



# The Link

Vol 6, No 2(2004).

*A quarterly non-denominational publication to the body of Christ*

*“Sow for yourselves righteousness, reap the fruit of unfailing love, and break up your unplowed ground; for it is time to seek the LORD, until he comes and showers righteousness on you”.*

***Hosea 10:12 (NIV)***

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This publication is being financed as the Lord provides through a group of brethren.

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You can also send in your gift(s) in cash or kind to improve the quality of this publication. (Cheques/Money orders should be made payable to Segun Ajayi).

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### **EDITORIAL**

Right from creation, the passion in the heart of God, the Creator, is to have a people with a mindset to please God. After man fell into sin, God prepared a way to restore man; that man can walk to please God again. The death of Jesus Christ on the cross of Calvary is to set the stage for a people zealous to live a righteous life to please their maker.

Sin is a reproach to man and the enemy is busy luring men and women into its gallows to make them fall short of God's mercy and glory.

In preparation for the return of the master, the Lord Jesus Christ, the passion in our heart is to awake the whole body to seek to please the Lord by obeying Him and living a righteous life that will make us ready as a part of the spotless bride ready for the bridegroom.

Are you willing to live to please God in every area of your life?

In this edition, we will examine that three-letter word again (S-I-N) and get to know how to avoid it. We intend to stir you to thirst after righteousness and bring glory to God continually by living a holy life in our homes, offices and everywhere.

We bodily declare that we belong to the righteous God, who cannot behold iniquity.

Join me to go through another wonderful edition of this magazine.

It has not been easy, but the Lord's work must be done. The master's business requires urgency and we have a short time on our hands before He comes knocking.

Thanks for all words of comfort, encouragements, and advice, especially during the trying times we just passed through. Through it all we triumph valiantly because our God is with us.

Thank you for all your comments through the feedback form & your phone calls and messages.

Thanks also for every gift in cash and kind. The Lord will surely reward you.

Have a wonderful experience with God as you read on. Most importantly allow this work to change you into the manner of man you ought to be.

*".....what kind of people ought you to be? You ought to live holy and godly lives"* 2 Pet 3:11(NIV)

We love you dearly and trust God to be a blessing to you through this outreach.

Yours in His Service,  
'Segun Ajayi

# A Glorious Church

Rufus Oladosu

*“Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless” (Eph 5:25-27)(NIV)*

## Understanding the Church

The Church by definition means “the assembly of the called-out ones”. The Greek word for the Church is “EKKLESIA”. The component words are ‘EK’ meaning ‘out of’ and ‘KALEO’ which means ‘to call’. Hence, the Church is a body of people called out of darkness into the light.

Remember this: to be called, God is committed

*“God is faithful, by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord”.*

1 Corinthians 1:9

God is faithful to fulfil the purpose of your calling if you stay true to Him. *“For it is God who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose”*

Philippians 2:13 (NIV)

When you cooperate with Him, He will make all things work to your favour.

*“And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose”.* Romans 8:28 (NIV)

You will also become a candidate for eternal, all surpassing glory.

## The Church of God’s Dream

Ephesians 5: 25-27 indicates that Jesus Christ is coming for a glorious Church. This takes it a step further; His present operations in the Church are meant to prepare a body of the called-out ones who radiate His glory. Glory signifies the beauty that is connected, unique and attributable to God’s personality. Hence, glory is the manifestation of God’s essential character.

## Characteristics of a Glorious Church

### 1. It is a clean Church – “without spot”

Spot signifies corruption or defilement. In a glorious Church, sin is not accepted, excused or tolerated because it defiles and enslaves. Rather it is exposed and removed like a cancerous growth as soon as it is evident.

The Church is in the light and cannot allow any form of darkness to operate, every form of darkness is exposed. Darkness is the realm of Satan, while light is the realm of God. Darkness is the lifestyle of sin while light is the lifestyle of righteousness. Whosoever is born of God does not sin habitually or make a practice of sin.

*“No one who is born of God will continue to sin, because God’s seed remains in him; he cannot go on sinning, because he has been born of God”* I John 3:9 (NIV)

If you are a member of Christ’s Church you must “love righteousness and hate wickedness”(Psalms 45:7a).

A man may have his name boldly written in a denomination’s register but have no record in heaven.

The Scripture says, “have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness but rather expose them” (Ephesians 5:11). This process is painful but profitable. The stories of greed by Achan in Joshua Chapter 7 and deceit by Ananias and Saphira in Acts of Apostles Chapter 5 are ample examples of how a glorious Church deals with the issue of “sin in the camp”. Whenever sin is allowed or excused and tolerated, it grows like gangrene and corrupts the whole body.

*“Your boasting is not good. Don’t you know that a little yeast works through the whole batch of dough”* 1 Corinthians 5:6(NIV)

The resultant effect is that the glory of God departs and activities of the Church become lifeless rituals.

### 2. It is a vibrant Church – “without wrinkle”

Wrinkle is a telltale of ageing. A Church is ageing when it talks all the time about the achievements of the past.

The past successes are not meant to become obstruction to progress. God intends them to be levers for new exploits.

David, for example, recounted his victories over lion and bear only to be given an opportunity to confront the overbearing Goliath (1 Samuel 17: 34-37). Don’t allow the good to become the enemy of the best. The best of you is yet to be

seen. Reach down inward by the help of the Spirit and bring it out.

Hear Apostle Paul giving us the secret of his outstanding achievements: *“Brothers, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus”*

Philippians 3:13-14(NIV)

This is the attitude of a glorious Church.

*All of us who are mature should take such a view of things. And if on some point you think differently, that too God will make clear to you.*

Philippians 3:15(NIV)

### **3. It is a united Church – “That they may be one”**

The prayer of Jesus in John Chapter 17 is an unveiling of His heart cry for the Church. Jesus Christ prayed for a united Church.

His glory can only be made manifest in a united body.

*“How good and pleasant it is when brothers live together in unity! It is like precious oil poured on the head, running down on the beard, running down on Aaron's beard, down upon the collar of his robes.*

*It is as if the dew of Hermon were falling on Mount Zion. For there the LORD bestows his blessing, even life forevermore”.* Psalms 133 (NIV)

Thus, blessings, life and glory are found in the place of unity.

Therefore, no schism, racism or class mentality should be permitted in the Church. Exaltation of individuals on the sole basis of financial status is frowned at by the Scripture. The Bible says in James 2:1-4 *“My brothers, as believers in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ, don't show favouritism. Suppose a man comes into your meeting wearing a gold ring and fine clothes, and a poor man in shabby clothes also comes in. If you show special attention to the man wearing fine clothes and say, “Here's a good seat for you,” but say to the poor man, “You stand there” or “Sit on the floor by my feet, “have you not discriminated among yourselves and become judges with evil thoughts?”(NIV)*

If we heed this injunction and many others like it, the glory of the Lord will be revealed in His Church.

Besides, there should be unity in the essentials of our faith and liberty in the non-essentials. The focus of all should be in the imminent return of Jesus Christ our saviour and how to get ourselves ready for Him.

### **4. It is a maturing Church – “that we no longer be infants” (Ephesians 4:13-14)**

The characteristics of infancy are instability, gullibility and dependability on others. It is grieving God's heart to see His children perpetually in the state of infancy being *“tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of men in their deceitful scheming”.* Eph 4:14(NIV)

This sadly to say is the state of the larger part of Christ's Church today. This has to change.

