

**THE SHEPHERD  
THE OVERSEER  
AND THE SOUL**

by Funmi Adebayo

# **The Shepherd, The Overseer and The Soul**

Funmi P. Adebayo

Unless otherwise indicated, all Scripture quotations in this book are taken from the King James Version of the Bible.

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## INTRODUCTION

I was praying on the morning of 20th August 2021 when the Spirit of the Lord began to minister to me in a special way from 1 Peter 2:25 and Ezekiel 18:4. I was so thrilled by the light penetrating my soul from it that I leapt for joy in my heart. All that transpired that morning in turn made my fellowship moment to be exceptionally enriching. Later on, I sensed the Lord would want me to share the truth I was receiving with His people. (I said I was receiving because more started coming later. And sure there is always more.)

So, I began to note some points down by the inspiration of God's Spirit. But as I progressed, having written so much and yet there was still much to write, it dawned on me that it would finally be a book. You know, from preparing a message to writing a book. Interesting!

I also later remembered that I had been moved to write a book in line with this before but from another perspective. I only made some jottings then. I could not fully write the book, as I felt I needed more understanding. One thing with me is that I love to consider the individual intellect that would read or listen to my work. Thus I love to imagine their different reactions and reasoning and then try to balance things in my work and bring home quality ratiocination, not allowing any form of lopsidedness in the least.

This is God's mind concerning our approach to His word. We should always make sure that everything that has made it into the Holy Bible is well-thought-out. There should be no irrational conclusion of anything. All Scripture is given by the inspiration of God! So all is to be well considered, connected and properly elucidated as much as possible. No one should be carelessly striking out Scriptures, just because they want to sturdily establish a thought of theirs.

This is why the role of the Holy Spirit must be maximally engaged. Jesus said of the Holy Spirit that He would teach us all things and guide us into all truth (John 14:26, 16:13). One can't depend on one's mere logical reasoning to interpret Scriptures. The Holy

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Spirit has to help one to clearly understand and aptly connect the dots, and to make and paint a visibly well-defined inferential picture. Where one is not so clear about anything, one should not try to rationalize things. One should leave it open, trusting God that someday He will make one comprehend better and know the right application.

None of us is the author of God's Scripture. We should thus forbear sounding like one, no matter how so highly anointed we have become and the number of exploits we have done for the kingdom. Besides, anointing is not the same as the interpretation of God's word. God's word should be and must be interpreted according to His heart. And where we are yet to grasp His heart's stance about any Scripture, we should not jump into any personal conclusion. The Scripture isn't of any personal interpretation. Apostle Peter said, *"Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the Scripture is of any private interpretation."* 2 Peter 1:20. The Amplified version states it this way, *"...no prophecy of Scripture is [a matter] of any personal or private or special interpretation (loosening, solving)."*

Paul in Philippians 3:15 said, *"...and if in anything ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you."* Remember also Deuteronomy 29:29 says, *"The secret things belong unto the Lord our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children forever, that we may do all the words of this law (law of faith in the New Testament, and not any longer of works, Romans 3:27)."*

We should therefore learn not to be masters of all when it comes to God's word. Nobody should project themselves like they can explain anything and everything of the Scripture in toto. Even our Lord Jesus Christ, in the days of His flesh, was not going about giving a conclusive answer, like a direct 'yes' or 'no', to some questions He was asked. (This I said with all deference to my Lord and Saviour.) He left the response to some questions open. He would only explain as far as possible for the people to understand sufficiently enough, as to help them in their journey of faith and in decision-making.

For instance, in Luke 13:23-30, someone asked Him if many would be saved. Jesus did not outright state a 'yes' or 'no' answer. He only told them to contend to enter through the strait gate... He then further added some elucidations. If it were to be in our generation such a question was asked, I'm sure many would give a direct 'yes' or 'no' straight away. But this kind of question isn't about a 'yes' or 'no' answer, but of proper explanation with the help of the Holy Spirit.

Also, we need to bear in mind that there are some things we will only come to understand better as we grow up spiritually, while some only when we get to heaven. We should learn to stick to this that we may not let the devil use our curiosity to derail us.

**1 Corinthians 13:9-12**

**[9]For we know in part, and we prophesy in part.**

**[10]But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away.**

**[11]When I was a child, I spoke as a child. I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things.**

**[12]For now, we see through a glass darkly; but then (in the life beyond) face to face: now I know in part, but then (in heaven) shall I know even as also I am known.**

Another interesting thing in the process of making the first draft of this book is that most times I only knew per time all I was supposed to write. So when I had exhausted that, I would have to wait until God's Spirit flooded my heart with His light to continue. The writing was absolutely a work of faith, especially when it dawned on me that it was going to be a book. You know, there is a difference between writing a sermon to preach and fully writing a book.

So I am without exaggeration certain that this book is going to open up the eyes of your understanding to a lot as regards your configuration as a man and how to relate well in life. The understanding from this work will surely help you apprehend the simplicity God primevally set in place for this world before the generations of humans decided to walk away from the mind of God, and the enlightenment that will get a hold of your heart in perusing

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it will undoubtedly enable you to successfully navigate your way through life, riding victoriously in the triumph of Christ Jesus, which He got for all us over the devil and his cohorts. And by a habitual practising of the truth revealed in this work, you will live fearlessly all your life and enjoy God's best all-around till you draw your last breath here on earth and move on into the world of glory beyond with Jesus Christ for the best of best, which no amount of words in this finite world can extensively describe.

# CHAPTER ONE

## UNDERSTANDING SPIRIT, SOUL AND BODY (I)

### **1 Thessalonians 5:23**

**“And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.”**

I would like to have a crescendo approach to start my discourse. Let me begin by saying, man is of spirit, soul and body, just as our opening scripture states. It has been said of many preachers and theologians that man is a spirit, having a soul and living in a body. This I assent to and sturdily believe because God Who is a Spirit Himself thought of making man like Himself. This made man to be first conceived as a spirit. So man came forth first as a spirit. This is what took place in the 26th verse of Gen. 1.

### **Genesis 1:26**

**“And God said, Let Us make man in Our image, after Our likeness ...”**

Then what can be termed as the identity of man in the spirit realm, the functionality body and the control of man’s life, God created as ‘soul’. Or one can say, God set up to be resident in the soul. This is what verses 27 to 29 of chapter one of Genesis are about.

### **Genesis 1:27-29**

**[27]So God created man in His own image, in the image of God created He him; male and female created He them.**

**[28]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.**

**[29]And God said, Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed, which is upon the face of all the earth, and**



**every tree, in the which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for meat.**

Note, you eat whatever you desire to eat simply because your soul wants you to eat it. Your physical body will only act on the order from your soul, your body's disposition nonetheless. This cuts across every aspect of life. Although, after the soul has so much indulged the body, it may sometimes appear as if it is the body that is going for things on its own accord without any prior order from the soul, yet it is never entirely the true state of things. The soul is still the one permitting the body to be acting that way. When the soul really gets in place and wants to change the course of things, it can underyoke the body absolutely as it likes. The blessing for this capacity in the soul came from God upon it. No matter the influencing signal from either the spirit or the body, if the soul is not going to decide, nothing will eventually happen. This means that the soul is quite more than what most of us have taken it to be. Though the Scripture is replete with these special qualities of the soul the whole time, many hardly pay attention to this scripturally provided light about the soul in our generation.

The soul is quite more than mind and emotional chamber many do call it. The human soul is eternal. It cannot be dissolved by death, unlike the human physical body. The soul is the representation of man in the spirit realm. What becomes of the soul of man is the reality of that man. It will be the true manifest experience of that man in the material world. And there are some very critical decisions of the soul that will have *an eternal effect* on the life of a man.

The decision ability is resident solely not in the spirit, nor in the body (the brain), but in the soul of a man. Influence can only come from either the spirit or the body, but what to do is finally of the soul every time. Where the soul goes is where the entire life of a man will go at last. We need to understand that the soul is the real deal! It is the focus of everything. We should notice that when man is referred to in the Scripture regarding consequences, the soul is mostly the focus. I would like for you to henceforth pay close attention to the mentioning of the soul with regard to man

whenever you're studying the Holy Scripture, from the Old Testament to the New. The discoveries about the soul will surely amaze you. The soul is indisputably the real crux of the matter! I'm sure you will get a better understanding as we proceed.

By the way, 'psuche' is the Greek word for soul. Psuche is used 105 times in the New Testament. It is used only two times in reference to the creatures in the sea, in Rev. 8:9 and Rev. 16:3. Other times, it is used in reference to God, Jesus and man, but man mostly. Psuche is sometimes translated as mind and heart in the King James' Version, but mostly translated as either life or soul. It is translated as 'mind' in Acts 14:2, Phil. 1:27 and Heb. 12:3, as 'heart' in Eph. 6:6 and as 'heartily' in Col. 3:23. It is altogether translated 58 times as 'soul' and 40 times as 'life'.

## **The Body**

### **Genesis 2:7**

**"And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul."**

In Genesis 2:7, God finally gave man a body for the physical identity in the material world and also to house his spirit and his soul, and for concrete execution of soul's desires. It is through the body that the soul finds an expression in the material world. God so designed it in such a way that 'anything' that will operate manifestly in the earth will have to do it through a body. Even God Himself had to physically walk this earth in a corporeal body of Jesus Christ. Jesus is the physical body of God. Jesus said to Philip, "*... he that hath seen Me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Show us the Father?*" John 14:9.

From Genesis 2:7, we can also deduce that the spirit of man was used to activate and set the soul of man in an eternally existential motion. Note, the soul is to be walking around, navigating the physical world through his physical body, the one physically housing everything of man in this present life, and through his spiritual body, by which the soul can be seen and identified in the spirit realm, which usually should look like the physical one. But

for some reasons, there may sometimes be a difference in some ways, *because the spiritual state does project the realness of things.*

**Matthew 10:28**

**“And fear not them which kill the body (the physical body), but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear Him [God] which is able to destroy both soul and body (this is sure referring to the spiritual body, because the physical body of that fellow must have been physically seen dead and probably inhumed on earth) in hell (remember hell is not of the physical world, hence no corporeal body goes there).”**

A flash here: we should note that what is done in and with the physical body determines what becomes of the soul and the spiritual body when one’s earthly time elapses. The full discussion later.

**2 Corinthians 5:10**

**“For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body (physical body), according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.”**

**Further Explanation**

In Genesis 1:2, the word used for the Spirit (of God) is ‘ruach’ in Hebrew, which can mean, spirit (as used in this place and every time God’s Spirit is referred to in the Old Testament), wind, breath, mind, etc. It is used as mind only five times in the Old Testament, videlicet, Genesis 26:35, Proverbs 29:11, Ezekiel 11:5 and 20:32, and Habakkuk 1:11.

What about this? I am directing the spotlight on the mind just to corroborate the point that was initially raised, that God thought to make man. You remember? Generally, we know that thinking is of the mind. We can thus say, God, Who is a Spirit, thought or spirited to make a spirit called man. That is, Spirit spirited (thought) to make a spirit like Spirit Himself and to create this spirit to be unique like none ever, just as the Spirit, the Creator, Himself is

unique. So man is only like God and should only be and live like Him uniquely, and also be venerating and worshipping Him as His one and only Creator and His only forever Source.

The manner of man's creation makes him be of an unparalleled soul. The soul of a man is without equal, being that, his soul (among other kinds of souls) is the only one whose spirit (that is, 'what' activated and set it in an eternal motion) is directly of the order of God; it is straight from and of God and part of God. Praise God for His unfathomable love for man and His unspeakable gift bestowed on him! Hallelujah!

**Psalms 139:14**

**I will praise Thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvellous are Thy works; and that my soul knoweth right well.**

**The Heart and the Mind**

**1 Thessalonians 5:23**

**“And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.”**

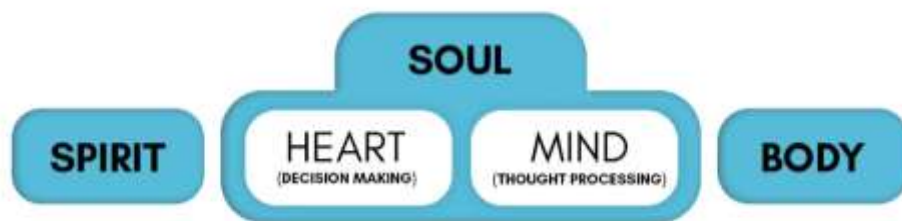
The order that Apostle Paul gave in 1 Thess. 5:23 is the right one because he wrote that by the Spirit of God, and the Spirit of God will not oppose Himself. I strongly believe that the soul is placed in-between the spirit and the body if they are to be represented diagrammatically. I also believe that the heart and the mind are of the soul, that is, they are located in the soul; they are contents that make up the soul. I'm going to elucidate this extensively by the help of God's Spirit.

As I went on seeking the Lord in 2009, studying and praying, a further understanding of the spirit, soul and body came to me. And after reading from some Christian authors and listening to some preachers on this same subject since this understanding came to me, I have not really been able to do any major modification to it.

I've only been able to further myself deeper into its certainty and knowing how to aptly apply it in life experiences.

**Here is the understanding:**

Diagrammatically, let us say the spirit is to the left and the body to the right, while the soul is at the middle, that is, between them both, according to 1 Thess. 5:23's order, then we will have the heart to the left part of the soul, where the soul is abutted on the spirit, and the mind to the right side of the soul, where it borders on the body (the brain, because the brain oversees the activities of the body, so understandably brain and body can be used interchangeably). Imagine also a partitioning between the heart and the mind. See the diagrammatic representation below.



Let us remember that the mind is basically for processing thoughts, while the heart is for decision making, though the two are sometimes being used interchangeably in off-the-cuff discourses and discussions. Also understand that whatever decision is made in the heart is solely, or one can say, mostly, based on the thought that has already been processed in the mind, whether thoroughly or superficially.

Generally, things are not decided upon in the mind, they are only considered there. Whatever that is still in the mind has not gained a firm root yet. It can be changed and replaced at any time. It is only in the heart that things are finally rooted and become what one lives by.

This is why faith cannot be of the mind, but of the heart. The word of God comes into the mind for the meditation process only. Then

by and by faith decision is made in the heart, as soon as the mind finally gets through processing it, or while still in the processing of it, causing the light of God's word to shine forth into the heart, for a corresponding action to be taken there. The mind must be engaged first for other things to follow but the mind is just a means to an end. The heart is the target. But if the mind is not well captured and subject to the word, there won't be any faith-birth in the heart after all. Remember 2 Corinthians 4:4 talks about the god of this world blinding *the minds* of those who believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ should shine unto them. That is, the devil did not allow their minds to thoroughly consider the contents of the gospel of Jesus Christ, so no faith could be birthed in their hearts for salvation.

In a nutshell, it can be said that whatsoever stays in the mind for some time will surely have an effect on the heart in its decision-making. That is, there will be a generation of some influence fluid, so to say, which will flow through the pores of the partitioning wall between the mind and the heart into the heart, thereby causing the heart to make a decision in the direction of what has been over time incubated in the mind. This is the reason for the admonition in Romans 12:1-2, the second verse especially.

**Romans 12:1-2**

**[1]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.**

**[2]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.***

God is wanting our minds to be renewed and in so doing be in sync with His. He wants our minds to be processing only His very thoughts, such that we will be acting out His perfect will on earth by the decisions of our hearts (Col. 3:1-2).

**Colossians 3:1-2**

**[1]If ye be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God.**

**[2]Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.**

Notice also, as we take our fellowship with the Holy Spirit (2 Cor. 13:14) serious, both in prayer and God's word and also in obeying and living by scriptural injunctions, the wall of partition between the heart and the mind becomes strongly reinforced, such that anything that comes into the mind will not easily get its way, its influence, into the heart through it. By reason of this strongly reinforced wall, the thought will be bounced off again and again, as it tries to route through until it is conquered in the mind and gets knocked off.

### **The Heart And The Spirit**

You will remember from our diagrammatical representation of the spirit, soul and body that the heart is the part of the soul that is directly adjacent to the spirit. Right? Their lying side by side is the reason why many do consider the heart and the spirit to be one, even as some scriptural references seem to paint it so, like Romans 2:29 and 1 Peter 3:4. Though it's okay to have such an inference, they can be further divided. Let's analyse these references.

#### **Romans 2:29**

**"But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God."**

#### **1 Peter 3:4**

**"But let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price."**

Looking quite closely, one will notice the rendering in Romans 2:29 that Paul is not really saying that the heart and the spirit are one, but like the heart is being plunged into the spirit. In fact, the Greek source there says it like this, "*of heart in spirit*". That is, the heart can be so set to be in sync with the spirit, where God's Spirit resides in a saved fellow, that the two will become like one, just as it is expected of husband and wife, though they are two different

persons. Peter is also saying the same thing that the beauty of a woman should be of the hidden man of the heart, which is of the order of a meek and quiet spirit, as God's Spirit now resides in our spirit. Let us consider Proverbs 15:13.

**Proverbs 15:13**

**“A merry heart maketh a cheerful countenance: but by sorrow of the heart the spirit is broken (afflicted, wounded, or stricken, as the Hebrew word used here also means).”**

This reference clearly shows that the two are not the same but they sure do affect each other. What happens to the heart directly tells on the spirit because they are directly bordering on each other. The spirit is always wanting the heart to get it right in its decision-making, that the whole of man may be well and that he may have a joyful disposition always. But when something goes wrong and it heavily drains the heart, culminating in the heart becoming sorrowful, the spirit too is affected automatically. The spirit will be broken, will suffer an affliction, for not having its expectation held up by the heart at that point in time. So one is directly afflicting one's spirit with pain when one allows one's heart to be depressed; when one allows one's heart to walk in disobedience.

The spirit does not like depression at all because it is the dwelling habitation of the Holy Spirit in a man, and God's Spirit is never of sorrow but of joy. It means, our spirit needs to always stay animated, as it is through it our soul is actively set in motion. It is in it that the Life by which our soul lives resides. When the spirit is conquered by the enemy, it is certainly and finally over for the soul and the entire existence of a man. It is the reason why Apostle Paul says to us not to grieve, that is, not to cause sorrow to, the Holy Spirit of God, by whom we are sealed unto the redemption day (Eph. 4:30). Remember He is housed in that our spirit.

In addition, when our spirit is wounded, it affects our body's health and our deportment in general. See these Scriptures below for corroboration.



**Proverbs 17:22**

**“A merry heart doeth good like a medicine: but a broken spirit drieth the bones.”**

**Proverbs 18:14**

**“The spirit of a man will sustain his infirmity: but a wounded spirit who can bear?”**

### **The Mind And The Body**

On the other hand, the mind which shares boundary directly with the body (the brain) can also be easily influenced by the reactions from the body. (Recall that it is the body that has uninterrupted contact with the physical world.) But we can make our minds to be strongly adamant against the advances from the flesh, from the body of sin (the body of death).

