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Professional Experience

- Member of the University of Education, Winneba. Publication Board (1999 to present)
- An Editorial consultant of Eureka International Journal of Educational Studies, Federal College of Education, Pankshin, Plateau State, Nigeria (2003 to present)
- Editor-in-Chief of the Journal of Research and Development in Education (JORDE), Faculty of Educational Studies, UEW (2000 to present)
- Dean of the Faculty of Educational Studies in the University of Education, Winneba (2001 to present)

Publications

Published a number of scholarly articles and books in areas of assessment on speech tests and articulation tests for children.

Innovations

These tests were designed in the local languages of Ewe, Ga and Akan and are suitable for basic school children particularly, the pre-school children

Membership of Professional Associations

- Member of the International Reading Association (USA) and Ghana Reading Association, Winneba
- Member of the Paediatric Association, Ghana

CHAPTER ONE

WHO IS YOUR FRIEND?

*“There is a divinity that shapes our ends, rough-hew them how we will”
- Dale Carnegie, 1940.*

INTRODUCTION

There is this popular saying “show me your friend and I will tell you who you are”.

Every classroom teacher has ever asked a pupil in the class to talk about the friend. The first thing any teacher does when faced with a new group of students or pupils is to ask the pupil in his/her class to make an introduction of who he/she is. If asked “What is your name?” The child may say “I am so-so and so”. The teacher may ask “Who is your friend?” Sometimes the child can say “I have no friend”. Probably the child is a newcomer in the school and is yet to find one. And as the days go by friendship is established and they support each other. This is the world in which we live. Earthly friends may support you and even see you to the grave. Others may disappoint you and wish you a speedy death but thank God also that this is also rare.

Friends, life is so short. The bible says our days on earth is 70 years: if even it extends it is 80 years with its accompanying worries. So $70 \times 365 \frac{1}{4}$ days give us 25567.5 days and $80 \text{ years} \times 365 \frac{1}{4}$ days give us 29200 days.

You can Reverse your Destiny

Problems and woes, disappointment and troubles actually have landed many good friends, relatives and even children in psychiatry homes. Some have died prematurely. Some are alive but dead emotionally.

Haven't you remembered when within your own family there were debates and your own children, wife or husband vehemently opposed you and you failed to compromise and you felt useless and bitter? Yes, my brother and sister, life is 90% perspiration and 10% inspiration. But I tell you that you can turn the circumstance around. The REVERSE CAN HAPPEN to 90% or more Divine Inspiration and 10% or less perspiration. We can still live in the midst of the lion's den as Daniel (Daniel 6:22) and have our PEACE, joy love and sound mind as the bible has promised us (II Timothy 1:7). Those emotions that make you weep, feel sad, make you feel you are cheated,

unappreciated, and that you spent much of your time, years and resources as a waste by a single appalling behaviour of a trusted friend, son or daughter could be turned to times of joy, peace and love.

It is a very sad situation for a parent to invest in the children, or relatives and see them at the point that decisions need to be made together for the good of the family, but the best received when in need, cannot be remembered. Decisions are now lopsided and that parents become helpless and useless.

Likewise, it is terrible if the reverse happens when children's voices cannot be heard. Researches show that lack of involving the adolescents in decision making is also not appreciated by the adolescents. They are very much hurt if their voices are not heard or when they are not involved in decision making (Gadagbui, 2003). We are all a family and as such the bible says, parents (fathers) do not provoke your children (Ephesians 6:4); children obey your parents in the Lord; for this is right (Ephesians 6:1).

Wives submit yourselves unto your husbands and husbands love your wives

(Ephesians 5:22 & 25) Dear friends, if we can all cleave unto God's principles and act on them, we can still remain a happy family, bonded by the love of God no matter the heights and levels we all find ourselves in life. Can we say in times of conflict we are able to solve it with ease? I cannot boast of it that way. It's a struggle. It's a matter of prayer and fasting. It is asking God to take off bitterness and replace it with love and forgiveness and forsaking or forgetting the hurt. This is practically difficult but the bible says forgive 70 X 7 a day. This gives us 490 times a day. If it is even impossible for an enemy to hurt you that much. So you can reverse the trend of events. Win the so called enemy to your side by your divine action of humility obedience to God's instruction and emulating good characters of the bible; Hannah, Anna, Simeon, they all prayed and had results. Paul and Silas did the same, so was Esther and the Apostles. The latter experience the Holy Ghost power and went to preach the word. Gideon a man of valour became a leader in Israel. Jabez a boy born in sorrow, became a happy man with wealth and God's blessings were on him.

What are you waiting for?

Speak the word, decree it and it, will take root. God bless your mouth from now on wards that the very good things you say based upon the word of God will manifest unto the glory of God.

Nail the King of Kings

There is only ONE THING that can bring peace into our hearts in the midst of “fiery furnace” of life. I am Happy to introduce to you The King of Kings, The LORD of lords. Our Divine Manufacturer, the one who knows every minutest details of our bodies’ chemistry, anatomy and the physiology. The one and only Eternal God, LORD of all the heavenly galaxies (stars, moon and what not); the LORD of our existence, the one who shuts and nobody opens, and when He opens nobody shuts, the Everlasting Father the Prince of Glory; The Eternal God, the healer of our souls, to whom all angels bow and sing, “ Worthy is the lamb that was slain, to receive power, and riches and wisdom, strength and honour and glory and blessing (Revelation 5:11-12). The 24 elders fall down before the Lord and cast their crowns before the throne saying, “Thou art worthy O Lord to receive glory and honour and power: for thou has created all things and for thy pleasure they were all created (Revelation 4:11). This God is the one who will lead us even to death, Halleluyah!

You have a purpose to live for

Some have nothing to boast of except to lament. Life has become a traumatic experience, but you have a purpose to live for. We do not have to exist but to live. How do we live and not merely exist? In times of affliction, sorrows, depression – when opponents raise their heels against us; when children rise up against parents and parents against their children. Whereas the good book of all books written by men inspired by God

(II Timothy 3:16), says, “Children obey your parents..... (Ephesians 6:1). Parents do not provoke your children. Why do ethnic sentiments deprive us of people who are competent to lead but we do the opposite? Jesus the Holy One and Barabbas the criminal had their lives at stake but the Jews gave up the Holy One for torture and crucifixion? That is the world in which we live. Gross injustice – social injustice inequity in distribution of resources. Parents are unfair to their children. In some rare instances those who really cherish and support their children rather face the wrath of their children. What a contradiction and a social injustice! So cruel, and shocking. But in the midst of all these, we all have a purpose, a cause to live for. We are created to have dominance over all God’s creation to worship and praise Him. we are created to identify our potential, release potential and maximize it as kings, princes, and princesses of God.

We have the purpose of dominating and triumphing over the Principalities, Powers, rulers of the darkness of this world; spiritual wickedness in high places. Moreover to tread upon them serpent and the scorpions and over all wicked forces. The “nothing shall by any means hurt us” (Luke 10:9).

