

**The
Christian Walk**

By Fredrick G. Omondi

Unless otherwise stated, all Bible quotations are taken from
King James Version.

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APPRECIATION

I take this opportunity to thank the following who gave assistance in one way or another. Brother David Otieno who is my eldest son whom when I informed him of what I was involved in, encouraged me greatly by saying that what I was doing was a very good thing and also gave me financial support which enabled me to move from one stage to another and I finally came up with a final manuscript. May the Lord God protect, guide and bless him in all his endeavors. Brother Shem Omondi, The Manager of Beautex Image Designs, Nairobi who gave me much guidance and advice in books publication and printing and other assistance. May the Lord God manifest and bless the work of his hands. Sister Nancy Kahuthia, The National Director of Scripture Union of Kenya who when I shared with her what the Lord had enabled me to come up with, gave me a piece of advice on book publication and printing. May the Lord remember and bless her with her entire family. May the Lord God continue to guide and lead her in steering Scripture Union of Kenya to even greater heights.

INTRODUCTION

The Christian walk is quite an adventure. This book has been made available to you to serve as a good guide for those who are already in the Christian walk as well as those who are seriously contemplating to cross over to Jesus Christ and to start this walk. The walk is long and weary to the promised land of God - Heaven. The journey is not for the feint-hearted but for those who are totally determined and who will have a heavenly focus and have no reservations to make and can say, come rain, come sunshine, I will press on and on and on to my final destination (Luke 9:57-62). For your information, this is a faith walk, a spiritual walk, a walk in the wisdom of God and the only walk with a living hope (1 Peter 1:3-5, Romans 4:16-25, 8:1-8, Matthew 7:13-14; 10:16-25, 2 Timothy 4:1-5, 1 John 5:4-5, John 4:21-24, 2 Corinthians 5:6-10, Acts 14:19-23). From the above scriptures one can see for oneself that this walk is not a joke but it is serious business.

But one should not lose heart as God says. (Zechariah 4:6-7, Romans 8:18-39). In this walk of faith one does not

make it by one's strength but God's strength, the Holy Spirit that God gives to those who have repented of their sins and have put their faith in Christ Jesus as their Lord and Savior, and who comes and dwells in one's heart. (Romans 5:1-2, 5, Acts 2:36-38) likewise, one should not lose focus on our Lord Jesus Christ, but to keep focus on Him daily (Hebrews 12:1-3).

At this juncture I take this humble opportunity to thank the Lord God who has enabled me to come up with this book. I give all the glory, power, majesty and honor to the Lord Almighty.

Although the work was both tiresome and weary the Lord took me all through. As you read this book, I quite sincerely hope that the Lord God shall bless you and you will not be disappointed and that you will have a better Christian perspective, be more persevering along the way, hoping for your blessed ending. The walk nevertheless is not an impossible task but a possible one. In the Holy Scriptures many saints made it and you and I can likewise make it. We have an advantage over the saints of old as we can see from the Scriptures how they lived and how they ended and we can borrow a leaf and adjust our lives accordingly for our own good. (1 Corinthians 10:1-13).

Remember too, that our perfect example is our Lord Jesus Christ who lived a sinless life here on earth. (John 8:44-46; 10:30-38).

If one is walking right in this Christian walk (life), one should expect from the world more enmity, rejection, ridicule, criticism and opposition than friendliness, acceptance and so forth. Jesus told his disciples the following (John 16:33; 17:9-21, Matthew 5:1, 10-16; 10:16-23, 34-39). Apostle Paul told Timothy the following (2 Timothy 3:10-14) Apostle Peter told the church the following (1 Peter 4:12-14).

In this book and in all my other books, I have endeavored to restrict myself in King James version of the Holy Bible in quotations and the subsequent texts, as it is the best ever translation in English and in case you are uncomfortable with of don't despair, as all is well and not lost. Whenever you find I have given a scripture quotation, just go to your Bible (whatever version it is) and read and you will be in the same page with me in your reading.

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CHAPTER 1

THE CHRISTIAN WALK

Christianity is a way of life, a lifestyle which is Christ like. This is possible with those who have chosen to follow the footsteps of Jesus Christ by putting their faith and trust in Jesus Christ to save them from their sins – they have repented of their sins and have invited Jesus Christ into their lives as their Lord and Savior (Acts2:36-38, Romans 10:9-10).

Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ. Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do? Then Peter said unto them, repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.

Acts 2:36-38

That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in their heart that God 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

A Christian is a person who has been converted to Jesus Christ, that is, a person who has been saved (born-again), a person who has been created anew (John 3:1-6, 1:12-13, 2 Corinthians 5:17)

There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews: The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him. Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born? Jesus answered, Verily, verily I say unto thee, except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot

enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit

John 3:1-6

But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

John 1:12-13

Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are past away; behold all things are become new.

2 Corinthians 5:17

The necessity of salvation

When God created man and put him in the Garden of Eden he was without sin and God used to visit them - Adam and Eve at the cool of the day and had fellowship with them. Later man sinned against God and the relationship was severed and broken as God the creator is a Holy God and cannot be associated with sin (Genesis 1:26-3: 24, Romans 3: 23, 5:12) But the Almighty God had a plan of salvation for mankind to be reconciled back to Him through His only

begotten son Jesus Christ (Isaiah 7:14, Matthew 1:18-25, John 3:16).

Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.

Isaiah 7:14

Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost. Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not willing to make her a public example, was minded to put her away privily. But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost.

And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins. Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they

shall call his name Immanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us.

Then Joseph being raised from sleep did as the angel of the Lord had bidden him, and took unto him his wife: And knew her not till she had brought forth her first-born son: and he called his name JESUS.

Matthew 1:18-25

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

The reason we need to be born again is because we were born all wrong the first time. When God created the first man, he created him in his own image, after his likeness (Genesis 1:26). But after man sinned, the Bible tells us that man's descendants were after the likeness of fallen man and not after the likeness of God. (Genesis 5:3).

And Adam lived a hundred and thirty years, and begat a son in his own likeness, after his image; and called his name Seth;

Genesis 5:3

You can see that Adam and Eve after they had sinned their child Seth was born after their likeness and image and not after the likeness and image of God anymore.

Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:

Romans 5:12

In the book of Psalms (Psalm 51:1-5) we also find that man was sharpened in iniquity at birth.

HAVE mercy upon me, O God, according to thy loving – kindness: according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions.

Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from sin.

For I acknowledge my transgressions: and my sin is ever before me.

Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight: that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, and be clear when thou judgest.

Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me.

Psalm 51:1 - 5

The scriptures say very clearly that man was given a commandment by God and which he broke (disobeyed) and man who was perfect then became a sinner (sinful) and that is why need to acknowledge sin by repenting just as the psalmist did. Scripture in Psalm say man is sinful beginning from conception in the womb as a result of the first (initial) sin by man in the Garden of Eden. God is holy and only the holy can inherit God's kingdom if they have repented and forgiven and cleansed by God.

Please also note in the same chapter what the Psalmist had to say in verses 7 and 10.

Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.

Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me.

Psalm 51:7-10

Verse 7 above concurs with Isaiah 1:18 and verse 10 speaks of ‘renewal of spirit’ (regeneration) which is essential to have a right standing with God. Sin has wrecked and ruined this world and God will not permit it in heaven (Revelation 21:27)

And there shall be in no wise enter into it anything that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb’s book of life.

Revelation 21:27

The new birth /regeneration is not inheritable as it is not by family influence, not by fine intentions and not by human desire (fleshly impulses) (John 1:11-13), But come by believing, receiving and becoming.

He came unto his own, and his own received him not.

But as many as received him to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:

Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

John 1:11-13

The way of salvation

Jesus Christ is the way of salvation and one must pass through Him and Him alone to be saved (John 14:6, Acts 4:11-12, I Timothy 1:15, 2:5- 6, 1 John 5:11-12).

Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.

John 14:6

This is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner.

Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.

Acts 4:11-12

This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief.

1 Timothy 1:15

For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time.

1 Timothy 2:5-6

And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son.

He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.

1 John 5:11-12

The process of salvation.

There is a process unto salvation which is as follows:

- i. Hearing the word of God
- ii. Being convicted by the word of God
- iii. Being convinced by the word of God.
- iv. Repenting of one's sins
- v. Believing the word of God and calling on the name of the Lord for salvation.

- vi. Being baptized in much water (complete body immersion).
- vii. Receiving the gift of the Holy Spirit (Romans 10:5-13, Psalm 51:17, Acts 2:36-38, 41).

Christianity is not an idea, but a reality. Christianity is not religion and no amount of religion will save anyone, save for one's repentance of sin and acceptance by confession in faith of the Lordship of Jesus Christ into one's life (Romans 10:3, Mark 7:1-13, Ephesians 2:8).

When one is saved, one should ask the Holy Spirit to lead one to a local church where one can grow and be cared for. Many Christians have problems because they led themselves to a church and were not led by the Holy Spirit, hence in a wrong family (local church).

Christianity cannot be modernized as Jesus Christ does not change (Hebrews 13:8). For Christ did a perfect work at the cross by giving a perfect sacrifice and mankind need to change by the word of God and not by the times of the world. As some have tried to do to their own damnation.

The Christian life is a supernatural life. It begins with a supernatural experience known as the new birth (regeneration). It is continued with the supernatural aid of

the Holy Spirit of God. One must be born again into the family of God to have a right access into heaven. It seems that when God created man, he had six purposes in mind: fellowship, procreation, dominion, praise, worship and service. Hence man was created in a special way than the other creatures for a purpose, to have fellowship with God through man's spirit. Man was created by God to have a spirit, a soul and a physical body. Man was to rule the earth (physical beings) as God's supervisor and God being the overall boss to rule both heaven and earth and more so the spiritual. (Genesis 1:26-28; 2:15, 20, 3:8, 9).

And God said; Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.

So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.

And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the

fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.

Genesis 1:26-28

And the LORD God took the man, and put him into the Garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it.

Genesis 2:15

And Adam gave names to all cattle, and to the fowl of the air, and to every beast of the field; but for Adam there was not found a help meet for him.

Genesis 2:20

And they heard the voice of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God amongst the trees of the garden.

And the LORD God called unto Adam, and said unto him, where art thou?

Genesis 3:8-9

Thine, O LORD, is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty: for all that is in the

heaven and in the earth is thine; thine is the kingdom, O LORD, and thou art exalted as head above all.

Both riches and honor come of thee, and thou reignest over all; and in thine hand is power and might; and in thine hand it is to make great, and to give strength unto all.

Now therefore, our God, we thank thee, and praise thy glorious name.

1 Chronicles 29:11-13

And when he had consulted with the people, he appointed singers, unto the LORD, and that should praise the beauty of holiness, as they went out before the army, and to say, Praise the LORD; for his mercy endureth for ever.

2 Chronicles 20:21

Ye that fear the LORD, praise him; all ye the seed of Jacob, glorify him; and fear him, all ye the seed of Israel.

Psalms 22:23

Let the people praise thee, O God; let all people praise thee.

Psalms 67:3

O come, let us worship and bow down: let us kneel before the LORD our maker.

Psalms 95:6

But this I confess unto thee, that after the way which they call heresy, so worship I the God of my fathers, believing all things which are written in the law and in the prophets:

Acts 24:14

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

Philippians 3:3

But the hour cometh and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him.

John 4:23

Ye shall walk after the LORD your God, and fear him, and keep his commandments, and obey his voice, and ye shall serve him, and cleave unto him.

Deuteronomy 10:14

And if it seem evil unto you to serve the LORD, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Am'-o-rites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD.

Joshua 24:15

Serve the LORD with fear, and rejoice with trembling.

Psalms 2:11

If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of thine hand, O King.

Daniel 3:17

Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, thou shalt worship the lord thy god, and him only shalt thou serve.

Matthew 4:10

Religion vs Spirituality

Religion is simply a man's attempt to make himself acceptable to God. Therefore religious people hope that their zeal will earn them acceptance with God (Romans 10:1-3). The only way a person can become spiritual is through a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

Religion is a mere activity that makes people believe they are spiritual (spiritually alive) whereas in the actual sense they are spiritually dead, very dead indeed. Spirituality has to do with the condition of one's heart. Having a head knowledge of God does not make one spiritual but knowing God, hearing him and experiencing him through Jesus Christ and flowing in the Holy Spirit.

Wherever you are, you need to be interested of being a member of the body of Christ and not merely a church member.

Christianity is the way of reaching to God by one's faith (John 14:6, 1 Timothy 2:5-6) whereas religion is man's way of trying to reach God (Romans 10:1-3).

In order for one to be truly a Christian, one must have Christ in one and who will give Christ's character in order to be able to live godly life portraying Christ's character. Religion on the other hand is trying to do godly deeds by one's own effort which in reality cannot work, but is

merely like a public relations exercise and is not Christianity but pure hypocrisy (Matthew 23:13-15, 23-36). Now let me give you an illustration of the futility of remaining a religious person in life from the scripture, instead of becoming a spiritual person (a true Christian). Salvation is a gift from God to mankind (John 3:16, Romans 3:23-24, 6:23) although it is wrapped in religion (Romans 10:1-4) and for that reason it is important for one to go for the gift (salvation) and not to be contented/satisfied with the gift wrapper (religion), as many people have done and are going to miss it all together in the end (John 3:17-18; 36, 14:6, Revelation 20:11-15; 21:5-8).

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

For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;
Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption
that is in Christ Jesus:

Romans 3:23-24

For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Romans 6:23

BRETHREN, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved.

For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge.

For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God.

For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone that believeth

Romans 10:1-4

For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.

He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

John 3:17-18

He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.

John 3:36

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.

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.

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.

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

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

Revelation 20:11-15

And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful.

And he said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely.

He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son.

But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, 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.

Revelation 21:5-8

Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he is made, ye make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves. Woe unto you, ye blind guides, which say, Whosoever shall swear by the temple it is nothing; but whosoever shall swear by the gold of the temple, he is debtor! Ye fools and blind: for whether is greater, the gold, or the temple that sanctifieth the gold? And, Whosoever

shall swear by the altar, it is nothing; but whosoever sweareth by the gift that is upon it, he is guilty.

Ye fools and blind: for whether is greater, the gift or the altar that sanctifieth the gift? Whoso therefore shall swear by the altar sweareth by it and by all things thereon. And those shall swear by the temple, sweareth by it, and by him that dwelleth therein. And he that shall swear by heaven, sweareth by the throne of God, and by him that sitteth thereon. Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgement, mercy, and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not leave the other undone. Ye blind guides, which strain at a gnat, and swallow a camel.

Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For ye make clean the outside of the cup and of the platter, but within they are full of extortion and excess.

Thou blind Pharisees, cleanse first that which is within the cup and platter, that the outside of them may be clean also.

Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For ye are like unto whited sepulchers, which indeed appears beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones, and of all

uncleanness. Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity.

Matthew 23: 15-28

The above might appear to be very harsh words, but they are the truth as Jesus Christ was telling some religious leaders (the scribes and Pharisees). Jesus Christ was merely telling them in their face, their pathetic condition in life. These religionists were teaching what they don't do and therefore were just a bunch of hypocrites and were preventing people from having a true faith in the true God and be saved. The legalistic approach these religionists took which could not be coupled with action as required fell short of God's requirements. Moreover they were blind with regard to what they taught without understanding (read verses 16 & 18) Jesus gave them understanding in verses 17, 19-22. Jesus Christ went on and denounced them as they had omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgement, mercy and faith (verse 22); because they lacked faith in God, they could not judge rightly or be merciful. God is both a righteous judge and full of mercy. Jesus Christ went further and told them that they washed the outside of the cup and platter but left the outside

unattended to and described them as like whited sepulchers because outwardly to men they appeared righteous (which was not their real state) and that they needed to clean the inside first so as to make the outside also clean (Verse 24-28). The heart of a person is very deceitful in nature and as the center of life, needs to be dealt with before there can be meaningful change (Jeremiah 17: 9-10, proverbs 4: 23, Mathew 12: 33-34).

The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?

I the LORD search the heart, I try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings.

Jeremiah 17: 9-10

Yes, Jesus had searched and known the state of the scribes and Pharisees so well. Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life.

Proverbs 4: 23

Issues of life come out of the heart. Things that are said or done begin from the heart, and for that matter, care must be

taken and deal with it properly. Either make the tree good, and his fruit good; or else make the tree corrupt, and his fruit corrupt: for the tree is known by his fruit o generation of vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak good things? for out of the abundance of he heart the mouth speaketh.

Matthew 12: 33-34

It is true, Jesus Christ was but telling the scribes and the Pharisees to first make the tree good so that his fruit is good. The two groups had taken the wrong route –legalism and not faith.

They need to have faith in Christ to be made good trees to bring forth good fruit. Truly speaking, all mankind needs the Great Physician Jesus Christ to be cleansed by His precious blood and healed in their spirit and to be made good trees by the Spirit of God so as to bear good fruits. Now, let us look at another religionist in the scripture and get to know the prescription he was given by the Great Physician.

THERE was a man of the Pharisees, named Nic-o-de-mus, a ruler of the Jews: The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher

come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doesn't except God be with him.

Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, Verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God.

Nic-o-de-mus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born?

Jesus answered, verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.

That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the spirit is spirit.

Marvel not that I said unto thee, ye must be born again.

The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit.

Nic-o-de-mus answered and said unto him, How can these things be?

Jesus answered and said unto him, Art thou a master of Israel, and knowest not these things?

Verily, verily, I say unto thee, we speak that which we do know, and testify that we have seen; and ye receive not our witness.

If I have told you earthly things, and ye believe not how shall ye believe, if I tell you of heavenly things?

And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven.

John 3: 1-13

Now here we find that it is not position in society or in church that matters most but position in God. Are you a son or a daughter of God? That is, are you born again? Although Nicodemus was a ruler of the Jews yet as a religious man knew very little about God and His kingdom. The Great Physician Jesus Christ knew all about Nicodemus and his heart condition even before him saying anything about himself as do happen normally when you pay a doctor a visit. Jesus Christ went ahead and told him what ails him and what he need to do (verses 1-3) Nicodemus just as other religious people he could not grasp a thing (verse 4) Jesus had to elaborate further (verses 5-8) Nicodemus still seemed to be lost some how (verse 9) Jesus knew Nicodemus as a master of Israel and asked him

how come he does not know those things (verse 10). To be a spiritual person in God one needs a new birth, a spiritual birth from above by God. To continue to live in the first birth in religion is to continue to live hypocritically remaining a fool and blind in the spiritual sense.

Please note that to be spiritual is two-fold. One can be spiritual by believing in Christ Jesus and serving God by the Holy Spirit or by believing in Satan and serving him by the evil spirit of Satan. So true believers (born again Christians) have the Holy Spirit given by God and Satanists have evil spirits from Satan (John 14: 15-17, Matthew 12:22-28, 1 John 4: 1-6).

If ye love me, keep my commandments.

And I will pray the Father and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever.

Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him; but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.

John 14: 15-17

Then was brought unto him one possessed with a devil, blind, and dumb: and he healed him, insomuch that the blind and the dumb both spake and saw.

And all the people were amazed and said, is not this the son of David.

But when the Pharisees heard it they said, This fellow doth not cast out devils but by Be-el'-ze-bub the prince of the devils.

And Jesus knew their thoughts, and said unto them, Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation; and every city or house divided against itself shall not stand: And if Satan, cast out Satan, he is divided against himself; how shall then his kingdom stand. And if by Be-el'-ze-bub cast out devils, by whom do your children cast them out? therefore they shall be your judges. But if I cast out devils by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God is come unto you

Matthew 12:22-28

BELOVED, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world.

Hereby know the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of an-ti-christ, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world.

Ye are of God, little children, and have over come them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world. They are of the world: therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them. We are of God: he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us; Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error.

1 John 4:1-6

But true spirituality is only found in God by the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 2:6-13).

Sheep or Goat?

One need to know well enough in this life where one belongs before it is too late. Let us look at the following scripture:

When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory:

And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats:

And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left.

Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world:

For I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me.

Then shall the righteous answer him, saying Lord, when saw we thee an hungered, and fed thee? Or thirsty, and gave thee drink?

When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee?

Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee?

And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.

Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels:

For I was an hungered, and ye gave me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink:

I was a stranger, and ye took me not in: naked, and ye clothed me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not.

Then shall they also answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungered, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee?

Then shall he answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me.

And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal.

Matthew 25:31-46

From the above scripture the Lord Jesus is talking about two category of people. Some he calls them sheep and the other he calls them goats. The sheep he will have them on

his right hand at the time of judgement and the goats he will have them in his left hand. The sheep are the blessed and are the righteous and the goats are the cursed and are the unrighteous. The sheep will enter into eternal life and the goats into everlasting punishment. The question is, Are you a sheep or a goat? If you are a sheep, you will show the character of a sheep and if you are a goat, you will show the character of a goat. A sheep behaves well and is not in a hurry for anything. Also, a sheep is orderly compared to a goat. A goat hardly stays at one point, but is always on the move running here and running there aimlessly and is stubborn to it,s shepherd by unbecoming behaviours.

If you are a sheep you are in God's family and will be with him in life eternal as you will be doing righteous deeds portraying the goodness of God. Jesus Christ referred to those who believed in him as his sheep, he himself being a shepherd and not only a shepherd, but a good shepherd.

I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep.

But he that is a hireling, and not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep: and the wolf catcheth them, and scattereth the sheep.

The hireling fleeth, because he is a hireling, and careth not for the sheep.

I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine.

John 10:11-14

Even in the Old Testament you find God referring to the Israelites as his sheep.

As a shepherd seeketh out his flock in the day that he is among his sheep that are scattered; so will I seek out my sheep, and will deliver them out of all places where they have been scattered in the cloudy and dark day.

And I will bring them out from the people, and gather them from the countries, and will bring them to their own land, and feed them upon the mountains of Israel by the rivers, and in all the inhabited places of the country.

I will feed them in a good pasture, and upon the high mountains of Israel shall their fold be: there shall they feed upon the mountains of Israel.

I will feed my flock, and I will cause them to lie down, saith the Lord God.

Ezekiel 34:12-15

Even David the son of Jesse who God chose to be the king of Israel after King Saul, referred to God as his shepherd, he being a sheep.

THE LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want.

He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters.

He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.

Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over.

Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever.

Psalms 23

The words in the above scripture are just wonderful. How marvelous to have the Lord God in one's life as a shepherd to lead, feed and protect one. If you have not yet become a

sheep as you have not repented of your sins and believed in Jesus Christ inviting him in your life, please do so now as God expect just that from you (John 6:22-29, Acts 4:10-12)

The Importance and the Power in the blood of Jesus Christ.

The blood of Jesus Christ which was shed on the cross at Calvary where he offered himself to be crucified and died for all mankind and later was resurrected by God on the third day is of so much power as I am going to share with you from the holy scriptures.

And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat.

And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons.

And they heard the voice of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God amongst the trees of the garden.

And the LORD God called unto Adam, and said unto him,
Where art thou?

And he said, I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was
afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself.

And he said, Who told thee that thou wast naked? Hast
thou eaten of the tree that thou shouldest not eat?

And the man said, The woman whom thou gavest to be
with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat.

Unto Adam also and to his wife did the LORD God make
coats of skins, and clothed them.

Genesis 3:7-12, 21

In the above scripture we see man had fallen into sin by
disobeying the commandment of God and became naked in
the process as the glory of God had left and became fearful
and God had to slaughter an animal and the skins made
coats for both Adam and Eve. God was but prefiguring the
death of Christ on the cross for the remission of man's sins.

And whatsoever man there be of the house of Israel, or of
the strangers that sojourn among you, that eateth any
manner of blood; I will even set my face against that soul

that eateth blood, and will cut him off from among his people.

For the life of the flesh is in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul.

Therefore I said unto the children of Israel, No soul of you shall eat blood, neither shall any stranger that sojourneth among you eat blood.

And whatsoever man there be of the children of Israel, or of the strangers that sojourn among you, which hunteth and catcheth any beast or fowl that may be eaten; he shall even pour out the blood thereof, and cover it with dust.

For it is the life of all flesh; the blood of it is for the life thereof: therefore I said unto the children of Israel, Ye shall eat of the blood of no manner of flesh: for the life of all flesh is the blood thereof; whosoever eateth it shall be cut off.

Leviticus 17:10-14

In the above scripture we see God confirming what he did to Adam and Eve that it was going to be the norm for blood to be purely for atonement and not to be eaten as it is the life of any flesh and that is exactly what became the

practice for sin atonement in the Old Testament to cover men's sins by the shedding of blood for men to be forgiven of their transgressions.

And if any one of the common people sin through ignorance, while he doeth some what against any of the commandments of the LORD concerning things which ought not to be done, and be guilty;

Or if his sin, which he hath sinned, come to his knowledge: then he shall bring his offering, a kid of the goats, a female without blemish, for his sin which he hath sinned.

And he shall lay his hand upon the head of the sin offering and slay the sin offering in the place of the burnt offering.

And the priest shall take of the blood thereof with his finger, and put it upon the horns of the altar of burnt offering, and shall pour out all the blood thereof at the bottom of the altar.

And he shall take away all the fat thereof, as the fat is taken away from off the sacrifice of peace offerings; and the priest shall burn it upon the altar for a sweet savor unto the LORD; and the priest shall make an atonement for him, and it shall be forgiven him.

And if he bring a lamb for a sin offering, he shall bring it a female without blemish.

And he shall lay his hand upon the head of the sin offering, and slay it for a sin offering in the place where they kill the burnt offering.

And the priest shall take of the blood of the sin offering with his finger, and put it upon the horns of the altar of burnt offering, and shall pour out all the blood thereof at the bottom of the altar:

And he shall take away all the fat thereof, as the fat of the lamb is taken away from the sacrifice of the peace offerings; and the priest shall burn them upon the altar, according to the offerings made by fire unto the LORD: and the priest shall make an atonement for his sin that he hath committed, and it shall be forgiven him.

Leviticus 4:27-35

In the above scripture we see that the animal offered for sin offering had to be without blemish because its blood was going to be used as an atonement for sin for the transgressor why? It was a shadow of the things to come in the New Testament dispensation, when Christ who was sinless would shed his pure (perfect) blood for the

atonement of sin for all that would believe on him. It was and is a fact that any thing blemished cannot make anyone to be clean.

By laying of one's hand (the sinner) upon the head of an animal it meant the transfer of the sin (guilt) to the animal which in turn had to die (be killed) (Romans 6:23a) instead of the sinner and the blood to cover (not wash away) the sin of the guilty so that God may forgive the sinner.

Now coming to the deliverance of the children of Israel, blood had to be applied on the two side posts and on the upper door post of their houses so as to escape God's judgment when, he was going to punish their offenders (the Egyptians).

AND the LORD spake unto Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, saying,

This month shall be unto you the beginning of months: it shall be the first month of the year to you.

Speak ye unto all the congregation of Israel, saying, In the tenth day of this month they shall take to them every man a lamb, according to the house of their fathers, a lamb for a house:

And if the household be too little for the lamb, let him, and his neighbor next unto his house take it according to the number of the souls; every man according to his eating shall make your count for the lamb.

Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year: ye shall take it out from the sheep, or from the goats: And ye shall keep it up until the fourteenth day of the same month: and the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it in the evening.

And they shall take of the blood, and strike it on the two side posts and on the upper door post of the houses, wherein they shall eat it.

And they shall eat the flesh in that night, roast with fire, and unleavened bread; and with bitter herbs they shall eat it.

Eat not of it raw, nor sodden at all with water, but roast with fire; his head with his legs, and with the purtenance thereof.

And ye shall let nothing of it remain until the morning; and that which remaineth of it until the morning ye shall burn with fire.

And thus shall ye eat it; with your loins girded, your shoes on your feet, and your staff in your hand; and ye shall eat it in haste: it is the LORD'S pass over.

For I will pass through the land of Egypt this night, and will smite all the first born in the land of Egypt I will execute judgement: I am the LORD.

And the blood shall be to you a token upon the houses where ye are: and when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy you, when I smite the land of Egypt.

And this day shall be unto you for a memorial; and ye shall keep it a feast to the LORD throughout your generations; ye shall keep it a feast by an ordinance for ever.

Seven days shall ye eat unleavened bread; even the first day ye shall put away leaven out of your houses: for whosoever eateth leavened bread from the first day until the seventh day, that soul shall be cut off from Israel.

And in the first day there shall be a holy convocation, and in the seventh day there shall be a holy convocation to you; no manner of work shall be done in them, save that which every man must eat, that only may be done of you.

And ye shall observe the feast of unleavened bread; for in this selfsame day have I brought your armies out of the

land of Egypt: therefore shall ye observe this day in your generations by an ordinance for ever.

In the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month at even, ye shall eat unleavened bread, until the one and twentieth day of the month at even.

Seven days shall there be no leaven found in your houses: for whosoever eateth that which is leavened, even that soul shall be cut off from the congregation of Israel, whether he be a stranger, or born in the land.

Ye shall eat nothing leavened; in all your habitations shall ye eat unleavened bread.

Exodus 12:1-20

In the above scripture we see God telling the children of Israel to now take a male animal without blemish to slaughter for the pass over feast, instead of a female animal. That foreshadowed his only begotten Son Jesus Christ to be offered as a sacrifice as the Lamb of God the blood of which would not be to cover sin but to wash away completely sin from those repentant and believing. At that time Moses posed as their leader; as a type of Christ who delivers his people from the bondage of sin.

The blood of Jesus Christ was to be in and on those who will be born again and become the true children of God. (John 1:12; 1 John 3:1-2, 1 Peter 1:1-3).

Now let us go further and look at the scriptures why Jesus had to die on the cross for mankind to be saved.

For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus:

Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God;

Romans 3:23-25

For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Romans 6:23

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

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

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

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

Romans 5:6-9

THERE is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

Romans 8:1

Therefore, if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.

2 Corinthians 5:17

From all the above scriptures we find that all people had sinned and therefore there was not any to save the other and for that reason, God by his love, grace and mercy set forth his Son Jesus Christ a sinless, perfect being to come and die for a sinful, imperfect man and save him (for the wages of sin is death) so Christ came to die on our behalf we who deserved death, so that we can have eternal life, we who were weak, in the flesh because of sin. We had to be

justified by his blood so that we no longer need to be condemned but live spiritually as new creations in him.

But Christ being come a high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building;

Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us.

For if the blood of bulls and of goats and the ashes of a heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh:

How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal spirit offered himself without a spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?

And for this cause he is the mediator of the New Testament, that by means of his death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance.

For where a testament is, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator.

For a testament is of force after men are dead: otherwise it is of no strength at all while the testator liveth.

Whereupon neither the first testament was dedicated without blood.

For when Moses had spoken every precept to all the people according to the law, he took the blood of calves and of goats, with water, and scarlet wool, and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book, and all the people,

Saying, This is the blood of the testament which God hath enjoined unto you.

Moreover he sprinkled with blood both the tabernacle, and all the vessels of the ministry.

And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission.

Hebrews 9:11-22

In the above scriptures we see the blood of animals purifying the flesh but it was an inferior blood, but the blood of Christ is superior blood that purifies the conscience (the inner man and not the outer).

Christ Jesus became the mediator of the New Testament unlike Moses in the first (old) testament. All that was not

possible with Moses becomes possible with Christ Jesus (Galatians 3:11; 2:16, Romans 8: 3-4)

It is important to take note that only God lives eternally as the Creator of heaven and earth and is the source of life hence he sent his only Son Jesus Christ to die on the cross and to shed his blood to atone for the sins of mankind in order for man to be reconciled back to his Creator and to have again an opportunity to enter where God is in heaven to live eternally there with him (Genesis 3:22-24, Revelation 5:6-10; 19:1-16, 20:6-10; 21: 1-7).

It follows therefore that only the blood of the Lamb of God is recognized in heaven where God dwells. Remember the hymn which says, ‘What can wash away my stain; Nothing but the blood of Jesus!’ So let all consider and value most the blood of the Lamb of God (Revelation 12:10-12) as the blood of animals comes to nought is irrelevant/is null and void Revelation 7:11-15).

The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.

John 1:29

Jesus Christ takes away the sin of the world (your sins and mine) by his shed blood on the cross-only one must have accepted the gospel of Christ, repented one's sins and invited Jesus in one's life as Lord and Savior in faith.

And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take eat; this is my body.

And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it;

For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.

Matthew 26:26-28

Jesus, when he had cried again with a loud voice, yielded up the ghost.

And, behold, the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom; and the earth did quake, and the rocks rent;

And the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints which slept arose,

And came out of the graves after his resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many.

Now when the centurion, and they that were with him, watching Jesus, saw the earthquake, and those things that were done, they feared greatly, saying, Truly this was the Son of God.

Matthew 27:50-54

In the above scripture we see that through the blood of Jesus (his death on the cross) all people who are born again have direct access to God and don't need go through any other person save for in the name of Jesus Christ their Lord and Savior. In the old testament the law allowed only the high priest to go to the presence of God in the holy of holies and only once in a year. But now Christians are free to go to his presence at any time and on any day. How wonderful is the blood of Jesus Christ!

But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building;

Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained **eternal redemption** for us.

For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh:

How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the **eternal Spirit** offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?

And for this cause he is the mediator of the New Testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of **eternal inheritance**.

Hebrews 9:12-15

Now that is something to smile about as a Christian.

But ye are come unto mount Zi'-on, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels,

To the general assembly and church of the first-born, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect.

And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel.

Hebrews 12:22-24

The blood of Abel talks of accusation and revenge whereas the blood of Jesus talks of sin forgiveness, spiritual and physical healing, deliverance and life.

Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers;
But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot:

1 Peter 1:18-19

In the above scripture we see that the blood of Jesus Christ is too precious to comprehend.

Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.

Acts 20:28

The blood of Jesus Christ is God's currency for the purchasing of souls for him.

And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne and the beasts and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands;

Saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing.

Revelation 5:11-12

Why was all the above happening?

And when he had taken the book, the four beasts and four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odors, which are the prayers of saints.

And they sung a new song, saying,

Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for **thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nations;**

And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on earth.

Revelation 5:8-10

The blood of the Lord Jesus Christ is too precious, too important, as by it we are redeemed and made kings and priests to God, Jesus Christ himself being the King of kings and the Lord of lords, and the Chief Shepherd. You can further read also the epistle to the church at Corinth (1 Corinthians 6:20)

And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning the first born from the dead; that in all things he might have preeminence.

For it pleased the Father that in him should all fullness dwell;

And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in the earth, or things in heaven.

And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled.

In the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblamable and unreprouvable in his sight.

If ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which ye have

heard, and which was preached to every creature which is under heaven; whereof I Paul am made a minister;

Colossians 1:18-23

The blood of Christ is very important it not only purchased us but brought peace between God and us through reconciliation and if we continue in the faith steadfastly we are assured of being presented before our God holy, unblamable and unreprouable. It is not only powerful but marvelous. Thanks be to the God of all glory.

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessing in heavenly places in Christ:

According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love:

Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will,

To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved.

In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace;

Ephesians 1:3-7

Please do note that the life of a person is in the person's blood and that obviously includes the person's character. Therefore as we inherited the character of our parents through the blood, when we are born again by God in the Spirit and through the blood of his Son, we inherit/acquire back into us the character of Christ and of God the Father and that is real news, good news indeed! You can read Leviticus 17:10-14, 1 Peter 1:18, Romans 5:15-21, Ephesians 2:1-10. Therefore in Christ Jesus we receive by faith in his death and resurrection the glory and the image of God back again in us - we literally partake of it and are renewed day by day (2 Corinthians 4:7-18 Peter 1:1-4).

God was stressing the importance of the blood of any being and that it should not be eaten as it was to serve as a cleansing agent and not as food and the penalty for eating the blood of any flesh was quite severe- the offender's life was to be cut off. God has on various occasions has repeated that commandment in the scriptures which you are going to see in due course. In life soap is used for washing

away dirt from the clothes and the body too as well as for other items like cutlery and many other things and therefore it would be absurd and even would not do for food. In the same way, the eating of blood is misuse of blood and moreover it cannot be used as food and still expect to use the same further, as a cleansing agent as somehow it would be of no consequence-useless as not effective. All the above point to one thing: if the blood of living thing is that important then what about the blood of the Son of the living God!!! Is it not much, much, much more and too precious? Now look at the various scriptures touching on the blood in general.

AND God blessed Noah and his sons, and said unto them,
Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth.

And the fear of you and the dread of you shall be upon every fowl of the air, upon all that moveth upon the earth, and upon all the fishes of the sea; into your hand are they delivered.

Every moving thing that liveth shall be meat for you; even as the green herb have I given you all things.

But flesh with the life thereof, which is the blood thereof, shall ye not eat.

Genesis 9:1-4

And whatsoever man there be of the house of Israel, or of the strangers that sojourn among you, that eateth any manner of blood; I will even set my face against that soul that eateth blood, and will cut him off from among his people.