Bear in mind that our present body is usually referred to as mortal, which means ‘dying’. That is, our physical body is dying gradually. Simple! It is the reason why Peter, in 1 Peter 3:4, directs our attention on taking care of our heart more than the body, so that the beauty will be mostly of the heart instead of the body. 2 Cor. 4:16 says that our outward man (the body) perishes by the day, while on the other hand our inward man (the entire soul) is renewed. For this to be so, we must make our mind so strong in the Lord Jesus Christ, make it continually well renewed in the word of God, as Romans 12:2 encourages us. *This is how we get our inward man renewed, while our outward man is left to die alone, not letting it bring our soul into its death.*

We cannot afford to joke with the engagements of our mind. They must be well censored all the time, to see to it that our mind is not following the way of the flesh, the desire of our mortal body, our dying body. You need to understand that if your mind follows the pleasures of your body, it will in turn affect your heart in its decision-making and eventually your entire soul. Proverbs 4:23 says to us to keep our heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life. And how do we achieve this if not by watching what our mind engages on? It is such a serious matter that Proverbs 24:9

says, *"The thought of foolishness is sin..."* That is, when you are analysing a foolish thought in your mind and enjoying it every step of the way, you are gradually getting captured by sin. It is the same thing Jesus was referring to in Matthew 5:28, when He said, "Whosoever looks on a woman to lust after her has already committed adultery with her in his heart." A serious matter indeed!

I would like to as well get this point across to us. Whatever brings us into sin is targeted at bringing us into death, death of all kinds and also the eternal one (separation from God eternally). This we must know and keep before us so that it doesn't evade our mind and we later begin to act in an unbecoming way. Sin acts like cancer, which eats the body from one end to another, except it is stopped on time. For there is a time when it becomes too late to be eradicated and the cancer patient will be left for the dead. We need to know that sin does not come just to catch fun and while away time. No! The owner of sin, the devil, doesn't just come but to steal, kill and destroy, Jesus said about him in John 10:10. His ultimate goal is destruction, that is, eternal separation from God, as he and his angels are already separated from God eternally (Mat. 25:41).

**James 1:14-15**

**[14]But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed** (this all takes place in the mind).

**[15]Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin** (that is, a hand of fellowship is extended from the mind to the heart for sin action): **and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death** (it can be any kind of death, depending on what that sin is about).

Get this right and clear: that a sinful or toxic thought comes to mind does not mean one is automatically contaminated. Never! It is when one advertently CHOOSES to enjoy processing such thought, relishing every part of it, while neglecting the red alerts, antipathies, sounding from one's spirit and through one's heart that one is then gradually selling out to that thought for defilement. Note the 14th verse of James 1 above very well. *It is a process! It doesn't just happen!* It is the processing it that does land one in

trouble. I mean, processing to want to try it out and see and feel how it is like, just like Eve tried out eating from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil they were warned against, and eventually died spiritually.

Also, according to the understanding from Ephesians 2:2, we live in a world with spiritually contaminated air. Even biologically, it is known that the air is not completely pure. But God has set some things in our respiratory system to handle that. Nonetheless, we do cover our nose and mouth in some situations. I said all that for a reason. Eph. 2:2 calls the devil the prince of the power of the air. Now, who can stay without breathing? Sure, we all need air to breathe, as oxygen is part of the air. This is then apprising us that there is a direct and constant spiritual attack on us from the air we breathe in, as there is physically as well, because of the devil being the prince of the power of the air.

Maybe you have heard of someone who had a weird experience after some kind of air blew over them. Like something instantly happened to or within them, such that they were never the same again from that moment on. Perhaps you have experienced something similar before. You know, like an experience of great fear coming upon one as an aftermath effect of some air blowing over one, and one would wonder what just happened.

Similarly, some people who leave their home in the morning with a zealous heart to stay devoted to God throughout the day, do happen to find out later on that they hardly keep up with that. Many keep on experiencing constant waning in their Christian walk generally. The reason for all this is not far-fetched. It is nothing more than the power of the prince of the air working against everyone, that we may not be able to faithfully stay connected to God in our journey through this life and enjoy His best for us every time.

I said the above to make us see how serious the matter of the mind must be handled with all concentration required. Though God has provided protection for our souls in Christ Jesus, we also need to individually take up the responsibility of appropriating this protection well. The mind must be deliberately set by the individual to constantly brood on the word of God, if it must stay

clear of coming under the devil's influence and from being finally crushed by the continual attack of the prince of the power of the air on it. We must be serving the law of God with our mind daily (Rom. 7:25), that the motions of sins in our body of death, coupled with the external influence from the prince of the power of the air, may not overpower our mind ultimately. There is also a constant praying in the spirit we need to engage in addition to filling our mind with the word of God, before we can always and effectively parry the attack of the enemy on our mind, and in turn our soul. (More discussion about this later.)

We should also note that this our flesh, body of death, cannot be renewed, but can only be subjected. It will stay the body of death till we receive an immortal body in the life beyond. This is why this process is a continual one till we draw our last breath. It is also the reason why the devil always has hope that he can still get us by hook or by crook. He believes with this dying body, he has a very high hope. But the devil is a liar! Thank God for our Lord Jesus Christ! God constantly gives us THE victory through Him. (1 Cor. 15:57.) And through Him, we can do all things all the way. Through Him, we can keep our body under till the end. If the likes of Joseph and Daniel did it in the Old Testament by keeping God's fear in their heart, we can do better in the New Testament with the understanding of our Lord Jesus Christ (Who He is to us and all that He did for us). Hallelujah!!!

**Romans 7:22-25**

**[22]For I delight in the law of God after the inward man:**

**[23]But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.**

**[24]O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?**

**[25]I THANK GOD THROUGH JESUS CHRIST OUR LORD. SO THEN WITH THE MIND I MYSELF SERVE (slave myself to) THE LAW OF GOD; BUT WITH THE FLESH THE LAW OF SIN.**

### **More On The Heart**

The heart, because of its proximity to the spirit (where God's Spirit resides in the believers in Christ Jesus) can and does easily receive inspirations, words, from God via God's Spirit. But the heart won't still be able to go ahead and act on what is received until the mind is first made to comply. That is, until the mind has acceded to whatever it is and thoroughly processed it, the heart won't be able to successfully do anything concrete about it. *If the heart tries to act without exhaustive consideration in the mind first, that fellow will not be that firm on their stand concerning whatever it is. They will be unstable in their stance.*

This is the reason why in the parable of the sower Jesus gave, God's word could not produce any result in the life of those who received it in the stony places and those among the thorns. They received it into their hearts and were very happy and started acting on it, without letting it first settle in their hearts for firm stability of themselves in it and of it in themselves. But after a while and for different waning reasons, they could not stand fast in their decision, which was all born out of an emotional outburst rather than a deliberate and careful consideration. So by and by, they dwindle in their faith about the word and there was no fruitfulness eventually.

This is why pastors must learn not to appeal to people's emotions when preaching. Emotion does not help anyone make the right decision. Emotion is never the right foundation for anything at all! People must calm down and meticulously consider everything. That is the way our Lord Jesus set things. Count the cost, the Master said. And no one can rightly count any cost when experiencing a surge of emotion. Any kind of emotion at all! Preaching to the people to accept Jesus that they may have this material blessing or that promotion, is certainly appealing to their emotion rather than making them face the reality of following Jesus Christ. Surely, earthly blessings are promised by God but they are not the bases for following Jesus Christ, for many people of the world are stinking rich without following Jesus Christ. So it can't be that Jesus came primarily to take care of financial needs. No! People were sorting

that one out before He came. Many nations without God then were so rich, just as it is also in our contemporary time. So Jesus didn't come mainly for that purpose. That's just by the way. ***Jesus came rather to take care of the lack in the spirit and soul of man, to make man completely whole again and be established in God forever.***

And of course, the earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof, which means, following Jesus Christ will also culminate in one abundantly enjoying divine provisions and supplies of all kinds, if one will learn how to leverage off His providence. For one can't have a rich dad and remain a poor child unless one chooses the path of a bastard. In a nutshell, Jesus Christ is the main reason for following Jesus Christ, because He is the Lord over all and the Eternal Life by which our soul will forever live with God.

**Luke 9:23-24**

**[23]And He [Jesus] said to them all, If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me.**

**[24]For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: but whosoever will lose his life for My sake, the same shall save it.**

And concerning the one by the wayside, there was no comprehension at all in their mind. It made no sense to them at all, by the way they might have been living their life, which must have given the god of this world permission to completely blind their mind from letting the light of the glorious gospel of Christ penetrate through into their heart for regeneration of their spirit and reformation of their entire life consequently. (2 Cor. 4:3-4.)

But those on the good ground, take time to digest everything by settling down on it. They then get themselves assured of it and in it, and finally trust God for fruitfulness, and have it in fullness in the end. The account of Luke does a very good job in its presentation about them.

**Luke 8:15**

**But that on the good ground are they, which in an honest and good heart, having heard the word, keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience.**

Note this point also: if we do not set our mind in good time to engage on the word of God that has come into our heart, in the long run, the word will be lost. This in the sense that it may not make any sense to us anymore, even if we can still remember it. Thus it will not produce any result in our life, but rather leave us worse, sort of. Remember God's word is light. *"The entrance of Thy words gives light..."* Psalm 119:130 says. But when light is ignored, darkness by design takes over without stress. See below what Jesus has to say about this.

**John 12:35-36**

**[35]Then Jesus said unto them, Yet a little while is the light with you. Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you: for he that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth.**

**[36]While ye have light, believe in the light, that ye may be the children of light. These things spake Jesus, and departed, and did hide Himself from them.**

Another point I will like to stress here is that God's word always targets the heart first on its arrival, not the mind. Obviously, it can go through the mind into the heart, depending on how it comes. When it comes directly from God's Spirit within us, it goes straight into the heart. But when it comes from an external medium God sets in place for us, it will have to route through the mind into the heart. In all, the target is always the heart.

But then it will have to be sent back into the mind for proper processing, depending on the recipient's disposition toward that word, whether they are interested in it or not. For those who are interested in it, when it has been well digested in deep meditation by carefully engaging their mind, the resultant effect is sent back into the heart to start acting by it, and after a while, the net result will be witnessed in the fellow's life.

**Mark 4:24**

**“And He (Jesus) said unto them, Take heed what ye hear: with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you; and unto you that hear shall more (fruitfulness of the word they hear and also more word for more fruitfulness) be given.”**

**1 Timothy 4:15**

**“Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them; that thy profiting (progress) may appear to all.”**

Illustratively, the heart can be likened to a company's owner, while the mind the subordinates under him, working for and with him for a common goal, the progress of the said company. Let us say this boss orders for some goods for a particular project. On the arrival of these goods, it is certain in an ideal situation that it is the subordinates, especially the appointed ones, who will receive these goods. Sometimes it may be the boss himself that will have to personally go and get the goods, for some reasons. In any case, none of the subordinates will start to use those goods until the boss has checked and ascertained that they are what they need and has certified them for use. These goods will then be given to the subordinates for whatever they are up to. And finally, when they are done with the work, they will bring the result back to their boss, who will check to see if it is well done. And at last, he will set it like a legacy for the company; one of the things they stand to represent; what they can do. Exactly, how it is with the heart and the mind in the soul of a man.

### **Feeling And Emotion**

The feeling and the emotion can be likened to substances inside the wall surrounding the mind especially, which can be stirred to generate a kind of fog and then move round to cover the entire soul. These two can be compared to a bottle of soft drink, which reacts according to the condition of the content within it, or what it is being subject to. The bottle can just be normal (at room temperature), moderately cold or moderately hot. It can also be very cold to the point of having condensed water all over it, or



extremely cold or hot to the point of cracking and breaking, and thereby spilling its content, depending on what it is subject to, or the condition of its content. A moderately hot content in it, or when it is subject to heat, will make it feel hot to touch. A moderately cold content, or when it is placed in a cooling gadget, will make it feel cold to touch. This is exactly how it is with feeling and emotion. Different conditions stir them up for different purposes.

Someone may be wondering what could be the difference between feeling and emotion. Well, simply put, emotion is the expression, an outburst, of feeling. That is, 'feeling' MOSTLY activates 'emotion'. Feeling is always internalized, while emotion is externalized.

Sometimes emotion can be triggered without any prior feeling signal initiating it, (the reason why I used 'mostly' earlier). When this happens, it is usually as a result of our spiritual sensation, which our feeling has nothing to do with. Our spirit picks up something in the spirit realm or in the realm of God's Spirit, which is yet to be perceived nor understood by our mind. But because our soul is of the spirit realm (that is, it operates in the spirit realm to bring about manifestation in the physical world through our corporeal body and also our heart being part of the soul and in direct contact with our spirit) instantly an emotional reaction will be aroused in our corporeal body according to the signification of that signal, making us project an unusual disposition at that point in time. This will in turn try to get our mind to do something about what our spirit has picked up. First, to understand what it is about and then to know what exactly to do.

This sensing can either be negative or positive, and it can happen to just anybody, born again or not. For the saints of God, they are of an advantage to handle things well, especially when they have been well trained in the word of God and about the Holy Spirit on how to respond to such sensation. It is expected of them at such a time to first calm down and then engage praying in tongues, especially if the sensing is perceived to be negative and pressing, while they make their heart go deeper into their spirit, where the light is (Pro. 20:27, "*The spirit of man is the candle of the Lord, searching all the inward parts of the belly.*"), and track down the matter, and remain

in such prayer until there is a note of victory, a relief in their heart and mind. Sometimes they may instantly understand what it is about in their mind, while at other times it may be quite later. Yet in some cases, it may be in heaven they will get to understand properly. For God can cause us to pray about a situation that is not connected to us in any way, but just because we are available for Him at that point in time to use us to achieve His purpose on earth about that situation. Remember it is a God's family thing and all about God's plan and purpose.

**Romans 8:26-28**

**[26]Likewise, the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit Himself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.**

**[27]And He [God] that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because He maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God.**

**[28]And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose.**

So it is advisable to pray with the Holy Spirit in our spirit by praying in tongues at such moments, as one does not have a clue yet in one's mind what it could be about, such that one can specifically pray out in one's understanding.

You must have heard of how some people who were involved in a fatal accident and consequently died while on a journey had been unusually restless just before embarking on that journey. On the other hand, you must have also heard the testimony of some other who rightly and wisely responded to such unusual restlessness within them and they were spared. Exactly, my explanation so far regarding spiritual sensations.

**Some applications:**

Let us consider some Scriptures for real-life applications as regards spiritual sensations.

**1. Matthew 26:40-41**

**[40]And He cometh unto the disciples, and findeth them asleep, and saith unto Peter, What, could ye not watch with me one hour?**

**[41]Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.**

According to this passage, the sensation can be to get us prepared for the hour of temptation, trial, ahead. If you do not prepare before the day of battle, you will certainly be overrun by it. You do not prepare and get ready for a battle on the day of battle. Any athlete who does that knows they have already lost before the contest.

**2. Esther 6:1-3, 6, 10**

**[1]On that night could not the king sleep, and he commanded to bring the book of records of the chronicles; and they were read before the king.**

**[2]And it was found written, that Mordecai had told of Bigthana and Teresh, two of the king's chamberlains, the keepers of the door, who sought to lay hand on the king Ahasuerus.**

**[3]And the king said, What honour and dignity hath been done to Mordecai for this? Then said the king's servants that ministered unto him, There is nothing done for him.**

**[6]So Haman came in. And the king said unto him, What shall be done unto the man whom the king delighteth to honour? Now Haman thought in his heart, To whom would the king delight to do honour more than to myself?**

**[10]Then the king said to Haman, Make haste, and take the apparel and the horse, as thou hast said, and do even so to Mordecai the Jew, that sitteth at the king's gate: let nothing fail of all that thou hast spoken.**

Considering this story about king Ahasuerus and Mordecai in the light of God's Spirit in the New Testament, the sensation can be to bring us direction on something we have neglected, which the Lord is now wanting us to act on as the time for its execution has finally

come, or another opportunity has been granted to us. (And it can as well be to clear the way for us concerning the progress of our life and the needed promotion and glory for our life at that point in time, or in the future. You know, getting things settled ahead of time, as God's Spirit moves you to act when you do not fully understand what it is all about at present.)

### **3. Philippians 1:9-10**

**[9]And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment;**

**[10]That ye may approve things that are excellent; that ye may be sincere and without offence till the day of Christ;**

According to this reference in the light of our discussion, it can be to help our soul become sharper in the accurate knowledge of God, stripping us of any sticky wrong mentality which has reduced us in life or affected us badly in some way. Then we will become more accurate in our perceiving God's mind and endorsing excellent things, and thereby live as perfect and mature as much as possible till Christ comes to take us home.

### **For Further Digestion On Being Inspired From Within**

**Job 32:8**

**"But there is a spirit in man: and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding."**

**Psalms 51:6**

**"Behold, thou desirest truth in the inward parts: *and in the hidden part thou shalt make me to know wisdom.*"**

**John 4:23-24**

**[23]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.**

**[24]God is a Spirit: and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth.**

**John 7:37-39 (AMP)**

**[37]Now on the final and most important day of the Feast, Jesus stood, and He cried in a loud voice, If any man is thirsty, let him come to Me and drink!**

**[38]He who believes in Me [who cleaves to and trusts in and relies on Me] as the Scripture has said, From his innermost being (his spirit, for the Holy Spirit dwells there) shall flow [continuously] springs and rivers of living water.**

**[39]But He was speaking here of the Spirit, Whom those who believed (trusted, had faith) in Him were afterwards to receive. For the [Holy] Spirit had not yet been given, because Jesus was not yet glorified (raised to honour).**

## CHAPTER TWO

### UNDERSTANDING SPIRIT, SOUL AND BODY (II)

#### **1 Thessalonians 5:23**

**“And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.”**

Let us from another related perspective consider the relationship among spirit, soul and body. Remember in chapter one, it was said that the heart and the mind are of the soul. Now let us consider the mind as a signal analyzer. What is a signal analyzer? Simply put and in a layman definition, it is a machine used to examine a signal for further application elsewhere. When a signal (which could be either negative, devil-inspired, or positive, God-inspired) enters the mind and stays there beyond the expected time, it will automatically and spontaneously affect the entire soul, as I said in chapter one.

This means there is a preset time permitted for any signal that enters the mind to stay before it can begin to affect the mind and subsequently the heart, and in due course the man's entire life. (I believe this set time varies from one person to another somehow to a degree, depending on their upbringing and how they've worked on themselves.) Any signal that lingers beyond the preset time will trigger a strong magnetic field in the emotional chamber, which will move to becloud the heart, causing it to decide and act under its influence, and which can be very calamitous if it happens to be a negative one. A kind of thought is what I mean by '*a signal*'. Bear in mind that thoughts do externally come into our minds through our senses of touching, seeing, hearing, tasting and smelling.

