

Bezael Enlite



Someone is Controlling You!

Pastor Bankie

About The Book

No matter how independent you feel, you are being controlled by someone or something. The true independence of man is in the freedom to choose which influence he will come under. When man ate of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, it was his attempt to take over control of his own life and be free of the control of God, but he only came under the power of the evil one. Now, the first step to real freedom for the believer in Christ is to identify the forces over his life. ***Someone is controlling you; just make sure it is the Lord.*** That is what this book is about.



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Make sure it is the Lord


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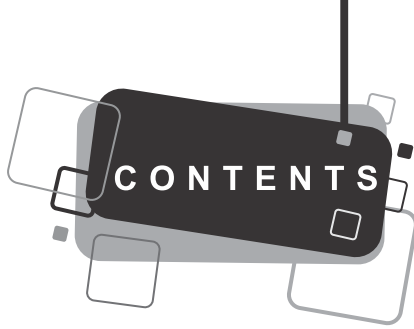
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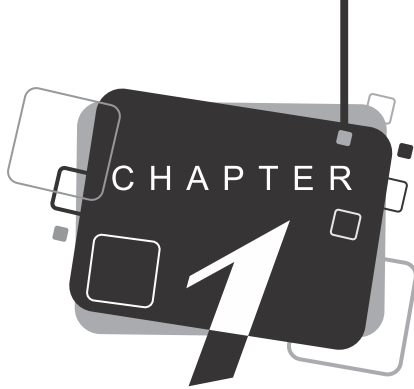
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Who Are You Obeying?

Don't you realize that you become the slave of whatever you choose to obey? You can be a slave to sin, which leads to death, or you can choose to obey God, which leads to righteous living. Thank God! Once you were slaves of sin, but now you wholeheartedly obey this teaching we have given you. Now you are free from your slavery to sin, and you have become slaves to righteous living.
Rom 6:16-18 NLT


In 1979 Bob Dylan released a song as part of his first gospel themed album. In it he said, “you gotta serve somebody. It may be the devil or it may be the Lord but you gotta serve somebody.” Now, that is a very true statement.

The way we are, we are always obeying something or somebody. We are not as


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independent as we think. There is always something that controls each person. Our true independence is in the ability to choose what controls us. There are those who have given that control over to things like drugs and their lives are so miserable and pitiable. But many of the people doing the pitying are just as bound to something else but which is not so obvious to the eyes of the world or which the results are acceptable in the eyes of the world. The fact is that we are all obeying something or someone.

What does the Lord want from us? Simple—He wants us to obey Him; He wants His Spirit to control us. From the very



**“You gotta
serve somebody.
It may be the devil
or it may be the
Lord but you
gotta serve
somebody.”**



beginning, the problem we have had has been that of obedience to the Lord. We seem to often stray away from it, but obeying Him is what the Lord has always wanted. The truth is that obedience to Him is actually very good for

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us; there is nothing better than it. He never, ever, asks us to do anything for His own benefit (hey, what could He need that we would be the ones to supply anyway?). Everything He ever asks us to do is for our benefit.

*This is what the Lord says—
your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel:
"I am the Lord your God,
who teaches you what is good for you
and leads you along the paths you should follow.
Oh, that you had listened to my commands!
Then you would have had peace flowing like a
gentle river
and righteousness rolling over you like waves in
the sea.
Your descendants would have been like the sands
along the seashore—
too many to count!
There would have been no need for your
destruction,
or for cutting off your family name."
Isa 48:17-19 NLT*


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From these words of Isaiah we see that obedience to the Lord brings us peace, prosperity, health, blessing in our homes and progress in all we put our hands to do. It is all for our good.

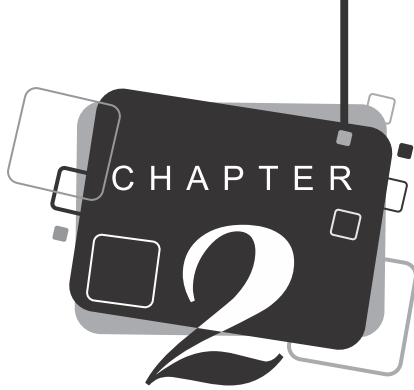
Now, with such good things lying in store for



**The truth is that
obedience to
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us, why would anyone ever think of not obeying the Lord? The answer is simple: We are obeying something or someone else; things which are deliberate in their attempts to take us away from obeying the Lord.



Disobedience Always Has A Cause

There is something we must understand, and it is that disobedience to the Lord is not disobedience in a vacuum. It is not a case of 'I don't just feel like obeying.' What actually happens is that we are obeying something else. *Every disobedience to the Lord is active obedience to another voice or influence.* That is what the problem is, and that is what I am writing to help Christians think about. *Who are you actually obeying?*

The voice of the Lord calling to us to obey is ever present but it is also gentle. You have to be deliberate in seeking it and in obeying it. But the voices calling us to obey something else are plenty and they are loud. Those voices are the reasons we do not obey the Lord. Every time we pay attention to all these

Every disobedience to the Lord is active obedience to another voice or influence

other voices, we are said to be walking in doubt or unbelief. Doubt is that reason which we have to not trust the Lord's word or instruction. Many of us fall for the subtlety of unbelief because we do not understand this

fact. We think that doubt is refusal to believe, but it is not so. Just as in the case of disobedience, doubt is believing something else apart from the word of God. It is when you have a reason for thinking that what the Lord has spoken is not reliable and cannot be committed to. You therefore cannot doubt except there is a reason, and those reasons are the other voices we are speaking of.

Reasonable Doubt

You see therefore that doubt is very reasonable, and that is the dangerous thing about it. The person walking in unbelief and so disobeying the Lord is a very reasonable person. He has 'good' reasons to do what he

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is doing. He is not a careless person; in fact he appears more careful and cautious than the fellow walking in faith. If you listen to the reasoning pattern of the man of unbelief, you will hear a well ordered progression in reasoning. He has facts and figures, and has reasonable projections based on them. It is the person of faith that is kind of more confusing. The main thing the latter has to say to justify his actions is, "the Lord has spoken that..." or, "according to the word of God..." He says these things like they are real, even when rational thinking seems to say something else.

Please note that it is not that the person of faith is unreasonable; it is just that what is written, the prophetic word of God, is just as real to him as the things that eyes can see around, and even more real actually. This fellow of faith refuses to accept any conclusion which implies that the word of God is not true and cannot be relied upon. Reasoning with the scriptures is normal to him.

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Let me use the following account of an event in my life to illustrate.

There was one of those days as a young man, yet unmarried, that an old friend of mine visited and we discussed plans for the future. He was making the final preparations to emigrate out of the country to seek better prospects elsewhere. Now, I was one who believed, and still do believe, that such decisions are not to be taken lightly. As a Christian I understood that there is the issue of the specific will of God concerning each person's geographical location. At that time I was persuaded that my place was within our native country, even though things were tight and the country did not seem to present a clear vision of a prosperous future to the young people like me around. I asked my friend why he had to do this.

