. They marry five times and still end up single and heartbroken. They run after money and end up poor. They get money but only want more because there is no satisfaction therein. They become bound to their own 'success.'

Freedom only comes through being a slave to the right Master. To truly and properly set us free, our Father God made us slaves of Christ. We were moved from the domain of darkness into the kingdom of Christ (Col 1:13). That is the only way to be free indeed; it is by being bound as a slave of Christ.

*If therefore the Son shall make you free, you shall be free indeed. John 8:36*

*Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy-laden and overburdened, and I will cause you to rest. [I will ease and relieve and refresh your souls.] Take My yoke upon you... and you will find rest (...and blessed quiet) for your souls.*

*For My yoke is wholesome (useful, good –not harsh, hard, sharp, or pressing, but comfortable, gracious, and pleasant), and My burden is light... Matt 11:28-30 AMP*

We are saved to be slaves of Christ, but if we do not serve Him willingly, we do not become free, we only become the slaves of a cruel master. True freedom is in being an active slave of Christ. We are yoked under Him. Unfortunately a lot of times many of us Christians think that there is no yoke to Christianity, but there is. It is just that the yoke of Christ is easy actually, mainly because He supplies the grace to carry them. But there is a yoke.

### **The yoke of Christ**

A yoke tells you where you can go, what you can do, who you can relate with, who you can marry, where you can work, what you can do with your money, etc. A yoke is a yoke; it directs your movement, restricts you to a defined perimeter and ties you to a burden or work. Christ Jesus has a yoke for each one of us. It is not all play and no work. It is not all blessings and no trials. It is not all good and no troubles. No, no! That is the attitude only of irresponsible children.

But we can cast off His yoke if we insist; He allows that freedom if we so choose, and many have chosen that freedom. The rules of Christ do not

feel good to them. They are not ready to take the hardship that the yoke of Christ may entail. That was the story in the house of the famous prodigal son. He was prodigal because he didn't like the yoke of the father, and it is what happened to him that is my warning in this chapter.

The father's house is a house of work. The children there differ little from the servants. They work. You will notice what the elder brother later said to the father; that was the order in the house.

*'Look! For so many years I have been serving you, and I have never neglected a command of yours...'* Luke 15:29

The brother was what the Bible calls a serving son, and they are a special class among children of God; they have special promises of deliverance which the others do not have. Paul wrote that Timothy was such a son, serving in the cause of the gospel like a son serving his father (Phil 2:22). The characteristics of a serving son includes serving the father and obeying all the commandments, as we can see in that verse quoted above.

Serving sons are not occupied with the fact that they are children of the Father; they are concerned about serving Him.

As a young student of the word of faith I was taught that we believers are sons of God; I learnt that sons are superior to servants and that for that reason we are not servants. That is true, but it is not the whole truth. The whole truth is much deeper than that.

Yes there are servants, and there are sons, but the perfect will of God is that a son willingly takes the combination of the two positions. God wants us to be *sons that serve*. Being sons of God doesn't mean we are

no longer servants. When I understood this, it solved for me a concern I had for a long time as to why the promise of God for deliverance and many other ones were not given to sons but to servants; these promises are recorded by Isaiah and other prophets, for example:

*"No weapon that is formed against you shall prosper; And every tongue that accuses you in judgment you will condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, And their vindication is from Me," declares the Lord. Isa 54:17*

*"The Lord be magnified, Who delights in the prosperity of His servant. Ps 35:27*

I understood that God cares for the sons that serve; there are so many promises given to sons that serve.

*And they will be Mine," says the Lord of hosts, "on the day that I prepare My own possession, and I will spare them as a man spares **his own son who serves him**. Mal 3:17*

### **Which type of son?**

Now, any time the word of God says there were two sons, like in this case of the prodigal son and his brother, what it is saying is that every child of God is invariably one or the other. You either choose to serve, or you will automatically be possessed by a prodigal spirit. There is no other choice. The only defence against prodigality is service. You must be a service-personnel, fully enlisted and at the duty post in the army of God, or you will be a receptacle for the prodigal spirit; your determination cannot change this fact.