God says we are a peculiar nation a royal priesthood, we are also sitting in heavenly places, on mount Zion, with thousands and thousands of angels surrounding us. So we are in the company of heavenly angels. If indeed our Father in heaven is a King, I have that purpose to LIVE unto His glory to bring out the God-given talents and gifts and affect my generation with kind words and not with swords and bring them holy. He will satisfy the desires of our heart because we are delighting in Him. He is God and His purpose for our lives will to pass in

Life Securities are Vanities

Emotional or psychological problems have made many of us sick and dead. No doctor on earth can ever cure. Sacks of money have gone into the drain and there is no cure. There are a lot out there with indescribable torment. They are entangled and treacherously bound by their emotions..... They have gone from shrine to shrine lit dozens and dozens of candles. Chanted and chanted many “things” but heaven’s gates cannot open. They rolled and rolled from the shores of sandy beaches under the hot scorched sun with their garmets and wildly awake in the darkest of nights to obtain their heart’s desires but to no avail. Where is our security? The world offers us many types of securities, wife, husband, Social Security and National Trust Fund (SSNIT): there are others offered financial securities – Educational Trust Fund, Accidents and Death. These are really good however, we are only protecting our lives here on earth perhaps to have our joy, live longer and stay together with our loved ones and enjoy the properties we toiled for with the sweat of hard labour. Nevertheless, is this all to life? Can these secure our souls? Even right here on earth can each one of us boast that the properties we have acquired or in the making of acquisition, the children we have and their status, the monies saved and the grandiose life styles will give us the J-O-Y? Can’t you remember that in the midst of all these things, sometimes you feel dejected, rejected, cheated, and do not have the appreciation for good things done to people but they turn away without saying even “thank you?”. If even they do, it is a mere rhetoric; they don’t mean it because it is not from their heart. Would you tell me that you cannot be hurt by these even though you are in the comfort of those basic things of life? if even they hurt,

I tell you, it is better to give than to receive God's own gifts are the best, they are lasting and soothing. Your gifts given on earth from a genuine heart are the savings in heaven for the soul's eternal rest. The book of Revelation says our prayers are the As incense which sweet smelling savour unto the LORD. So what do you think your free giving alms are to the poop to the needy be fore God. It is service to the LORD and He is a rewarder.

Friends, colleagues, my relatives, young boys and girls, I can testify of my **friend**. And this is my friend, the only Friend, JESUS CHRIST. Let His glory rest in us and we shall never be the same. Our purpose of living is to dominate the earth and all the creations, serve God faithfully, love our neighbours (share with them our resources, skills) and glorify the Lord in our bodies. Co-exist peacefully and serving and worshipping the Lord in all obedience and reverence till He comes the second time. What's your purpose of living? I have identified mine. I know if I do God's will, I will find favour with Him Heaven is our portion if we're faithful to Him.

My Testimony

If we cling to my God:

The lions den will be friendly.

The fiery furnace will be air-conditioned.

The storms and gails and hurricanes will mellow.

His grace will be abundant to us.

And we shall sing and sing unto the glory of that Holy One Jesus.

Friends, truly Receive Him now and have life; reject Him! and you will perish.

I have experienced the sweet encounter with this living Jesus in my life. My testimony is true to me and I want you Friends to try Him. Your mother, father, siblings, friends and even your loved ones may fail you but when you're kicked out or punched by them, you'd bounce back to Jesus. JESUS alone can rescue you and pour His anointment on you. That the "odour" that makes you even to be rejected becomes a sweet odour (aroma), fragrance of favour. You are called "Favour" and wherever you step your feet you'd receive favour and your worries would belong to the past. My name is F-A-V-O-U-R, the Blessed of the LORD. I am a Princess. You are also one or a Prince. Believe your positive utterances because they are the keys to your destiny. Amen.

Sing with me the hymn:

The Live of the Valley

1

I've found a friend in Jesus, He's every thing to me
He's the fairest of ten thousand to my soul;
The Lily of the valley in Him alone I see,
All I need to cleanse and make me fully whole.
In sorrow He's my comfort, In trouble He's my stay,
He tells me every care on Him to roll. Hallelujah!
He's the Lily of the valley
The Bright and Morning Star,
He's the fairest of ten thousand to my soul.

2

He all my griefs has taken, and all my sorrows borne,
In temptation He's my strong and mighty tow'er,
I have all for Him forsaken, and all my idols torn
From my heart, and now He keeps me by His power,
Though all the world forsake me, and Satan tempt me sore,
Through Jesus I shall safely reach the goal. Hallelujah!
He's the Lily of the Valley, the Bright and Morning Star,
He's the fairest of ten thousand to my soul.

3

He'll never, never leave me, nor yet forsake me here,
While I live by faith and do His blessed will;
A wall of fire about me, I've nothing now to fear;
With His manna He my hungry soul shall fill;
Then sweeping up to glory, we'll see His blessed face,
Where rivers of delight shall ever role. Hallelujah!
He's the Lily of the valley, the Bright and Morning Star,
He's the fairest of ten thousand to my soul.

CHAPTER THREE

I AM GOING THROUGH, MOTHER

“Every mother is like Moses. She does not enter the Promised Land. She prepares a world she will not see”.

- Pope Paul VI.

INTRODUCTION

My life is a victory through the cross: suffering, hunger, low personal perception, gross ignorance in choice; simplicity or foolishness, filled with lack of wisdom but God will forgive and will see us through.

Many of us have walked through the valleys and shadows of death but thank God we I have let go of those “evil” things which are depressants.

Everyday is not a rosy one because there are many rivers to cross. Rivers of dejections, rivers of poverty, rivers of depression, rivers of woes; rivers of despise even from “low cost” people, and rivers which may seem insurmountable. Rivers of stubborn, unappreciative children. What are “rivers” for? Rivers form water ways and major part of the world. At least 2/3rds of the world is water, made up of oceans and seas; rivers and streams and pond. Man is occupying 1/3rd part of the earth for shelter, growing plants and cash crops and “survival” crops since we need to eat. Rivers can only be crossable by ship, boats or canoes but there must be safety device for passengers such as, life jackets. Ships do cross oceans and man dives or swims in shallow waters. However, without caution it is likely that you can get drowned in the rivers or seas. Every shore has coast guards. Their primary objective is to secure the life of a potential unprofessional swimmer from drowning. Guards or the Navy personnel also patrol on the high seas for smugglers. They protect the territory from “swingers” and illicit citizens from their own country and those from neighbouring countries. If man knows how to get a fence around his own family and the surrounding waters of his/her country, why can’t the children of God be secured and have their safety? We children of the most high God are secured in the WORD OF GOD. The tides of the oceans and seas and rivers can rage higher but we shall go through. I am going through. It is said that tides rise up at certain times or seasons. When the sea waves begin to rise high, and you

observe it even as you are 20 or more feet away, you can have the tiny splashes or tiny drops of its angry waves on your body. This means that if you don't get further away, it is capable of demonstrating how boisterous it is at certain times. I have stayed along the coast for years and have witnessed how the Keta Sea literally uprooted many houses and mansions and even destroyed lives of innocent and professional swimmers. Although the shores have no coast guards to protect novices, the hard working and pathetic fishermen normally come to rescue or bring to shore those whose lives are at stake. I am not ignorant of the devices of High Tide Rivers and Seas.

Don't be ignorant of the Denies of Satan

When Israel with Moses were by the Red sea, we read in the book of Exodus that they had wilderness around them. This meant no food, no water; it was not habited. The Red Sea was before them. The enemies, the Egyptians, Pharaoh and his chariots were pursuing them. I believed people inland have practically little knowledge of how terrible rivers and seas can behave. The lagoon water stirs below its surface. It's tides/waves seem to be smooth on the surface and you'd think you can easily swim in it to relax your body. But you need to take caution since some of the bed floors are shallow and others are so deep to "swallow" life. If you liken these scenarios to life, sometimes, you may find life difficult as how rivers can be uncrossable without boats or ships. You may waste precious times and resources to build your house and expecting a higher yield, and it seems it is not going to be likely. Imagine, a trader who tries all genuine means to make profit and all his hard work and efforts are thwarted – a swindler took the goods with promissory notes and didn't turn up. This will be a great loss and indebtedness. Imagine that the fishermen cast their nets in the sea all night and had nothing. So is life sometimes the greater input yields nothing significant? Output versus labours are proportionally insignificant.