## **The Essence of Feeding On God's Word**

For any follower of Christ who feeds their heart very well on the word of God, it provides a very strong protective wall or shell around their heart, which in turn will be serving to repel any negative magnetic field that may be triggered for whatever reason in their mind, so that their heart does not end up acting under its influence. This protective, or resistive, wall is reinforced more strongly as they continually feed their heart on the word of God and always have their mind renewed by the same.

Note, in meditation both the heart and the mind are engaged, though the mind may be more active for the collation of data from different sources. The heart must be set sturdy in the word of God and the Holy Spirit to monitor the moving around of the mind, so that it may not in the process of gathering data lose focus and get gone astray into frivolities, dragging the heart along with it. The heart must always endeavour to bring the mind back on course each time it's wandering too far, as wandering far from the set course can easily happen to the mind because of the inpouring of memories in a moment like that. The heart must very well know its target and why such a moment is on, which will in turn help it to detect fast when the mind is going off course excessively and unnecessarily.

### **Psalms 119:111-114, 133**

**[111]Thy testimonies have I taken as an heritage for ever: FOR THEY ARE THE REJOICING OF MY HEART.**

**[112]I have INCLINED MINE HEART TO PERFORM THY STATUTES ALWAYS, even unto the end.**

**[113]I HATE VAIN THOUGHTS: BUT THY LAW DO I LOVE.**

**[114]Thou art my hiding place and my shield: I hope in Thy word.**

**[133]Order my steps in Thy word: and let not any iniquity have dominion over me.**

### **Romans 12:2**

**“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.”**

When our heart is properly and strongly shielded in the word of God, even if by any chance an unwanted signal (thought) forces its way into our mind and activates our emotion in that respect, there is going to be an abrupt stoppage of its influence on our heart, which at times can be so snappy and instant, while at other times a very long battle before the heart can emerge a winner, after being subjected to prayers.

Jesus' case in the garden of Gethsemane is a good illustration. A contrary signal to God's will for Him has found its way into His mind and activated a very strong and sorrowful magnetic field, which is now trying to find its way into Jesus' heart, so as to cause Him to make a decision contrary to God's will for Him. Jesus' spirit is ready for the will of God, but He will not be able to go for it except the decisive power of His soul, which is the heart, takes action. According to the Scripture, Jesus said, *“My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even unto death.”* It is that serious! Jesus is not immediately able to resist this. No! He has to all alone give Himself to an intense prayer before He finally gains the victory over the conflicting emotion. Then His heart boldly goes ahead to decide to go through with God's will. (Matthew 26:36-45).

On the other hand, when satan, in Matthew 16:21-23, used Peter's mouth to send a signal (suggestion) contrary to God's will for Jesus Christ to Him, He was instantly able to resist that signal. It was sharp and instant there!

I believe from these Jesus' experiences, we have vividly understood the practical examples of the two possible situations referred to just above. It is the reason why Hebrews 2:18 says, *“Jesus Christ has suffered being tempted (tried), and He is able to succour (help) them that are tempted (tried).”* Jesus Christ can sure help anyone who will believe Him. He can help them go through anything, no matter the present state of their life. Hebrews 4:15 makes us understand that we have a High Priest, Who can be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, because He Himself was in all points tried and



tempted as we are, but without missing it. With Jesus Christ we cannot miss it and will not. Amen.

Feeding on the word of God will certainly make our heart to be set in such a way that when anything contrary to this setting is perceived approaching our heart, it is immediately interrupted and sharply stopped, as we will just know in our heart of hearts that it is not from God. When we constantly have our heart feed on the word of God, we will make it to be rightly preset with God's rightness, God's righteousness (what God wants and what He doesn't). This is why Jesus said in Matthew 6:33 that we should be seeking first the kingdom of God and His righteousness (rightness, His way of doing things...) and other things would be an addition.

Seeking first to preset our hearts with God's standard in every aspect of life is for our good and the best we can do for ourselves, so that we may always and easily shrug off things which are not of God when they are trying to vie for our attention. And this we will have to do daily because the devil doesn't rest.

Jesus' temptation from the devil in Matthew 4 is a good case for consideration. His heart was perfectly preset with God's word, so He was able to firmly resist and dislodge the devil's advances. It is also the same in that Matthew 16:21-23 we previously referred to. Jesus was sure in His heart what God wanted (a kind of fixed God's righteousness), so when a contrary opinion came to Him through Peter, He was able to detect it easily, resist it instantly and rebuke the devil speaking through him.

It is as well the same with David in 1 Samuel 24:1-7, when he was pressured by his men to slay King Saul. Verses 4 and 5 make us understand that *David's heart smote him for the contrary suggestion he was trying to execute*, and he said to his men, *"The Lord forbid that I should do this thing unto my master, the Lord's anointed, to stretch mine hand against him, seeing he is the anointed of the Lord."*

Lastly in this chapter, I would like for us to bear in mind that getting ourselves continually saturated in the word of God will help our minds not only to be renewed but also become galvanized with some resistive substances. Such that on their own they will be

dropping some signals without desiring to know what they are about. There will be no desire whatsoever to analyze their contents. The mind can sure be worked upon to be this focused and well disciplined.

## CHAPTER THREE

### THE SPIRIT AND THE SOUL (I)

**Ezekiel 11:19-21**

**[19]And I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within you; and I will take the stony heart out of their flesh, and will give them an heart of flesh:**

**[20]That they may walk in my statutes, and keep mine ordinances, and do them: and they shall be my people, and I will be their God.**

**[21]But as for them whose heart walketh after the heart of their detestable things and their abominations, I will recompense their way upon their own heads, saith the Lord GOD.**

In our opening Scripture, it is shown what exactly happens when one accepts Jesus Christ as one's Lord and Saviour (verse 19). When we become born again, a new spirit is imparted to us, as well as a heart of flesh that accepts the will of God. *We can say one and a half of man is made new at the new birth. Then by taking responsibility this newness should spread from there to the remaining part of him, his mind and body, so that in the end the whole of man can be a saturation of newness of God in Christ Jesus (2 Cor. 5:14-18). The one and a half of man that is made new at rebirth is the core, like the centre of gravity of man, which is meant to be strong enough to carry the weight of responsibility for the rest of man yet to be made new.*

I should say this, the giving of a new spirit and a new heart (a heart of flesh) at salvation birth indicates that everyone is spiritually dead before turning their life over to Jesus Christ. 'Dead' in this sense means a disconnection from God, which can eventually become eternally permanent if one remains in such estate till the physical demise takes place. Additionally, understand that this death of a thing began with the fall of man in the Garden of Eden. God said to Adam, *"The day you eat of this tree you shall surely die,"* Gen. 2:17. They ate and died spiritually.

To further explain this, in the unsaved state, the spirit is dead and severed from God. *"God is not the God of the dead, but of the living,"* Jesus said in Matthew 22:32. And remember that God is a Spirit, a living Spirit always. Also, reasonably enough, we should know that a living spirit will only stay connected to another living one, as no one living and in their right mind will want to be relating constantly with the dead. So God, a living Spirit always, cannot and will not stay in a relationship with a man of dead spirit. So, when man fell in the Garden of Eden and became a dead spirit, he was automatically severed from God, Who is always a living Spirit and relates only with the living ones.

Recall vividly that it was Adam and Eve who hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees, when they heard His voice walking in the garden in the cool of the day (Gen. 3:8). They themselves instantly knew that they didn't belong with God anymore. There was an instinctive disengaging from them toward God. This is the reason why people who fell into sin instinctively tend to hide from their close saint friends and pastors especially. They do everything to avoid having a conversation with them, because their conscience will keep pricking them every now and then, making them very uncomfortable around these people, until they have done the right thing according to Christ's knowledge about their misdeed. And sometimes some may opt for continuity in such a sinful estate till they finally deaden their conscience to the extent that it never really pricks them anymore when they engage in sinful acts. (1 Tim. 4:2.)

Furthermore, when a man's spirit is dead, his heart (the decision-making part of his soul) also will not be able to connect to God anymore through his spirit, which is the only means through which the heart of a man gets connected to God. This will lead to his heart not being able any longer to continue to receive constant vitality from God for his heart's sustenance in the will of God, as regards decision-making. So after a while the heart will certainly become stone-dead toward God. This is the reason for the phrase 'a stony heart'. A stony heart is a heart that is obstinate to God's mind. It is not accepting God's will and cannot. It is a dead heart towards God's fear and rightness. The resistive power of such a man against

some evil advances (because it's not all he will stand a chance to resist) will solely be based on moral laws, factored in by his birthplace, upbringing environment and external factors generally, but not of God's making in any way. For this reason, his resistive willpower will suffer defeat over and over again in every pressuring moment, because it will lack the divine power for a steady staunchness.

Considering this given explanation above in connection with events that took place after the fall in the garden, one will have a crystal-clear understanding of why generations of men have since become worse by the day. The spirit dies and the heart gets severed from God, and then gets farther away from God gradually but surely by the day in the things it decides to do. And since it's only in God the genuinely true and good things are present, it means the farther away the heart is from God, the further its decision-making will exclusively be of evil things, things opposing to God's stance. In fact, by the time it was Noah's generation, only tenth generation from Adam, the Scripture apprises us that so much wickedness had already filled the earth. Genesis 6:5 says, "*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.*"

But when a man becomes born again by surrendering his all to Jesus Christ, via the willpower of his heart, which is a part of his soul, a new spirit and a new heart are imparted to him.

Note, whether saved or unsaved, the volition power is always resident and intact in the heart, and no matter how dead the heart might have become, it can still at some point in life decide to follow God, before it can finally enter a sealed reprobate state. *A reprobate state is a certain condition of the heart when a man can never decide to follow God anymore, no matter the persuasion from anybody.* But it's never a state arrived at overnight. It will take rejecting so many offers from God, through different means, to bring someone back to Himself before they can finally walk themselves into that place. The following Scriptures talk about this state.

**Romans 1:21-22, 28-29, 32**

**[21]Because that, when they knew God, they glorified Him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and THEIR FOOLISH HEART WAS DARKENED.**

**[22]Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools,**

**[28]And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient;**

**[29]Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers,**

**[32]Who, knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, BUT ALSO HAVE PLEASURE IN THEM THAT DO THEM.** (Watch it not to have pleasure in Christly unacceptable things. If you know you can't do something because it is against God's righteousness, make sure you don't also enjoy watching others do it, neither endorse it, nor support the cause in any way. Let God's Spirit minister to you regarding this, and make sure you don't shun His voice.)

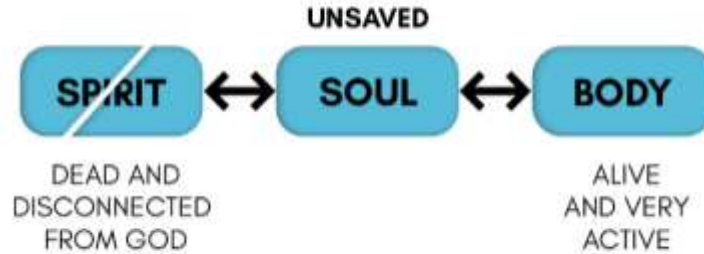
**Ephesians 4:17-19**

**[17]This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind,**

**[18]Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness (callousness) of their heart;**

**[19]Who being past feeling have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness.**

## The Unsaved



The man described in the above diagram lives solely by his soul and fleshly desires. He is a natural man who cannot receive the things of the Spirit of God, according to 1 Corinthians 2:14, as there is no living spirit in him to accommodate God's Spirit. To be natural in this sense is to be 'soulish', which means, to be of sensuous nature, subject to sensual gratifications and living absolutely by physical senses. God's things will be complete foolishness to such a man and he will not be able to know them intimately, because they can only be spiritually (through God's means) discerned and examined.

(Note that the unsaved people too can go into the spirit realm, but never through God's means, nor to connect to God, but through and to connect to demons, who can transform themselves as angels of light, as 2 Cor. 11:13-14 apprises us. This is the delusion the new agers and many like sects suffer from, thinking they are communicating with some light beings, but not knowing that the reverse is the case. Their going into the spirit realm is all demonic always, as it is not God-controlled because they aren't born again.)

Conclusively, we can categorically state that the unsaved *only live by their own soul and in their own flesh.* Let us consider Ephesians 2:2-3.

### **Ephesians 2:2-3**

**[2]Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience:**

**[3]Among whom also we all had our conversation (manner of life or lifestyle) in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.**

According to this Scripture, the unsaved have their life directly or indirectly controlled by the power of the prince of the air, which is the devil. Their volition power will mostly be rooted for the devil, as there will be no resistive power of God within them, which only comes through the accurate knowledge of the word of God. They will not be able to help escape all manner of lusts of the flesh *most of the time*. Their mind will be habitually filled with the desires of the flesh. They won't be stable as air is never static.

We all in one way or another had a share of this kind of life before turning our life over to Jesus Christ. And this kind of life pitches one against God, making one a child of disobedience, and consequently, of God's wrath by default. People with this kind of life are by design and also their own choice slaves of sin. The end of such life without Jesus Christ being allowed to take over before physical death is undoubtedly eternal death.

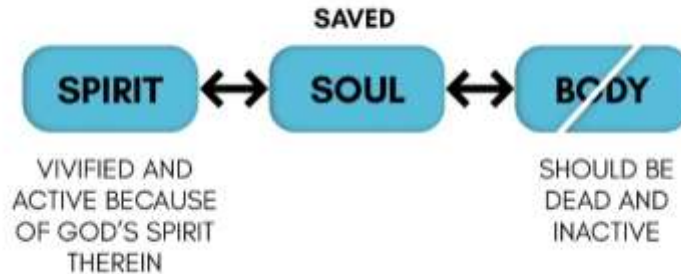
**Romans 6:20-21**

**[20]For when ye were the servants of sin, ye were free from righteousness.**

**[21]What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? FOR THE END OF THOSE THINGS IS DEATH (eternal death).**



## The Saved



### Romans 8:9-10

**[9]But ye (your soul) are not in the flesh, but in the spirit (your own spirit, where the Holy Spirit inhabits), if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His.**

**[10]And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the spirit (your own spirit) is life (alive) because of righteousness (the presence of the Holy Spirit).**

The saved have their body dead and should always be RENDERED dead. Therefore, their soul is not living in the flesh, neither by itself, but by the Spirit of God in their spirit. They have their heart in a position of direct communication with God via their spirit, where God's Spirit indwells. In this way, they can have their heart permit, by wielding their volition power well, the life of God in their spirit to percolate and permeate their entire soul, and thereby have their whole life saturated with only Jesus Christ all their life. It is the reason why 3 John 2 says, "*Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth.*" The soul must keep on prospering into the reality of the righteousness of God situated in their spirit.

But note that everything is hinged on the proper usage of the willpower of the soul, the willpower which is residing in the heart. It is why God also gives a new heart at salvation birth and not just a new spirit. It is also why I put "should be dead and inactive" under the body, because the volition power can be misused in such a way

that the body will be revived again and allowed to dominate one's life.

So for the saved, they must be taught and they too must learn to always put their spirit first, because it is with our spirit we receive from God. Our spirit has a direct link to God because of His Spirit indwelling it. Our soul must be set to always follow God's Spirit in our spirit and no more our flesh (our body). Our soul must not be body ruled any longer, but Spirit ruled. Jesus said, *"That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit."* (John 3:6.) Apostle Paul said, *"Wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh: yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we Him no more."* (2 Cor. 5:16.)

We must not be known after the flesh any longer, but after Christ and by His Spirit in us, just as Jesus is no more known after the flesh. Our soul is now born of the Spirit of God, and so it is spirit, which means, it must be following the Spirit of God in everything and no more the flesh. Spirit to spirit! Thus, we must always render our body dead by the word of God and the power of the Holy Spirit active in us. Dead in the sense that we will keep on shunning the advances of our flesh, not making any provision to fulfil its lusts in our body anymore.

**Romans 8:13.**

**"... but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live."**

**Romans 13:15**

**"But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to the lusts thereof."**

**The Sealed (When is one sealed?)**

**Ephesians 1:13**

**"In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise."**

The new spirit allows for the indwelling of the Holy Spirit in one, that one may again be independently and directly connected to God, the Source of life. The new heart is a heart of flesh, doped with an ability to accept God's will always and decide to act according to it. But the entire soul is not made completely new at salvation birth for responsibility on the side of the individual. (Remember I earlier explained that it is only one and a half of man that becomes new at rebirth.) This is why the 20th verse of our opening Scripture for this chapter, Ezekiel 11, says,

**“That THEY statutes MAY walk in My, and keep Mine ordinances, and do them: and they shall be My people, and I will be their God.”**

God is saying, the giving of a new spirit and a heart of flesh is for the purpose of taking responsibility to walk in His statutes, keep His ordinances and do them. “THAT THEY MAY WALK...” With this in mind, it can then be said that the sealed are those who have believed the word of truth and allowed God's fear, His reverential fear, into their hearts, to be dictating their way of life pleasingly before God, just in accordance to the written word of God, and this they will be getting better at every day. One becomes sealed when one is found in this position.

For if you really believe the word of truth, you will trust God for the grace to live by it and be very responsible always. You cannot claim you have believed and yet you are found living contrary to what that 'belief' stands for, rendering excuses upon excuses always. You are only deluding yourself that way, the Scripture says. (James 1:21-25.) Believing makes one a doer, not an excuse giver. Excuses are denial bosses. They will deny you the reality of all that God did for you in Christ Jesus.

Let me also point something out here, others can't really tell when one has come to this height of being sealed, as we cannot see into the people's hearts except God helps us to. Even if God for whatever reason helps to know, it is not for us to be announcing that all over about them. We need to deal wisely always. So when we happen to perceive some things about them, we should be careful of how we conclude. Man's heart can be so deep, that even God Himself needs

to constantly search it before He can ascertain what is in it per time. Man's heart cannot be measured by the surface area of his face, nor of his look. Take note!

Basically, only the individual and God know the state of things in their life per time. But we can speak by faith over the people of God, like the apostles would as contained in their epistles. We can and should teach, expose, correct, admonish and encourage them to get things right with God and keep it that way to the end. All Scripture is given for these stated purposes. (2 Tim. 3:16.)

And occasionally, if God reveals the state of their heart to us and asks us to warn them, we should obey God irrespective of how they will react to us. But this we should also do with the maturity of Christ and in love, not giving any place to the devil for any form of accusation and condemnation. For we are not to be helping him out in his ministry of accusation and condemnation. We are rather supposed to be helping Jesus out in His ministry of justification and recommendation.

**Romans 14:1**

**"Him that is weak in the faith receive ye, but not to doubtful dispositions (discrimination of reasoning)."**

**Romans 15:1-3**

**[1]We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves.**

**[2]Let every one of us please his neighbor for his good to edification.**

**[3]For even Christ pleased not Himself, but, as it is written, The reproach of them that reproached thee fell on Me.**

**Galatians 6:1**

**"Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such a one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted."**

For emphasis, we must always remember that a man, whether saved or unsaved, always has his volition power intact and the authority to do just anything he likes, at any time he likes and in

any way he prefers. However, some of us have let God's fear subdue and underyoke our willpower and human nature continually. We are always surrendering our authority to God to be used as He pleases. Not about us anymore, but Him always in all things. We love for our testimony to be like that of our Lord Jesus Christ always all our life, as He said in John 8:29.