He took some time to explain to me why he needed to relocate, and it was for the sake of earning more money. He told me of family needs that should be met and that being a young man and a doctor in the family,

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eventually he would have to come up with the money. Everything he said to me that day was reasonable, and it is interesting that he never focused on himself. He was not the typical person I was used to talking to about such things—people who focused on their personal quality of life and future. You know, to own a house, buy a good a car and to have money to spend. No, he was not such a one. He seemed, in summary, to be saying, “I need to make money to help my relatives, and this country is not showing me how I can do that locally; I have to move to greener pastures.”

For the first time in my life, in all the years of engaging in these discussions, I felt terrible. It suddenly dawned on me that I had been kind of selfish in the decisions I had made in these matters. I had not thought of my loved ones and how they may have had some hopes in me. I had not thought about money for them. For goodness sake, I was not from a wealthy home; both of my parents were civil servants, middle level, and the economic downturn of those days affected them just

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like it affected everyone. I had a number of younger ones who were all still in school at different levels. I felt terrible. How could I be so wicked? I thought about these things after my friend left and ended up weeping.

I cried and cried. I laid down on my bed and wept. I turned to the Lord to tell Him how I had been so irresponsible by being nonchalant about the matters of other people, my family specifically. Yes, I could live poorly, but what about those who I was supposed to help? I seemed to have only been concerned about me and this will-of-God thing which I was so obsessed about.

Kind But Uncompromising

The Lord, who is so kind, and who sees our tears when we come to Him in sincerity answered me. But with what? If you think He came over to my frame of thinking, then think again; He did nothing of such. He did not tell me He understood and so I could go and look for money too. He did not even bring a word to tell me not to worry, that He would soon send money. The Spirit of God

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spoke clearly in my heart with just one scripture. It was a verse of the words of the Lord Jesus which I was familiar with. My reins, like David said, did instruct me in that night season of my life.*

This was what the Lord quoted to me from:

If anyone comes to Me, and does not hate his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, and even his own life, he cannot be My disciple. Luke 14:26

That word of the Lord Jesus came to me clearly as I remembered the quote. Funny the way the Holy Spirit comforts us. He did not come pacifying me; He only made things crystal clear. He made it clear that indeed following the will of God was much more important than the thing that I was pointing out in my 'righteousness'. When later I thought about it I understood that He loves my father, mother and siblings much more than I could ever love them, and that His plan is the best for everyone. But His word to

*Ps 16:7

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me at that time was just one to let me know what to put first. He made it clear that those who put their relatives first are not worthy of being His servants.


And He said to another, "Follow Me." But he said, "Permit me first to go and bury my father (that is, care for my aged father till death)." But He said to him, "Allow the dead to bury their own dead; but as for you, go and proclaim everywhere the kingdom of God." And another also said, "I will follow You, Lord; but first permit me to say good-bye to those at home." But Jesus said to him, "No one, after putting his hand to the plow and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God." Luke 9:59-62 (NASB, explanation in parenthesis added)

So you see that anyone walking by faith may appear unreasonable except for the word of God that is behind what he or she is doing, and only people who are of faith can understand. No wonder the Bible has spoken to us that without faith there is no true understanding; it is only by faith that we understand. See, when we are walking in


unbelief, everything makes sense except that the final conclusion is not in alignment with total trust in the Lord. Doubt assumes that the word of God is not that reliable.

Many Voices

So we see that the other things that call us away causing us to disobey the Lord are not obviously bad things a lot of times. Most times they are very reasonable. Take a thing like mammon, which is a major distraction from obeying the Lord. Many people assume that mammon is a strong love for material things; they think the fellow operating by the spirit of mammon wants a billion dollars, a private jet and houses on every continent. But it is not so. Mammon is gentle, subtle, and very reasonable. Mammon is simply, “what shall we eat; what shall we drink, and with what shall



When we are walking in unbelief, everything makes sense except that the final conclusion is not in alignment with total trust in the Lord.

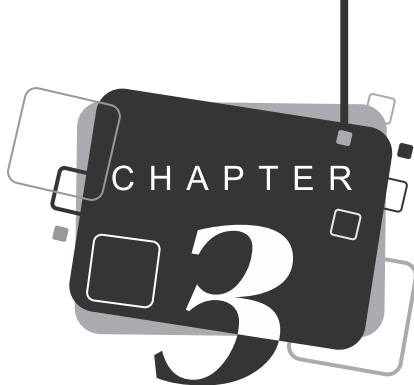


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we clothe ourselves?" Mammon is the desire for basic material security. For this reason, even though many Christians are controlled by mammon, they do not know it. They feel righteous while serving another god.

So what are these voices we obey that result in disobedience to the Lord?

There are, it may be, so many kinds of voices in the world, and none of them is without signification.
1 Cor 14:10 KJV



The Flesh And The World

For all that is in the world — the lust of the flesh [craving for sensual gratification] and the lust of the eyes [greedy longings of the mind] and the pride of life [assurance in one's own resources or in the stability of earthly things] — these do not come from the Father but are from the world [itself]. 1 John 2:16 AMP

But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh. For the flesh sets its desire against the Spirit... Gal 5:16-17

When the bible talks about the flesh and the world, we see the two phenomena intertwined. I will also therefore talk about both together as I go on.


The flesh refers first to the things that are

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natural to our *biological* instincts. These include the desire for sensual gratification and for preservation of the body. These things interestingly were created into us by God and so are in themselves not evil; but everything made has a set of instructions that controls the use of them. Each appliance we purchase comes with a little booklet telling us what we can do with it and the do's and don'ts of the operations. The fact that you own that piece of equipment does not mean you can do just anything you like with it; rather you must follow the rules set by the manufacturer. So it is with our bodies. Our desires may be natural and God-built, but the use is controlled by instructions as revealed in the scriptures, and we must follow those rules. When we obey a natural call of the body without observing the *modus operandi* and boundaries set by the Lord, we are walking in the flesh.

Many times I see the world grapple with things. They want people to do things just because that is how they feel and anyone saying differently is judged a bigot who

should be silenced. If a man feels like a woman, then he has the right to *identify* as a woman. How people feel should be respected, they claim. But that opinion and practice are predicated upon the fact that the world, in its foolishness, says there is no God. If there is no manufacturer there can't be a manual. Otherwise they would have known to ask the Creator for the instructions for us.



When we obey a natural call of the body without observing the modus operandi and boundaries set by the Lord, we are walking in the flesh.



We cannot do things just because that is how we feel. Take sexuality as an example. Yes, there is an instinct for sex and it is natural, God created it. But the Maker says, "use it only in a marriage union between a man and a woman, and make sure you walk in marital fidelity." He has a circuit installed in us, which starts in our ears, which makes

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controlling the instinct possible if only we would pay attention to His words. When we pay attention to the body, we will want to have sex with whoever we wish, whenever we feel like it. A man will see a woman today, and tomorrow he is in bed with her, whether she is married or not is irrelevant. Like I once heard said, “you know I can't help falling in love” or “the heart wants what the heart wants.” They call it love, but it is not love; the bible calls it lust. It is the lust of the flesh.