For the life of the flesh is in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul.

Leviticus 17: 10-11

By taking blood as food to eat, one is making it a common thing, which of course it is not.

When the LORD thy God shall enlarge thy border, as he hath promised thee, and Thou shalt say, I will eat flesh, because thy soul longeth to eat flesh; thou mayest eat flesh, whatsoever thy soul lusteth after.

If the place which the LORD thy God hath chosen to put his name there be too far from thee, then thou shalt kill of thy herd and of thy flock, which the LORD hath given thee,

as I have commanded thee, and thou shalt eat in thy gates whatsoever thy soul lusteth after.

Even as the roebuck and the hart is eaten, so thou shalt eat them: the unclean and the clean shall eat of them alike.

Only be sure that thou eat not the blood: for the blood is the life; and thou mayest not eat the life with the flesh.

Deuteronomy 12:20-23

Forasmuch as we have heard, that certain which went out from us have troubled you with words, subverting your souls, saying, Ye must be circumcised, and keep the law: to whom we gave no such commandment:

It seemed good unto us, being assembled with one accord, to send chosen men unto you with our beloved Barnabas and Paul,

Men that have hazarded their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

We have sent therefore Judas and Silas, who shall also tell you the same things by mouth.

For it seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things;

That ye abstain from meats offered to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication: from which if ye keep yourselves, ye shall do well.

Fare ye well.

Acts 15:24-29

Just as the blood of Abel was crying to God for his life so is the blood of Christ crying to God for being shed at Calvary for all those who will not accept it for their lives (souls) because it was shed for that very purpose that they may live. Therefore for that matter, God just as he judged Cain, he is going to judge the unrepentant who refuse to turn back to him through the blood of his Son. God is a God of vengeance and will surely revenge the blood of his dear Son on the judgment day and what will matter will be the blood of his Son and nothing else. Cain for his sin (murder) became a temporary fugitive but those who refuse to accept the blood of Christ will become permanent fugitives away from God and be in hell for all eternity.

All people have sinned and need the blood of Jesus Christ to cleanse them so that they become spotlessly clean before they can be allowed to enter heaven otherwise it is completely closed for them just as the garden of Eden was

completely closed for Adam and Eve when they had sinned before God. It is true what is contained in the Golden Bells hymn book “What can wash away my sin, nothing but the blood of Jesus”. There is absolutely nothing under heaven and earth that can wash away man’s sins save for the blood of Jesus. It is the blood of Jesus throughout so don’t leave it to waste at the cross but use it and use it now not tomorrow as it may be too late.

And Cain talked with Abel his brother: and it came to pass, when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother, and slew him.

And the LORD said to Cain, Where is thy brother? And he said, I know not: Am I my brother’s keeper?

And he said, What hast thou done? the voice of thy brother’s blood crieth unto me from the ground.

And now art thou cursed from the earth, which hath opened her mouth to receive thy brother’s blood from thy hand;

When thou tilleth the ground, it shall not henceforth yield unto thee her strength; a fugitive and a vagabond shalt thou be in the earth.

Genesis 4:8-12

Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows:
yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and
afflicted.

But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised
for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon
him; and with his stripes we are healed.

Isaiah 53:4-5

Therefore, O thou son of man, speak unto the house of
Israel; Thus ye speak, saying, If our transgressions and our
sins be upon us, and we pine away in them, now should we
then live?

Say unto them, As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no
pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn
from his way and live: turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways;
for why will ye die, O house of Israel?

Ezekiel 33:10-11

To me belongeth vengeance and recompense; their foot
shall slide in due time: for the day of their calamity is at
hand, and the things that shall come upon them make haste.

For the LORD shall judge his people, and repent himself for his servants, when he seeth that their power is gone, and there is none shut up, or left.

And he shall say, Where are their gods, their rock in whom they trusted,

Which did eat the fat of their sacrifices, and drank the wine of their drink offerings? Let them rise up and help you, and be your protection.

See now that I, even I, am he, and there is no god with me: I kill, and I make alive; I wound, and I heal: neither is there any that can deliver out of my hand.

For I lift up my hand to heaven, and say, I live for ever.

If I whet my glittering sword, and mine hand take hold on judgement; I will render vengeance to mine enemies, and will reward them that hate me.

I will make mine arrows drunk with blood, and my sword shall devour flesh; and that with the blood of the slain and of the captives, from the beginning of revenges upon the enemy.

Rejoice, O ye nations, with his people: for he will avenge the blood of his servants, and will render vengeance to his adversaries, and will be merciful unto his land, and to his people.

Deuteronomy 32:35-43

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.

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 judge out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.

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.

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

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

Revelation 20:11-15

For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Romans 6:23

And the LORD God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever:

Therefore the LORD God sent him forth from the Garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken.

So he drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the Garden of Eden cher'-u-bim, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life.

Genesis 3:22-24

I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last.

Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city.

Revelation 22:13-14

Then said they unto him, What shall we do, that we might work the works of God?

Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent.

John 6:28-29

Seeing therefore it remaineth that some must enter therein, and they to whom it was first preached entered not in because of unbelief:

Again, he limiteth a certain day, saying in David, Today, after so long a time; as it is said, today if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts.

Hebrews 4:6-7

In summarizing let me give you a comparative table of those that are out of Christ and are not washed and covered by the blood of Christ Jesus and those that are in Christ Jesus and are washed and covered by the blood of Christ Jesus.

	Out of Christ	In Christ
1	All are sinners and are born once in the flesh and are doomed (Romans 3:23; 6:23 a John 3:6a; 18)	All are saints and have been born twice in the flesh and in the Spirit and have a bright future. (John 3:1-6; 16, 1 Peter 1:22-23, Titus 2:11-14, Revelation 20:6)
2	All are old creations of the first man Adam (1 Corinthians 15:45-48, Romans 5:15)	All are new creations of the last Adam Christ. (2 Corinthians 5:17, 1 Corinthians 15:45-48, 2 Peter 1:1-4, Colossians 3:5-10)
3	All don't have God's glory. (Romans 3:23)	All have God's glory (2 Peter 1:1-4)
4	All are cursed by default (Romans 8: 5-8, Deuteronomy 11:26-28)	All are blessed by promise (Hebrews 9:15, Psalm 32:1-2, Galatians 3:6-9; 23-29)

5	All are spiritually dead (Ephesians 2:1, 1 Corinthians 2:14, Colossians 2:13)	All are spiritually alive (1 Corinthians 2:12-13; 15-16, Romans 8:1-2)
6	All are facing an imminent physical death (Romans 6:23a, Ezekiel 33:10-11)	All are awaiting a new body like that of God's holy angels (Philippians 3:20-21, 1 Corinthians 15:51-54)
7	All are going to face eternal judgement (Revelation 20:11-15, John 3: 36b)	All have everlasting life (John 3:36a; 14:6, 1 John 5: 11-12)
8	All are going to die twice spiritually and physically. (Ephesians 2:1, Romans 6:23a, Matthew 10:28, Revelation 21:8)	All are going to die once spiritually and physically if the Lord tarries to come for them (Ephesians 2:1, John 11:25-26, Revelation 14:13; 20-6)
9	All are not going to have eternal rest (Matthew 25:31-33; 41-46,	All who live a pure life and persevere will have eternal rest (Revelation 14:13;

	Revelation 20:15)	21:1-4, Matthew 25:31-40; 46b)
10	All are going to be lost forever (John 3:18, 35b, 1 Corinthians 1:18a)	All as above (9) are not going to be lost. (John 3:16, 35a, Colossians 1:21-23, Matthew 10:22-33, Revelation 2:8-11)
11	All are enemies of God (Colossians 1:21)	All are friends of God (Romans 5:10, Colossians 1:22, John 15:15)
12	All have no peace (Isaiah 48:22, Job 15:20, Romans 2:9)	All have the peace of God (Isaiah 26:3, Romans 2:9)

CHAPTER 2

THE CHRISTIAN WALK VS FAITH, GRACE WORKS AND THE LAW.

Christianity is a long walk or a journey on the earth and eventually ends into the entry into heaven. It is a spiritual walk as one walks in the spirit by the Spirit of God and by faith and it is also a race and a fight as the following scriptures imply (2 Corinthians 5:6-7, Habakkuk 2:4, 1 Corinthians 9:24, Philippians 3:12-14, 1 Timothy 6:12, 2 Timothy 4:7-8).

Therefore we are always confident, knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord:
(For we walk by faith, not by sight).

2 Corinthians 5:6-7

Behold his soul which is lifted up is not upright in him: but the just shall live by his faith.

Habakkuk 2:4

Know ye not that they *which* run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain

1 Corinthians 9:24

Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus.

Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

Philippians 3:12-14

Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hath professed a good profession before many witnesses.

1 Timothy 6:12

I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith:

Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing

2 Timothy 4:7-8

In chapter 1 we found out in the book of Genesis 1-3 that God after putting man in the Garden of Eden, he gave him instructions. It is so in the Christian life. One does not have to live aimlessly and anyhow. One need to live an orderly life as God our creator is a God of order. I CHARGE thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom; Preach the word: be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine.

2 Timothy 4:1-2

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.

For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.

Do all things without murmurings and disputings.

Philippians 2:12-14

Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain. And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we are incorruptible.

I therefore so run, not as uncertainly: so fight I, not as one that beateth the air:

But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway.

1 Corinthians 9:24-27

The benchmark of God is holiness because he is holy and expects all that are His to be likewise (Leviticus 11:44-45, 20:7, Psalm 99:9, Isaiah 6:3, 54:5, 1 Peter 1:16, Ephesians 1: 4, 1 Thessalonians 4:7, 2 Timothy 1:9, Hebrews 12:14, Revelation 4:8). The baby Jesus our Lord is holy too (Luke 1:35)

And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee; therefore also that holy thing which shall

be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.

Luke 1:35

The New Jerusalem, the destination of the redeemed of God is holy (Revelation 21:10).

And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God,

Revelation 21:10

Salvation is not a part time occupation but a full time (life time) occupation and is not a game or play to pass time with, but is total serious business with a risk (cost) element in it. Therefore one needs to remove be serious and to mean business to be able to succeed thereby. There is a sign post reading “No jokes are allowed here” and which one may not quickly notice but can sense it after beginning the walk. It is invisible to the naked eye but insiders (the believers) know that it actually exists (Matthew 10:16-25, 34-39, 7:21-27, 12:46-50, Luke 14:25-33, 19:1-10 and Mark 10:17-31).

There has been much controversy by Christians on the applicability of faith, grace, the law and works how these affects one's life. Here are a few scriptures that enlighten us on each.

(i) Faith

For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.

For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith.

Romans 1: 16- 17

But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference:

For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus:

Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God;

To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.

Romans 3: 21- 26

THEREFORE being justified by faith we have peace with God through our Lord Lord Jesus Christ:

By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

Romans 5:1-2

But the righteousness which is of faith speaketh on this wise, Say not in thine heart, Who shall ascend into heaven? (that is, to bring Christ down from above:) Or, Who shall descend into the deep? (that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead.)

But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach;

That if thou shalt what 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. For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed.

Romans 10: 6-11

We who are Jesus by nature, and not sinners of the Gentiles,

Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.

Galatians 2: 15-16

For by grace are ye saved through faith; and not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast

Ephesians 2: 8-9

(ii) Grace

But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) And hath raised us up together, and made us to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus:

That in the ages to come he might show the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus.

Ephesians 2: 4-7

For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men,

Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world;

Looking for the blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ;

Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.

Titus 2:11-14

One is saved only by the grace of God and once saved, one need to live a godly and righteous life as grace is not a

licence to sin by living a careless life but to be sober in all one's endeavours in life. Read also Romans 6:1-2.

(iii) The law

Thou that makest thy boast of the law, through breaking the law dishonorest thou God?

For the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles through you, as it is written.

For circumcision verily profiteth, if thou keep the law: but if thou be breaker of the law, thy circumcision is made uncircumcision.

Romans 2: 23-25

Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God.

Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for the law is the knowledge of sin.

Romans 3: 19-20

BRETHREN, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved.

For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge.

For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God.

For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone that believeth.

For Moses describeth the righteousness which is of the law, that the man which doeth those things shall live by them

Romans 10: 1-5

(iv) Faith and works

What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? Can faith save him?

If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, And one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; not withstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit?

Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone.

Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: show me thy faith without thy works and I will show thee my faith by my works.

Thou believest that there is one God; then doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble.

But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead?

Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar?

Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect?

And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God.

Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only.

Likewise also was not Rahab the harlot justified by works, when she had received the messengers and had sent them out another way?

For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.

James 2: 14- 26

(v) Grace and the law

Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:

(For until the law sin was in the world: but sin is not imputed when there is no law).

Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, who is the figure of him that was to come.

But not as the offense, so also is the free gift. For if through the offense of one many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many.

And not as it was by one that sinned, so is the gift: for the judgment was by one to condemnation, but the free gift is of many offenses unto justification.

(For if by one man's offense death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ).

Therefore as by the offense of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness one of the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life.

For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.

Moreover the law entered, that the offense might abound.
But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound.
That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace
reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus
Christ our Lord.

Romans 5: 12-21

THERE is therefore now no condemnation to them which
are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after
the Spirit.

For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made
me free from the law of sin and death.

For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through
the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful
flesh, and for sin, condemned sin the flesh:

That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us,
who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

Romans 8:1-4

Be not carried about with divers and strange doctrines. For
it is a good thing that the heart be established with grace
not with meats, which have not profited them that have
been occupied therein.

Hebrews 13:9

CHAPTER 3

THE TWO GOVERNMENTS: GOD'S AND SATAN'S

Initially man was in the Government of God when he was created and placed in the Garden of Eden, and everything was in order. But later, after man sinned against God, things became out of order. Alas, man found himself living in the Government (Kingdom) of Satan. By then, Satan whose name was Lucifer had already lost his citizenship in the Government (Kingdom) of God for being proud and rebellious and was thrown from heaven to earth and was given the Governments (Kingdoms) of the world. He became the ruler (prince) of this world. (Ezekiel 28:11-17, Isaiah 14:12-17, Revelation 12:7-9) Even Satan himself prided in holding the kingdoms of the world and Jesus Christ acknowledged saying that the Kingdoms of the world are not His and Apostle Paul also writing to the Ephesians and Corinthian church said of the kingdoms of the world are being ruled by Satan referring to him as the prince of the air (Matthew 4:8-9, John 12:31, 18:36, Ephesians 2:1-2, 2 Corinthians 5:3-4).

The kingdom of Satan is a kingdom of darkness, a kingdom of negatives as its end products. Man therefore walked in darkness producing all forms of negatives – sin. The culture of this kingdom is the works of the flesh. (Genesis 6:5-7, Galatians 5:19-21)

And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.

And it repented the Lord that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart.

And the Lord said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth; both man and the beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air; for it repenteth that I have made them.

Genesis 6:5-7

Man had surely become a spoilt child after the fall – the first sin at the Garden of Eden. And thus spoilt everything for every creature Verse 7.

Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness,

Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies.

Envy, murders, drunkenness, revelings; and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.

Galatians 5:19-21

In the kingdom of Satan man served Satan rather than God (his Creator). When one is saved, he crosses over from the kingdom of Satan back to the kingdom of God. At this juncture he now has the nature of God restored in his life, although he still has the old sin nature of Adam made dormant in his life because of the new nature in Christ Jesus. But the Kingdom of God is a kingdom of light and one is now able to see how glaring the things one did in life under Satan. Once served Satan now one must serve only God. One needs to walk in the light of the word of God. (Colossians 1:12-14, Galatians 5:22-26, I John 1:5-7, Romans 13:11-14).

Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us, meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light:

Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear son: In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins:

Colossians 1:12-14

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith

Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.

And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts.

If we live in the Spirit let us also walk in the Spirit.

Let us not be desirous of vain glory, provoking one another, envying one another.

Galatians 5:22-26

This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all.

If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not say the truth.

But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.

1 John 1:5-7

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 the owners 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 fulfill the lusts thereof.

Romans 13:11-14

Because of the change in kingdoms which are totally different and which are enemies, there is a continuous conflict (war) between the right and the wrong, truth and falsehood, holiness and wickedness.

We as Christians are automatically at war the rest of our lives. We are not in a physical war but a spiritual war

using spiritual weapons (Galatians 5:16-18, Ephesians 6:10-18, 2 Corinthians 10:3-6).

This I say then, walk in the Spirit and ye shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh.

For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.

But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law.

Galatians 5:16-18

Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.

Put on the whole armor of God that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.

For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers, of darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.

Wherefore take unto you the whole armor of God that ye may be able to stand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.

Stand therefore, having your loins, girt about with truth and having on the breast-plate of righteousness;
And your feet shod with preparation of the gospel of Peace;
Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked.
And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God:
Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with will perseverance and supplication for all saints:

Ephesians 6:10-18

For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh:
(For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;)
Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ;
And having in a readiness to revenge all disobedience when your obedience is fulfilled.

1 Corinthians 10:3-6

We must be violent against the kingdom of Satan. Our destiny is heaven and our operation is “Operation Heaven” We need to fight until we enter (Matthew 11:12).

And from the days of John the Baptist until now the Kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force.

Matthew 11:12

God encouraged Joshua for him and the Israelites to enter the promised land of Canaan. (Joshua 1:7-9)

Only be thou strong and very courageous, that thou mayest observe to do according to all the law, which Moses my servant commanded thee: turn not from it to the right hand or to the left, that thou mayest prosper whithersoever thou goest.

This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success.

Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of good a courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the lord thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest.

Joshua 1:7-9

King Jehoshaphat encouraged the people of Judah and Jerusalem when they faced their enemies (2 Chronicles 20:20)

And they rose early in the morning, and went forth into the wilderness of Tekoa: and as they went forth, Jehoshaphat stood and said, Hear me, O Judah, and ye inhabitants of Jerusalem; Believe in the Lord your God, so shall ye be established; believe his prophets so shall ye prosper.

2 Chronicles 20:20

I have given two illustrations showing the likely structures of the two Governments (Kingdoms) Fig 1 as the Government of God and figure 2 as the Government of Satan. You will notice that both Governments have Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, Pastors and Teachers. But the true ones are those of God only.

Those of Satan are counterfeits. The strategy of Satan is to try and do what God has done (imitate God). Christ is the seed of woman and Anti - Christ is the seed of the serpent (Genesis 3:15).

When God created man it seems he had six purposes in mind: fellowship, procreation, dominion, praise, worship and service. Hence man was created in a special way than all other creatures for a purpose to have fellowship with God through his spirit. Man was created by God to have a spirit, soul and a physical body. Man was to rule the earth (physical beings) and God's supervisor and God being the overall boss to rule both heaven and earth by his spirit. Man was to praise and worship the Lord God in life. (Genesis 1: 26-28; 2:15, 20; 3:8-9, 1 Chronicles 16: 25-26, Psalm 45: 17, Revelation 19:25, 1 Chronicles 16: 27- 31, John 4:21-24, Revelation 7: 11-12; 14:6-7 Matthew 4:10, Mark 16:15-16).

And God said, let us make man in our image, after our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth and over things that creepeth upon the earth.

So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.

And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.

Genesis 1:26- 28

And the Lord God took the man, and put him into the Garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it.

Genesis 2:25

And Adam gave names to all cattle and to the fowl of the air and to every beast of the field; but for Adam there was not found a help mate for him.

Genesis 2: 20

And they heard the voice of the Lord God walk in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the lord God amongst the trees of the garden.

And the Lord God called unto Adam, and said unto him,
where art thou?

Genesis 3:8-9

For great is the lord, and greatly to be praised: he also is to
be feared above all gods.

For all gods of the people are idols: but the Lord made the
heavens.

1 Chronicles 16:25-26

I will make thy name to be remembered in all generations:
therefore shall the people praise thee for even and ever.

Psalm 45: 17

And a voice came out of the throne, saying, praise our God,
all ye his servants, and ye that fear him, both small and
great.

Revelation 19:5

Glory and honor are in his presence; strength and gladness
are in his place. Give unto the Lord, ye kindness of the
people, give unto the Lord glory and strength.

Give unto the Lord the glory due unto his name: bring an offering and come before him: worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness.

Fear before him, and all the earth: the earth also shall be stable, that it be not moved.

Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice: and let men say among the nations, The Lord reigneth.

1 Chronicles 16: 27-31

Jesus saith unto her, woman believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the father.

Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship: for salvation is of the Jews.

But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the father in spirit and in truth: for the father seeketh such to worship him.

God is a spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and truth.

John 4: 21- 24

And all the angels stood round about the throne and about the elders and the four beasts, and fell before the throne on their faces, and worshipped God,
Saying, A'-men: Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honor, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever. A'-men.

Revelation 7: 11-12

And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, saying with a loud voice, Fear God and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters.

Revelation 14: 6- 7

Then said Jesus unto him, get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.

Matthew 4:10

And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.

He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.

Mark 16:15-16

In God's Government we have a holy Trinity which is recorded in the book of Saint Matthew (Matthew 3:16-17 and 28:18-19) and Satan as an imitator, we also find in his Government an unholy trinity, which is recorded in the book of Revelation (Revelation 13:1-16 and 20:7-10).

In God's Government the Trinity is portrayed in God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit. Whereas in Satan's Government the trinity is portrayed by Satan (the Devil), the Beast (the anti-Christ) and the false prophet.

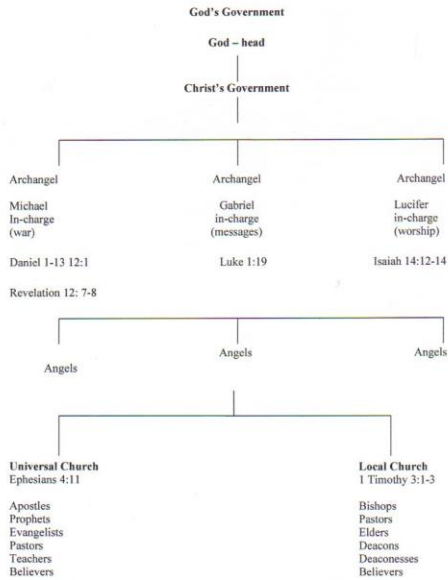


Figure 1.

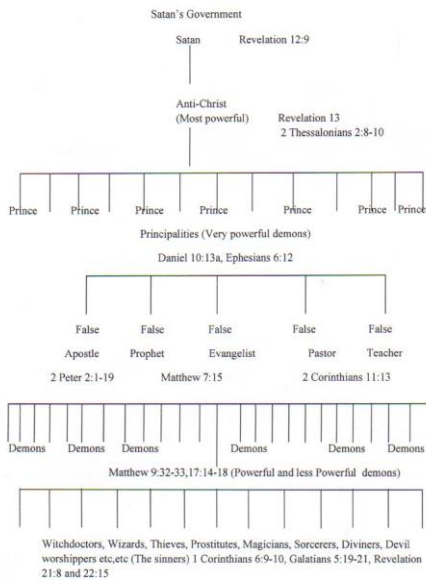


Figure 2.

CHAPTER 4
A CHRISTIAN AND THE ISRAELITES'
EXPERIENCE.

It is important for Christians to know what happened to those who came before us, what they experienced and how God dealt with them and how one can apply that to one's life now. It is for that reason that I am going to share with you some of the experiences of Israelites in the wilderness on their way to the Promised Land of Canaan and how it relates to the Christians now.

(a) God's manifestation

(i) In the Old Testament period God manifested himself to the Israelites during the day in the form of a pillar of a cloud and at night in the form of a pillar of fire (Exodus 13:20-22).

And they took their journey from suk-cloth, and encamped in E-tham, in the edge of the wilderness.

And the Lord went before them by day in a pillar of cloud, to lead them the way; and by night in a pillar of fire, to give them light; to go by day and night:

He took not away the pillar of the cloud by day nor the pillar of fire by night, from the people.

Exodus 13:20-22

(ii) In the New Testament period God the Holy Spirit appeared to Jesus Christ in the form of a dove and to the believers in the form of tongues of fire (Matthew 3:13-17, Acts 2:1-4)

Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him.

But John forbade him, saying I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me?

And Jesus answering said to him, suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness. Then he suffered him.

And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightaway out of the water, and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him:

And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.

Matthew 3:13-17

And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all in one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting.

And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them.

And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the spirit gave them utterance.

Acts 2:1-4

(b) The Church of God

(i) In the Old Testament period the person of Israel in the wilderness were considered as the children of God and therefore was a church in the wilderness and was a shadow of the church of Christ in the New Testament. (*Acts 7:35-38*).

This Moses whom they refused, saying, who made thee a ruler and a judge? the same did God send to be a ruler and

deliverer by the hand of the angel which appeared to him in the bush.

He brought them out, after he had showed wonders and signs in the land of Egypt, and in the Red Sea, and in the wilderness forty years.

This is that Moses, which said unto the children of Israel, a prophet shall the lord your god raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear.

This is he, that was in the church in the wilderness with the angel which spake to him in the mount Si'-nai, and with our fathers: who received the lively oracles to give unto us:

Acts 7:35-38

(ii) In the New Testament period all believers in Christ Jesus becomes the Church of Christ. The true Church of Christ was birthed at Pentecost (Acts 2:1-4, Joel 2:28-29, Ephesians 1:22-23).

And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophecy, 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

And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all.

Ephesians 1:22-23

(c) Destination of the Israelites

- (i) The destination of the Israelites was the Promised Land of Canaan which was earthly and temporal (Exodus 3:16-17).

Go, and gather the elders of Israel together, and say unto them, the Lord of your fathers, the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, appeared unto me, saying, I have surely visited you, and seen that which is done to you in Egypt: And I have said, I will bring you up out of the affliction of Egypt unto the land of the Ca-na-an-ites, and the Hit-tites, and the Am-o-rites, and the Per-iz-zites, and the Hi-vites, and the Jeb-u-sites, unto a land flowing with milk and honey.

Exodus 3:16-17

(ii) In the New Testament period the destination of all believers (Christians) is the New Jerusalem which is heavenly and eternal (Revelation 21).

(d) The Holy Spirit

(i) In the Old Testament period the Holy Spirit was for only Gods servants and the kings (1 Samuel 10:1-13, 16:11-13, Numbers 11:16-17).

(ii) In the New Testament period the Holy Spirit is for all true believers in Christ Jesus (Acts 1:8, 2:1-4, Ephesians 1:11-14).

(e) The Priesthood

(i) In the Old Testament the priesthood was preserved only to the tribe of Levi (to their sons aged between 30-50 years) (Numbers 4:1-23 8:5-26).

(ii) In the New Testament all true believers in Christ Jesus regardless of sex or age are priests of the Lord (1 Peter 2:9, Revelations 1:4-6).

(f) Sin atonement

(i) In the Old Testament period the blood of animals was used for sin atonement and moreover it only covered the sins of the Israelites (Leviticus 4 & 5 Hebrews 10:1-11).

(ii) In the New Testament period the blood of the Lamb of God (Jesus Christ) is used for sin atonement by God on all those who have repented of their sins and have put their faith in Jesus Christ for their salvation. Here the sins are not covered by the blood of the Lamb but are washed away (removed completely) (John 1:29, 1 Peter 1:18-19, Hebrews 10:12-18, Isaiah 53:4-6).

(g) The Passover feast “Pesach” (Hebrew)

(i) In the Old Testament period, only those who were circumcised could partake of the feast (Exodus 12:43-49).

(ii) In the New Testament period all true believers in Christ Jesus are allowed to partake the Lord’s Supper (Matthew 26:17-29 1 Corinthians 11:23-33).

(h) Blood application.

(i) In the Old Testament period when the children of Israel were about to leave Egypt, they were to apply the blood of the lamb slaughtered for the pass over feast on side posts and on upper door post of their houses as a sign that they

belong to God and hence escape the judgment of God upon the Egyptians (*Exodus 12:1-13*).

(ii) In the New Testament period all believers in Christ Jesus have had their hearts all cleansed by the precious blood of the Lamb of God (Hebrews 10: 10, 14, Romans 8:1-4).

(i) The Brass Serpent.

(i) In the Old Testament period when the children of Israel against God, they encountered poisonous snakes that killed many. God intervened and told Moses to make a brass serpent of which if one was bitten by a snake, he only had to look up at the brass serpent raised by Moses to get his healing. This was physical (Numbers 21:1-9).

(ii) In the New Testament period, the Son of God was raised for all people to look unto by faith by accepting His sacrifice on the cross and one is healed spiritually as well as physically (John 3:14-16, 1 Peter 2:24).

(j) Food in the Wilderness

(i) In the Old Testament period when the Israelites were in the wilderness and lacked food, God provided them with

physical food called “Manna” (Man hu Hebrew) literally meaning “What is it”? (Exodus 16:1-18).

(ii) In the New Testament period the Christians have spiritual food for their souls which is the word of God (1 Peter 2:2, John 6:22-35).

(k) Food generally

(i) At creation God after creating man He gave them vegetables and fruits as their food. Later he added others for their food (Genesis 1:29, 9:1-3). As for the Israelites God gave them the following instructions: Deuteronomy 14:3-21 and Leviticus 17:10-12.

(ii) In the New Testament period the Christians similarly have been given some instructions by the Lord: Romans 14:1-3, 14-18, Colossians 2:16-17, 1 Timothy 4:1-5, Acts 15:19-20.

(l) Israelites’ deliverance

(i) In the Old Testament period God used Moses and Joshua to deliver the Israelites from bondage in Egypt which was physical in nature (Exodus 3, Joshua 1).

(ii) In the New Testament period God has used His only begotten Son Jesus Christ to save and deliver His people

(All who repent and accept Him as their Lord and savior) to deliver them spiritually from the slavery of sin and Satan (John 3:16, Matthew 1; 18-21, Hebrews 2: 14-15, I John 3:5).

(m) Access to God's presence

(i) In the Old Testament period it was the priests who were to go to the holy place in the temple of God and the high priest to the holy of holies (Exodus 29).

(i) In the New Testament period all the true believers in Christ Jesus have access to God, because the death of Jesus Christ has annulled the restriction on priesthood and all believers now have access to God and only one mediator Jesus Christ (who they pray through) and not through any other man (Matthew 27:45-51, 1 Peter 2:9, 1 Timothy 2:5-6, John 14:13-14, 1 John 3:22).

(n) Tithes and offerings

(i) In the Old Testament period there were Tithes and offerings to be given in the temple of God by God's people (Genesis 14:17-20, 28:10-22, Deuteronomy 12:4-6, Malachi 3:6-12).

(ii) In the New Testament period we find that Christians need to pay their tithes and give their offerings at their local assembly (Church) (Luke 11:42, Matthew 23:23, 2 Corinthians 8:1-15, 9:1-15).

(o) (i) In the Old Testament the Israelites crossed the Red Sea being led by God and were delivered from Pharaoh and his armies and that it was a form of baptism (Exodus 14, 1 Corinthians 10:1-2).

(ii) In the New Testament all those who believe in Jesus Christ are required with him and thereby fulfil all righteousness (Matthew 3:13-17, John 3:1-6, Romans 6:1-13).

(p) (i) In the Old Testament the Israelites drank water from a rock which was a symbol of spiritual water (Numbers 20:1-11) as Jesus is a Rock of salvation (Psalms 62:1-2; 63:1-5).

(ii) In the New Testament Jesus is the living water of life to the believers (John 4:1-14, 7:37-39, Revelation 22:17).

(q) (i) In the Old Testament the Israelites were in a physical bondage in Egypt which did symbolize a spiritual bondage of mankind (Exodus 1).

(ii) In the New Testament all the disobedient are spiritually bound (Romans 6:15-22, Galatians 5:1-6).

(r) (i) In the Old Testament God chose the Israelites and instructed them to live a separated life from strangers (Deuteronomy 7:1-6, Joshua 23:1-13) which symbolized the lifestyle of believers in God.

(ii) In the New Testament all believers in Christ Jesus are demanded to live a separated life, being separated from evil associations and from all sin (1 Corinthians 15:33-34, 2 Corinthians 6:14-18, Revelation 18:1-5).

NB:

God led the children of Israel using the longer route to the Promised Land when they had left the land of Egypt where they had been in bondage. The way was not easy for them and only those that were obedient and persevered made it to the Promised Land. We too who are Christians we will need to persevere in all situations being obedient to the

leading of the Holy Spirit to be able to make it into heaven as there are no short-cuts (a short route) to heaven (Exodus 13:15-18).

CHAPTER 5

VITAL ASPECTS IN THE CHRISTIAN WALK

In this chapter I do present some vital aspects in the Christian Walk as follows hereunder:

(A) Baptism and infilling of the Holy Spirit.

To be baptized with the Holy Spirit is the ideal thing in a Christian's life, unfortunately not all Christians had experienced this partly because of ignorance or short comings in their lives and so on and so forth. The Lord God had promised this (Joel 2:28-29, Acts 1:8). In baptism of the Holy Spirit one is literally immersed in the Spirit and the sign is the speaking in a new tongue (Acts 2:1-4). After that one need to be experiencing the infilling of the Holy Spirit often in life; which is like refueling one's life with God's power.

And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophecy, 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

But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Sa-mar-ia, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.

Acts 1:8

The anointing of God comes in different levels as recorded in the book of Ezekiel (Ezekiel 47:1-5).

AFTERWARD he brought me again unto the door of the house; and behold, waters issued out from under the threshold of the house eastward: for the forefront of the house stood toward the east, and the waters came down from under, from the right side of the house, at the south side of the altar.

Then brought he me out of the way of the gate northward, and led me about the way without unto the outer gate by the way that looked eastward; and, behold, there ran out waters on the right side.

And when the man that had the line in his hand went forth eastward, he measured a thousand cubits, and he brought me through the waters; the waters were to the ankles.

Again he measured a thousand, and brought me through; the waters, the waters were to the knees.

Again he measured a thousand and brought me through; the waters were to the loins.

Afterwards he measured a thousand; and it was a river that I could not pass over: for the waters were risen, waters to swim in, a river that could not be passed over.

Ezekiel 47:1-5

When one is filled with the Holy Spirit, one must be totally submissive to Him so as to live a life that is pleasing to God the Father who art in heaven. If one is totally submissive thus, one will live under the influence of the Holy Spirit who now has been given enough room to take over the whole being and in total control and one will be most inclined to do the will of God by following the leading and the direction of the Holy Spirit within. It is not automatic that once you are filled with the Holy Spirit, you will always do the will of God. One need also totally

surrender one's will to the Lord. Some examples confirm the above statements. The sad story of Samson (Judges 14 and 16) and another of King David (1 Samuel 16:1-13 and 2 Samuel 11). By the way the Lord help us. The more one is anointed by the Spirit, the more one needs to be extra vigilant and more careful as one becomes more of a target of the enemy Satan who tries tirelessly to find a way of bringing one down, why? Because such a one becomes a big threat to his Kingdom - can bring havoc in the Kingdom of darkness. The devil even assigns his powerful or very powerful demon to deal with those with such powerful anointing. As said earlier, when one is totally submissive to the Holy Spirit one is more prone to do His will (The will of the Holy Spirit) than doing one's own will which mostly comes out of one's flesh. The more one is submissive the more one is alert and sensitive in the spirit. It is so important to be filled with the Holy Spirit as a Christian so as to be able to live a holy life, be effective in witnessing and serving and live a victorious life. That is why God commands Christians to be filled with the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 5:18).

And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit.

Ephesians 5:18

When the apostles were faced with some challenges which seemed to interfere with the work in the ministry, they decided to elect deacons to deal with the issue for them to have enough time to the work of the ministry. One of the requirements of those to be elected was that one must be filled with the Holy Spirit (Acts 6:1-7).

It should be noted that infilling of the Holy Spirit is a continual and an experiential one in nature and it bestows power in the individual so filled. The infilling of the Holy Spirit thus, is not a once for all transaction or experience and therefore need to be repeated now and then in time in an individual's life. Baptism of the Holy Spirit on the other hand is a positional experience at the time of one's conversion and it does not bestow power. It is a once for all experience and is a miracle of God at the new birth and one is immersed or added unto the body of Christ and is not commanded as infilling of the Holy Spirit. This being united to the body of Christ, the Church, is the baptism of

the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 12:13, Galatians 3:26-28, Ephesians 4:5).

For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.

1 Corinthians 12:13

For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.

For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.

There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.

Galatians 3:26-28

One Lord, one faith, one baptism.

Ephesians 4:5

When one is Spirit filled and continue to serve, the level of anointing in the individual does not continue to remain the same (Marks 5:25-30) but slowly the level goes down, hence the need of more infilling. Experience confirms this

phenomenon. Ideally infilling of the Holy Spirit need be on a daily basis (2 Corinthians 4:16). So, a Christian need to be aware of this important fact lest one becomes burnt out (sort of spiritual engine knock) (Acts 2:1-4, 4:23-31).

And being let go, they went to their own company, and reported all that the chief priests and elders had said unto them.