God's desire is a Church that is attaining the stature of the fullness of Christ.

A church where heresy and fakes are easily detected and truth is appreciated and lived, reveals God's glory.

A maturing Church is a fruitful church. It bears the fruit of the Spirit as enumerated in Galatians 5:22-23; and it bears fruit of soul winning as stated in John 15:16.

Jesus said *“By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit, so you will be my disciples”* John 15:8. Hence a glorious Church places premium on manifesting Christ 's character and soul winning. Every other thing is secondary.

### **Let revival begin with you**

There is an old song whose lyric goes like this: *“Lord send revival and let it begin with me”.* This is not only a good song but also a good policy. The operations of Christ to prepare a clean, vibrant, united and maturing Church should become a personal desire of yours. Make yourself available to His dealings so that what the Lord Jesus Christ by the Holy Spirit is achieving in the Church becomes a reality in your life.

If you submit yourself to the processes of conformity to the image of Jesus Christ, the glory of God will radiate brightly through you in this present life and the day of Christ's return will be the happiest day of your life.

# Paths of Righteousness

Segun Ajayi

"...*He guides me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake.*" Psalms 23:3 (NIV)

"*I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd gives his life for the sheep.*" John 10:11

The desire of the good Shepherd, the Lord Jesus Christ, is to prepare for Himself a sheepfold that will follow Him.

In John Chapter 10, He describes God's pasture and the good Shepherd and the fact that the sheep will hear the voice of the Shepherd and follow Him.

He calls His sheep by name and He leads them out. The Shepherd goes ahead of the sheep and the sheep follow because they know His voice.

The challenge before us is to look at God's expectation of a sheep that will follow the Shepherd on the path of righteousness.

This is a generation of people that are living in a precarious and dangerous period when the devil is busy perpetrating evil and causing men and women to stumble into sin.

However, the desire of our God at this end-time is to prepare for Himself a group of people in His sheepfold that will neither listen to the voice of the stranger, satan, nor obey him.

"*But they will never follow a stranger; in fact, they will run away from him because they do not recognize a stranger's voice.*" John 10:5 (NIV)

King David recognized that the Lord is his Shepherd, whose leading cannot bring destruction or peril to the sheep. He recognized that by himself he is likely to lose his way and fall into the hands of wolves and robbers.

Let us look at some steps on the path the Shepherd will lead us.

## **1. He will provide**

Many times when we are on the road of life, to satisfy our basic needs, the enemy brings temptations and perils across our ways.

In the course of looking for ways of survival, we find ourselves making choices in life in the area of business, profession that will not lead us to righteousness.

It is easy to follow the voice of the stranger, the devil, get money, satisfy our wants, become wealthy but at the end stray from the path of righteousness.

What shall it profit a man if he gains the whole world and lose his soul?

However, the good Shepherd has everything we need and will provide for us if only we can take time to hear his voice.

The Psalmist says in Psalms 34:9-10 "*Fear the LORD, you his saints, for those who fear him lack nothing. The lions may grow weak and hungry, but those who seek the LORD lack no good thing*" (NIV)

You will tell me, "the times are hard and we need to apply wisdom", "it is just a business lie", "I need to be smart". You cannot out-smart the devil. Brethren, if in the course of making money, you begin to compromise your stand, and you allow the devil to give you ideas, you will only make it here on earth but you may never make it to heaven.

The only true prosperity is that which the Lord will give you as you follow Him, and heed His instructions as He leads you. It may take awhile for you to breakthrough but I can assure you will make it in life.

He delights to lead you in the path of righteousness till your needs are met. Remember, He owns silver and gold; He created the hills and mountains. He has the roadmap to the earth's treasures.

Learn to trust in His leading and His judgements. In Psalms 37:23 the Scripture says "*The steps of a good man are ordered by the LORD: and he delights in his way*"

If you allow the Lord to lead you through the path of righteousness, you will not lack anything, because He will always be there to supply your needs.

"*And my God will meet all your needs according to his glorious riches in Christ Jesus*" Philippians 4:19 (NIV)

It is a common knowledge that the times are hard, the economy is bad, and things are difficult. However, in the midst of these you can depend

more on God's leading. The enemy is working hard to make things more difficult these days so that you can compromise your stand and lose your way. The Lord, the good Shepherd, will take care of you (Amen). Learn to follow Him, hearken to His voice especially now and you shall live by faith in Him.

## **2. He will lead to pasture**

A pasture in the context of the sheep is where the sheep can feed and rest.

We are living at a time when the true word of God that will nourish the soul and preserve us on the path of righteousness is important. As the pasture is important to the sheep for growth and nourishment, the word of God is important for the growth of the believer and his sustenance on the path of righteousness. The Lord is speaking to His Church and He wants His sheep to hear His voice so that we can be led to 'these pastures'.

The Lord has prepared several pastures for His sheep; the Lord has set 'green grass' in every 'meadow and valley' so that the sheep can be fed properly. He has prepared seasoned men and women in this generation with the word of life and with a passion for His body, His sheepfold. They will feed His sheep with timely messages and make them grounded with what is needed for growth and nourishment.

However, the onus is left for the sheep to find these pastures by allowing the Lord to lead them there. Not every grass is good for food for the sheep. Not every green vegetation will do the sheep good, but I can assure you, if you submit yourself to the Lord's leading He will lead to His pasture. At His pasture you will be fed with the word of God and you will enjoy His presence and a freshness that will satisfy your soul.

It is actually the tactics of the devil to keep the sheep looking for any green vegetation for food. I tell you, that green vegetation, may actually poison your system, instead of nourishing your soul. Many men & women out there are actually wolves in sheep's clothing, agents of darkness to cajole and mislead you from the path of righteousness and feed you with messages that will ensnare your souls. Beware!

Many men and women out there are busy making merchandise of Christians, appealing to their emotions and psyching them to satisfy their bellies. They are agents of the stranger, the devil, whose voice you should not obey.

Beware of such; the word of God is not with them. They will never provide the kind of word that is good for your soul and will never allow you to continue to follow in righteousness the Lord, the Shepherd of your soul.

*"The Spirit clearly says that in later times some will abandon the faith and follow deceiving spirits and things taught by demons. Such teachings come through hypocritical liars, whose consciences have been seared as with a hot iron"*  
1 Timothy 4:1-2(NIV)

The Lord will surely lead you to pasture; He has a plan to satisfy every sheep that follows His leading. When you discover God's own pasture, the word of God will be taught (correctly) and righteousness will prevail. The Lord will satisfy you and will cause you to lie down, you will stay and enjoy His presence.

In that place you will find fulfilment and live the kind of life God wants you to live in righteousness.

Take time to remain where the Lord has planted you, His pasture. The Lord wants you to grow and He wants to satisfy you.

## **3. He leads beside the still waters**

The leading of the good Shepherd, our Lord Jesus Christ, is wonderful because He will lead you to settle beside the still waters.

To the sheep, water is important. As the sheep finds the pasture pleasant for food so also she needs water to be able to derive good value from the grass eaten.

The 'still waters' described in Psalms 23 is a type of the Holy Spirit.

We cannot over-emphasise the presence of the Holy Spirit in the life of a Christian. The Holy Spirit, sweet, still and gentle will provide every Christian with moment-by-moment instruction mixed with the word of God that has been received.

