

Your

WORD

Is

Strength

VOLUME FOUR

A LIFE-APPLICATION DEVOTIONAL

BY BROTHER JONATHAN

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CONTENTS

1. HOLY REVELATION, NOT JUST INFORMATION: KEY TO INTIMACY WITH GOD (Exodus 3:1-6)
2. THE PREPARATION OF OUR HEARTS IN WORSHIP (Exodus 25:8)
3. CIRCUMCISION COMES BEFORE CONQUERING (Joshua 5:2)
4. ARE WE MERE ACQUAINTANCES OR INTIMATE FRIENDS OF GOD? (Psalm 25:14)
5. NOT JUST THE HOURS, BUT THE HEART AS WELL (Psalm 86:11)
6. GOD'S MANDATE FOR MINISTRY (Isaiah 52:7)
7. THE FORCE OF FASTING (Isaiah 58:6-9)
8. WHY DO COUNTLESS CHRISTIANS GET SPIRITUAL BURNOUT? (Isaiah 61:4-7)
9. THE BREATH OF GOD IS BLOWING (Ezekiel 37:10)
10. THE DAY OF THE LORD IS COMING (Joel 2:1)
11. THE PILLAR OF THE PROPHETIC (Joel 2:28-29)
12. THE MIGHT OF MEEKNESS (Matthew 5:5)
13. THE CHARACTER OF CHILDLIKENESS (Matthew 18:1-5)
14. FAITHFULNESS PRECEDES FRUITFULNESS IN FULFILLING OUR DESTINY (Luke 16:10)
15. HAVE YOU SUBMITTED YOURSELF TO THE FACE, FEAR AND FIRE OF GOD? (John 3:14)
16. MANY ARE INTERESTED IN THE CITIZENSHIP OF GOD'S KINGDOM, BUT FEWER WILL PURSUE FRIENDSHIP WITH HIM (John 15:14-15)
17. DON'T JUST BE SEEKER-SENSITIVE, BUT BE SPIRIT-SENSITIVE AS WELL (John 16:8-11)
18. BASIC QUALIFICATIONS FOR CHRISTIAN SERVICE (John 21:15-19)
19. THE REPENTANCE, REFRESHING, RESTORATION OF REVIVAL (Acts 3:19-21)
20. CONTRITION OF THE HEART PRECEDES CONSOLATION OF THE HOLY SPIRIT (Acts 9:31)
21. SACRIFICE AND WORSHIP RELEASE THE GIFT OF GOD (Romans 12:3-8)
22. THE BODY IS BROKEN TO BLESS (Ephesians 4:11-13)
23. DEVELOPING DYNAMIC DISCIPLESHIP DWELLING ON CHRIST AS MASTER MENTOR AND MODEL (Philippians 2:3)
24. THE PREPARATION AND PRICE FOR THE PROMISE OF HIS PLEASURE AND PURPOSE (Philippians 2:13)
25. MANIFESTING MULTIPLICATION (2 Timothy 2:2)
26. ONCE SAVED, ALWAYS SAVED? (Hebrews 3:12)
27. THE SOURCE FOR ALL OUR SUBSTANCES (James 1:17)
28. THE POWER OF THE PRAYER OF FAITH (James 5:14-15)
29. THE TRUTH ABOUT THE TRINITY (1 John 5:7)
30. AM I DESPERATE FOR MY FIRST LOVE? (Revelation 2:4)

1. HOLY REVELATION, NOT JUST INFORMATION: KEY TO INTIMACY WITH GOD

“NOW Moses kept the flock of Jeth’ro his father in law, the priest of Mid’i-an: and he led the flock to the backside of the desert, and came to the mountain of God, *even* to Ho’reb. And the angel of the LORD appeared unto him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush: and he looked, and behold, the bush burned with fire, and the bush *was* not consumed. And Moses said, I will now turn aside, and see this great sight, why the bush is not burnt. And when the LORD saw that he turned aside to see, God called unto him out of the midst of the bush, and said, Moses, Moses. And he said, Here *am* I. And he said, Draw not nigh hither: put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest *is* holy ground. Moreover he said, I *am* the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. And Moses hid his face; for he was afraid to look upon God” (Exodus 3:1-6).

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Education can influence the mind, but only a holy revelation of God can transform the heart of a man or woman for the work of God. We need truths that are not just informative, but transformative as well. Such revelation knowledge of God cannot be taught from the classroom of our schools, churches or seminaries, but is caught from the closet of prayer, praise and pain in our lives.

Moses was educated in Pharaoh’s court but it was not until he went through forty years in the wilderness that equipped him for the task of shepherding God’s people. He was blessed with all the knowledge and philosophies of men, but it was brokenness on the backside of the desert that he became a partaker of God’s glory and power. Moses requested to see a glimpse of God’s glory, but dared not look upon His face, for “no

man [could] see [Him], and live” (Exodus 33:20). Even so, the Presence of the Lord was so overpowering that his own face and countenance was like the reflection of the King of kings and the Lord of lords who dwells in “the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see” (1 Timothy 6:16).

Likewise, to build intimacy in our relationship with God, we need a glimpse of His glory. We need holy revelation, not just information. It is an analogy of looking into the mirror of God’s Word, trembling before His Presence as He speaks to us with the voice of the Holy Spirit, “Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord *is*, there *is* liberty. But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, *even* as by the Spirit of the Lord” (2 Corinthians 3:17-18).

“Lord, change me to be more like You. In the lovely name of Jesus.”

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2. THE PREPARATION OF OUR HEARTS IN WORSHIP

“And let them make me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them” (Exodus 25:8).

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To praise and worship God is the most powerful activity both now and throughout eternity. We were created for “thy [God’s] pleasure” (Revelation 4:11).

The ministry of worship exists to prepare people in the congregation to experience the manifest Presence of God and music plays a key role in building an atmosphere of His glory. In our day where contemporary Christian music is popular, we must be careful not to worship the music, but the King of kings and the Lord of lords Himself! It is

heartbreaking, but many have substituted the heart of worship for the hype of worship, unconsciously turning music ministry into idol industry! We must repent of human entertainment and return to heaven's endorsement!

How do we know that our worship is an acceptable offering? True worship will produce life and strength in our spirit. But if there is irreverence, there will be emptiness and hardening of our hearts. Let us be careful to enter God's Presence with awesome reverence and holy fear or else His judgment will result!