A Spot On A Clean Record

When we listen to our bodies in that regard, we disobey the word of God. There was a time David did just that.

Late one afternoon, after his midday rest, David got out of bed and was walking on the roof of the palace. As he looked out over the city, he noticed a woman of unusual beauty taking a bath. He sent someone to find out who she was, and he was told, “She is Bathsheba, the daughter of Eliam and the wife of Uriah the Hittite.” Then David sent messengers to get her; and when she came to the palace, he slept with her. She had just completed

the purification rites after having her menstrual period. Then she returned home. Later, when Bathsheba discovered that she was pregnant, she sent David a message, saying, "I'm pregnant." 2 Sam 11:2-5 NLT

He has a circuit installed in us, which starts in our ears, which makes controlling the instinct possible if only we would pay attention to His words.

That pregnancy was the beginning of David's troubles. Or was it?

The flesh of David spoke to him and he listened. David had many wives and ample number of concubines (Nathan described them as flocks and herds in 2 Sam 12:2), but the beauty of this young woman was too much for his flesh. The lust of the flesh called and David responded.

The body speaks to us. Our natural instincts speak to us. The body tells us to ignore rules

and commandments and to follow our feelings.

There was a voice of God calling to David gently. That voice said, "*thou shall not commit adultery.*" Notice that the messenger told him clearly that, "the woman is truly quite beautiful, but she is somebody's wife." David should have taken a cue from that and obeyed the superior voice of the Lord. See, every time we have to make a choice in life and we are about to do something that is wrong, the Lord would put a simple check there to make things clear. "I did not know" wouldn't any longer be an excuse, as something that you *did* know would have been one of the rules broken. You may want to say, "I did not know the place was dangerous," but the Spirit would point out to you that the sign was clear, "Private property. No trespassing." That should have been enough to keep you out of danger. David did not listen to the clear warning that this would be committing adultery and coveting a neighbour's wife. David obeyed the flesh.

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Such voices from the flesh come to all of us. Paul said we should therefore take the time to put the body under. Following the voice of the body can ruin us spiritually.

And everyone who competes in the games exercises self-control in all things... I buffet my body and make it my slave, lest possibly, after I have preached to others, I myself should be disqualified. 1 Cor 9:25,27

This was what David was supposed to do. If only he bothered to think of what was about to commence in his life for following the voice of the body, he would have exercised self-control. It was possible. If he had known that this would lead to the rape of his daughter by her own half-brother, the death of his son, his flight from the throne, civil war in Israel, and the death of another son, he would have been able to exercise self-control. It was only half an hour or less of pleasure. If he had considered the consequences, he would have kept his body in subjection. Vision gives ability.

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Another interesting thing is that God actually made it possible and actually easy for him to turn away.

No temptation has overtaken you but such as is common to man; and God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will provide the way of escape also, that you may be able to endure it. 1 Cor 10:13

God already made a way of escape. He is a faithful God. Yes, sexual desire may be strong, but David already had avenues to release it. Nathan told him simply, “why did you not reach into your harem?” (See 2 Sam 12:4). No matter what may be the voice calling out to you to obey, no matter the temptation, God has made a way of escape. All you need to do is look for it and turn away from the strange voice of the flesh. Even for the young and single, there is a way of escape from such, but we are not talking about that now, our focus is on David.

There was no mistake greater in the life of

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David than this few minutes of pleasure and the subsequent plot to hide it. It was a permanent blot on an otherwise impeccable record.

...David did what was right in the sight of the Lord, and had not turned aside from anything that He commanded him all the days of his life, except in the case of Uriah the Hittite. 1 Kings 15:5

Following the voice of the flesh still ruins people today, especially Christians. It is not true that because we are believers the grace of God covers all these things. The grace of God is rather the power to obey God even when all the voices are calling in the opposite direction. And to who much grace is made available, much is expected as the fruit of righteousness. The flesh may tell us to do all manner of things, and often we start making excuses for doing those things. For example I need to make some extra money because things are tight, and so I am unfaithful to my primary employment. I may decide to break all kinds of rules of the society because

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everyone does it and I need the money anyway. With those excuses we are killing the voice of the Spirit and frustrating the power of grace to help us. We then end up obeying the voice of the flesh.

Other Ways

The world and the flesh speak to us in many other ways.

...the lust of the eyes [greedy longings of the mind] and the pride of life [assurance in one's own resources or in the stability of earthly things].

It is a fleshly instinct to want something that the eyes see, especially if we have not had it before. Just look at the behaviour of children and you will understand. They want it because they laid eyes on it. They will throw a tantrum until they get it unless an adult brings in a stern voice of discipline. If children are properly taught, they mature away from such habits. But many of us have not.

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We want the latest gadgets, even when we don't truly need it. The latest model of cars must be ours, even when the one we have is still very good. We must be leaders in acquisitions. We don't want to be behind in ownership of anything. We get a good feeling if we are the first to have something or we are one of the few that have it. We want to create an appearance of being rich so as to impress observers.

The companies that make those gadgets know this and they advertise them to us from every corner. They spend billions of dollars annually trying to sell things to us, so much that a man like David Pawson* decided that advertising is a sin and is of the devil. His reason is that they mainly appeal to the flesh. But it is not the adverts, it is our lack of self-control. It is all flesh and we must grow away from it. Many people have entered into sin so as to acquire things, like borrowing and not paying back, or lying and cheating. And many have resorted to lying and boasting

*davidpawson.org

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vainly to explain to their peers why they do not have theirs yet. The flesh is speaking and they are obeying.

Many Christians even go ahead and start saying that their spirit said they should do something or buy something. When they say this we are supposed to accept that they have discovered the will of God in it. Yes they are right that it is their spirit, but it is not the will of God. It is the voice of the flesh which they are hearing, it is propelling them and so the term 'spirit' can be an accurate description, but is not the Spirit of God. Remember that a spirit is anything that propels someone.* It is called the pride of life. We must never forget the verdict of the Lord Jesus,

And he went on to say to them all, "Watch out and guard yourselves from every kind of greed; because your true life is not made up of the things you own, no matter how rich you may be." Luke 12:15 GNT

*For more please read my book, 'Guided by the Spirit'.

The Pride Of Life

I have seen that one of the greatest motivations of people is the pride of their flesh. The desire to be the richest, finest, fastest, etc., is a major motivation in life. Solomon discovered it way back then and wrote about it.