Every Christian that has chosen to follow the Shepherd's leading will experience a true fellowship with the Holy Spirit especially when led to the pasture and the word of God is allowed to mix with faith in the heart.

The Holy Spirit will begin a quick work of renewal and regeneration and work out righteousness in such a life.

I trust the Lord that we will all experience a transformation into the image of the Shepherd.

This will make us to know the Shepherd better just as He has known us and begin to experience a wonderful relationship with His Father.

*“I am the good shepherd; I know my sheep and my sheep know me--just as the Father knows me and I know the Father”* John 10:14-15a(NIV)

The life of such a believer will experience a fresh indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit; He will remain calm in the midst of storms and experience joy unspeakable even when faced with trials because the Holy Spirit (still and calm) will be there, to comfort him.

He will experience a daily inspiration on the path of righteousness as to walk to please God despite the corruption around him.

May we experience this wonderful relationship in Jesus name (Amen).

Are you willing to submit to the leading of the Shepherd to experience this?

#### **4. He brings restoration**

To every sheep following the shepherd, the presence of the shepherd calms the sheep and brings confidence in the midst of storms and difficulty.

Even when a sheep is about to die as a result of one peril or the other, the shepherd will seek to rescue and restore life.

Jesus Christ says He has come to lay His life down for the sheep. He values every sheep in His sheepfold that if one is missing He will go after that one sheep and bring it back to safety.

We are living in a perilous time when many are being led astray and held captive by the devil. Many have lost their way from the path of righteousness and have fallen into traps of the enemy.

The Lord, the restorer of soul is still busy seeking the lost, having laid His life down for every sheep till every sheep is brought back into His sheepfold.

The Lord loves us so much and desires our safety. The wolves, robbers and thieves are out there beckoning. Though you lose your way, the Lord will restore every backslider and set them on the path of righteousness.

Jesus Christ's desire for a Church without spot or wrinkle cannot be compromised. He is busy looking out for the safety of His sheep.

He wants you to be cleansed and preserved spotless.

He does not want you to stray away from the path of righteousness; He is busy looking out for you and will restore you today in Jesus Name (Amen).

Consider the way you have been living. Have you been led away from Christ, please allow Him to restore you today. Tomorrow may be late. The enemy has no good intention for you, he only want to trap you and lead you to hell. Hearken to Jesus Christ the restorer of soul today and you will find joy in His presence once again.

All we have been discussing is the fact that the Lord Jesus Christ wants to lead us in the path of righteousness. He has done everything needed; He gave Himself for us, He gave us the Holy Spirit, He will sustain us with His word and cause us to grow and He will restore our soul when we miss our way. He will not suffer you to be in want of anything even though the times are hard.

He cannot allow His name to be brought to disrepute, so He will lead us in the path of righteousness.

We only need to take time to recognize His voice, obey His voice and follow Him in true righteousness and holiness all the days of our life.

The enemy will also be beckoning and calling you loudly; He is a thief and comes to steal, to kill and to destroy. He has nothing to offer you. He will lead you away from the path of righteousness.

*“I am the gate; whoever enters through me will be saved. He will come in and go out, and find pasture.*

*The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full”* John 10:9-10 (NIV)

We can say like King David:

*“The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not be in want. He makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads me beside quiet waters, and he restores my soul. He guides me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake”.* Psalms 23:1-3 (NIV)

Jesus Christ will surely give you all that is needed now and always. He will sustain you and will not allow you to stray from the path of righteousness because His name must be glorified in your life.

He leads the way and we will follow Him all the way in Jesus name (Amen).

# Habitual Holiness is a test of Christian Character

(Culled from a lecture by Charles Finney - February 15, 1843)

*“Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remains in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God”.* I John 3:9

## A. What sin is?

1. As was said in a former lecture, the primary faculties of the mind are Intelligence, Sensibility, and Free Will. This we know from consciousness. The Intelligence is that power which thinks, affirms, reasons, and reflects. The Sensibility is the power of feeling. To this power are referred all appetites, desires, passions, or emotions whatever. The Free Will is the power that wills.

2. The will is always influenced by motives originating either in the intelligence or the sensibility. The will always chooses some object, or acts in reference to some motive; and we know by consciousness that these motives are either duties perceived by the intelligence, or the awakened susceptibilities of the sensibility, which always invite the mind to seek the gratification of its appetites and passions for their own sake. I do not mean that the action of the intelligence and the sensibility are so isolated from each other, that either of them acts in perfect independence of the other; for we know that every thought and affirmation of the intelligence is accompanied by some feeling of the sensibility, and on the contrary that every feeling awakens in the intelligence, affirmations, thoughts, and reasoning to a greater or less extent. But what I mean is, that some motives originate in, and are addressed to the will by the intelligence, and some on the contrary, originate in the sensibility, and as such, influence the will. The distinction of which I am speaking is just what every one means, when speaking of the difference between being led by propensity or passion, and reason.--The intelligence and sensibility mutually influence each other, but one or the other takes the lead. In other words, the mind, which is a unity, in thinking feels, and in feeling, thinks. When the intelligence reveals and imposes obligation, it is always echoed by the sensibility; and on the contrary, when some appetite or desire is excited in the sensibility, the intelligence is awakened into thought respecting it. In the one case the sensibility follows in the wake of the intelligence,

and in the other, the intelligence in the wake of the sensibility, but in all cases the action both of the sense and intelligence is indirectly under the control of the will, which by its sovereign power always determines which shall be the ascendant.

3. The mind affirms itself to be under obligation to obey the law of the reason just as I suppose the mind of God imposes obligation on Him. The holiness of God consists in his obeying the law revealed and imposed on Him by his own infinite and eternal reason, and so the holiness of all moral beings must consist in their voluntary conformity to whatever their own reason affirms to be obligatory. Holiness then is that state of the will or heart which consists in the voluntary consecration of the whole being to God.

4. Sin is the exact opposite of this, and consists in the consecration, by the will or heart, of the whole being to the gratification of self. This is selfishness, which we have already endeavoured to show is the substance of all the sin in the universe.--Whatever, in the action of the will or heart, is not conformed to the law of love, as perceived by the reason, is sin, whether it be omission of duty or the commission of that which is positively prohibited. Entire conformity of heart and life, therefore, to all known truth is holiness, and nothing short of this is, or can be. If persons deny this, it is because they do not know what they say, and have not the idea of holiness before their mind at all. The law of God is one--a unity, and to talk of being partly conformed to it, and partly not, is to overlook the very nature both of the law and of conformity to it. The law of God requires perfect conformity of life and heart to all the truth perceived, and this is moral perfection in any being, and is the only sense in which any being can be morally perfect in any world.

All the truths in the universe are known to Him with absolute certainty, and He conforms to all He knows. Since his knowledge admits of no increase, his holiness admits of none, while that of all finite beings does and will to all eternity. Angels doubtless sustain innumerable relations of which they are totally ignorant, and to which they are not morally conformed, but their state of will is such, that as fast as they learn them they conform to them, and hence their holiness is constantly increasing; and so it must be from the lowest to the highest degree of moral capacity. Every thing, then, short of living up to the light we have, is sin.