The prodigal spirit, when it possesses a person, removes spiritual sense

from the fellow and drives him or her to depths not previously imagined. A prodigal son is *de facto* lower in rank in the home than a servant. That was why the prodigal son began to aspire to the rank of a servant. He had fallen far below them. 'Make me as one of your hired men,' he planned to ask his father.

The prodigal son went as low as staying and eating with pigs, the very things a normal Israelite would not touch. That is what happens to the believer who quits the army. After a long time you start wondering if this person is a real Christian. Many times we have seen this happen. I remember then when Nigeria returned to civilian rule after years of military rule; a number of prominent politicians were supposed to be Christians the way people had known them, but the kind of things they got involved in made one wonder whether they were really born again. Well, now we understand that they may have been, but when a child of God becomes prodigal, they can be low down there with the pigs. You see a fine Christian girl of those days and you can hardly believe what she has become. Sometimes she moves about like a truly worldly woman, and at other times she simply marries a clear unbeliever. A young man who was vibrant for the Lord on campus starts doing deals that make the ear tingle when it hears of them. His dishonesty stinks to the high places all in pursuit of money. All of these things happen because they want the inheritance of their faith now *now*; they want the things of the world. This happens again and again when believers are not careful to be serving-sons. It is called eating with pigs.

### **And there is slavery**

Oh yes, I must not ignore to emphasize the matter of slavery which we started this chapter with. Notice what we saw in Genesis chapter 49 about Issachar.



*He bowed his shoulder to bear burdens,  
And became a slave at forced labor.*

The very place people run to, away from the posting of the Lord, is the very place where they will be denied the freedom which they eagerly seek. Yes, initially it will promise to be sweet, but it is only a bait to get the individual trapped. Those who do not serve the Lord willingly serve the enemy forcefully.

*Because you did not serve the Lord your God with joy and a glad heart, for the abundance of all things; therefore you shall serve your enemies whom the Lord shall send against you, in hunger, in thirst, in nakedness, and in the lack of all things; and He will put an iron yoke on your neck until He has destroyed you. Deut 28:47-48*

Whatever one leaves the place of God to take will always leave him or her bound, no matter how sweet it appears at the onset. Being bound means you hate where you are but you can't leave. It means you would rather be doing something else but you must do this one. Being bound means to be sure this is not God's best or plan for you but you can't do something else. Many people are bound but unfortunately, they are not able to go back home like the prodigal son did. They would rather die in the far country, while spiritually destitute.

Sometimes people are bound to 'prosperity.' They have all the world's goods and outwardly appear to be doing very well, but it is all at a cost of lack of peace of mind, fulfillment, joy in the heart or home, etc. The fellow wants to come out but the fear of losing it all keeps him or her bound in an unhappy place. Days pass by and the fellow realizes that this life is being wasted away. The possessions have shown themselves to be vanity after all. It is indeed a terrible experience.



## CHAPTER 11

### Vanity

Arguably the richest man of all times was King Solomon of Israel. This son of David became rich through divine intervention. He experienced everything anyone in his days could wish for, and things that were even for the future. He was rich. But what was his opinion of material things? Let's read him recount his experience and tell us of his conclusion.

*I enlarged my works: I built houses for myself, I planted vineyards for myself; I made gardens ... I bought male and female slaves.... Also I possessed flocks and herds larger than all who preceded me in Jerusalem. Also, I collected for myself silver and gold, and the treasure of kings and provinces... And all that my eyes desired I did not refuse them. I did not withhold my heart from any pleasure... Thus I considered all my activities which my hands had done and the labor which I had exerted, and **behold all was vanity and striving after wind and there was no profit under the sun.** Eccl 2:4-11*

Solomon said all the experiences of having abundance was the same as having acquired emptiness. If you read the whole of that book of Ecclesiastes, you would see this man Solomon was allowed by the Lord to help us with information that we would eventually get to but only after many years of striving, by which time we would have wasted our lives. Solomon said it is all vanity the things that people run after.