Then I observed that most people are motivated to success because they envy their neighbors. But this, too, is meaningless—like chasing the wind. Eccl 4:4 NLT

My counsel to Christians is to avoid any word that ends with *-est* as in overt or subtle competition. There are times I hear churches announce, “we are one of the fastest growing churches on this continent” and such things. “This is the best choir in town.” “We have the most beautiful sanctuary.” Such statements are statements of the pride of life. These things motivate many Christians and it is wrong. It is the reason why we often disobey God and start hearing our so-called spirits tell us things that are not in line with the word of God. It is the spirit of Babylon. When

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we would have followed those voices, even though we spiritualize them and call them the voice of the Spirit of God, we will still end up in downfall. It was like that with the king of Babylon, as it is written:

You were determined to climb up to heaven and to place your throne above the highest stars. You thought you would sit like a king on that mountain in the north where the gods assemble. You said you would climb to the tops of the clouds and be like the Almighty. But instead, you have been brought down to the deepest part of the world of the dead. Isa 14:13-15 GNT

Never work so as to be better than someone else. Do not compare yourself with other people. You must strive to outdo your own last performance. You are to compete with yourself alone and fix your eyes on Jesus as the ultimate standard. That is the way to avoid listening to strange voices. That is the way to stay safe. Take examples from other people, learn from them, but never compete with them.

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Each person has his or her own race in front of them. Each person's path in life is different. God has different expectations of different people. He knows what He gave to each, and it is acceptable according to what each person has. It is not about how much better than someone else you or I are.

This pride of life is why people join churches and would rather join a visible department rather than the one in which they are most gifted or needed. It is the reason many people hear the call to a prominent office in the church. It is the reason many people have their own ministries and churches. There was a man who confessed that he never felt the Lord wanted him to start a church but he did it only because he was never accorded the respect pastors of churches used to get when ministers of the gospel gathered. His gift was in being a singer/worship leader. When I started out in ministry then, I was counselled to start a church so that I could get the respect of people. I remember replying the person who gave me that counsel that day that, "I am not doing it for

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the respect.” All I wanted was to exercise my gift according to the grace given to me in Christ and to release the teachings of the word of God into the body of Christ.



Don't Follow Men

Men are one of the greatest come-in-betweens to our obedience to the will of God. It is a fact that one of the things that drive people is the desire to be praised by men. This desire is a major voice we obey and so disobey God.

You like to receive praise from one another, but you do not try to win praise from the one who alone is God; how, then, can you believe me? John 5:44-45 GNT

Remember that true believing is synonymous with obedience. The Lord Jesus was saying here therefore that anyone who is following the voice of men's approval cannot obey God. No wonder the word of God warns about the danger of holding men in

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such high regard. It is a trap, the Bible says (Prov 29:25). That was what led to the rejection and eventual destruction of Saul, the king of Israel.

When the Lord gave instructions to Saul through Samuel, the assignment was clear—destroy everything and spare nothing, man or beast. But Saul did not do what the Lord commanded him. This thing made the Lord sad and He called Samuel.

He said, "I regret that I have made Saul king, for he has turned back from following me and has not performed my commandments." This made Samuel quite upset, and he cried to the Lord all night. Next morning he rushed off to see Saul and to inquire of him why he had disobeyed the Lord so. After initially trying to deny, Saul finally owned up to the reason why he did not carry out the instructions of the Lord. What was the reason?

And Saul said, "They have brought them from the Amalekites, for the people spared the best of the

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sheep and oxen, to sacrifice to the Lord your God; but the rest we have utterly destroyed.” 1 Sam 15:15

Then Saul admitted to Samuel, “Yes, I have sinned. I have disobeyed your instructions and the Lord’s command, for I was afraid of the people and did what they demanded. 1 Sam 15:24 NLT

Did you notice what happened with Saul? He gave approval for his men to do what they wanted. The real reason was that he wanted to be popular with men. The approval of people mattered so much to him.

Now, this man began to earnestly beg Samuel for forgiveness, admitting that he sinned. That would impress us because we know that the Lord is quick to forgive. But in this case, both Samuel and the Lord were recalcitrant, and for good reasons. Samuel told him simply that,

... “I will not go back with you! Since you have rejected the Lord’s command, he has rejected you as king of Israel.” vs 26

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At this point Saul became desperate, and in trying to physically restrain Samuel from leaving he tore the prophet's robe. That worsened the situation.

And Samuel said to him, "The Lord has torn the kingdom of Israel from you today and has given it to someone else—one who is better than you. And he who is the Glory of Israel will not lie, nor will he change his mind, for he is not human that he should change his mind!"

Now, to the undiscerning mind, this is so unlike the Lord. This is the same Lord who we read later forgave Ahab (1Kgs 21:27-29) and David when they repented, after committing more heinous crimes. Why was the Lord so adamant in this case? Well, it was because the Lord saw his heart; the man was not truly repentant but was desperate to continue to have the position of king and the approval of men. He was desperate to restrain the prophet from leaving him so that he would not lose face before the people. That was the problem. See what he said in the midst of all this (vs 30):

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*“I know I have sinned. But please, **at least honor me before the elders of my people and before Israel by coming back with me so that I may worship the Lord your God.**”*

And this was not his first time.

The first time we read of him doing this was on one of the first instructions which Samuel gave him. He was to wait till Samuel would come and offer the sacrifice. He waited, but when it appeared that Samuel was delaying, he crossed the boundary of the role he was called to and he offered the sacrifice which Samuel was supposed to offer. Again, why did he do it? It was because the people were scattering from him, and he felt victory in battle was more dependent on having the right number of people (1 Sam 13).

When David sinned and was going to repent, he was concerned only with what the Lord thought of him. He was far less concerned about the opinion of people. According to David,

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*For I recognize my rebellion;
it haunts me day and night.
Against you, and you alone, have I sinned;
I have done what is evil in your sight.
Ps 51:3-4 NLT*

See, many people are like Saul even till today. They are so keen on pleasing men. They would disobey the clear word of God so as to remain in favour with men. They misplace the priorities of obedience. God must be pleased first before anyone else. But pleasing people is allowed only within the limits of the pleasure of God. When Peter and John were confronted with this kind of situation, they felt everyone should know what is right to do. "Whether it is right in the sight of God to give heed to you rather than to God, you be the judge," they said (Acts 4:19). To them it was something everyone should know. But many people would rather please men, and many times they tell you it is wisdom.

Why

Why are people like that? Why do we often want respect from men so much? Why do we want it?

There are two main answers to that. One is the flesh's desire to be important. It is natural to want to be liked. It's in our nature. I remember when one of my children was a little boy, about the worst thing you could tell him was, "I'm not your friend anymore." He would start crying. It's just human nature to want to be liked. As believers in Christ Jesus we must outgrow these things. We must walk away from the things of the flesh and move on to things of maturity. Pleasing God is priority for us; too bad for whoever gets displeased in the process.

The *second* reason why people love the approval of men so much is the confusion about their source of help. A story which the Lord told is very appropriate to illustrate this.

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In Luke 16 we read the story of the dishonest manager. He was reported to his boss for having mismanaged the resources kept in his care, and so the boss decided to sack him. What he did next shows us clearly why people seek the approval of men and so lose that of God.