And when they heard that, they lifted up their voice to God, with one accord, and said, Lord, thou art God, which hast made heaven and earth, and the sea, and all that in them is: Who by the mouth of thy servant David hast said, **why did the heathen rage, and the people imagine vain things? the kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers were gathered together against the lord, and against his Christ.**

For of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together, For to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done.

And now, Lord, behold their threatenings: and grant unto thy servants, that with all boldness they may speak your word.

By stretching forth thy hand to heal; and that signs and wonders may be done by the name of thy holy child Jesus.

And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God with boldness.

Acts 4:23-31

When a Christian is not spirit filled the devil knows and can take advantage and bombard such and try to bring to backslidden state where one goes back to living in sin and the devil takes a further step of finishing his mission by causing an early death (John 10:10a).

The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill and to destroy:

John 10:10a

It should be noted from the outset that a Christian is a soldier in the army of God on earth and is in a battle field

fighting spiritual warfare day and night and therefore, must be bold and have power, which comes from the anointing of the Holy Spirit (infillings). On a daily basis Christians are coming face to face with a myriad of obstacles and challenges that need power to overcome (Ephesians 6:10-13, 2 Timothy 2: 1-4).

Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.

Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.

For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.

Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.

Ephesians 6; 10-13

THOU therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus.

And the things that thou has heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.

Thou therefore, endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.

No man that warreth entangleth himself with affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier.

2 Timothy 2:1-4

By being filled with the Holy Spirit we see the boldness of Peter in Acts 2 where 3,000 souls were added to the Church in one day. How Peter and John were bold and defied the odds and continued to preach the risen Christ in Acts 4: We also see the boldness of Stephen (Acts 6:8-7:60) even in persecution. When one is filled with the Holy Spirit one finds it difficult to condone sin and is ready to rebuke sin when it raises its ugly head, also one can pronounce judgment upon those who oppose the work of God (Acts 5:1-11, 8:1-24, 13:1-12).

By the way, gifts of the Holy Spirit can operate best in a Spirit filled Christian and the manifestation of the gifts of the Holy Spirit becomes evident in operation. The Holy

Spirit is a gentleman and therefore we need to yield to Him fully because He is not going to otherwise bulldoze us into actions and so forth. The Holy Spirit is a personality, a divine being and has in many occasions prompted Christians to do or not to do a thing by slowly and quietly whispering to their spirits and others have neglected as a mere “something” or because of much worldliness have not even heard. The Holy Spirit is our comforter (parakletos in Greek) and is our helper and our advocate, called by God to be alongside us and we need to embrace Him and guard Him in our life as without Him we are nothing and are not able to make it to heaven. Lastly, it should be noted that on some occasions the baptism and infilling of the Holy Spirit occurs simultaneously as it happened at the Pentecost and in Cornelius’ house (Acts 2:1-4, Acts 18:44-48).

The infilling of the Holy Spirit is so important such that apostle Paul had to ask some new believers (Acts 19:1-6) and apostles John and Peter were sent for the same purpose (Acts 8:14-17). I can vividly remember when I was initially filled by the Holy Spirit and spoke in a new tongue my Christian life changed dramatically. I found out that serving the Lord was made easier when teaching or preaching the word of God. Prayer life was not a struggle

either and I could pray longer than before. One time when I was preaching, I uttered words unconsciously that astonished me as I could not even remember having read them in the Bible; but some day while reading the Bible I came across the exact words – amazing! I found more passion to witness to people I came into contact even when travelling in a bus, to witness to the person sitting next to me.

Contrasts between the Spirit of God and the spirit of Satan.

Holy Spirit (God's)	Evil spirit (Satan's)
1. The original spirit (Genesis 1: 1-2, John 1: 1- 3; 4: 24)	1. A fake spirit (2 Thessalonians 2: 1-5)
2. The genuine spirit (John 14: 6- 7, 15- 17, 16: 13 10: 30)	2. An in genuine or counterfeit spirit
3. The good spirit (Job 28: 28, Isaiah 9: 6b, proverbs 4: 1-2)	3. A bad spirit (Luke 9: 37- 43, Matthew 12: 43 -45)
4. The holy spirit (Acts	4. An unholy (evil) spirit

1: 4-5; 2: 1-4, 10: 38)	(1 Samuel 16: 14- 15)
5. The right spirit (Luke 4: 18-19)	5. A wrong spirit (Acts 16: 16- 18, 2 Thessalonians 2: 5-12)
6. The spirit of God (1 Samuel 16: 13)	6. The spirit of Satan (Acts 13: 6-12)
7. The superior spirit (Exodus 7: 8- 12, Acts 19: 11- 12) unlimited power	7. An inferior spirit (Exodus 7: 10-12, Acts 13: 6- 12) Limited power
8. A gentle spirit (Matthew 11: 29, Galatians 5: 22- 23)	8. A harsh and rough spirit (Mark 9: 14- 27)
9. A spirit that convicts of sins and eventually leads an individual to true repentance and the forgiveness of sins (John 16: 7-9, 2 Corinthians 7: 10)	9. A spirit that condemns and also justifies sins in an individual and also gives no hope of

<p>10. A spirit that rarely enables one to see the spirit world but only when it is absolutely necessary and not also as and when an individual wants (2 Kings 6: 15-17, Acts 7: 51-55; 16: 9-10, 22: 17-18)</p> <p>11. A spirit with power for overcoming sin (Romans 8: 1-2)</p> <p>12. A spirit that never contradict God's word while communicating to an Individual.</p>	<p>the forgiveness of sins and usually leads one to none repentance.</p> <p>10. A spirit that frequently assists one to see the spirit world. (1 Samuel 28: 3-14, Acts 16: 16)</p> <p>11. A spirit with power to lead one to sin (Genesis 4: 8-9, Ephesians2:1-2)</p> <p>12. A spirit that contradicts God's word while communicating and also twists or perverts the word of God to justify sins in an individual (Genesis 3:</p>
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<p>13. A spirit that glorifies Jesus Christ and God the Father in an individual (John 16: 12- 14)</p> <p>14. A spirit that helps one to understand the holy scriptures and encourage one to pray and fast (John 14: 26, Matthew 4: 1-2, 1 Corinthians 2: 10-15)</p> <p>15. A spirit that gives one a desire to read the Holy Bible (Joshua 1: 8, 2 Timothy 2: 15)</p>	<p>1-5, 2 Peter 3: 15-17)</p> <p>13. A spirit that is proud and self glorifying in an individual (Isaiah 14: 13- 15)</p> <p>14. A spirit that brings confusion in understanding the Holy Scripture. (1 Corinthians 2: 14; 14-33)</p> <p>15. A spirit that tries to discourage one from reading the Holy Bible</p>
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According to the scriptures we are going to read, it can be said that one can receive and be filled with the Holy Spirit of God by at least three ways:

Prayer and fasting

Then returned they unto Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is from Jerusalem a Sabbath day's Journey.

And when they were come in, they went up into an upper room, where abode both Peter, and James, and John, and Andrew, Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew, James the son of Al-'phe-us, and Simon Zelo-'tes, and Judas the brother of James.

These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brethren.

And in these days Peter stood up in the midst of the disciples, and said, (the number of the names together were about a hundred and twenty).

AND when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place.

And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting.

And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them.

And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

Acts 1: 12- 15; 2: 1-4

And being let go, they went to their own company, and reported all that the chief priests and elders had said unto them.

And when they had heard that, they lifted up their voice to God with one accord, and said, thou art God, which hast made heaven and earth , and the sea, and all that in them is :

Who by the mouth of thy servant David hast said, why did the heathen rage, and the people imagine vain things? the kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers were gathered together against the lord, and against his Christ.

For a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together,

For to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done.

And now, Lord, behold their threatenings: and grant unto thy servants, that with boldness that may speak thy word. By stretching forth thine hand to heal; and that signs and wonders may be done by the name of thy holy child Jesus. And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spoke the word of God with boldness.

Acts 4: 23-31

We can see that when the disciples of Jesus Christ were gathered in prayer and fasting they received the Holy Spirit and were also filled at the same time initially and they spoke in new tongues (Acts 2: 1-4) but later it is recorded they were filled again but did not speak in new tongues(Acts 4: 23-31)

Listening to the word of God

While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word.

And they of the circumcision which believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost.

For they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God.
Then answered Peter,
Can any man forbid water, that these should not be
baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as
we?

And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the
Lord. Then prayed they to him to tarry certain days.

Acts 10: 44- 48

We can see that when Apostle Peter was in Cornelius’
home and was preaching to them, they were all filled with
the Holy Spirit and they spoke with new tongues.

The laying on of the hands

AND it came to pass, that, while A-pol-‘los was at Corinth,
Paul having passed through the upper coasts came to Eph-
‘e-sus: and finding certain disciples,

He said unto them, Have ye received the Holy Ghost since
ye believed?

And they said unto him, We have not so much as heard
whether there be any Holy Ghost.

And he said Unto them, unto what then were ye baptized?

And they said, Unto John’s baptism.

Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him which should come after him, that, is on, Jesus Christ.

When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.

And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them: and they spoke with tongues and prophesied.

Acts 19: 1-6

We can see that the new converts in Ephesus when Apostle Paul laid hands upon them they were filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke with tongues.

I want to put here a word of caution. We have seen in the above scripture that by the laying on of hands by an anointed servant of God for receiving of the Holy Spirit and one receives, Likewise the opposite is true in that Satanists can also do the same to prospective candidates but not to receive the Holy Spirit (which they never have) but with evil spirits; (for them it is a hidden agenda) and will invite people to be laid hands on to be filled , if is given a chance in a church. It is common for Satanists to infiltrate

many churches , especially those not preaching and practicing the doctrines of Christ Jesus (pastors must watch out and not allow anybody to pray for and lay hands on any church member except himself or church elder or an invited speaker who is known to be truly saved and living a holy life, has the testimony of Jesus, loves and serves the Lord from another local church and not a freelance worker who not under any authority - church Pastor) (Acts 13: 6, 2 Corinthians 11: 12- 15).

Get to know that there are two types of speaking with tongues. One is by the Holy Spirit and another by evil spirits. One can confirm this by looking at the fruit, those who claim to be filled with the Holy Spirit produce in life.

Beware of false prophets, who come to you in the sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves.

Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?

Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit.

A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit; neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit.

Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them.

Matthew 7: 15- 18, 20

How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him.

Acts 10: 38

Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.

But the fruit of the Spirit is Love, joy, peace, long suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.

Galatians 5: 19- 23

Don't have the habit of allowing anybody calling himself or herself "a servant of God" to pray and lay hands on you

indiscriminately. One can easily fall on the wrong hands- mind you, we are living in the end- time and the enemy and his servants are busy daily everywhere bringing all sorts of harm to the unsuspecting (the unwary).

Preserving the anointing

Earlier we had found that it is very important for a Christian to be filled with the Holy Spirit. Equally important is the fact that a Christian must safeguard the anointing one holds. To do this, one must stay away from sin. To get back anointing after losing it is not easy. Sexual immorality tops the list in the draining out all the anointing that a Christian holds. No wonder the Lord God detests more this sin (Numbers 25:1-11).

Now we are going to look at some seven examples in the scriptures the first four being of those that safeguarded the anointing of God in their lives and the remaining three that at some point in life did not safeguard God's anointing in their lives due to carelessness and disobedience.

1. Elisha

If you read about Elisha's life you find he was careful and obedient and preserved his anointing such that even after he

died (slept) he had the anointing in his body, enough anointing that raised a dead person from death back to life. (2 Kings 5: 1-16; 2 Kings 13:20-21).

2. Peter

Looking at Peter's life, he too refused to corrupt his ministry by taking money from Simon who had an evil mind. Earlier we saw that Elisha refused to accept any 'gift' from Naaman for service rendered. Peter safeguarded his anointing as he continued to serve in much anointing. (Acts 8:14-23, Acts 9:32-41, Acts 10:44-48).

3. Paul

Paul preached what he practiced and safeguarded God's anointing in him and continued to serve in much anointing (Romans 6: 1-2, 15-16, Philippians 3:12-18, Acts 13:4-12, Acts 14:1-3, 8-10, Acts 16:16-18, Acts 19:11-12).

4. Joseph

Joseph's life was of integrity of heart and lived preserving the anointing of God in him. He refused all the advances of Potiphar's wife, lest he be defiled and God gave him favor.

If you read beyond Genesis chapter 39 you will see Joseph as a humble young man.

5. Balaam

If you look at the life of Balaam you find he was a disobedient servant and lusted after money and possessions and did not safeguard the anointing of God in his life and ended badly from a prophet to a soothsayer and eventually met his death. (Numbers 22:1-22, 2 Peter 2:15-16, Jude 11, Joshua 13:22).

6. Samson

Samson too did not safeguard God's anointing in him because of his lifestyle and ended as a prisoner and had to bitterly cry to the Lord to get back anointing for revenging against the Philistines and although he received it, it was short-lived as he passed away together with the Philistines. (Judges 15:1-8, Judges 16:1-21, Judges 16:23-31).

7. David

David did not preserve God's anointing in him at one time and had to seriously repent before the Lord to be able to get

back God's anointing and be restored. (2 Samuel 11, Psalm 51).

It is quite clear in the scriptures both in the Old Testament and in the New Testament that the infilling of the Holy Spirit should be a continual experience in a believer to enable the believer to continue to shine in this dark world and to serve the Lord with the anointing as well to be able to live a holy and righteous life. Let us look at yet another scripture from the Old Testament that attest to that fact.

AND the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

Command the children of Israel, that they bring unto thee pure oil olive beaten for the light, to cause the lamps to burn continually.

Without the veil of the testimony, in the tabernacle of the congregation, shall Aaron order it from the evening unto the morning before the LORD continually: it shall be a statute for ever in your generations.

He shall order the lamps upon the pure candlestick before the LORD continually.

Leviticus 24:1-4

Oil is symbolic of the Holy Spirit and therefore Christians can be likened to the lamps talked about here and need to

give light as they have the Holy Spirit of God housed in them as they are the temple of God. This is only possible if they continue to be in filled by the same.

What? Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?

1 Corinthians 6:19

It is one thing to be filled with the Holy Spirit that enables you to live a holy life and serve the Lord effectively but it is another thing all together to walk in the same Spirit, why? Let us look at the following scriptures.

For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another.

For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this; Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.

But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another.

This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh.

For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.

Galatians 5:13-18

Apostle Paul was addressing the church in Galatia who had received the gospel of Jesus Christ and had received the Holy Spirit but continued to walk as the world by giving their bodies (the flesh) an occasion to do its will, which many Christians seem to do unfortunately and the apostle had to inform them of the spiritual warfare (struggles) going on in their lives and that they need give occasions to the Holy Spirit in them to lead their lives which if they don't do they will be destroying their lives (Salvation walk). You can also read the life of Samson who was filled with the Holy Spirit but on many occasions succumbed to the lust of the flesh. We just have as Christians to continue to walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit. (Romans 8:1)

THERE is therefore no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

Now you can see that only those who are in Christ Jesus and are walking in the spirit (after the Spirit and not after the flesh) are not condemned. Now yet another thing. Not all filled must speak in other tongues save for the first time as recorded in the scriptures: Acts 2:1-4; 10:44-48; 19:1-6; 4:23-31.

Hearkening or listening or hearing the voice of God.

This is another very important aspect in a Christian's life because there are just too many voices around in the world and one need to be sure of the source before taking action by moving in a certain direction. These voices are:

- i. From God through the Holy Spirit
- ii. From Satan through the evil spirit
- iii. From the body through one's soul
- iv. From the world through the mass media and people around you.

The last in this list is undoubtedly the loudest. From all the above we can see the necessity of having to know and

differentiate one voice from the other. Here without the help of the Holy Spirit one cannot make it as one can very easily mistake one voice with the other and go astray and do the wrong thing altogether. It is imperative for a Christian to quickly learn and know as number 1 the voice of the Lord. The surest way of knowing whether the voice is from God or otherwise is by checking against (using) the holy scriptures, as God cannot contradict Himself. The Lord God talked of the sheep (Christians) knowing his voice (John 10:1-9, 2). So it is a must for a Christian to know the voice of his master the Shepherd or else one is in danger of being led astray.

In the New Testament we read how a damsel named Rhoda hearkened to the voice of Apostle Peter who had just been set free by an angel of God from prison and Peter was knocking on the door. That is how a Christian need to know the voice of God and differentiate clearly from the rest of “other” voices (*Acts 12:13-16*).

And as Peter knocked at the door of the gate, a damsel came to hearken named Rhoda.

And when she knew Peter's voice; she opened not the gate for gladness, but ran in, and told how Peter stood before the gate. And they said unto her, thou art mad.

But she constantly affirmed it was even so. Then said they, it is his angel.

But Peter continued knocking; and when they had opened the door, and saw him, they were astonished

Acts 12:13-16

We need to learn to know the voice of the Lord such that when He speaks we know it without an iota of doubt so that we can act accordingly in His will. Let us now see the example that shows the danger of not hearkening to the voice of God. The case of Apostle Peter and the case of King David respectively. They hearkened unto the wrong voices and ended up going astray from will of God. In fact even the Devil whispers to people and prompts them to do things (Mark 8:31-33, 1 Chronicles 21:1-2).

And he began to teach them, that the Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders, and of the chief priests, and scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again.

And he spake that saying openly. And Peter took him, and began to rebuke him.

But when he had turned about and looked on His disciples, he rebuked Peter saying, Get thee behind me, Satan: for thou savorest not the things of God, but the things that be of men.

Mark 8:31-33

And Satan stood up against Israel, and provoked David to number Israel.

And David said to Joab and to the rulers of the people, Go number Israel from Beer-She-ba even to Dan; and bring the numbers of them to me, that I may know it.

1Chronicles 21:1-2

Because of the action of David God was not pleased and brought judgement upon the people of Israel. Harkening to the voice of God is so important we can see several scriptures touching on the same (Deuteronomy 15: 5, Joshua 1:7, 1 Samuel 15:22, Proverbs 12:15, 1 Isaiah 51:1, Jeremiah 26:1-6).

God speaks in various ways and means apart from his speaking to people through the Holy Scripture. God speaks by audible voice, by impressions and thoughts as well by

dreams and visions. Our yardstick in verifying all these should be the word of God. I now give examples of God's voice:

1. Audible voice: (Genesis 6:9-22, Exodus 3:1-10, 12:1-3, Joshua 1:1-9).
2. Dreams: Genesis (28:10-17, 37:1-11, Daniel 2:1-45, Matthew 1:20-21, 2:13-15).
3. Visions: (Ezekiel 1, 9, 37:1-14, Daniel 8, 2 Corinthians 12:1-7).

We need a quiet spirit and be turned to heaven as well as being keen and alert at our surroundings to be able to hear the voice of God (Genesis 3:8, Isaiah 30:15-16).

And they heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: And Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God amongst the trees of the garden.

Genesis 3:8

For thus saith the Lord God, the Holy one of Israel; In returning and rest shall be saved; in quietness and confidence shall be your strength: and ye would not.

But ye said, No; for we will flee upon horses; therefore shall ye flee: and we will ride upon the swift; therefore shall they that pursue you be swift.

Isaiah 30:15-16

The Lord God can be talking to a person on a daily basis and even severally in a single day, but because the one is not tuned to heaven and therefore not spiritually alert or sensitive, one may not notice or one may notice but because of many activities brush aside as a mere thought and so forth. Because God is powerful and mighty, one may think that God will thunder when speaking to one. God can just whisper in a small gentle voice – He is a gentleman (1 Kings 19:9-13).

To skilfully hearken to the voice of God takes time. You just can't be a Christian today and tomorrow you are well acquainted with the voice of the Lord and can recognize it with certainty.

If one makes the habit of enquiring from God in prayer on different issues in life to get God's direction and one is patient enough, one will start learning of how to listen to His voice. We can hear more from God if we are humble and obedient to what He speaks to us. God bore witness to

Moses' humility and talked to Moses many, many times (Numbers 12:1-8). James the brother of the Lord had this to say to the saints.

But he giveth more grace. Wherefore he saith, **God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble.**

Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up.

James 4:6, 10

Let me share a few testimonies of my personal experience with you, on hearkening or listening or hearing the voice of the Lord for the glory of God the Father. In one occasion, I came back to my rented house in the evening on a Sunday and immediately thereafter a maid servant of my neighbour came and asked 'where have you been? as she had come earlier and I was not around. I narrated to her how I had gone to church for service, and after the service others including the Pastor and I had gone visiting villages and sharing with the people the word of God. Later, just when I bade her farewell and she was leaving, I sort of heard a whisper in my spirit or an impression say "You have preached to others, how about me here, your neighbour?"

“This really struck me and I asked myself, could this be the voice of God reminding me that I had forgotten to witness to my neighbours? The more I thought of this the more I got convinced inside my heart that, Yes, it is true; I need to act lest I disobey the Holy Spirit. I therefore resolved to pay my neighbour a visit. The following day or so I went and preached and the maid servant and another lady I found with her accepted Jesus Christ as their Lord and Saviour that evening, hallelujah to the King of Kings (Matthew 28:18-20, Acts 1:8).

And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, all power is given unto me in heaven and on earth.

Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:

Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway even unto the end of the world. Amen.

Matthew 28:18-20

But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in

Jerusalem and in all Judea, and Sa-mar-i-a and unto the uttermost part of the earth.

Acts 1:8

In another incidence, it was on a Saturday in the morning hours around 9.00 am, a certain lady who was carrying a small child knocked at my rented house door. I opened for her and she briefly told me she had been going round to look for any casual work and has not succeeded so far, and that she has no money and the child is hungry and needs something to eat. At that juncture, a thought flashed in my mind “it is not good to send her away empty handed, even if you don’t have some work to casually employ her, surely you can do some thing however little” I realised that definitely God had directed her to me to get some help. I invited her with the child in the house I prepared some tea and went to a kiosk and bought some buns and I served them. Afterwards, I asked the lady if she is saved and she said not yet. I then preached to her and she willingly accepted Jesus Christ as her Lord and Saviour. When it reached the time to bade her farewell, I gave her some grains and some money, after counselling her on how she should live, now that she was saved (James 2:14-17).

What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? Can faith save him?

If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food.

And one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, Thy be warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit? Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone.

James 2:14-17

I have come to realize that God can speak to one in any way he sees best and that he will speak also more to one, in the way one has heard Him speak to one before .When we do hear the voice of God and obey by acting accordingly then God is pleased and is likely going to speak to us more often. God speaks through his servants through teaching and preaching. God can speak to one when meditating on the word of God, and also when in a quiet and serious Bible study, by bringing revelation.

From the garden of Eden when man fell in sin to date, man has continued to listen more to the voice of Satan than of God because man wrongly sees more sense/is easily convinced in what the former is saying than what he latter

is saying and how tragic it continue to be with those that follow that wrong route (Proverbs 14:12; 16:25).

(C) Obedience

Obedience to the word of God is very important indeed. To do the opposite - to disobey has far reaching consequences. We find that by one disobedience, the whole human race lost all that God had given them. That one act has continued to affect mankind to date (Genesis 1:26-28, 2:8-17, 3:1-24 Romans 3:23, 5:12-19, 6:23).

But thanks to God the Almighty as he had another plan in place to counter the disaster and to bring about salvation and restoration. Disobedience is so serious it cost King Saul his kingship (1Samuel 15:1-23). Looking at verses 22 and 23, it seems that disobedience gives birth to rebellion or other way they relate to each other as a brother relates to a sister. The Israelites because of disobedience went backward instead of forward (Jeremiah 7:23:24).

But this thing commanded them saying, obey my voice, and i will be your God, and ye shall be my people: and

walk ye in all the ways that I have commanded you that it may be well unto you.

But they hearkened not, nor inclined their ear, but walked in the counsels and in the imagination of their evil heart, and went backward and not forward.

Jeremiah 7:23:24

The Israelites were commanded to obey the Lord and failure of which the consequences that would follow (Deuteronomy 10:12-13, 28:15-68) because Jesus Christ was obedient, God exalted him greatly (Luke 2:51-52, Philippians 2:6-11).

Who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God:

But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men:

And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name:

That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven and things in earth, and things under the earth; And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Philippians 2:6-11

Jesus said that only those who obeyed God by doing His will enter the kingdom of God (Matthew 7:21-23). A widow's obedience saved her household. (2 Kings 4:1-7). In the case of Namaan the commander of Aramean army, he almost lost his healing because of some trace of disobedience coupled with pride. He had to obey completely for his healing. Initially he wanted to get his healing as he thought or wished and not as God intended. (2 Kings 5:1-14). Many have missed God because they have tried to act as a "boss" to God by ordering to get result as they think - in self-will and not as God sees fit as it is His prerogative. After all God is omnipotent, omniscient and omnipresent. (Psalm 139) God need be approached with all humility and in total obedience.

Apostle Paul also stressed to the saints the need of obedience (Romans 13:1-7, Ephesians 6:1-3, 5-9 Colossians 3: 20, 22-24).

Jesus Christ talking on obedience had this to say (Matthew 21:28-32)

But what think ye? A certain man had two sons; and he came to the first, and said son, go work today in my vineyard.

He answered and said, I will not; but afterward repented, and went.

And he came to the second, and said likewise. And he answered and said, I go sir: and went not.

Whether of them twain did the will of his father? They say unto him, the first. Jesus saith unto them, Verily I say unto you. That the Publicans and the harlots go into the kingdom of God before you.

For John came to you unto the way of righteousness, and ye believed him not: but the publicans and the harlots believed him: and ye when ye had seen it, repented not afterward, that ye might believed him.

Matthew 21:28-32

By being obedient to God one gets closer to Him and builds oneself in him and goes further away from Satan (Joshua 1:8, John 15:1-4, James 1:25, 1 Thessalonians 4:1).

This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that **thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy ways prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success.**

Joshua 1:8

I AM the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman.

Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and **every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit.**

Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you.

Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me.

John 15:1-4

But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed.

James 1:25

FURTHERMORE then we beseech you, brethren, and exhort you by the Lord Jesus, that as ye have received of us how ye ought to walk and to please God, so ye would abound more and more

1 Thessalonians 4:1

Now the opposite of obedience is disobedience the result of which is also the opposite- one disobedient destroys oneself and breaks away from God and goes further and further from Him and gets nearer and nearer to Satan (Hosea 4:6, 1 Peter 2:7-8).

My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest to me: seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I will also forget thy children.

Hosea 4:6

Unto you therefore which believe he is precious: but **unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner, and a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient:** whereunto also they were appointed.

1 Peter 2:7-8

Obedience is important as God detests disobedience and judges it accordingly just as witchcraft, rebellion, Idolatry and other sins as well. The consequences for disobedience is costly and therefore we need to be always obedient and thereby pleasing our Creator as well as all those that God has placed over us in the church and in the Government, doing so in the Lord. Look at the text where it is recorded king Saul had disobeyed God and what became of him.

And Samuel came to Saul: and Saul said unto him, Blessed be thou of the LORD: I have performed the commandment of the LORD.

And Samuel said, What meaneth then this bleating of the sheep in mine ears, and the lowing of the oxen which I hear?

And Saul said, They have brought them from the A-mal'-ek-ites: for the people spared the best of the sheep and of the oxen, to sacrifice unto the LORD thy God; and the rest we have utterly destroyed.

Then Samuel said unto Saul, Stay, and I will tell thee what the LORD hath said to me this night.

And he said unto him, Say on.

And Samuel said, When thou wast little in thine own sight, wast thou not made the head of the tribes of Israel, and the LORD anointed thee king over Israel?

And the LORD sent thee on a journey, and said, Go and utterly, destroy the sinners the A-mal'-ek-ites, and fight against them until they be consumed.

Wherefore then didst thou not obey the voice of the LORD, but didst fly upon the spoil, and didst evil in the sight of the LORD?

And Saul said unto Samuel, Yea, I have obeyed the voice of the LORD, and have gone the way which the LORD sent me, and have brought Agag the king of Am'-a-lek, and have utterly destroyed the A-mal'-ek-ites.

But the people took of the spoil, sheep and oxen, the chief of the things which should have been utterly destroyed, to sacrifice unto the LORD thy God in Gil'-gal.

And Samuel said, Hath the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams.

For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because thou hast rejected the word of the LORD, he hath also rejected thee from being king.

1 Samuel 15:13-23

From the above account you can see that although it is acceptable to give to God offerings and sacrifices, yet it is in vain if one is not obedient to the word of God. Therefore, Giving should go along with obeying the other words of God for it to be acceptable all which point to total faith.

King Saul instead of repenting immediately after hearing from the prophet Samuel, he continued to argue and defend himself before the prophet and showed his true character of disobedience and stubbornness. If one does not obey the word of God, in actual sense one has rejected the word of God which is His breath and therefore has rejected God subsequently by that act. No wonder God rejected Saul

from being king and God had now already chosen David the son of Jesse to be king and instructed the prophet to go to the household of Jesse and to anoint David as a king (1 Samuel 16:1-3). Now let all people reject you but, do not let God reject you, it is the worst thing ever to happen to one.

So be wise and live righteously both before men and before God and even if they reject you, it is okay as that is human nature as they rejected and still continue to reject the Son of the Most High God and the only Savior. (Matthew 27:15-26, John 1:6-11; 3:16, 14:6; Acts 4:10-12).

Now look at this other scripture to see the importance of obeying the word of God.

And it came to pass, as he spake these things, a certain woman of the company lifted up her voice, and said unto him, Blessed is the womb that bare thee, and the paps which thou hast sucked.

But he said, Yea rather, blessed are they that hear the word of God, and keep it.

Luke 11:27-28

In the above account, that woman saw in Jesus wisdom, knowledge and understanding and ended by raising her voice and talking that way but you can see Jesus underscoring, the importance and need of obedience to the word of God.

Any wisdom, knowledge or understanding that does not make one to obey the word of God is useless (null and void) before the Most High God, the Creator of Heaven and Earth. Wisdom is but obedience to the word of God and is not being intellect as true wisdom is an issue of the heart and not much of the mind.

(D) Love - “Agape” (In Greek) divine love.

Love is so important that without it nothing else matters- is important. It is quite an ingredient in itself on all issues of life. True love is unconditional love, divine love that comes from God to us so that we can also extend it to reach others. God Himself is love and therefore is the originator of true/real love. The Bible is full of this four letter word “Love” from the Old Testament right through to the New Testament. Faith without works is dead. Just as love without deeds is not love. Both these need action to demonstrate themselves – faith and love. Just like a needle

alone cannot sew, same a thread alone cannot sew, but both combined something is accomplished. God has shown love from the beginning to the end of everything. The Lord God has demonstrated his love to all his creations. Let me list just a few Scriptures on Love (1 John 4:16, 1 John 3:11-18, 1 John 4:7-10, 17 John 3:16, Deuteronomy 6:4-9, Romans 5:6-8, 12:9-10, 13:8-10, 1 Peter 1:22, 1 Peter 2:21-24, 1 Peter 4:7-8, Hebrews 13:1, 1 Corinthians 13, Matthew 22:34-40) the list is almost endless.

Let me say something that is not the love from God: some people have claimed that unbelievers love their folk (their own) than believers among themselves. Reason, that unbelievers happily and willingly share their cigarettes or alcohol. What hypocrisy this is, how can one claim love in an issue touching on sin? Those sharing a cigarette, bhang, narcotics drugs or alcohol are intoxicating and corrupting their bodies which are the temple of God such that the body's senses are dulled or numbed in a way that it cannot operate normally as God intended and lead the body to poor health from diseases eventually leading to death. That is helping each other to sin or sharing the act of sinning. Any behaviour leading to fornication or adultery from any quarter is not the love of God but is "another" love coming

from hell-Satan. By the way in Christianity there is no such vocabulary as boyfriend, girlfriend, sugar daddy, sugar mummy all these belong to the world and Satan. We only have brothers and sisters in the Lord.

Jesus knew that it was easier for men to love their friends than their enemies and he took love to the next (higher) level as recorded (Luke 6:27-36).

But I say unto you which hear, love your enemies, do good to them which hate you,

Bless them that curse you, and pray for them which despitefully use you.

And unto him that smiteth thee on the one cheek offer also the other; and him that taketh away thy cloak forbid not to take thy coat also.

Give to every man that asketh of thee; and of him that taketh away thy goods ask them not again.

And as ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise.

For if ye love them that love you, what thank have ye? for sinners also love those that love them.

And if ye do good to them which do good to you, what thank have ye? for sinners also do even the same.

And if ye lend to them of whom ye hope to receive, what thank have ye? for sinners also lend to sinners, to receive as much again.

But love ye your enemies, and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again; and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the children of the Highest: for he is kind unto the unthankful and the evil.

Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful

Luke 6:27-36

It has been said, “People won’t care how much you know until they know how much you care”. Now let me share my experience on the lack of love. At one time a brother in the Lord and I were with some Christian couples in another Christians’ house and when we were alone, this is what were told “The kind of salvation you have in present Kenya, you cannot survive”. We were all still young in the Christian walk and them, I think they thought, that they were mature. But I think they were most likely spiritual babes, by what they told us. They needed to grow in the love of Christ, as it seemed they knew not about it or knew very little if at all, (Ephesians 3:19). They should have given us a word of exhortation instead of the word of

discouragement they uttered to us, in fact at some point after, the incident I thought to myself “am I going to survive in the salvation I received of the Lord?” Read the following scriptures and see that love is as important factor in the Christian Walk.

Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man.

Colossians 4:6

Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another

Romans 14:19

(E) Hope

Hope is an expectancy, expectancy for something good to come to pass. It is an important component of faith. Hope and faith go hand in hand and where there is faith there is hope and vice versa. But where there is no faith there is no hope as well because faithlessness always results in hopelessness. It can be said that faith and hope are bed fellows. (1 Corinthians 13:13). Hope need to be in God and

not in people or things, otherwise one will be badly disappointed if not in God. It is so because only God is completely/totally faithful and will not disappoint one that hopes and trusts in Him. (Numbers 23:19-21, Psalm 23).

When we have believed in Christ Jesus by faith we put our hope and trust in the eternal God (Romans 5:1-2). The scriptures are full of encouragements for the need to hope in God and the following are just some of them for you to read and be encouraged in the Lord:

PAUL, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the commandment of God our Savior, and Lord Jesus Christ, which is our hope;
Unto Timothy, my own son in the faith: Grace, mercy, and peace, from God our Father and Jesus Christ our Lord.

1 Timothy 1:1-2

From the above scripture it is clear that only God is our hope in life. If we fail to believe in Him and put our hope in Him trusting Him, we are doomed.

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us

again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,

To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you,

Who are kept by the power of God though faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

1 Peter 1:3-5

Christians have an incorruptible and undefiled inheritance reserved for them in heaven and meanwhile they are kept by the power of God here on earth awaiting the redemption of their bodies as well at God's appointed time (in the rapture) to receive their eternal inheritance. For that very reason they must continue in hope regardless of what they may be going through in life but await for that glorious event which even the angels in heaven are anxiously waiting for to see the bride of Christ (the holy saints) appear before God in the marriage Supper of the Lamb.

PAUL, a servant of God, and an apostle of Jesus Christ, according to the faith of God's elect, and the acknowledging of the truth which is after godliness;

In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began;

But hath in due times manifested his word through preaching, which is committed unto me according to the commandment of God our Savior;

To Titus, mine own son after the common faith: Grace, mercy, and peace, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ our Savior.

Titus 1:1-4

Christians have hope of eternal life which God promised before the world began (and I know God's promises are yea and Amen) so we Christians must remain in hope and receive our eternal reward as it is just a matter of time and God is in control at His throne in heaven and we need relax in Him going about doing his will while still here on earth. (Matthew 7:21). The following scriptures are for your further reading;- 1Thessalonians 5:8-11, Titus 3:7, Romans 8:22-25, 1 Corinthians 15:19-26, Psalms 146:5; 130:5-7; 125:1-2; 118: 8-9; 115:9-13; 71:14; 62:8; 40:4; 33:18-19; 31:24; 28:7;27:14; 22:4-5; 9:10 and 7:1.

Hope is the belief or expectation that something wished for can happen. It is a firm assurance regarding things we have

not seen that they will appear. It is a confident expectation of that which one has not received and is equated to faith and is a requirement in the life of a Christian as without it, life loses its meaning and hope must be only in God.

For thus saith the LORD, that after seventy years be accomplished at Babylon I will visit you, and perform my good word toward you, in causing you to return to this place.

For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the LORD, thoughts of peace, and not evil, to give you an expected end.

Then shall ye call upon me, and ye shall go and pray unto me, and I will hearken unto you.

And ye shall seek me, and find me, when Ye shall search me with all your heart.

And I will be found of you, saith the LORD: and I will turn away your captivity, and I will gather you from all the nations, and from all the places whither I have driven you, saith the LORD; and I will bring you again into the place whence I caused you to be carried away captive.