## **B. What is it to be born of God?**

1. To be born of God is to have a new heart.
2. We have seen that the old or wicked heart is the same as the carnal mind, and that the carnal mind or wicked heart consists in the devotion of the will to self-gratification. Self-gratification is the ultimate end chosen.
3. Now to be born again, or of God, is to make a radical change in the ultimate intention, or choice of an end. It is called being born again because it is a change of the whole moral character and course of life. Christ says, 'except ye be converted and become as little children, ye shall, in no case, enter into the kingdom of heaven.' The phraseology is figurative and emphatic, because when a moral being has changed his ultimate intention, he must of necessity live an entirely new life, perfectly the reverse of what it was before.
4. It is called, a being born of God, or from above; because sinners are influenced to make this voluntary change by the word and Spirit of God. I say voluntary change, because every one is perfectly conscious that he was voluntary in it, and because it must of necessity be voluntary, if it has any moral character in it; and I might add, that unless it is voluntary, backsliding from it would be naturally impossible, and obedience necessary, which are as false in fact, as they are absurd in theory.

## **C. What this seed is.**

1. It is the word or truth that re-generated him— That is, in view of which he changed his ultimate intention or heart. Truth is frequently called seed in the bible,--'Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever.' 'Of his own will begat He us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of first fruits of his creatures.'
2. This word or truth is called the seed of God, because it is introduced and made known to the mind by the Holy Ghost. Hence we are said to be 'begotten of God.' It is his truth that quickens the mind into right voluntary action. Now every one knows, by his own consciousness, that this is the way in which he was born again. Hear a young convert tell his experience. He begins to tell of some truth which

arrested his attention, and convicted him; how he thought of one thing after another, that he perceived this, and that and the other thing to be true as he never did before, and that finally he made up his mind, in view of what he thus saw was true, to repent. Now what is he doing? Why, he is giving the history of his regeneration, and giving it in the detail. But does he know the history of his regeneration? As well as he knows any thing else under Heaven. To be sure he did not see the Spirit, nor did he perceive that it was the Spirit, because the Spirit directs to Christ, but he is conscious that he did see the truth as he never saw it before. And he is conscious that he was perfectly voluntary under its influence.

3. This seed, which has once broken the power of selfishness, remains in him, that is, in his memory, so that he can sin only by letting it slip. 'Let that therefore abide in you which ye have heard from the beginning. If that which ye have heard from the beginning shall remain in you, ye also shall continue in the Son and in the Father.' This truth, as I said before, is not a piece of something which God puts into you, nor is it religion, nor love, but it is that which once subdued your will and will not cease to influence you, only as you let it slip.

## **D. What is not intended by the assertion that whosoever is born of God does not and cannot commit sin.**

1. It cannot mean that a holy being has not power to commit sin. Adam was a holy being and he sinned, as did also the "Angels that kept not their first estate." If there were a lack of natural power to sin, there would be no virtue in obedience. This position would contradict facts innumerable. Perhaps very few have ever been born of God who have not afterwards been guilty of sin. This is a matter of consciousness. Most of the histories recorded in the Bible of good men, show that they did fall into sin, and the Bible everywhere assumes that there is danger of this. It would destroy free agency and the possibility of being sinful or holy.

2. It would make John contradict himself, for he was writing to regenerate persons, but he all along assumes that they could sin, and were in danger of sinning. Nor can it mean that one who is born of God never does in any instance sin under the force of temptation. This would contradict all the rest of the Bible.

## E. What is intended by it.

1. It is intended that since the truth has once broken the power of passion, and appetite, and gained the consent of his will, and since it remains in him, that is, in his memory, he will not, as a matter of fact, consent to indulge himself in any form of sin.

2. Cannot is here used in its popular sense, as it generally is in the Bible. Such language must not be strained nor cut to the quick. It is used just as it is now used in popular conversation. Suppose I say I cannot take twenty-five dollars for my watch. What do I mean? Not that I have not power to take it, but that I am unwilling to take it. If I say I cannot throw this table across the room, the nature of the case shows that I use cannot, to indicate a natural impossibility, but in the former case I use it merely in the sense of a strong unwillingness. It is in this sense that it is used in the text, just as it is used every day in every store on Broadway.

3. It is intended then that with all Christians, holiness is the rule and sin the exception--if there be sin at all, that sin is only occasional as opposed to habitual, that it is so infrequent, that, in the strong language of John, it may be truly said, that they do not sin. If sin is not so rare as to be merely occasional instead of habitual, the text is absolutely false. For example, suppose I should say that such a man is not a drunkard. I should not be understood to say that he had never been drunk in his life, but I should certainly be understood to say that at most his fits of intoxication were extremely rare. John, as a writer, expresses himself very strongly, and I might read many passages from his writings, showing that he does not intend such terms in an absolute sense, but to state, that, in Christians, their aversion to sin, and their purpose of obedience are so strong and fixed, that it may be said in strong language they cannot sin. *'And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure. Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: For sin is the transgression of the law. And ye know that He was manifested to take away our sins; and in Him is no sin. Whosoever abideth in Him sinneth not; whosoever sinneth hath not seen Him neither known Him. Little children, let no man deceive you: he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous. He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil. Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot commit sin, because he is born of God.'*

4. It must be intended that Christians only sin by being diverted from the consideration of the truth by

the force of temptation. This is the least that this and similar passages can mean. It is not intended to assert what ought to be true of Christians, but what is so as a matter of fact. He is drawing the very portrait of a Christian and hanging it up for all the Church in all ages to look at.

## F. How a Christian may be distinguished from a sinner.

1. They cannot be distinguished by profession. For doubtless many sinners make profession and some Christians do not.
2. Nor can they be distinguished by their observance of the forms of religion, nor by their creeds or opinions, nor by their church standing, nor by the emotions or feelings that they manifest. Emotions are as natural to the impenitent as to Christians, and are no distinguishing test. But,
3. The Christian is benevolent, while the sinner is selfish. These are their ultimate states of mind, and will manifest themselves in both by a natural necessity.
4. The Christian is influenced by reason, and the sinner by mere feeling. If you wish to influence a sinner, you must appeal to his feelings, for nothing else will move him. He has not learned to yield his will to the dominion of truth. But the Christian has devoted himself to truth, and is always influenced by it. He knows that the feelings effervesce, boil or freeze, just as circumstances vary; while truth is forever the same. Said a brother to me not long since, "I am distressed about my wife. She is very full of feeling, and can be affected by appeals which are calculated to awaken it; but I cannot influence her by truth." I replied, that this was truly a dark sign; and I now say, that I should have no hope for my wife nor anyone else, who cannot be influenced to duty, by the simple truth, unaided by appeals to the Sensibility.
5. The Christian obeys all known truth, on all subjects, while sinners conform to truth only on those subjects that are enforced by public opinion. Truth is the Christian's law, and he conforms to it as fully in opposition to, as in conformity to public opinion. But mark! a sinner will conform to some truths outwardly, but not to all, nor really to any in his heart. Public sentiment is a god that most people obey and worship.

# Thirst After Righteousness

Dare Odeyemi

- Christians adhere to principle in the face of all opposition, while sinners quail before it. Let opposition rise ever so high, you will see the true Christian stand like a rock, and breast the dashing wave--he will not shrink or quail. Not so with the sinner. He will go along well enough, while all is smooth, but when the tide begins to rise, you see him yield to its force and drive along with it wherever it goes. "By and by he is offended."
- It can never be said of a true Christian, that, 'sin has dominion over him.' But some form of sin has dominion over sinners universally. Sometimes it assumes one type and sometimes another, but sin is their master.
- Christians obey the spirit and letter of the moral law, but sinners obey only the letter, even if they do that.
- Cause a Christian to see the truth on any subject and he will obey it; but a sinner will see and acknowledge it, and continue on in his sins. His appetites, and not his conscience, are his master.