"Father, prepare me to be a pure and holy sanctuary of worship. I offer myself as a vessel unto You. In the awesome name of Jesus."

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3. CIRCUMCISION COMES BEFORE CONQUERING

"At that time the LORD said unto Joshua, Make thee sharp knives, and circumcise again the children of Israel the second time" (Joshua 5:2).

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Circumcision was a sign of covenant between God and the children of Abraham, "This *is* my covenant, which ye shall keep, between me and you and thy seed after thee; Every man child among you shall be circumcised" (Genesis 17:10). However, this practice was in recess for 40 years as they were indifferent to the Law.

After reaching the promised land, the ceremony of circumcision and the celebration of the Passover were carried out before their actual conquest. The outward sign was meant to be the expression of an inward change. The old covenant served as a portrayal of the new covenant which was to be fulfilled by faith and obedience. Circumcision of the organ was a mark of a heart and life separated

from sin and set apart for God. And the Passover typified the blood of Jesus, the Lamb of God.

Just as circumcision was a mark under the old covenant, baptism is a sign of being “circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ: Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with *him* through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead. And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses; Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross; *And* having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it” (Colossians 2:11-15).

The application is this: Even though salvation is not by ritual observance, following the Lord in baptism has benefits and is a key to spiritual victory. Are we baptized? Do we have a new heart and nature to receive the blessings of God in faith and obedience?

“Father, give me a heart to love and obey You. I ask this in the name of Jesus”.

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4. ARE WE MERE ACQUAINTANCES OR INTIMATE FRIENDS OF GOD?

“The secret of the LORD *is* with them that fear him; and he will shew them his covenant” (Psalm 25:14).

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Is there a season of dry spell in our lives where God does not seem to move? Do we feel like giving up? This is where and when God searches

and reveals the contents of our hearts on whether we really know Him as mere acquaintances or as intimate friends.

An acquaintance is someone whom we will follow only when it is to our advantage, but a friend is someone we will stick with through thick and thin.

Are we like the children of Israel who were merely contented with perceiving the miracles and provisions of God or like Moses who pressed deeper in and on to talk with and listen to God's voice on an intimate level, "He made know his ways unto Moses, his acts unto the children of Israel" (Psalm 103:7)? Do we remain on the level of knowing *about* God or actually *knowing* Him in the communion and fellowship of the Holy Spirit, "That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death" (Philippians 3:10)?

"Lord, take me deeper into You. I ask this in Jesus name."

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5. NOT JUST THE HOURS, BUT THE HEART AS WELL

"Teach me thy way, O LORD; I will walk in thy truth: unite my heart to fear thy name" (Psalm 86:11).

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Taking time to wait upon the Lord in prayer and the reading of scriptures is essential. However, the Lord is primarily concerned with us having hearts of truth and integrity and not just fulfilling the amount of time we spend in prayer.

Prayer is not just talk, but walk as well. It is not just communication, but also confrontation with "the issues of life" (Proverbs 4:23). It is not the appearance of the outward, but obedience in the heart that matters,

“This people draweth nigh unto me with *their* lips; but their heart is far from me. But in vain they do worship me, teaching *for* doctrines the commandments of men” (Matthew 15:8-9).

Distractions divide our hearts, “If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear *me*” (Psalm 66:18). We must continually ask God for a heart that is fully committed to Him. Devotion is more than just the sum hours we spend in prayer and scripture, but having hearts of truth and integrity as well, “I will therefore that men pray every where, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting” (1 Timothy 2:8).

“Father, create in me a clean heart. I lift up holy hands, delighting in Your truth and walking in Your ways. In Jesus name.”

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6. GOD’S MANDATE FOR MINISTRY

“How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth” (Isaiah 52:7).

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I believe the calling of God for ministry is upon my life, “THE Spirit of the Lord GOD *is* upon me; because the LORD hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to *them that are* bound; To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn; To appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the LORD, that he might be glorified” (Isaiah 61:1-3).

There has been different waves of anointing of the Gifts of the Father (according to Romans 12:3-8) flowing through me over the years. Some of them include prophecy (according to Romans 12:6), ministry or act of serving (according to Romans 12:7) and exhortation (according to Romans 12:8). Yet fear and unbelief have made me closed up to other giftings. As I allow the Holy Spirit to break intimidation and “stir up the gift of God, which is in [me]... ” (2 Timothy 1:6), one aspects of my vision is to see lives being touched by the Word of God delivered under the anointing of the Holy Spirit through applied arts, literature, audio/visual mass media (music and teaching) and Information Technology in subservient to the local church, “Unto him *be* glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. A’-men” (Ephesians 3:21).

The purpose here is not to boast in the gifts or calling, but to share that there is tremendous responsibility in moving within the capacity and measure of enablements. I have been strong in some areas, yet often weak in others. True strength comes in relating to, and supporting others in the Body. Our identity and security is in our relationship with Christ, not in our abilities or talents. Faithfulness and godly character is what’s important in the long haul.

“Father, enable me to be faithful in ministry. Holy Spirit, let Your anointing flow through me. In the wonderful name of Jesus.”

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7. THE FORCE OF FASTING

“Is not this fast that I have chosen? to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke? Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house? when thou seest the

naked, that thou cover him; and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh? Then shall thy light break forth as the morning, and thine health shall spring forth speedily: and thy righteousness shall go before thee; and the glory of the LORD shall be rereward. Then shalt thou call, and the LORD shall answer; thou shalt cry, and he shall say, Here I *am*. If thou take away from the midst of thee the yoke, the putting forth of the finger, and speaking vanity” (Isaiah 58:6-9).

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When the attitudes and the motives of the heart is right with God, fasting and prayer brings tremendous benefits.

Fasting stirs up the spirit of repentance, restoration and revival for ourselves, our family, our church and our nation! It enables us to know the Father’s heart in lifting darkness and oppression and releasing fountains of freedom in our lives and others around. Our fleshly appetites are brought under control and we receive a greater anointing of the Spirit to paralyze the works of the enemy as we fast. It awakes us to interceed for the salvation and healing of the physically and spiritually poor and stirs up compassion in our hearts to care for those that we are able to reach out to.