Peter and friends went fishing and it was just a toil. They had nothing (John 21:3). Today, some of us toiled also and had nothing. But thank God if after every toil the profit was even slight it is, an achievement. If you cross the river and you reach a safely shore celebrate it because it is a victory. This is because not many people can cross it successfully. It is a race of survival. You may be the type with children who seemed to be loving and all resources have been spent on them. You may have wished to have their reciprocation, of love but it turned out to be sore. You cannot believe it. You naturally will tend to look up to see the years spent the labour involved and you cannot gain them back. You remember the home created for them with all your toils and tears

begin to roll effect. No good home is likely to train bad children unless there is a genetic trait. A hereditary factor like mother like daughter; like son like father, something nobody can work at except God and self realization to change character for the better.

The Quality Home of a Mother and Father

The home is the first contact of the child in his/her interaction with the environment. It ought to be so warm or conducive in terms of affection, feeding, health care, training for skills in communication, norms, values and beliefs. Living up as a parent is God-given.

I have lived up as a parent who is so much concerned about the upbringing of my children and project ahead of how they can have carriers to live as independent persons and fear God. Even if it took me to sacrifice my little resources I did that. I have inherited abundant love from my mother. Unfortunately my father died before age 19 (years). Every parent must opt for maximum input to yield maximum output despite the odds. The bible has good news for us. It says that train up the child the way he should go so that as he grows does not depart from it. My inheritance of love made me to given love to all.

We as parents have a duty to perform, care, feed, love train, shelter, protect and bestow the best of everything, our resources and affection of children. Our children will carry on our generation but if we spare the rod we shall spoil them.

Where we need to love, let us do it and when the children deserve to be reprimanded let us do it. This does not depend on status. Every child need quality parental care irrespective of his/her parents' status in public some children have dropped out of school because they fail to have discipline from the home. They ended up being fraudsters, we smokers and drug addicts; no truants and school drop out with no lucrative jobs. Some are starved, burdened and deprived off their joy and pleasure as youth. Some have been imprisoned. Why should this be. Many young people are deprived of basic needs food, dress, stationeries for school and parental affection. Divorce, separation, alcoholism, gross punishment, abuses of all kinds are now very rampant in our homes.

We can have the best for them through love, and good support in everything.

Quality relationship existing between the child and the parents and siblings versus siblings is the main thing whether in a single parenting home or where both parents are together. This bonding is essential. And if that good relationship is established then, it can glow to the immediate

environment that is the school, church and the larger community and generate concern and ability to share and project each other thus living in peace.

The adage is that he who runs away from his problems lives to fight them another day.

If parents run from children's problems, and responsibilities they would live to fight their misconduct another day. So as parents, we need to encourage ourselves in the Lord and continue with the good training. It is better to do the best to the children till they are independent as adults. If even they fail to appreciate it the heavens have recorded the role we have played and will reward us as parents.

Children's Role

On the part of the children the bible says in **Ephesians 6:1-4**. Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. Honour thy father and mother; which is the first commandment with promise.

That it may be well with thee, Children, your parents do not need much except to say thank you from a genuine heart. Parents want you to appreciate whatever role they have played personally, I tell myself that my mother especially did well just by allowing me to suck her breasts to survive. She could have decided to terminate my life as a neonate or to starve me to death or otherwise but through all odds she faced the music of sing we through. My mother, who washed my infant head and cuddled me to feel her warmth and affection. What do I do to reward her? Mine is to love and love her.

The bible says this is what should do as a sign of obedience that I may live long on earth.

What constitutes this "Obedience?" Love, care, respect and extending your hands full of "gift and love" to your parents.

Some children have fist hands. They used all the resources of their parents and turn round to deny them even for recognition of their selfless roles played to build them up. The bible said in **Colossians 3:20** that children obey your parents in all things for this is well pleasing unto the Lord.

Parents' Role

"And ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord" (Ephesians 6:4).

Colossians 3:21 says, “Fathers, provoke not your children to anger, lest they be discouraged”.

The bible encourages us as such, though some how, some children are stubborn and unappreciative and disobedient. It hurts bad but let us learn to forgive. If we should all be such responsible parents we hope to have caring adult-children also. This is a cherished dream of every parent and we need to pray for it.

We cannot guarantee this 100 percent yet we have to trust God and ask Him to make our children have love for us. However, sometimes the devil tempts us as parents and the children. It is likely that the very children you bet on will give you the greatest heart break. If it happens that way what shall we say or do? It is a hard thing. Too terrifying to imagine but it can happen and some parents are disappointed. The bible says “children (including adult – children) obey your parents” I am still my mother’s child. I think Ephesians 6:1-3 is speaking to us all “Children Obey your parents that it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth”. Stubbornness and the Word of God can’t go together and it cannot prosper any one of us.

Truths about Family

Arch..... of South African Desmond Tutu, cited by Maxwell (2001:140) cautioned that: “You don’t choose your family, They are God’s gift to you, as you are to them”.

Nobody can choose a parent. However, observations indicate that some children would have wished to have some specified characteristics in their parents. Some may want to be royals. Some feel shy of their parents. If you are this type, then I pray that you have the challenge to make your parents to suit your prescription. But DON’T ever renounce them or forget them. Love for parents is a blessing. My personal experience in accepting my parents the way they are is to do the best out of my meager resources. Over the years God has bestowed upon me uncountable blessings.

To maintain this channel of love cord binding parents and children together.

Mary S. Calderone (2001) said, “Our children are not going to be Just “our children” – they are going to be other people’s husbands and wives and the parents of our grandchildren”. They grow and marry to expand the family, but this should not be seen as a relationship sever. Jesus remembered Mary His earthly vessel parents. I want to leave one important fact with you. Age and experience is a teacher besides. One day, these children including the adult children will say “We never know the love our parents have for us till we have become parents”. Every parent

should live to listen to such comments. Unfortunately, some parents leave the scene for eternity without reaping the fruits of their labour. No wonder Pope Paul IV said “Every woman is like Moses. She does not enter the Promised Land. She prepares a world she will not see”. This is not the exper..... of any woman or parent. The bible says we shall live and see our children’s children. This must be every parents dream.

You may rise up to be a boss even having the signature appearing on the \$60 billion or trillions of Ghanaian cedis, Niara or Pound sterling. But more importantly to me however, is the signature that appears on my life – the strong, proud, assertive handwriting of a loving caring mother.

In your case it may be that of a loving father and mother. For the fact that your parents provided 1/100th part of your needs, remember to keep them in your mind and reward them simply by acknowledging that through love. Husbands and children, do realize that for every birth, a mother lays down her life for it? Think about it. Do you love your parent(s)? Do you love your father and mother?

Alvin Toffler cited in Maxwell, (2001; 148) says, “parenthood remains the greatest single preserve of the amateur”. Experience is the best teacher. Tille Olsen remarks;

More than in any other
human relationship, overwhelmingly

More, **motherhood** means being

Instantly interruptible, responsive

Responsible (Maxwell, 2001; 148).

I will want to agree with Henry Ward Beecher’s statement that “We never know the love of our parents for us till we have become parents”. However, for now show love to your parents and don’t hurt them. You cannot cut your nose to smite your face. It’s your won skin. Anthy Brandt cited in Maxwell (2001:140) reminded as that, “Other things may change us, but we start and end with family.