## REMARKS.

Every real Christian lives habitually without sin. Nothing is more common than to find large classes of professors of religion who acknowledge that they are living in sin. You ask them--Do you not know that this is wrong? Yes, they say, but no person is expected to live without sin in this world. We must sin some. Now, as the Bible is true, such persons are deceived, and in the way to hell. If that is religion, what is Christianity? But, you will say--"I know what you say of this text cannot be the meaning, for it is not my experience." Poor soul! this excuse will do you no good, for God's word is true, whatever your experience is, and in the day of eternity, where will you be if you rely on this?

Now where are you? Where would you be to night if summoned to the Judgment? Could you lay your hand on your heart and say, 'Lord you know all things; you know that I love Thee?' You know that my life is a life of conformity to all thy known will?

*"As the deer pants for streams of water, so my soul pants for you, O God. My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When can I go and meet with God?"*  
Psalm 42:1-2 (NIV)

*"Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled".* Matthew 5:6 (NIV)

A man's thirst today will determine where he will end his tomorrow. For every thirst there must be a way out to quench it.

There are bad and good thirst and hunger. It is only the people that are thirsty and hungry for good (righteousness) that shall be satisfied and will meet with God. It is only those that thirst after God in living right that will see the Lord.

*"LORD, who may dwell in your sanctuary? Who may live on your holy hill? He whose walk is blameless and who does what is righteous, who speaks the truth from his heart."* Ps 15:1-2(NIV)

Some constraints to a good thirst are disobedience, lust of the eye and flesh, pride of life, impatience, doubt, selfishness, idolatry and rebellion.

Examples of people that thirsted after wrong things:

- Adam and Eve (Gen.3: 6-7) Adam & Eve disobeyed God by eating fruit of the tree God instructed them not to eat. They thirsted after this fruit and entered into sin.
- Esau (Gen 25:30-34) Esau thirsted after pottage and lost his birthright. "He said to Jacob, "Quick, let me have some of that red stew! I'm famished"  
Gen 25:30  
Many Christians today can't control their belly and this has made them to consume poison.
- Miriam (Num 12:2,10) Miriam thirsted after authority and began to rebel against Moses. She became leprous as a result of this.  
*"Has the LORD spoken only through Moses?" they asked. "Hasn't he also spoken through us?" And the LORD heard this."* Num 12:2(NIV)

Several other examples exist in the scriptures, such as, Sons of Aaron, Korah, Dathan and Abiram (Num 16:1-2,32); Samson (Jud 16:); King Saul (1 Sam 13:8-9,13-14, 1 Sam 15:11,22-23); Eli's sons (1 Sam 2: 22-24); Alexander (1 Tim 1:20); Demas (2 Tim 4:10); Gehazi (2 kings 5:20-27)-the man that should have received 'four portions' of Elisha's anointing but ended up being the father of lepers.

Are there not some people today that have commercialised the gift of God by the sales of the so-called 'anointed or spiritual items'? There are also many Christian businessmen that still give and take bribe under the pretence of business promotion.

People are thirsty for political power, title(s) in church; fashionable things, best cars in town.

## The choice we have.

For us as Christians, there is no other choice than to thirst after righteousness. We should thirst after the power of God and the ability that God can give.

We need to seek after God in faith, give attention to the word of God (meditate and do what the word of God instructs), have a humble and teachable spirit and resist the devil when he comes prowling.

The Lord will help us as we thirst after His righteousness in Jesus name.

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# Put on the New Man

Odunayo Ogundipe

*“So I tell you this, and insist on it in the Lord, that you must no longer live as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their thinking. They are darkened in their understanding and separated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them due to the hardening of their hearts. Having lost all sensitivity, they have given themselves over to sensuality so as to indulge in every kind of impurity, with a continual lust for more.*

*You, however, did not come to know Christ that way. Surely you heard of him and were taught in him in accordance with the truth that is in Jesus.*

*You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; to be made new in the attitude of your minds; and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness.”*

Ephesians 4:17-24 (NIV)

Every born again Christian loves to sing a particular song immediately after the great experience of salvation; having realized the great transformation they have gone through.

The song is as follows:

There is a great change  
When I am born again  
There is a great change  
When I am born again  
There is a great change  
When I a born again

Some things I used to do, I do them no more  
Some places I used to go, I go there no more  
Some things I used to say, I say them no more

Truly, this song is in line with the Scripture quoted above. There is a great change from the old man to a new man. This new man is created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness. This simply connotes that Christians must live as a children of the light. Righteousness and holiness is a must for all Christians that want to enter into the kingdom of God.

The Bible says in Hebrews 12:14 & Ephesians 4:24 *“Make every effort to live in peace with all men and to be holy; without holiness no one will see the Lord.”*(NIV) and *“to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness.”*(NIV)

## What is righteousness and holiness?

According to Genesis 6:9, righteousness is a state of being placed in a right relationship before the Lord. On the other hand, holiness means to be separated from impurity and set apart for special purposes. Separation and purity are the core of holiness. Thus, Jesus Christ is said to be holy (Mark 1:24; Luke 4:34) and Christians, like Israelites are called to be holy.

*"Israel was holy to the LORD, the first fruits of his harvest; all who devoured her were held guilty, and disaster overtook them," declares the LORD.*"  
Jeremiah 2:3 (NIV)

*"To the church of God in Corinth, to those sanctified in Christ Jesus and called to be holy, together with all those everywhere who call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ-- their Lord and ours:"* 1 Corinthians 1:2 (NIV)

The reason why God saved us is to serve Him without fear in holiness and righteousness before Him all our days.

The Bible says in Luke 1:68-75 *"Praise be to the Lord, the God of Israel, because he has come and has redeemed his people. He has raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David (as he said through his holy prophets of long ago), salvation from our enemies and from the hand of all who hate us--to show mercy to our fathers and to remember his holy covenant, the oath he swore to our father Abraham: to rescue us from the hand of our enemies, and to enable us to serve him without fear in holiness and righteousness before him all our days."* (NIV)

As we put on a new man, we must serve God in holiness and righteousness. As a new man, all the old habits, desires or characters must be not be seen again.

## What should be the lifestyle of the righteous?

Let us use the Bible as our guide.

From the these passages Ephesians 4:25-32; Ephesians 5:1-21, we can note the following instructions:

- 1 Put off falsehood and speak truthfully to your neighbors.
- 2 In your anger, do not sin.
- 3 Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry (do not keep malice and resolve issues the same day).
- 4 Do not give the devil a foothold in your life.
- 5 Do not steal again.

- 6 Do something useful with your own hands (i.e. find work to do, do not be idle).
- 7 Do not let unwholesome talk come out of your mouth.
- 8 Speak words that will benefit those who listen.
- 9 Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God.
- 10 Get rid of all bitterness, rage, anger, brawling, slander and malice.
- 11 Be kind and compassionate to one another.
- 12 Forgive each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.
- 13 Be imitator of God.
- 14 Live a life of love.
- 15 Flee from sexual immorality, any kind of impurity or greed, because these are improper for God's holy people.
- 16 Avoid foolish talk or coarse joking
- 17 Avoid all forms of idol.
- 18 Avoid all fruitless deeds of darkness but rather expose them.
- 19 Speak to one another with Psalms, hymns and spiritual songs. Give thanks to the Lord always.
- 20 Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ.