Jeremiah 29:10-14

The above is a prophesy by prophet Jeremiah regarding the return of the children of Israel from captivity after seventy years have expired when they are in exile in Babylon. But I strongly believe that applies to Christians as well because Christ died for them on the cross and shed his blood, which is more love than the one God loved the Israelites when he chose them as His people. For Christians God loved them and gave His Son to die for them to be His children (people). I am a living testimony as I was at some point in life taken captive by the enemy and remained in bondage for quite some time (in a backslidden state) but God at some point came and delivered me and restored my life back in His salvation and I have peace of heart and mind and you are able to read this book as a result of God's grace and good plans for my life. God remained my only hope to remove me from the sorry state of backsliding, even prayers of various servants hardly did much but God Himself came to my rescue.

If you read the remaining verses in that chapter you will find that false prophets tried to remove the faith of the people from their God by telling them falsehoods.

A Christian should not listen to many comments or advices of people but rather believe and trust only in the Lord

waiting for his help, when they are going through tough times. It may seem long humanly speaking but if one continues to hope for God to intervene for sure God he will do it at his time only one need not lose hope.

(F) Faith

Another very important aspect of the Christian walk is faith. Without faith, you are a non-starter in this walk. The Christian walk is a faith walk, a spiritual walk with God. The Scripture say that without faith it is impossible to please God. (*Hebrews 11:6*). With God it is just faith, faith and faith. Before we continue, Lets get it right by first asking our self “What is fait?” The answer:

Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.

Hebrews 11:1

In other words, faith is the substance or foundation or basis of things for which we hope. It means the solid, unshakeable confidence in God, which is built upon the assurance that He will be faithful to His promises. In God faith is both essential and mandatory. One may ask why

faith? Well, it has been said that faith is the currency of heaven. Just as we have to get our daily provisions here on earth by using the currency (money) in our country, it is different in the kingdom of God. In the kingdom of God rather, we use faith to buy (get) what we need from God. Faith is the key we use to unlock or tap the resources of God. In God we only have faith. No dollar, pounds, or euros are needed (Romans 4:13-17) Faith is an activator, it triggers and brings things to come to pass. Faith is simply acting on what one believes in, in God of course, else it is worthless and cannot save help one.

By reading chapter 11 of the book of Hebrews one will see what faith can accomplish and one can come to the conclusion that surely without faith one cannot succeed in the journey /walk. In this walk, walk of faith, one must learn to ignore anything negative on one's way though they may be there. Ignore them as if they are not there and continue trusting in the Lord and confessing the opposite of those things (negatives), confessing what God says about the situation, as He is not a liar. Faith is synonymous with the word of God (Romans 10:17).

So then faith cometh by hearing and hearing, the word of God.

Romans 10:17

We need to be careful as Christians on what we hear, see, or think as these affect us directly or indirectly whether we like or not. Also for us to walk in this faith, walk we need move from our senses to our spirit. We need to base our decisions on what we hear or see or think etc to the truth – the word of God (2 Kings 6:15-17,7:1-2, Romans 12:2, Philippians 2:5,4:8). Apostle Peter had to believe first the word of the Lord before he walked on water (Matthew 14:25 -29) but when he went back to his sense of sight by looking at the wind, he began to sink and cried out for his life – verse 30. We need just to rely on the word of God and avoid looking at our circumstances how bad they are. Apostle John said in his epistle that we overcome this world by faith (1 John 5:4-5).

Some of the reasons why we need faith:

- i. To be sanctified (Acts 26:18)

- ii. To be counted righteous (Romans 4:5, Galatians 3:6)
- iii. To be justified (Romans 5:1)
- iv. For our Christian walk (2 Corinthians 4:18, 5:7)
- v. For our lives (Habakkuk 2:4)
- vi. For our shield (Ephesians 6:16)
- vii. For our healing (Matthew 8:5-13, 8:18-23, 9:20-22, 27-30, Luke 5:12-13, Mark 2:1-12, 7:24-30, Acts 3, 14:9-10.)

Now let us come to another thing which is levels of faith. There are many different levels of faith as you shall see in the Scriptures.

1. Every true believer (a born - again Christian) has a certain measure of faith given by God at the time of conversion, which must be guarded jealously lest one loses it (Romans 12:3).
2. This is the little faith level where one has done little with the measure of faith one received (Matthew 6:30, 8:23-26, 14:30-31).

3. This is the level of great faith where one has done great things with one's faith (Matthew 8:5-10).
4. This is the level of exceeding growing faith (2 Thessalonians 1:3).
5. This is the level known as grounded and settled faith (Colossians 1:23).

From the above we can notice that faith is a living thing in that it grows. But we know that anything that grows needs nourishment or else it will die at some point in time, if it lacks nourishment. This is true with faith. It must be nourished. Earlier we found out that faith comes by hearing, and hearing the word of God (Romans 10:17). Therefore, we need to be hearing the word of God daily in our life, be it by reading and studying the Bible to listening to teaching or preaching of the word of God. Apostle Peter in his epistle to young converts he likened the word of God to sincere milk which they should desire for their spiritual growth (1 Peter 2:2-3). From the above we can deduce that unless one feeds on the word of God and applies it in one's life one is likely to wither out and die spiritually sooner or later. We need to make a concerted effort to not only read,

but study and meditate on the word of God as well as applying it in our lives for our faith to grow thereby. Faith is not increased by adding more but by working on the available faith and it grows to great heights (Luke 17:5-6). Therefore whatever measure of faith we received we need to progressively expand on it by working with it until it is fully developed. Faith is very precious and therefore it can be tried (1Peter 1:5-9). Faith likewise is a strong weapon too, of spiritual warfare. Some people have said rightly or wrongly that faith is likened to madness in that faith just believes and acts and has no time for reasoning, calculating or analysing situations. The opposite of faith is fear. Satan uses fear as his number one weapon in the lives of Christians to bring them to a standstill (passivity in countering him) by instilling fear in them (Job 3:25, 2 Timothy 1:7). We need to have daily checks and balances on the following fronts that can show us we are in or out of the true faith.

Action: Is it good and pleasing and glorify God? Is it helpful or destructive?

Speech: Is it good, pure, true?

Thought: is it pure, good and helpful?

Sight: Is it glorifying, God, helpful or destructive?

Readership: Is it inspiring, shameful or destructive?

A daily check of one's life in the Christian walk is necessary (2 Corinthians 13:5) and is a reminder to Christians as apostle Paul had said earlier to the church at Corinth when he was addressing the issue of how to prepare and partake the Lord's supper (1 Corinthians 11:26-32).

Checking and examining one's life is mandatory whether one is going to partake the Lord's supper or not as the Lord Jesus Christ said he was going to come for the church on a day that no one knows and therefore this noble practice need be enhanced to see if one is still on the track (the highway of holiness) or have deviated from it and if so, to quickly act in repentance and coming back to the Lord and walking right to avoid being found wanting at the Lord's coming (in the rapture for the holy Church) and miss entering heaven (Matthew 24:36-44). Hence, by taking this issue seriously and not getting entangled in the things of the world, one can be said to be walking in wisdom as a Christian (Romans 12:1-2).

Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?

2 Corinthians 13:5

For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come.

Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord.

But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup.

For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body.

For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep.

For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged.

But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world.

1 Corinthians 11:26-32

But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only.

But as the days of Noah were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.

For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark,

And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.

Then shall two be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left.

Two women shall be grinding at the mill; the one shall be taken, and the other left.

Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come.

But know this, that if the good man of the house had known in what watch the thief would come, he would have watched, and would not have suffered his house to be broken up.

Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh.

Matthew 24:36-44

I BESEECH you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.

And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

Romans 12:1-2

(G) Witnessing

Witnessing is an important tool for a Christian. Through witnessing one speaks to others about what the Lord has done in their lives and also taking that opportunity to introduce Jesus Christ to them and later giving them an opportunity of inviting Christ in their life as Lord and Saviour. If time allows witnessing ideally should culminate into preaching of the good news to those so witnessed to. Now let us go straight to the Scriptures to see what it has to say.

1. John the Baptist witnessed to people about Jesus Christ and many believed (Matthew 3:1-12, John 1:6-8, 29-34).

2. Jesus Christ told His disciples that they were to witness to all people about Him. (Acts 1:8).
3. The Samaritan woman at the well went and witnesses to people about Jesus Christ and many came to Him (John 4:28-30, 39-42).
4. Apostle Peter stood up and witnessed to a big crowd and three thousand people believed and the number of the saints (believers) increased. (Acts 2:14-41).
5. Andrea witnessed to his brother Simon Peter about Christ Jesus (John 1:40-42).
6. Philip witnessed to Nathaniel about Christ Jesus (John 1:43-48).
7. Apostles Peter and John witnessed to the council at Jerusalem (composed of rulers, elders, scribes and the high priests) about Jesus Christ (Acts 4:13-20).
8. Apostle Paul witnesses before Kings about Jesus Christ (Acts 22:1-16, 26:1-18).
9. Apostle John witnessed about Jesus Christ by his epistle to the assemblies of the saints about the realities of the Christian life (1 John 1:1-4).

10. Apostle John touched on the testimonies of the saints (Revelation 12:11).
11. Apostle Peter had something to say to Christians (1Peter 3:15).
12. Apostle John had this to tell the saints on witnessing. (1 John 5:10).
13. Jesus advised the man who had been demon possessed to go and witness to people about what God had done to him instead of following him as he had requested (Luke 8:26-39).

And when he was come into the ship, he that had been possessed with the devil prayed him that he might be with him.

Howbeit Jesus suffered him not, but saith unto him, Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee. And he departed, and began to publish in De-cap'-o-lis how great things Jesus had done for him: and all men did marvel.

Mark 5:18-20

From the above account you can see that Jesus valued the testifying of what he had done to this man than the man to follow him and be with him. It is important for one to testify of the goodness of God at all times (Hebrews 13:15). From the above we can see that the act of witnessing is not a luxury but a must by Christians wherever they are or go.

NOW Na'-a-man, captain of the host of the king of Syria, was a great man with his master, and honorable, because by him the LORD had given deliverance unto Syria: he was also a mighty man in valor, but he was a leper.

And the Syrians had gone out by companies, and had brought away captive out of the land of Israel a little maid; and she waited on Na'-a-man's wife.

And she said unto her mistress, Would God my lord were with the prophet that is in Sa-mar'-i-a! for he would recover him of his leprosy.

2 Kings 5:1-3

From the above scripture you can see that that little maid did the needful in Naaman's house by witnessing to her mistress on the prophet of God, the God of Israel and brought blessing to Naaman who acted on that information

and got healed. It is good to witness even in a foreign land. Don't ever belittle any one, maids included.

A Christian should not despise oneself in whatever position one is in as can greatly impact positively in the society one is in, just as that Jewish slave girl did in Syria in the household of Naaman the captain of the host of the king of Syria.

(H) Repentance

To repent is to be contrite or remorseful, to feel and show that you are sorry for something bad or wrong you have committed. Repentance is an invitation to respond to divine initiative, it is in itself the activity of God's kingdom. "Repentance" (metanoia, in Greek) means "to turn from sin to God" 2 Corinthians 7:10, the verse is metanoian in Greek, meaning a complete reversal. Literally the term means "to have a second mind". Repentance is to make an about turn in life - if one was going for instance to the south, one change (turn around) and begin to go towards the north and if one was going to the east, one change (turn around) and begin to go towards the west. In repentance one need not compare himself with the others but look at himself and himself alone against the word of God (the

mirror). A good example of this is the publican, who had repented right (Luke 18:9-14). Likewise, in true repentance there is no name calling or blaming so and so made me do it. It does not matter who made you or what made you do it, but it matters a lot that you did it.

Repentance is compulsory and not optional and is fundamental in the Christian walk. Because of lack of repentance by Adam and Eve just blamed each other instead of truly repenting in the Garden of Eden after they had sinned against God, Sin has brought many sorrows to mankind to date (Genesis 3:1-19). The right thing one can do after finding one has fallen into sin is to repent but not to give out excuses. Repentance to God is likened to medicine to mankind as it brings with it the forgiveness of sin, restoration and healing. The Holy Scripture talks so much on the need for men to repent. Prophet Jonah had to repent to be restored back. (Jonah 1, 2 & 3) King David after sinning he had to repent before God before God could accept his sacrifice (1 Chronicles 21:17, 26-27). Later he confessed that if he regards iniquity (sin) in his heart, the Lord will not hear him (Psalms 66:18). Prophet Isaiah had to repent at his call before he could be commissioned. (Isaiah 6:1-8). The Lord God told prophet Jeremiah to tell

the Jews to repent. (Jeremiah 8:4-7). Prophet Hosea was told by God to ask the Israelites to repent (Hosea 14:1-3). When John the Baptist began his ministry he began by asking people to repent (Matthew 3:1-8). When Jesus Christ began his ministry, he began by telling people to repent. (Mark 1:14-15). Apostle Paul said that all have sinned and have come short of the glory of God meaning that all need to repent (Romans 3:23). Likewise Jesus said that no one is better than the other and unless people repent they will likewise perish. Therefore, we should stop rationalising by comparing one with the other (Luke 13:1-3).

THERE were present at that season some that told him of the Galileans, whose blood pilate had mingled with their sacrifices.

And Jesus answering said unto them, Suppose ye that these Galileans were sinners above all the Galileans, because they suffered such things? I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.

Luke 13:1-3

Apostle Peter told the Israelites at Pentecost that they need to repent (Acts 2:22-42). Apostle Paul in addressing the

Athenians said that now God has commanded all men everywhere to repent (Acts 17:29-31).

Forasmuch then we are the offspring of God, we ought not think that God- head is like gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man's device.

And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent:

Because he hath appointed a day, in which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead.

Acts 17:29-31

The Lord God in addressing the Ephesian Church he told them to repent (Revelations 2:5).

Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent.

Revelations 2:5

The apostle John advised the church to repent (1 John 1:8-10).

If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

If we say that we have not sinned. We make him a liar, and his word is not in us.

1 John 1:8-10

Sometimes our repentance is not genuine in God's sight and there are normally some indicators confirming this. Let us look at some two examples of true/genuine repentance.

- The case of Apostle Peter (Luke 22:31-34, 54-62).
- The case of Zacchaeus (Luke 19:1-10).

Ideally, in repentance, people need to do away with past ties which binds as is the case of the Prophet Elisha and some new believers at Ephesus. (1 Kings 19:19-21, Acts 19:18-19).

And many that believed came, and confessed, and showed their deeds.

Many of them also which used curious arts brought their books together, and burned them before all men: and they counted the price of them, and found it fifty thousand pieces of silver.

Acts 19:18-19

Unfortunately with some Christians they still keep: letters and photographs of their past boyfriends and girlfriends or their gifts, crime and pornographic books and magazines and secular music and so forth, in their houses. What many don't know is that these are open doors in their lives for the enemy to continue to bring havoc in their lives and even make them backslide. They still cherish those articles, that is why they are unable to part with them and the devil sees and justifies his attacks, after all these are of the world and belong to Satan and the Christians are not his citizens (1 John 2:15-17, James 4:4).

Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? Whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.

James 4:4

When one got saved, one was translated from the kingdom of darkness to the kingdom of light and no longer needs those items in the new kingdom. If one is saved and one continue to hold such items in one's house, one should be sure to be adversely affected spiritually in life as these are but some of the stumbling blocks on one's way. (Christian walk) (Colossians 1:12-14, Philippians 3:7-11).

Repentance can either be a genuine one or a fake one depending on the heart condition. A genuine repentance is deep, shows seriousness and is sincere (Psalm 51:17) (2 Corinthians 7:10) and often leads to tears. On the other hand faked repentance is shallow and just to save face and serves just as a mere formality. One is heartfelt and the other is heartless. A heartfelt repentance comes from the heart which is a spring of life and therefore is wet as a well and tears can come out and restoration and regeneration is achieved (Proverbs 4:23, 2 Corinthians 7:10a). On the other hand, a heartless repentance comes not from the heart but from the head, of the mind (thoughts only) and is dry as a desert and therefore is dead and unfruitful and does not bring change in one's life (Matthew 6:27, 2 Corinthians 7:10b).

Repentance is the foundation of the church (Acts 2:38). Christians as the body of Christ must live a repentant life. The salvation of a Christian can be likened to a litmus paper in chemistry, and acidic or alkaline solutions can be likened to sin. I remember we were using two types of litmus paper in chemistry laboratory while I was in High school. We had a red litmus paper and a blue litmus paper. When one dipped in a litmus paper be it red or blue into any of the solutions, the colour of the litmus would either remain the same or have its colour changed.

Repentance is the deciding factor on a Christian's life which makes the difference whether you remain a saint or have become a sinner (Luke 7:29-35).

And all the people that heard him, and the publicans, justified God, being baptized with the baptism of John.

But the Pharisees and lawyers rejected the counsel of God against themselves, being not baptized by him.

And the Lord said, Where unto then shall I liken the men of this generation? And to what are they like?

They are like unto children sitting in the market place, and calling one to another, and saying, We have piped unto

you, and ye have not danced; we have mourned to you, and ye have not wept.

For John the Baptist came neither eating bread nor drinking wine; and ye say, He hath a devil.

The Son of man is come eating and drinking; and ye say, behold a gluttonous and a winebibber, a friend of the publicans and sinners!

But wisdom is justified of all her children.

Luke 7:29-35

Let me give my personal account on repentance. At one time I went to some office to be attended to and the one handling my case seemed to be casual and unconcerned and I expressed my displeasure with a high and harsh tone. When I left that office I went to take a lift. The lift opened and I entered into it, it later closed its door. I pressed the button to instruct it to take me to the floor I wanted to alight, but the lift did not respond. I was alone in the lift. I tried severally in vain, even instructing it to open for me to look for another lift, nothing happened. I had many thoughts running in my head, what is wrong? How long am I going to be stranded in this lift? How can I get help? Then I recalled the office incidence and decided to make a try, I

said to the Lord, “Lord God, I am a sinner for the way I behaved in that office, please forgive me” Immediately after that prayer, the lift responded and took me to the floor where I had wanted to go. The prayer I believe, was the button that instructed the lift (or rather directed) the lift to behave.

There are instances where God too can repent, not for sin as you and I, but by postponing a judgement to some later time or withdrawing it completely by his discretion depending on man’s repentance to him(Exodus 32:1-14; 30-35, 1 Kings 21:20-29, Jonah 3, Joel 2:12-14).

(I) Water Baptism

Water baptism is vital for all Christians. The Lord God instituted it through the ministry of John the Baptist. Jesus Christ acknowledged it by setting an example by going Himself to be baptized by John the Baptist, same as John was doing to other people. For Jesus he went to be baptized in obedience to fulfil all righteousness of God the Father as his Son and not as a sinner as he was sinless, but identified with sinners who were his prospects (to be his followers) (Matthew 3:13-17).

Water Baptism is not for one's salvation or cleansing but is an ordinance giving testimony publicly that one has been saved and cleansed (Romans 6:3-5). Water baptism is a faith witness baptism.

Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?

Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.

For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection.

Romans 6:3-5

To “baptize” is to dip or completely immerse. In water baptism therefore, one is completely immersed in much water as the case was with John the Baptist was doing with those who came for baptism at River Jordan. For a Christian, water baptism is not optional but a must, as it is a command from the Lord Himself (Mark 16:16).

He that believeth and is baptised shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.

Mark 16:16

Let me add here that there are some who think that because one has not gone for water baptism though has believed is not saved. At the time one believed, one is already saved but one has to now publicly declare one's salvation (or celebrate it) in water baptism. Let me illustrate like this, one may hold a passport which qualifies one to visit many countries in the world, but one need to be flagged off or given a nod by the issuance of a visa. Therefore one need salvation plus water baptism to enter heaven save for very exceptional cases, like the thief on the cross with Jesus. (Luke 23:39-43) I therefore would advise that immediately one has believed in Christ Jesus, one's next question is when can one be baptised? And seek to be baptised at the earliest opportunity (Acts 8:35-38, 2:40-41, 16:13-15, 30-33).

Apostle Peter commanded, water baptism immediately he saw that people assembled in Cornelius' house had believed in the Lord Jesus (Acts 10; 44-48). Because water

baptism is a command, if one has truly believed in Him, one need just to obey (John 14:15).

If ye love me, keep my commandments.

John 14:15

Requirements for water baptism:

1. One need to hear and obey the word of God (Acts 2: 40-41, 16:14-15, Romans 10:17).
2. One must be convicted of sin (Acts 2:36-37).
3. One must repent of sins first (Acts 2:38).
4. One must believe the word of God (have faith) and confess the same (Romans 10:9).

What happens when one is baptized in much water

When one is water baptised the Holy Spirit of God performs a spiritual operation known as circumcision of the heart, at the time of baptism. We find that in the Old Testament period God gave a command for a physical circumcision, which was a fore shadow of the circumcision of the heart in the spirit (Genesis 17:9-11) and verse 11-13 talks of a seal of covenant relationship with God and Abraham and marked the Israelites as God's chosen people

and set apart as His personal property and if they obeyed the command of God of their circumcision, their relationship was maintained with God. God commanded not only the circumcision of their foreskin but also of their heart (Deuteronomy 10:16-17, 30:5-6). Just as the circumcision of the foreskin was a sign as a circumcision of the heart in the Old Testament (Genesis 17:11), water baptism is the sign of circumcision in the New Testament. In the New Testament a true sign of a believer is a circumcised heart (Romans 2:28-29) circumcision without hands has been performed in baptism (Colossians 2:11-12).

The New Covenant declares that the Lord is our God and we are His people (Hebrews 8:6-10). When we are baptized in water we are baptized in the name of the Father, the Son and of the Holy Spirit (Matthew 28:19). In summary when one is baptised one undergo the following:

Being baptised in the Lords:

- (i) Death (Romans 6:3-11).
- (ii) Burial (Colossians 2:12, Romans 6:4).
- (iii) Resurrection (Colossians 3:1-4, Romans 6:4-5).

N/B: Before one is baptised one must have been taught the meaning of water baptism, why it is mandatory, what happens at baptism and what to expect.

Also as an after thought, one need to be told to come with clothes for changing and preferably a towel for wiping oneself from the baptism before changing clothes.

(J) The Word

The word of God is the most important thing to the human race as a whole. We have the written word of God, Logos in Greek and the spoken word of God Rhema and God Himself is the word (John 1:1).

IN the beginning was the word, and the word was with God, and the word was God.

John 1:1

The word of God is very, very, very important for a Christian. In fact without the word of God, although a Christian, one will definitely perish (be lost).

The Holy Bible has 66 books with which 39 books consisting of the Old Testament and 27 books consisting of the New Testament, the total chapters of both Testaments is 1189. The number of man is 6 (Genesis 1:26a, 31 Revelation 13:18) God as the creator, gave man a life manual which was fit for him to use in his walk in this life. Shoes come in pairs and are worn in the feet and used for walking. Hence God gave man what perfectly fits him 6 and 6 which is the 66 books. It is like God was telling man when he gave the 66 books (a pair of 6) (The Holy Bible) “This is how I created you and this is how you should operate (walk) lest you break down”. The Holy Bible can be likened to a road map showing man where to start and where to reach in one’s walk in life. When tempted by Satan, Jesus Christ used the word of God to defeat him (Matthew 4:1-11). How about you and I? We can’t defeat Satan if we don’t know the word of God. Satan knows the scriptures well only he usually twists the truth therein and mislead many. Mind you he was in heaven as an archangel with the name Lucifer, before he fell. Therefore as a Christian, we need to know the word of God so well to be able to defeat the enemy. Mere words are nothing to the devil save for the word of God only; which

he can't resist or deny its truth. The word of God need to be read, studied and stored in the spirit so as to be of use in time of need, as the Holy Spirit can bring it out (retrieve) from our spirit to our mind for us to apply in a situation. (Matthew 10:19-20, 2 Timothy 3:16-17, 2 Timothy 2:15) Remember God says that His People perish because of lack of knowledge the word of God (Hosea 4:6).

Let us look at some scriptures for ourselves and see how it talks on the word of God and come to the realisation of its importance:

1. The word of God endureth forever (Proverbs 12:19, Isaiah 40:8, 1 Peter 1:25 Matthew 5:18, John 12:34).
2. The word of God gives life (John 6:63, 68, Philippians 2:16, Mathew 4:4).
3. The word of God is sharper than a two- edged sword (Hebrews 4:12).
4. The word of God is sword of the Spirit (Ephesians 6:17)
5. The word of God is lamp to a believer's foot (Psalm 119:105).
6. The word of God is like fire (Jeremiah 23:29).

7. The word of God is food for the soul (1 Peter 2:2-3).
8. The word of God is truth (John 17:17, 1 Peter 1:22).
9. The word of God is living water (John 4:10).
10. The word of God is perfect as has been tried and is a buckler to them who trust in him. (2 Samuel 22:31).

The word of God is all compiled in the Holy Bible. Unfortunately, in many churches you will find that some Christians don't have a Bible with them. Some pastors in some churches, because of the importance of the word of God, give such Christians Bibles as they know that a Christian need have the Holy Bible for one's personal use on a daily basis. When one is born-again, the next important thing after water baptism is for one to see to it that one buys a Holy Bible. A Christian need to have the Holy Bible in this walk just as a school going child need to have both school uniform and books and a pen. One can easily get lost on the way. Just as a tourist in a foreign country needs a map of that country showing the various towns, roads and so forth for direction, similarly a

Christian who was once a sinner in a foreign country the kingdom of Satan and now in another country the Kingdom of God, needs the Holy Bible as the only guidance with the help of the indwelling Holy Spirit to be able to walk thereby without getting lost if truly chooses to obey the instructions which is the word of God. Some pastors have rightly challenged Christians on owning a Bible by saying, 'If you are able to eat and drink in your home for a whole month, why can't you see to it that you buy and own your own Bible?' The Holy Bible does not cost as much as your monthly budget!

Worse still on the same vain, some Christians have Bibles alright, but they hardly read them save for Sundays when in service in the church; what a hypocrisy! Their Bibles accumulate dust at home where they were left last Sunday from church. This is laziness of the highest order on the part of such Christians. The word of God is equally important just as others, like to be filled with the Holy Spirit, prayer and fasting among others. The Christian walk is a daily walk and not a Sunday walk and the earlier we sober up to this fact the better our walk will be.

A wordless Christian is spiritually weak and is easy prey to the enemy. Let us all endeavor to read and study the word of God and store it in our hearts so that we are full with the word. The word of God is likened to a spiritual mirror (James 2:22-24) and it is foolish not to read and obey the word of God (Jeremiah 7:27-28).

For one to get right the message from the Bible one need to seek the guidance of the Holy Spirit by first praying and then reading it thoughtfully with an open mind and heart. It should be known to us that studying the Bible is tedious but it has more benefits accrued from it and makes one to be knowledgeable in the word of God in a way that he cannot handle it carelessly as some have done to their destruction (2 Timothy 2:15). Bible study though being tedious it is quite rewarding. It of utmost importance to be reading the word of God as it contains His will for us. So by ignoring to read it we end up not knowing the will of God to live by it. Reading the Holy Bible or hearing the word of God being preached or taught and doing nothing about it is not beneficial at all, meaning we have to practice (obey) it as well for our own good. Let us look at the following scriptures.

Not everyone 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

And it came to pass, as he spake these things, a certain woman of the company lifted up her voice, and said unto him, Blessed is the womb that bare thee, and the paps which thou hast sucked.

But he said, Yea rather, **blessed are they that hear the word of God, and keep it.**

Luke 11: 27- 28

For whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother.

Matthew 12: 50

But **be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only,** deceiving your own selves.

James 1: 22

Naturally in the physical realm, anything that grows up will eventually become mature. It is the same in the spiritual realm. One who is born of water and of the Spirit is a spiritual baby and need to grow up by the word of God unto maturity (1 Peter 2: 2- 3) without which one will remain a spiritual infant and stagnate in growth and become carnal (1 Corinthians 3: 1- 4). From the word of God which nurtures one's growth in salvation, when fully exercised will eventually yield maturity (Hebrews 5: 12 - 14, Ephesians 4: 11- 24) It has been said that "practice makes one perfect". It is the word of God that one hears and reads and obeys that make one to grow and mature and be fit for rapture into heaven at the Lord's coming for his holy Church (John 14: 15-17; 15: 1-5, 1 Peter 1: 15-16). One need to remain in the word of God with all sincerity to be made clean by his Master, otherwise one will remain dirty and unpresentable and for that reason one should not behave like a child who refuses to be bathed fearing that the water is cold; but should be ready to be washed whether the water is cold or hot (Ephesians 5: 25b - 27). The disciple of Jesus Christ by the name Peter tried to behave that way but later realized and came to his senses and totally made an about turn at the time that the Lord had

wanted to wash their feet with water (John 13:1-9). That experience somehow symbolized Christians today needing a daily wash with the word of God. Christians are going to be thoroughly clean and spotless by the blood of the Lamb of God that was shed at Calvary if they are ready to repent genuinely of their shortcomings (1 John 1: 7; 3: 1-3). It is only holiness and righteousness that comes by obeying the word of God, that brings the maturity in a Christian and makes him or her fit and ready to be raptured and be with the Lord in heaven forever at the appointed time (1 Thessalonians 4: 1-2, 15 - 18).

....., even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it;

That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle or say such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.

Ephesians 5: 25b- 27

NOW before the feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that his hour was come that he should depart out of this

world unto the Father, having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end.

And supper being ended, the devil having now put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's, son, to betray him;

Jesus knowing that the Father had given all the things into his hands and that he was come from God, and went to God;

He riseth from supper, and laid aside his garments; and took a towel, and girded himself.

After that he poured water into a basin, and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith he was girded.

Then cometh he to Simon Peter; and Peter saith unto him, Lord dost thou wash my feet?

Jesus answered and said unto him, what I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter.

Peter saith unto him, Thou shalt never wash my feet.

Jesus answered him, If I wash thee not, thou has no part with me.

Simon Peter saith unto him, Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head.

John 13: 1- 9

But **if we walk in the light**, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and **the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.**

1 John 1: 7

Walking in light involves living in obedience to the word of God.

BEHOLD, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not.

Beloved, now we are the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.

And **every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.**

1 John 3: 1-3

As Christians we should endeavor to see that we purify ourselves on a daily basis so that we are not found with impurities at the coming of the Lord.

FURTHERMORE then we beseech you, brethren, and exhort you by the Lord Jesus, that as ye have received

of us how ye ought to walk and please God, so ye would abound more and more.

For ye know commandments we gave out by the Lord Jesus.

For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep.

For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trumpet of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first:

Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.

Wherefore comfort one another with these words.

1 Thessalonians 4: 1- 2, 15-18

Walking in pleasing the Lord is by living in obedience.

(K) Forgiving

This is yet another very important thing in the Christian walk and is highly encouraged. To forgive is to pardon one who had done something bad or wrong to you. All of us need forgiveness both from the others and from God. Similarly of all us need to forgive others. Without the

forgiveness of God, all of us would be nowhere (Matthew 6:12, 14-15, Luke 6:37c).

The Lord God forgives all our sins if we repent and turn away from them save for one sin, the sin of blasphemy against the Holy Spirit (Isaiah 55:7, 1:18, Psalm 103:1-3, Matthew 12:32). Not only does God forgive but he forgets (Isaiah 43:25). Our forgiveness to others should not be limited and also our forgiveness should not be half- hearted but whole- hearted. (Matthew 18: 21-35, Luke 17:3-4). Lack of forgiveness is sin and is a hindrance to one's prayers too (Mark 11:25-26). Forgiveness changes bitterness to joy and also restores broken relationships (Luke 15:11-32). The Lord Jesus Christ forgave those who crucified him on the cross, then who are you or me not to forgive those who wrong us? (Luke 23:33-34). Even Stephen forgave those who were stoning him to death. (Acts 7:59-60).

We need to ask for forgiveness when we have wronged others or God and we need to forgive others when they have wronged us (2 Corinthians 12:13, 1 John 1:9, 2 Timothy 4:16, Genesis 50:15-21). Christians are advised to forgive each other (Ephesians 4:32, Colossians 3:13). Forgiveness brings freedom (Luke 12:57-59).

Another important factor on the act of forgiving is that repentance is needed (1 Chronicles 21: 1-8, Psalms 51:1-4). But here also, we need wisdom. Some people or most people don't wrong others intentionally and therefore, might not know that they have wronged someone save if are they told and also sometimes one may wrong another or be wronged by another and does not have the other's contact and there is a distance factor, Well, under these circumstances, don't expect the other to come and confess to you - Just forgive to solve that issue, to close that chapter, and even if there is no distance factor, don't put conditions on another that he or she must come and apologise to you of the wrong done to you.

Forgiveness should be between two individuals or between an individual and a party or vice versa or between two parties and the third party and other parties need be engaged only when forgiveness has not been achieved, this is the ideal approach to avoid things like gossip which normally worsens the issue at hand (Matthew 18:15-17). Christians are advised when one is wronged not to sue the other in a law court but rather, to sort the issue amongst the Christians (1 Corinthians 6:1-7.)

BUT I determined this with myself, that I would not come again to you in heaviness.

For if I make you sorry, who is he then that maketh me glad, but the same which is made sorry by me?

And I wrote this same unto you, lest, when I came, I should have sorrow from them of whom I ought to rejoyce; having confidence in you all, that my joy is the joy of you all.

For out of much affliction and anguish of heart I wrote unto you with many tears; not that ye should be grieved, but that ye might know the love which I have more abundantly unto you.

But if any have caused grief, he hath not grieved me, but in part: that I may not overcharge you all.

Sufficient to such a man is this punishment, which was inflicted of many.

So that contrary wise ye ought rather to forgive him, and comfort him, lest perhaps such a one should be swallowed up with overmuch sorrow.

Wherefore I beseech you that ye would confirm your love towards him.

For to this end also did I write, that I might know the proof of you, whether ye be obedient in all things.

To whom ye forgive anything, I forgive also: for if I forgave anything, to whom I forgave it, for your sakes forgave I it in the person of Christ;

Lest Satan should get an advantage of us: for we are not ignorant of his devices.

2 Corinthians 2:1-11

The scripture above being the second epistle of Apostle Paul to the church at Corinth was addressing an equally important issue of forgiveness among the Christians there.

Let us forgive each other of trespasses so that Satan does not get an advantage on our lives and thereby have something to accuse us with before our God.

(L) The Lord's Supper

During the time of the Israelites' bondage in Egypt, the Lord God heard their cry and decided to deliver them by calling Moses to be their leader. God then instituted the pass over feast, the Hebrew word being "Pesach" meaning to "pass over". This was because the Lord was going to pass over their houses and not bring judgement on them, but to judge the Egyptians who had made them their slaves. God did instruct them to put blood on their door post and

frames so that when God sees the blood he just passes over. They were to prepare a pass over meal which was to be a memorial observance throughout the generations, how God delivered His people. To Christians to day this is what has become known as the Lord's Supper. The pass over feast, was a fore shadow of the atonement of Christ on the cross (Exodus 12: 1-42). There were ordinances for the pass over feast (Exodus 12:43-51).

In the New Testament, the Lord instituted this supper before his arrest and crucifixion as is recorded (Matthew 26:17-30, Mark 14:12-26 and Luke 22:7-23). The Lord's Supper involves being one in Christ and in fellowship. It is remembrance of his death till he comes back for the Church. When taking the Lord's Supper one is celebrating one's deliverance from sin by Christ's death; It is also as saying to the Lord "I am still yours and is waiting for you to come and take me to be with you forever". Just as there were ordinances for the pass over feast, likewise in the Lord's Supper not anybody can partake of it but only true believers in Christ Jesus, who are part and parcel of Christ's body and have their hearts circumcised. (Ephesians 1:22-23, Philippians 3:3, Deuteronomy 30:6). One must be born - again to be a partaker. This `is a special supper and

not an ordinary supper that we normally take in our houses. This is not a religious ritual where anybody can partake as long as one has gone through what some call ‘Confirmation’ or ‘Catechism’. Remember the Israelites were instructed not to eat leavened bread but unleavened bread with bitter herbs, and also they were to take away leaven from their houses (Exodus 12:8, 15) the “unleavened bread”, bread without yeast speaks of the sinless Christ. Leaven or yeast normally starts a fermentation process thus naturally is a symbol of moral corruption. “Bitter herbs” on the other hand spoke of Christ’s suffering at the cross and also called to mind the bitterness of bonding that the Israelites underwent in Egypt. Apostle Paul reminded the Corinthian church brethren to re-examine their lives before partaking the Lord’s Supper (1 Corinthians 5:6-8, 11:23-34). One may ask ‘How often should Christians partake of the Lord’s Supper?’ Let us go to the scriptures and see how the early Church went about it (Acts 2:44-47, 20:1-7). From the above scriptures we see that Christians were partaking the Lord’s Supper daily and at least weekly. Unfortunately many Christian fellowships take months or more to come together in partaking of the Lord’s Supper, in partaking of the Lord’s Supper, there is

no age limit nor colour discrimination or sex discrimination as long as one is a follower of Jesus Christ and one has re-examined oneself. Some Christian fellowships have taken leavened bread at the Lord's Table yet God is a God of specifics and not ambiguity (Exodus 12: 8, 15, 17).