You don’t become a president and reject the womb in which you once loin in. You don’t marry and your parents become your enemy; you don’t cut off relationship because your parents are dependant on you. There are lots of blessings in the treating them well. Because mothering or fathering is a string of bond that cannot break unless death separates you and your parents, it is very important to keep the relationship working through lively and lovely communicating; visits if you can but you’ve absolute commitment for their care in health and in sickness. The biblical obedience to parents uplies tons of these and more with blessings attached. The bible reminds us

that in everything we must give thanks. How do you apply this in our relationship parents. Think of a baby sucking mother's breast and the care she gives supported by the father. Will you want to suggest that now that you've grown your parents must care for themselves especially if poor? Whether rich or poor you have an obligation with a promise. You don't give or love from a dirty heavy heart. Gift with a cheerful heart and the blessings run slow. Would you want to have children without a grand mother or grand father especially when they are still alive? After all, if you think they are useless and dependent that is your own business you will account for it one day. God simply says children "Obey your parents in the Lord for this is right" (Ephesians 6:1). See the complements attached – "Honour thy father and mother; which is the first commandment with promise : that it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth (**Ephesians 6:3**)".

Parental Caution

And ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord (**Ephesians 6:4**).

You may agree with me that some youngsters would only take what that hearts and minds appreciate. Some have peer pressure be it in the world or in the church. They follow their own heart or the information they feed on. How could parents a Their children when these children feel proud, arrogant and feed on other "gobbage" information? How many times could these young people be talked to when each time it's a tussle? Well, we have been told to "bring the children up in the nurture and fear of the Lord". Peter and friends listened to Jesus and cast their net at the right side of the boat and they caught many, many fishes. The word of God is final. Parents, "let us not provoke our children to wrath but train them in the fear of the Lord". Irrespective of the "Stabs" received, let us forgive and pray for the youth because our God is a prayer answering God. He says ask and you'd be given, knock, the door will be open, seek and find. Believe it. He will hear us from heaven His dwelling place and reveal His glory in the lives of these young people wherever they are so that we can live peacefully and die peacefully our own natural death. Children, love us so that we can cherish you wherever we are and continuously pray with you. May the God of LOVE and peace Touch your hearts where ever you

are. And may that abundant grace keep your children all over the world and bind all families together in the Name of Jesus. Amen!

Sing with me

My faith looks up to thee

My faith looks up
Thou Lamb of Calvary
Saviour Divine
Now hear me while I pray
Take all my guile away
Oh let me from this day
Be holy thine.

CHAPTER FOUR

I SHALL SURVIVE

I shall survive the storms. In times of hatred or love the Lord will preserve me and the silver lining will be at the end of the tunnel (Anonymous).

INTRODUCTION

One time the late president Ronald Reagan of the United States of America said “after the storms the stars will appear. This was in the 1980’s after a tragedy hit the US of course not the 11th September 2002 disaster and a pilot was taken captive in a foreign land and Reverend Jesse Jackson went to negotiate for his release and succeeded. The pilot survived. It takes someone to fight for our release and this He did willingly and day in and day out, we bear these marks, on our bodies. A rare feat in all religious settings.

Many times the devil tempts us sore.

Winds blow as if they are gales or hurricanes. Disappointments, failures, soul wretchedness, are felt in the midst of plenty. Life seems unpleasant and the cool air becomes hot and you feel warm. When nobody is sweating, you are, whereas you’re not in your menopause or andropause too. Young man, young woman, old and aged, life sometimes tosses us about. Loved ones pretend as if they care. Hatred, sorrows, afflictions pave your way and life seems meaningless. The unexpected happens and your lips are pursed and you cannot utter a word and you have a deep breath and you ask yourself “Can I survive?” Can I survive this? Friends, there is nothing in this world that you cannot survive it. The Bible says “*All things are possible to him that believes*” (Matthew 19:26) **All things.** Survival in the midst of misfortune, when rejected, when treated as a fool and when neglected. But you are a royal, a royal priesthood, a peculiar nation

(I Peter 2:9), the child of the most High God. What is your affliction? Poverty, sickness, divorce, separation as a family man or woman or single parenting? As a young man or woman, are you afflicted because you haven’t got someone to marry? Have you been treated unfairly? Who did this? A suitor, a fiancé or a fiancée? Have you been cheated on, deprived of your properties that

you had rightfully owed through the genuine labour of your hands and you even feel like paying for it through hatred, anger or self pity?

Jesus the Rescuer

Who had ever suffered like this and God or Jesus Christ refused to adhere to a genuine prayer?

The Bible talks about the story of Peter the Apostle, and the brethren, the fishermen disciples who went to fishing with him (Luke 5:4-9). For a whole night they toiled but had no fish. Luke 5:5 says, if you have ever been with the fishermen, you'd notice that they have their own natural way of observing the moon and the tides to determine when and where to fish for bumper harvest in order to have something worth the labour. The bible says, Peter and his friends had nothing. You can imagine the toil of a wretched man going to do exploits. Probably, counting the number of chicks before the hen starts hatching the eggs. Peter and his brethren could have thought so, as you, and I are but there was no show. How many times haven't you given it a thought that "as for this time my visa would be given, as for this year, I would have started my building or moved out off the rented house?" But five times had elapsed and nothing happened. How many times have you recalled working that statistics on town planning, and the number of HIV/AIDS patients and family care and you got the computation wrong? Have you not been disappointed by a close friend to the extent that death was almost imminent? Who had not been disappointed before? Jesus Christ our Lord had similar experience when one of His followers Judas Iscariot turned the relationship sore till he hanged himself in shame. The question is "Didn't Jesus Christ know of Judas Iscariot's venomous plans?" Yes, of course, He who knows the beginning from the end. The biblical report (Isaiah 46:9) "for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me". verse: 10 Declaring the end from the beginning and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying my counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure (Isaiah 46:9-10). He foreknew Judas Iscariot's agenda but he never said it till one day he said "one of you will betray me". And all turned to ask "is it I?" and he said "But behold, the hand of him betrayeth me is with me on the table, (Luke 22:21). It is the one whose hands are in the same bowl with me. Soon after, He was caught and tried; ridiculed, despised, tortured and Jesus carried the cross for my sins.

But why carry another cross?

Jesus Christ the same yesterday, today and forever (Hebrews 13:8).

So the question is “why should Jesus Christ allow us to go through afflictions? Some of which are problems with damaged organs due to difficulty of blood flow to the brain like stroke – cerebral vascular accident; some are psychological resulting to psychiatric problems like madness of both young and old people. Why should this be so? Why should an innocent child become a psychiatric patient? Due to hereditary factor. Why should some children be abandoned, sexually defiled, physically tortured, amputated and starved of parental affection and food? Why should I suffer physically and emotionally having terrible shocks of my life? Why? The Bible Believer’s Hymnal 89 has this to say.

Must Jesus Bear Alone?

Must Jesus bear the cross alone.

And all the world go free?

No, there’s a cross for every one,

And there’s a cross for me.

Peter and friends at sea

If we look critically at the event at sea, in (Luke 5:4-8) when the apostles toiled and had nothing, we can see that they were by profession, fishermen, at least Peter, who had **professional knowledge about fishing. They toiled.** That represents hard work over a period and were **expecting** some catch. **There are basically five key words here; professional knowledge; fishing, toiled and expecting. Professional knowledge** signifies a job or an experience acquired over a long time of practice; it is a hands-on approach.