The Pharisees and Scribes were known to adhere strictly to their laws and they are careful to observe them. The Bible says, in Matthew 5:20 *"For I tell you that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the Pharisees and the teachers of the law, you will certainly not enter the kingdom of heaven."* (NIV)

We need to live according to the new man that we put on and seek to please the Lord in righteousness; obeying the Lord in all thing.

Anything that is not of God must not be mentioned among Christians. We must be holy and righteous.

## What we stand to gain by living a holy and righteous life?

■ Blessings of God & divine favour.

Psalm 5:12 *"For surely, O LORD, you bless the righteous; you surround them with your favor as with a shield."* (NIV)

Proverbs 3:33 *"The LORD's curse is on the house of the wicked, but he blesses the home of the righteous."* (NIV)

■ We shall not be forsaken, nor will our children beg for bread.

Psalm 37:25 *"I was young and now I am old, yet I have never seen the righteous forsaken or their children begging bread."* (NIV)

■ We shall flourish

Psalm 92:12

*“The righteous will flourish like a palm tree, they will grow like a cedar of Lebanon;”* (NIV)

■ The Lord will uphold us

Psalm 37:16-17 *“Better the little that the righteous have than the wealth of many wicked; for the power of the wicked will be broken, but the LORD upholds the righteous.”* (NIV)

■ Our inheritance will be preserved

Psalm 37:18 *“The days of the blameless are known to the LORD, and their inheritance will endure forever.”* (NIV)

■ We shall enter the kingdom of God

Beloved, the coming of our Lord is at hand. Jesus is coming for the righteous and holy ones. Always put on the new man, don't go back to your old self. There is the danger in doing that. The Bible says in Revelations 22: 10 11 *“Then he told me, “Do not seal up the words of the prophecy of this book, because the time is near. Let him who does wrong continue to do wrong; let him who is vile continue to be vile; let him who does right continue to do right; and let him who is holy continue to be holy.” “Behold, I am coming soon! My reward is with me, and I will give to everyone according to what he has done.”*(NIV)

This calls for wisdom and deep meditation. God bless you.

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# Holiness is the nature of God

\*Kemi Oluwadara

*“But just as he who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do; for it is written: “Be holy, because I am holy.”* 1 Peter 1:15-16(NIV)

Holiness according to the dictionary is the state or quality of being holy; perfect moral integrity or purity; freedom from sin; sanctity; innocence.

Holiness is a separation from all uncleanness, abominable, unholy things, sin and immoral living.

Holiness takes personal moral cleanness of life and conduct; such is evident by purity of life and morals and not by just outward appearance.

The opposite of holiness cuts off the line of fellowship between a believer and God.

*“Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look on iniquity:”* Habakkuk 1:13

*“Make every effort to live in peace with all men and to be holy; without holiness no one will see the Lord.”*

Hebrews 12:14 (NIV)

Any man that has come to identify with Christ has become a new creature. Such a person that is born

again, becomes a new man created after God in righteousness and true holiness.

We need to exhibit absolute holiness as God that called us out. Run away from unclean things, sins, and all works of darkness. Have no relationship with them. Stay clear of all unrighteousness (every sin).

The testimony of Jesus Christ goes thus “..for the prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me”

John 14:30b.

How many believers have this testimony?

A lot of Christians live a life of compromise. If there is no sin in your life, the devil will not be able to penetrate your defense.

Believers in this generation toy with sins. Among believers you hear of fornication, adultery, stealing, fraud, corporate & business lies, just to mention a few.

There seems to be no fear of God, the one who called us out of darkness.

The same old self (nature of sin) that you carried, when you were in the world, in darkness, the same you carry about professing that you are a Christian. Your profession is only by mouth and not by deeds.

*“Know ye not that your bodies are the members of Christ?”* 1 Corinthians 6:15a

We should not yield any members of our body to uncleanness or iniquity; we should yield them to God in righteousness and holiness.

Hebrews 12:14 say, “without holiness, no man shall see the Lord”. Without holiness we cannot have any relationship with Him unless we are deceiving ourselves. He cannot behold our iniquity. We cannot have Him as our father and continue to sin.

If we do then He can disown us because we do not have His nature.

Brethren, there should be a clear distinction between a believers and unbelievers. The line of distinction is holiness, the nature of God our father.

Holiness is what will make us to make heaven.

*“To the end he may stablish your hearts unblameable in holiness before God, even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints”.*

1Thessalonians 3:13

I know it the desire of every Christian to make heaven; hence our earthly character should be for us to able to make heaven.

The Lord will prepare you as a candidate for heaven but you must preserve yourself.

Please consider the way you live now. Are you demonstrating that you belong to God?

The Lord be with us and sustain us as we live to please our God by having His nature of holiness in Jesus name (Amen).

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# The Home, the citadel of God's order

## (Tips for Couples)

Kunbi Ajayi

Couples stand at the altar with great expectations, yet without knowing many are settling themselves up for deep hurt and disappointments. The trouble starts when they fail to practice biblical necessities.

Below are some of those things that can make our marriages and homes the haven the Lord planned them to be. We are trusting God to bring order and sanity to homes and marriages as we go through the following together.

### 1. *Leaving before cleaving*

Leaving is a prerequisite for cleaving.

*“For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh.”* Gen 2:24 (NIV)

Leaving means taking a bold step towards a new destiny that God has planned.

The placenta joins an unborn baby to its mother, but at birth unless that bond is severed, the baby can't be born. After the baby is born a very important chord has been severed yet the baby is still very much united with his/her mother but now more independent, free and an individual entity.

That is the leaving we are talking about, it must take place for a home to be born.

Unless this leaving takes place, the welding together that is compulsory before a home can be that wholesome individual unit cannot become a reality. In as much as leaving is important it must not be equated

to mean simply doing the opposite of what your parents say or want or disregarding their needs. This may not bring any blessing but the opposite.

### 2. *Faithfulness*

In God's plan for marriage, the man and the woman becomes one entity and this oneness binds the two together in a way that removes every option of retreat when the going gets rough. Are you committed to your partner in such a way? If so, you are prepared to weather the storms that can break apart less committed marriages. The key to it is faithfulness.

Faithfulness is **failing to hate**, functioning in **unlimited loyalty**, **never ending strength** and **sincerity**.

This is what faithfulness gives to a man and woman in marriage. No matter what he or she does, you remember your first love and just refuse to replace love with hatred. You may correct in love, you may not share the same views about issues, and your partner may not be meeting your expectations yet you remain loyal because he/she is your best friend. The Bible says in Proverbs 18:24 that *“A man of many companions may come to ruin, but there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother”* (NIV)

In times of weakness, you give your strength and comfort. You don't pull down and at all time you are sincere in your love. You are sincere in your financial dealings. You are sincere in your expressions. Sincere in all things; your yes is yes and your no is no. Anything outside this is of the devil.

*“.... Let your "Yes" be yes, and your "No," no, or you will be condemned”.* James 5:12b(NIV)

### 3. **Unity**

When Adam was confronted with his sin, he tried to leverage his blame on his wife by saying 'it was the woman you gave me'. Adam tried to blame his personal failure on Eve.