The manager said to himself, 'What shall I do, since my master is taking the management away from me? I am not strong enough to dig; I am ashamed to beg. 'I know what I shall do, so that when I am removed from the management people will welcome me into their homes.' And he summoned each one of his master's debtors, and he began saying to the first, 'How much do you owe my master?' And he said, 'A hundred measures of oil.' And he said to him, 'Take your bill, and sit down quickly and write fifty.' Luke 16:3-7

This man was trying to buy favour so that when his time of need would commence, he would have people to call upon so that they can help him. He was therefore willing to break the laws of God so that he might please

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men. This is what we call unbelief; it leads to disobedience.

Unbelief is when we think that sustenance comes from natural sources rather than God. It means we think that what we have in life is a result of our strength and wisdom rather than the endowment of God. Men strive in the flesh so that they may have abundance rather than trying to please God so that He might bless them. This man was putting his trust in humans, but according to the word of the Lord he was in for a big surprise.

Thus says the Lord,

"Cursed is the man who trusts in mankind

And makes flesh his strength,

And whose heart turns away from the Lord.

"For he will be like a bush in the desert

And will not see when prosperity comes,

But will live in stony wastes in the wilderness,

A land of salt without inhabitant."

Jer 17:5-6

The word of the Lord to His children is clear: do no trust in man. Put your trust in the Lord

Unbelief is when we think that sustenance comes from natural sources rather than God.

alone. God may use people but we are never to trust in them. Human beings can change, and many times they do not even have the ability to help us the way we are thinking they should. We must see

that our help comes from the Lord alone. David said, "My help comes from the Lord who made heaven and earth." He is the only one who cannot fail. He is the only one who is dependable. He works in different ways but He is trustworthy. A major reason we do not see His power work for us is this thing we are discussing here—the trust in man.

When we put our trust in man, we activate the curse which Jeremiah prophesied; things fail in our lives. I have a personal interesting testimony: most of the times that I have overtly or subtly in my heart relied on people to help move me forward in anything, they

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have failed. I have learnt over time not to even rely on the promises of people. My experience is that up to 90% of promises that people have made to me have not been kept. I learnt long ago not to keep the promises of people in mind. That way people find it hard to disappoint me. That is one of the reasons why in our ministry, Kingdom-Word Ministries, I do not ask for pledges from people. When the Lord motivates people to give and they do, we give Him praise for it. We recognise that all good gifts come from Him alone. When people remember you, when they do you good, it is God who is using them as, according to the Lord Jesus, there is none good but God.

Satan's Subtle Influence

The voice of men calling for our obedience can be loud. And I must emphasize that a lot of these voices calling out to us actually mean well. They are often just seeking our welfare. Yet they may be calling us away from the plan of God. That was the reason the Lord Jesus refused to answer even His mother at a time. It was not like He was

angry with her; but He knew the operation of Satan.

When His own people heard of this, they went out to take custody of Him; for they were saying, "He has lost His senses." ...

Then His mother and His brothers arrived, and standing outside they sent word to Him and called Him. A crowd was sitting around Him, and they said to Him, "Behold, Your mother and Your brothers are outside looking for You." Answering them, He said, "Who are My mother and My brothers?" Looking about at 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 3:21, 30-35

Many people imagine Jesus never refused His mother anything, but we see clearly here that His love for her did not mean He would disobey the will of God for His life to please her. Many times when Satan wants to call us away from the will of God, he speaks through the people we love and who love us. They would usually mean well. The famous

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quote of the Lord Jesus, 'get behind me Satan,' was spoken to Peter, dearly beloved of the Lord, when he spoke for the preservation of His life. Peter did not want anything bad to happen to his master. Jesus had just told them that He was going to suffer and be killed. Who would hear that of someone he loves and not speak up? That was what happened with Peter and yet the Lord said it was Satan was speaking through him. Yes, He understood that *that* was the operation of the enemy to get Him away from the eternal plan of God.

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

Is a loved one speaking for Satan or not? For us Christians, the test is simple: Is the counsel focused on the interests of God and His kingdom or our personal interests, or even of the family? Once it is not the interest of God that is in front, it is satanic talk. Bitter truth here.


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“What are you still doing there? Will you not do something now for your future? Your mates are already married and have started building their own houses o.”


“Ha!, you want to marry a man (or woman) who has so much responsibilities? How long will you spend training that number of younger ones? When will you be able to give yourself the kind of comfort you deserve?”

“This ministry you are doing, how much is in it for you? Why don't you settle down and pastor a church instead of moving up and

down like this with little material benefits to show? How much offering can they give in that kind of town? Preaching is preaching my brother; please move to a big city.”



Remember, you are not living for your relatives. Their opinion and the expectations of the society are not of primary importance.



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These are the kinds of questions that well-meaning family and friends ask us many times but which the Lord Jesus said in them they are not minding the things of God but those of man. Follow them at your own peril.

Remember, you are not living for your relatives. Their opinion and the expectations of the society are not of primary importance. Do not allow these things take you away from your destiny in God. Beware!*

*Please read my book, *'Don't Quit the Army'* for more on this.

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Thought For The Morrow

We saw a little bit about the god called mammon earlier, but we need to examine it some more as it is one of the major voices people obey and so disobey God.

Mammon is one of those very sly things in life. People who serve it do not even realize they are serving another god. It is very powerful partly because it is deceptive. We tend to confuse mammon with an open love of money and covetousness. There are indeed some similarities but mammon is so much more subtle than covetousness, which is rather overt. Like I mentioned earlier, it so reasonable that even good Christians fall for it. Let us read the words of the Lord Jesus about it again.

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"Do not store up riches for yourselves here on earth, where moths and rust destroy, and robbers break in and steal. Instead, store up riches for yourselves in heaven, where moths and rust cannot destroy, and robbers cannot break in and steal. For your heart will always be where your riches are... You cannot be a slave of two masters; you will hate one and love the other; you will be loyal to one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money (or mammon, KJV).

"This is why I tell you: do not be worried about the food and drink you need in order to stay alive, or about clothes for your body. After all, isn't life worth more than food? And isn't the body worth more than clothes? ...

"So do not start worrying: 'Where will my food come from? or my drink? or my clothes?' (These are the things the pagans are always concerned about.) Your Father in heaven knows that you need all these things. Instead, be concerned above everything else with the Kingdom of God and with what he requires of you, and he will provide you with all these other things. So do not worry about tomorrow; it will have enough worries of its own. There is no need to add to the troubles each day brings." Matt 6:19-34 GNT

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I have omitted a few lines in the portion quoted above so as to save space, but I encourage everyone to read the complete thing in their Bibles.

What is mammon? Mammon is anything material that is trusted in. Simply put, it is material and financial arrangement in which is our security for the future. It is a major voice that speaks to common people. Like I mentioned earlier, it is not necessarily the desire to have a billion dollars, a private jet and houses on every continent. It is the desire for basic material security. It is, "what shall we eat, what shall we drink, and with what shall we clothe ourselves?" "Will I have the money when the time comes to send my children to good schools? What will happen to me financially when I am retired? Will I ever own a house of my own?" These are the things that constitute mammon, and that is why many people who serve it do not think they are doing anything evil, and yes, they are 'good' Christians.