(M) Fellowship

Fellowships are paramount with Christians. To fellowship is to have a friendly association with another person or other people collectively. Christian fellowships are important activities for Christian growth. In such fellowships Christians witness and share their life experience with the others, sing, praise and worship together, share the word of God and pray together in addition to rebuking and encouraging each other in love. One of the reasons why God created man in His own image and after His likeness was to fellowship with him and the man to have dominion on earth over all other creatures (Genesis 1:26,28, 3:8-9).

Enoch had fellowship with God (Genesis 5:24). Abraham had fellowship with God (Genesis 18). The early Church came together and had fellowships (Acts 1:6-26, 2:1-4, 44-47, :1-7, 1 Corinthians 14:26-40, 1 Timothy 2:1-10, Hebrews 10:25). There is a saying which goes like this ‘Unity is strength’ it is true for Christian fellowships (Psalm 133).

I want to say something here on our association as Christians with the others. One need to selective in joining any group or welfare to associate with. Don’t just join any that comes your way. Bad company corrupt good morals, be warned (1 Corinthians 15:33-34, Psalms 1:1, 2 Corinthians 6:14-18).

The Israelites sinned against God because of bad company (people who were heathen and were hence not like-minded) (Numbers 11:4-6, 16-20, Proverbs 14:7).

During the early Church Christians turned the world upside down with the gospel of Christ, but today’s Church, if not careful, it can easily become lukewarm and find itself turned by the world upside down. Separation is necessary for a Christian (Romans 12:2). I remember at one time while in formal employment, I happened to join a staff welfare association as everybody seemed to be encouraged

to join .It was customary, that when one was to go on retirement, all members were to contribute some equal amount to cater for a present and a farewell party to bid farewell any outgoing member. Well, when such an occasion came, we used to have a meal and the retiree was given a present, but after the meal I used to see even beer being served, although those who don't take beer were being offered soft drinks. One day I sobered up and asked myself, surely where does the money come from for buying beer? If not from all the member contributions which include mine? I realized that my money was being used for a wrong cause, I was sinning through the money- my money is used to buy beer for my colleagues to drink themselves silly. Alcohol taking is sin against the Almighty. I later wrote to the chairman of the welfare that henceforth, I will not be contributing to staff welfare parties, as the money is also used to buy beer which is against my faith. Likewise, when I retire, members need not throw me a farewell party. I forfeited a farewell party, on this ground for my faith's sake. The intentions or objectives of many welfare groups may be sound, but what takes place in them leaves a lot to be desired - ungodly talks or actions and so forth so stay away brother or sister.

You may not have involved yourself directly but remember you are part and parcel of everything happening by your mere presence.

Christian fellowships that are started in a Christian's house normally in the initial stage serves as a church foundation and Christians who do meet there when the number grows and becomes too big for the members who assemble there it leads to the birth of a formal church building to accommodate all that come and be opened to all that want to hear and receive the gospel.

(N) Service

Services to the Lord is equally important for a Christian .Jesus served mankind and he is our perfect example, we therefore need to emulate Him and serve Him by serving others .The Lord God expects to get to our services we Christians, and to reward us accordingly both now in this life and in the world to come - our final destination. The Lord Jesus gave the disciples a commission (Matthew 28:18-20). Other scriptures touching on serving the Lord are as follows: Malachi 3:13-18, 1 Corinthians 3:11-15, Matthew 24:45-51, 1 Corinthians 15:58 Revelation 22:12).

To be effective in serving the Lord some preparation is necessary. We need to learn to be obedient and faithful in our daily walk. We need to do away with some things, repent and stay away from sin and be of integrity (2 Corinthians 7:1 Isaiah 6:1-8, Romans 12:1-2, 2 Timothy 2:19-21, Matthew 25:14-29, Luke 16:1-10, Mark 6:30). We need to be with Jesus as Mary, Peter and John (Luke 10:38-42, Acts 4:13). We need to go into prayer and Bible study and word meditation (Matthew 14:22-23, 2 Timothy 2:15, Joshua 1:8). We need God's power (Acts 1:8). We should not be sluggard in the service of the Lord (Proverbs 24:30-34, 6:6-11, 14:35, Ecclesiastes 11:4).

True Service is motivated by love for lost souls and devotion to God. We cannot serve two masters at a time. We should not serve the Lord for any financial gain, as it is not a business enterprise. We should avoid behaving like Gehazi or Balaam (Matthew 6:24, 10:1-8. Numbers 22:1-33, 2 Kings 5:15-27). Christians should be contented with what they have and should also work with their own hands in earning a living and not to burden other people (2 Corinthians 2:17, 2 Timothy 6:3-10, 2 Thessalonians 2:6-10, Acts 18:1-4 20:33-35).

Not all Christians are busy serving the Lord and that is why the Lord said what he said (Matthew 9:35-38). And Joshua had this to tell the Israelites (Joshua 24:14-15). In serving, one need to be an example by teaching his walk and walking his teaching (1 Timothy 4:11-12, 16). At the same time, one need not be too busy in serving that he has no time to rest in a while and ending up exhausted and burnt-out (Mark 6:31-32).

The life of a Christian is like a water reservoir with an intake on the one side and outtake on the other side for outflow. A Christian who only receives and never gives will sink and the Scripture say it is more blessed to give than to receive (Proverbs 11:24, Acts 20:34-35). Apostle Paul advised Timothy to give what he has received. (2 Timothy 2:1-2) There need to be a balance, a circulation of the word of God in and out of a Christian. In serving the Lord one need to be a good steward (1 Corinthians 4:1-2, 2 Corinthians 2:17).

When one is serving the Lord and God saves someone, it is of utmost importance that a thorough follow-up is done for the one or else the one is likely to go back to one's past life and backslide. The good thing in some churches the Pastors have a new believers' class, where the new believers come

together and are taught much the word of God on who they are now in the Lord and what the Lord expects from them, the promises of God and so on. Follow-ups should be the responsibility of not only the Pastor but to all the Christians in a church. The new believers need to be re-assured, encouraged and prayed for and so on, for the word of God to take root in their lives and for them to grow in the Lord. Personally, I have involved myself in such activity severally and continually on new believers.

Service to the Lord does not mean only serving inside a church building or in a crusade but every where you go you can serve the Lord witnessing to people of all walks of life. I take this opportunity to share some of my experiences in life. Several times I got myself involved in spreading the gospel of Jesus Christ moving from house to house and the Lord saved many in this way. Though it was not so smooth throughout but I was not discouraged. At some places they would not welcome me in their houses when I told them the reason of my visit. Yet in other places they would just straight away welcome me yes, but when we sat and I introduced myself and ask them if we can share the word of God, they would say no straight away or say not at the time, that I try and come later as they are busy. At another

time, I was a customer to a certain lady in a built stalls market in one town, where very month end I would go and buy my monthly supplies mainly grains. And at one time I felt in my spirit that surely I need to share the word of God with her and not make the routine of buying items from her and going back to my house - as I felt she needed more than just money which are physical needs but spiritual needs as well. I asked her if she was saved and she answered in the negative. I then shared with her the word of God just there at her stall. Although she did not accept the Lord at the time, but I felt she was touched by the message. Later when I went and met her and asked about her life, she confessed she was now saved and I saw myself that she was quite joyful. She told me she later got saved after my sharing with her the word of God (1 Corinthians 3: 6-8).

I have planted, A-pol-‘los watered; but God gave the increase.

So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase.

Now he that planteth and he that watereth are one: and every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labour.

1 Corinthians 3: 6-8

I remember on some occasions when traveling on a long journey in a bus, I would share the word of God to a passenger seated next to me, after introducing myself and getting to know him or her as well.

At my place of work at some time before retirement from formal employment, I turned the office as a church. Whoever would come in to be served, I would share to especially when I felt in my spirit being prompted to and most of them ended in accepting the Lord Jesus Christ (I would close the office and lead them to Christ in a prayer of repentance).

In my house also I used to share the word of God and in fact the first person preached to ever to accept Christ Jesus as Lord and savior occurred in this way. At home also at one time I called a carpenter to come and do for me some work and after he had finished doing it, I took time to share the word of God with him and he got saved. One thing I would like to say in my experiences, at first when I shared

the word of God to someone and the person did not get salvation by turning down the offer, I used to feel much offended. But as time went by, it began to dawn on me that it was not my efforts to convince one to acceptance of the Lord but God through the holy Spirit is the one that totally convicts one to come to the point of surrendering one's life to Christ Jesus forgiveness of sins and one's salvation, and that me I was just to play my part and God to do the rest. I was but a vessel, fulfilling the Great commission. (Mark 16: 14-16).

Afterward he appeared unto the eleven as they sat at meat, and upbraided them with their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they believed not them which had been him after he was risen.

And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.

He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.

Mark 16: 14-16

From the scripture above I can see that I did behave foolishly by getting offended when I preached and nobody

believed the gospel to be saved. I was sort of trying to force things to work whereas the word says the issue is that some will believe and some will and some will not and the consequences are as explained and that is a fact. I hope my brother or sister reading this book will not behave the way I used to in my earlier experiences in the field of God and that one will never be discouraged to the point of stopping to evangelize which is too bad for a truly born - again Christian.

While still in formal employment and was doing my Diploma course in one of the Government Training Institution, I took time despite the busy course schedule to share the word of God with most of my colleagues as some turned me down saying they were busy and never gave me an opportunity to share the word with them and was only comforted in the Lord (Ezekiel 3: 16- 19, Romans 1: 16).

And it came to pass at the end of seven days, that the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

Son of man, I have made thee a watchman unto the house of Israel: therefore hear the word at my mouth, and give them warning from me. When I say unto the wicked, Thou shalt surely die; and thou givest him not warning, nor

speakest to warn the wicked from his wicked way, to save his life; the same wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand.

Yet if thou warn the wicked, and he turn not from his wickedness, nor from his wicked way, he shall die in his iniquity but thou hast delivered thy soul.

Ezekiel 3: 16- 19

For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.

Romans 1: 16

I want to share an experience on former scripture you have just read in Ezekiel 3: 16- 19. When I was called to join the Government Training Institution for an in - service training, at first after training, at first after joining I didn't think about sharing the word of God to any one as every body was busy studying as we had many subjects to cover within a year and do the final examination in addition to other terminal examinations and other subject assessments from every lecturer on every subject.

Later I realized God did not send me there only to obtain a Diploma, but to do some work for him and that it was a big privilege to me as out of 2,000 plus applicants in the country, only say a tenth of the number were selected to join the various Institutions for the same course, as was confided to by an insider. Later when I went to visit one of my former college mate who was chosen as our course student leader at his place of work after our graduation, much later, I was shocked. The staff members told me their colleague passed away a few months ago.

The former colleague happened to be among those I had preached to and wondered if I had not, that scripture would have badly affected me and that is why I said it is bad to stop sharing the gospel to others.

(O) Wisdom

Wisdom is yet another very important thing in the Christian walk as one is normally faced with many difficult situations and need to be able to make sensible decisions in handling the issues. Wisdom is therefore the ability to use the word of God in every sphere of one's life. If we go the scriptures we find that God is the one that gives men wisdom, although one need to ask for it (1 Kings 4:29, 1 Kings 3:5-9,

Proverbs 2:6-7, James 1:5). In order to get wisdom one needs to begin by fearing God (Job 28:28, Proverbs 1:7, Psalm 111:10).

And unto he said, Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom; and to depart from evil is understanding.

Job 28:28

The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom: a good understanding have all they that do his commandments: his praise endureth forever.

Psalm 111:10

The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge: but fools despise wisdom and instruction.

Proverbs 1:7

In creation God used His wisdom (Proverbs 3:19, Psalm 104: 24).

The LORD by wisdom hath founded the earth; by understanding hath he established the heavens.

Proverbs 3:19

Wisdom is so precious (Proverbs 3:13-18) and is equated with strength (Proverbs 24:5).

A wise man is strong; yea a man of knowledge increaseth strength.

Proverbs 24:5

We as Christians must seek and find wisdom as even small creatures have it (Proverbs 30:24-28). The Scripture advises us that we need to be associated with people who are wise to be wise (Proverbs 13:20).

He that walketh with wise men shall be wise: but a companion of fools shall be destroyed.

Proverbs 13:20

Other scriptures also touching on wisdom are: Proverbs 10:19, 14:1, 16, 24, 15:7, 16:23, 27:17.

Wisdom is such an important thing such that when Solomon the son of David became King and the Lord appeared to him in a dream and asked him to ask Him for something, Solomon asked for one thing and that was

wisdom. God was pleased by that request and gave him so much wisdom and wealth and honour too as a bonus (1 Kings 3:3-15, 4:29 10:14 – 29).

Some of the things that King Solomon accomplished by the wisdom God gave him are as follows:

1. Solved the issue of two women harlots (1 Kings 3:16-28).
2. He compiled 3,000 proverbs (1Kings 4:32a).
3. He compiled 1,005 songs (1 Kings 4:32b).
4. Had knowledge of all trees (1 Kings 4:33a).
5. Had knowledge of beasts (1 Kings 4:33b).
- 6 Had knowledge of fowls (1Kings 4:33c).
- 7 Had knowledge of creeping creatures (1Kings 4:33d).
- 8 Had knowledge of fish (1Kings 4:33e).
- 9 People and kings from far and wide were coming to listen to his wisdom (1Kings 4:34).
- 10 Built the temple of the Lord (1 Kings 6).
- 11 Brought the Ark of the Covenant into the temple, dedicated the temple, prayed and made sacrifice (1 Kings 8).
- 12 Answered well all questions posed to him by the queen of Sheba (1 Kings 10:1-10).

When one is serving the Lord and God saves someone, it is of utmost importance that a thorough fellowship is done for the one or else the one is likely to go back to one's past life and backslide. The good thing in some churches the pastors have a new believers' class, where the new believers come together and are taught much the word of God on who they are new in the Lord and what the Lord expects from them, the promises of God and so on.

Follow- ups should be the responsibility of not only the pastor but to all the Christians in a church. The new believers need to be re - assured, encouraged and prayed for and so on, for the word of God to take root in their lives and for them to grow in the Lord. Personally I have involved myself in such activity severally and continually on new believers.

(P) Righteousness

The Lord God the redeemer of mankind is a righteous God. He is so righteous that the scripture describe his righteousness as great mountains (Psalm 36: 6) and we can rightly say in essence that God's composition is but righteousness as the throne of God's foundation is righteousness (Psalm 89: 14).

Thy righteousness is like the great mountains; thy judgments are great deep: O LORD, thou preservest man and beast.

Psalms 36: 6

Justice and judgment are the habitation of thy throne: mercy and truth shall go before thy face.

Psalms 89: 14

When the first man Adam fell in sin in the Garden of Eden righteousness left him because he did not do God's will and later we do not see God fellowshiping with him after he literally refused to repent and rather justified his sin by blame - shifting (Genesis 3: 9- 12).

And the LORD God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou?

And he said, I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked, and I hid myself.

And he said, Who told thee that thou wast naked? Hast thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat?

And the man said, The woman who thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat.

Genesis 3: 9- 12

On the other hand, when king David sinned with Bathsheba, he did not blame Bathsheba for bathing out in the open but repented when approached by a prophet sent by God (2 Samuel 12: 13).

And David said unto Nathan, I have sinned against the LORD. And Nathan said unto David, The LORD also hath put away thy sin; thou shalt not die.

2 Samuel 12: 13

Adam and Eve were no longer righteous before God their Creator and could not associate themselves with a holy and righteous God in fellowships henceforth.

When one who is in Christ does righteous deeds, one resembles God as God is but righteous. To disobey God is unrighteousness and can bring a curse to a one. One need to be obedient to the Lord God to be blessed. Christians on the earth are supposed to be an extension of God's righteousness from heaven. When one is saved, one is

saved only on the basis of the grace of God and not of one's doings. It is by Christ's death on the cross and by one's faith in Christ Jesus one is made the righteousness of God in Christ. But from henceforth, one becomes a peculiar person who should be zealous of good works which is essentially righteousness and one need to deny ungodliness and live a righteous life, so that one is perfectly furnished in all good works (Ephesians 2: 8, 2 Corinthians 5: 21, Titus 2: 11- 14, Matthew 7:17;12: 35, 2 Timothy 3: 16-17).

For by grace are ye saved, through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God.

Ephesians 2: 8

For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him

2 Corinthians 5: 21

For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men,

Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world;

Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ;
Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.

Titus 2: 11- 14

Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit.

Matthew 7: 17

A Christian becomes a good tree and need bring forth good fruit as is attached to the true vine Jesus Christ (John 15:1-5).

A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things: and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things.

Matthew 12: 35

A Christian has good treasure of the heart which is the word of God which is the word that was planted and therefore can bring forth good things (James 1:16-18).

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

By the word of God a Christian is able to know and do all righteousness.

In the Old Testament we find that God's laws were written on two stone tablets by him and given to Moses for the Israelites to obey the commandments thereon and also to have them placed at different places to remind them of what is expected from them but unfortunately now and then they would forget and break the laws. Hence, the Lord in his divine wisdom decided to have his laws imparted in the hearts of the Israelites lest they forget them again (Deuteronomy 10: 1-5; 11: 18-21, Jeremiah 31: 31-33).

AT that time the LORD said unto me, Hew thee two tables of stone like unto the first, and come up unto me into the mount and make them an ark of wood.

And I will write on the tables the words that were in the first tables which thou brakest, and thou shalt put them in the ark.

And I made an ark of shit-tim wood and hewed two tables of stone like unto the first, and went up into the mount, having the two tables in mine hand.

And he wrote on the tables, according to the first writing, the Ten Commandments, which the LORD spake unto you in the mount out of the midst of the fire in the day of assembly: and the LORD gave them unto me.

And I turned myself and came down from the Mount, and put the tables in the ark which I had made: and there they be, as the LORD commanded me.

Deuteronomy 10: 1-5

Therefore shall ye lay up these my words in your heart and in your soul, and bind them for a sign upon your hand, that they may be as frontlets between your eyes.

And ye shall teach them your children, speaking of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.

And thou shalt write them upon the door posts of thine house, and upon thy gates:

That your days may be multiplied, and the days of your children, in the land which the LORD swore unto your fathers to give them, as unto your fathers to give then as the days of heaven upon the earth.

Deuteronomy 11: 18- 21

Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah:

Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was a husband unto them, saith the LORD:

But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; after those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people.

Jeremiah 31: 31-33

Likewise in the New Testament dispensation all the children of God all have the laws of God by a new spirit with a new heart in this covenant by their conversion to

Christ Jesus in faith (Ezekiel 36: 26- 27, Romans 10: 10, Acts 2: 36- 39).

A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh.

And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them.

Ezekiel 36: 26- 27

For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

Romans 10: 10

Therefore let all house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ.

Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their hearts, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?

Then Peter said unto them, Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.

For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.

Acts 2: 36-39

In the Old Testament we find that a priest had to put on a special dress to do the work of priesthood as we can see in the book of Leviticus chapter 8 and verse 1 to 9.

AND the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Take Aaron and his sons with him, and the garments, and the anointing oil, and a bullock for the sin offering , and two rams, and a basket of unleavened bread;

And gather thou all the congregation together unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation.

And Moses did as the LORD commanded him; and the assembly was gathered together unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation.

And Moses said unto the congregation, This is the thing which the LORD commanded to be done.

And Moses brought Aaron and his sons, and washed them with water.

And he put upon him the coat and girded him with the girdle, and clothed him with the robe, and put the e-‘phod, upon him, and he girded him with the curious girdle of the e’-phod, and bound it unto him therewith.

And he put the breastplate upon him: also he put in the breastplate to the U-‘rim and the Thum’- mim.

And he put the mitre, upon his head; also upon the mitre even upon his fore front did he put the golden plate the holy crown; as the LORD commanded Moses.

Leviticus 8: 1-9

The above was a physical act but in the New Testament we have both a spiritual act as well as a physical act. God doing the spiritual part by giving Christians His Holy Spirit and the righteousness of Jesus Christ and then expects them to express that outwardly (physically) to the world by righteous deeds. God makes Christians holy after saving them by his Holy Spirit and expects them to thereby express what is in them. (Psalm 132: 9, Isaiah 61: 10, 1 Peter 2: 9).

Let thy priests be clothed with righteousness; and thy saints shout for joy.

Psalm 132: 9

I will greatly rejoice in the LORD, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels.

Isaiah 61: 10

But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.

1 Peter 2: 9

Now in this dispensation we don't put on a special dress but put on Christ Jesus instead. (Romans 13: 14, Galatians 3: 27)

But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision of the flesh, to fulfill the lusts thereof.

Romans 13: 14

For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.

Galatians 3: 27

From the above scriptures we can see that it is necessary that each true believer of Jesus Christ have righteous deeds as one's fruit as we are going to so further in other scriptures. Our good works are quite invaluable in God's sight and will follow us in the end of each one's life; in the form of a long robe or gown, as the one we normally see in a wedding worn by the bride (with a long tail trailing behind). Only this time round, it will not be a physical gown but a spiritual one in the Marriage Supper of the Lamb of God and each one who lived a holy life as the bride of Jesus Christ, looks like that saints righteous deeds will form the fine linen and not Christ's righteousness (Revelation 19:8-9). Christ himself was, is and will continue forever to be righteous because he was from the beginning with God the Father and therefore we too, need to be righteous too in our lives to be fit to be wedded to his Son Jesus Christ at long last as our Bridegroom (Revelation 14: 13, Hebrews 12: 14).

And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, write,
**Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from
henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest
from their labors; and their works do follow them.**

Revelation 14: 13

Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no
man shall see the Lord:

Hebrews 12: 14

Please note that both Joseph and Mary the biological
parents of Jesus Christ were righteous people – Joseph
being a just man and Mary a virgin. Now Jesus Christ the
Son of the living God is more than just (Matthew 1: 18- 20,
Like 1: 26- 35).

Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When as his
mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came
together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost.

Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not willing
to make her a public example, was minded to put her away
privily.

But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, the son of David, fear not to take thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost.

Matthew 1: 18-20

And in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth,
To a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name was Mary.

And the angel came in unto her, and said, Hail, thou that art highly favored, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women.

And when she was him, she was troubled at his saying, and cast in her mind what manner of salutation this should be.

And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favor with God.

And behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS. He God shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom shall be no end.

Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man?

And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.

Luke 1: 26-35

Surely, Christ Jesus is not going to wed (marry) just any believer for that matter, but only a holy bride. God help us to live holy, to live righteously.

For your information, as a Christian, to live a righteous life is more rewarding than all the rewards or riches one can ever get in this world. I can assure you it is too good, as you are going to read on.

Riches profit not in the day of wrath: but righteousness deliveth from death.

The righteousness of the perfect shall direct his way: but the wicked shall fall by his own wickedness.

The righteousness of the upright shall deliver them: but transgressors shall be taken in their own naughtiness

Proverbs 11: 4-6

The wicked worketh a deceitful work; but **to him that sowest righteousness shall be a sure reward.**

As **righteousness tendeth to life**; so he that pursueth evil pursueth it to his own death.

Proverbs 11: 18- 19

There shall be no evil happen to the just; but the wicked shall be filled with mischief.

Proverbs 12: 21

Righteousness exalteth a nation; but sin is a reproach to any people.

Proverbs 14: 34

For **a just man falleth seven times and riseth up again**; but the wicked shall fall into mischief.

Proverbs 24: 16

The eyes of the LORD are upon the righteous, and his ears are open unto their cry.

Psalms 34: 15

I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the
righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread.

Psalms 37: 25

I will hear what God the LORD will speak: for he will
speak peace unto his people, and to his saints: but let them
not turn again to folly.

Surely his salvation is nigh them that fear him; that glory
may dwell in our land.

Mercy and truth are met together; **righteousness and
peace have kissed each other.**

Psalms 85: 8-10

He withdraweth not his eyes from the righteous: but with
kings are they on the throne; yea, he doth establish them for
ever, and they are exalted.

If they obey and serve him, they shall spend their days in
prosperity, and their years in pleasures.

Job 36: 7, 11

FOR, behold, that day cometh, that shall burn as an oven;
and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be
stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith

the LORD of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch.

But unto you that fear my name shall the Son of righteousness arise with healing in his wings; and ye shall go forth and grow up as calves of the stall.

Malachi 4: 1-2

For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall, in no case enter into the Kingdom of heaven.

Matthew 5:20

The righteousness of Christians must exceed that of the Pharisees for they have Christ in them unlike the Pharisees and therefore must be more fruitful.

Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? Or what shall we drink? Or, wherewithal shall we be clothed? (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things.

But seek ye the kingdom of God, and his righteousness;
and all these things shall be added unto you.

Matthew 6: 31- 33

A Christian must strive for righteousness and not to be unduly worried of anything and all his/her needs God will surely provide (Philippians 4:6-9; 19-20, Hebrews 13:5-6).

If one does not live a righteous life now in Christ Jesus, when he comes to rapture his holy Church, one will not have righteousness in oneself and therefore will be found naked without a wedding gown and will be left behind (as normally you will never find a naked bride in a wedding ceremony but one that is properly dressed for the occasion) (Matthew 22: 11-14, Revelation 16: 15, 19: 7-8).

Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame.

Revelation 16: 15

Just as Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden after had disobeyed God and had no righteousness they were not

ready to face him, as they realized they were naked (Genesis 3: 8- 19).

Much is expected from us by the Lord as Christians as we have Christ in us who has boosted us and brought a big plus compared to the non - Christians who are empty (Luke 12: 47- 48).

Righteousness is a Christian's ticket to enter the kingdom of God in heaven and unless one lives a righteous life one cannot walk with God and if one cannot walk with God how one can expect to be with him where he dwells? (Genesis 5: 22- 24, 6: 8-9. 7: 1-5).

And E'-noch walked with God after he begat Me-thu-'se-lah three hundred years, and begat sons and daughters: and all the days of E'-noch were three hundred sixty and five years:

And E'-noch walked with God: and he was not; for God took him.

Genesis 5: 22- 24

By walking with God in righteousness one is secured a place in heaven. Read also John 14:1-3.

But Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD. These are the generations of Noah:

Noah was a just man and perfect in his generations, and Noah walked with God.

Genesis 6: 8- 9

Noah found grace in the eyes of God because he was a just (righteous) man and perfect and could walk with God.

And the LORD said unto Noah, come thou and all thy house into the ark; for thee have I seen righteous before me in this generation.

Of every clean beast thou shalt take to thee by sevens, the male and his female: and of beasts that are not clean by two, the male and his female.

Of fowls also of the air by sevens, the male and the female; to keep seed alive upon the face of all the earth.

For yet seven days, and I will cause it to rain upon the earth forty days and forty nights; and every living substance that I have made will I destroy from off the face of the earth.

And Noah did according unto all that the LORD commanded him.

Genesis 7: 1-5

Noah and his family were saved because of Noah's righteousness.

We have seen that when one is living a righteous Christian life, one becomes brave and bold (Daniel 3: 8-18, Acts 4: 13, 18-20. Proverbs 28:1 the opposite of bravery is fearfulness – and the fearful are not to be found in heaven (Revelation 21:8).

I hate, I despise your feast days, and I will not smell in your solemn assemblies.

Though ye offer me burnt offerings and your meat offerings, I will not accept them: neither will I regard the peace offerings of your fat beasts.

Take thou away from me the noise of thy songs; for I will not hear the melody of thy viols.

But let judgment run down as waters, and righteousness as a mighty stream.

Amos 5:21-24

The above scripture underscores the importance of justice and righteousness before the holy God and therefore mere

offerings and praise and worship devoid of the above (justice and righteousness) is not enough to move the Almighty God the Holy One of Israel. God condones spiritual laxity read the book of Matthew (Matthew 23:23).

And, behold, there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was **Simeon**; and the same man **was just and devout**, waiting for the consolation of Israel: **and the Holy Ghost was upon him.**

And it was revealed unto him by the Holy Ghost, that he should not see death, before he had seen the Lord's Christ.

And he came by the Spirit in to the temple: and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him after the custom of the law,

Then he took he him up in his arms, and blessed God, and said,

Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word:

For mine eyes have seen thy salvation,

Luke 2:25-30

The Holy Spirit only comes to dwell in the righteous (just) and the truly repentant (see in verse 25 above and in the book of Acts-Acts 2:38).

(Q) Praise

Praise is another important aspect of the Christian walk. It simply means to give honor to God by expressing words of administration and giving thanks to God. To underscore the importance of praise in Christian life we are going to read one example in the case of Paul and Silas the servants of God in the New Testament and others as well.

And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God: and the prisoners heard them.

And sudden there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken: and immediately all the doors were opened, and everyone's bonds were loosed.

Acts 16: 25- 26

It came even to pass, as the trumpeters and singers were as one, to make one sound to be heard in praising and thanking the LORD; and when they lifted up their voice with the trumpets, instruments of music, and cymbals and

praised the LORD, saying, For he is good; for his mercy endureth for ever: that then the house was filled with a cloud, even the house of the LORD;

So that the priests could not stand to minister by reason of the cloud: for the glory of the LORD had filled the house of God.

2 Chronicles 5: 13-14

And they rose early in the morning, and went forth into the wilderness of Te-ko'-a: and as they went forth, Je-hosh'-aphat stood and said. Hear me, O Judah, and ye the inhabitants of Jerusalem; Believe in the LORD your God, so shall ye be established; believe his prophets, so shall ye prosper.

And when he had consulted with the people, he appointed singers unto the LORD and that should praise the beauty of holiness, as they went out before the army, and say, Praise the LORD; for his mercy endureth for ever.

And when they began to sing and to praise, the LORD set ambushments against the children of Ammon, Moab, and mount Se-'ir, which were come against Judah; and they were smitten.

2 Chronicles 20: 20-22

Thou shalt fear the LORD thy God; him shalt thou serve, and to him shalt thou cleave, and swear by his name.

He is thy praise, and he is thy God that hath done for thee these great and terrible things, which thine eyes have seen.

Thy fathers went down into Egypt with three score and ten persons; and now the LORD thy God hath made thee as the stars of heaven for multitude.

Deuteronomy 10:20-22

I will call on the LORD, who is worthy to be praised: so shall I be saved from mine enemies.

2 Samuel 22: 4

Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate.

Let us go forth therefore unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach.

For here we have no continuing city, but we seek one to come.

By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name.

Hebrews 13: 12- 15

And when he was come nigh, even now at the descent of Mount of Olives, the whole multitude of the disciples began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice for all the mighty works that they had seen;

Saying, blessed be the king that cometh in the name of the lord: peace in heaven, and glory in the highest.

And some of the Pharisees from among the multitude said unto him, Master, rebuke thy disciples.

And he answered and said unto them, I tell you that, if these should hold, their peace, the stones would immediately cry out.

Luke 19: 37- 40

Let all the people praise thee, O God: let all the people praise thee. Then shall the earth yield her increase; and God even our own God, shall bless us.

God shall bless us; and all the ends of the earth shall fear him

Psalms 67: 5-7

The dead praise not the LORD neither any that go down into silence.

But we will bless the LORD from this time forth and for evermore.

Praise the LORD.

Psalm 115: 17- 18

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

Psalm 34: 1

I WILL praise thee, O LORD, with my whole heart; I will show forth all thy marvelous works.

I will sing praise to thy name, O Thou Most High.

Psalm 9: 1-2

Ye that fear the LORD, praise him; all ye the seed of Jacob, glorify him; and fear him, all ye the seed of Israel.

Psalm 22: 23

REJOICE in the LORD, O ye righteous: for praise is comely for the upright.

Praise the LORD with harp: sing unto him with the psaltery
and an instrument of ten strings

Psalm 33: 1-2

All the above and many others also show us that we need to praise the LORD whether saved or not saved. We are going to see from the following scripture the importance of praising the Almighty God.

And they rose early in the morning, and went forth into the wilderness of Te-ko'-a: and as they went forth, Je-hosh'-aphat stood and said, Hear me, O Judah, and ye inhabitants of Jerusalem;

Believe in the LORD your God, so shall ye be established; believe his prophets, so shall ye prosper.

And when he had consulted with the people, he appointed singers unto the LORD, and that should praise the beauty of holiness, as they went out before the army, and to say, Praise the LORD; for his mercy endureth for ever.

And when they began to sing and to praise, the LORD set ambushments against the children of Ammon, Moab, and mount Se'-ir, which were come against Judah; and they were smitten.

For the children of Ammon and Moab stood up against the inhabitants of mount Se'-ir, utterly to slay and destroy them: and when they had made an end of the inhabitants of Se' - ir, every one helped to destroy another.

And when Judah came toward the watch tower in the wilderness, they looked unto the multitude, and, behold, they were dead bodies fallen to the earth, and none escaped.

2 Chronicles 20:20-24

From the above account we see that God came down to intervene for his children and brought confusion, great confusion in the camp of the enemy in a way that they utterly destroyed themselves instead of fighting and destroying the children of Israel. The God of the children of Israel is Jehovah - Nissi and Jehovah El-Gibbor being their banner and is Almighty. We see God lifted up the children of Israel who came out victorious. Now here is another lesson for the saints-praise to God is but a spiritual weapon when faced with the enemy, Halleluia.

We can see in the scripture that Jesus Christ was doing righteous acts in his life while on earth in a bodily form.

How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him.

Acts 10:38

A Christian also receives the Holy Spirit to help him or her to be able to do good wherever he or she goes as God is with him or her (1 John 4:13-15, John 14:15-17) as goodness is a fruit of the Holy Spirit (Galatians 5:22).

But **the fruit of the Spirit is** love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, **goodness**, faith,

Galatians 5:22

Apostle Paul said to the church at Rome that he was persuaded of that fact-that they had goodness as they had the Spirit.

And **I myself also am persuaded of you, my brethren, that ye also are full of goodness**, filled with all knowledge, able also to admonish one another.

Romans 15:14

Get to know that in heaven there is righteousness and therefore for one to be a partaker in heaven one must be righteous.

But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up.

Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness,

Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat?

Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.

2 Peter 3:10 - 13

Keeping the word of God is righteousness and is a key factor before God.

And it came to pass, as he spake these things, a certain woman of the company lifted up her voice, and said unto him,

Blessed is the womb that bare thee, and the paps which thou hast sucked.

But he said, Yea rather, **blessed are they that hear the word of God, and keep it.**

Luke 11:27-28

A Christian has been created in Jesus Christ to be able to do good works (righteousness) as that is in God's will on earth (2 Corinthians 5:17, Ephesians 2:10 Matthew 6:9-10.)

Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.

2 Corinthians 5:17

For **we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works**, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.

Ephesians 2:10

Hence this following prayer as taught by Jesus, to his disciples.

After this manner therefore pray ye; Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name.

Thy kingdom come. **Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.**

Matthew 6:9-10

A Christian is in a spiritual warfare and righteousness serves as his or her protection in the battle against the enemy, as can be seen below.

Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and **having on the breastplate of righteousness;**

Ephesians 6:14

Please read also John 8:42-47, Acts 19:11-16.

A Christian must exercise his faith by good works otherwise his faith is not useful at all. Dorcas did just that and was resurrected from the dead (Acts 9:36 - 42).

What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? Can faith save him?

If a brother or a sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, And one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; not withstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit? Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone.

James 2:14-17

Now there was at Joppa a certain disciple named Tab'-itha, which by interpretation is called **Dorcas**:_this woman **was full of good works** and alms deeds which she did.

And it came to pass in those days, that she was sick, and died: whom when they had washed, they laid her in an upper chamber.

And forasmuch as Lyd'-da was nigh to Joppa, and the disciples had heard that Peter was there, they sent unto him two men, desiring him that he would not delay to come to them.

Then Peter arose and went with them. When he was come, they brought him into the upper chamber: and all the widows stood by him weeping, and showing the coats and garments which Dorcas made, while she was with them.

But Peter put them all forth, and kneeled down, and prayed; and turning him to the body said, Tab'-itha arise. And she opened her eyes: and when she saw Peter, she sat up. And he gave her his hand, and lifted her up, and when he had called the saints and widows, presented her alive. And it was known throughout all Joppa; and many believed in the Lord.

Acts 9:36-42

Only the righteous will enter heaven and just as Dorcas was raised from the dead so God will raise up the righteous to everlasting life in heaven. (John 5:28-29; 6:39-40, Matthew 25:46, Daniel 12:2-3, Matthew 13:43, Revelation 19:6-9).

(R) Worship

Worship is yet another important activity in the Christian walk which one need not do without. It is to adore God – to have a strong feeling of love and respect for God and experience it by singing and saying prayers to God.

The scriptures have severally touched on this and we are going to look at some of them. At this juncture let me share my own experience. In my salvation I got filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke with new tongue when I was in my

house one evening and I was busy singing hymns to the Lord with praise and worship and at some point I felt like shedding tears and began to pray at first slowly and later it accelerated and intensified and busting into speaking in a new tongue that I knew not, and from that time, my prayer life was totally changed.