*The man said, "The woman you put here with me-- she gave me some fruit from the tree, and I ate it." Gen 3:12(NIV)*

Like any other unit made up of independent parts, the family needs unity for strength. Pointing the fingers of blame at others for sins and mistakes can shatter the unity of the home. Rather lean on each other for strength to recover from wrong choices or sinful failures.

### 4. **Forgiveness**

In marriage, our partners often fail or fall short of our expectations. This can lead to disappointment, brings anger and resentment and finally bitter grudge. Even when it happens again and again, it is important to give them the time and opportunity to change. Remember that if God forgave you, you must forgive others.

If you truly love, you will also forget when your forgiveness is genuine. The Bible says love keeps no record of wrongs (1Corinthians 13:5).

You say you have forgiven your spouse but you cannot forget; the Bible says this is not love. If God remembers your own sins where will you be now? God says concerning them in Hebrews 10:17 "And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more".

He wants you to have the same attitude towards your spouses' offences to forgive and forget. Let love find space to grow.

### 5. **Respect**

Partners should respect each other but it is pertinent to mention that each one must create the right atmosphere for respect.

*"Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ. Wives, submit to your husbands as to the Lord" Eph 5:21-22(NIV)*

*"Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her" Eph 5:25 (NIV)*

*"In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. After all, no one ever hated his own body, but he feeds and cares for it.." Eph 5:28-29 (NIV)*

Wives should submit to their husbands and husbands should love their wives. This provides an enabling environment for mutual respect.

### 6. **Perseverance**

Sarah and Abraham had a long wait before God's promise of a child came to pass. Perseverance is not a common quality in our world today but it is very important for a marriage to be sustained. There may be relational, financial or spiritual problems that seem to drag on without an end in sight. Cast not away your confidence that has a great recompense of reward.

*"So do not throw away your confidence; it will be richly rewarded. You need to persevere so that when you have done the will of God, you will receive what he has promised". Hebrews 10:35-36(NIV)*

### 7. **Thankfulness**

When we first get in love, become engaged, and get married, our attitude is thankfulness. In marriage, as time goes on, we may forget God's leading in the choice of a partner especially as we get to know him or her better. Hurts do come and offence can't be ruled out. Ask God for grace to see your spouse with the same loving eyes you had when you started your relationship. Always thank God for your partner. Let your love be like God's own; let it be renewed every morning.

*"Because of the LORD's great love we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail. They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness". Lamentations 3:22-23 (NIV)*

### 8. **Choosing God**

In our world where everything has been pinned with a price tag, where it looks like you constantly have to be on the run and on the move, there is that tendency to put God on one side and make excuses about how busy our schedules are. We tend to replace God's standards with those standards of the world and we say we are applying wisdom.

The Bible says we should fear God, love Him with all our heart and mind; in all our ways we should acknowledge Him. Like Joshua, let it be your motto that as for me and my household we would serve the Lord. So, if you choose the King of Salem, the King of Peace, you can expect peace in your home and marriage.

The Bible says they that choose Him, choose life and they that reject Him embrace death. He gives wisdom and riches, hear Him (Proverbs 8:17-19, 34-36).

Jacob and his family destroyed their idols and went to Bethel.

*"So Jacob said to his household and to all who were with him, "Get rid of the foreign gods you have with you, and purify yourselves and change your clothes.*

*Then come, let us go up to Bethel, where I will build an altar to God, who answered me in the day of my distress and who has been with me wherever I have gone". Gen 35:2-3(NIV)*

A home that will fulfill God's expectation must consciously, constantly and continuously choose God. This is the whole duty of man.

*"Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man". Eccl 12:13*

### **9. Fanning the Flame**

1 Corinthians 7 teaches that a wife does not own her body, it belongs to the husband and vice versa, so we each owe our spouse a satisfying sexual relationship. If Christian spouses don't find sexual fulfillment in marriage, they are courting troubles. As a Christian we must do everything in our power to fulfill our spouse's sexual needs and desires.

The devil has attacked many homes as a result of a deficiency in this area. Please do your best and do not deny your spouse.

A good sexual relationship does not start in the bedroom; it starts in the kitchen or some other part of the house. It starts with thoughtfulness, with kindness, with appreciation and commendation.

It is also important to talk and openly discuss issues related to sexual intimacy. Talk about what you like and what turns you off sexually. A good partner will take note.

Many women feel that the only time their husbands are physically expressive is when he wants sexual intimacy. A husband who is rough and unreachable for days and suddenly turns tender at bedtime will either make his wife feel exploited or frustrated. Many women will resist such advances. Men, please realize that intimacy begins in the morning, with your conduct and affection and can get to the peak with sexual intimacy in the bedroom later in the evening.

Many Christian women also with increasing responsibilities as wives and mothers leave themselves unattractive and unkempt when their husbands are even kind and thoughtful, clean and neat, they are never responsive to their sexual needs. Dear daughter of Zion, don't drive that man into the waiting arms of the adulteress. The Bible says in Eccl 10:8: *"Whoever digs a pit may fall into it; whoever breaks through a wall may be bitten by a snake". (NIV)*

Don't break the wall around your marriage by your unresponsiveness.

Some women lose interest completely in sexual intercourse as they progress in marriage; this is the devil's ploy to destroy your home. Pray and ask God to rekindle your love for your husband. Don't just accept that, that is the way it should be. Make effort and get

informed. Pray and be ready to go the extra mile to satisfy your spouse and as you do that the brutish, uncaring and unappreciative man becomes once again the man of your first love.

### **10. Team Work**

God created men and women to complement each other.

*"In the Lord, however, woman is not independent of man, nor is man independent of woman. For as woman came from man, so also man is born of woman. But everything comes from God".*

1 Corinthians 11:11-12 (NIV)

Women and men are different in many ways and those differences mean opportunities to help each other and to work together.

In marriage, no one is more important than the other, for God created both with unique strengths.

*"Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their work:*

*If one falls down, his friend can help him up. But pity the man who falls and has no one to help him up!*

*Also, if two lie down together, they will keep warm. But how can one keep warm alone?*

*Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves. A cord of three strands is not quickly broken". Eccl 4:9-12 (NIV)*

Husband and wife are to stand together in every area of their lives, spiritually, physically, and emotionally. They should treat their problems together, handle their finances as one purse, put their enemies to flight together and never allow anything to separate them. Including Money! God will help them to resolve all differences in this area.

You shall defeat your 'Midianites' as one man. Your ranks will never be broken.

Conflicts and misunderstanding will surely come but they are not supposed to drive the husband and wife apart. Value your differences, God created them for a reason.

There are different ways of making a journey, different things to be seen on the way. Even when you have made that journey yourself, you may not be able to describe all parts of the journey in details. You may not be able to say how many trees and stones on the way, but you may be able to give some guidelines on how to make the journey in the easiest, safest and most comfortable way. That is what we have attempted to do here.

God will help us to work within this framework outlined in this article so that our marriages will fulfill God's purpose.

# Are you prepared for His second coming?

\*Rotimi Daniels

*“Men of Galilee,” they said, “why do you stand here looking into the sky? **This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven.**”*

Acts 1:11 (NIV)

In the text above, the angelic beings were confirming the much-awaited second coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Jesus Christ, the author of the word of life said in John 14:3 *“And if I go and prepare a place for you, **I will come back** and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am”*. (NIV) He stated it loud and clear and that fact cannot be changed, HE IS COMING BACK SOON.