**What is mammon?
Mammon is
anything material
that is trusted in.**

Once you want material assurance concerning your future and you are making decisions primarily with that in mind, no matter how good a person

you are, you are serving mammon but you do not know it.

Once the primary assignment of God for your life is not first and foremost in your mind but you are more concerned about where money and comfort comes from, you are listening to the voice of mammon. Several times I have encountered anointed and gifted children of God who put following the call of God for their lives off until they would have secured themselves financially so that they would not lack; they plan to then 'retire' into doing the real reason they were given life. They are leaving important things till the last. Married people want to start having children after they have 'made it' in their careers; "It is for the

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children," they lie to themselves. For those who are called into the preaching ministry, many even boast that they do not want anyone to think they have come into it for money, so they have to first have investments so as to take care of what they shall eat, what they shall drink and what they shall clothe themselves with. If you are like this, know that you are serving mammon currently, and the Lord will not wait till later to be served. He is saying to you that you are not worthy of being His disciple or of the kingdom (Luke 9:59-62). You have forgotten His faithfulness and the testimony of the people He once sent out.

Then Jesus asked his disciples, "When I sent you out that time without purse, bag, or shoes, did you lack anything?" "Not a thing," they answered.


Luke 22:35 GNT

By the time you would be ready, in your own estimation, He would have moved on to other more available persons and to maybe another generation. Very likely He would no longer be interested in your services.


Signs Of Mammon

What else may be the signs of serving mammon?

Once your prayers and spiritual activities focus on what we shall eat, etc., you are not serving the Lord. No matter how much you give, once what you will receive for your offerings is the primary motivation for the gifts, you are serving mammon. I have heard



Once the primary assignment of God for your life is not first and foremost in your mind but you are more concerned about where money and comfort comes from, you are listening to the voice of mammon.



it said by well-meaning Christians that they are not at rest until their 'seed' produces a 'harvest' for them. Guess what? They did not give to God; they gave in the service of mammon. The true fruit that a genuine Christian giver expects is what their gift

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produces in the life of the recipient. Paul said, “even if I am offered like a drink offering, pouring out my lifeblood as I give myself for the cause and work of your faith, in that I will be glad.”* When the Lord Jesus gave Himself for us, His joy was not in what He would get, but in what His sacrifice would produce in our lives, we who would believe in Him. He saw the deliverance that He would bring to us, He saw the new life and reconciliation to God, with the healing, deliverance and all, things that would come to us as a result of His labour, and He was glad.

When he sees all that is accomplished by his anguish,

he will be satisfied.

And because of his experience,

my righteous servant will make it possible

for many to be counted righteous,

for he will bear all their sins. Isa 53:11 NLT

That is how true Christians give—they rejoice in being able to make a difference.

*Phil 2:17 paraphrased.

See, people of God, once money and satisfying security for the future occupies a leading position in your choice making, then in that choice you are serving mammon. The Lord Jesus made it clear that there is no middle of the ground in this. It is either one end or the other.

Deception

Security in material things is deceptive. There is no security anywhere but in God. The word of God says that all flesh is grass; this means everything physical can easily be destroyed. They easily fail. I was reading Fareed Zakaria the other day and he explained that the age of the economist is gone. According to him, *“After the Cold War, suddenly the most valuable intellectual training and practical experience became economics, which was seen as the secret sauce that could make and unmake nations. That all changed with behavioral economics, which showed that markets, people, and perhaps nations don’t always behave rationally—and knocked the discipline down a peg... That economics has since slipped from that pedestal is simply a testament to*

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*the fact that **the world is messy.**"**

I could have told him that. I knew it from reading the word of God from Isaiah who said it long ago that, "*people (systems and nations) are like the grass. Their beauty fades as quickly as the flowers in a field. As grass withers and the flowers fade beneath the winds the Lord sends, so it is with people, nations and their systems. They all fade, while the word of our God stands forever.*"**

Why would anyone trust their future to this? No wonder the Lord Jesus told us to learn to put our trust in the Lord and to lay up treasure in heaven.

Laying up treasure in heaven does not mean we will find it only when we have slept in the Lord and gone to heaven. No. Heaven is a storage place from which material things are sent down when necessary. Laying up treasure in heaven is real and dependable.

*Fareed Zakaria. *The End of Economics?* Winter 2019 issue of *Foreign Policy* magazine.

**Is 40:6-8 paraphrased.

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There is no security in human systems.

To want to be safe for tomorrow is not a bad thing. The Lord has no problem with that concern. Notice that what He offered Abraham was not just for the present but also for the future. The difference however is where we believe the security for the future is. Is it in a human system, careful investment, assets, or a developed country? That is what the real question is actually. Where is your future; where is your hope? Any plans you make for your future that does not show that your faith is in God and in Him alone is the service of mammon.

There is a way the Amplified Bible describes the pride of life.

For all that is in the world — the lust of the flesh... and the pride of life [assurance in one's own resources or in the stability of earthly things] — these do not come from the Father but are from the world [itself]. 1 John 2:16 AMP

Here we are seeing confidence in earthly

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thing as one of the components of the pride of life.

As false as mammon is, the voice is so loud and is calling out to people every day, and many Christians are gladly following it.

But what is the voice of the Lord? David prophesies it for us:

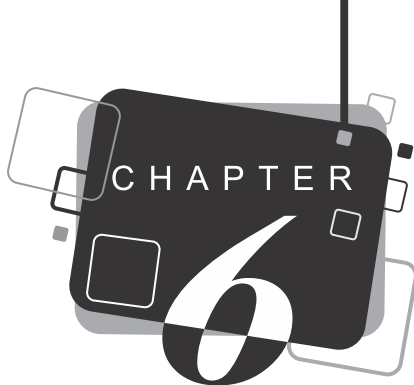
*Trust in the Lord, and do good;
Dwell in the land and cultivate faithfulness.
Delight yourself in the Lord;
And He will give you the desires of your heart.
Commit your way to the Lord,
Trust also in Him, and He will do it.
And He will bring forth your righteousness as the light,
And your judgment as the noonday.
Rest in the Lord and wait patiently for Him;
Do not fret because of him who prospers in his way...
Do not fret, it leads only to evildoing.
For evildoers will be cut off,
But those who wait for the Lord, they will inherit the land.*

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*... the humble will inherit the land,
And will delight themselves in abundant
prosperity.*

(from Psalm 37)

Let us turn deaf ears to the voice of the fear of tomorrow, the voice of mammon. Let us seek the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and that tomorrow will be taken care of by the faithful God.