O come, let us worship and bow down: let us kneel before the LORD our maker.

Psalms 95: 6

The word that came to Jeremiah from the LORD saying, Stand in the gate of the LORD's house, and say, Hear the word of the LORD, all ye of Judah, that enter in at these gates to worship the LORD.

Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, Amend your ways and your doings, and I will cause you to dwell in this place.

Trust ye not in lying words, saying, The temple of the LORD, the temple of the LORD, the temple of the LORD, are these.

For if ye thoroughly amend your ways and your doings; if ye thoroughly execute judgment between a man and his neighbor;

If ye oppress not the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow, and shed not innocent blood in this place, neither walk after other gods to your hurt:

Then will I cause you to dwell in this place, in the land that I gave to your fathers, for ever and ever.

Jeremiah 7: 1-7

Again, the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them;

And saith unto him, all these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me.

Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, thou shalt worship the lord thy god, and him only shalt thou serve.

Then the devil leaveth him, and, behold, angels came and ministered unto him.

Matthew 4: 8- 11

Jesus saith unto her, Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, where ye shall neither in his mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem worship the Father.

Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship: for salvation is of the Jews.

But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshipers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.

John 4: 21- 24

But this I confess unto thee, that after the way which they call heresy, so worship I the God of my fathers, believing all the things which are written in the law and in the prophets:

And have hope toward God, which they themselves also allow, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and the unjust.

Acts 24: 14- 15

FINALLY, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord. To write the same things to you, to me indeed is not grievous, but for you it is safe.

Beware of dogs, beware of evil workers. Beware of the concision.

For we are the circumcision, which worship God in the Spirit and rejoice in Christ Jesus and have no confidence in the flesh.

Philippians 3: 1-3

NOW in the twenty and fourth day of this month the children of Israel were assembled with fasting, and with sack clothes, and earth upon them.

And the seed of Israel separated themselves from strangers and stood and confessed their sins, and the iniquities of their fathers.

And they stood up in their place and read in the book of the law of the LORD their God one fourth part of the day; and another fourth part they confessed and worshiped the LORD their God.

Nehemiah 9: 1-3

And I John saw these things, and heard them. And when I had heard and seen, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel which showed me these things.

Then saith he unto me, See thou do it not: for I am thy fellow servant, and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them which keep the sayings of this book: worship of God.

Revelation 22: 8- 9

And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people,

Saying with a loud voice, Fear God and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters.

Revelation 14: 6-7

Although the Lord God expects worship from us, we must be careful how we present ourselves before him in worship as he is a holy God. We need to watch our bodies to be clean as well as our clothes to be clean and also modest and presentable and not tight, not transparent, not with slits, not short, not have clothes meant for the opposite sex on, and to be with a repentant heart with a renewed mind and not to dance like in a disco theatre.

Our sacrifices or offerings form part of worship and must not be presented before the Lord carelessly or any howly. Some for instance, have given out their offering using their left hand, when actually they are not left-handed - this is serious and not acceptable before the Lord God, why joke with the Mighty one of Israel? And of course, the fruits of our lips with sincerity of heart and with all holiness do count much before the Lord. God does not tolerate idol worship and as I said earlier, God does not accept a carelessly given offering and therefore don't say in your heart "any offering will do," no. Let us go to some scriptures and read, which are as follows: Genesis 4: 3-7, Exodus 20: 4- 6; 32: 1-8, Leviticus 22: 17-24, Deuteronomy 15: 21;17:1, Jeremiah 13: 10; 25: 6, Malachi 1: 6-10; 3: 6- 10, Romans 12: 1-2.

If you keenly look at the scriptures you will come to learn the fact that worship to God the Creator of Heaven and earth is very important to Him as he has been worshipped time immemorial (since creation) and is going to be so eternally in Heaven as it is the main activity in Heaven. Right now God is being worshipped here on earth as well but the common denominator is that those who worship him; is his family both in Heaven and on earth who truly

know how to worship Him. The following are just a few of the many scriptures touching on worship: Luke 4:1-8; 19:37-40, John 4:20-24, Revelation 4, 5 and 7.

(S) Separation

A Christian must choose to live a separated life to be able to please God. Abraham who is our father of faith is a good example. Abraham was called by God and told to separate himself by coming out of his country and out of his relatives and told to go where God will show him (Genesis 12: 1-3).

NOW the Lord had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will show thee:

And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing:

And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.

Genesis 12: 1-3

As we are going to see, although Abram did separate himself, he did not separate himself completely as he took with him his brother's son Lot and later suffered the consequences (Genesis 12: 4- 6, 13: 8- 13).

Because God told Abram to separate himself from his kindred and from his father's household and which he did because of his faith in God and became the father of all that believe in God (Romans 4:1-12), it follows therefore that all believers in Christ Jesus must live a separated life (2 Corinthians 6: 14-18) and that is why God had instructed the children of Israel (which was a shadow of the Church of Christ) that they must live a separated life as they were God's chosen / consecrated people (Deuteronomy 7:1-6) they were set apart by God for divine purposes. Remember too that the end time events revolve around the nation of Israel (Matthew 24:1-28, Mark 13:1-23, Luke 21:5-24). Christians are called for divine purposes as well.

So Abram departed, as the Lord had spoken unto him; and Lot went with him: and Abram was seventy and five years old when he departed out of Har-'an.

And Abram took Sar-'a-i his wife, and Lot his brother's son and all their substance that they had gathered, and the

souls that they had gotten in Har-‘a-an; and they went forth to go into the land of Canaan; and into the land of Canaan they came.

And Abram passed through the land unto the place of Si’chem, unto the plain of Mo’-reh. And the Ca’-na-an-ite was then in the land.

Genesis 12: 4-6

And Abram said unto Lot, let there be no strife, I pray thee, between me and thee, and between my herdsmen and thy herdsmen; for we are brethren.

Is not the whole land before thee? Separate thyself, I pray thee from me: if thou wilt take the left hand, then I will go or if thou depart to the right hand, to the right then I will go to the left.

And Lot lifted up his eyes, and behold all the plain of Jordan, that it was well watered every where, before the LORD destroyed Sodom and Go-mor’-rah, even as the garden of the LORD, like the land of Egypt, as thou comest un to Zo-‘ar.

Then let chose him all the plain of Jordan; and Lot journeyed east: did they separated themselves the one from the other.

Abram dwelled in the land of Canaan, and Lot dwelled in the cities of the plain, and pitched his tent toward Sodom. But the men of Sodom were wicked and sinners before the LORD exceedingly.

Genesis 13: 8-13

Please note that after Abram had departed from Har-‘an God only visited him once and it is only after he had separated from Lot that God did visit him again onwards. (Genesis 12: 7; 13: 14- 18).

And the LORD appeared to Abram, and said, unto thy seed will I give this land: and there builded an altar unto the LORD, who appeared unto him.

Genesis 12: 7

And the LORD said unto Abram, after that Lot was separated from him, Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward:

For all the land which thou seest to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever.

And I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth: so that if a man can number the dust of the earth, then shall thy seed be numbered.

Arise, walk through the land in the length of it and in the breadth of it, for I will give it unto thee.

Then Abram removed his tent, and came and dwelt in the plain of Mam-'re, which is in He-'bron, and built there an altar unto the LORD.

Genesis 13: 14- 18

Please do take note also and see for yourself that Jacob was only visited by God when he had separated himself and now was alone when he had the encounters with God (Genesis 28:10-22; 32: 22-31). Surprisingly too even Isaiah at his commissioning by God as a prophet, it is only in the year that king Uzziah died, that Isaiah saw the Lord and he heard him (Isaiah 6:1, 8). It is clear that people can prevent you from seeing or hearing the Lord. If possible people can prevent you from getting a blessing from God as we can read in the books of Matthew and Mark for instance (Matthew 20: 29- 34, Mark 5: 35- 42; 10: 13- 16).

When you live a separated life as a Christian God will be visiting you and finds it easier to share His secrets with you (Genesis 18: 1-5, 16- 21).

And the Lord appeared unto him in the plains of Mam'-re: and he sat in the tent in the heat of the day; And he lift up his eyes and looked, and lo, three men stood by him: and when he saw them, he ran to meet them from the tent door, and he he bow himself toward the ground.

And said, My Lord, if now I have found favor in thy sight, pass not away, I pray thee, from thy servant:

Let a little water, I pray you, be fetched, and wash your feet, and rest yourselves sunder the tree:

And I will fetch a morsel of bread, and comfort ye your hearts; after that ye shall pass on: for therefore are ye come to your servant. And they said, so do, as thou has said.

Genesis 18: 1-5

And the men rose up from thence and looked toward Sodom: and Abraham went with them to bring them on the way.

And the LORD said, shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do; Seeing that Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him?

For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the LORD, to do justice and judgement; that the LORD may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him.

And the LORD said, Because the cry of Sodom and Gomor-rah is great, and because their sin is very grievous;

I will go down now, and see whether they have done altogether according to the cry of it, which is come unto me; and if not, I will know.

Genesis 18: 16-21

We see that in the following verses (verses 22 onwards), Abraham could even now dialogue with the LORD God. On the issue of separation, we see that God instructed Moses to have Aaron his brother as well as Aaron's sons to be separated from the Israelites before they could be brought in the priesthood. You also see that Christians are in the priesthood of God from day one after their conversion into Christianity (Exodus 38: 1, 1 Peter 2: 9).

AND take thou unto thee Aaron thy brother, and his sons with him, from among the children of Israel, that he may

minister unto me in the priests office, even Aaron, Nadab
and A-bi-‘hu, El-e-a’-zar and Ith-‘a-mar, Aaron’s sons

Exodus 28: 1

But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy
nation, a perculiar people; that ye should show forth the
praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his
marvelous light:

1 Peter 2: 9

Christians although they are living among people, they are
not supposed to involve in their evil activities and must
refuse and separate themselves from their crooked/
corrupted lifestyle. It seems that Lot’s life was later
influenced by his uncle’s lifestyle and found favor in the
eyes of God when Sodom and Gomorrah was being judged
because he was as charitable as Abraham and most likely
must have hated the evils of Sodom but only stayed put
because he had wrongly chosen the plains of the Jordan and
had separated from Abraham and the angels spared his life
and that of his family (Genesis 19: 1- 3; 12- 16)

AND there came two angels to Sodom at even; and Lot sat in the gate of Sodom: and Lot seeing them, rose up to meet them; and he bowed himself with his face toward the ground;

And he said, Behold now, my lords, turn in, I pray you, into your servant's house, and tarry all night, and wash your feet, and ye shall rise up early and go on your ways. And they said, Nay; but we will abide in the street all night.

And he pressed upon them greatly; and they turned in unto him, and entered into his house; and he made them a feast, and did bake unleavened bread, and they did eat.

Genesis 19: 1-3

From the above scripture we see that Lot sat at the gate of Sodom and sort of acted like a watchman of the city probably to warn those entering the city the wickedness therein (2 Peter 2: 6-9) no wonder he quickly requested to lodge the angels sent by God into his house and when they refused he had to plead with them in persuading them to be with him after which they did oblige. Lot knew the problem of the city and surely enough it was evident from verse 4 of the chapter through to verse 11.

It is only by living a separated life in this world that one can be qualified to finally enter the kingdom of God in heaven. (2 Corinthians 6: 14- 18, Philippians 3: 17- 21, Mark 8: 34- 38, 1 John 2: 15-17, James 4: 4-8, Colossians 3: 1-6).

Therefore as Christians we need not be corrupted and defiled by the world system but to determine to live a holy, righteous and separated life. Lot, Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah also lived in a corrupt system in their society but involved not themselves in the evil acts that were being committed in the society. You and I can live free of corruption. We must say no to corruption (Zero tolerance to corruption). I do know we have faced and will continue to face much opposition and also suffer some consequences but we must stay put. We must not fall prey to the slogan “If you can’t beat them join them.” We can’t join them because we can and we are going to beat them surely and squarely as we have a King with us who is none other than the Lion of the tribe of Judah, who is more than triumphant and so it will be to us (Revelation 5: 5, Colossians 2: 13- 15, Romans 8: 28-39).

Still on separation we see that God at creation the first thing he dealt with from day one, was to bring a separation between light and darkness (Genesis 1: 1-5).

IN the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.

And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.

And God said, Let there be light: and there was light.

And God saw the light, that it was good: and God divided the light from the darkness.

And God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And the evening and the morning were the first day.

Genesis 1: 1-5

Moreover God himself is light and hates darkness, otherwise he would have not bothered to have light or to see that it was good and wisely separated it from darkness.

Read for yourselves the following what Christ and the apostles had to say (John 8: 12; 12: 44- 46, 1 John 1: 5-7, Colossians 1: 12- 14, 1 Peter 2: 9). Also read Luke 12: 51- 53. God still further had this to say in the fifth book written

by Moses (Deuteronomy 14: 1-2) that the Israelites were a separated Lot and must avoid indulging in doing certain things. All these need a changed mindset so as not to conform to the world pattern by following blindly but a mind renewal by the Holy spirit in Christians (Romans 12: 2).

For Christians to be right and safe, they need to go by the word of God as this is beneficial and for that matter they need to be full of God's word (wordy) and to be renewed in the mind thereby (John 6: 63).

BLESSED is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful.

Psalms 1:1

Enter not into the path of the wicked, and go not the way of evil men.

Proverbs 4:14

BE not thou envious against evil men, neither desire to be with them: For their heart studieth destruction, and their tips talk of mischief.

Proverbs 24: 1-2

If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.

John 15:19

For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light.

For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth; proving what is acceptable unto the Lord. And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them.

Ephesians 5: 8-11

Furthermore from the above scriptures we see a separated life. When one is in the Lord, one has been already separated by the Lord for the Lord and should remain so in one's life, to continue to be one with the Lord (1 John 1: 5-7).

One must separate oneself from the world and the world in the church. To separate oneself that is, from the sins in the world and the sins in the church, if one is serious with

one's salvation. I believe no one can afford to miss the peak of one's salvation - The rapture of the Holy Church of God which will usher one into heaven to be with the Lord forever (Philippians 3:20-21, 2 Peter 3:9-14, 1 John 3:1-3).

Sanctify yourselves therefore, and be holy: for I am the LORD your God. And ye shall be holy unto me: for I the LORD am holy and have severed you from other people, that ye should be mine.

Leviticus 20:7, 26

God's people are called to separate from the other people and from sin as God who has chosen and called them is both holy and separated. It is therefore a command from God for all that are called to separate themselves.

Be ye therefore very courageous to keep and to do all that is written in the book of the law of Moses, that ye turn not aside therefrom to the right hand or to the left;

That ye come not among these nations, these that remain among you; neither make mention of their gods, nor cause to swear by them, neither serve them, nor bow yourselves unto them:

But cleave unto the LORD your God, as ye have done unto this day.

Joshua 23:6-8

THOU shalt not raise a false report: put not thine hand with the wicked to be an unrighteous witness.

Thou shalt not follow a multitude to do evil; neither shalt thou speak in a cause to decline after many to wrest judgment:

Exodus 23:1-2

Depart from me, ye evildoers: for I will keep the commandments of my God.

Psalms 119:115

A wise decision indeed by the psalmist to separate from any thing that is evil (Look for Proverbs 4:14 and add the text of verse 15-16 and the quote as follows:

Avoid it, pass not by it, turn from it, and pass away.

For they sleep not, except they have done mischief; and their sleep is taken away, unless they cause some to fall.

Proverbs 4:14-16

Stay away (separate) from the path of the wicked as advised because it is messy and I believe you don't want to find yourself in a mess; messed up before your Holy Father who is in heaven and ever sees what is on earth and everywhere else.

You have seen in the earlier scriptures that God began to separate people and things even at creation and after creation and now he is going to do a final separation at the end of the age as you can see from the following scriptures; separating the righteous from the unrighteous:

Again the kingdom of heaven is like unto a net that was cast into the sea, and gathered of every kind:

Which, when it was full, they drew to shore, and sat down, and gathered the good into vessels but cast the bad away.

So shall it be at the end of the world: the angels shall come forth, and sever the wicked from among the just,

And shall cast them into the furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.

Matthew 13:47-50

When the Son of man shall come in glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory:

And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats:

And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left.

Then shall the king say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world:

For I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me.

Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungered, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink?

When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee?

Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee?

And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.

Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels:

For I was an hungered, and ye gave me no drink:

I was a stranger, and ye took me not in: naked, and ye clothed me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not.

Then shall they also answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungered, or a thirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee?

Then shall he answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me.

And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal.

Matthew 25:31-46

There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day:

And there was a certain beggar named Laz'-a-rus, which was laid at his gate, full of sores,

And desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table: moreover the dogs came and licked his sores.

And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried;

And in hell he lifted up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Laz'-a-rus in his bosom.

And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Laz'-a-rus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame.

But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy life time receivedst thy good things, and likewise Laz'-a-rus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented.

And beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that would come thence.

Then he said, I pray thee therefore father, that thou wouldst send him to my father's house:

For I have five brethren; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment.

Abraham saith unto him, They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them.

And he said, Nay, father Abraham: but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent.

And he said unto him If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead.

Luke 16:19-31

Now the above is the lesson of the year and supports what has just been said in the book of Matthew (Matthew 25:31-46) that one must do righteousness while on earth before one can enter heaven. Therefore in a nutshell the love of God in us is paramount and which will enable one to do righteousness. This rich man was worse than the dogs because at least the dogs did something small to Lazarus the beggar by licking his sores (in actual fact, were trying to wash the sores from pulse- only they lacked a disinfectant). It would have been good at least if he took the trouble to have the beggar be attended to in some Hospital and better if he also fed the beggar as he definitely had plenty - just look at the way he dressed! And the way he fared!

The word “Lazarus” means “God supplies help” and indeed God did just that to Lazarus who was both sick and hungry by taking him back to Himself by sending angels to carry him into Abraham’s bosom the equivalence of paradise but the soul of the rich man ended in hell. God comforted Lazarus by having him rest with him.

God is an all wise God and had left nothing to chance and made sure there would be no gate crushing into heaven by the wicked and also those in heaven would not sympathize with their relatives and friends being tormented in hell and try to make effort to save them, as there is only one Savior Jesus Christ. God fixed a great gulf between the righteous and the unrighteous (a separation). Now the the case of this rich man reminds me of these scriptures: Psalm 49, Proverbs 30:7-9, Luke 18:18-30.

Now let me give you a piece of advice just as Abraham gave to that rich man. Don’t wait for anybody from the dead to tell you what you ought to do with your life here on earth be they a relative or a friend because it will surely be a demon to lead you astray from the Creator (God) read: (Job 7:9, 2 Samuel 12:23, Psalms 6:5; 115:17, Ecclesiastes 9:5-6, 10).

Right now we have an end-time Prophet sent by God to prepare people of the world for their eternity prior to the rapture of the holy Church by Jesus Christ and he has been consistent in telling people all over the world to prepare the way for the Messiah is coming by repenting and living a holy and righteous life but unfortunately many have doubted him and his message from God and some have even abused him. But let me give you these scriptures to ponder on and sober up, for those who have doubted or have abused him: Deuteronomy 18: 15-22, Malachi 4:1-6, Psalm 105:14-15. As for me, I know without an iota of doubt that he is a true prophet of God and a great one indeed as I have heard what he is telling the world and have seen what God is doing in peoples' lives, me included through him. When I attended the meeting where he was ministering at Eldama Ravine from 18th to 20th October, 2008 and heard him for the first time and what I witnessed by my own eyes, my life has never remained the same. This is what is going to happen.

And when he was demanded of the Pharisees, when the kingdom of God should come, he answered them and said, The kingdom of God cometh not with observation:

Neither shall they say, Lo here! Or, lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you.

And he said unto the disciples, The days will come, when ye shall desire to see the days of the Son of man, and ye shall not see it.

And they shall say to you, See here; or see there: go not after them, nor follow them.

For as the lightning, that lighteneth out of the one part under heaven, shineth unto the other part under heaven; so shall also the Son of man be in his day.

And as it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man.

They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the Ark, and the flood came, and destroyed them all.

Likewise also as it was in the days of Lot; they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded; But the same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all.

Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed.

In that day, he which shall be upon the housetop, and his staff in the house, let him not come down to take it away: and he that is in the field, Let him likewise not return back Remember Lot's wife.

Whosoever shall seek to save his life shall lose it; and whosoever shall lose his life shall preserve it.

I tell you, in that night there shall be two men in one bed; the one shall be taken, and the other shall be left.

Two women shall be grinding together; the one shall be taken, and the other left.

Two men shall be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left.

Luke 17:20-36

Take the above advice or leave it, the decision is yours. But I still plead with you that you heed this last call from God before it is too late. Please heed it today and not tomorrow (Hebrews 4:1-7).

My son, if sinners entice thee, consent thou not.

If they say, Come with us, let us lay wait for blood, let us lurk privily for the innocent without cause:

Let us swallow them up alive as the grave; and whole, as those that go down into the pit:

We shall find all precious substance, we shall fill our houses with spoil:

Cast in thy lot among us; let us all have one purse:

My son, walk not thou in the way with them; refrain thy foot from their path:

For their feet run to evil, and make haste to shed blood.

Proverbs 1:10-16

That scripture talks of living a separated life away from sin by avoiding walking in the way of the ungodly. If you are a child of God take that advice and live with it.

THIS know also, that in the last days perilous time shall come.

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

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

Traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God;

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

2 Timothy 3:1-5

Apostasy is right here with us in this dispensation and as a Christian one need to turn away from such people mentioned above lest you too be infected with apostasy. Live a separated life away from such behaviors.

AND after these things I saw another angel come down from heaven, having great power; and the earth was lightened with his glory.

And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and cage of every unclean and hateful bird.

For all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth are waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies.

And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye receive not of her plagues.

For her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities.

Revelation 18:1-5

I do believe the nations of the earth have to a very great extent reached that far and it is like the case of the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah (Genesis 19:12-14). If you are a Christian this is the time to run for your life away from the sins of the world as soon and very soon the nations of the earth will be judged. We need as Christians to live a separated life and not be caught up in all the mess going on around us, lest we be judged with the world.

From the book of Genesis to the book of Revelation it is all talking about separation, separation, separation, to the children of God, may the Lord help us to heed the advice (1 Thessalonians 5:1-6; 17-24).

(T) Mind control

It is very important for a Christian to have control over one's mind and care much about one's thought life. It has been said that the mind is a battle field (of course, a spiritual battlefield) and it is where battles are won or lost in life. How true this is, if you entertain good thoughts, you

are more likely to do good deeds and vice versa. Normally what one thinks about is what one will most likely do in the end. The mind is the platform of an individual that facilitates action apart from the heart. The following are some scriptures that touch on the mind and which I believe will be helpful to you.

Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.

Philippians 4: 8

Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: And see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.

Psalms 139: 23- 24

You can see the above talks volumes - the heart, the mind, the content, which must be checked, examined and sieved before any action is taken otherwise one is not headed in the way everlasting (God's way).

O how love I thy law! It is my meditation all the day.

Psalm 119: 97

The psalmist says above that the whole day his meditation is in the word of God, how about you and I!?

Mine eyes prevent the right watches, that I might meditate in thy word.

Psalm 119: 148

When I remember thee upon my bed, and meditate on thee in the night watches.

Psalm 63: 6

I can remember very well that during the period I was drafting notes for this book, I would wake up at night and find myself meditating in the word of God and remembering the goodness and the faithfulness of God and how he has sustained me and my mind would be flooded with materials for the topics I was dealing with and the relevant scriptures to support them. Now and then, I would

wake up from bed and write these before going back to bed.

I will mediate also of all thy work and talk of thy doings.

Psalm 77: 12

Seest thou a man that is hasty in his words? There is more hope of a fool than of him.

Proverbs 29:20

The above scripture show us a person who is careless in his thought life and therefore his words are useless. Your words will be only useful when you think through by taking time to carefully see and assess and conclude before releasing it out.

Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, thou shalt not commit adultery:

But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.

Matthew 5:27-28

The above is touching on the thought life and throws light on how serious it is to be careless in that area in one's life. It is a make or break, a win or a loss, that simple. The word "lust" the key word touch on the thought life by meditation and imagination, eeh! Our minds need continuous checking, correcting and directing in the right direction, as God will hold us accountable. Therefore our minds must always be active and not left to be passive, lest the enemy gets advantage over us and try to take control. The mind if left unchecked, it will take anything even from the devil who actually is good at injecting wrong or bad thoughts in people in order to lead them astray. Our minds need not be void or blank but be filled with the word of God (Ephesians 4:17-24).

This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind,

Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart:

Who being past feeling have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness.

But ye have not so learned Christ; If so be that ye have heard him, and have been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus:

That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts;
And be renewed in the spirit of your mind;
And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.

Ephesians 4:17-24

Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ;
As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance.

1 Peter 1:13-14

The above verse, the former (verse 13) is telling us to gird up the loins of our mind and be sober; meaning we need to put our mind together and be ready for battle in a serious and sensible way, why? Because the mind is a battle field and can be attacked any time from any quarter.

That is the reason why a Christian must take great care in what one listens to, sees or reads as all these are transmitted to the mind and heart and affect one whether one wants or not, unless one do counter them early (2 Corinthian 10:3-6).

For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: (for the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds;) casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ; And having in a readiness to revenge all disobedience, when your obedience is fulfilled.

2 Corinthians 10:3-6

From the above one can see that there is a spiritual warfare to do with the thought life which need to be dealt with as per the word of God and any opposition on the word of God to be brought to control. The saying “Sow a thought, reap an act. Sow an act, reap a habit. Sow a habit, reap a character. Sow a character, reap a destiny” is true.

Let me share an incident in my life touching on the thought life. At one time I really desired to be filled with the Holy Spirit once again and at one Sunday service while the speaker was preaching there was a heavy presence of the Holy Spirit and it reached a point I felt I had started to speak with a new tongue and at that instance something in my mind told me “No, this is not the right time to act that way, wait at prayer time and it will be okay for you”. I fell for Satan’s trap (a lie) and I closed my mouth such that my lips could not utter the words, and most unfortunately, that was the end of it that day, because when prayer time reached, I never had the experience again sadly to say. I was simply ignorant and immature in the spiritual sense. Now I can say that the enemy saw the infilling of the Holy spirit in me was forthcoming and detracted me straight away by injecting the silly thoughts in my mind.

From the above experience you can now just imagine how many Christians have gone wrong by acting on their thought life unquestioningly, foolishly, carelessly. For your safety I advise just follow these simple steps:- look at the thought you have (1), and the circumstance you are in (2), then counter check (1) and (2) against the Holy Scripture (3) on which you need to base your decision or action (4).

Please take note that king Saul failed God because he did not control his thoughts and deviated from what he was commanded to do (1 Samuel 15:10-22). To sum it up, just do what is right all the time and be safe in God and be safe indeed (Daniel 3:1-27; 6:1-23).

Our fathers worshipped in this mountain; and ye say, that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship.

Jesus saith unto her, Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father.

Ye worship ye know not what we know what we worship; for salvation is of the Jews.

But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him.

God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.

The woman saith unto him, I know that Messiah cometh, which is called Christ: when he is come, he will tell us all things.

Jesus saith unto her, I that speak unto thee am he.

And upon this come his disciples, and marvelled that he talked with the woman: yet no man said, What sleekest thou? or Why talkest thou with her?

John 4:20-27

From the above scripture you can see that Jesus had no any ill motive whatsoever on the Samaritan woman and was busy leading her to salvation by expounding the truth to her. But the thought life of his disciples was somehow distorted as they marvelled at their Master talking to the woman as being abnormal. They can be excused as they had believed in Jesus and became his followers only that they had not yet received the promise of the Father. But now after Christ's ascension into heaven and from the Pentecost henceforth the Holy Spirit is available to all the believers in Christ Jesus and which is able to help them live a self-controlled life including the thought life as the above scripture says. It is possible for born again Christians to get all kinds of thoughts, as not all come from the heart but also from outside by the enemy and such evil thoughts must be controlled and not entertained to cause any damage, that is, allowed to lead one into sin.

NEB-U-CHAD-NEZ'-ZAR the king made an image of gold, whose height was three score cubits, and the breadth thereof six cubits: he set it up in the plain of Du'-ra, in the province of Babylon.

Then Neb-u-chad-nez'-zar the king sent to gather together the princes, the governors, and the captains, the judges, the treasurers, the counselors, the sheriffs, and all the rulers of the provinces, to come to the dedication of the image which Neb-u-chad-nez'-zar the king had set up.

Then the princes, the governors, and captains, the judges, the treasurers, the counselors, the sheriffs, and all the rulers of the provinces, were gathered together unto the dedication of the image that Neb-u-chad-nez'-zar the king had set up; and they stood before the image that Neb-u-chad-nez'-zar had set up.

Then a herald cried out, to you it is commanded, O people, nations, and languages,

That at what time ye hear the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, dulcimer, and all kinds of music, ye fall down and worship the golden image that Neb-u-chad-nez'-zar the king hath set up:

And whoso falleth not down and worshipped shall the same hour be cast into the midst of a burning fiery furnace.

Therefore at that time, when all the people heard the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, and all kinds of music, all the people, the nations, and the languages, fell down and worshiped the golden image that Neb-u-chad-nez'-zar the king had set up.

Wherefore at that time certain chalde'-ans came near, and accused the Jews.

They spake and said to the king Neb-u-chad-nez'-zar, O king, live for ever.

Thou, O king, hast made a decree, that every man that shall hear the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, and dulcimer, and all kinds of music, shall fall down and worship the golden image:

And whoso falleth not down and worshiped, that he should be cast into the midst of a burning fiery furnace.

There are certain Jews whom thou hast set over the affairs of the province of Babylon, Sha'-drach, Me'-shach and Abed'-ne-go; these men, O king, have not regarded thee: they serve not thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up.

Then Neb-u-chad-nez'-zar in his rage and fury commanded to bring Sha'-drack, Me'-shack, and A-bed-ne-go. Then they brought these men before the king.

Neb-u-chad-nez'-zar spake and said unto them, Is it true, O Sha'-drack, Me'-shack, and A-bed-ne-go, do not ye serve my gods, nor worship the golden image which I have set up?

Now if ye be ready that at what time ye hear the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, and dulcimer, and all kinds of music, ye fall down and worship the image which I have made; well: but if ye worship not, ye shall be cast the same hour into the midst of a burning fiery furnace; and who is that God that shall deliver you out of my hands? Sha'-drack, Me'-shack, and A-bed-ne-go, answered and said to the king, O Neb-u-chad-nez'-zar, we are not careful to answer thee in this matter.

If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of thine hand, O king.

But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up.

Then was Neb-u-chad-nez'-zar full of fury, and the form of his visage was changed against Sha'-drack, Me'-shack, and A-bed-ne-go: therefore he spake, and commanded that they should heat the furnace one seven times more than it was wont to be heated.

And he commanded the most mighty men that were in his army to bind Sha'-drack, Me'-shack, and A-bed-ne-go and to cast them into the burning fiery furnace.

Then these men were bound in their coats, their hosen, and their hats, and their other garments, and were cast into the midst of the burning fiery furnace.

Therefore because the king's commandment was urgent, and the furnace exceeding hot, the flame of the fire slew those men that took Sha'-drack, Me'-shack, and A-bed-ne-go.

And these three men, Sha'-drack, Me'-shack, and A-bed-ne-go, fell down bound into the midst of the burning fiery furnace.

Then Neb-u-chad-nez'-zar the king was astonished, and rose up in haste, and spake, and said unto his counselors, Did not we cast three men bound into the midst of the fire? They answered and said unto the king, True, O king.

He answered and said, Lo, I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt; and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God.

Then Neb-u-chad-nez'-zar came near to the mouth of the burning fiery furnace and spake, and said, Sha'-drack, Me'-shack, and A-bed-ne-go, ye servants of the most High God, come forth, and come hither. Then Sha'-drack, Me'-shack, and A-bed-ne-go, came forth of the midst of the fire.

And the princes, governors, and captains, and the king's counselors, being gathered together, saw these men, upon whose bodies the fire had no power, nor was a hair of their head singed, neither were their coats changed, nor the smell of fire had passed on them.

Daniel 3:1-27

IT pleased Da-ri'-us to set over the kingdom a hundred and twenty princes, which should be over the whole kingdom; And over these three presidents; of whom Daniel was first; that the princes might give accounts unto them, and the king should have no damage.

Then this Daniel was preferred above the presidents and princes, because an excellent spirit was in him; and the king thought to set him over the whole realm.

Then the presidents and princes sought find occasion against Daniel concerning the kingdom; but they could find none occasion nor fault; forasmuch as he was faithful, neither was there any error or fault found in him.

Then said those men, we shall not find any occasion against Daniel, except we find it against him concerning the law of his God.

Then these presidents and princes assembled together to the king, and said thus unto him, king Da-ri'-us, live for ever.

All the presidents of the kingdom, the governors, and the princes, the counselors, and the captains, have consulted together to establish a royal statute, and to make a firm decree, that whosoever shall ask a petition of any God or man for thirty days, save of thee, O king, he shall be cast into the den of lions.

Now, O king, establish the decree, and sign the writing, that it be not changed, according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which altereth not.

Wherefore king Da-ri'-us signed the writing and the decree. Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went into his house; and his windows being open in his chamber toward Jerusalem, he kneeled upon his knees three

times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God, as he did aforetime.

Then these men assembled, and found Daniel praying and making supplication before his God.

Then they came near, and spake before the king concerning the king's decree;

Hast thou not signed a decree, that every man that shall ask a petition of any God or man within thirty days, save of thee, O king, shall be cast into the den of lions? The king answered and said, The thing is true, according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which altereth not.

Then answered they and said before the king, That Daniel, which is of the children of the captivity of Judah, regardeth not thee, O king, nor the decree that thou hast signed, but maketh his petition three times a day.

Then the king, when he heard these words, was so displeased with himself, and set his heart on Daniel to deliver him: and he labored till the going down of the sun to deliver him.

Then these men assembled unto the king, and said unto the king, know, O king, that the law of the Medes and Persians is, That no decree nor statute which the king establisheth may be changed.

Then the king commanded, and they brought Daniel, and Cast him into the den of lions. Now the king spake and said unto Daniel, thy God whom thou servest continually, he will deliver thee.

And a stone was brought, and laid upon the mouth of the den; and the king sealed it with his own signet, and with the signet of his lords; that the purpose might not be changed concerning Daniel.

Then the king went to his palace, and passed the night fasting: neither were instruments of music brought before him: and his sleep went from him.

Then the king arose very early in the morning, and went in haste unto the den of lions.

And when he came to the den, he cried with a lamentable voice unto Daniel: and the king spake and said to Daniel, O Daniel, servant of the living God, is thy God whom thou servest continually, able to deliver thee from the lions?

Then said Daniel unto the king, O king, live for ever.

My God hath sent his angel, and hath shut the lions' mouths, that they have not hurt me: forasmuch as before him innocency was found in me; and also before thee, O king, have I done no hurt.

Then was the king exceeding glad for him, and commanded that they should take Daniel up out of the den. So Daniel was taken up out of the den, and no manner of hurt was found upon him, because he believed in his God.

Daniel 6:1-23

From what you have read in Daniel 3:1-27 you can see that the trio did not bulge when they were ordered by the king to bow down and worship the golden image and to serve the gods of the king, even when the fiery furnace was heated seven times more and continued steadfastly to trust in their God. Under the circumstances, many would have thought it logical and wise to yield: But the trio did not use their head (mind) on the issue to do what was convenient to them under the circumstance but did what was right (in their heart) and in God's sight. Therefore brother and sister yield not to temptation have your heart treasured with the word of God and follow your heart and not your head except when it does contradict the truth (God's word) and therefore not of the Holy spirit. The trio ran into the name of the Lord and were safe. They were like Mount Zion which could not be shaken. The king did not know that the God of these trio was a mighty God and a consuming fire.

God the Almighty had neutralized the fiery furnace fire by consuming it and only His fire was with the trio.

In the second incidence concerning Daniel, Daniel went on praying three times a day as he used to do before a decree was signed and thanked his God. He even did not hide it, by closing the windows in his chamber, but left them open. This time round, the king's officials in their wicked scheme against God's servant they did not know that his God was a Super Lion, a great lion that no other lion could ever face, as he was the Lion of the tribe of Judah and stopped the lions in the den may have seen in his eyes such a message "Don't you ever try to touch him". In all the two incidences, we see that both the king's officials were plotting wickedly against the servants of God and the kings who were unaware of what was being cooked. The devil is the accuser of the brethren (Revelation 12:10) and therefore we need all the time to be checking whether there is any fault in our life, lest we are accused. If we happen to find any fault we need not waste time but repent to the Lord.