**John 8:29**

**"I can of Mine own self (out of Myself, out of My brain) do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and My judgment is just; because I seek not Mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent Me."**

You too can likewise decide. Jesus Christ is waiting to hear from you. His grace will be superabundantly supplied all the way. Just talk to Him today and right now! For without Him you can do nothing acceptably pleasing before God.

**More About The Soul**

**Galatians 5:16-17**

**[16]This I say then, Walk in the Spirit (God's Spirit in our spirit), and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh.**

**[17]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.**

Let us have an exegesis on Galatians 5:16-17. A part of the 17th verse explicitly states that, "You cannot do what you will, except by either falling on the side of the flesh or the Spirit." Question, who is this 'you', the doer? Who is this 'you' being asked to walk in the Spirit? We use Scripture to explicate Scripture by the help of the Holy Spirit, Who teaches us all things, as Jesus said of Him in John 14:26. So let us quickly look up 1 Corinthians 6:17-20.

**1 Corinthians 6:17-20**

**[17]But he that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit.**

**[18]Flee fornication. Every sin that a man doeth is without the body; but he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body.**

**[19]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?**

**[20]For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.**

We will notice that the 20th verse mentions the body apart and also the spirit apart, but no mentioning of the soul. This can only mean one thing, the one that is expected to be glorifying God in the body and in the spirit, is actually 'the soul'. In essence and by paraphrasing this 20th verse, Paul is saying, *"For your soul is bought with a price; therefore by all means, let your soul glorify God in your body (that is, let your soul be permitting only things which bring glory to God in and through your body), and in your spirit, which are God's."*

(Remember Matthew 16:26 shows us that it is all about the bargain over the soul.)

So it is your soul that is expected to do these things, through its heart, where the willpower lies and which is directly bordering on the spirit. Our soul makes these decisions through its heart and then the heart directs the mind to move the body into action accordingly.

Let me say this, I strongly believe that God's Spirit houses Himself in our spirit. Of course, spirit to spirit! Although Galatians 4:6 talks of God sending forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, we should understand that it is because the spirit and the heart lie together side by side. And when we allow our soul to be so taken over by the Lord Jesus Christ, His Spirit will make our spirit and our heart to be one, and indwells them, so that He can guide the decisions of our heart every time according to God's mind. (Some explanation regarding this was earlier given in chapter one. You can re-read it under 'the heart and the spirit'.) It is the reason why Ephesians 3:17 says, *"That Christ may be dwell in your hearts by faith..."* For

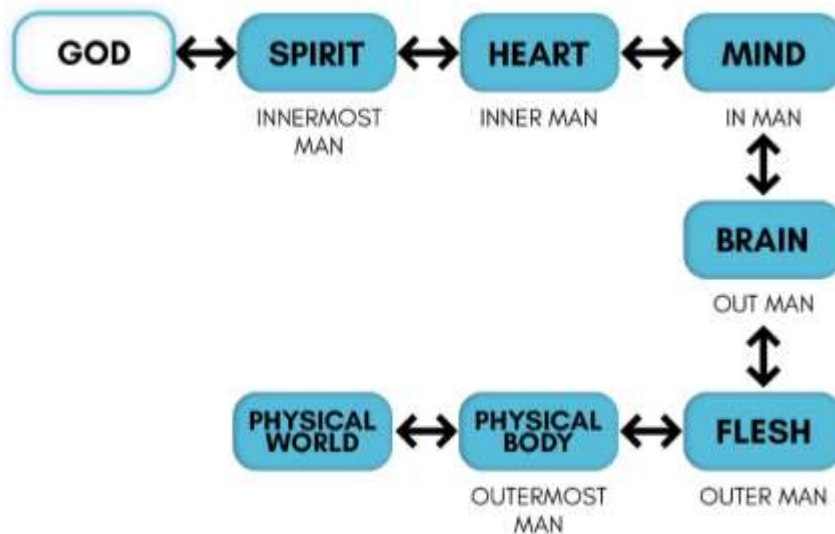
this is the only way Christ can perfectly control every decision made in our heart **each time**, through His Holy Spirit in us.

**Ephesians 3:16-17**

**[16]That He [God] would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might by His Spirit in the inner man;**

**[17]That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith...**

See this flow chart below to understand how each unit is connected in man:



I believe when the Scripture talks about ‘the inner man’ in Eph. 3:16, it is referring to the heart. But the innermost man, I believe to be the spirit. This I believe Jesus was referring to in John 7:38, when He said, *“He that believeth on Me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.”* The Living Water here is understood to be the Holy Spirit as it was later pointed out in verse 39 of the same chapter. So, I believe the belly there is referring to the spirit of a man, the innermost being. The Amplified version expresses it better.

**“AMP:He who believes in Me [who cleaves to and trusts in and relies on Me] as the Scripture has said, From his INNERMOST BEING shall flow [continuously] springs and rivers of living water.” John 7:38**

I also believe that the spirit is not to be renewed when once a new one is given. It is the heart that needs continual renewal. The spirit is already one with Christ's Spirit according to 1 Cor. 6:17, and God's Spirit cannot be improved upon. But the heart, which is a heart of flesh (Eze. 11:19) has to be constantly renewed in the word of God, that it may not *become hardened again* through the deceitfulness of sin bombarding the mind daily (Heb.3:13-15). The heart, the main inner man, is to be continually renewed by Christ's saving knowledge, so that it keeps making decisions that are Christly, to help the entire soul continue to prosper in the fullness of Christ.

**James 1:21**

**“Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, WHICH IS ABLE TO SAVE YOUR SOULS.”**

**2 Corinthians 3:18**

**“But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.”**

For emphasis, the spirit and half of the soul (that is, the heart) become new at the same time during the new birth experience. One is then expected to bring the rest of oneself in alignment with this new experience. This is absolutely everyone's responsibility, with God's superabundant grace in constant supply. The Holy Spirit is there in our spirit to always guide us into all truth, but He is not going to force anyone to do anything their soul is not willing to do, for the exhibition of volition power is resident in the heart always. The heart must therefore be set to be appropriating the supply from the Holy Spirit in us to work things out according to God's mind. Ezekiel 36:27 says, *“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.”* In a way, it is what Apostle Paul meant in Phil. 2:12.



**Philippians 2:12**

**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.**

Apostle Paul is saying here, let your soul, by its heart's willpower, be making decisions to work out the salvation already released into your spirit, by the presence of the Holy Spirit there, for the rest of your entire being, bringing your mind and body under control to God's Spirit and God's word. You are the one expected to work it out! No one will do it for you. Your willpower is in you, not in another person, nor even in God. God gave it to you and He is not going to take it from you, except you willingly yield it to Him. Take note!

Now as regards the question that was earlier raised from Gal. 5:16-17, it is obvious that the soul is the 'you' referred to there. I believe you should understand that by now.

We as well need to understand that the soul can go either way. That is, it can fall on the side of God's Spirit in our spirit, or the flesh in our body. This is the essence of Paul's discourse in that Gal. 5:16-17. If we become flippant in our fellowship with the Holy Spirit and the word of God, our heart will gradually dwindle in its Christly fervency. This will in turn lead to a drop in the rate at which our mind processes the word of God and thereby allow the creation of spare rooms for the worldly junks in our mind. Our mind will as a result be found processing worldly things more and more by the day. This will certainly cause the secretion of toxic substances to after a while begin to flow through the pores in the partitioning wall between our heart and mind into our heart, thus causing our heart to start making 'unchristly' decisions and gradually getting our entire soul defiled completely again. When this begins to happen, the heart's sensitivity to God's Spirit will wane slowly but surely. This is what "*hardness of heart*" means and how it can happen. The heart of flesh will become hardened again and ultimately a stony heart will be resulted to, which was its initial condition, but will now be much worse than ever.

Recollect also that the ultimate mission of defilement, of sin, is death. Deaths of all kinds in different aspects of life and eternal death as the final of finals. The thief, the devil, does not come for a mere cruise, neither does he come for what he does not intend an eternal effect about. When he shows up, it is for stealing, killing and destroying eternally. He knows his destination, that everlasting fire is for him and his angels, but he also wants to take as many humans as possible with him. And he does this by first introducing lust of all kinds into a man's life. For when lust is well nurtured it will bring forth sin and sin eventually will bring death. So watch it! Consider James 1:13-15 again.

**James 1:13-15**

**[13]Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man:**

**[14]But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed.**

**[15]Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.**

## **Deaths**

**Isaiah 53:9**

**And He [God] made His [Christ's] grave with the wicked, and with the rich in His [Christ's] death (deaths); because He [Christ] had done no violence, neither was any deceit in His [Christ's] mouth.**

From the Hebrew source of Isaiah 53:9, the rendering says 'deaths' and not just 'death'. The whole chapter of Isaiah 53 is of course about the description and expression of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ for everyone who will believe in what He did for the whole world.

We need to know that Jesus Christ died the deaths for us. He did not just take care of eternal death, He as well took care of all deaths for us, marital death, health death, academic death, career death, financial death, ministry death, fulfilling God's purpose death and any other kind of death that can be imagined. Jesus took care of all

deaths for us. Hallelujah! We should therefore be determined to maximally appropriate and fully enjoy the more abundant life He bought with His priceless and precious blood, which has been brought to us for free.

Our only payment for this offer is to simply believe and diligently obey His instructions, as His Spirit guides us in His word. No addition, no subtraction! As such, we are to enjoy God's best in this world, while we expect the best of the best in the world to come. Jesus Christ completed the payment for our best both in this world and in the one to come. Let us not be slack! Death of any kind does not have any power over us. Never! Let the truth keep making us free as we continue in the saying of Jesus Christ. Hallelujah!

**Mark 10:29-30**

**[29]And Jesus answered and said, Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, FOR MY SAKE AND, THE GOSPEL'S,  
[30]But he shall receive an hundredfold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come eternal life.**

**John 10:10**

**"The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I Am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly."**

**John 11:25-26**

**[25]Jesus said unto her, I Am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live:  
[26]And whosoever liveth and believeth in Me shall never die. Believest thou this?**

**John 19:30**

**"When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, He [Jesus] said, It is finished: and He bowed His head, and gave up the ghost."**

**Revelation 1:18**

**“I am He that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I Am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death.”**

**A Prayer of Declaration**

Father God, I thank You for forgiving me graciously in Christ Jesus all my sins which I have committed and brought death to my life one way or another. Lord Jesus, thank You for dying in my place for all kinds of death. Heavenly Father, thank You for making me Yours completely in all aspects of life in Christ Jesus. No aspect of my life is ever outside Christ, outside Christ's coverage. I am Yours totally, Father. I am eternally in Christ Jesus.

Henceforth, by the truth I have now known and which is making me free, I am walking evidently in the life my Lord Jesus Christ has secured for me in every aspect of life. No more death experience. I palpably handle the reality of this, in the Name of Jesus Christ.

Hear me, devil! You cannot put death on any aspect of my life anymore, because there is no legal ground for you to do that. You are not the one in the possession of the keys of hell and death. It is my Lord Jesus Christ, being the righteous Judge. Thus, I resist you constantly from this time forth, in the Name of Jesus Christ. Get your hellish and death experiences out of every aspect of my life and everything of me, in the Name of Jesus Christ.

I am abiding in the saying of Jesus Christ. Therefore, I am knowing the truth and the truth is making me free. Hallelujah! I am majestically riding in Christ's victory over you, satan, and everyone in your camp and everything of you, in the Name of Jesus Christ.

From now on, I keep on enjoying the more-abundant life given to me by my Father God in Christ Jesus. Hallelujah! Hallelujah!! Hallelujah!!! Glory to God!!!

### **Know This Also About The Soul**

Have you ever considered that it was only the soul of Jesus Christ that went to hell when He died? Yes, it was only His soul that descended to hell, and of course alongside His spiritual body to move around in. His spirit, where God's Spirit usually dwells in man, did not go with Him. It was the reason why Jesus prayed the last prayer on the cross before He breathed His last in this manner, "...Father, into Thy hands I commend My spirit..." Luke 23:46 (which was according to what was said of Him in Psalm 31:5).

So we can gather that He released His spirit into the Father's care, while only His soul descended to hell, as His corporeal body was hanging right there on the cross, which was later laid in the tomb, according to the Scriptures. Isaiah, by the Spirit of God, said this below about Jesus Christ as regards His soul.

#### **Isaiah 53:10-12**

**[10] Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise Him [Jesus]; He [God] hath put Him [Jesus] to grief [because of us, of our sins]: when THOU [God] SHALT MAKE HIS SOUL [Jesus' soul] AN OFFERING FOR SIN, He [God] shall see His seed [Jesus' seed], He [God] shall prolong His days (Jesus' days, as it is a reality with us today, Christ's followers), and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in His hand (Jesus' hand).**

**[11] HE [God] SHALL SEE OF THE TRAVAIL OF HIS SOUL [Jesus' soul], AND SHALL BE SATISFIED: by His knowledge shall My righteous servant justify many; FOR HE [Jesus] SHALL BEAR THEIR INIQUITIES.**

**[12] Therefore will I [God] divide Him [Jesus] a portion with the great, and He [Jesus] shall divide the spoil with the strong; because HE [Jesus] HATH Poured out His [Jesus'] SOUL UNTO DEATH: and He [Jesus] was numbered with the transgressors; and He [Jesus] bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.**

You see, Jesus' spirit was not in any way mentioned in the above passage. His spirit sure did not go to hell with Him, because the

Holy Spirit Who dwells in the spirit of man does not go to hell. Jesus' spirit and the Holy Spirit were inseparably one. That was why Jesus never did anything without the Holy Spirit taking the lead. The Holy Spirit was the Father in Jesus, Who was doing the works (John 14:10). So had Jesus' spirit gone to hell with Him, the Holy Spirit would have also automatically descended to hell with Him, as His spirit and the Holy Spirit could not be separated. But The Holy Spirit does not stay in hell and Jesus was going to undertake that escapade for three days. I mean, Jesus was going to be in hell for three days, to cater for the past, present and future deaths, especially eternal death, for all who will believe His testimony.

In Psalm 16:8-10, David similarly spoke about Jesus in connection with His soul, which Peter later referred to and explained when preaching on the day of Pentecost. This is to further buttress that it was indeed only Jesus' soul that went to hell.

**Acts 2:25-27, 29-31**

**[25]For David speaketh concerning Him [Jesus], I foresaw the Lord always before my face, for He is on my right hand, that I should not be moved:**

**[26]Therefore did my heart rejoice, and my tongue was glad; moreover also my flesh shall rest in hope:**

**[27]Because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption.**

**[29]Men and brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day.**

**[30]Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, He [God] would raise up Christ to sit on his throne;**

**[31]He seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ, that His SOUL WAS NOT LEFT IN HELL, neither His flesh did see corruption.**

On the other hand, the spirit of man is not automatically inseparably one with the Holy Spirit, unlike that of our Lord Jesus Christ. *Everyone will have to decide whether this state will be*

*reached in their walk with the Lord or not. Only the sealed ones have come to that place where their spirit and the Holy Spirit have become inseparably one.* Although the sealed ones may not still walk as perfect as Christ, the Holy Spirit can't ever depart their spirit anymore. Come what may, He has come to stay in their spirit forever. (I explained in detail about the sealed ones earlier in this chapter. You may refer to it again.)

As for everyone who will end up in hellfire, the Holy Spirit will depart their spirit finally before their departure time to hell. Their spirit and soul will both descend to hell, being housed together in their spiritual body. Their physical body will be left behind on earth to decay. Solomon in Ecc. 12:7 was inspired by the Spirit of God to write partially about their end. And according to the very words of Jesus Christ, we understand that both their soul and their body (spiritual body) will be destroyed in hell. (Matthew 10:28.) Let us remember that the spirit and the soul are always housed in a body, whether physical or spiritual one. And recall also, as it was explained in chapter one, that it is the spiritual body that goes to hell, as hell is not corporeal. So, if their spiritual body goes to hell, by design it means all that is within it, their spirit also and not only their soul, will go with it.

**Ecclesiastes 12:7**

**“Then shall the dust (their physical body) return to the earth as it was: and the Spirit [the Holy Spirit] shall return unto God Who gave it.”**

The Spirit of God in them will return to God, leaving their spirit with them, if their soul chooses to depart from God and head off for hell, dragging their spirit with it, by the sole reason of their soul's decisions and whatever they allow their corporeal body to do during their earthly time. Jesus said, *“Whosoever commits sin is the servant of sin, and that the servant abides not in the house forever: but the son abides ever.”* (John 8:34-35.) Adjust your life now and make sure that you are a son in the house and remain as one. Though the servant may be in the house for now, they surely won't be in forever. Only the son will forever.

Now let's continue with the discussion about Jesus. When He walked the earth He used His body well for the strengthening of His soul, before His demise time arrived, as to be able to stand up to the main task ahead for Him, so that He might not go down in rescuing the souls of men. You should know that Jesus carried all the sins of the whole world, past, present and future, plus the corresponding judgments of God on His soul right there on the cross and then went with that load to hell. It was surely a heavy one, far more than words in this our finite world can properly describe and quantify how heavy it was.

No any man's soul could be made so strong to bear such load, no matter how much he worked hard on himself. No one's soul could even be made strong enough to bear only their own sin and God's corresponding judgment, not to talk of adding that of others. Any other soul would crumble under any kind of load of sin and God's judgment, and would never make it out of hell, however so small that load might be. Only Jesus' soul could help anyone and everyone! Yes, only Jesus was able to, because He already paid this price in full. He knew no sin at all, but chose to become all sin for us all that we might become the very righteousness of God in Him. Hallelujah!

Everyone can only now make their soul so strong in that which Jesus Christ has done for them, simply by believing His report and correspondingly acting on it, maximally cashing in on all that Papa God invested in Christ for them. Then they will walk free all their life, fully enjoying God's superabundant provisions for them through Jesus Christ.

**Psalm 49:5-9 (AMP)**

**[5]Why should I fear in the days of evil, when the iniquity of those who would supplant me surrounds me on every side,**

**[6]Even of those who trust in and lean on their wealth and boast of the abundance of their riches?**

**[7]None of them can by any means redeem [either himself or] his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him—**



**[8] FOR THE RANSOM OF A LIFE (SOUL) IS TOO COSTLY,  
AND [THE PRICE ONE CAN PAY] CAN NEVER SUFFICE—**

**[9]So that he should live on forever and never see the pit  
(the grave) and corruption.**

**Acts 13:38-39**

**[38]Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren,  
that through this Man (Jesus Christ) is preached unto you  
the forgiveness of sins:**

**[39]And by Him all that believe are justified from ALL  
things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of  
Moses (and any other kinds of law as well).**

**Revelation 5:1-5**

**[1]And I saw in the right hand of Him [God] that sat on  
the throne a book written within and on the backside,  
sealed with seven seals.**

**[2]And I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud  
voice, Who is worthy to open the book, and to loose the  
seals thereof?**

**[3]And no man in heaven, nor in earth, neither under the  
earth, was able to open the book, neither to look  
thereon.**

**[4]And I wept much, because no man was found worthy  
to open and to read the book, neither to look thereon.**

**[5]And one of the elders saith unto me, Weep not:  
behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David,  
hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven  
seals thereof.**

Oh, worthy indeed is the Lamb Who was slain! The one and the only Lamb of God, Who prevailed to eternally satisfy the judgment of God on sin, and for the redemption of the souls of all men. Hallelujah to the Lamb! O how so, so, so precious is what You did for us, Lord Jesus! It's eternally precious!!! Thank You, Lord Jesus Christ!