As much as possible, we should fast in secret, “Moreover when ye fast, be not, as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance: for they disfigure their faces, that they may appear unto men to fast. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward. But thou, when thou fastest, anoint thine head, and wash thy face; That thou appear not unto men to fast, but unto thy Father which is in secret: and thy Father, which seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly” (Matthew 6:16-18) and devote an extended time to minister to the Lord (according to Acts 13:2) in prayer, worship and the study of His Word. We should also walk in forgiveness, love, humility and unity with others.

Be led by the Spirit as to how consistent, how long and the type of fast we should enter. In God’s Word, there are three days and three nights

fast for crisis (read Acts 9:9); partial (eating “no pleasant meat”) fast of 21 days for revelation (read Daniel 10:3) and 40 days fast (read Matthew 4:1-2) for dominion in spiritual warfare and temptation. Generally, if you are fasting for the first time, you might consider missing only one meal (but with drinking water or juices) and then gradually increase it to 24, 48 and 72 hours fast (with or without fluids). However, do not go without food and water longer than three days unless you are physically able and God directs you to. The key is to be led of the Lord and that you consistently dedicate yourself in much prayer in the type of fast chosen.

“Father, let my motives be right and specific needs be met as I minister to You in prayer and fasting. In Jesus name.”

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8. WHY DO COUNTLESS CHRISTIANS GET SPIRITUAL BURNOUT?

“And they shall build the old wastes, they shall raise up the former desolations, and they shall repair the waste cities, the desolations of many generations. And strangers shall stand and feed your flocks, and the sons of the alien *shall be* your plowmen and your vinedressers. But ye shall be named the Priests of the LORD: *men* shall call you the Ministers of our God: ye shall eat the riches of the Gentiles, and in their glory shall ye boast yourselves. For your shame *ye shall have* double; and *for* confusion they shall rejoice in their portion: therefore in their land they shall possess the double: everlasting joy shall be unto them” (Isaiah 61:4-7).

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Why do countless Christians get spiritual burnout? A lack of vision is a reason for it. Proverbs 29:18 says, “Where *there is* no vision, the people

perish... ”. Or in the *NIV* translation, it reads, “Where there is no revelation, the people cast off restraint”.

Every God-called mission began with a vision. Moses knew he was to be a deliverer (read Exodus 3:1-22; 4:1-17). Joshua was directed to lead Israel into the promised land (read Joshua 1:1-15). Nehemiah received a vision to rebuild the city of Jerusalem (read Nehemiah 1:3-4, 2:4-5). Paul was chosen to “bear [the Lord’s] name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel” (Acts 9:15).

When a vision is filled with the power of the Holy Spirit, its growth will be “exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us” (Ephesians 3:20). A God-anointed vision focuses on the harvest and not on the labourer because “neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God giveth the increase” (1 Corinthians 3:7).

“God, let me catch the vision to fulfill the mission of Your calling in my life. In Jesus name.”

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9. THE BREATH OF GOD IS BLOWING

“So I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood up upon their feet, an exceeding great army” (Ezekiel 37:10).

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The vision of the valley of dry bones Ezekiel saw is the restoration of Israel, both physically and spiritually. Some say that the fulfilment was in Cyrus’s time (read Ezra chapter 1), yet others see the realization with the complete regathering of Israel in the end time.

Even though there has been various levels of interpretation, I believe the key is the awakening of spiritual dryness and death in our land and in the church. When the “breath”, “wind” or the “Spirit” of God blows, there will be infusion of freshness into our souls, churches and nations. Hopelessness has become commonplace in the world around us. Even we Christians can fall into the trap of slothfulness and lose the confident expectation we once had, “And we desire that every one of you do shew the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end” (Hebrews 6:11). Being diligent and steadfast in faith and patience in dry times is difficult. We cry out for the hand and touch of God. Yet He wants us to confess and speak His Word until we “inherit the promises” (Hebrews 6:12).

Just as the prophet Ezekiel was told to “prophesy upon these bones, and say until them, O ye dry bones, hear the word of the LORD” (Ezekiel 37:4), we must appeal to our communities and see the Lord gives us His breath of life, “And shall put my spirit in you, and ye shall live, and I shall place you in your own land: then shall ye know that I the LORD have spoken *it*, and perform *it*, saith the LORD” (Ezekiel 37:14).

“Lord, pour out Your Spirit upon my soul, our church and in the land. Let there be a great awakening. In the mighty name of Jesus.”

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10. THE DAY OF THE LORD IS COMING

“BLOW ye the trumpet in Zion, and sound an alarm in my holy mountain: let all the inhabitants of the land tremble: for the day of the LORD cometh, for *it is* nigh at hand” (Joel 2:1).

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There is an increasing anointing and glory in the church for fulfilling thr Great Commission of the Lord Jesus Christ. As the Holy Spirit floods the earth, multitudes are being swept into the Kingdom. The church is reaping a mighty harvest of souls.

However, in the midst of this revival, there are also a number of dead, lukewarm and sleeping Christians with little or no concern for the things of God. No burden for lost souls. No desire for prayer and the Word. When believers have tasted of the goodness of the Lord and caught a glimpse of His glory and then grow careless and cold, it is the sure sign of spiritual slumber, “And that, knowing the time, that now *it is* high time to awake out of sleep: for now *is* our salvation nearer than when we believed. The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light. Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying. But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to *fulfil* the lusts *thereof*” (Romans 13:11-14). The trumpet speaks of forthcoming danger! It warns of darkness and gloom, judgment and destruction, both in the physical and spiritual realm! Natural catastrophes and earthquakes abound! Economically, the financial walls of our society is shaking! Can we discern the times and season we are living in? Are we ready for the coming day of the Lord? Beloved, nothing can compare to the devastation of our spiritual lives if we do not allow the Lord to build the foundations of our faith in Him,

“Whose voice then shook the earth: but now he hath promised, saying, Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven. And this *word*, Yet once more, signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain. Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear: For our God *is* a consuming fire” (Hebrews 12:26-29). This message may not seem “nice” but I have a word from the Lord in my heart and fire burning in my bones to call forth (if you will pardon this expression) “cocktail Christians” to “be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: Whom resist stedfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world” (1 Peter 5:8-9). Once we are shaken to the core, only the Lord can rebuild and restore the ruins of our lives! The trumpet must be blown! The alarm must be sounded! That we will awake from our spiritual slumber and rise up as the army of the Lord, “AWAKE, awake; put on thy strength, O Zion; put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city: for henceforth there shall no more come into thee the uncircumcised and the unclean. Shake thyself from the dust; arise, *and* sit down, O Jerusalem: loose thyself from the bands of thy neck, O captive daughter of Zion” (Isaiah 52:1-2).