Adam in the Garden of Eden sinned because he used his head (the mind) and not his heart (where God's command was deposited) and must have reasoned in his mind "The bone of my bone and the flesh of my flesh, has brought me

a nice fruit forgetting that God had commanded them not to eat it lest they die''. Watch your spouse, she can mislead you. Delilah also mislead Samson and history repeats itself. You can be the next victim if you are careless with her advances. May be that is why the scripture talk of them as the weaker vessel!? (Genesis 2:15-23; 3:1-6, Judges 16:15-21, Ecclesiastes 3:15, 1 Peter 3:7).

Abraham we see that he wanted to play safe (conveniently) and not (rightly) because his thoughts were busy telling him something, luckily for him God intervened on two occasions (Genesis 12:10-20; 20:1-11). Sadly to say, Abraham's lies were later inherited by his son Isaac and later his grandson Jacob (Genesis 26:1-7; 27:1-40) as it turned into a generational curse as probably Abraham never realized it to be sin that needed his repentance. Well, it seems for some Christians it is much better to follow the path of convenience than that of inconvenience which might turn out to be very costly. Righteousness is the key thing. Jesus Christ went through inconveniences in his life in order to do the will of God. It is to do the will of the Father and not our will or somebody else's will (John 4:34; 6:38). King Saul acted foolishly because of his thoughts (1 Samuel 13:10-14).

Now let me give you a few examples of the need to control the mind lest it be misused by Satan.

AND Satan stood up against Israel, and provoked David to number Israel.

And David said to Jo'-ab and the rulers of the people, Go number Israel from beer-she-ba even to Dan; and bring the number of them to me, that I may know it.

And Jo'-ab answered, The LORD make his people a hundred times so many more as they be: but, my lord the king, are they not all my lord's servants? Why then doth my lord require this thing? Why will he be a cause of trespass to Israel?

Nevertheless the king's word prevailed against Jo'-ab. Wherefore Jo'-ab departed, and went throughout all Israel, and came to Jerusalem.

And Jo'-ab gave the sum of the number of the people unto David. And all they of Israel were a thousand thousand men that drew sword: and Judah was four hundred threescore and ten thousand men that drew sword.

But Levi and Benjamin counted he not among them: for the king's word was abominable to Jo'-ab.

And God was displeased with this thing; therefore he smote Israel.

1 Chronicles 21:1-7

From the above account you can see that Satan was involved in persuading king David to number the people through his mind and David did not question the thought and acted in it thereby sinning against God for lack of trust on his part by wanting to know the might of Israel although he knew it was God who was fighting for them their battles and giving them victory and not because their number was bigger than their enemies' numbers. Even Joab was surprised by his lord's request and counted not Levi and Benjamin because it was to him abominable altogether. God was displeased and that is why he smote Israel for the silly act of their king.

Now before the feast of the pass over, when Jesus knew that his hour was come that he should depart out of this world unto the Father, having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end.

And supper being ended, the devil having now put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray him;

And after the sop Satan entered into him. Then said Jesus unto him, That thou doest, do quickly.

John 13:1-2, 27

Here also Satan had a hand in Judas Iscariot's betrayal of Jesus. First he put a thought in Judas' mind to betray Jesus and because Judas did not fight the thought, that is, did not object, the thought then sunk into his heart (verse 2) and now that it had sunk and settled in the heart, it was ripe for action and that is why Satan used further that open door in Judas' heart and he himself entered into Judas' body to accomplish his mission of doing away with Jesus' life and Jesus knew it and told him to go ahead with his plan (verse 27). Jesus knew all along that in Satan's thought on him to be crucified he would accomplish God's work on earth for all mankind (John 10:9-18, Isaiah 53:3-12). Satan all long was in the dark and did not know that he was going to be utterly defeated in his what he thought that Jesus would be no more (Colossians 2:13-15, John 12:20-32).

BUT a certain man named An-a-ni'as, with Sapph-i'-ra his wife, sold a possession.

And kept back part of the price, his wife also being privy to it, and brought a certain part, and laid it at the apostles' feet.

But Peter said, An-a-ni'as, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost, and to keep back part of the price of the land?

Acts 5: 1-3

Here too, Satan is involved in Ananias and Sapphira's lives by filling their hearts with a lie prior to putting such a thought in their minds which eventually ended in their hearts and they acted contrarily. If one does not control one's mind, Satan can use it again and again in misleading one to do or say the wrong thing (to sin).

Always do what your heart tells you to do where the issues of life come from but before that have your heart filled with the word of God and you are most likely to do the right thing. Check and confirm if what you think is not against the word of God and then, only then go ahead and do it. It is easier for Satan to use one's mind than one's heart if you block him at the mind level you have won the battle.

(U) Unity

God loves unity and blesses those that live in unity (Psalm 133). God brought also the Institution of marriage which speaks of unity. God loves fellowship as well which also involve associating or uniting together. God is a Trinity (God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit) and is a divine being (Genesis 1:26, John 10:30) hence God's love for unity. God went further and removed the hostility among the peoples of the world (The three races), he did this in his Son Christ Jesus (Ephesians 2:12-14, 4:1-6, Galatians 3:26-29, 1 Corinthians 1:9-13) When Christ was on the earth in a physical body before he left he prayed for the unity of his followers (the disciples) and those who would later believe in him. (John 17:21; 10:16).

Now let me take you to the scriptures and see how it supports unity.

So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another.

Romans 12:5

In Christ Jesus, all who have believed in him are one-united.

Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgement.

For it hath been declared unto me of you, my brethren, by them which are of the house of Chlo'-e, that there are contentions among you.

Now this I say, that every one of you saith, I am of Paul; and of A-pol'-los; and of Ce'-phas; and of Christ.

Is Christ divided? was Paul crucified for you? Or were ye baptized in the name of Paul?

1 Corinthians 1:10-13

Yes, you can't be united if you have divisions and you can't be of one mind except you be united.

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 faith of the gospel;

Philippians 1:27

All the above is talking of one thing- unity of purpose.

THEREFORE, my brethren dearly beloved and longed for,
my joy and crown, so stand fast in the Lord, my dearly
beloved. I beseech Eu-o'-di-as, and beseech Syn'-ty-che,
that they be of the same mind in the Lord.

Philippians 4:1 – 2

Still this is a call for unity, which is very important before
the eyes of the Lord.

I THEREFORE, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that
ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called,
With all lowliness and meekness, with long – suffering,
forbearing one another in love;
Endeavoring 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, through all,
and in you all.

But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ.

Ephesians 4:1 - 7

Christians must endeavor to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the body of Christ.

FOR I would that ye knew what great conflict I have for you, and for them at La-od-ce'-a, and for as many as have not seen my face in the flesh;

That their hearts might be comforted, being knit together in love, and unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the acknowledgment of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ; In whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

Colossians 2:1-3

All speak of unity.

Finally, be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another, love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous:

1 Peter 3:8

Unit, unity, unity.

He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, (that he might fill all things).

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:

Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ:

Ephesians 4:10-13

Verse 13 still talks of the very one thing- unity. One of God's blessing in unity read (Acts 1:14; 2:1-4)

The unity God hates

Now there is I believe only one unity that God hates and he will not hesitate to judge - the unity for ill motive, the unity to do evil. That kind of unity we begin to see in the book of Genesis (Genesis 11) and another one also in the book of Revelation (Revelation 20) and there could be still others,

but we will look at these two examples and what transpired in the former and what will transpire in the latter.

AND the whole earth was of one language, and of one speech. And it came to pass, as they journeyed from the east, that they found a plain of Shi'-nar; and they dwelt there.

And they said one to another, Go to, let us make brick, and burn them thoroughly. And they had brick for stone, and slime and had they for mortar.

And **they said, Go to, let us build us a city and a tower, whose top may reach unto heaven; and let us make us a name, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth.**

And the LORD came down to see the city and the tower, which the children of men builded.

And the LORD said, Behold, the people is one, and they have all one language; and this they begin to do: and now nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined to do.

Go to; let us go down, and there confound their language, that they may not understand one another's speech.

So the LORD scattered them abroad from thence upon the face of all the earth: and they left off to build the city.

Therefore is the name of it called Babel; because the LORD did there confound the language of all the earth: and from thence did the LORD scatter them abroad upon the face of the earth.

Genesis 11:1-9

Now why did God confound the language of those people and scatter them across the face of the earth? These people in their unity were overly ambitious and wanted to exalt themselves ('Let us make us a name') and that was a sign of pride. Pride is sin. The people were beginning to follow the pattern of Satan (formerly called Lucifer in heaven), who wanted to exalt himself above God and became proud and ended rebelling against God and was thrown (literally cast down) to the earth, as he had already ganged up with some of the angels in heaven. God had no alternative with those people as they were heading on the wrong direction and God judged them. Read (James 4:5-7) The people had become rebellious by defying God's instruction of multiplying and replenishing the earth meaning spreading and occupying the earth as the population grew (Genesis

9:1,7) and instead were planning to live at the plain in the land of Shinar and not to spread beyond it and that is why they thought of having a city and a tower there (Genesis 11:1-4) the tower most likely they were going to idolize it and all the above amounted to setting a wrong precedent by building their lives not on the instruction/word of God but on their own human wisdom which was not constructive but destructive. God had to scatter them abroad upon the face of all the earth by confounding their language (verses 5-9).

Those people were making a futile effort to reach God in the physical instead of in the spiritual (Matthew 5:8, 1 Corinthians 15:50, John 4:20-24). Jesus Christ had to come first to show man how to reach God (John 14:1-6, 8:12-16) as he was the one to mediate between God and mankind and to bring a reconciliation (1Timothy 2:5-6, Romans 5:10-11, 2 Corinthians 5:17-19).

God had to judge king Nebuchadnezzar because of such behaviour as of those people (Daniel 4:29-36).

And when the thousand years are expired, **Satan shall be loosed out of his prison.**

And shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Ma'-gog, **to gather them together to battle:** the number of whom is as the sand of the sea.

And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them.

And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever.

Revelation 20:7-10

Satan it seems will be always be found on the wrong end. It was so in heaven and he was cast down to earth. He will be at the wrong end again at the end of the Millenium rule by Jesus Christ in Jerusalem and will show his cheekiness and will be dealt with instantly, being devoured and followed by being cast into the lake of fire and brimstone- his case sealed for ever and ever.

V) Thanksgiving

Thanksgiving is an important thing in life and which need not be a rare thing in a Christian's mouth as it glorifies God. It should be with pure motive and clean heart and if with material or money, from a right source and presentable. On the other hand ingratitude is a bad thing and need be avoided. The Holy Scripture is full of people who gave their thanks both to God and to their fellow men. Also in the scriptures we find God commanding that people to give thanks and we also see the consequences of not giving thanks, that is, ingratitude.

I have three segments on this topic and call them the ABC in thanksgiving. The first segment dealing with thanksgiving as a command, the second segment dealing with examples of those who gave thanks and the last segment dealing with consequences for ingratitude.

A) Thanksgiving as a command

Offer unto God thanksgiving; and pay thy vows unto the Most High:

And call upon me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me.

Psalms 50:14-15

Oh that men would praise the LORD for his goodness, and
for his wonderful works to the children of men!
And let them sacrifice the sacrifices of thanksgiving, and
declare his works with rejoicing.

Psalm 107:21-22

O GIVE thanks unto the LORD; for he is good: for his
mercy endureth forever.

O give thanks unto the God of gods: for his mercy endureth
forever.

O give thanks to the Lord of lords: for his mercy endureth
for ever.

Psalm 136: 1-3

By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God
continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his
name.

Hebrews 13:15

Beware that thou forget not the LORD thy God, in not
keeping his commandments, and his judgments, and his
statutes which I command thee this day.

Lest when thou hast eaten and artful, and hast built goodly houses, and dwelt therein;

And when thy herds and thy flocks multiply, and thy silver and thy gold is multiplied, and all that thou hast is multiplied;

Then thine heart be lifted up, and thou forget the LORD thy God, which brought thee forth out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage.

But thou shalt remember the LORD thy God: for it is he that giveth thee power to get wealth, that he may establish his covenant which he sware unto thy fathers, as it is this day.

Deuteronomy 8:11-14, 18

Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ;

Ephesians 5:20

In everything give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.

1 Thessalonians 5: 20

Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand.

Be careful for nothing; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.

Philippians 4:5-6

I EXHORT therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men;

1 Timothy 2:1

O COME, let us sing unto the LORD: let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation.

Let us come before his presence with thanksgiving, and make a joyful noise unto him with psalms.

For the LORD is a great God, and a great King above all gods.

Psalms 95:1-3

Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and

hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.

And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him.

Colossians 3:16-17

B) Examples of thanksgiving

I thank my God upon every remembrance of you,
Always in every prayer of mine for you all making request with joy,

For your fellowship in the gospel from the first day until now;

Being confident of this very thing, that he which begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ:

Philippians 1:3-6

But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

1 Corinthians 15:57

And from thence, when the brethren heard of us, they came to meet us as far as Ap'-pi-i For'-um, and The three Taverns: whom when Paul saw, he thanked God, and took courage.

Acts 28:15

First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for you all, that your faith is spoken of throughout the whole world.

Romans 1:8

I thank my God always on your behalf, for the grace of God which is given you by Jesus Christ;

That in everything ye are enriched by him, in all utterance, and in all knowledge;

Even as the testimony of Christ was confirmed in you:

1 Corinthians 1:4-6

Wherefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus, and love unto all the saints, Cease not to give you by Jesus Christ;

That in everything ye are enriched by him, in all utterance, and in all knowledge;

Even as the testimony of Christ was confirmed in you:

1 Corinthians 1:4-6

Wherefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus, and love unto all the saints, Cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers;

That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him:

Ephesians 1:15-17

We give thanks to God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for you,

Since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus, and of the love which ye have to all the saints,

For the hope which is laid up for you in heaven, whereof ye heard before in the word of the truth of the gospel;

Which is come unto you, as it is in all the world; and bringeth forth fruit, as it doth also in you, since the day ye heard of it, and knew the grace of God in truth:

Colossians 1:3-6

PAUL, and Sil-va'-nus, and Timothy, unto the church of the Thess-a-lo'-ni-ans which is in God the Father and in the

Lord Jesus Christ: Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.

We give thanks to God always for you all, making mention of you in our prayers;

Remembering without ceasing your work of faith, and labor of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, in the sight of God and our Father;

Knowing, brethren beloved, your election of God.

1 Thessalonians 1:1-4

I thank God, whom I serve from my forefathers with pure conscience, that without ceasing I have remembrance of thee in my prayers night and day;

2 Timothy 1:3

I thank my God, making mention of thee always in my prayers,

Hearing of thy love and faith, which thou hast toward the Lord Jesus, and toward all saints;

That the communication of thy faith may become effectual by the acknowledging of every good thing which is in you in Christ Jesus. For we have great joy and consolation in

thy love, because the bowels of the saints are refreshed by thee, brother.

Philemon 4-7

From all the above scriptures you can see for yourself the classical example of thanksgiving portrayed in the life of Apostle Paul. I can say that the apostle excelled in thanksgiving and may the Lord God help you and I to be like him or every near like him and which would be good for you and I. No wonder the apostle received abundance of the grace of God in his life and could boldly say the following:

But I rejoiced in the Lord greatly, that now at the last your case of me hath flourished again; wherein ye were also careful, but ye lacked opportunity.

Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content.

I know both how to be abased and I know how to abound: every where and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need.

I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.

Philippians 4:10-13

Let me say this: our thanksgiving need not be limited to God only but to the rest of mankind thanking them in whatever good they do to us however small or big it may seem before our naked eyes.

Thanksgiving as we have learned, should be part and parcel in our lives. Something which seem very difficult to do though possible is to give thanks even when no good thing has been done to us - we all need the Lord to help us here, even the more.

Jesus saith unto her, Said I not unto thee, that, if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the glory of God?

Then they took away the stone from the place where the dead was laid. And Jesus lifted up his eyes, and said, Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me.

John 11:40-41

I thank thee, and praise thee, O thou God of my fathers, who hast given me wisdom and might, and hast made known unto me now what we desired of thee: for thou hast now made known unto us the king's matter.

Daniel 2:23

And he leaping up stood, and walked, and entered with them into the temple, walking, and leaping, and praising God.

Acts 3:8

And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath enabled me, for that he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry;

Who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious: but I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly in unbelief.

1 Timothy 1:12-13

At midnight I will rise to give thanks unto thee because of thy righteous judgments.

Psalms 119:62

And one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, and with a loud voice glorified God.

And fell down on his face at his feet, giving him thanks: and he was a Sa-mar'-i-tan.

Luke 17:15-16

After this I beheld, and lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongue, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands; And cried with a loud voice, saying, salvation to our god which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb. And all the angels stood round about the throne, and about the elders and the four beasts, and fell before the throne on their faces, and worshiped God, Saying, A'-men: Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honor, and power, and might be unto our God for ever and ever. A'-men.

Revelation 7: 9-12

From the above account you can see for yourself that thanksgiving will not be limited to men only and that in heaven, even the angels there are full of thanksgiving to the Almighty God.

Thanksgiving need to be done both for small things and big things as well, as that is the right attitude of the heart (Psalm 34:1, Ephesians 5:20).

One need to have in mind the fact that some have not received and therefore one need to appreciate whatever one has received however small or big it may appear in one's eyes as the fact remains that it is a blessing.

C) Consequences for Ingratitude

And it shall be, if thou do at all forget the LORD thy God, and walk after other gods, and serve them, and worship them, I testify against you this day ye shall surely perish.

As the nations which the LORD destroyeth before your face, so shall ye perish; because ye would not be obedient unto the voice of the LORD your God.

Deuteronomy 8:19-20

Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin.

James 4:17

AND Re-ho-bo'-am went to She'-chem: for to She'-chem were all Israel come to make him king.

And it came to pass when Jer-o-bo'-am the son of Ne'-bat, who was in Egypt, whither he had fled from the presence of

Solomon the king, heard it, that Jer-o-bo'-am returned out of Egypt.

And they sent and called him. So Jer-o-bo'-am and all Israel came and spake to Jer-o-bo'-am, saying, Thy father made our yoke grievous: now therefore ease thou some what the grievous servitude of thy father, and his heavy yoke that he put upon us, and we will serve thee.

And he said unto them, Come again unto me after three days. And the people departed.

And king Jer-o-bo'-am took counsel with the old men that had stood before Solomon his father while he yet lived, saying, What counsel give ye me to return answer to this people?

And they spake unto him, saying, If thou be kind to this people, and please them, and speak good words to them, they will be thy servants for ever.

But he forsook the counsel which the old men gave him, and took counsel with the young men that were brought up with him, that stood before him.

And when all Israel saw that the king would not hearken unto them, the people answered the king, saying, What portion have we in David? and we have none inheritance in the son of Jesse; everyman to your tents, O Israel: and now,

David, see to thine own house. So all Israel went to their tents.

But as for the children of Israel that dwelt in the cities of Judah, Jer-o-bo'-am reigned over them.

Then king Jer-o-bo'-am sent Ha-dor'-am that was over the tribute; and the children of Israel stoned him with stones, that he died. But king Jer-o-bo'-am made speed to get him up to his chariot, to flee to Jerusalem.

And Israel rebelled against the house of David unto this day.

2 Chronicles 10:1-8, 16-19

And Jesus answering said, Were there not ten cleansed? But where are the nine?

There are not found that returned to give glory to God, save this stranger.

And he said unto him, Arise, go thy way: thy faith hath made thee whole.

Luke 17:17-19

W) Walking with God

Walking with God is another very important aspect in a Christian's life and come about as a result of being faithful

to God always and the presence of God is always with you. How does one become faithful to God then for that to happen? It is by obedience. If you are ever obedient to God you are then faithful to him and you can be sure his presence is with you wherever you are. Those who always obey God can also be sensitive to his promptings and listen to the Holy Spirit and act accordingly and God is pleased with them and he continues to direct their paths. One has to maintain holiness and righteousness to be able to be in a position to enjoy God's presence. God's presence can be felt in different ways such as: - All of a sudden a scripture coming to your mind - meaning you have to heed to it to understand it with regard to the prevailing circumstance around you to be able to know what to do at that particular time. One can also receive a prompting of the Holy Spirit which is some inner feeling in one's spirit to behave in a certain way - an urging sort of to do or not to do a thing. One can also hear a small audible voice telling him or her about something - giving some direction. If one does not act appropriately the Holy Spirit is grieved as one has missed the point and therefore not done the will of his Father. In order for one to be near to God so as to walk with him one must be separated from sin as God is holy.

Other things that the Lord requires from a Christian to be always near to him/her is humility and truthfulness (Psalms 34:18, 145:18, 2 John 9).

In a nutshell walking with God is essentially pleasing him by always obeying him and by that, one is enabled to prophesy (forth telling and foretelling) and also one becomes a candidate for rapture to be with him eternally in his kingdom in heaven. A good example is the case of Enoch and Elijah among others as is recorded in the Scripture. Obedience therefore becomes the characteristic of those walking with God as that is what is common to all of them. Do note that it is only obedience that can take/make one to be close to God.

Now get to know that the prerequisite for walking with God is to be blameless before him and that is of course on a daily basis not on some days only.

AND when Abram was ninety years old and nine, the LORD appeared to Abram, and said unto him, I am the Almighty God; walk before me, and be thou perfect.

And I will make my covenant between me and thee, and will multiply thee exceedingly.

Genesis 17:1-2

By telling Abram to be perfect in walking before him God meant he had to be walking before him a blameless man.

When God created man he intended to have a close relationship with him just as a friend and to fellowship and commune with him but unfortunately disobedience came in and man fell.

But fortunately, God who is Almighty had things in his control and you and I can walk with him in Christ Jesus being perfect by being obedient to the will of the Father.

Now there is something that one need to watch and that is how one relate with other people. If one is not careful enough one may end up compromising or being compromised and that alone definitely affects one's relationship of walking with God. Who do you obey most? God or men?

And the LORD God took the man, and put him in to the Garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it.

And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat:

But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.

And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat.

Genesis 2:15-17; 3:6

Now there the man Adam obeyed his wife Eve instead of God. That is why Jesus said those who don't love him more cannot be his disciples (followers) and that we must say no to people and they will hate us and become our enemies (Matthew 10:34-39)

Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword.

For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law.

And a man's foes shall be they of his own household.

He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me.

And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me.

He that findeth his life shall lose it: and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it.

Matthew 10:34-39

In walking with God we see when the angels visited Lot, Lot's in – laws and Lot's wife chose not to walk with God and only Lot and his two daughters chose to walk with God by obeying God's instructions and were saved. Later we see that Lot's daughters chose not to walk with God by arranging to sleep with their father after making him drunk. Walking with God is an individual walk and not a group walk as one has to decide as an individual to walk with God.

Many try to follow Jesus but they have not taken their cross and also many fear mortal men which becomes a snare to them. The apostles are going to find their lives for Christ's sake. Read on

But that it spread no further among the people, Let us strictly threaten them, that they speak henceforth to no man in this name.

And they called them, and commanded them not to speak at all nor teach in the name of Jesus.

But Peter and John answered and said unto them, Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye.

For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard.

Acts 4:17-20

The apostles heeded the advice of Jesus (Luke 12:4-5). Samson who was full of the Spirit of God when he began to relate intimately with women than with his God ended being more distanced by God and ended in cruel treatment by his enemies and was a slave to them and not a victor and died a terrible death being crushed to death in the rubble of a building as his enemies (Judges 14 and 16).

King Solomon when he began to relate more with women than his God, the God of his father David he ended turning away from God and God was angry and king Solomon had many adversaries until his death (1 Kings 3 and 11).

Now let us see some of the people that walked with God.

Enoch

And E'-noch lived sixty and five years, and begat Me-thu'-se-lah:

And E'-noch walked with God after he begat Me-thu'-se-lah three hundred years, and begat sons and daughters:

And all the days of E'-noch were three hundred sixty and five years:

And E'-noch walked with God: and he was not; for God took him.

Genesis 5:21-24

Noah

And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.

And it repented the LORD that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart.

And the LORD said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth; both man, and beast, and

the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air; for it repenteth me that I have made them.

But Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD.

These are the generations of Noah: Noah was a just man and perfect in his generations, and Noah walked with God.

And Noah begat three sons, Shem, Ham, and Ja'-pheth.

Genesis 6:5-10

Now there are also others who walked with God's presence and that is the Israelites. Before I go to that scripture, do note that Noah walked with God because he was an obedient man (Genesis 6:13-7:1-5). Now the Israelites were also expected to be obedient to God (Exodus 23:20-22) Moses had asked God that his presence be with them on their journey to the promised land and that if he will not be with them then they need not go. Moses knew the importance of having the presence of God in their midst. God's condition as above is that you just have to be obedient to him. God led the Israelites in a pillar of a cloud in the day and a pillar of fire at night. (Exodus 13: 21-22). When the Israelites disobeyed God and made a golden calf and offered burnt offerings and brought peace offerings to it (were now doing their own things- being in idolatry).

God almost destroyed them and Moses had to intercede for them (Exodus 32:1-14).

There are others as well who walked with God and that is His disciples who were always with him save only when he sent them away or when he wanted to be alone in prayer.

After Christ's ascension the apostles were endowed with power on the day of Pentecost being filled with the Holy Ghost and the Lord worked mightily through them because his presence was with them whenever they went. (Acts 2:42-47; 3:1-8; 5:1-16).

Even now there are some Christians who are walking with God and the Lord's presence being with them. You and I too can be counted among them, but we have to maintain God's standards in our lives being humble, obedient, truthful, holy and righteous. One cannot live a careless life and expect to have God's presence with the one-no, not with a holy God, the holy One of Israel. (Revelation 3:4)

In walking with God we see when the angels visited Lot, Lot's in-laws and Lot's wife chose not to walk with God and only Lot and his two daughters chose to walk with God by obeying God's instructions and were saved. Later we see that Lot's daughters chose not to walk with God by

arranging to sleep with their father. Walking with God is an individual walk and not a group walk.

And E'-noch lived sixty and five years, and begat Me-thu'-se-lah:

And E'-noch **walked** with God after he begot Me-thu'-se-lah three hundred years, and begat sons and daughters:

And all the days of E'-noch were three hundred sixty and five years:

And E'-noch **walked** with God: and he was not; for God took him.

Genesis 5:21-24

And the LORD said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth; both man, and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air; for it repenteth me that I have made them.

But Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD.

These are the generations of Noah: Noah was a just man and perfect in his generations, and Noah **walked** with God.

And Noah begat three sons, Shem, Ham, and Ja'-pheth.

Genesis 6:7-10

AND when Abram was ninety years old and nine, the LORD appeared to Abram, and said unto him, I am the Almighty God; **walk** before me, and be thou perfect. And I will make my covenant between me and thee, and will multiply thee exceedingly.

Genesis 17:1-2

As Christians we need to have a close walk with the Lord by closely relating with him as we are co-workers with him. If we fail to do so our work for him will be fruitless just as it was with Simon Peter and his comrades. Without Christ we are good for nothing as he is the true vine and we who have believed in him are the branches (1 Corinthians 3:9, Luke 5:1-7, John 15:1-4).

(X) Faithfulness

Faithfulness is a must for a Christian as the consequences for unfaithfulness are quite severe a few example is the case of Judas Iscariot (John 12:1-6, Matthew 26:14-16; 47:49; 27:1-5) and Ananias and Sapphira (Acts 5:1-10).

Faithfulness is remaining steadfast to one's commitment in God in all situations both favorable and unfavorable.

Christians need to be faithful in all things and not just one some things.

A Christian is either faithful or not faithful to God as there is no middle ground, so choose one. Faithfulness has to do with the state of one's heart as it is a heart issue.

Christians have a covenant with God through the salvation they received in Jesus Christ and God expects them to walk with him in faithfulness. God hates unfaithfulness as he himself he is ever faithful. God is a jealous God and likens unfaithfulness as spiritual adultery (Hosea 1:2). By, being unfaithful one breaks one's covenant with God which is quite serious. By unfaithfulness one breaks one's relationship with God as relationship with God is hinged on one's faithfulness to God. By being faithful to God in all things one portrays spiritual maturity which is the nature of Christ. Many marriages have been broken because a partner was unfaithful to the other partner, yet marriage is a temporal thing (Luke 20:27-36), how about salvation which is an eternal thing? Surely the relationship need be more as regards the issue of faithfulness.

Let us look at some scriptures that touch on the faithfulness of God the Father as well as God the Son.

Know therefore that the LORD thy God, he is God, the faithful God, which keepeth covenant and mercy with them that love him and keep his commandments to a thousand generations;

Deuteronomy 7:9

Blessed be the LORD, that hath given rest unto his people Israel, according to all that he promised: there hath not failed one word of all his good promise, which he promised by the hand of Moses his servant.

1 Kings 8:56

Thy mercy, O LORD, is in the heavens; and thy faithfulness reacheth unto the clouds.

Psalms 36:5

God is faithful, by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord.

1 Corinthians 1:9

For men verily swear by the greater: and an oath for confirmation is to them an end of all strife.

Wherein God, willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath:

That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us:

Hebrews 6:16-18

But the Lord is faithful, who shall stablish you, and keep you from evil.

2 Thessalonians 3:3

If we believe not, yet he abideth faithful: he cannot deny himself.

2 Timothy 2:13

Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;)

Hebrews 10:23

And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the

earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood.

Revelation 1:5

And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war.

Revelation 19:11

Christians are required to be faithful in their lives. Let us look at some scriptures touching on that.

LET a man so account of us, as the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God. Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful.

1 Corinthians 4:1-2

As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.

1 Peter 4:10

Who then is a faithful and wise servant whom his Lord, hath made ruler over his household, to give them meat in due season?

Blessed is that servant, whom his Lord when he cometh shall find so doing.

Verily I say unto you, That he shall make him ruler over all his goods.

Matthew 24:45-47

The following are just some of the examples of those servants who were faithful.

1. Noah

AND the LORD said unto Noah, Come thou and all thy house into the ark; for thee have I seen righteous before me in this generation.

Genesis 7:1

2. Abraham

And the king of Sodom said unto Abram, Give me the persons, and take the goods to thyself.

And Abram said to the king of Sodom, I have lift up mine hand unto the LORD, the most high God, the possessor of heaven and earth,

That I will not take from a thread even to a shoelatchet, and that I will not take anything that is thine, lest thou shouldest say, I have made Abram rich:

Genesis 14:21-23

Abram (Abraham, as was later called) refused to be compromised by the king of Sodom to receive a bribe.

And the angel of the LORD called unto Abraham out of heaven the second time,

And Said, By myself have I sworn saith the LORD, for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son:

That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of heaven, and as the sand which is upon the seashore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies;

And thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice.

Genesis 22:15-18

Faithfulness has to do with complete obedience to God by being righteous in doing the will of God (doing what God says you do).

3. Elisha

And he returned to the man of God, he and all his company, and come, and stood before him: and he said, Behold, now I know that there is no God in all the earth, but in Israel: now therefore, I pray thee, take a blessing of thy servant.

But he said, As the LORD liveth, before whom I stand, I will receive none. And he urged him to take it; but he refused.

2 Kings 5:15-16

Now the prophet Elisha behaved just like father Abraham he literally refused to take a bribe (coated as a ‘blessing’) from Naaman the captain of the host of the king of Syria Christians, Let our No remain No and our Yes remain yes.

4. Moses

And Moses verily was faithful in all his house, as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after;

Hebrews 3:5

5. Job

THERE was a man in the land of UZ, whose name was Job; and that man was perfect and upright, and one that feared God, and eschewed evil.

Job 1:1

An upright man is a faithful man.

6. Daniel

IT pleased Da-ri'-us to set over the kingdom a hundred and twenty princes, which should be over the whole kingdom; And over these three presidents; of whom Daniel was first: that the princes might give account unto them, and the king should have no damage.

Then this Daniel was preferred above the presidents and princes, because an excellent spirit was in him; and the king thought to set him over the whole realm.

Then the presidents and princes sought to find occasion against Daniel concerning the kingdom; but they could find none occasion nor fault; forasmuch as he was faithful, neither was there any error or fault found in him.

Daniel 6:1-4

Daniel was faithful as he had an excellent spirit in him (which is nothing other than the Holy Spirit) and he was found to be blameless before those people. All spirit-filled Christians too can be able to live as Daniel did if they are obedient to the Spirit.

7. Joseph

And it came to pass after these things, that his master's wife cast her eyes upon Joseph; and she said, lie with me.

But he refused, and said unto his master's wife, Behold, my master wotteth not what is with me in the house, and he hath committed all that he hath to my hand;

There is none greater in this house than I; neither hath he kept back anything from me but thee, because thou art his

wife: how then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?

And it came to pass, as she spake to Joseph day by day, that he hearkened not unto her, to lie by her, or to be with her.

Genesis 39:7-10

Joseph refused to compromise his body to Potiphar's wife as he was faithful both to Potiphar and to God. May the Lord help us to have many such as Joseph.

Now in closing this topic, there are rewards for being faithful to the Lord God (Deuteronomy 5:29, 33, Genesis 15:1, Psalm 37: 27-28; 19:7-11, Proverbs 16:6-8; 28:20, Luke 19:11-17, Ephesians 6:7-8, Revelation 2:10; 20:4; 22: 12)

There are serious consequences for being unfaithful to the Lord God (Matthew 21:43; 25:25-30, Luke 16:10-12, Jeremiah 11:9-17, 22:1-9, Hosea 2:2-13; 10:12-15

(Y) Patience

Patience is something important in a Christian's life without which one can lose so much. Just as some have said 'patience pays'- that saying is true as by being patient one can get what one hopes for but impatience can make

one lose what one has or what one expects/hopes to have. Therefore a Christian has no option but to be a patient person in life. God do command Christians to be patient as the scriptures record and the following are some of them.

And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake.

But there shall not a hair of your head perish.

In your patience possess ye your souls.

Luke 21:17-19

Whatever one goes through one has to be patient and one shall not lose.

Better is the end of a thing than the beginning thereof: and the patient in spirit is better than the proud in spirit.

Ecclesiastes 7:8

It is wise to be patient as by patience in Christianity one can reach one's destination as God purposed and gain everything. It is good to be saved and it is better to

consummate one's salvation by being in heaven at long last it is a worthy cause indeed.

Rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation; continuing in prayer;

Romans 12:12

Even in tribulation a Christian has to be patient as it is but for a short time and is not for ever. Patience is a fruit of the Holy Spirit and therefore it should be something difficult for a Christian to practice (Galatians 5:22).

I CHARGE thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and dead at his appearing and his kingdom;

Preach the word, be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine.

2 Timothy 4:1-2

Even in serving the Lord in his vineyard one has to be patient so as to reap. On this one I can remember very well that I preached the word of God for a year or more before I

at last began to see God win souls through my ministry and as I have continued to preach at all times I continue to see even more and more souls being won to Christ for his kingdom.

Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain.

Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh.

James 5:7-8

Apostle James in his epistle to the church of Christ explains what patience can achieve in the physical in reference to the spiritual, which is far much better, that is, the end of our salvation (the climax, the rapture of the church).

For when God made promise to Abraham, because he could swear by no greater, he swore by himself,

Saying, Surely blessing I will bless thee, and multiply I will multiply thee.

And so, after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise.

Hebrews 6:13-15

Abraham was patient and he obtained the promise of God and those who are of faith just as Abraham will obtain but by being patient. If one is not patient the God of multiplicity will not multiply such a one and one will remain the same- no progress or development in one's life. By our patience we wait for God to bring to pass his will at his appointed time.

Commit thy way unto the LORD; trust also in him; and he shall bring it to pass.

And he shall bring forth thy righteousness as the light, and thy judgment as the noonday.

Rest in the LORD, and wait patiently for him: fret not thyself because of him who prospereth in his way, because of the man who bringeth wicked devices to pass.

Psalms 37:5-7

King David had this to say as was moved by the Spirit of God in him.

I WAITED patiently for the LORD; and he inclined unto me, and heard my cry.

He brought me up also out of a horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings.

Psalm 40:1-2

What King David experienced I have also experienced when I experienced a mighty deliverance and restoration by the Lord God after being cornered by the Devil and I suffered greatly and had very little hope remaining if any in me after being prayed for by many servants of God with little or no success at all. You can read my book ‘A Christian and How not to backslide’ where I have given a testimony on the same.

And, being assembled together with them, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith he, ye have heard of me.

Acts 1:4

Jesus Christ told his disciples not to be in a hurry to spread the good news to the world after his departure but to wait for the coming of the comforter, the Spirit of truth to come into them and they waited prayer fully and patiently and they received in a mighty way indeed (Acts 1:8, 12-14; 2:1-4).

Yea, in the way of thy judgments, O LORD, have we waited for thee; the desire of our soul is to thy name, and to the remembrance of thee.

With my soul have I desired thee in the night; yea, with my spirit within me will I seek thee early: for when they judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness.