You will notice that I have not directly listed Satan's voice as one of the voices that we follow so as to disobey the word of the Lord. I only pointed out his influence in the voices of well-meaning people. It was not an oversight; I wish to point out that Satan actually only works through the other voices we have mentioned. Satan only amplifies any voice that detracts from the voice of the Lord. For example, when he came to Eve, what he appealed to was the pride of life; 'you will be like God, he said. It was not as much the voice of Satan that she listened to as much as the voice of the flesh. The lust of the flesh and the pride of life was what was being amplified by Satan there.

When James wanted to explain the origin of temptations, notice what he said:

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But we are tempted when we are drawn away and trapped by our own evil desires. Then our evil desires conceive and give birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death. James 1:14-15 GNT

I am not at all saying the devil does not try to draw us away, neither was James implying that too, but I am saying that his pull is through something that is already in our flesh. Many of our natural desires are evil unless we learn how to control them; that is why the natural tendency is called flesh. It is those desires Satan seeks to amplify for us. It is as we focus on these things that we fall for his temptations. No wonder when he came to Jesus there was nothing he could do. Yes,

**Satan only
amplifies any voice
that detracts from
the voice of the
Lord.**

the world and Satan offered their temptations to the Lord Jesus but He had put his flesh into the proper place and was consumed with the desire to be pleasing to the

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Father in all things, so that when Satan came, he had nothing to hold on to in the life of the Lord.

...for the ruler of the world is coming, and he has nothing in Me. John 14:30

Satan could enter Judas to make him betray the Lord only because he already loved money. The power of Satan is the lust and evil that we allow remain in us.

Notice from the following verses that resisting the devil is always tied to something about our attitude to God.

Be of sober spirit, be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls about like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. But resist him, firm in your faith... 1 Peter 5:8-9

Submit therefore to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. James 4:7-8

James said to submit to God while Peter said to be firm in faith.

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Our duty in the matter of the devil is to resist his temptations. All he can do is to tempt. He does not have any power over us as children of God. But resisting the devil is not an isolated thing; it is a result of our submitting ourselves to following the voice of the Lord alone. Once we can refuse the other voices that are calling us to follow them, Satan is automatically resisted.

Hearing And Hearing

When we as children of God do not understand this truth about resisting Satan, we spend much energy trying to pray against Satan when in actual fact we should spend that energy dedicating ourselves to following the voice of the Lord alone. We are to fill our spirits, our hearts and minds, and our ears with the word of God. We are to have the right attitude to His word.

There is what I call the double-hearing attitude. David said, '*once he has spoken, twice have I heard,*' and Paul said faith comes by hearing-and-hearing.* There is something

*Ps 62:11, Rom 10:17

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about double-hearing. It is not about counting the number of times one has heard the word but rather about the attitude. It is that attitude which takes the word of God as its life. It is the attitude that says that "once the Lord has spoken or once I discover His word, it is the final statement on that issue." It is the inclined ear that fills the heart and sight with the word of God, using the words of Solomon in Prov 4:20-22. That attitude seeks God's mind through His word on everything. That is the attitude that resists Satan. Now we understand why the Lord Jesus' method of resisting Satan's temptations was by speaking the word of God which He had committed Himself to.


Many times we want to practice the motions of Christianity by quoting scriptures in the times of trouble or temptation, but it does not seem to work and we become confused. We have been told that the word works but here we are and it is not working for us. The problem is that we fail to realize that the word is not a mere mantra to be chanted in times of trouble. The power in the Word is

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only released when it is spoken by the heart that is committed to it.

We cannot resist the devil unless we are committed to the word of God and are constantly purging ourselves with it. The word acts like water which washes us continually and puts the flesh into a place where the devil cannot use it to pull us away from obedience to the will of God. So, the Lord is saying to each one again today:

*My child, pay attention to what I say.
Listen carefully to my words.*



**We cannot resist
the devil unless we
are committed to
the word of God
and are constantly
purging ourselves
with it.**



*Don't lose sight of
them.*

*Let them penetrate
deep into your heart,
for they bring life to
those who find them,
and healing to their
whole body.*

Prov 4:20-22 NLT



Cleanse This Spirit

Let me add a few lines on the need for cleansing ourselves continually with the word of God. The need I want address is that of knowing what to obey and having the power to obey it.

Many times Christians hide behind 'my spirit said' to justify actions and decisions they are taking. When they say 'my spirit' we are supposed to assume that whatever comes out of that spirit is right because they are born again. But please let me state again that it is not necessarily so.

As a matter of fact, we each have a spirit, and the believer in Christ has his or her spirit regenerated by the work of God's Spirit. The seed of God is deposited in the spirit of the

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believer. However that is not the whole story.

One thing is that the spirit of even Christians can be polluted, and that is why Paul said we must cleanse ourselves of the defilement of flesh and *spirit* (2 Cor 7:1). Now, that does not mean the seed of God in the person is defiled; it just means that, just as the Lord Jesus said, even though a person has bathed the whole body, the feet can still be dirtied by many things as he goes about (Jn 13:10).

Also, anything that propels or controls someone is called a spirit because it settles deep within, into the unconscious. And this is the point: whichever of the voices around someone is listening to can seem to come out of the 'spirit'. Whichever voice we are following will manifest in our hearts as our so called spirit.

Sometimes we think if we pray long enough we will silence our minds and hear our spirits, but that again is not necessarily so. The spirit is deep seated and even though

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you are able to silence the thoughts in your mind, the polluted spirit will still give you an impression or leading that is not in accordance with the Spirit of God. Just because you have learnt how to hear your spirit does not mean you have learnt how to discern the mind of God. Any of the voices you are following will seem to speak through your spirit. This is an important warning to Christians.

This is why good Christian ladies have married unbelieving men and said it was their spirits, something that is so directly instructed against in the Word. They were not lying, it was indeed their spirits that told them, but the Spirit of God would not instruct against the word of God. For many, their 'spirits' are afraid of not getting another man, while for others, their 'spirits' are afraid of poverty, and this man is rich, so the truth known to all about not being yoked with unbelievers will have to subject itself to the voice of this spirit.

Many times people make decisions because

Any of the voices you are following will seem to speak through your spirit. This is an important warning.

of the things of mammon, and when they speak they tell you that it is their spirits that told them to do those things. They abandon important assignments of God

to follow after material security and they say their spirits spoke to them. Yes, they were right; it was their spirit but not the Spirit of God. Those voices we have been warning about in this book sank deep into their hearts and spoke to them. The same person who is full of the fear of tomorrow, respects men and follows the lust of the flesh, how could he have discerned the Spirit of God rightly?

You can learn to hear your spirit through all sorts of spiritual exercises, but what your spirit is saying to you cannot be relied upon until that spirit has been cleansed of all defilement.* Those voices we speak of—the flesh, the world, the fear of tomorrow and

*For more on this please read mybook 'Guided by the Spirit'

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mammon, the respect of men, etc.—all of them pollute the spirit and they affect what comes out of there. Solomon told us to guard our hearts above all that is guarded, because it is the source of life. We are to cleanse our hearts actively of all these defilements.