It is not something

It is not something told as a tale, but involved mastery of both theory and practicals of a specific discipline and in this case, it is fishing.

Nobody works hard without expectation of rewards.

There the natural law of cause and effect as in planting seeds and harvesting holds. There is seed time and harvest time. Input produces output. The magnitude of output is determined by the amount of input. Peter and friends were expecting nothing less than a bumper catch for the time

and every energy put in the work, because for a whole night they toiled. But the bible says they had “nothing”. This didn’t mean hope is lost though Satan might have been saying, “you’d trust in your God, and now you’re disappointed. And hasn’t this same Satan told you the same story many, many times when you experienced failures in chains as if light shines within seconds and darkness lingers for hours, days, months to years and you want to give up? If you had no “fish” there’s the tendency that you’d renounce him as the Lord. Although this is my own figment, as human as they were, it was possible that some might have had this thought and many diverse kinds. It was likely also that they believing in the Lord and trusting him had been meditating though sorrowful but never losing focus on the EVERLASTING ARM OF GOD on their lives. Man must eat, therefore he needs to survive. In Christ the Rock of Ages, you’d survive and I will survive the storms of life also. Lo! And behold as the apostles pondered over these, the rescue came. Jesus appeared on the scene. “Children have ye any meat?” They answered, “No, we toiled all night long and there was no effect”. The Master of the sea and all the minerals in the soil, the birds, trees, seas and rivers, all the highways and valleys including man are His own. He controls the weather and season. There can be tears in the night but at dawn the golden lining, the pearls and jaspers will appear, not silver because it is too cheap to possess. There will be an “evening light.” Jesus Christ the first and last should be our comfort and hope. He told them “in John 21:6 “cast the net on the right side of the boat, and ye shall find”. Why right side? That is where the Lord of the seas who has foreknowledge of tomorrow and holds you in His hands, knows the site of abundance of fish; the multidollar prosperity that you cannot see but are in store for you. What a mighty God we serve. He knows the site of the treasure house. He will direct us to it. Wait and watch and expect to have it by the little stroke of His indefatigable power and Word of God. There is a right path for you to pass to identify the location for the shoal of fishes to be caught with less toil. If you have lost your bearing, don’t panic; don’t ever think of being disappointed or failed. Ask God for re-Direction. I fumbled with life and had no solid direction. I groped in darkness, no one cares much but when the right season came with all the suffering as a woman, I searched to learn the word of God from AME Zion Church, Assemblies of God and Deeper Life ministries as a visitor then to Bible Believers Fellowship. There I settled for the word of God to cleanse me, be in my heart and that’s what I am eating as a “bitter leaf “for the expectation of the everlasting CROWN”. My as a b..... out of the shave of the fowler. The shave is broken and we are escaped. Our help is In the name of the Lord.

Glory in tribulations

The book of Romans 5:3 teaches us to glory in tribulations

The book of **Romans 5:3**..... teaches us to glory in tribulations. Life does not give man only the desires of his heart. There are two tragedies in life: one is not to get your heart's desire. The other is to get it. So in both tragedies, thank God and glory in His word. Romans 5:3 – 11 says:

V.3 And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience;

V.4 And patience, experience; and experience, hope:

V.5 And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.

V.6 For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly.

V.7 For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die

V.8 But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

V.9 Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him.

V.10 For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.

V.11 And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, whom we have now received the atonement.

Paul's Tragedy

In II Corinthians 11:25, Paul narrated his ordeal. He was beaten five times, received 40 stripes. Three times he was beaten with rods, once stoned. Thrice had shipwreck; a night and day he was in the deep.

Have we suffered like Paul? Sometimes the weighting may be like it but the bible tells us that the grace of God is sufficient for us.

Don't Quit

Failure/disappointment is nothing. What is really disappointing is for you to quit. Why quit? If the apostles were to quit fishing they would not even have been found on the shore. They hanged

in there probably thinking of the next move of survival and – eventually they survived. Friends, Don't you ever dare quitting that project or study in Mathematics, English or whatever be your interest. Stay there, wait, think of a strategy, work it out, bring in all the applicable principles or get a help. Jesus came to the fishermen's rescue and they survived – that is a bumper harvest. The bible says they couldn't even have managed bringing the fish to shore alone. They called out to other friends. Please I pray you have enough to give to others in need. Bacon them to share your fortune, good news and new ways of doing things to succeed. Serve as a mentor; write it as a recipe or manual. The Lord of host will water and nurture your good intentions and bless you so that you can bless others the more. He will strengthen us and we are bound to have strength from above.

Who shall separate us from the Lord?

In Romans 9:35-37 we read: “Who shall separate us from the Love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril or sword? Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us”.

Are you sure that the devil knows who you are? Let him know now because if you're hot in prayer sincerely and love God and serve him faithfully he will know who you are and will begin to tremble at who you are because you are professing nothing but Jesus Christ from the depths of your heart. Let others say you are a devil just because gates are opening for you. You have found favour with God, they do not know you have a prayer answering God. Instead of asking you of your strategy for success, they give you a name. Jesus was called, “Beelzebub” prince of the devils, (Matthew 12:24) so who are you if you are given a nickname and insults? Even your own household can give you a name, shout at you in order to compensate for a misconduct against you. With no respect displace anger and shout at you. My humble plea is that don't fight at arrows thrown at you Rebuke them, in Jesus' Name. Leave the battle for the Lord.

Expect nothingless

Don't expect anything less than what you have desired. Peter and friends toiled so the caution is that do not be lazy but work hard. Friends, if from today the devil is causing you a condition of peril, sorrow, divorce, separation, rejection, failures and all kinds of disappointments, be bold to tell the devil in the face “I shall not only survive but LIVE in Christ Jesus. I will survive the

crises, and God will make my life grand”. That is why you have to think big and let go, anger, worry or anxiety whilst the weeping lasts for a night, the beams of joy become pronounced at dawn. By morning, the crown of victory is yours, it is just put right on your head. Look on the author of your life. Your Manufacturer sees your needs as the expert and He’d make you survive. May that faithful God be your anchor and make you survive. I shall survive and I have survived. You remember the Shunamite woman who Elisha prayed that God should grant her a child which she had but unfortunately, he died of headache? (II Kings 4:8-26). And she said “it shall be well”. (verse 23) and later changed the sentence “It is well” (verse .26)? Likewise it shall be well with your soul. Then you’d sing within a twinkle of an eye. “It is well – I have survived”. You need to identify yourself as being a champion. Secured under God’s protection. Leave the battle for the Lord and He will fight for us.

Fight my Battle

Leave the Battle for the Lord

Leave the Battle for the Lord

Leave the Battle for the Lord,

He will fight for you Jehovah will fight for you.

He will fight for you, Jehovah Hoseenu will fight for you.

The Lord will contend for you,

Pursue your enemy

And recover your blessings

Leave the battle for the Lord

Daddy will fight for you

He will fight for you.

What are the lessons to be learnt?

- Call Jesus to the scene of problem just as how Peter and friends did, likewise, the Shunamite woman. His name Jesus alone terrifies the devil and it shudders. His word is settled in heaven so as you make your requests. He hears and will supply. Know that the devil will always fight you but you can use the word of God to overcome it. The Bible says they overcame the devil by the Blood of the Lamb and by the testimonies of His word (Revelations 12:11). Use the word of God “It is written just as how Jesus Himself used it against the devil and it fled (Luke 4:1-13).