“Father, restore me. Build my life on the foundation that cannot be shaken. In Jesus name.”

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11. THE PILLAR OF THE PROPHETIC

“And it shall come to pass afterward, *that* I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions: And also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my spirit” (Joel 2:28-29).

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God is restoring the prophetic mantle and spirit in the church today. Just as John the Baptist was a forerunner to the birth of Jesus, “And he shall go before him in the spirit and power of E-li’as, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord” (Luke 1:17), the Lord is raising up a prophetic community who will herald the second coming of the Lord.

However, the anointing and authority will not be given to any one particular man or woman, but a remnant of those who are broken and contrite in spirit, live a life of prayer and walk in the power of holiness. This office is not just for predicting future events, releasing word of knowledge or wisdom but also appropriating resurrection life and preparing the Bride for the coming of the Husband, “That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish” (Ephesians 5:27).

Beloved, are we hungry and thirsty with an overwhelming desire for purity in our hearts? Are we desperately crying out for a fresh revelation of the King of glory? Jesus is jealous for those who are separate from carnality and worldliness and are set apart for Him, “But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him” (1 Corinthians 2:9).

“Lord, take me as Your bride. Wash me in the blood of the Lamb. Take my heart, my life and my spirit a living sacrifice. In the precious name of Jesus.”

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12. THE MIGHT OF MEEKNESS

“Blessed *are* the meek: for they shall inherit the earth” (Matthew 5:5).

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Meekness is not weakness. Rather, it is strength balanced with humility and self-control.

When Jesus was “led up of the spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil” (Matthew 4:1) and having “fasted forty days and forty nights, he was afterward an hungred” (Matthew 4:2), he could have “command that these stones be made bread” (Matthew 4:3). In encountering the temptation to throw Himself down on the highest point of the temple, He could have called legions of angels to rescue Him (read Matthew 4:5-7), but He answered, “It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God” (Matthew 4:7). Rather than earthly power, Jesus chose submission to His mission as a sacrifice for sin. As He triumphed over sin and death, He could ask the Father “the nations *for* [His] inheritance, And the ends of the earth *for* [His] possession” (Psalm 2:8). This power is expressed in the commissioning to the disciples to “Go ye therefore, and teach all nations...” (Matthew 28:19). Likewise, we can manifest God’s glory and Kingdom authority in being “partakers of the divine nature...” (2 Peter 1:4) but it involves obedience and submission to the will and Word of God in our lives.

“Father, let my heart submit to You in loving obedience to Your will and Word. I ask this in Jesus name.”

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13. THE CHARACTER OF CHILDLIKENESS

“AT the same time came the disciples unto Jesus, saying, Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven? And Jesus called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them, And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven. And whoso shall receive one such little child in my name receiveth me” (Matthew 18:1-5).

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Childlikeness is not childishness. It is having a tenderness of heart and a teachable spirit. A child wants to learn and know the ways of his or her parents or guardians. Even though the little one could do wrong, he or she is usually more open to correction and discipline than many adults. What is reflected in the natural often also applies in the spiritual, “For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth” (Hebrews 12:6).

As we grow as Christians, do we have a tendency to become self-confident and self-satisfied? Observe the manner children (in terms of physical age) and new Christians (in terms of spiritual age) pray and worship and you will usually, if not always, sense a greater hunger and tenderness than some of the more mature believers. God is no respecter of persons but He will honour those who exemplify childlike faith and will satisfy those who hunger and thirst after His righteousness.

I believe the time is coming when God is going to visit the children’s church, the Sunday schools and the youth ministries in greater degrees. Revival usually starts with the young and the youth not because God

bypasses the older and the more mature but because arrogance and experience prevent some of them from receiving more of God's grace to flow through, " ...God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble" (1 Peter 5:5).

Beloved, no matter how great, how long and how much we have served God, let us continue to be childlike in our character, faith and humility. Jesus said, "But he that is greatest among you shall be your servant. And whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted" (Matthew 23:11-12).

"Master, I ask for childlike humility and a servantlike heart. In the wonderful name of Jesus."

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14. FAITHFULNESS PRECEDES FRUITFULNESS IN FULFILLING OUR DESTINY

"He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much" (Luke 16:10).

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When we put our own benefits above the welfare of God's people, we pervert the grace and withhold the glory of God (please read Ezekiel 34:1-10).

Faithfulness precedes fruitfulness in fulfilling our destiny. This include our financial giving to the work of God, "If therefore ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true *riches?*" (Luke 16:11).

We cannot expect to reap a harvest of results in our own lives and ministries if we do not sow into "good ground" (Mark 4:20). We need

to support the preaching of God's Word, help the spreading of the Gospel and winning souls with our time, money and prayer. This is the key to keep the flame and fire of God burning deep within our souls.

"Master, multiply the fruits of my life as I sow into work of the Gospel. I ask this in Jesus name."

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15. HAVE YOU SUBMITTED YOURSELF TO THE FACE, FEAR AND FIRE OF GOD?

"And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up" (John 3:14).

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Friend, if you have not previously surrendered your life over to the Lordship of Jesus Christ or have backsliden and slipped away from God's ways, you can make the decision to turn or return to Him NOW, "(For he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee: behold, now *is* the accepted time; behold, now *is* the day of salvation.) (2 Corinthians 6:2); "Wherefore (as the Holy Ghost saith, To day if ye will hear his voice, Harden not your hearts, as in the provocation, in the day of temptation in the wilderness: When your fathers tempted me, proved me, and saw my works forty years. Wherefore I was grieved with that generation, and said, They do alway err in *their* heart; and they have not known my ways. So I sware in my wrath, They shall not enter into my rest.) Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence stedfast unto the end; While it is said, To

day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts, as in the provocation” (Hebrews 3:7-15). The choice is yours. If you say “yes” to Jesus, here’s what you must do,

Admit the fact that you are a sinner, “For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God” (Romans 3:23);

Be willing to repent from disobedience and rebellion against God, “...except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish” (Luke 13:3);

Believe that Jesus is your only Saviour, “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life” (John 3:16);

Confess, trust and receive Jesus Christ as your Lord and Saviour, “That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation” (Romans 10:9-10).