Paraphrasing what has been said, everyone's soul can now be so strongly built up in Christ Jesus to resist the devil and fulfil their purpose on earth, and hugely enjoy all that God has set for them in

this life. No one has to needlessly suffer oppression all their life, provided they can build up their soul well in the word of God's grace (Acts 20:32).

While no one else's soul, apart from Jesus', is meant to face the devil for the whole world, everyone else's soul can and should face the devil for themselves and God's purpose for them, waxing stronger every day in the victory of Jesus Christ over the devil for them. Yes, your soul can be that strong to, in the authority of the Name of Jesus Christ and through His finished work, take on the devil concerning your matters and stop him from touching you, and also to let him know that you now know the truth of Christ, which is making you completely free from all his shenanigans. You will be so set on high, where the enemies won't be able to get your attention any longer.

I will therefore advise anyone facing any difficulty in life, that instead of doing all manner of prayers against the enemies that they think are behind their matter, they should rather focus their energy more on building up their soul sturdy in the Lord and His most assured word.

We should even note that always praying about and against the enemies can be so tiring and frustrating many a time after a while. For sometimes it does look like the enemies are so powerful and we will as such need to do so much before we can conquer them. Or we will need some special anointed men of God to free us, or yet some special anointing to subdue them. No, that is another deception of the devil, in wielding his weapon of ignorance well against us! We just have to learn to do things as we have models in the New Testament.

For an illustration, when apostles Peter and John were threatened by the chief priests and elders at Jerusalem never to again preach in the Name of Jesus Christ, the Scripture says they went to their own company to report all that happened and they all prayed to God with one accord. But we will notice that their prayer was not in any way against those people, nor desiring God to kill them. No, they prayed rather for boldness to keep on preaching and for signs and wonders to back up their preaching. To be more direct, their prayer was basically for the strengthening of their souls, so as to

press on more effectively in the work of the Lord. And really marvellous things followed them, which shook their generation to its foundation (Acts 4:18-33).

Remember Paul and Silas also in Acts 16, when they were beaten and thrown into prison with their feet fastened in the stocks for casting out a demon out of a damsel. They didn't curse nor do anything like that to the people who beat them. The Scripture says they prayed and sang praises unto God, and God wrought a miracle for them, plus that the jailer and his entire family got saved that same night, just by *their acting right in prayer*. The magistrates ended up begging them for the maltreatment.

Remember also Daniel of the Old Testament, that he didn't pray against his enemies who wanted him dead by all means. The Scripture says, "*Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed (the writing to bring Daniel into a snare of compromise toward God, or of death, if he chose to stick to God), he went into his house; and as 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.*" (Dan. 6:10.)

"As he did aforetime" indicates this was his manner of praying. He wasn't given to cursing the enemies, demanding God to kill them, or do any such thing to them. And we can see what happened when God stepped in for Daniel in this matter, without Daniel reporting them to God, God wiped out all his enemies at once, like 122 most prominent leaders in the land, including their wives and children. After that scenario, no one ever again connived against Daniel. The fear of the God of Daniel must have saturated everywhere. (Read up the whole account in Daniel chapter six.) And remember that angel Gabriel told Daniel later in chapter 9 of the book of Daniel that he was greatly beloved. So, for God to have used this kind of expression on a man, it means there is at least one good thing we can learn from his life, if not more. I strongly believe we can sure learn how to handle the enemies from Christ-reflective stories.

See, focusing on God is the best way to go, instead of letting the enemies get our attention again and again in the place of prayer, such that our prayer moments are always mostly about them.

These archetypes we have seen from the given accounts above, both in the Old and New Testaments, are solid proofs of this assertion. Therefore, let's see to it that we begin to adjust our hearts and minds on this matter. We can go the best way always in everything. Remember there is a good will and there is an acceptable will of God. But there is this the very perfect will of God, which is the best in everything. We can reach forth for that, instead of settling for just the good or the acceptable.

Moreover, we need to understand that the main enemies we are wrestling against are not flesh and blood, but principalities and powers and rulers of darkness of this world, and wicked spirits in the heavenly places. It only means, even if we succeed at killing some human agents of darkness, these wicked spirits can find yet another human being they will use to carry out their activities through. But when we have waxed so strong in our soul and keep waxing stronger, we can always and easily be palpably victorious over them in the sure victory of Jesus Christ for us, no matter how they keep on multiplying themselves against our soul every time.

**Psalm 66:3**

**“Say unto God, How terrible art Thou in Thy works!  
Through the greatness of Thy power shall Thine  
enemies submit themselves unto Thee.”**

Remember Christ is the power of God, according to 1 Cor. 1:24. So when our souls become so strong in Christ, the Power of God, all our enemies will surely submit themselves unto God in us. Then we will be able to rule continually amid our enemies, according to Psalm 110:2, and constantly and maximally enjoy the table God always prepares before us right in the presence of our enemies, according to Psalm 23:5.

**2 Corinthians 2:14**

**“Now thanks be unto God, Who always causeth us to triumph  
in Christ, and maketh manifest the savour of His knowledge by  
us in every place.”**

## **About Praying In Tongues**

It is very important to as well take note of this: Apart from the word of God's grace that can build up our soul, we also need to learn how to intelligently and effectively engage praying in tongues. Recently, God made me understand yet another necessity of praying in tongues. God's Spirit explained to me that we hardly can know everything that takes place in the spirit realm per time. No matter how prophetically anointed anyone is, they cannot be as current in the spirit realm as the enemies are. We can only sometimes know a little per time, as God's Spirit lets us in on matters. God made me understand that this is why our walk is called, "a walk of faith."

The witches, wizards and the occult people generally are most frequent in the spirit realm like it's their marketplace, but we the sons and daughters of God do not live like that. Many of these people see and communicate with demons (darkness principalities) like regularly, but it is not like that with us. We only walk with God by faith. We believe He talks to us, but not because we tangibly see Him do that. We just believe in our hearts! Of course, SOME can and do sometimes experience some spectaculars. But even with them, it is not always the usual, because we do not control these things. It is as God wills, the Scriptures make us apprehend. This is why we do wait upon Him until He shows up. Anyone controlling such experiences on their own might certainly be operating by some familiar spirits, knowingly or unknowingly to them.

So since we do not know so much about things going on per time in the spirit realm, it will thus be unwise for us to be praying all the way in our understanding. We will surely be limited in the effectiveness of our prayers this way. We will need much more than that. We will need to know how to get into the realm of God's Spirit, Who can guide us on how to effectively and triumphantly handle things going on per time. And the only way this can be possible is by praying in tongues.

God made me understand that He gave us the blessedness of praying in tongues in the New Testament for us to navigate the spirit realm by faith and effectively exercise the authority of Jesus

Christ over the enemies, enabling our angels to excel in strength on our behalf and carry out God's plan for us. He explained to me that the Old Testament people could not venture into the spirit realm activities because they were disconnected from Him spiritually, so they could not access the blessedness of tongues, nor could freely usurp authority over the devil.

But the story has changed in the New Testament because of Jesus Christ. By Him we are now back in God and seated in Christ far above all these rulers of the darkness of this world and wicked spirits among the heavenly ones, including the devil, their grandmaster. So by faith, *our souls* can penetrate the spirit realm in our prayers and change things without delay, unlike Daniel, who could not exercise any authority over the prince of Persia, who tiresomely delayed the delivery of his prayer request.

Therefore, it will be very advisable that we maximize praying in tongues with the understanding of why. For we do not have the details of what goes on up there in the spirit realm, unlike the enemies who know what they are doing and can see everything they are doing, and why they are doing what they are doing. As we pray in tongues, while God's Spirit takes the lead, we enter realms and settle things according to the mind of God on matters. Unknowingly to us most times, we scatter the enemies and their plans more easily and clear them out of the way when we master praying effectively in tongues. This God's Spirit made me understand.

Imagine, just how could Daniel have known what was transpiring in the spirit realm on his matter? He stayed there in prayer for long, because all he could do was to pray in his understanding. But it is better off now in the grace dispensation. Praise God! Let us, therefore, maximize this for constant effective prayer moments.

Note that there are three kinds of tongues, videlicet, tongues of men, of angels and of God Himself. (1 Cor. 13:1, 14:2.) Without our knowledge and as we yield ourselves to God, we get to speak any of these three, as the Holy Spirit brings us utterance per time. But that doesn't mean we will per se know which one we are speaking per time. We just speak whichever by faith, as He brings us

utterance and we say out those words, releasing ourselves completely to Him. God knows which is which per time and for what purpose. We too may sometimes know, as God's Spirit brings understanding, but it's not the usual. So, we should not go into a frenzy because we want to know which is which. The devil can accommodate one that way. We should desist from desperately wanting and pressing for what God didn't categorically promise us in His written word. We should rather focus on the clearly written promises in the Scripture, of which there are many of such we are yet to claim and walk in the reality of. We shouldn't, therefore, leave pursuing the promised for the not-promised.

Note as well not make a mistake of wanting to pray to know and comprehend everything happening per time in the spirit realm about any matter. You may wear yourself out that way. I'm certain the details will even be more than your mind can bear. Besides, God did not ask us to do that. He only asks us to pray to Him and He will show us great and mighty things that we know not. But what kind of great and mighty things He will show us we sure don't know.

So we should just learn to launch in tongues and let God have things done in His way. If He wants us to know anything in our understanding, He will right away get us on it. If we are to interpret our tongues, we will sense something like that within us, and then we will somehow know that we are to pray for the corresponding interpretation, according to 1 Cor. 14:13, in a way. And if He wants us to declare some things out, He will specifically bring us understanding about them and direct us on what to say. Jesus said of the Holy Spirit that He would teach us all things and guide us into all truth. All we need do is to consciously ask the Holy Spirit to help us pray through, to take the lead as we follow by faith. He knows the routes to follow and the actual targets, in enforcing the victory of Jesus Christ all the time.

Finally, God explained to me that, the fact that the enemies do see all they are doing, which means, they are working by sight, is the reason why they will not last. For the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal, God's word says. (2 Cor. 4:18.) So, we walking by faith while praying in tongues

helps us engage in eternal things, and of course, we are eternal too. Hallelujah!

Remember everything about speaking with tongues is an act of faith. It is by faith we receive the Holy Spirit who brings us utterance per time to speak with. It is by faith we open our mouth to utter those words He brings, when we do not have a clue of what they mean. Which is the reason why many see it as a crazy thing because it is not of logical reasoning, but of faith. Anyways, everything of God is always absolutely of faith!

**Hebrews 11:6**

**“But without faith it is impossible to please Him [God]: for he that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him.”**

Moreover, those who have done outstanding things in this kingdom of God in the New Testament era are men of tongues. Just read through the history and look around in our contemporary time. The truth is sure not far-fetched! Apostle Paul, that great apostle, said to the Corinthians, who were a bunch of tongues talkers themselves,

**“I thank my God, I speak with tongues MORE THAN ye all:” 1 Cor. 14:18**

Oh, my, my! Can you imagine that? So let us fire on in praying in tongues with the understanding of why. It's good to do things with the understanding of why. *It gives direction and consistency.* With the word of God's grace and praying in the Spirit, praying in tongues, we are sure making our souls stronger in the fullness of Christ and His glorious triumph for us over the enemies.

**Jude 1:20 (AMP)**

**“But you, beloved, build yourselves up [founded] on your most holy faith [make progress, rise like an edifice higher and higher], praying in the Holy Spirit;”**

**Ephesians 6:18 (NIV)**

**“And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests...”**



(For more on tongues, read “Tongues Beyond The Upper Room” by Kenneth E. Hagin.)

## CHAPTER FOUR

### THE SPIRIT AND THE SOUL (II)

**John 10:27-29**

**[27]My sheep hear My voice, and I know (intimate knowing) them, and they follow Me:**

**[28]And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of My hand.**

**[29]My Father, which gave them Me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of My Father's hand.**

In chapter three, there has been an explicit explanation about the connection between the spirit and the soul. We've also seen the state of the spirit and the body for both the saved and the unsaved. In this chapter, we will explore and cover more areas with respect to the spirit and the soul, as God's Spirit shall help us.

#### **The Condition For Once Saved Is Forever Saved**

From the discussions thus far in chapter three, we can unmistakably understand that once saved will only be saved forever if one continues to follow the Lord Jesus, as a sheep follows its shepherd. This is what the Lord Jesus was emphasizing in our opening Scripture. In the 27th verse, Jesus talked about 'once saved is forever saved' by using a sheep-and-shepherd relationship. Note, discussing eternal security without this emphasis is never of Christ's stand! No scriptural reference talks of eternal security in isolation of its condition. *And this condition is simply hearing Christ's voice and following Him obediently*, according to Jesus Christ in the 27th verse of John 10. There wouldn't have been verses 28 and 29 without verse 27. Christ's declaration in verses 28 and 29 is hinged only on what He first said in the 27th verse.

It is not enough to claim you believe in Jesus Christ, you must prove that by following Him obediently. Some Muslims will tell you they

believe in Jesus too. What will be the difference then? See, our believing in Jesus Christ shouldn't be mere words of mouth, it must be a life of action accordingly. You must show forth fruit to back up your claim. John cried out and said, "*Bring forth fruit that is consistent with repentance [let your lives prove your change of heart]*". (Matthew 3:8, AMP.) If you truly believe in Jesus, you will hear Him and do His sayings. Jesus cried out in Luke 6:46, "*And why call ye Me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?*" So if you believe in Him, you will also obey Him always in all things as your Lord truly. At least, you will diligently and intentionally make effort to work at obeying Him in all things as much and perfect as possible, getting better at it every day. For there is grace for this, which is made available for everyone. Let us see what Titus 2:11-12 says.

**Titus 2:11-14**

**[11]For the grace of God that bringeth salvation has appeared to ALL men,**

**[12]Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we SHOULD live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world;**

**[13]Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ;**

**[14]Who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify us unto Himself a peculiar people, ZEALOUS OF GOOD WORKS.**

So, no one is left with an excuse. A sheep that will not stray will not decide to go in any direction it likes. It will gently and diligently follow the shepherd always. That is how it should be with every one of us. But we should know that the Lord Jesus won't force anyone to follow Him. It is why, Paul, in the reference above, says, "*This grace is teaching us.*" *This grace teaches, it doesn't force!* The Lord is not in the habit of forcing people to do anything that they don't want to do. I should keep on emphasizing this every now and then. Everyone will have to want to follow Him desirously. It's a decision the individual has to make, and make that every time and every day, just like one is supposed to love one's spouse afresh every day for an ecstatically and a mutually evergreen romantic

union. "...Today, if you hear His voice, do not harden your hearts." (Hebrews 4:7, ESV.)

Jesus said, "*My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me.*" Do you know His voice? Do you hear His voice? Or do you just live by what someone tells you of Him without you yourself getting acquainted with His voice? You should know that you are not a bastard, nor a second class citizen, neither are you a grandchild of God. You are directly a child of God. Hence, you should grow to that point where you yourself can personally be acquainted with Christ's voice. Do not always be spoon-fed by others. God doesn't want it that way! All souls are God's. No one should be found queuing behind another. It's not what God wants, nor how He set things primordially. Such is of human modifications, which have landed many in trouble of all kinds. Therefore, come out of men's shadow and stand boldly before your heavenly Father, and look straight into His penetrating eyes of love, focusing on you, for your constant refreshing in His fullness. See what Apostle Paul said in Ephesians 2:19.

**"Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household (family) of God."**

Yes, you now belong in the family of God and you should know your Father's loving voice for yourself. You are like everyone else in the house. No one should be hearing God for you. God should rather be using them as a confirmation to what you yourself have heard of Him, or at least perceived. You are in Christ like everyone else. You have authority with God through Christ like everyone else. I'm not saying this to make look like one should disregard some specially anointed ones. No, not at all! Apostle Paul, who was greatly anointed more than many ministers of all generations, said to the Galatians, "*Be as I am, for I am as you are.*" (Gal. 4:12.) So, the point I'm making is that we are all Christ's brethren and we should grow into acting like one.

Study through the epistles and you will notice that God wants His people to come to maturity. Jesus raised the disciples that way to be independent, and they also followed suit in their respective

ministries. Many things have changed over the generations because men modified God's standard, but God hasn't changed His standard for any reason, nor for anyone in any generation. So it's your birthright to know His voice for yourself, if you want to ascertain that you are His sheep indeed.

You need to have a desire for the word if you really want to grow to know His voice. Without it, you can't grow to begin with. For how can you obey what you aren't aware of? Apostle Peter said, "*As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word of God that ye may grow thereby:*" (1 Peter 2:2.) There is no growth without the word of God. Miracles and the likes don't make people grow. They can only get their attention for what's next. And what is next should be the teaching of the word of God, for God's people to come to that place of independence where they can begin to follow the leading of their Shepherd for themselves without any intermediary, and especially in their private life, where no one can pry into whatever they choose to do in secret. Our gathering will thenceforth be mostly for more refreshing, eating of solid meals and handling of hard truths. (See 2 Peter 3:14-16.)

**Hebrews 5:12-14**

**[12]For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat.**

**[13]For every one that useth milk is unskillful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe.**

**[14]But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.**

Every sheep usually knows their shepherd's voice, which is why each is independent in following the Shepherd. It is the reason why they do not get mixed up when folds of sheep gather with different shepherds. They don't depend on one another to follow their shepherd. Each knows the voice of its shepherd perfectly. We too must know Jesus' voice for ourselves, that we may be able to follow Him through His Spirit in our spirit, making sure our heart is

always doing everything possible to take instructions only from the Holy Spirit in us. Everyone is saddled with this responsibility, for God is certainly not going to force anyone. He doesn't ever force anyone to do His behest. It is the devil and the people working for him who force people to obey their intentions, as it is witnessed in some religions and even some so-called Christian circles too.

### **More Scriptures For Consideration**

#### **Colossians 1:21-23**

**[21]And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath He reconciled**

**[22]In the body of His flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unproveable in His [God's] sight:**

**[23]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;**

Paul also, from another angle but still saying the same thing, pointed out the condition 'for once saved is always saved' in the 23rd verse of Colossians 1, which is, "*one must continue in the faith, grounded and settled, and not be moved away from the hope of the gospel.*" For how can one achieve what he said there, if not by hearing Christ and following Him? Yes, this can only be possible by following Jesus as a sheep does a shepherd.