All the fine cars, fine houses, comfortable beds, best gadgets, private jets; they are the same as wind. All the glamour you see outside and

which makes you think someone is enjoying, is all emptiness.

Vanity, or emptiness, is not a theological word; it is a real experience that every person will understand when he or she goes through it. It is a real discovery which unfortunately you only realize after you have put in the effort.

Vanity is why there is no happiness super-abounding with the rich. The son of a onetime richest man in the world said, "Money was a curse to our family." It is a matter of fact that money and material things do not bring happiness. There is no need to emphasize it again. They do not bring fulfillment. They do not make people joyful. There is nothing worth chasing in this life in that area.

Every material thing you acquire will vanish like smoke one day; there is no guarantee that it will bless your children. There will be no memory of them. Material things are too temporal and cannot be relied upon.

Are you seeking comfort? Comfort is in the mind, not outside. Joy does not come from things; it comes from within. A man can be joyful with little and be sad with much. How you react to what is outside is just a reflection of what is inside. The average man's feeling of sadness and joy in the midst of material things is usually tied to what he is seeing outside. If he is better than other people he often feels good, but no matter what the Lord blesses him with, if he thinks that is more out there than others have and he doesn't, he often experiences distress. Only God gives real joy and satisfaction.

If outward things are the things that give you the greatest joy, then know you are indeed carnal; you do not know God as you ought. You are not yet spiritual until you reach a place where little or much mean the same

to you.

*...I have learned how to be content (satisfied to the point where I am not disturbed or disquieted) in whatever state I am. Phil 4:11AMP*

When Paul was sent material things, his joy was not because of what he got but because he realized that the Philippians were operating in the love of God and would be blessed for it. He rejoiced for them and not for himself because he was in a place where good or bad, material things had little effect on him.

Like I mentioned earlier, it is the opinion the Lord has that matters, and we must be transformed into having His opinion as our own. In the letters to the churches which the Lord sent through John in the book of Revelation, we see Him describing a church which had so much money as poor, wretched, miserable, poor, blind and naked. Many things we call wealth the Lord calls poverty. Why not go for true riches?

A big title does not mean you are important in life. Men can call you Professor or Bishop and the Lord will say you are worth nothing. The truth is that only God knows what is real and only His word reveals it. Solomon, speaking for God, said it is all vanity. What should a child of God pursue; what is it that has meaning and is real as a goal for the child of God? What is the duty we have in life?

*Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man. Eccl 12:13(King James' Version)*

*"My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me, and to accomplish His work. John 4:34*

The thing worth pursuing in life is the will of God. Our satisfaction must come from accomplishing His work assigned to us. There is a reason why the Lord gave us life, and fulfilling it must be the goal of our lives.



## CHAPTER 12

### **The day of reckoning**

Brethren, there is a day coming in which we will give account of what we did in the flesh.

*For we shall all stand before the judgment seat of God...*

*So then each one of us shall give account of himself to God. Rom 14:10,12*

*In the future there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day; and not only to me, but also to all who have loved His appearing. 2 Tim 4:8*

We were born for a purpose and we must live like that. What the Lord told Jeremiah, that before he was born he was ordained to be a prophet (Jer 1:3), and which Paul found out about himself applies to all of us God's children. We were given life for a specific purpose and we will be asked about that on a particular day. We were born to do something, for certain people and in certain places. This life is not an adventure in which we go around to see as many places as possible and do as many things as possible. (Many times when I observe how people idolize travelling far and near and seeing places, I wonder whether they realize what life is really about). No, we were given life for specific assignments. We cannot do just anything and expect the Lord to be pleased with us. He is concerned specifically about what He created us to be and the work He said we should perform.

Paul was not an apostle because he loved apostleship. He was not an

apostleship because he loved to witness. He was an apostle because he was called by God to be one.