Please pray this prayer and do mean it with all of your heart:

“Dear Lord Jesus, I now recognize that I am a sinner and I am in need of salvation. I accept the sacrifice You paid for me on the cross of Calvary and I allow Your precious shed blood to cleanse me. I now surrender myself to You and invite You to be my Lord and Saviour. Please come into my heart. Take full control of my life and help me to live and serve You from this moment forward. I ask in the name of Jesus. Amen.”

If you prayed this prayer in all sincerity, you are now a child of God. We encourage you to find fellowship in a Bible-believing, Spirit-filled church and obtain a copy of the Bible and that you read it diligently so that you will be the kind of Christian God wants you to be.

“Father, as we lift up the name of Jesus, draw people unto You. In Christ name.”

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16. MANY ARE INTERESTED IN THE CITIZENSHIP OF GOD'S KINGDOM, BUT FEWER WILL PURSUE FRIENDSHIP WITH HIM

“Ye are my friends, if ye do whatever I command you. Henceforth I call you not servants; for servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends: for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you” (John 15:14-15).

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As citizens of a nation, we can be acquainted with the accomplishments and actions of our country's president or prime minister by observing him through the reports of the mass media. But if we want to know the intimate desires and motives of his heart, we need to have a personal, face-to-face friendship with him, right? How much more it is with the King of kings and Lord of lords!

Friendship with God does not mean we become over-familiar with Him. To experience intimacy with Jesus, we need an awesome, holy and proper fear of the Lord, “The secret of the LORD *is* with them that fear him; and he will shew them his covenant” (Psalm 25:14).

When there is an absence of the fear of the Lord, there will be disorder and disunity in the congregation. The fear and the pride of man are the deceptive snares that cause problems in our relationship with God and others. But when we learn to “fear Him” (in the sense that He is given due honour and reverence), it results in enjoyment of our covenant friendship and relationship with Him, “And I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them, to do them good; but I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me. Yea, I will rejoice over them to do good, and I will plant them

in this land assuredly with my whole heart and with my whole soul”
(Jeremiah 32:40-41).

“Lord, let Your fear burn bright in my heart. In the holy name of
Jesus.”

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17. DON'T JUST BE SEEKER~ SENSITIVE, BUT BE SPIRIT~SENSITIVE AS WELL

“And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of
righteousness, and of judgment: Of sin, because they believe not on me;
Of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more; Of
judgment, because the prince of this world is judged” (John 16:8-11).

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I am not against being “seeker-sensitive” or “sinner-friendly”, a
concept that is being promoted and practiced in some churches. I
believe that the pastors and leaders who established this method
generally have shepherd hearts and their motives are godly and pure.
They took the “walls” off the church so that many unchurched people
have the opportunity to perceive church not as some religious, self-
righteous club but one that is community conscious. I thank God for
these faithful shepherds who partake a portion of the Chief Shepherd’s
heart to “seek and to save that which was lost” (Luke 19:10).

However, as we develop these means and methods of outreach in the
church, let us not neglect the Person and Ministry of the Holy Spirit
who still convicts sin, call for repentance and conform God’s
righteousness in our lives. We need to be sensitive to the Holy Spirit and
not grieve or quench Him in the process of drawing large crowds to our

churches. In the Gospels, when Jesus said, “Follow Me”, it meant forsaking oneself and taking up one’s cross (read Luke 9:23-27). In the early church, the Apostle Peter preached a message that pricked the hearts of the hearers and saw 3, 000 people saved (read Acts 2:37-41). Peter’s sermon, under the work of the Holy Spirit, was convicting and hardly comfortable, yet it results in a harvest of conversion. Why? And how?

The key is the anointing and inspiration of the Holy Spirit. When we are sensitive and yield to the Holy Spirit in ministry, He will discern the hearts of the ones being ministered to better than any of us could expect, or at least in the way that He intends. Thank God for the Person and Ministry of the Holy Spirit!

“Holy Spirit, come fall afresh on me. I yield and surrender, hunger and thirst for Your righteousness. You are welcome in my life. In Jesus name.”

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18. BASIC QUALIFICATION FOR CHRISTIAN SERVICE

“So when they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Si-mon, *son* of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my lambs. He saith to him again the second time, Simon, *son* of Jonas, lovest thou me? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my sheep. He saith unto him the third time, Simon, *son* of Jonas, lovest thou me? Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me? And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee, When thou wast young, thou girdedst thyself, and walkedst whither thou wouldest: but

when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry *thee* whither thou wouldest not. This spake he, signifying by what death he should glorify God. And when he had spoken this, he saith unto him, Follow me” (John 21:15-19).

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While others may commend or confirm, only the Lord Jesus Christ can call and commission us for spiritual service in the church.

The primary qualification is that we have a devoted love for the Lord. When Jesus asked Peter whether he loved Him, Peter could only respond to Him with the affectionate and emotional kind of “love” (*phileo*). He was still immature and imperfected as far as the “love” (*agape*) which springs from the mind and the will is concerned. Of course, we need to develop and grow in these two levels of love (*phileo* and *agape*) for the Lord and others but there will be times when our heartfelt feeling love (*phileo*) is weak that we are still able to exercise purposeful love (*agape*).

Personally, I have made foolish blunders and shameful mistakes in terms of certain social and spiritual relationships and were it not for the grace and *agape* love of God, I would not be able to have *phileo* love anymore, “For your shame *ye shall have* double; and *for* confusion they shall rejoice in their portion: therefore in their land they shall possess the double: everlasting joy shall be unto them” (Isaiah 61:7).

“Father, there has been times in my life I’ve made a mess in my relationship with You and others too. I am so unworthy, yet You love and restore me. Thank You in Jesus name.”

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19. THE REPENTANCE, REFRESHING AND RESTORATION OF REVIVAL

“Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord, and that He may send Jesus Christ, who was preached to you before, whom heaven must receive until the times of restoration of all things, which God has spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began” (Acts 3:19-21; *NKJV*).