So I believe if one will continue in the faith of Christ and grounded and settled in Him, one will not be yielding to the lusts, advances of the flesh and pressures from the world. And if by any chance one gets carried away at any time, one will quickly repent and adjust and get focused again, just like a stray sheep will cry out until the shepherd locates and brings it back to the fold. Do not deceive yourself!

**Romans 8:5-8, 12-13**

**[5]For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit.**

**[6]For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.**

**[7]Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.**

**[8]SO THEN THEY THAT ARE IN THE FLESH CANNOT PLEASE GOD.**

**[12]THEREFORE, BRETHREN, WE ARE DEBTORS, NOT TO THE FLESH, TO LIVE AFTER THE FLESH.**

**[13]FOR IF YE LIVE AFTER THE FLESH, YE SHALL DIE: BUT IF YE THROUGH THE SPIRIT DO MORTIFY THE DEEDS OF THE BODY, YE SHALL LIVE.**

If your mind is following your fleshly dictates instead of God's word as God's Spirit teaches (as you give yourself continually to fellowshiping in God's word and prayer, and gathering with the brethren regularly) death is certainly going to be your end. "*For to be carnally minded is death,*" the 6th verse says.

The 8th verse plainly states that there is no how anyone staying in the flesh can please God. No one moving with the conventional current of the system of this present world, on the claim that they want to enjoy themselves, can please God. It is just not possible! Besides, that is not even enjoyment! It is a mere evanescent one, which only gratifies fleshly desires and is not in any way pleasing to God. And consider, if one is not pleased unto God like this, how can one then think of ending up with Him in the end, except one changes one's way before it becomes too late? Romans 6:16 says a man is a slave to whom he obeys, sin unto death, or obedience unto righteousness. Can you be obeying sin and yet in the end you expect God to take you home to Himself? Is it not the one you are obeying now that will come for you in the end and exercise their right over you? I don't know of any man who will want to take a woman who has not been pleasing him home to be his wife. And what made you think God will act otherwise? Think about it.

Verses 12 and 13 make us see that we are debtors not to the flesh, but the Spirit. I think we know what it means to be in debt to someone you respect so much, while you are a responsible fellow as well. Sure, in all your earnings and spending, you will always remember that person and what you are owing them. You will generally do fiscal things with them in mind always, until you have paid off your debt. Now let us say the debt will take you all your life to pay it, think about how you will have your life lived. And yes, our debt in following Jesus Christ through His Spirit in us will take us all our life here on earth to pay it. We will keep on paying it till we depart this world. *But this payment is only in obeying Jesus in all things, finding out what His mind is in everything and doing just that. It's the reason why Jesus said to us to be seeking first God's kingdom and His righteousness, His approach in and His stand in all things. (Mat. 6:33.) We don't get to know all about the kingdom things at once, the why we are to be seeking it continually concerning every situation before us.* This we must not be tired of doing, that we may not along the way find ourselves settling for the fleshly things again, as one can easily fall back to them time after time. The 13th verse emphatically expresses that if we live after the flesh, death is going to be our end. But if we through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, which are trying to get in our way of faithfully following Jesus Christ, we shall live. That is, we shall be forever saved.

**Hebrews 10:38-39**

**[38]Now the just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him.**

**[39]But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul.**

This Scripture explicitly states that one can actually draw back after being saved. I do not know how one can reason or say otherwise about this assertion. The only otherwise case will be if the writer did not mean what he said. But I believe the writer wrote the mind of God by the Spirit of God. Thus there is no mincing word in the above Scripture. It's just as it is stated! O Yes! And if this is true, how then can any preacher say, "Once saved is always saved,



no matter what.” This kind of claim is certainly not from the Scripture. It is just a mere human postulate, which cannot be scripturally supported without having to twist some Scriptures and make them say what they do not say. It is a way of trying to overshadow things God’s Spirit has categorically stated and which are conspicuously written in the Scriptures. It is of making an assumption for God, Who He should and shouldn’t be, and what He should and shouldn’t do. But God is God all by Himself. No one can teach Him what to do. All His works are known unto Him from the beginning of the world (Acts 15:18). Besides, Jesus categorically stated that it is His word that He has spoken that will judge whosoever rejects Him (His stand) on the last days. (John 12:48-50.)

By definition, “to draw back” means “to retreat from a position.” What position in this case? The position of salvation, of course. We should know that someone’s soul can truly draw back from Jesus Christ and live as they please. The choice is always there! God doesn’t make anyone become a puppet in grace. The willpower is always alive and active in every situation! So when there is a drawback like this, the Scripture says, it is unto perdition (destruction) and that God has no pleasure in such a fellow. Just how can it then be said on the behalf of a person in this state, that “once saved is saved forever”?

Think about what it means for God not to have pleasure in a person. *Now, not just in what they do but also in their person, by reason of their choices in life.* So I believe claiming “once saved is always saved, no matter what” for someone in this estate is an out-and-out fallacy.

But praise God, we are not of them who draw back unto destruction, but of them that believe to the completeness and perfecting of the work of salvation on the soul. Hallelujah!!!

This is why the Scriptures also say that we should be encouraging one another daily, so that by reason of life challenges and pursuits of all kinds we will not get carried away and subsequently become hardened against God in our journey of faith and opt out of Him eventually. But that we should hold on firmly to the initial and

original confidence we have in Christ Jesus, when we first surrendered our life to Him, unto the end. And this we can do better every day by living according to the scriptural injunction of assembling with other believers from time to time, and thereby continually provoking one another unto God's love and Christ's works.

**Hebrews 3:12-13**

**[12]Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God.**

**[13]But exhort one another daily, while it is called Today; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.**

**Hebrews 10:24-25**

**[24]And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works:**

**[25]Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.**

**Another Dimension Of God's Love**

**1 Corinthians 11:31-32**

**[31]For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged.**

**[32]But when we are judged, we are chastened (disciplined) of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world.**

The Scripture above explains God's love in another dimension that many do not too consider to be an act of His love. See, we need to learn to be humble and judge ourselves when we have done wrong and take godly corrections on time before it gets too late. Failing to act within a particular time frame and after many warnings from God, using different avenues to communicate His warnings to us when we are going off or have gone off already, may cause God to apply His measures on our case, which may result in some being called home before their time, or God ALLOWING any other

unpalatable experience to befall them. This is also an extension of God's unconditional love, so that we may not be condemned with the world. We should understand that the condemnation in this sense, as stated in the 32nd verse, is eternal separation from God because that's what is going to happen to the world. So God does decide to take some home before they enter the mode of eternal separation from Him (Hebrews 6:4-6), when they don't judge themselves on time. Or other times, He PERMITS some unpleasant things to happen to them, just to get their attention and shake them back in position. The measure applied by God depends on the gravity and the implication of what the individual is into and also the state of their heart at that point in time, which only God knows per time and person. This precisely is what 1 Cor. 11:31-32 is all about.

We have to learn better every day to be humble and promptly obedient. We should be quick to take corrections and not let the pride of life, by reason of our achievements so far by and for God, get into our head. We should desist from thinking we can never make any mistake, like we are infallible like God. Of course, we are trusting God by faith not to commit any blunder and to live as perfect as possible, but when we happen to make one, we should be humble enough to see it and admit that we are wrong, and then sincerely take correction instantly. Acting like this will surely help the people around us to live more sincerely. It will create a room for openness and sincerity, and will as well give God His place in everyone's life and the general assembly. The true and reverential fear of God will be maintained and held in high esteem among the brethren. Psalm 89:7 says, *"God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of the saints, and to be had in reverence of all them that are about Him."*

Yes, acting rightly will create the right atmosphere for the true fear of God to be prevalent. And when this kind of atmosphere is maintained, there surely will be a continual move of the Spirit of God in an overflowing manner. The early Church experienced and enjoyed this a lot. It should continue with us and even be greater, for the glory of this latter is set of God to be greater than of the former. (Hag. 2:9.) And it is in this latter house we belong.

In any case, when we are judged and disciplined of the Lord, we should understand that it is purely a display of His love, as some did not receive such privilege. And for those who did not receive this kind of privilege, it is so for them because they did not humble themselves before God, and not because God is partial. Never! Peter said at Cornelius' house, "... *Of a truth I perceive that God is not a respecter of persons. But in every nation he that fears Him (is truly humble before God) and works righteousness is accepted with Him.*" (Act 10:34-35.)

If we look well around in our contemporary time we may get to know some people who received this kind of 1 Cor. 11:31-32's dealing from God. It will be good we pragmatically learn from them. I also will want to make a reference to King David and King Saul as scriptural examples. The former, because of his humility when his sin was exposed, received judgment and discipline from God, as he did not judge himself on time. God did not at all spare David, despite being a man after his heart. God disciplined him for not judging himself on time in his erring in the matter of Uriah the Hittite, so that he might not be condemned like the sons of Belial. Unlike King Saul, who did not humble himself when his sin was pointed out to him and consequently he was condemned with the world. Saul was good at giving excuses, as to exculpate himself from any blame. He would not humble himself to receive God's forgiveness and justification. He kept on doing all to justify himself every time. He ended up consulting with the devil and was damned in the end.

Brethren, we should learn to depend on God's justification for us and not try to make up one for ourselves. But when we keep tendering excuses, it simply means we are telling God that He should not bother to help us. And who can last without a constant and ceaseless supply of God's help and mercy?

## **Renewal**

Like I said before, I believe, according to the Scriptures, there must be a continual renewal of the heart, just as there is for the mind. Renewal in this sense means, making the heart better from time to

time, more receptive to God consistently. The Holy Spirit is in our spirit to continually help our hearts get better through the word of God we give ourselves to. He helps our souls change better into the image of Christ we each time see in the word of God from glory to glory. Our minds become purer, while our bodies are continually kept under, as we closely keep on beholding ourselves in the mirror of God's word, observing and meditating on the heart of our Master Jesus Christ, by the help of the Holy Spirit. This whole process will culminate in making our souls to keep prospering in the fullness of Christ. Then we will be confident in ourselves that indeed as He is so are we in this world, according to 1 John 4:17. Meditate on these Scriptures below.

**Colossians 3:5-10**

**[5]Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry:**

**[6]For which things' sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience:**

**[7]In the which ye also walked some time, when ye lived in them.**

**[8]But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth.**

**[9]Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man (old heart) with his deeds;**

**[10]And have put on the new man (new heart), which is renewed in knowledge after the image of Him [God] that created him:**

**2 Corinthians 3:18**

**"But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord."**

**2 Corinthians 4:16**

**"For which cause we faint not; but though our old man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day."**

## **Exegesis on Ephesians 1:13-14**

### **Ephesians 1:13-14**

**[13]In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise,**

**[14]Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory.**

Let's get the definition of some pivotal words in the reference above. (From Thayer's Greek Lexicon.)

1. The word 'sealed' in the 13th verse is 'sphragizo' in Greek, which means, "to stamp (with a signet or private mark) for security or preservation." That is, to set a seal upon, mark with a seal for the purpose of,

❖ *security from evil*, as applied in Revelation 7:3.

### **Revelation 7:3**

**"Saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have SEALED the servants of our God in their foreheads."**

❖ *keeping the contents secret* for a personal reason, as in Revelation 10:4, and also to keep the contents safe and intact till the designated destination, just as it is used in Ephesians 4:30 and 1:13.

### **Revelation 10:4**

**[4]And when the seven thunders had uttered their voices, I was about to write: and I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, SEAL UP those things which the seven thunders uttered, and write them not.**

### **Ephesians 4:30**

**[30]And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are SEALED unto the day of redemption.**

**Ephesians 1:13**

**[13]In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were SEALED with that Holy Spirit of promise,**

A quick side journey here. I want you to know that there is more than can be grasped in the now concerning the beautiful things of God in stock for us in this present world and especially in the one to come. Scriptures give us a notion that unimaginable beautiful things are laid up for us in Christ. But the contents of these packages for us are sealed until we will finally arrive at both our earthly and heavenly destinations. For the earthly, we won't fully grasp all about the contents until we arrive at the destination of God for us. (Recall, when Joseph's dream finally came to pass, it was bigger than what he saw and could imagine.) And for the heavenly, we'll never really know the full gist here on earth till then.

Apostle Paul says if it in this world only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable (1 Cor. 15:19). 1 Cor. 2:9 talks about eye not seeing, nor ear hearing, neither entering the heart of man yet, the things which God has prepared for them who love Him. Eph. 2:7 talks of God showing, in the ages to come, the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness towards us through Christ Jesus. And Romans 8:18 talks of the present sufferings we are facing not worthy in comparison with the glory that shall be revealed in us. In 1 Peter 1:4, Apostle Peter talks about an inheritance reserved for us in heaven, which is incorruptible, undefiled and not fading away. Praise God!

This is why we are always encouraged in the Scriptures to by all means stay faithful and endure to the end, even till death, like Jesus said to the Smyrna's Church in Rev. 2:10. *No matter what happens to us in this life, we must make sure we stay faithful in Christ Jesus till we draw our last breath.* His grace is superabundantly sufficient all the way! Don't try to work things out for yourself. Such will disqualify you from what God has already prepared for you in Christ Jesus for this present life. *"Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown."* (Rev. 3:11.)

- ❖ *marking a person or a thing for a particular purpose, like that of Rev. 7:3 (referred to above), Mat. 27:6 (concerning the tomb of Christ) and Rev. 20:3 (concerning the devil.)*

**Matthew 27:66**

**So they went, and made the sepulcher sure, SEALING the stone, and setting a watch.**

**Revelation 20:3**

**And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and SET A SEAL upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season.**

- ❖ *proving, confirming, or attesting a thing, as to confirm and authenticate it place beyond doubt. This 'thing' can be a written document, one's testimony or of a person, that they are who they profess they are, as in the references below:*

**John 3:33**

**"He that hath received His testimony hath set to his SEAL that God is true."**

**John 6:27**

**"Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you: for Him hath God the Father SEALED."**

Note: This seal (sphragizo of Greek number G4972) is different from the mark of the beast, which the book of Revelation talks about. 'Charagma' (of Greek number G5480) is the Greek word used for the mark of the beast, which means 'a scratch' or 'an etching,' like the mark branded upon horses. It also can mean a thing carved, a sculpture, or a graven work generally.

I am showing this clear difference to establish the fact that the seal of the Holy Spirit upon us is not an etched work, that is, it is not automatically permanent like that of the mark of the beast. All this still boils down to the datum that God never forces Himself on people. He does not make people a marionette. Each one of us will



determine the permanency of the seal of the Holy Spirit upon us, as we choose to faithfully follow the Lord Jesus Christ to the end. (Col. 1:21-23.)

2. The word 'earnest' in the 14th verse is 'arrhabon' in Greek, which means, 'a pledge'. That is, part of the purchase, or money given in advance, for a property as security for the rest. Also looking up 'earnest' in the Oxford dictionary for this purpose, it means, "a sum of money paid in advance as a deposit; hence, a pledge, a guarantee, an indication of something to come."

This definition of earnest is quite a common practice in the business world today. You know, giving a down payment for an item that one desires to purchase, or a place one wants to secure for use in the future. But we should know that some things sometimes do not go as initially planned. The person in possession of the item, or the place, can for different reasons decide to give the expected out to another customer and then return the down payment of the first person. (In an ideal situation now.) Of course, there is nothing much the initial and the now disappointed customer can do, once their down payment is fully refunded. It is all about the choice and preference of the proprietor under legal conditions.

But at other times, the two parties, both the owner of the item and the potential buyer, can take things further into having a more secure agreement, making it legally binding on them both that the said transaction will go as initially agreed upon no matter what may later crop up. In this case, nobody will be left with any excuse not to fulfill their part of the agreement.

Now, Romans 1:19-20 helps us understand that the things of God can be understood by the things that are made. That is, closely looking at the concept of some things in life, we can understand some operations of God, such that in the end no one will stand a chance of any excuse before God. Whatsoever!

Here is where I'm heading, the business world's practice referred to is sure a good illustration of how it is with us and God on this subject matter. In this case, God is the potential buyer and we are

the product He is interested in, as well as the possessor of the product. We are both. For everyone who turns their life over to Jesus Christ, they strike a business deal with God and God gives a down payment, earnest, of the Holy Spirit for their product, which is themselves, their soul. Remember the soul is always the target. Matthew 16:26 says,

**“For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?”**

This down payment gets our spirit sealed with the Holy Spirit. Spirit to spirit. Remember a new spirit and a new heart are given at rebirth. A new spirit, a clean spirit, which can and will house the Holy Spirit. Thus our spirit is sealed with the Holy Spirit as a sign that our soul is a product meant for God, as He has given a down payment for it. That is, God is going to come someday, known to only Him, to claim us completely and finally to Himself.

But just as it is in the business world, this deal may not go through at last. Of course, this cannot be any fault from God’s side. Never! It will always be from us. Jesus said in John 14:16 that, *“And I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter (the Holy Spirit, our seal), that He MAY ABIDE with you FOR EVER.”* This means God sure desires for the Holy Spirit to abide with us forever. He wants Him to remain His seal upon our spirit, as a sign that He owns our soul till He comes to take us to Himself. So God is always interested in us. But we also have a choice to make. We have the absolute control over who we sell our soul-product to.

We should know that there is another interested buyer in our soul-product, the devil himself. While God (Who has all things, riches, and wealth, name it) is humble and gentle in His approach, the devil at the other end (who has nothing but deception) is impudent and rough. He walks and talks so arrogantly like he possesses something, whereas he has NOTHING OF HIS. He stole all he claims he has subtly from man.

Please, know this truth about the devil. By his pride he was stripped of everything God gave him (Ezekiel 28:11-18). It was through

deception he got covered again, when he deceived man in the Garden of Eden. This insinuates that man actually covered the devil again, and has since been covering him more and more ignorantly. The devil will brag of, flaunt and display wealth that is not his own before our face, to show that he can pay so much more than God can ever offer for our soul-product. (Exactly, what he did with Jesus in Luke 4:5-7.) He may even give us some instant treats to prove to us that he is up to his words. But all are temporary because they are evanescent things. Besides, Jesus said of him in John 8:44 while engaging in conversation with some Jews,

**“Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.”**

**Luke 4:5-8**

**[5]And the devil, taking Him [Jesus] up into an high mountain, showed unto Him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time.**

**[6]And the devil said unto Him, All this power will I give Thee, and the glory of them: *for that is delivered unto me; and to whomsoever I will, I give it.***

**[7]If thou therefore wilt worship me, all shall be thine.** (This is how one's soul is slyly taken by the devil; as you receive his offer, he takes your soul in exchange whether you know it or not)

**[8]And Jesus answered and said unto him, Get thee behind Me, satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve.**

Unlike Jesus, as seen in the above reference, by and by some will be inveigled by the devil. They will give in to his advances and the devil will further wheedle them gradually but surely till they finally return God's down payment, the earnest of His Spirit. And remember that God is always a gentle God. He will not forever drag with anyone on their choice.