*But even before I was born, God chose me and called me by his marvelous grace. Then it pleased him to reveal his Son to me so that I would proclaim the Good News about Jesus to the Gentiles. Gal 1:15-16*  
*NLT*

Paul could have refused. He could have said the life of an apostle to the gentiles was too hard. A lot of people do not realize we have the ability to say no to the predetermined plan of God for our lives. Many think that what they are doing must be the will of God since He has permitted it, but it is not so. You can actually say no to the call of God and continue to live a 'normal' life. Paul could have said no. He could have given his life to Christ and yet not fully followed his apostolic calling; that was very possible, and many are doing just that today. Paul could have said no, but he would have had to face the issue on the day of judgment; that is the same with your life and mine. We have to be careful to say yes to Him; we have to be deliberate about it.

Like Paul we were all called for our own specific purposes, and the Lord did not think of our comfort first nor will He accept it as a valid excuse on that day of judgment. Being busy here and there and neglecting to do what He sent us to do is a problem that we must guard against. Hardship has always been a reason people walk away from the call of God for them. They are too busy making life comfortable. People have all kinds of excuses to give why they cannot follow the call of God for their lives. Most of these excuses revolve around solving the mundane things of life first, so that life will be more comfortable.

*And He said to another, "Follow Me." But he said, "Permit me **first** to go*



*and bury my father...Luke 9:59-60*

We have so many things we want to do *first*.

“Let me *first* establish a business and then I can go into the ministry.”

“Let me first build a house of my own so that my people will not think I am a failure.”

Someone actually said to me once, “now that I have reached the peak of my career, I can now go into the ministry.” He waited first to get the fullness of his earthly career before answering the call to preach. I thought to myself, “I sure hope this chap was not called for the ministry, otherwise he waited too late.”

What are the first things you are doing before obeying the Lord? Let me tell you, you cannot leave the reason why God gave you life to when it is convenient. You can't do other things first and then leave the work of the Lord for last. I am not referring to the work of your church and the one which pleases your pastor. You can be active in a church and be out of God's will. The fact that you are in a religious organisation sweating away does not necessarily mean you are serving God. Building new branches may promote your denomination but does not prove you are pleasing God. I am referring to the call of God for your life. It may not be in the realm which is generally deemed spiritual; it may be in the realm of what people call secular. With God and in the life of the child of God, there is nothing secular; all is spiritual.\*

Your calling may be to be a preacher/teacher of the word of God. It may be related to the things of church or ministry.

It may be to build businesses so as to generate jobs. You may be called to make money through businesses and so control funds for the advancement of the kingdom of God.

It may be to build good schools to train the next generation. It may be to be a mother fully devoted to the raising of a new generation of soldiers of Christ. If you are a married woman and are having children, raising those children is a primary assignment which must not suffer because of other accomplishments.

Your calling may be to be a king and a prince in any area of life, what I call the kingdoms of this world, which shall become the kingdoms of His Lord and Christ (Rev 11:15). He may have called you to be a politician, an academic or an industrialist. You cannot leave any of these till when you have done other things and there is then free time. Yes, there will be a proper time, but that time is not when all comforts have been added to you and you have running water, a good house and a nice car, all in a comfortable environment. The Bible tells us that anyone waiting for conditions to be perfect will get nothing done (Eccl 11:4).

### **Geography**

Like I mentioned earlier, the calling of God for you has a geographical location. Even though this may change depending on the phase of the work you are in, yet you must know that it is location specific each time. You must bear this in mind before you make your changes. Paul was not called to preach to just anyone; the commission for him was to the gentiles.

Once I was taking a long trip to the US, and a friend of mine said he hoped I will come back. He knew many people loved to move to that nation. I said, "Hey my bro, I have a ministry to do." He said, "but there is also ministry in the US." I said, "Yes there is, but everyone has his assignment for each season." I was not at all called to the US at that time, and he wasn't thinking I was; he was just thinking of the allure of the US for the average Nigerian. But it was not my calling.

A brother told me that once he was trying to make a decision concerning moving from one city to another, then he was present as I preached and I asked, "Where is ministry?" I was saying in effect that each person should be more concerned about where he or she is of service to the Lord and to people when they are making location decisions. Money and personal comfort must not be first. He chose to remain where he was.