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Frequently we hear Christians talking about revival these days. We read of reports of the abundance of the gifts of God in operation. True, there is an increase of healing and miracles today. But I believe that there is much more to come.

Genuine revival must include the following conditions: Repentance, refreshing and restoration, according to Acts 3:19-21. There will be a season when those who “tempt the Spirit of the Lord” (Acts 5:9) like Ananias and Sapphira did will “[fall] down, and [give] up the ghost” (Acts 5:5) and “great fear [will come] upon all the church, and upon as many as [will hear] these things” (Acts 5:11). It will be a time when the glory and judgment of God will fall so greatly that a remnant of sinners and backsliders will cry out, “...what must I do to be saved?” (Acts 16:30).

Beloved, we must be ready to either receive or reject the word of the Lord. Just as John the Baptist was sent from God to “go before the face of the Lord to prepare his ways” (Luke 1:76) for the birth of Jesus, God is raising a new breed of messengers, prophets and ministers burning brightly with the “flame of fire” (Hebrews 1:7) and carrying the anointing, mantle and spirit of Elijah to “turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers” (Malachi

4:6) before “the [Second] coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD” (Malachi 4:5).

“Holy Spirit, revive us. Send Your rain of repentance, refreshing and restoration. In Jesus name.”

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20. CONTRITION OF THE HEART PRECEDES CONSOLATION OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

“Then had the churches rest throughout all Judaea and Galilee and Sama’ri-a, and were edified; and walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost, were multiplied” (Acts 9:31).

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Contrition of the heart precedes the consolation of the Holy Spirit. The comfort of the Holy Spirit must be coupled with the fear of God. I believe in the comforting work of the Holy Spirit, but it is not balanced without experiencing the sorrow of repentance, “Blessed *are* they that mourn: for they shall be comforted” (Matthew 5:4).

A person could act religious, attend church and still have a deceitful heart, “But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves” (James 1:22). It is knowing the light and truth of God’s Word and yet, rejecting repeated corrective warnings of what one hears that hardness of heart sets in, “Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away” (2 Timothy 3:5).

I believe if we are to experience the ever-increasing ministry of the Holy Spirit in our lives, we will choose to “esteem other better than [ourselves]” (Philippians 2:3). We can be anointed and move mightily in His name, yet lack the fear of the Lord. Lucifer fell because “[his]

heart was lifted up” (Ezekiel 28:17). He esteemed himself as above God. Ananias and Sapphira died not because it was wrong for them to keep some of the amount they had received for what was sold, but for lying that they have given everything when it was only part of it (read Acts 5:1-11). They regarded human recognition more than truth and integrity.

The fear of the Lord produces the ability and power to live godly lives. We may lose the attention and praise of people, but we will secure the comfort and fellowship of the Holy Spirit, “Behold, the eye of the LORD *is* upon them that fear him, upon them that hope in his mercy” (Psalm 33:18).

“Father, fill me with Your love and holy fear. In the name of Jesus, my Lord.”

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21. SACRIFICE AND WORSHIP

RELEASE THE GIFT OF GOD

“For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think *of himself* more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith. For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office: So we, *being* many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another. Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, *let us prophesy* according to the proportion of faith; Or ministry, *let us wait on our* ministering: or he that teacheth, on teaching; Or he that exhorteth, on exhortation: he that giveth, *let him do it* with simplicity; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that sheweth mercy, with cheerfulness” (Romans 12:3-8).

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The gift of God in us has nothing to do with our abilities, at least after we have been through the wilderness of the Refiner’s fire.

True anointing flows out of sacrifice and worship. Genuine manifestations of God’s gift are released out of being partakers of His suffering, “Beloved, think it not strange concerning the firey trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ’s sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy. If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy *are ye*; for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you: on their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified” (2 Peter 4:12-14).

Natural charisma alone do not qualify one for the supernatural service of God. A season of preparation is necessary to build a strong, godly character worthy to be entrusted with carrying the burden of the Lord. Though Moses and Paul were well educated and trained by men, they

had to be placed through the process of pain, persecution and pressure before they could perceive the purpose of God and be perfected to perform His work.

“Father, let me be a sacrifice and worship, holy and acceptable unto You. In Jesus name.”

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22. THE BODY IS BROKEN TO BLESS

“And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: That we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, into a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ” (Ephesians 4:11-13).

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Just as “the Lord Jesus the *same* night in which he was betrayed took bread: And when he had given thanks, he brake *it*, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me” (1 Corinthians 11:23-24) symbolizing His sacrificial death on the cross in order that we might have life, we the Body of Christ with many members but one Head will also go through the process of breaking, both individually and corporately, so that we will be a blessing to the world.

How could we possibly be effective witnesses of salvation and healing if we ourselves have never experienced the redemptive and restorative power of salvation and healing in our own lives?, “Only let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ: that whether I come and see you, or else be absent, I may hear of your affairs, that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the gospel; And in

nothing terrified by your adversaries: which is to them an evident token of perdition, but to you of salvation, and that of God. For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake; Having the same conflict which ye saw in me, and now hear *to be* in me” (Philippians 1:27-30).

Understanding the purpose and process of brokenness in our lives can release us to become “ambassadors for Christ” (2 Corinthians 5:20) as being set apart and “committed unto us the word of reconciliation” (2 Corinthians 5:19). But just because all of us are called for “the work of the ministry” (Ephesians 4:12) does not mean we all stand in “the same office” (Romans 12:4). Which is why discovering our spiritual calling and gifts enable us to move, build and edify the church in a divine order in the spirit of unity in the diversities of operations (read 1 Corinthians chapter 12).

“Lord, we are Your Body. As bread that is broken, use our lives as a blessing to our world. In Christ’s name.”

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23. DEVELOPING DYNAMIC DISCIPLESHIP DWELLING ON CHRIST AS MASTER MENTOR AND MODEL

“*Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves*” (Philippians 2:3).

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One of the most enduring marks of true discipleship is to walk in humility and total dependence on God's grace.

Pride is a subtle enemy of God's grace " ...be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble" (1 Peter 5:5).