Come close to God, and God will come close to you. Wash your hands, you sinners; purify your hearts, for your loyalty is divided between God and the world. James 4:8 NLT

...dear friends, let us cleanse ourselves from everything that can defile our body or spirit. And let us work toward complete holiness because we fear God. 2 Cor 7:1 NLT

How

How do we cleanse our hearts and spirits? It is through imbibing the word of God and prayer. Your spirit cannot be kept clean except you are a constant student of the word, and effective prayer is possible only with a foundation of the word of God.

Anytime the word comes to you, it will bring

**What your spirit
is saying to you
cannot be relied
upon until that
spirit has been
cleansed of all
defilement.**

the light of God into you to search everything that is inside. Many times the word will convict you, bringing your wrong actions, motives and fears before your eyes.

Take the revelation to the Lord in prayer and ask Him to use the hyssop of the spirit to purify you. Sometimes there are things inside our hearts that are pulling us in a wrong direction and we don't even know they are there. That is why we must pray like David:

*Search me, O God, and know my heart;
Try me and know my anxious thoughts;
And see if there be any hurtful way in me,
And lead me in the everlasting way.
Ps 139:23-24*

There is nothing like laying all your heart and even your fears open before the Lord.

Someone is Controlling You!

Forget what your spirit is telling you; stick to what the word has said to all of us. See if you are in full compliance with it. Pray that the Lord will help you know the truth about yourself and what is really motivating you. Confess everything to Him.

Then begin to pray prayers of dedication to the Lord. Pledge to Him that only His voice you will follow. Say things like:

I am born of God.

I have the spirit of Christ in me.

I am a child of God and my spirit is alive to God

I know the voice of the Lord and I follow His voice.

My life is His and I will follow Him where He goes.

The will of God is primary in my life.

I live for Him and not for myself. My life is not my own; it does not belong to my friends, relative or any other person. I live primarily for the Lord.

All flesh is grass, and I do not depend on flesh. I do not depend on men; I depend on the Lord alone.

I am constantly being filled with the knowledge of His will, in all spiritual wisdom and understanding.

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I am walking in a manner worthy of the Lord and I am pleasing Him in every way.

I am bearing fruit in every good work.

I am seeking FIRST the kingdom of God; and I follow after His righteousness.



Controlled By The Lord

The conclusion of everything we have seen thus far is that we must desire to be controlled not by any other force but by the Spirit of the Lord. We have seen that every person on this earth is being controlled by something or someone. We understand that the real choice we have is in tuning our receivers to a particular direction and frequency. We are either controlled by the flesh and the world, or we are controlled by the Lord through His Spirit. It is a decision we must make deliberately. If we do not make the decision, we will be controlled by the flesh and the world.

We must deliberately choose to be fully conformed to His will. This is what consecration is all about. Every Christian

The conclusion of everything we have seen is that we must desire to be controlled not by any other force but by the Spirit of the Lord.

must regularly consecrate himself or herself to the control of the spirit of Christ. Notice that the Lord Jesus did this again and again in His life. At the beginning of His ministry, the Father testified that, "*this is My beloved Son in whom I am well-pleased.*" Only following fully the will of the Father can produce that kind of commendation. Yet, we notice the Lord again and again declaring His commitment to the will of the Father. At the height of everything, when the cross was at hand and pressure was upon His soul, what did He do? He again dedicated Himself to the will of the Father.

...nevertheless not My will but Yours be done.

Behaving like this is what is meant by having the spirit of Christ. Having that spirit is not a

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bragging point but a living point. It is how we live.

But if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him. Rom 8:9

You do not have the spirit of Christ just because you claim to be a Christian, but because you are propelled by the same spirit that controlled the Lord Jesus. It is to listen out for the true voice of God as the propelling force in our lives. I do not mean we start listening out for whispers in our hearts or ears. No. God has given us His word to be our life. The one with the spirit of Christ deliberately makes a commitment to match his or her life to that word of God. That is what it means to be a disciple of Christ Jesus.

A True Disciple

A disciple is a person who enrolls in a school, so to speak, so as to be trained into the exact image of the master. Discipleship has just one aim, and that is transformation into the image of the teacher. It is not about learning how to get results or how to manipulate


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spiritual forces for one's own advantage. No. Rather, it is about becoming something.


...the student (or disciple) who is fully trained will become like the teacher. Luke 6:40 NLT

When we are constantly learning from the Lord Jesus, we are by that listening to the voice of the Father. We are to assume we know nothing until we have learnt what the Lord has to say about it. Take our future as an

example, the Lord has given us His thoughts about it.*



You do not have the spirit of Christ just because you claim to be a Christian, but because you are propelled by the same spirit that controlled the Lord Jesus.



He said He will never leave us or neglect us.

He said He has a plan.

If He sends us out with nothing in hand we will lack nothing.

*Heb 13:5, Jer 29:11, Luk 22:35, Matt 6:32, Ps 16:6, Ps 37:5,6.

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He said we are not to be thinking about our future and be worrying over it because the Father has thought about it and made His own plans.

David helped us by explaining that as covenant people, we have a good heritage.

The Lord made it clear that in due season, if we trust Him and constantly walk with Him, He will bring forth the plan He has for us into manifestation.

For these reasons we Christians are to have a different perspective to life, to money and to planning. We do not plan as if the future is uncertain but as certain in the hands of the Lord. We plan more on how to please God than how to secure the future. We are careful to make sure that all our thoughts please Him. We know nothing will come because of our planning but because of the favour of God. Everything we will have will be commanded by Him, not by chance.

How do we know all these things? It is by

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being a student, a disciple of the Lord and His word.

Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you, with all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness in your hearts to God. And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through Him to God the Father. Col 3:16-17

If you are student, you must study. As a disciple, the Word must be a constant companion. You are always checking what it has to say about everything. What does the Word say about marriage; what does the Word say about doing business, about your health, about long life, about purpose, about destiny, etc. As disciples we are always seeking things out from the Word. We have the double-hearing attitude which we saw earlier. We are constantly looking for the Word and following whatever we learn from it. We use every method available to imbibe it. We read books, we listen to messages on our devices, we attend church services, we

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talk with our faith-friends, etc.

...those who feared the Lord spoke to one another... Mal 3:16

And these words which I am commanding you this day shall be first in your own... hearts; then you shall whet and sharpen them so as to make them penetrate, and teach and impress them diligently upon the... hearts of your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down and when you rise up. And you shall bind them as a sign upon your hand, and they shall be as frontlets (forehead bands) between your eyes. And you shall write them upon the doorposts of your house and on your gates. Deut 6:6-9 AMP

When you do this with prayers, having dedicated yourself to the Lord, you are setting yourself up for the voice of the Lord to control you. And so it must be in the name of Jesus.



ABOUT

Kingdom-Word Ministries

The author ministers from the platform of Kingdom-Word Ministries, a non-denominational organization based in Enugu, Nigeria. Activities of the ministry include weekly Bible classes at the ministry office, publication of free teaching tracts and books, radio/TV broadcasts and organizing teaching seminars in various towns and cities.

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