- Apply the correct principles
- Practice extensively what you desire to be your task/project in order to acquire the mastery of relevant skills.
- Call for a help if need be, a mentor or the expert
- Don't quit, have courage to move forward
- Lean on the everlasting arms of God
- Expect nothing less than what you desire – I have survived as a testimony Survivals a key factor – learn to survive by trusting Jesus Christ. Amen.

Sanky Hymnal

Simple trusting everyday
 Trusting through a storm wave
 Even when my sin is small
 Trusting Jesus
 That is all

Chorus

Simple trusting eveyday
 Trusting as the moments pass
 Even when my sin is small
 Trusting Jesus
 That is all.

A charismatic Song by Sister Ndidiamaka & Princess Ifeoma

When I think of the goodness of Jesus
 And what He has done for me
 My very soul shall sing “Hallelujah”
 Praise God for saving me.

Never fail me

You'd never fail me

Jehovah Jireh Jehovah Nissi
He never fails me Lord
Has mighty in battle
God of Daniel, God Sarah, God of Elijah
The prayer answering God
I am thine I am,oh Lord
You'd Never fail me Lord
God is sitting on His throne forever

CHAPTER FIVE

CAST THE STONE FIRST-NO CONDEMNATION

He that is with sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her – John 8:7)

Many times, the unexpected events happen. We tend to marvel but let us be that shunamite woman in II Kings 4:8-37 whose only son complained of illness, and shortly he died. But the woman of faith said in v 23, shall be well and changed her confession, “It is well” II King 4:26.

When peace like a river
Attended my way
And sorrows like sea billows roll
Whatever my lo..... Thou has taught me to say
It is well, it is well with my soul.

In the last day

I do not know what to say but when Jesus Christ is in the boat no matter the storms, we shall prevail. Children of God will prevail. Events unfolding remind us of the last days as recorded in II Timothy 3:1-5.

V. 1 This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come.

V. 2 For men shall be lovers of their own selves covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy.

V. 3 Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce despisers of those that are good.

V. 4 Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God;

V. 5 Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: form such turn away.

Shocks will not end. Thunders may stem from your own household, friends, co-workers and form parents or their own families. Nevertheless II Timothy 3:1-5 is reminding us. Sometimes when we read the bible it seems some of the events and warnings sound as stories, never close to happen.

But the Word of God is true. Who will believe that husbands and wives could separate? Some after solemn vows get divorced before the close of one year some after living happily and having issues, no longer seek after the welfare of their children and just bolt away without due thought of the consequences to the growth and development of these innocent ones? Who will also think that children bred with all the care affection with the usual parental hope that these little ones will become adults and expand the family, but to their disappointment the spirit of disobedience, unforgiveness, and terrible displacement of their anger in public places against their parents be possible? But this is what the bible is saying “This know also, that in the last days, perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy.

Perilous Events at the End

“Peril” means serious danger. Something that cause danger. So when the apostles were in the boat and there was the storm (Matthew 8:23-27). They were having a perilous time. The danger of losing their lives. So was Paul on the sea when the high tides rolled and the goods were cast into the sea to save the situation (Acts 27:1-44). So was the woman with the issue of blood for 12 years (Matthew 9:20).

V. 20 An behold, a woman which was diseased with an issue of blood twelve years, came behind him, and touched the of his garment.

V. 21 For she said with in herself. If I may, but touch his garment, I shall be whole.

V. 22 But Jesus turned him about and when he saw her, he said “Daughter, be of good comfort, thy faith hath made thee whole”. And the woman was made whole from that hour.

Mark 5:27 records that “When she had heard of Jesus, came in the press behind and touched his garment”

V. 30 Jesus asked“..... who touched my clothes? My friends, the apostles saw the peril. They all were afraid. Psychologically, as the waves were pouring into the ship, they became emotionally disorganized. Ah! Master Jesus too was a sleep after the days preaching and the usual personal interaction, healing and the griefs that He bears with us. In the flesh, yes, He was tired and had every cause to sleep. But His disciples came to Him, and woke Him up saying “Lord, save us; we perish”.

The epistle of Luke 8:24 states, “..... Master, master, we perish”. Then he arose, and rebuked the wind and the raging of the water; and they ceased, and there was calm. The account of the woman who had a spirit of infirmity eighteen years and was bowed together, and could in no wise lift up herself.

She too had a perilous time for this long.

V. 12 And when Jesus saw her, he called her to him, and said unto her, Woman, thou art loosed from thine infirmity.

V. 13 And he laid his hands on her, and immediately she was made straight, and glorified God.

In John 5:1-9 there was the record of the man who for 38 years had infirmity and was waiting for his turn to get into the pool at Bethesda when the angel of the Lord stirred (troubled) the water but according to the report instead of asking instantly I needed to be made whole when he was asked by Jesus, “Wilt thou be made whole?” this sick man said “Sir, I have no man, when the water is troubled, to put me into the pool; but while I am coming, another steppeth down before me.

V. 8 Jesus s..... unto him, Rise, take up thy bed, and walk.

V. 9 And **immediately** he was **healed** and **walked**.

In these last days we may not necessarily have ship-wreck like Paul who was even promised by the angel of God “Fear not Paul;”. Not only having sickness for 38 years, 12 years and so on, but we are burdened with psychological and psychiatric issues that many people are secretly being tortured and have nobody to talk to. Some people, both young and old are found in the psychiatric homes: Many of whom have their visions buried in their graves. The cemetery is full of potentials. Possible causes are divorce, separation, disobedience of children towards their parents and irresponsibilities of wives, husbands; adult children misbehaving towards their parents and showing gross unthankfulness. Little things cumulated over the years which predisposed many men and women to insanity actually sent them to mental hospitals.

Many parents are now disappointed, likewise sons and daughters. There is no trust and hope only disappointment. People have forgotten good deeds of others and haven't learned to show affection. They can remember nothing good done except to fund harsh words to repay the deeds of good people. II Timothy 3:3 says, These are men without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, men and women and children have become these:

People of God, God is love; He has natural affection for us that's why you and I have unmerited gift the grace. We have done nothing to merit it. Jesus bore our sicknesses and diseases. All the "disgraceful things" we have done, but he became vicarious. He carried my sins and burdens instead He died with our disgraceful behaviours, he had perils, thorns in his flesh, he was beaten and battered spat on, pieced, ridiculed for us. If he did should sons and daughters, conspired to crucify loved ones? Parents, of course those who cared, beloved you, saw you through, can't there be any respect for them. Young people can't you show reciprocal love? This should be natural. You fed on Mama's breast slept on daddy's lap, all affection had been bustled on you till you are independent as you're become adults. Perilous times are looming but adults, parents, do not be carried by the winds.

Look Unto Jesus Christ

The tides are high but no matter what I urge you to look unto Christ the LORD. The disciples in the storm said Master, Carest thou not that we perish? "(Mark 4:38) Master the tempest is raging the billows are tossing high. And Jesus rebuked the storms. Let us have faith.

Faith, faith in the word of God. Let us be aware of these perilous time as recorded in the bible II Timothy 3. Awareness makes you knowledgeable about relevant information and gives you cautions of strategizing to act. We don't have any strategy but the word of God should guide us. We should not also have prejudice since we cannot be sure of anything until we observe for a number of times and that negative behaviour keeps on repeating itself. We should not allow the devil to steal our joy and mar relationship. This is a strategy of the devil to bring divisions to families, friends and brothers and sisters in Christ or of any organized religion. Jesus foreknew his betrayal, death and resurrection. He foreknew Judas Iscariot but by patience, comportment and abundantly grace tolerated him till the end when he fulfilled his wicked mission quickly by selling Jesus for the 30 pieces of silver, not even gold or pearl or jasper but silver and hang himself.