Sadly, most people fall into pride not in the dry times, but in the times of abundance, prosperity and success. Even Christians are not immune to this deadly spirit. When we reach a level of spiritual accomplishments and success - beware! Our knowledge of the Bible and experience in ministry can be our pitfalls, if we think we have arrived and attained it all! Without love and unity through humility, we can develop a puffed up attitude and an unteachable spirit, “ ...Knowledge puffeth up, but charity edifieth” (1 Corinthians 8:1).

Is there humility and tenderness in our hearts? Are we jealous when others are recognized in their ministries? Do we measure the standard of success on the mind of Christ, the Master Mentor and Model whose mission was to suffer and sacrifice His life for many others or mimic the mentality of the multiplicity of many modern megaministries as mirrored by the marketing methods of Christian magazines and mass media? (I am not against them but let us beware of idolizing these resources more than the worship of God!). Can we say, in some measure, the magnitude of Paul’s words, mouthed out of the abundance of the humility of his heart as he grasped the greatness of God’s grace toward him, “But by the grace of God I am what I am: and his grace which *was bestowed* upon me was not in vain; but I laboured more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me” (1 Corinthians 15:10)?

“Father, I humble myself that Your grace may rest upon me. In the name of Jesus Christ”.

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24. THE PREPARATION AND PRICE FOR THE PROMISE OF HIS PLEASURE AND PURPOSE

“For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of *his* good pleasure” (Philippians 2:13).

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God’s grace prepares our hearts with the desire to do His will and the price is obedience hidden in the fear of God for the promise of His pleasure, “Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling” (Philippians 2:12).

If we are to receive the promise of the good pleasure of God, we are to experience the power and the presence of perfecting holiness in the fear of God as well, “HAVING therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God” (2 Corinthians 7:1).

Faithfulness in cultivating the spiritual life is tested not only in His Presence but also in the seeming absence of His Presence or when His promises are yet to be fulfilled. For example, if we are deeply in love with someone, we will be faithful to the relationship whether the person is around with us or away for a period of time. Likewise, if we love God, we will burn with both consuming passion and holy fear, the forces that will enable us to walk in faithfulness and obedience before Him, “Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear: For our God *is* a consuming fire” (Hebrews 12:28-29).

“Father, by grace may I love and fear You perfectly that You will work in me both to will and to do of Your good pleasure and purpose. In Jesus name.”

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25. MANIFESTING MULTIPLICATION

“And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also” (2 Timothy 2:2).

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In the Kingdom of God, we cannot lead, pastor or shepherd others if we ourselves do not listen to the Shepherd’s voice, follow and obey Him. We cannot raise up strong disciples without developing a heart of a father ourselves. And we cannot be fathers without first being sons, “For though ye have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet *have ye* not many fathers: for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel” (1 Corinthians 4:15). Of course, the concept of “fathers and sons” do not exclude women, for “there is neither male nor female in Christ” (Galatians 3:28). We are not dealing with gender here, but we are using them in terms of spiritual principles.

The fire and power of God to lead others can only manifest after we ourselves hear the voice of God in seeking His face and walk in the fear of the Lord as the desire of our hearts, “The God of Israel said, the Rock of Israel spake to me, He that ruleth over men *must be* just, ruling in the fear of God” (2 Samuel 23:3).

The foundation of ministry is the multiplication and reproduction of spiritual relationships for the next generation of believers. Like Elijah who imparted a double portion of his anointing and spirit to Elisha, his son in God’s work, leaders in ministry must prepare sons and daughters of the faith to exceed their own ministries. And like Paul who developed Timothy to his fullest potential in God, shepherds must raise up others to reach their greatest influence in the Kingdom of God.

“God, give us fathers of the faith who will raise up sons and daughters in the power of the Spirit. In Jesus name.”

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26. ONCE SAVED, ALWAYS SAVED?

“Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God” (Hebrews 3:12).

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No Christian who truly loves, obeys and seeks God will lose his or her salvation, “ ...If ye continue in my word, *then* are ye my disciples indeed” (John 8:31); “For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence stedfast unto the end” (Hebrews 3:14). However, a believer can harden his or her heart through the deceitfulness of sin, disregard the repeated checks of the Holy Spirit, abandon the faith and forfeit his or her salvation, “HE, that being often reproveth hardeneth *his* neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy” (Proverbs 29:1); “But when the righteous turneth away from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, *and* doeth according to all the abominations that the wicked *man* doeth, shall he live? All his righteousness that he hath done shall not be mentioned: in his trespass that he hath trespassed, and in his sin that he hath trespassed, and in his sin that he hath sinned, in them shall he die” (Ezekiel 18:24); “Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven” (Matthew 7:21); “They on the rock *are they*, which, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no root, which for a while believe, and in time of temptation fall away” (Luke 8:13); “NOW the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and

doctrines of devils” (1 Timothy 4:1); “For *it is* impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, And have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put *him* to an open shame” (Hebrews 6:4-6); “For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning. For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known *it*, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them” (2 Peter 2:20-21).

Any Christian, no matter how weak or how much he or she has backslide, can still return to the Lord through confession of faults and repentance, “Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother” (Matthew 18:15); “Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him; Let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sin” (James 5:19-20).

Personal apostasy and the losing of one’s salvation happens only when a believer wilfully rebel against the voice of the Holy Spirit and reject the continued warning of the Word. As long as we are genuinely concerned with our spiritual condition, we can stand on the secure promises of God that “Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present *you* faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy. To the only wise God our Saviour, *be* glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen” (Jude 24-25).

“Father, as I follow and submit to You, I rejoice that Your grace is able to keep me both now and forever. In Jesus name.”

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27. THE SOURCE FOR ALL OUR SUBSTANCES

“Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning” (James 1:17).

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I believe God is the Source for all our substances, including motor vehicles! Every Christian who have the opportunity to drive or be driven ought to be grateful for the gift of vehicles. Vehicles can be a blessing or a curse. As we honour God, it brings blessings. Yet, Satan wants to “steal, to kill, and to destroy” through thefts, accidents, mechanical faults, etc.

Some of us have faced problems with vehicles in one way or another. Either we are not faithful to God or else Satan is robbing us! If we are not faithful, we need to repent! But if Satan is robbing us, we need to ask God to rebuke the devourer! We need to Satan-proof our vehicles!