Isaiah 26:8-9

God will surely judge the world and when he does at whatever time, it is only then that some in the world come to learn righteousness. The world learns the hard way through bitter experiences. It should not be so with Christians (the children of light) as they know what is right or wrong for them.

Let us now go to some encouragements too for being patient in the Lord.

Behold, we count them happy which endure. Ye have heard of the patience of job, and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy.

James 5:11

Here is a very good example of one job who was patient and received a double reward in the end of all he had gone through in life. God really had pity on him. (Job chapter 1 and 2 and chapter 42).

We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, as it is meet, because that your faith groweth exceedingly, and the charity of every one of you all toward each other aboundeth;

So that we ourselves glory in you in the churches of God for your patience and faith in all your persecutions and tribulations that ye endure:

Which is a manifest token of the righteous judgment of God, that ye may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which ye suffer:

2 Thessalonians 1:3-5

I know thy works, and thy labor, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil: and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars:

And hast borne, and hast patience, and for my name's sake hast labored, and has not fainted.

Revelation 2:2-3

The Ephesus church just as the Thessalonians church had some praise to them for showing patience.

Now as I said earlier in the beginning of this topic, impatience has its consequences and I here give just two of them touching on the children of Israel and king Saul which you can take your time to read (Exodus 32:1-10, 35, 1 Samuel 13:1-14).

(Z) Perseverance

Now perseverance is equally a very important thing in the Christian walk which if a Christian lacks he or she will not go far and will not achieve the goal in salvation, that is, to be and live with God in heaven for eternity. Without

perseverance one cannot make it to the rapture of Christ's holy church and be ushered into heaven for eternity. It is never and never because there are a myriad of challenges facing a Christian in his or her walk prior to entering heaven. These challenges are not to break Christian but to build them by becoming hardcore Christians who are unmoved by anything, here on earth and therefore come out victorious. The Christian Walk is not for the feeble-hearted, once you have crossed over to the kingdom of light (the kingdom of God) by repenting of one's sins and accepting and inviting Jesus Christ to be your Lord and Savior you just have to pull up your socks by always encouraging yourself in the Lord and with patience you will make it to the end - which as you saw in the foregoing topic, is better than the beginning of your faith (Ecclesiastes 7:8).

Let us look at the example of Jesus Christ.

He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not. Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted.

But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.

Isaiah 53:3-5

Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered;

And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all that obey him;

Called of God a high priest after the order of Mel-chiz'-ed-ek.

Hebrews 5:8-10

From the above two scriptures we see that Jesus Christ went through much suffering but he preserved and at last brought us salvation through his crucifixion and death as well as his resurrection. If he could not endure all that allowing his crucifixion on the cross, you and me would still be living with our sins (not forgiven and our hearts not washed and cleansed).

Jesus Christ had these to say to his disciples.

Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his Lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also.

John 15:20

If a Christian cannot persevere, he or she will not be able to withstand persecutions in life which according to the Lord is inevitable to a Christian.

Behold, the hour cometh, yea, is now come, that ye shall be scattered, every man to his own, and shall leave me alone: and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me.

These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.

John 16:32-33

In the above case, Jesus was both foretelling his disciples what was in the offing and encouraging them at the same time. Let us be encouraged that we now are not alone but now have another helper, a Comforter, the Holy Spirit to help us endure all the hardships in this life as we can

overcome just as our Lord Jesus Christ overcame (Romans 8:35-39, 1 John 5:4-5, Luke 10:19, Matthew 28:18-20).

Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him.

James 1:12

We Christians have to endure temptations in order to receive God's promise at the end of this life if we come out victorious which is possible (1 Corinthians 10:13).

Now there is a point which Jesus gave his disciples and which many of us seem not to understand.

If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple.

And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple.

For which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost, whether he have sufficient to finish it?

Lest haply, after he hath laid the foundation, and is not able to finish it, all that behold it being to mock him.

Saying, This man began to build, and was not able to build it.

Or what king, going to make war against another king, sitteth not down first and consulteth whether he is able with ten thousand to meet him that cometh against him with twenty thousand?

Or else, while the other is yet a great way off, he sendeth an ambassage, and desireth conditions of peace.

So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple.

Salt is good: but if the salt have lost his savor, wherewith shall it be seasoned?

It is neither fit for the land, nor yet for the dunghill; but men cast it out. He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.

Luke 14:26-35

The above is your homework but I give you some clue: forwards ever, backwards never and never, never quit but endure to the end and be saved.

And there came thither certain Jews from An'-ti-och and I-co'-n-i-um, who persuaded, the people, and, having stoned Paul, drew him out of the city, supposing he had been dead. Howbeit, as the disciples stood round about him, he rose up and came into the city: and the next day he departed with Barnabas to Der'-be.

And when they had preached the gospel to that city, and had taught many, they returned again to Lys'-tra, and to I-Co'-ni-um, and An'-ti-och,

Confirming the souls of the disciples, and exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that we must through must tribulation enter into the kingdom of God.

Acts 14:19-22

Apostle Paul by the grace and power of God working in him was a hard nut to crack as he had all it takes to be a Christian by his endurance through thick and thin. He and Barnabas encouraged other Disciples of Christ to be prepared for such persecution and face them squarely and finally enter into the kingdom of God in heaven.

Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

Philippians 3:13-14

We need to emulate this apostle by not mourning over what we have gone through or our past successes living on them but to face whatever is ahead of us with full vigor and to overcome and await for your rewards when the Lord comes for us being occupied in the things of God. See the advice of the apostle on what he was doing (verse 17-21).

But thou hast fully known my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, long-suffering, charity, patience, Persecutions, afflictions, which come unto me at An'-ti-och, at I-co'-ni-um, at Lys'-tra; what persecutions I endured: but out of them all the Lord delivered me. Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.

2 Timothy 3:10-12

And unto the angel of the church in Smyrna write; These things saith the first and the last, which was dead, and is alive;

I know thy works, and tribulation, and poverty (but thou art rich) and I know the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews, and are not, but are the synagogue of Satan.

Fear none of these things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.

He that hath an ear, Let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death.

Revelation 2:8-11

There came then his brethren and his mother, and standing without, sent unto him, calling him.

And the multitude sat about him, and they said unto him, Behold, thy mother and thy brethren without seek for thee.

And he answered them, saying

Who is my mother, or my brethren?

And he looked round about on them which sat about him, and said, Behold my mother and my brethren!

For whosoever shall do the will of God, the same is my brother, and my sister, and mother.

Mark 3:31-35

In the above scripture Jesus was trying to illustrate to the multitude that sat round about him to listen to him who are his true kin (relatives) and told them it is those who do the will of God. In essence he was talking on the need of separation and contrasted between physical ties/relations and underscored the fact that spiritual ties/relations are of more importance before God, than physical ties/relations.

The question I now put to you is, Are you trying to be closer to your relatives or to God? Who do you try to obey and to please? You need to put in order your priorities lest you lose in life.

CHAPTER 6

A CHRISTIAN AND UNANSWERED PRAYERS

Many a times Christians have prayed for an issue and they did not receive an answer. The truth of the matter is that always the fault is not on God's side, but on the Christian's side. If a Christian can re-examine oneself, one may be able to find a reason. As we read the Scriptures we find that the main reason among others of unanswered prayers is sin (Isaiah 59:1-2, Psalms 66:18, John 9:31, 1 Kings 18:25-40, 2 Timothy 2:19). Another reason is that one may miss the answer if one was not expectant, attentive and alert (Job 33:14-15) also bad family relations may be a hindrance, lack of repenting sin and lack of unforgiving (1 Peter 3:7-12, 1 Chronicles 21:17, 26-28, Matthew 6:12, 14-15).

As Christians we need remember all the time that we are in a spiritual warfare and our prayers can be hindered by the principalities in the air as it happened to Daniel and thank God Archangel Michael intervened and prevailed and Daniel was able to get the answer he was waiting for three weeks (Daniel 10:1-14). Our prayers may not be answered because we asked a miss or not according to God's will or

we asked and not in Jesus' name (James 4:3, 1 John 5:13-14, John 14:14, 15:16 16:23).

Another reason of unanswered prayer is not keeping God's commandments, bitterness lack of faith (unbelief) all which boils down to sin (1 John 3:22, Hebrews 12:15, 11:6, James 1:5-7).

Still yet there is another reason which most Christians miss to notice, and not for their prayers not being answered, no, rather their prayers actually being answered but not as per their expectation and that to some extent is their undoing. Usually with most of them they may have forgotten that occurrence and forget they prayed but it happened very much later in the future, as God answered at His time (John 7:25-30; 8:12-20) and not at our time save for some, which He can answer immediately or within a short period of time, after all, He knows our situation better and he cares.

Let me share with you a testimony of one of my sister-in-the Lord, many years back where I used to fellowship, she testified about God's doings that her husband was an unbeliever and she prayed and kept remembering him in her prayers, asking God to save her husband, and do you know what dear readers? her husband got saved not after a week, a month, a year, but she testified God saved him 10

years later, from the time she first started praying for her husbands salvation. In that case, suppose she expected her husband to be saved within a week or a month? We find here that God saved her husband and answered her prayers alright. If she was not steadfast, in prayer and also not expect and in haste, she wouldn't have remembered God had actually answered her prayer. What am I saying here readers, that thing known as patience, this eight word letter brings with it change and a new beginning, as has been said, patience pays (Luke 18:1-8). There is a lesson to be learned from the above Scriptures let us read together:

And he spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not faint; Saying, There was in a city a judge, which feared not God, neither regardeth man: And there there was a widow in the city; and she came unto him saying, Avenge me of mine adversary.

And he would not for a while; but after ward he said within himself, Though I fear not God, nor regard man;

Yet because of this widow, troubleth me, I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me.

And the Lord said, Hear what the unjust judge saith.

And shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them?

I tell you that he will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless when, the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on earth?

Luke 18:1-8

From the above we can see that we should not lose hope quickly and that we need, to pray steadfastly (James 5:17) and determined and though it bear long God nevertheless will answer us speedily (definitely at his timing), but the bone of contention is in 'our faith' will we be earnest in prayer, in faith or out of faith, that is the question each one of us need answer God.

Faith, hope and patience it seems they are partners or in another word, they operate together. If say faith, leaves; hope will follow suit and patience will not be found as it will definitely take leave and be gone.

Because patience is such an important thing in the Christian walk let us know the meaning and see some of the consequences for patience or lack of it, from the Holy Scripture. Patience is the ability to stay calm and accept a delay or something annoying without complaining. Also, it

is the ability to spend a lot of time doing something difficult that needs a lot of attention and effort. As Christians, the consummation of our salvation is not now and has always been in the future and therefore, we need patience in the things of God in our daily walk coupled with hope (expectation) (Romans 8:24-25, James 5:7-8, Romans 12:12, Hebrews 6:12,15).

For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for?

But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it.

Romans 8:24-25

Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receives the early and the latter rain.

Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh.

James 5:7-8

Rejoicing in hope; patience in tribulation; continuing instant prayer;

Romans 12:12

That ye be no slothful, but followers, of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises.

And so, after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise.

Hebrews 6:12, 15

God himself is patient and expects us Christians to be patient with Him and with other people as well (1 Peter 3:20; 2 Peter 3:9, Ephesians 4:2 & 1Thessalonians 5:14).

Let me now come to instances where patience was lacking in some and was present in others.

1. Abraham – Genesis 15:1-5, 16:1-15.

We see that although God promised Abraham not a child but children, he went ahead later and took Hagar his wife's handmaid to be as wife.

2. King Saul – I Samuel 13: 1-14.

The priest Samuel had told him to wait for him to make a sacrifice before God, as God's priest before they are

to go war with the Philistines but the King fearing that his soldiers had lost patience waiting for Samuel and began leaving him, he also instead of convincing them, he (their commander) also lost patience like them, and in haste took the role of a priest and offered sacrifice to God which the priest Samuel came and disapproved.

3. The Israelites - Exodus 32:1.

To the Israelites, they saw that Moses, had taken long from Mount Sinai where he was to get God's instructions, because of lack of patience and instead contemplating a very bad thing an alternative God. But our God has not alternative (Exodus 3:14-19, Isaiah 40:12-26, Psalm 145:13-21) only the intercession of Moses calmed somehow God's wrath on them for their idolatry (Deuteronomy 5:1-10) Many of us get impatient and end up with alternative solutions that are both cosmetic and temporary and God is not happy as we read in the Scriptures.

We now come to another lot - two examples of those who were patient enough.

1. Joseph the son of Jacob – Genesis 37:1-41:57.

We see that from the time Joseph had a dream and another dream again to the time his dream came true (came to pass) by being appointed as the Prime Minister of Egypt, it was surely a long time and he passed through many experiences even imprisonment before his appointment. Christians also have a wonderful dream. To be in heaven with the Lord forever, one day. It follows therefore that patience must be present hard and thin. May the Lord help us by His grace and the power within (the Holy Spirit).

2. King David – 1 Samuel 16:1 - 2 Samuel 2:7.

We see here that even though David was anointed by the priest and prophet of the Lord to be the King of the Israelites, he was not in haste nor tried to overthrow King Saul in a coup or otherwise, as many people would do by putting pressure and thumping their chest saying “I have been anointed the king of this land, could you please leave the palace peacefully, or else you will see, I am now the boss”. Instead we find David even serving the King by humbling himself and further had to wait for so long (waiting until the King’s death and his sons). It is when he enquired from God it

is was okay for him in the land. Most of us have missed on God because we are not patient enough on many issues in life and it is high time we came to our senses. It has been said, hurry, hurry, has no blessing. There is some truth in this.

CHAPTER 7

A CHRISTIAN AND WAYS OF EARNING A LIVING.

From the beginning at creation we find God was busy working and therefore we human beings as His creatures who happen also to have been made in His image and after His likeness, God expects us too to be a working people, as He is a working God. Hence, God allocated work at the Garden of Eden to the first man Adam (Genesis 1:26, 2:8, 15-17). So God employed man in the Garden of Eden and even gave him a code of regulations (instructions).

The Lord God has promised us that he will bless the works of our hands. So if you don't work with your hands, how do you expect to be blessed with your needs? (Deuteronomy 28:1-14). Looking at the above scriptures we find that we may work with our hands, alright, but if we don't obey God's commands, well, we can as well get very, very little or nothing altogether.

Apostle Paul stressed the need for Christians to work with their own hands to earn, a living, a practice which he also was involved in and was not giving a lip service to Christians (2 Thessalonians 3:6-10, Acts 18:1-3, 20:33-34).

Now on riches, we find that all riches belong to God. To be rich, therefore one need to be very close to God because God is the one that gives power for one to get wealth (Haggai 2:8, Deuteronomy 8:18).

The silver is mine, and the gold is mine, saith the Lord of hosts

Haggai 2:8

No wonder King Solomon had so much gold and silver (1 Kings 3:3a, 10:14-29). Now look further at these men who feared God how God blessed them with riches:

1. Abraham (Genesis 13:1-3)
2. Isaac (Genesis 26:12-13)
3. Jacob (Genesis 30:43)
4. Job (Job 1:1-3)
5. Joseph son of Jacob (Genesis 45:7-9)
6. Joseph of A-ri-ma-the-a (Matthew 27:57-60)

But thou shalt remember the Lord thy God: for it is he that giveth thee power to get wealth, that he may establish his covenant which he share unto thy fathers, as it is this day.

Deuteronomy 8:18

First of all, before God can bless us so much, we need to learn to become good stewards over the money and resources that have already been entrusted to our care by God (Luke 16:10-12, 1 Corinthians 4:2, Matthew 25:28-30). God would like to see that as His children, we prosper. (Psalms 35:27, 3 John 2, Philippians 4:19).

Let them shout for joy, and be glad, that favour my righteous cause: yea, let them say continually, let the LORD be magnified, which hath pleasure in the prosperity of his servant.

Psalms 35:27

Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth.

3 John 2

But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.

Philippians 4:19

Now there are ways of getting money or wealth to help one earn a living through the following avenues:

1. Work:

(a) Farming

(b) Employment

2. Business

3. Supernaturally

1(a) Farming

To begin with, God Himself is the oldest and the biggest farmer and had a beautiful garden known as Eden and there he taught man farming. Therefore, one can engage in farming to earn a living. Examples of early farmers are Adam and his sons Cain and Abel (Genesis 2:8, 15, 4:1-2)

And the LORD God planted a garden eastward in Eden, and there he put the man whom he had formed

Genesis 2:8

And the LORD God took the man and put him into the Garden of Eden; to dress it and keep it

Genesis 2:15

God promised to bless the works of our hands (Deuteronomy 28:8).

The LORD shall command the blessing upon thee in thy storehouses, and in all that thou setteth thine hand unto; and he shall bless thee in the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee.

Deuteronomy 28: 8

Remember to honour the Lord with the harvest (Proverbs 3: 6-9, Leviticus 27:30-34, Matthew 6:19-21).

In all thy ways acknowledge him and he shall direct thy paths.

Be not wise in thine own eyes: fear the LORD and depart from evil.

It shall be health to thy navel, and marrow to thy bones.

Honour the LORD with thy substance, and with the first fruits of all thine increase.

Proverbs 3: 6-9

(a) Working hard

He becometh poor that dealeth with a slack hand: **but the hand of the diligent maketh rich.**

Proverbs 10:4

He that tilleth his land shall have plenty of bread: but he that followeth after vain persons shall have poverty enough.

Proverbs 28:19

And let ours also **learn to maintain good works for necessary uses**, that they be not unfruitful

Titus 3:14

(b) Avoid Laziness

How long wilt thou sleep, O, Sluggard? When wilt thou arise out of thy sheep?

Yet a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep:

So shall thy poverty come as one that traveleth, and thy want as an armed man.

Proverbs 6:9-11

In all labor there is profit: but **the talk of the lips tendeth only to penury.**

Proverbs 14:23

(c) Avoid Hire-purchase schemes.

Wealth gotten by vanity shall be diminished: but he that gathereth by labor shall increase.

Proverbs 13:11

(d) Avoid Get-rich quick schemes

He that tilleth his land shall be satisfied with bread: but **he that followeth vain persons is void of understanding**

Proverbs 12:11

(e) Avoid getting into debt

The rich ruleth over the poor, and the borrower is servant to the lender.

Proverbs 22:7

Owe no man anything, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law.

Romans 13:8

(f) Do not overwork yourself

Harbor not to be rich: cease from thine own wisdom.

Proverbs 23:4

(g) Have a day of rest

And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,
Speak thou also unto the children of Israel, saying, Verily
my sabbaths ye shall keep: for it is a sign between me and
you throughout your generations; that ye may know that I
am the LORD that doth sanctify you.

Ye shall keep the Sabbath therefore; for it is holy unto you:
every one that defileth it shall surely be put to death: for
whosoever doeth any work there in, that soul shall be cut
off from among his people.

Six days may work be done; but in the seventh is the
Sabbath of rest, holy to the LORD: whosoever doeth any
work in the Sabbath day, he shall surely be put to death.

Exodus 31:12-15

Thus said the LORD unto me; Go and stand in the gate of
the children of the people, whereby the kings of Judah
come in, and by the which they go out, and in all the gates
of Jerusalem; And say unto them, Hear ye the word of the
LORD, ye kings of Judah, and all Judah, and all the
inhabitants of Jerusalem, that enter in by these gates: Thus
saith the LORD; Take heed to yourselves, and bear no

burden on the sabbath day, nor bring it in by the gates of Jerusalem;

Neither carry forth a burden out of your houses on the Sabbath day, neither do ye any work, but hallow ye the Sabbath day, as I commanded your fathers.

Jeremiah 17:19-22

(h) Do some saving

The thoughts of the diligent tend only to plenteousness; but of every one that is hasty only to want.

Proverbs 21:5

Read also the book of Proverbs (Proverbs 6:7-8).

Be thou diligent to know the state of thy flocks, and look well to thy herds:

For riches are not for ever: and doth the crown endure to every generation?

Proverbs 27:23-24

(i) Spend wisely

He that loveth pleasure shall be a poor man: he that loveth wine and oil shall not be rich.

Proverbs 21:17

There is treasure to be desired and oil in the dwelling of the wise; but a foolish man spendeth it up

Proverbs 21:20

(j) Live your means

It is equally very important that a Christian live according to the means at one's disposal after of course factoring such factors as tithe and offering as well as savings in one's budget-planned well. There is no point living beyond your means as it means living in debts which is not wise at all and is being hypocritical. As said in my second book 'Christian Marital Life'- don't look at your neighbor and start to strive to live as their standard as all people are not and cannot be the same on many things, provisions/income included as well as tastes. You need only to adjust when you have more or less than what you used to have as you find necessary-applying flexibility then.

Consequence for not giving

In the world it is a known fact that robbers when caught in the act and arrested, are judged and sentenced to jail. Likewise with robbers in the house of God, they are not

arrested and sentenced to a physical Jail but are judged and sent to a spiritual jail by God just withholding/locking up their blessings up in heaven until such a time that they have repented of their act of robbing God and starting to pay regularly and faithfully and also giving their offerings in the house of God.

But those who are fond of saying “Sow a seed and get your healing, miracle, breakthrough” are liars as one can’t buy any of those things. Those are giving a corrupted/twisted message and have ill motives and are servants of the devil. (2 Corinthians 11:12-15)

1. (b) Employment

Now on employment, the oldest and the biggest employer is God Himself who engaged Adam the first man in His garden in Eden. We also find Jesus Christ engaging the disciples to witness to people about Him (*Genesis 2:8, Matthew 4:18-22 10:1-23*).

In employment one can be employed or one can employ oneself (self-employment). But in all of them one need honour God and pay his tithes (a tenth of one’s income) to God be it weekly or monthly whichever is most applicable to one (Malachi 3:8-12). Another thing is that one should

not involve oneself in giving bribes to be employed or to be promoted in employment, likewise an employer should not ask for a bribe to employ a person or to promote a person in his employment. Also there should be no sexual favours in the employment sphere. Some of the conducts required in employment are given below:- (Colossians 4:1, 3:22-23, James 5:1-6, Deuteronomy 10:17, 16: 18-20, 24:14-15) Examples of early employees are Joseph (Genesis 39:1-6 41:39-46) and Matthew (Matthew 9:9) among others.

2. Business

God equally is the oldest and the biggest businessman business tycoon and talks business language in the Scripture. God's biggest business is to win souls of people back to Him and that is why Jesus Christ called Peter and Andrea, John and James and so forth to a better business which is soul winning and to do away with fishing using boats and nets to get fish but instead to catch men's souls using the anointing of the Holy Spirit and with the word of God. Some of the following Scripture are but business talk: (Leviticus 27:30-33, Malachi 3:8-10, Matthew 4:18-22, 25:24-27).

One can start a business and earn a living from it. First of all the business must be a legal business and avoiding rackets or hoarding of products to later get undue increase in profits. If the business by law warrants registering, have it registered and also get a license of operation, additionally pay your taxes to the government as well as your tithes to God, from the profit of the business. Another thing required by God in business is honesty, don't be a crook (Deuteronomy 25:13-16, Leviticus 19:35-37, Proverbs 16:11, 20:10, Hosea 12:6-9). Also don't visit a witchdoctor on your business only trust in the Lord.

Examples of businessmen:

Simon Peter, Andrea, John and James (Fishermen) (Matthew 4:18-22), Paul Aquila and Priscilla (Tentmakers) (Acts 18:1-3), Joseph the father of Jesus (Carpenter) (Matthew 13:53-56).

Don't be oppressive and do apply integrity (Proverbs 22:16, James 5:4, Proverbs 28:8; 21:6, Amos 8:4-6). As a child of God don't ever enter into business life with a non-believer. Remember you have to separate yourself as the scripture says (2 Corinthians 6:14-18). Now look at the following accounts:

IN the six and thirtieth year of the reign of A'-sa Ba'-ash- a king of Israel came up against Judah, and built Ra'-mah, to the intent that he might let none go out or come in to A'-sa king of Judah.

Then A'-sa brought out silver and gold out of the treasures of the house of the LORD and of the king's house, and sent to Ben-ha'-dad king of Syria, that dwelt at Damascus, saying,

There is a league between me and thee, as there was between my father and thy father: behold, I have sent thee silver and gold; go, break thy league with Ba'-ash-a king of Israel, that he may depart from me.

And Ben-ha'-dad hearkened unto king A'-sa, and sent the captains of his armies against the cities of Israel; and they smote I'-jon, and Dan, and A'-bel-ma'-im, and all the store cities of Naph'-ta-li.

And it came to pass, when Ba'-ash-a heard it, that he left off building of Ra'-mah, and let his work cease.

Then A'-sa the king took all Judah; and they carried away the stones of Ba'-ash-a was building; and he built therewith Ge'-ba and Miz-pah.

And at that time Ha'-na'-ni the seer came to A'-sa king of Judah, and said unto him, Because thou hast relied on the

king of Syria, and not relied on the LORD thy God, therefore is the host of the king of Syria escaped out of thine hand.

Were not the E-thi-o'-pi-ans and the Lu'-bim a huge host, with very many chariots and horsemen? Yet, because thou didst rely on the LORD, he delivered them into thine hand.

For the eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward him.

Herein thou hast done foolishly: therefore from henceforth thou shalt have wars.

2 Chronicles 16:1-9

Here we learn that by associating with unbelievers one just invites more wars and it is foolish to do so. By having such an association you believe and trust each other which is all wrong as we need to believe only in the one true God Jehovah - El Olam the everlasting God and to trust only in him for our success and victory in life and not on any other. Surely Asa the king of Judah did act foolishly by bringing out the silver and gold out of the treasures of the house of the LORD and sending them to a foreigner (a heathen king) - Asa was bribing king Baasha of Syria and that too is sin

before the LORD. The LORD rebuked him. Let us look at yet another example.

NOW Je-hosh'-a-phat had riches and honor in abundance, and joined affinity with Ahab.

And after certain years he went down to Ahab to Sa-mar'-i-a. And Ahab killed sheep and oxen for him in abundance, and for the people that he had with him, and persuaded him to go up with him to Ra'-moth-gil'-e-ad.

And Ahab king of Israel said unto Je-hosh'-a-phat king of Judah, Wilt thou go with me to Ra'-moth-gil'-e-ad? And he answered him, I am as thou art, and my people as thy people; and we will be with thee in the war.

2 Chronicles 18:1-3

Here too, it is all talking about one thing-kings. Kings I do pity them as they need very good advisors to guide them in their leadership and I can see no better advisors to guide them in their leadership and I can see no better advisors than the true prophets of God (1 Samuel 22:1-6) King Jehoshafat also messed up by accepting a bribe from king Ahab (the hospitality was an inducement to have an alliance at time of war). Jehoshafat fell in the trap and

willingly accepted King Ahab's request. But get to know that king Ahab was a very wicked king most likely by the influence of his wife Jezebel-a very wicked woman (1 Kings 21) and now here king Jehoshafat blindly gets into an alliance with king Ahab. Remember the advice of Apostle Paul to the church at Corinth (1 Corinthians 15:33-34). Just as king Asa, God also rebuked king Jehoshafat for that wicked alliance.

AND Je-hosh'-a-phat the king of Judah returned to his house in peace to Jerusalem.

And **Jehu the son of Ha-na'-ni the seer** went out to meet him, and **said to king Je-hosh'-a-phat, Shouldest thou help the ungodly, and love them that hate the LORD?** Therefore is wrath upon thee from the LORD.

2 Chronicles 19:1-2

And after this did Je-hosh'-a-phat king of Judah join himself with A-ha-zi'-ah king of Israel, who did very wickedly:

And he joined himself with him to make ships to go to Tar'-shish: and they made the ships in E'-zi-on-ge-ber.

Then El-i-e'-zer the son of Do'-da-vah of Ma-re'-shah prophesied against Je-hosh'-a-phat, saying,
Because thou hast joined thyself with A-ha-zi'-ah, the LORD hath broken thy works. And the ships were broken, that they were not able to go to Tar'-shish.

2 Chronicles 20:35-37

King Jehoshaphat we see here wanted to be in business partnership with this wicked king called Ahaziah and God was not pleased at all and we can see what God did. By breaking the works of their hands in essence God was disapproving their partnership and expecting king Jehoshaphat to part ways with king Ahaziah and not to do things in common (together). God literally told King Jehoshaphat to break his relationship with king Ahaziah by what God did.

3. Supernaturally

This mysterious happening normally happens to one who is very close to God or may also happen to one without employment or business and is extremely desperate. Also to people who are vulnerable such as widows or orphans. Those so close to God should be serving God and have

hope only in Him and so on. A few examples are as follows:

1. Prophet Elijah (1 Kings 17:1-16, 19:1-8).
2. A widow (2 Kings 4:1-7).

How one can mess up (defile) one's money or wealth:

1. Prostitution:

If you receive money from prostitution or give money to a prostitute.

2. Theft:

If you buy a stolen property knowingly or get money through selling a stolen property.

3. Robbery:

If you don't pay your tithes or give your offerings to God.

4. Smoking or snuffing:

If you spend money to buy cigarettes, or some stuff to smoke or to snuff or if you get money by selling cigarettes and the like.

5. Drinking:

If you buy beer with your money to drink or to give someone to drink, or if you get money by selling such alcoholic drinks.

6. Sacrifices:

If you give or throw or pour things to ancestors (actually in real sense - demons) hence communicating with wrong spirits.

Giving that are Biblical

Get to know that we don't give to God because he lacks anything but because we have been encouraged and also commanded to do so for our own good as well as for other's good. God owns everything (Psalm 24:1; 50:10-14, Haggai 2:8).

THE earth is the LORD'S, and the fullness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein.

Psalm 24:1

For every beast of the forest is mine, and the cattle upon a thousand hills.

I know all the fowls of the mountains: and the wild beasts of the field are mine.

If I were hungry, I would not tell thee: for the world is mine, and the fullness thereof.

Will I eat the flesh of bulls, or drink the blood of goats?

Offer unto God thank giving; and pay thy vows unto the most High:

Psalm 50:10-14

The silver is mine, and the gold is mine, saith the LORD of hosts.

Haggai 2:8

1. Tithe: - (Malachi 3:6-12, Leviticus 27:30-33)

You are supposed to give 10% of what you receive to the Lord. You show obedience to the Lord when you tithe.

2. First fruits (Deuteronomy 26:1-2, Proverbs 3:9)

When you give your first fruits you show honour to the Lord. This can be your first harvest from farming or your first salary from employment or your first profit from a business. You can bring all or a portion as the Lord may lead you. Later after this you can hence forth now, be tithing from the above source/s.

3. Thanksgiving (*Psalm 105:1-2*)

By giving your thanksgiving offering you show appreciation to the Lord and testify how the Lord has dealt with you. Any form of deliverance e.g. from accident (having a safe journey) or passing an examination, getting a baby, healing and so no.

4. Love offering (1 Corinthians 16:1-4)

In giving your love offering you show support to the Lord. It is to support the needs of a local church. Give honourably and not mockingly – see how much you give, let the Lord lead you, check your conscience of what you give. You can also give your money wrongly and get a curse - to your money, e.g. by supporting a wrong ministry or false teachers - street preachers not teaching the doctrines of Christ or jokers in the streets or pastor living in sin or an evil cause, to a mosque – supporting enemy of the Lord, strengthening enemy of the Lord. Don't murmur when giving your offering.

5. Alms (Matthew 6:1-4, Acts 10:1-2)

Alms - giving is secret giving. Secret between you and God. You can put in an envelope with no name of yours on the envelope. Alms are directed to the poor, widows, orphans and so forth. Don't throw your money to street beggars as some are not genuine and others drink or smoke from the money. Instead, you can contribute and charity organisations to distribute to the needy or have church account where people contribute to widows, and the poor can be helped from, or you can open your own account for widows, orphans and the poor and contribute monthly and can give to those genuinely in need – real:- widows, orphans, poor people, likewise you can wait for the leading of the Holy Spirit to tell you to help so and so with such and such help and not giving to anybody you feel needs help etc. You can also have property like clothes, shoes, etc. for helping refugees or foreigners who are in need.

6. **Vows** (Ecclesiastes 5:1-2, 4-5, Judges 11:1-10, 1 Samuel 1:10-11).

This is a covenant giving towards a cause. You promise to do a thing if God do to you a thing. “If God does this for me, I will do this” Don't make careless vows – see to it that you do what you promised, if God does what you asked for.

7. Pledges

This is to accomplish Church purposes or needs so God's work is not hindered or delayed, e.g. a Church building is to be built, and you promise to bring a certain amount for the cause or promise to bring say materials for the whole roof etc. It should be noted that money/wealth may lead one to pride. Therefore watch your heart and if you see any sign of pride break it immediately in the bud, repent and ask the Lord to keep your heart free of pride and give you humility. Your money or wealth should not make you self-sufficient that you feel you don't need God otherwise it becomes an idol in your life (worship wealth) and it takes the place of God in your life. Don't remove God in your life with anything you have in life - He must be not only in your life but also number one (1 Timothy 6: 17-18, Matthew 19:16-26).

Many have continued to mourn and worry about what they had lost in life in one way or another yet God is a God of restoration and can restore back many-fold. If it is in His divine will to restore something back to you, he will just go ahead and do it at His time. Let us now look at some scriptures that point to that fact.

HE that dasheth in pieces is come up before thy face: keep the munition, watch the way, make thy loins strong, fortify thy power mightily.

For the LORD hath turned away the Excellency of Jacob, as the Excellecy of Israel: for the emptiers have emptied them out, and married their vine branches.

Nahum 2:1-2

Restore unto me the joy of salvation; and uphold me with thy free spirit.

Psalms 51:12

But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you.

Peter 5:10

He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

Psalms 23:3

But there came a man of God to him, saying, O king, let not the army of Israel go with thee; for the LORD is not with Israel, to wit with all the children of E'-phra-im.

But if thou wilt go, do it, be strong for the battle: God shall make thee fall before the enemy: for God hath power to help, and to cast down.

And Am-a-zi'-ah said to the man of God, But what shall we do for the hundred talents which I have given to the army of Israel? And the man of God answered, The LORD is able to give thee much more than this.

2 Chronicles 25:7-9

So the LORD blessed the latter end of Job more than his beginning: for he had fourteen thousand sheep, and six thousand camels, and a thousand yoke of oxen, and a thousand she asses.

He had also seven sons and three daughters.

Job 42:12-13

Restoration indeed Job did receive after all he went through (Job 1).

IN those days was Hez-e-ki'-ah sick unto death. And the prophet Isaiah the son of Amoz came to him, and said unto him, Thus saith the LORD, Set thine house in order; for thou shalt die, and not live.

Then he turned his face to the wall, and prayed unto the LORD, saying,

I beseech thee, O LORD, remember now how I have walked before thee in truth and with a perfect heart, and have done that which is good in thy sight. And Hez-e-ki'-ah wept sore.

And it came to pass, afore Isaiah was gone out into the middle court, that the word of the LORD came to him, saying,

Turn again, and tell Hez-e-ki'-ah the captain of my people, Thus saith the LORD, the God of David thy father, I have heard thy prayer, I have seen thy tears: behold, I will heal thee: on the third day thou shalt go up unto the house of the LORD.

And I will add unto thy days fifteen years; and I will deliver thee and this city out of the hand of the king of Assyria; and I will defend this city for mine own sake, and for my servant David's sake.

And Isaiah said, Take a lump of figs. And they took and laid it on the boil, and he recovered.

2 Kings 20:1-7

And Samson called unto the LORD, and said, O LORD God remember me, I pray thee, and strengthen me, I pray thee, only this once, O God, that I may be at once avenged of the Phil-is'-tines for my two eyes.

And Samson took hold of the two middle pillars upon which the house stood, and on which it was borne up, of the one with his right hand, and of the other with his left.

And Samson said, Let me die with the Phil-is'-tines. And he bowed himself with all his might; and the house fell upon the Lords, and upon all the people that were therein.

So the dead which he slew at his death were more than they which he slew in his life.

Judges 16:28-39

And I will restore to you the years that the locust hath eaten, the cankerworm, and the caterpillar, and the palmerworm, my great army which I sent among you.

And ye shall eat in plenty, and be satisfied, and praise the name of the LORD your God, that hath dealt wondrously with you: and my people shall never be ashamed.

And ye shall know that I am in the midst of Israel, and that I am the LORD your God, and none else: and my people shall never be ashamed.

Joel 2:25-27

The silver is mine, and the gold is mine, saith the LORD of hosts.

The glory of this latter house shall be greater than of the former, saith the LORD of hosts: and in this place will I give peace, saith the LORD of hosts.

Haggai 2:8-9

But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.

Now unto God and our Father be glory for ever and ever.

A'-men.

Philippians 4:19-20

My God is very rich. What have you lost recently, your health? or wealth? or joy? My God is more than able to restore it.

Notes to the reader.

Thank you very much for taking time to read this marvellous book. May the Lord God continue to guide you in his truth. Please feel free and do not hesitate to write to us using the address below on your views, comments or suggestions together with a scripture about the contents in the book for future improvement and so on.

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