The bible says, let the wicked continue doing wickedly and the good man in righteous living. At the end, the wheat and the tare will be separated.

No Condemnation

Separation, “set apart” for use. Only God knows each one of us whether we shall go to hell or heaven but whether any, I **as an individual must**, and should follow and do the will of God. Formerly, we didn’t know and lived in sin for years. Now we must know and live right God alone can condemn. The woman caught from the adulterous bed was brought to Jesus probably to be condemned. The accusers “set her in the midst” (John 8:3). She became an object of ridicule and they complained “..... master this woman was taken in adultery, in the very act but Jesus did not condemn. He said go and sin no more”. Jesus after listening to their accusations stooped down and with his finger wrote on the ground, as though he didn’t hear them. How many fingers did Jesus use? The report said he used his finger. This probably implies he might have used his index or middle finger. Jesus used his finger. Only one finger. The symbolic representation is this – The remaining fingers are pouring at you the accusers. Jesus said in

V. 7 “..... He that is, without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her”. Meaning we have all fallen. We are all sinners except Jesus Christ. We have all fallen short of the glory of God. We live because of the grace of God.

All, all, all, things are possible to the believe. We believe that when confess, repent and for sake our sins we put on Christ.

All things are possible to the believer why? Because “..... with God all things are possible (Matthew 20:26). I am saved, new in Christ redeemed by the blood of Jesus. If our hearts do not condemn us we shall make it. If it does let us repent and for sake our sins and iniquities. Let us love those who spitefully use us and say all manner of evil things against us.

Praying for your enemies

The bible says of Jesus’ account (Matthew 5:44-45)

V. 44 But I say unto you, love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which spitefully use you, and persecute you;

V. 45 That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on unjust.

All to Jesus I surrender,

All to Him I freely give;

I will ever love and trust Him,
In His presence daily live

Chorus

I surrender all
I surrender all
All to the, my blessed Saviour
I surrender all

Your confession

Tell yourself who think you are condemned to tell that the spirit has left you that I shall live and see the goodness of the lord upon my life. Before the presence of my enemies will the lord lay tables

I will dine with the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords. Friend(s) in Jesus Name, I invite you to dine with us.

If the Lord blessed you, you may even invite your enemies but because of the terrible role he/she played against you to fall out of quite he/she may refuse the offer. That's why we need to pray for them.

Conclusion

For he that believeth, has **Not** believed in vain. Let the storms rise, the angels will hold our hands and lift us up. Forever, the word of God settles in heaven. Whatever we say shall be done, where ever we step our feet we possess the gates of the enemy. Whatever we do will be called blessed, for Abraham's blessings are ours. We are part of God's Kingdom God bless. Amen.

CHAPTER SIX
THE LAST BUS STOP,
WHEN I WALK THE LAST MILE

“And when the battle is over, we shall wear a CROWN just be faithful and believe God’s Word”

Introduction

Our years on earth are like a fleeting breath. We have no control over many things and events which unfold. Good news are gifts from above. They are not by matter of luck and chance but ordained. Nevertheless, we survive misfortunes by the grace of God. Some of the experiences of man are nasty and others cheer us to the extent of positively reinforcing us to repeat similar events. Despite everything, man must die or sleep in the Lord. Life is like a journey or a process with many symbolic events or happenings and living physically has its end. It could be traumatic or peaceful whatever means it takes, we shall all have rest.

Moses in Psalm 90:10 told us that the length of our very existence on this planet earth is 70 years. An extension of this is 80 which is full of troubles. Job in his assertion says, “man who is born of a woman is of few days and full of trouble (Job 14:1)”. But again the bible says, “Who is man that (God) is mindful of him and the son of man, that thou visits him? (Psalm 144:4 Psalm 8:4).

Job 7:17-18 says, “Man is like vanity: his days are a shadow that passes away”; So Moses added, “teach us to number our days so that we would have a heart of wisdom” (Psalm 90:12).

Death

When a Christian dies, it is believed that he/she is asleep in the Lord. “Death” is a physical separation between God and His creation. When we sin, it means we have separated ourselves from our Father who is in heaven and His Kingdom which is in our heart. This means that the spirit of God lives in our heart so when we disobey or sin the spirit leaves us because it is Holy. Hence, if we fornicate, steal, commit adultery, hate our neighbours and refuse to acknowledge Him as God or do anything contrary to His will, we have “death” or experience “death”. If we “Separate” ourselves this way, then we cannot inherit the blessings and promises the donor has

bestowed upon us. We shall be existing and not living. You may have all the riches of this earth but cannot satisfactorily enjoy them. Others may envy you for your wealth but you are not happy. This is a truth, because testimonies reveal this, that in the midst of these riches, a vacuum exists. Why? If you take Christ outside your life, you are merely existing, not living but dead, a “living skeleton” spiritually. A mere existence minus God, our Lord Jesus Christ is death. Solomon in the book of Ecclesiastes, 12:13, reminds us of how to survive on this planet and have good relationship with God the eternal Father; “Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man”.

V. 14 For God shall bring every work into judgment with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil.

Solomon again reminded the youth as to how to live. He said, in the book of Ecclesiastes 12:1 “Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shall say, I have no pleasure in them;

V. 5 because man goeth to **his long home**, and the mourners go about the streets:

V. 7 Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it”.

All is vanity

There is nothing new under the sun. Solomon acknowledged this fact in Ecclesiastes or The Preacher 1:9. “that the thing that hath been, it is that which shall be: and that which is done is that which shall be done: and there is no new thing under the sun”.

Solomon married 700 women (Princesses) and 300 concubines, but he declared this act of polygamy as vanity.

Wealth were existing in the ancient times of the biblical days. But the bible says that wealth gotten by vanity shall be diminished: but he that gathereth by labour shall increase (Proverbs 13:11). Abraham, Issac, Israel (Jacob) and Solomon were rich with earthly possessions including servants. In the early days of civilization, history stated it civilization started along the River Nile and Kingdoms sprang with their majestic decorum.

Queen Sheba's Visit

In Solomon's days, we read from I Kings 10:1:13 that the Queen of Sheba visited Solomon because she heard of the fame of Solomon concerning the name of the Lord hence she came to prove him with hard questions.

The bible says "she came to Jerusalem with a very great train, with camels that bare spices, and very much gold, and precious stones; and when she was come to Solomon, she communed with him of all that was in her heart".

V. 3 And Solomon told her all her questions. There was not **anything** hid from the king; which he told her not.

V. 6 And she said to the king, it was a true report that I heard in mine own land of thy acts and of thy wisdom.

V. 7 Howbeit, I believed not the words, until I came, and mine eyes had seen it: and behold the half was not told me: thy wisdom and prosperity exceedeth the fame which I heard.

V. 8 The Queen also saw how happy his servants were and how they served him continually and heard his words of wisdom.

As a token, in V.10 the Queen of Sheba gave Solomon many gifts comprising hundred and twenty talents of gold and of spices in great abundance that no man gave Solomon ever since she also gave him precious stones. She recognized that it was the Lord who bestowed such wealth and joy on Solomon as a chosen king of Israel because the Lord loved Israel forever.

Our Lord is a mighty God, He has all the minerals, silver and gold and all the wealth. He has **all** the powers and all power belongs to Him.

Solomon's Sin

He is that God who does not add curses to His blessings. the bible reports that, "The blessing of the Lord, it maketh rich, and he addeth no sorrow with it" (Proverbs 10:22). Riches and honour, durable ones are with God so is His righteousness.