I feel that it is important that every one who reads this and is a steward of God’s blessings need to dedicate our vehicles so that we can be His ministers of helps. We can “tithe” our time in bringing people to church. If you agree with God that He is the authority over your vehicle (whether it is car, motorcycle, van, truck, bus, boat, plane or other vessels of transportation), pray this prayer with me:

“Father, in the name of Jesus, I dedicate the vehicle (Make and Model):
_____ **with the (Registration plate number):**
_____ **unto You. I ask for Your forgiveness and**
cleansing if the vehicle has been used for ungodly practices and
purposes in the past (especially if you drive a second hand vehicle).
From this day and forward, I ask that You and Your holy angels will

watch over the vehicle against accidents, thefts and dangers. In Jesus name, we rebuke the devourer and destructive force of the enemy over the vehicle. Cover and wash every part of the vehicle with the blood of Jesus. Anoint and fill this vehicle with the Presence of the Holy Spirit. I confess and declare that Jesus Christ is the authority and Lord over this vehicle. I give myself and this vehicle to the glory and honour of God in Jesus name. Amen.”

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28. THE POWER OF THE PRAYER OF FAITH

“Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord: And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him” (James 5:14-15).

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Are we physically sick? Are we afflicted emotionally, financially and spiritually too?

As we take our burdens to the Lord in prayer, He is “very pitiful, and of tender mercy” (James 5:11) and He “careth for [us]” (1 Peter 5:7). When we face illness and other infirmities, they can be removed by asking for the prayers of elders and leaders of the church. Corporate anointing of the Holy Spirit is released as Christians joined their faith and united themselves in prayer. In the presence of the Holy Spirit, anointing with oil is the channel through which the gift of faith comes in operation.

In times of distress and feebleness, we may deal with them by requesting our elders, leaders and other upright Christians in the

church to put in motion of taking authority over our seemingly impossible situations and see ourselves being set free by the power of God, “Again I say unto you, That if two of you shall agree on earth touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven” (Matthew 18:19).

“Father, we stand united with those in need of healing and restoration, release the anointing of the Holy Spirit and exercise the power of the prayer of faith. In the mighty name of Jesus”.

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29. THE TRUTH ABOUT THE TRINITY

“For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one” (1 John 5:7).

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The word, “*Trinity*” (which means three in simplest form), as such is not found in the Bible. However, the Bible’s teaching is clear and true that there are three distinct Members in the Divine Godhead. That is, there is one God in three separate Persons: the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, “Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. *There is* one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; One Lord, one faith, one baptism, One God and Father of all, who *is* above all, and through all, and in you all” (Ephesians 4:3-6).

Each Person has unique individual office, position and work that could not be said of the other members of the Godhead. The Bible says the Father God is “the head of Christ” (1 Corinthians 11:3), the Lord Jesus Christ is “the Son of the Father” (2 John 3) and the Holy Spirit “proceedeth from the Father” (John 15:26). Even though the three Persons have their separate individualities, there is just one God in

perfect unity, purpose and will. Jesus prayed that “they [the followers] may be one, even as we [the plural pronoun of the Godhead] are one [not meaning in personality but in perfect essence and unity]” (John 17:22).

The closest we can get to seeing all three members of the Godhead is during the baptism of Jesus, “And it came to pass in those days, that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized of John in Jordan. And straightway coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens opened, and the Spirit like a dove descending upon him: And there came a voice from heaven, *saying*, Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased” (Mark 1:9-11).

“The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with us all. Amen.”

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30. AM I DESPERATE FOR MY FIRST LOVE?

“Nevertheless I have *somewhat* against thee, because thou hast left thy first love” (Revelation 2:4).

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Have you experienced the Lord’s rebuke for a loss of affection for Him? I have. I can identify the times when I was in danger of losing the lampstand and the oil of the Holy Spirit.

As I saw and confessed the condition of my heart, I received the comforting Presence of the Holy Spirit and the restoration of His grace so that I will not be ashamed of being a voice and a vessel of the Gospel. This is only possible to the degree that we are following Jesus wholeheartedly; not a calling, a church, a gift, a man, a ministry or a program. The wealth of our spiritual treasure is measured not by the

number of people we minister to or books we write, but by how intimately we fellowship and know the Lord, “Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew: depart from ye, ye that work iniquity” (Matthew 7:22-23).

In fact, all our callings, gifts, ministries and talents are abominable, dung, rubbish, unfruitful and unprofitable unless and until we love Jesus pre-eminently in our hearts and lives.

“Jesus, I desperately need You more than ever. Set my heart with affectionate desire and passion for Your Presence anew. In Christ’s lovely name.”

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Your WORD Is Strength

The Bible is the most important book in the entire world.

Though authored by men, it is the Holy Spirit who inspired every thought and word, “For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake *as they were* moved by the Holy Ghost” (2 Peter 1:21).

It is God’s letter to us, the book of divine instructions. Through its pages, we find rebuke for our sin and comfort in times of sorrow, “All scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works” (2 Timothy 3:16-17). It is the means to know the Living Word, the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, “IN the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God” (John 1:1).

As we walk with the Lord, we will learn to hear His voice and seek to do His will, “Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth” (2 Timothy 2:15).

Unfortunately, many believers neglect faith, prayer and the study of God’s Word. This results in boredom, dryness and emptiness, etc. There are no “quick fixes” in receiving from God. We need to wait in His Presence and devour His Word, not just read “how to” books on Christian living. I ask that the Holy Spirit will awaken you to “draw nigh to God” (James 4:8) and know the true source of strength for your every need as I say this, “As precious and as important as it is, it is not enough to just hear sermons from some great preachers or read books of some dedicated men and women of God telling us about their experiences, we need to be lost in the awesome wonder and glorious riches of Christ ourselves as we feast at His table in the secret closet of prayer”. He is the manna from on high, the Bread who satisfies us completely.

Birthered out of my own desperate cry and need for more of Him, I pray that this volume of writings will encourage you to enter into “the school of the Holy Spirit” yourself. Don’t depend entirely on some book, tape, counsellor, shepherd or pastor for answer and wisdom. Instead, get on your face before God and the Holy Ghost will be your true Comforter and Preacher. It is He who brings the Scriptures alive to you and enables you to apply His truth in your everyday life as you hunger for Christ and Christ alone.

Jonathan

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