**Genesis 6:3**

**And the LORD said, MY SPIRIT SHALL NOT ALWAYS STRIVE WITH MAN, for that he also is flesh: yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years.**

**Revelation 22:11-12**

**[11]He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still.**

**[12]And, behold, I come quickly; and My reward is with Me, to give every man according as his work shall be.**

These people, by letting the devil have their attention, will not be able to wait for God, the real Owner of all good things of life, to come for them, despite His grace being superabundant in supply for them to wait. For we can do all things through Christ, Who is strengthening us. (Phil. 4:13.)

See, we sure need to trust God for the needed patience in our journey that we may not look for an alternative with God. *We must set our heart and mind to remain focused on Christ in every circumstance, if we will not at last yield to the devil's allurements.* The devil will not get tired of coming around to see if we will give him a chance. We will therefore need to always stand firm in the word of God and resist him constantly and victoriously each time. He can't make us do anything we don't want to do, neither can he force anything on us. He doesn't have such authority. We can resist him successfully every time in the Name of Jesus Christ.

**Romans 8:24-25**

**[24]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?**

**[25]But if we hope for that we see not, THEN DO WE WITH PATIENCE WAIT FOR IT.**

Moving on, there is this other set of people who will take the deal further, to make it impossible for themselves to back out of their agreement to sell their soul-product to only God. They will get

themselves put in a situation with God, whereby they will not be able to yield anymore to the devil's advances, no matter how appealing they may be. These people have their heart solely set on the grace of God to make the most of it, as to get their soul secured in this place of no return. They are so disciplined in the word of God's grace. They follow Jesus Christ all the way to the end, as sheep follows the shepherd. They are completely lost into Christ. These Scriptures describe them.

**Jeremiah 32:39-40**

**[39]And I will give them one heart, and one way, that they may fear Me for ever, for the good of them, and of their children after them:**

**[40]And I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them, to do them good; BUT I WILL PUT MY FEAR IN THEIR HEARTS, THAT THEY SHALL NOT DEPART FROM ME.**

**John 6:67-69**

**[67]Then said Jesus unto the twelve, Will ye also go away?**

**[68]Then Simon Peter answered Him, LORD, TO WHOM SHALL WE GO? THOU HAST THE WORDS OF ETERNAL LIFE.**

**[69]AND WE BELIEVE AND ARE SURE THAT THOU ART THAT CHRIST, THE SON OF THE LIVING GOD.**

**John 10:27-29**

**[27]MY SHEEP HEAR MY VOICE, AND I KNOW THEM, AND THEY FOLLOW ME:**

**[28]And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of My hand.**

**[29]My Father, which gave them Me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand.**

**Philippians 3:7-9** (Note the saying of Paul in this reference especially)

**[7]But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ.**

**[8]Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ,**

**[9]And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith:**

Certainly, this is the set of people that can be said of, “once saved is forever saved.” They have made their Holy Spirit’s sealing to become etched on them. They’ve made it absolutely permanent! The only issue some of them may sometimes face is to in the now suffer consequences of their wrong actions or inactions, but never of any eternal consequence on their souls anymore. That is, they can never be eternally separated from God again no matter how much the devil tries. These consequences can be of an untimely death or loss of something or someone precious to them. And these God will permit concerning them for His mercy’s sake, like I earlier explained.

Remember God is a true and righteous Judge, Who presides over matters with fair hearing toward everyone and every party. The devil will always be there to accuse them and God will have to act in fairness. (Remember Job’s story.) So for His mercies’ sake, He will permit a judgment like this upon them, when they do not judge themselves on time. It is only that they cannot be condemned with the world again, because of where they have placed themselves with God. Thank God for His unspeakable gift of mercies and love!

Moses fell under this category. Moses did not judge his anger issue on time till the judgment caught up with him. But it was only for the earthly blessing denial, while the eternal deal with God concerning his soul-product went through, because of how he had before positioned himself concerning the deal. Likewise, it was the same with David, as mentioned earlier.

On the other hand, kings Saul and Jeroboam did not let the deal go through. They did not work at bringing themselves to that secure place, the place of no return no matter what. Honestly, the stories of Old Testament people do teach us a lot about God's dealings even in this grace era, if only we will humble ourselves to learn well with the help of the Holy Spirit, the Teacher of teachers.

**1 Corinthians 10:11-13**

**[11]Now all these things happened unto them for examples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come.**

**[12]Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.**

**[13]There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.**

**Romans 15:4**

**"For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope."**

All this said so far I believe God's Spirit is also wanting us to understand from Ephesians 1:13-14. Brethren, I beseech you by the mercies of God, do not let any trial of life make you compromise or walk away from the deal of selling your soul-product to only God. By the grace of God, bring yourself to that sure and secure place for the deal to go through no matter what. You can do all things through Christ Who is strengthening you!

## CHAPTER FIVE

### THE BODY AND THE SOUL

#### **2 Corinthians 5:10**

**“For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.”**

You must have heard some people say, “You don’t know my heart, so don’t judge me.” Well, quite all right, we may not know their heart, but surely by what we frequently see outwardly, we can have some deductions about them. After all, Jesus said, *“Therefore by their fruits you shall know them.”* (Mat. 7:20.) Jesus also said, *“...out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks.”* (Mat. 12:34.) That is, the body (the mouth part of it) can *only, freely and constantly* act out of what is in the heart. That is the truth, whether somebody accepts it or not. Somehow by what someone does constantly, especially when in their element, when they are completely free, one can perceive some things about their heart. If it is a negative thing, IT MEANS THE SOUL HAS BEEN ALLOWING THE BODY TO BE A SOURCE OF SUPPLY TO IT. In the process of time, the heart gets filled up with these supplies from the body, and then the body, in turn, acts out of that storage in the heart. Remember the body doesn’t act out of a void. It can’t act without permission from the soul one way or another. (Mind you, this isn’t about faultfinders, who always want to make people offenders in matters. No! Rather, it is about revealing the connection between the body and the heart.)

We need to understand that there is a link between our body and our soul. For this reason, we cannot afford to do whatever we like with our body. We shouldn’t be taking suggestions from the body. We should bring ourselves to that place where we get to know when it is our body that is suggesting stuff to us. We should not at all let the body be taking the lead for our soul, just because it lives in it. We should not be doing things with our body that will have a



negative effect on our soul. What becomes of the soul at present and what will become of it in the life beyond is solely determined by the things we do with our body from time to time. The Scripture says we will give an account of things done in the body. Things you do while in the body, you surely do with or through your body. That's simple to understand, I suppose? We must therefore be Christly decisive every time in what we do with our body. Remember the physical body houses the soul and the spirit. And if the roof of a house is leaking, it will definitely affect the things and the people inside that house. So it is with our body and the soul and the spirit.

### **Exegesis on 2 Corinthians 7:1 and 1 Peter 2:11**

Using King James Version, Thayer's Greek Lexicon and Greek Interlinear Bible, 2 Cor. 7:1 will read thus,

**“Having, therefore, these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse (we should be cleansing) ourselves from all filthiness (a stain, i.e., immorality, defilement, or *an action by which anything is defiled*), of the flesh and spirit, perfecting (to fulfil further or completely; to accomplish, do, finish, execute; to take upon oneself to do) holiness in the fear of God.”**

1 Peter 2:11 says,

**“Dearly beloved, I beseech you as STRANGERS and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul.”**

The word 'stranger' in 1 Peter 2:11 is 'paroikos' in Greek, which means "a stranger, a foreigner, one who lives in a place without the right of citizenship."

Brethren, we need to let this truth sink in our heart that when we turned our life over to Jesus Christ, we actually lost and forfeited our earthly citizenship to gain a heavenly one. *No one can hold the two at the same time!* You can't be God's and Satan's at the same time, as the devil is the god of this world at present. It is not the

same with earthly practices of having dual citizenship, or belonging in different companies at the same. No, it is not like that! We are not permanent residents of this earth anymore but passers-by. We need to keep this mind. We are not to be subject to the system of the world operational in the earth any longer because we are no more of the world. We are to be operating by the heavenly system, which is supreme. For we are only here for God's purpose and will to be enforced and fulfilled on earth. This is the reason why God did not take us home instantly after our salvation. He wants His will to be properly enacted on earth through us and therefore we must not forget why we are here.

**John 17:13-16**

**[13]And now come I [Jesus] to Thee [Father God]; and these things I speak in the world, that they might have My joy fulfilled in themselves.**

**[14]I have given them Thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I Am not of the world.**

**[15]I pray not that Thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that Thou shouldest keep them from the evil** (*'poneros', the Greek word used here, which can mean, the wicked one, that is, the devil*).

**[16]They are not of the world, even as I Am not of the world.**

**Get this right!**

We are not of the world. No! But at the same, that we are strangers in this present world does not mean we are not meant to be in charge. We are the light of the world and while we remain here we are to be in charge by and for our Lord Jesus Christ, and make known the manifold wisdom of God to the principalities and powers among the celestial ones. This is an eternal purpose which God purposed for us in Christ Jesus, and I don't think we should waste that, or in any way live less than what God set for us in Christ Jesus. (Eph. 3:10-11.) Understand that this is the will of God Jesus talked about in Matthew 6:10.

**“Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven.” Matthew 6:10**

We need to grasp that God created everything for His children, before the enemy, the devil, stole stuff from us. So while God is yet to bring us into a new world (a new heaven and a new earth that will not have nor permit any corruption, because this present one is incorrigibly corrupted), we still have to rule over everything here by the power of the kingdom of God in us. By the kingdom of God in us, we are to be quelling all other kingdoms working corruption in the earth, so that things will not get out of hand before the set time of God for this present world to be phased out. (Recall that *the kingdom of God is not in word, but in power*, 1 Cor. 4:20.)

Jesus said of Himself in John 9:5 that as long as He was in the world, He was the Light of the world. And He was indeed! And still today He is, but only through us His saints can this be possible. We are the ones representing Him on earth now and He is expecting us to be like He was and He is because He doesn't ever change. *“For as He is so are we in this world (right now),”* 1 John 4:17 says. Jesus also said this of us in Matthew 5:13-16.

**Matthew 5:13-16**

**[13]Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? It is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men.**

**[14]Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid.**

**[15]Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house.**

**[16]Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.**

We need to actively grasp that it is in the nature of light to INSTINCTIVELY dominate when it shows up. When light is passing through a dark area, every step into the journey through that dark area is automatically lit up. It means the light is just innately the

boss every time! The darkness cannot resist the shining of the light when it comes on. John 1:5 says, *“And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.”* Yes, *the* darkness (personality of the devil) can’t comprehend us, the Light representing Christ in this world. But if we don’t know who we are, how can we walk bold in the corresponding manifestation of it?

The light dominates always! We need to deeply apprehend this! This is what is expected of us by our dear heavenly Father. We are, as light does darkness, to dominate as we pass through this world to our new world destination. We should not let the devil twist things for us, that since we do not belong here, we need not bother ourselves with happenings in this present world. That we should just keep our mouth shut and pass through and pass on. NO! A MILLION TIMES NO!

And of course not, we aren’t going to bother ourselves because we are not trying to be who we are not, nor trying to manifest what we don’t have. We just want to be who we are and fully exhibit that every time and everywhere. So no need to bother ourselves but simply and naturally express who we are by the power of the Holy Spirit. We are the Light! The light does not have silence in its nature. The light can’t be silent in its manifestation when going through a dark tunnel. Never! The light is always in charge! We are that Light in charge in this world of darkness. And no, we are not fidgeting about anything because we have a kingdom which cannot be moved, but which is crushing all other kingdoms and subduing them permanently and forever. Hallelujah! Glory to God!

**Isaiah 60:1-3**

**[1]Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the LORD is risen upon thee.**

**[2]For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: but the LORD shall arise upon thee, and His glory shall be seen upon thee.**

**[3]And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising.**

**Hebrews 12:28**

**“Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear.”**

How then can we stay quiet and be vanquished when we carry such a powerfully and an eternally invincible kingdom! It’s not possible! We show up to destroy all other kingdoms, no matter how long they’ve been there. After all, they only came up along the way, but ours has been from everlasting to everlasting. And anything that shows up along the way will surely drop off and go into extinction right along the way. Jeremiah 10:11 says that *the gods which did not make the heavens and the earth shall perish from the earth and from under these heavens*. Hallelujah!

**Daniel 2:44**

**And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever.**

**Daniel 7:27**

**And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given TO THE PEOPLE OF THE SAINTS OF THE MOST HIGH, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey Him.** (Even though this Scripture will have its full fulfilment in the future in connection with the overthrowing of the antichrist, we sure also have some fulfilment of it with us now because Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever.)

The apostles shook the world for Jesus Christ. It was said of them in Acts 17:6 in this manner, *“...These people that have turned the world upside down are come hither also.”* That is how the true Light operates, and it is what is also expected of us in our time. Let’s remember Daniel and his three friends, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah. These men, though living in a very hostile environment to God’s way of life as it is in our day, they let the kingdom of God

manifest mightily in and through them that even the great king Nebuchadnezzar bowed to them and surrendered to the Sovereignty of God Almighty at last.

So, let us be in charge by and for our Lord Jesus Christ. Let us keep on occupying for Him till He comes back. The blessing to be fruitful, to multiply and replenish the earth and subdue it was given to God's sons and daughters, the righteous ones, and not the departed ones from God's mind. In Christ Jesus, we are no more part of the incident that took place in Genesis 3. No! We are rather of the order of Genesis 1:26 to the end of chapter 2. (God's Spirit gives you further understanding about that.) We are of the order of the last Adam and the second man, the Lord out of heaven. And He that is from above is above all! We are of Jesus Christ! We are no more known after the flesh, but only after Christ. Just how much can you believe?

**Isaiah 53:1**

**"Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the LORD revealed?"**

It's just that the children of this world are in their generation more prudently disposed than the children of light, as Jesus said in Luke 16:8, which is why we are having all these contrary happenings. They try to smart up and occupy our position to rule things in our stead. And we should know that they will never do things according to God's mind. They don't know God and they will not submit to His commandments. It is only God's children INDEED that can do things according to His mind. Even if we happen not to be political rulers and part of leadership directly for some reasons, we can still make them submit to God by manifesting the greatness of His power, just like it was with Daniel and Joseph. Psalm 66:3 says, "*... through the greatness of Thy power shall Thine enemies submit themselves unto Thee.*" No manifesting God's power, no submission from the enemies of God in the land. So let us wise up and be apprised in the word of God, and by the help of God's Spirit in us, let us take our rightful place and set things in order by the power of God's kingdom, where we belong, shining intensely as the children of light that we are, as we journey through this world.

We should also know that no one is going to manifest the power of the kingdom of God over anything in heaven. Heaven of God where we are going is perfect already! It's here on earth we need to demonstrate the power of the kingdom of God and manifest the authority of His Christ over the devil, who is accusing us before our God day and night. But we have overcome him by the Blood of the Lamb and by the saying of our testimony, the witnessing of Christ for us, Who is also the eternal Life of our souls and the reason why we will not fear or worry about our souls (lives) even in the face of death. Hallelujah! (Rev.12:10-11.)

We shouldn't thus let the devil continue using our time to reign for himself. The present time is for the Church of Christ to reign and rule by and for Jesus Christ, the Head of the Church (Romans 5:17.), like Jesus Himself will bodily rule on earth in His millennial reign. The time for the devil to rule the earth openly, which is only to a degree and briefly through the antichrist, is yet to come. But somehow through our negligence and misplacement of priority, the devil is at present using our time.

But we can turn things around if we will ask for mercy and turn to God now and surrender all to Him, that we may be fully restored to be functioning effectively in our exalted position in Christ, just as it is in the agenda of God. Now is the time to seek the Lord for mercy. Now is the time to diligently give ourselves to the word of God and prayers like never before and for the right *reason*, as we let the Holy Spirit take the lead. Let our knees hit the floor in pressing prayers until the Lord is entreated on our behalf and sends us the early and latter rains. O send us the rain, Lord!

**Psalm 32:6 (NIV)**

**"Therefore let all the faithful pray to You while You may be found; surely the rising of the waters will not reach them."**

**Zechariah 10:1**

**"Ask ye of the Lord rain in the time of the latter rain; so the Lord shall make bright clouds and give them showers of rain to everyone grass in the field."**

Note, God's agenda for reigning is in this order: Israel's era, Church's (Jews plus Gentiles) era and Christ's era. And in between Church's era and Christ's, the devil is to be allowed in the space of three and a half years major to manifest all his power of deception through the antichrist and his false prophet, so that those who love deception instead of embracing the love of God's truth may be fully deceived and finally damned, according to the Scriptures. (2 Thess. 2:8-12.) The devil's part has always been by the way, never a major. Man has just been the one always allowing him unnecessarily. During Israel's proper era, they let the devil cheat them big time. They didn't reign as God would want them to, because they were always disobedient, preferring their ways to God's.

Now also in Church's era, it's sure the devil is using the same tactic on us. We too love doing things in our own way. Once we receive some power from God, we just take off like a cyclone, not waiting for God to guide us into things anymore. With only a tip-of-an-iceberg anointing received, we begin to make plans of *our own* and only pray to have God bless them for us. Not knowing there is so much more with God for us, if only we can learn to properly wait upon Him from time to time with a ready heart to do all His behests every time.

We pray for long many a time and even fast, yet the Lord can hardly get our attention because we are always consumed with the presentation of our own plans instead of waiting to hear what God's Spirit wants to say to us (or has even been saying in many cases). Also when He speaks and we don't see what He says in line with what we have been thinking and making plans toward, we drop whatever He says by and by. At other times, we interpret what He says in the light of the multitude of things in our mind. Lord have mercy!

But we can still change things now and maximize our era before it will finally be over, which I believe it's going to be when the rapture takes place. Let the understanding ones cry out to God with understanding on their knees. There is plenty of mercy for us in Christ Jesus.



## **Back to 1 Peter 2:11**

The word 'pilgrim' in this verse is 'parepidemos' in Greek, which means, "a resident foreigner; one who comes from a foreign country into a city or land to reside there by the side of the natives."

This expression in the 11th verse of 1 Peter is so because Peter already clearly shows us in verses 9 and 10 that we have been called out of darkness of the world to be God's people, citizens of Light, as those who have obtained God's mercy. So, like it has been said, we have changed citizenship from the earthly to the heavenly. *"For our citizenship is in heaven; from where also we eagerly look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ,"* Phil. 3:20 says. We are thus from a foreign country of heaven, as our being born again according to John 3:3 and from the Greek root actually means "to be born from above or from heaven." Did you get the gist?