## Why must we be prepared?

We must be prepared because the devil is on the prowl. The ministry of the devil is to kill, steal and destroy (John 10: 10). Christians at this end time ought to be on the alert and be vigilant because the devil does not want us to live the kind of life that will make us acceptable to Christ at His return. The devil wants to deceive many and lure them into sin, so that he can destroy their faith.

*“Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour.”* 1 Peter 5:8(NIV)

We must be prepared in order to qualify to see Him when he returns. If we indeed have the hope of seeing Him we must live a holy life.

*“Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when he appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. **Everyone who has this hope in him purifies himself, just as he is pure.**”* I John 3:2-3(NIV)

*“For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men. It teaches us to say “No” to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age, while we wait for the blessed hope-- the glorious appearing of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us to redeem us from all wickedness and to purify for himself a people that are his very own, eager to do what is good.”*

Titus 2:11-14 (NIV)

We have been given an opportunity to be aware of His soon return and be prepared. If we fail to prepare ourselves and carry out His instructions we stand to be punished by the master Himself at His return. He will judge the believers then, as indicated in His parable in Luke 12:47-48

*“That servant who knows his master's will and does not get ready or does not do what his master wants will be beaten with many blows. But the one who does not know and does things deserving punishment will be beaten with few blows. From everyone who has been given much, much will be demanded; and from the one who has been entrusted with much, much more will be asked.”* (NIV)

## What are the Ingredients for preparation?

There are two vital ones we will mention in this article: Holiness & Righteousness.

In Matthew 5:48, the Bible says

*“Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect.”*(NIV). For a believer to become perfect, he must live a holy life.

Holiness and righteousness are like twin brothers; if a believer does not thirst after righteousness he can't be holy.

When a man hungers after righteousness, he will be filled with the word of God that will make him to live a holy life. The word of God is like a seed. Whosoever has this seed remaining in him will not sin.

*“No one who is born of God will continue to sin, because God's seed remains in him; he cannot go on sinning, because he has been born of God.”* I John 3:9 (NIV)

## What are the obstacles to preparedness?

There are three obstacles believers face whenever they try to live a holy life. These obstacles are the lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes and the pride of life.

These three obstacles have wrecked so many believers. Satan is using these ‘weapons’ to make a mess of lives.

Many men of God have been swept off their feet through the lust of the eyes and lust of the flesh. Many believers are defiling their bodies daily by giving in to lusts beguiling them through ‘daughters of Jezebel’ being used by the devil at this end-time.

Countless believers have given-in to various works of the flesh and have wreck havocs in the Church; sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions, backbiting, gossips have become the order of the day in their lives. There is no way such things can allow us to see the Lord when He returns.

Many have resulted to stealing, fraud and crookedness in order to get the latest cars, wear the fashionable, and be counted with men in this world. The devil is making sure that many are carried away with all these cosmetic kind of values. Allowing the pride of life to lure them gradually away from God. May the Lord deliver and rescue us from the shackles of the enemy in Jesus name.

### The way out

The way out is to make up your mind to live differently, prepare adequately to live a godly life.

Consider that though you are still here in the world you are not of this world and you want to see the Lord.

- We must make up our mind to resist being enticed. Remember the words of the wise king, Solomon, in Proverbs 1:10 *“My son, if sinners entice you, do not give in to them.”*(NIV)  
Resist every luring of the devil *“Resist him, standing firm in the faith”* 1 Pet 5:9a.

- Allow the word of God to enrich your heart. Take a wise step like David in Psalm 119:9-11  
***“How can a young man keep his way pure? By living according to your word. I seek you with all my heart; do not let me stray from your commands. I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you.”*** (NIV)

- We must be renewing our minds daily with the word of God so that we will be transformed and not conform to the world and its standards.

*“Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God-- this is your spiritual act of worship. Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to*

*test and approve what God's will is-- his good, pleasing and perfect will.”* Romans 12:1-2(NIV)

- Lastly, we must live a life of dependence on the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit will guide us and prepare us for the challenges ahead. He will enable us to be able to prepare for the Lord. He will remind us of the words of Christ and comfort us in all situations.

*“But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you. Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid. “You heard me say, ‘I am going away and I am coming back to you.’”* John 14:26-28a (NIV)

May you be found ready when Christ comes. Are you willing to let go of other things so that you can see His face in peace? As many that have the hope of seeing God should be pure as He is pure.

Remember, He is coming for a Church without spot or wrinkle or any such things. Are you prepared to be among these glorious ones? Prepare to day tomorrow may be too late.

If you consider that you have not been living an acceptable life for Christ, bow your head where you are and acknowledge your sins. Drop every weight that can draw you back and repent today. The Lord is faithful and just to forgive you of your sins and grant you grace to say NO to all ungodliness.

Today is the day of your renewed commitment to Christ. Remember, He gave himself to you on the cross of Calvary. Do not harden your heart, return to Christ today and He will accept you to Himself.

He loves you so much and He wants to receive you unto Himself again, more so, He is coming to take you.

He who has ears let him hear what the Spirit is saying to the Churches,

*“Behold, I am coming soon! My reward is with me, and I will give to everyone according to what he has done.”* Revelations 22:12 (NIV)

***Jesus Christ will soon come. Are you prepared?***

# Ten Cans of Success

1 Why should I say I can't when the Bible says I can do all things through Christ who gives me strength (Philippians 4:13)?

2 Why should I lack when I know that God shall supply all my needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus (Philippians 4:19)?

3 Why should I fear when the Bible says God has not given me a spirit of fear, but of power, love and a sound mind (2 Timothy 1:7)?

4 Why should I lack faith to fulfil my calling, knowing that God has allotted to me a measure of faith (Romans 12:3)?

5 Why should I be weak when the Bible says that the Lord is the strength of my life and that I will display strength and take action because I know God (Psalm 27:1; Daniel 11:32)?

6 Why should I allow Satan supremacy over my life when He that is in me is greater than he that is in the world (1 John 4:4)?

7 Why should I accept defeat when the Bible says that God always leads me in triumph (2 Corinthians 2:14)?

8 Why should I lack wisdom when Christ became wisdom to me from God and God gives wisdom to me generously when I ask Him for it (1 Corinthians 1:30; James 1:5)?

9 Why should I be depressed when I can recall to mind God's loving-kindness, compassion and faithfulness, and have hope (Lamentations 3:21-23)?

10 Why should I worry and fret when I can cast all my anxiety on Christ who cares for me (1 Peter 5:7)?

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## What must I do to be saved?

**Acknowledge:** "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God," Rom 3:23 (NIV)

Say, "God, have mercy on me, a sinner." Luke 18:13 (NIV)

**Believe:** "'For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.'" John 3:16 (NIV)

"Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because he has not believed in the name of God's one and only Son." John 3:18 (NIV)

**Confess:** "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness." I John 1:9(NIV)

Pray like this: Dear Lord Jesus, come into my heart right now. Your word says if I come to you, you will in no wise cast me out. I believe in my heart and confess with my mouth that you are the Son of God. I believe you died and rose for my justification. Thank you for agreeing to be lord over my life. Thank you because I am saved NOW.

If you have just taken this step, we would like to pray along with you, please contact us at the address below or contact any gospel Church close to you. God bless you and keep you in Jesus Name (Amen)

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