Have you ever wondered what the Lord might ask you about on your own judgment day? You should! What should be most important to you is for you to hear the words, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant." Nothing beats that, not possessing the whole world or having the greatest comfort in this life. Well done, thou good and faithful servant. He also said, "*Blessed is the servant who the master finds so doing when He returns.*" There is something the Master commands that each of us should be doing at each season.

Even before the day of judgement there is accounting to do here on the earth. Your life may depend on it.

### **Cut it down?**

*And He began telling this parable: "A certain man had a fig tree which had been planted in his vineyard; and he came looking for fruit on it, and did not find any. And he said to the vineyard-keeper, 'Behold, for three years I have come looking for fruit on this fig tree without finding any. Cut it down! Why does it even use up the ground?'" Luke 13:6-7*

Many of us stand the risk of being cut down because we are not bearing the kind of fruit the Lord created us to bear. We were produced by Him as a specific part of the body to fulfil a particular assignment in the army; if He does not find fruit, that is a major problem.

Many are pursuing things that the Lord did not create them to do, and neglecting the things He created and empowered them to do. We have a duty to stir up the gift of God that He placed inside us so we can be fruitful for Him. Refusal to do this is a reason many believers fall into many troubles. It is one reason why we struggle so much and things don't go right. It is one reason why ill-health and all kinds of troubles come into our lives sometimes; it may even cause death before the proper time.

See, the Lord makes provisions for us, but He sends those things ahead to the place He expects us to be. When we are not in the right place, we struggle so much; things just don't work the way they are supposed to. Just like when David was carrying the ark of God wrongly, all kinds of accidents befall our paths.

### **The lesson**

My main aim in this book is to help the people of God focus and look away from the comforts of life as they are careful to fulfil the call of God for their lives. The things we often pursue are nothing more than vanities and they will pass away with this life. They will not stand with us in the day of reckoning.

What is a little discomfort in this life? The early Christians literally died for Christ, and many are still doing same today, so why can't we suffer for Him so we can be true soldiers? Okay, you may not have the best material things in life, but so what?! Is this world now the home of the believer? Are we no longer mere sojourners on the earth? Are we no longer supposed to have our eyes fixed on the things above (Col 3:2)? Ok, you won't own a house, a nice car or be able to travel all over the world! So what is that compared with being imprisoned or beheaded for the name of Christ that your brethren in the faith have suffered in times

past and are suffering even today?

Many of us speak as if we are ready to die for Him when we are not even willing to live for Him. I would have thought it easier to live without running water but be free to come and go than to live in a prison no matter how comfortable. If you are not ready to take a little bit of discomfort because of what you believe to be the calling of God for your life, please forget it, you are not ready to go to jail for His name's sake.

The gospel of prosperity is true but it is not the first thing about being a believer. Abundance is not what we are supposed to position ourselves for through deliberate choices for it; it is rather what the Lord adds to us as we go about obeying Him and doing His will. Christianity is not known for what the people get but for what they can give up. No wonder Paul said he counted things as dung for the sake of the knowledge of Christ. Are we ready to leave our comfort so that we can truly obey him?

Let me warn everyone again: one day we are all going to give account for what our lives were used for; our commendation will not at all be for what we enjoyed but for how we served Him in righteousness and in connection with the specific assignment He gave us. We have gifts that He sent us to the world to deploy.

We are soldiers of Christ and we must live life like soldiers. We have been sent into every field of life and we must be willing to take whatever it might be so as to be effective for our God. We must be willing to bear the difficulties that may arise; we must be willing to endure poverty. When Paul said, "I can do all things through Christ who gives me strength," he was speaking specifically about the ability to endure hardship without complaining. That is a true life of faith.



\*For more on this please see my book, *'How to work for God.'*

## CHAPTER 13

### **There is no want**

*Fear the Lord, you his godly people, for those who fear him will have all they need. Ps 34:9NLT*

*But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added to you. Matt 6:33*

I should conclude everything in this book by reminding believers that God actually has made provision for us. The Lord does not delight in having people suffer; He is just saying that we must be *ready* to suffer for Him and His cause if suffering is what it takes. He is saying that we must never place our comfort in life before the things that are more important. Having said that, the truth is that He actually delights in the prosperity of servants (Ps 35:27).