And here was Solomon blessed with not only riches but wisdom from above. A sign that if God blessed no one can take away. He gives you all that you can use to "stand tall" unto His glory. However, disobedience to His word is death. Solomon married seven hundred wives, princesses and three hundred concubines, and his wives tuned away his heart (1 Kings 11:3). Why was this a

sin? Because God commanded that none of His sons or daughters should contravene the order of going out to marry foreigners since they would turn their hearts unto their gods (Deuteronomy 17:17; I Kings 11:2). He followed their religions, and built high places to offer burnt offerings. Solomon who once loved the Lord and walked in the statute of his father David only sacrificed and burned incense in high places unto God, the most high (1 Kings 3:3). And now Solomon did evil in the sight of the Lord and went not fully after the Lord, as David his father. He built high places for all his strange (foreign) wives and burnt incense and sacrificed unto their gods. And the Lord was angry with him because the women turned his heart away from God (1 Kings 11:8).

The prize for evil doing is death, a separation from the Almighty God.

In Revelation 21:8, the bible states: But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable and murderers, and whore mongers and sorcerers and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone which is the second death.

The White Throne Judgement

We all have to account for our deeds on earth at the throne of Judgement.

John the beloved of Jesus Christ who was thrown on the Island of Patmos, and that's where he had revelations there. Your enemies may push you somewhere that they would think was detestable to them but God can make you live the lions in comfort and grant you "superior" revelations. This was what happened to John. He was abandoned to death but God turned it to a very friendly island for him to inhabit and to have revelations of things to come. In one of his encounters with God, he wrote in Revelations 20:11.

V.11 And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them.

V.12 And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God: and the books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.

V.13 And the sea gave up the dead which were in it: and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works.

V. 14 And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.

V.15 And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.

The bible says we shall find ourselves before the white throne (judgement throne). What preparations are we to make? Sit on the fence? Cleave unto our wealth and be satisfied? Be dignified because of our positions at the job places? Live in hypocrisy, arrogancy, pride and continuously hold unto our own cherished beliefs or sacrifice to the gods and follow traditions or blend traditions with the Christian Religion? Sir, Madam which one? It is written “It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgement: (Hebrews 9:27, Ecclesiastes 12:5)

Our preparations for the “Long home” must be now. Parents, train your children in the fear of the Lord. Don’t let them loose. Our Lord, our God is one God and His word is truth. Let man be the liar and He be the truth because what He says is what He does. Therefore, we as parents are supposed to diligently teach our children the commandment of the Lord. Write it upon the posts of our house and gates (Deut. 6:7-9). What is wrong with us as parents? We seem to be too busy about our jobs and irrelevant things that we cannot pray and read the bible? Children are great imitators whether good or bad. And that’s why the perfect behaviour, which is acceptable to the Lord Jesus is what we need to model to these young ones. If you need stubborn children, then live the word of God out and misbehave as a parent. If you want them to be drunkards, drug addicts and school drop out or people with low academic achievement, then as a parent exhibit drunkenness and use illicit drugs.

Deuteronomy 14:2 says, We are holy people, unto the Lord our God, chosen and are peculiar people unto him.

Therefore if we want children to be good wives, husbands and community leaders or presidents we should start being loving, careful in the choice of words, train them with acceptable social skills of tolerance, and obedience to rules and regulations of the country and respect authorities. Besides, accommodate other peoples views; believe in dialogue and discussion to resolve misunderstanding. We need to tell them we love them and teach them to reciprocate. Above all, the FEAR OF THE LORD is to be taught them. Being moral is not the ideal because at the end of it all we shall face the White Throne Judgement. Don’t be late. Children are for now – the formative years are the early stages between 0-5 years. If we are late to train them to have the basics of the skills to listen, respect and obey, we are likely to brew trouble for ourselves, the

community and the child as an individual and a citizen. The bible says “Train the child the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it”. (Proverbs 22:7).

Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child: but the rod of correction shall drive it far from him (Proverbs 22:15). Withhold not correction from the child: for if thou beatest him with the rod, he shall not die. Thou shalt beat him with the rod, and shalt deliver his soul from hell (Proverbs 23:13-14).

You despise the word you shall be destroyed but he that fear the commandment shall be rewarded (Proverbs 13:13).

Warning to children

To children, the bible says in Proverbs 23:22 Hearken unto thy father that begat thee, and despise not thy mother when she is old.

V. 26 My Son give me thine heart and let thine eyes observe my ways.

We as parents are supposed to openly rebuke our children because the bible says so – “Open rebuke is better than secret love (Proverbs 27:5). We need to tell our children “You have not done well in so, so and so. If need be, repeat the rebuke in order to discourage the negative attitude from being repeated next time. Let us train our children in the wisdom of God so that the wise Son can make the father glad. The bible says “A wise son maketh a glad father: but a foolish son is the heaviness of his mother (Proverbs 10:1).

If you ever had a foolish son, then your heart will grieve with pain and sorrow. Some of our children seem to be good outside but terrible in the home especially where a father is absent through divorce, separation or death. That child can be a hero, and hailed outside by friends and the community but yet he has a heinous character. I believe we all need to pray for our children right now even as they are old. Remember, the white throne judgement is at hand. Let us tell God we have done our best even at the last hour. At least the angels are writing our experiences and our own records will bear testimonies of all our lives.

Where we are becoming too much depressed and life seems unbearable as if, we want to be out of our bodies in order to feel better, let us simply ask for Abundant Grace, from the Lord. The journey is not all that smooth. The terrain is ruddy but it takes the feebleness of the mind and

hands to stretch to God and say “This is enough, Lord we need a break through”. Let us learn to cry like Moses. Lift up our heart unto Him, speak the word, remind Him of His promises concerning the situation and He will hear.

The last mile prayer

I pray that the Grace of God abide with you. It is a time of agony, torment, but we shall survive. Let us gather momentum to make the last step, a step of success. No matter the terrain, we shall survive, we shall sing the song that the angels do not know. We shall meet the Lord face to face but again it takes a hard work to make it. Let the BIBLE be our guide, our solace and eternal hope for eternal victory. Victory is ours for the cross has a *CROWN and that's the ultimate on the Road to Calvary, the last Bus Stop on the last mile*. Let us have courage like Joshua, meekness like Moses; Perseverance like Caleb and Joshua, prayerfulness like Daniel and Simeon waiting and fasting like Esther and Anna: Praising and dancing like Miriam and David. These are all bible characters who had played their roles and left foot prints for us.

May the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob (Israel) Our God, help us on the last mile to the LAST BUS STOP of life's journey.

Remember that your identity as the child of God is not by magical design. But before the foundation of the world you were a chosen vessel, a peculiar (unique) nation, the blessed of the Lord. Just be faithful and God will see you through.

So just be faithful and Believe his word.

Please sing or recite with me this Hymn

The Last mile of the way

If I walk in the path way of duty
If I work till the close of the day;
I shall see the great king in His being
When I've give the last mile of the way.

Chorus

When I've gone the last mile of the way
I will rest at the close of the day,
And I know there are joys that

Await me,
When I've gone the last mile
Of the way

2

If for Christ I proclaim the glad glory,
If I seek for His sheep gone astray,
I am sure He will show me His glory,
When I've gone the last mile of the way.

3

Here the dearest of ties we must sever,
Tear of sorrow are seen everyday;
But no sickness, no sig..... forever,
When I've gone the last mile of the way.

4

And if here I have earnestly,
And have tried all His will to obey
I will enhance all the rapture of heaven
When I've gone the last mile of the way.