The provisions of the Lord are packaged as promises in His word, and they will convert to material things when necessary. Whatever He has promised will come to pass if we just allow the right conditions. The fact is that God can bless anybody anywhere and He does not want us to think that we must go to a particular place to be blessed. Anywhere He places us He can cause material blessings to come there. He can bring forth food in the wilderness and water in the desert. When He told Isaac not to go to Egypt, what was the result?

*Now Isaac sowed in that land, and reaped in the same year a hundredfold. And the Lord blessed him, and the man became rich, and*

*continued to grow richer until he became very wealthy. Gen 26:12-13*

Wherever He places us, He will make all supplies flow to that place. We will be fruitful in that land.

God has spoken that we will not lack. Once the mouth of the Lord commands something, His Spirit goes out and brings in the result. The Lord will provide; in the place of the call of God for our lives there will be provision. He will send the ram ahead so that we will have our supplies at the right time. He is the Lord Who sees (Gen 22).

The Lord Jesus said the Father knows all we need even before we ask Him. He also said the major reason why we lack things and struggle hard for them is that we do not seek what is right. If we seek the right things, all other things will be added.

We are to seek the kingdom of God and His righteousness.

We are to pursue the righteousness of God in our personal lives and the Lord will provide all our needs.

We will not lack. It is a promise.

He will make all grace abound towards us so that we will have all sufficiency in all things and abound to every good deed; that is His promise. He said we will be enriched in all things and have enough for liberal sharing (2 Cor 9). He can do it, and will do it if we follow Him.

### **The promise of abundance**

The promise that brought peace to my heart years ago so that I do not make decisions because of financial gains is found in Isaiah 66:12. In summary it reads simply as follows (see the Revised Standard Version and GNT):



*Behold, I will cause prosperity to flow towards you like a river, and the wealth of the nations like an overflowing stream.*

What struck me was that He said it will flow *towards*; this means I must never run after it. By divine order I am the reference point of the flow. Prosperity is not the reference point of my movements; I am the reference point for the movement of prosperity.

That has been the wisdom for me to obey all these years. "Go where you believe I am leading you to go, and do what you understand as My will for you; put pressure on this word and watch Me pull resources in your direction." That has been the wisdom for my salvation.

God will supply all our needs if we dare to trust Him. He will make sure our children and all that matter to us are taken care of. That is what it means to be our Father.

He is a good God. The word of God says that He delights in the prosperity of His servant. That is a fact. He does not enjoy making us suffer; He just says love for Him must be first in our hearts before any other thing. He will make sure we do not lack.

David discovered this and said, "...those who follow the Lord will not lack any good thing." If anything appears to be lacking in our lives, what we need to do is to check and make sure we are really following Him. If things are not working out well for me, there is something wrong with me or with what I am doing. I must be getting something wrong. The man Kenneth Hagin said once that when he realised he was not enjoying the good of the land as promised in the word of God (Isaiah 1:19), he checked himself and discovered that though he was obedient as recorded in that verse of promise, he was not doing it wholeheartedly.

He was not quite willing, and the verse says the good of the land is for the willing and obedient. He repented of obeying the Lord grudgingly and the Lord made the good of the land begin to flow towards him.

Let us follow Him totally and it will be well with us.

*'Surely the land on which your foot has trodden shall be an inheritance to you and to your children forever, because you have followed the Lord my God fully. Josh 14:9*

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## **KINGDOM-WORD MINISTRIES**

**Pastor Bankie Olusina** teaches from the platform of Kingdom-Word Ministries, a non-denominational teaching ministry based in Enugu, Nigeria. Activities of the ministry include weekly Bible classes at the ministry hall, publication of free teaching tracts and books, radio/TV broadcasts and organizing teaching seminars in various towns and cities.

The audio messages digital catalogue includes hundreds of messages which are available on the ministry website and also on MP3 discs.

For more information and for free downloads of Pastor Bankie's audio messages, books and short sermons, please visit **[www.pastor.ng](http://www.pastor.ng)** or **[www.pastorbankie.org](http://www.pastorbankie.org)**.

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