This is it, *as born again ones, we are sent from the foreign country of heaven to earth for the Father's will to be done, in the same manner, Jesus came down from heaven to do God's will.* Recall what Jesus said in His prayer for us in John 17:18 that as the Father had sent Him into the world even so had He also sent us into the world. He repeated the same thing in John 20:21. He sent us and also prayed for us to be kept of the Father in His Name. And I believe that He is still praying for us, pleading for our sakes before the Father, according to the Scriptures. Why should we then cringe for any reason? No way! We are more than the seeming conquering ones through the Father Who is loving us! Hallelujah!!!

We must therefore see to it that we do not lose touch with the reality of where we legally belong and who we are and Who we are standing for. We should not let this earth adopt, absorb and make us its own anymore. We are to be quashing it by the kingdom of God that is alive in us. We are not to be subject to it nor let it dominate us in any way. God's kingdom comes and His will be done on earth, just as it is in heaven, beginning with each and every one of us and then spread to all over the nations of the world, in the Name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

Let us consider 1 John 3:1-3 in the light of our discussion.

**1 John 3:1-3**

**[1]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.**

**[2]Beloved, now are we 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.**

**[3]And every man that hath this hope in Him purifieth himself, even as He is pure.**

Understand that the only way to keep up with 1 John 3:3 in particular is by following Peter's admonition in that 11th verse of 1 Peter 2, which is, abstinence from fleshly lusts (many and different ones). Notice that these fleshly lusts directly and unswervingly war against the soul. Their first target is the soul, which is just a means to an end. Capturing the soul is to help them get the spirit finally polluted, defiled (2 Cor. 7:1). And remember that it is in our spirit we received the Holy Spirit and got sealed by Him, as a down payment of God for our soul-product that He is interested in till He will finally come to redeem us completely (Eph. 1:13-14). So when we become careless and allow the bombardment of these lusts from our flesh to overshadow our soul and have it captured, they route straight away and quickly to defile our spirit. And since the Holy Spirit, as He is of holy nature, Who ought to remain our seal till the day of redemption cannot stay in pollution, He will depart our spirit once it's polluted. Get this, *it is only by the Holy Spirit God can identify our souls in the end as belonging to Him, just as people use tags on goods they ordered for identification of which belongs to who on the arrival.*

The Holy Spirit will depart even as we have, by the choices of our soul, let lusts from our flesh make our spirit, the Holy Spirit's home in us, become filthy. Just where else, any clean place left in us, He can still reside? Under this condition, surely nowhere else is left by the time defilement reaches the spirit and fills it up.

This is why apostle Paul earnestly admonished us in 2 Cor. 7:1 we earlier referred to, *that we should be cleansing ourselves from all filthiness, stain, defilement, immorality, or any action by which we can be defiled, that is, our flesh and our spirit can be defiled.* And our soul is the one that will be taking action on this, by reason of what our mind thinks on and our heart consequently makes choices by.

Paul, by the Spirit of God, tells us that it is not what God will do for us, as if we are dummies. Rather we will advertently have to take responsibility for it because God gave us the volition power. Of course, God's grace will always be there for our help but we will be the ones to be appropriating it and leveraging off it to achieve God's desire for our continual sanctification.

Some grace preachers that are saying it is God Who will do all for us once we have given our life to Jesus Christ are in error. The volition power is never withdrawn from anyone because they are saved. They still have it intact to do and undo as they wish. Father God doesn't breed irresponsible children, just like no any responsible earthly father will want to raise an irresponsible child. Why should we think otherwise about God, the Father of fathers? God doesn't forcefully carry anyone! You have to show interest and mean it from your heart that you want Him to carry you all the way. It can't be a mere emotional expression but a heartfelt one, because God is never moved by the outward display but the true state of the heart. It is God that will indeed help us all the way, but we will have to truly surrender our all to Him and mean our decision from our heart. But the level of our surrender will be tested and known to God in how much we obey the leading of His Spirit in us. God searches the heart and tries the reins. God can't be deceived like men can. He sees beyond the surface. He proves everything well before endorsing it, and the proving of God is not as man's.

**Romans 5:20**

**“Moreover the law entered, that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, GRACE DID MUCH MORE ABOUND:”**

We should in addition notice in that 2 Cor. 7:1 that apostle Paul did not sound like defilement will not come in his expression, but that

we should be cleansing ourselves from it, like over and over. It is like wearing clothes to go out, they will certainly get dirty over time. Which is the reason why we wash our clothes time after time to keep them clean and neat. Our corporeal body is our spirit-and-soul's clothes. Therefore, we must always clean it up of any dirt that might jump on it and however it might happen as we continue in our heavenly journey. We should remember, according to Eph. 2:2, that the air in this world is contaminated, both spiritually and physically. So we should expect that this body we wear can easily and will surely get dirty one way or another. But by giving ourselves continually to God's word and prayer, fellowshipping with the Holy Spirit and the brethren, we will consistently keep our body clean from contamination and all defilement, and thereby have our spirit and soul stay clean also. Jesus said, *"Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you."* (John 15:3.)

No matter how much contaminated the air may be, we are sure of safety in Christ Jesus when we remain in His word. We are fully always protected in Him because of His Holy Spirit in us. Job 27:3 says, *"All the while my breath is in me, and the Spirit of God is in my nostrils."* As God's children, we have God's Spirit not just in our spirit but also saturating our whole being and active in our nostrils to protect us from every harm because of the contaminated air in this world. God's Spirit serves as an air purifier in our nostrils, so that only pure air goes into our system. It is the reason why no child of God should be afraid of any pandemic, both spiritually and physically.

Let us know this truth and stand sturdy in it, so that it may make us free always. God's word is what it is and what it says! It is forever settled in heaven. Heaven and earth shall pass away, but never Jesus' words! We should go from reading only the letter of the Scriptures to getting intimate with the Spirit of the Scriptures. This is where the active and dominating power of the word can be truly and fully experienced. With thanksgiving, we believe this prayer of Paul is working for us, in the Name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

**1 Thessalonians 5:23**

**“And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly (unimpaired); and I pray God your whole (your unimpaired) spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming (in the presence) of our Lord Jesus Christ.”**

**Declare This**

My soul is eternal and of eternal value to God. Thus I do not let things that end here on earth (things of no eternal continuity nor any eternal value whatsoever but which can sure affect my soul and its eternal placing) arrest my attention and get me stuck in life. My soul is certainly more than all these things. While they are no more, my soul lives on with God. To this end, I refuse to let them be the pursuit of my soul. Jesus Christ, by Whom my soul will live eternally with God, remains the pursuit of my soul all my life. Amen.

Heaven and earth shall pass away, but Christ’s words shall not pass away. Since all life challenges are of this present world, they are surely passing away alongside this world. Therefore, I speak to you, my soul, do go for the words of Jesus Christ only which shall not pass away. My soul, you are no more arrested by these challenges nor affected by them, in the Name of Jesus Christ. Henceforth, you are always captured and captivated by the words of Jesus Christ only in all circumstances.

Jesus said the sabbath was made for man and not man for the sabbath. He also said the Son of man (referring to Himself) is Lord of the sabbath. (Mark 2:27-28.) Thus, because I am of and in Christ Jesus, I decree and declare that my soul is more than each day. I don’t worry about any day. God created the days for me, not me for the days. He created everything for me, not me for them. He only brought me forth after everything was set in place to rule over everything and be enjoying them to the glory of His Name. Therefore, I decree that I make things stay for me according to the order of God. No reversal of anything, in the Name of Jesus Christ.

According to Ecc. 3:14, Psalm 66:3 and Psalm 119:89, the pure, the original, soul of mine that God made and formed from the

foundation of the world abides forever. No matter what has happened to me so far in life, I still believe in the word of God, which is forever settled in heaven, that nothing can be put to my soul, nor anything taken from it. God does this for me that men, through whom the devil is working against my life, all the enemies of my soul, may fear before Him and submit themselves unto Him through the greatness of His power, which is effectually energizing and effectively working in me. In the Name of Jesus Christ.

God has wrought the works of my soul and how fearful He is in His works! I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Marvellous are the works of God and this my soul knows exceedingly and functions effectively and stalwartly in it.

If God's word by which my soul lives is forever settled in the heavens, likewise my soul is. No dragging matter! It's the Lord's doing and it is marvellous in our eyes. Hallelujah! Hallelujah!! Hallelujah!!! Glory to God forevermore!

### **More Emphases**

We have understood that whatever we do with, through or by our body has a direct effect on our soul and in turn an overall effect on our entire life. Certainly! Now let's also understand that our body is divided into two, videlicet, the physical/tangible part (this is the part we see, which has cells, tissues, organs and systems within it, and which concretely carries out whatever we want to do) and the flesh (this is not referring to the flesh, as in, our skin and the rest, but the unseen part of our body, which God's word does refer to as the old man or the body of sin and which we do sometimes refer to as adamic nature, where sin and corruption dwell). In general, it is through the tangible part of our body that the flesh, the intangible part of our body, finds expression. (Also God's Spirit and evil spirits can find expression through this our physical body, by routing through our *soul*.) This flesh is what used to dominate our soul before meeting with Jesus Christ, which should now not be allowed anymore.

**Romans 6:6**

**“Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.”**

**Romans 7:16, 18, 20, 22-23**

**[16]If then I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law that it is good.**

**[18]FOR I KNOW THAT IN ME (THAT IS, IN MY FLESH) DWELLETH NO GOOD THING: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not.**

**[20]Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me.**

**[22]For I delight in the law of God after the inward man:**

**[23]But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.**

**Ephesians 4:22**

**“That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts;”**

**Colossians 3:9**

**“Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds;”**

As it's been stated, in salvation the soul is not supposed to be living by the body anymore nor by itself, but by God's Spirit residing in our spirit. Jesus said, that which is born of the flesh is flesh and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit (John 3:6). The heart part of our soul is now born of the Spirit of God, and it is thereby spirit, and therefore it ought to be living by the Spirit of God and no more by the flesh, that it may be renewed continually in the knowledge God, catching up better every day with walking in the exactness of God's mind in every aspect of life.

The old man was what our soul usually lived by before coming to Christ. This is clearly stated especially in the writings of Paul. And I believe that our new heart is what is being referred to as 'new

man' in the Pauline epistles, which we ought to put on, and which is meant to be continually renewed in the knowledge of God via God's word and His Holy Spirit in us. It simply means our soul ought to now be living by the things of our new heart, things which are sourced from God's Spirit in us, and not anymore by the things coming from our brain, which has been saturated with things of our old man, making our brain to be of earthly mentality. By and large, *mentality is the programming of the brain in a particular direction by engaging the mind, whether consciously or unconsciously, to think through and draw a concrete conclusion in that direction in the process of time.* This is how people live by a particular mentality as a philosophy.

Moving on, we will also notice in 2 Cor. 7:1 and 1 Pt. 2:11 that both Paul and Peter mentioned the flesh first. This is to emphasize the necessity of not allowing our flesh, by all means, to have an influence on our soul anymore in the decision making of our heart. We should not let our mind be dwelling on the fleshly lusts. For if we let that happen, it will eventually influence decisions of our heart in the long run. Our heart will become weak in acting by the directives coming from the Holy Spirit in our spirit. This exactly is what it means to be carnally minded, which does lead to death, according to Romans 8:6. Let us again look up Romans 8:5-8.

**Romans 8:5-8**

**[5]For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit.**

**[6]For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.**

**[7]Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.**

**[8]So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God.**

So we need not be giving any breathing space to our body. We must always keep it under (1 Cor. 9:27), by not letting our mind wander far too long, *as we may not sometimes be able to completely avoid some wanderings of the mind.* We should not let it be picking up fleshly desires for processing. As we do this with our body,



disciplining it as situation arises and having the flesh in it completely curtailed, we are directly helping our soul get better by the day in following Jesus Christ with the help of His Spirit in us. By way of doing this, we are sure renewing our new man, our new heart.

Let's consider more Scriptures.

**Proverbs 23:13-14**

**[13]Withhold not correction from the child: for if thou beatest him with the rod, he shall not die.**

**[14]Thou shalt beat him with the rod, and shalt deliver his soul from hell.**

Interesting how the Scripture in the reference above establishes that there is a direct link between the soul and the body. Like, one can do something with or on the body that will give a direct impact on the soul. You see, you can help a soul out of hell by what is done to its body. And I believe 'the rod' used in the 13th verse can also connotatively mean God's word, apart from the literal use of a cane. Proverbs 18:7 also says something very interesting in this line.

**"A fool's mouth is his destruction, and his lips are the snare of his soul." Proverbs 18:7**

This Scripture makes us see that the lips, which are parts of the body, are directly connected to the soul, such that they can bring destruction upon the soul if we use them carelessly. To be more direct, whatever one is saying with one's mouth is directly affecting the soul, positive or negative. Remember the Scripture says, with the mouth confession is made unto salvation, as with the heart one believes unto righteousness, Romans 10:10. Recall also that death and life are in the power of the tongue, and one will make a choice of either of them per time. In a nutshell, you will fill yourself up and completely get saturated by and by with the sayings of your mouth (Proverbs 18:20-21).

Proverbs 6:32 also says something attention-grabbing.

**Proverbs 6:32**

**“But whoso committeth adultery with a woman lacketh understanding: he that doeth it destroyeth his own soul.”**

Can you imagine? In fact, the word ‘understanding’ there is ‘leb’ in Hebrew, which is the Hebrew word for ‘heart’. This verse in essence is saying, the man who uses his body to commit adultery lacks, that is, he is destitute of, heart. And of course, if the heart is gone, so also the soul.

Note furthermore that it is not at once that the soul gets destroyed, but gradually. This is why people don’t get to know on time how much evil they are doing to themselves by the act of adultery and fornication, and all manner of sinful acts. It is only in the end many will realize how much they have destroyed their soul, which sometimes with some it may have been too late for them to receive restoration. And with some, while they may get healed one way or another, still they may never really be balanced again till they depart this world. Proverbs 5:11 says, *“And thou mourn at the last when thy flesh and thy body are consumed.”*

Recall that David was never really balanced again after his fall in the matter of Uriah the Hittite when he committed adultery with Bath-sheba, Uriah’s wife. He died a weak man bodily at the age of seventy, not fit for the battle any longer even before that age (2 Samuel 21:15-17). Whereas Caleb, at eighty-five years old, kept on waxing stronger in battle against the Canaanites (Joshua 14:6-15).

Brethren, let’s carefully watch what we do with our body. Its effect on our soul can be so enormous and very much undesired in the end, if we live carelessly. Do with your body what will make your soul grow well and keep on prospering into the fullness of Christ, and not what will damage it and bring it to a destructive end.

**Hebrews 12:5-11**

**[5]And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of Him:**

**[6]For whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth.**

**[7]If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not?**

**[8]But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons.**

**[9]Furthermore, we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live?**

**[10]For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure; but He [God] for our profit, that we might be partakers of His holiness.**

**[11]Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless, afterwards it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby.**

In helping our soul navigate well and successfully through the life adventure our body must be made subject to the disciplines of God's word perpetually. This sure has to be according to the right interpretation of Scriptures by the Spirit of truth, the Holy Spirit, the only One guiding us into all truth, so that the spirits of religion and the likes will not hijack us in the process. Apostle Paul talks about the spirit of religion in Colossians 2:16-23. In his discourse, he says these religious things indeed have a show of wisdom in will-worship and humility, and in neglecting of the body (like subjecting the body), and not in any honour to the satisfying of the flesh. Yet, no life in these practices for those who engage in them. For by strength shall no man prevail, neither can anyone in the flesh please God. Spirit to spirit. It takes walking by faith and remaining in the Spirit of God to please God.

**Romans 8:7-8**

**“So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God.”**

**1 Corinthians 2:11**

**“For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God.”**

**Redemption of the body**

It is also noteworthy that dealing with our body in this way will continue till we depart this world, because we are not going to have redemption for it all the while we walk this earth. In the New Testament when you see the Scriptures saying, “...till the day of redemption,” it is mostly about our body. The body is the main issue that our soul will have to deal with till we draw our last breath here on earth, not the devil per se. For it is through our body, our flesh, that the devil can get us.

Jesus said, His spirit truly was ready, but the flesh was weak, which badly told on His soul. Such that, His soul became exceedingly sorrowful unto death and for a moment He would not anymore want to go on with God’s plan, the Scripture shows us. (Mark 14:32-42.) But by subjecting Himself to prayer earnestly, praying according to what had been written of Him (Psalm 40:6-8, Hebrews 10:5-7), He was finally able to subject His body and then strengthen His soul to decide according to God’s will. If with Jesus Christ it was not automatic, how then can it be otherwise thought with us? This is all painting a bigger picture before us that there is going to be a lot of discipline work to be done on our body perpetually by the use of what has been written in the Scriptures concerning us, just like our Lord did. Let us consider Romans 7.

**Romans 7:15-25**

**[15]For that which I do, I allow not; for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I.**

**[16]If then I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law that it is good.**

**[17]Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me.**

**[18]For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not.**

**[19]For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do.**

**[20]Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me.**

**[21]I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me.**

**[22]For I delight in the law of God after the inward man:**

**[23]But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.**

**[24]O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?**

**[25]I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin.**

We can see from the above Scripture that it is indeed the body we have issues with, and not really the devil. In all the discourse of Paul above, he did not make any reference to the devil as the one behind him not being able to do the good he would like to do. Yet we all know that it is the devil that is generally behind anything that is repugnant toward God. This then only means that, when we are able to duly subject our body, we will by design manifest the victory that Jesus Christ already got for us over the devil. We will not in the least struggle when it comes to facing the devil in any aspect of life.

We should also understand that the devil was somehow behind what Jesus faced in the garden of Gethsemane. He wanted to manipulate Him out of God's will. (Remember he earlier used Peter's mouth to speak to Jesus in Matthew 16, not wanting Him to go to the cross.) Yet Jesus did not by chance make mention of the devil all the while He prayed in the garden. Rather He focused on God to get His body subject to God's will.

See, without the flesh, the devil can't tempt anyone. I can't overstate that! Undoubtedly, victory over the body is victory over

the devil. You will have to be in the flesh before the devil can tempt you and get you if possible. So you don't stay in the flesh, but actively in the Spirit and that always.

**Galatians 5:16, 24-25**

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

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

**[25]If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.**

Over again, the redemption of our body will automatically make our soul to be forever free in Christ Jesus, never to feel pain anymore, nor be oppressed, nor be subject to death. But this redemption will only happen when we depart this world. *So we will have to continue to manage the situation on ground till we go home.* Jesus managed His well, we also can do it successfully. We can do all things through Christ Who is strengthening us. Amen. Think on these Scriptures below.

**Romans 8:22-25**

**[22]For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now.**

**[23]And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, THE REDEMPTION OF OUR BODY.**

**[24]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?**

**[25]But if we hope for that we see not, *then do we with patience wait for it.***

**1 Corinthians 9:26-27**

**[26]I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air:**

**[27]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.**

**2 Corinthians 5:1-5**

**[1]For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.**

***[2]For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven:***

**[3]If so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked.**

***[4]For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life.***

**[5]Now He that hath wrought us for the selfsame thing is God, Who also hath given unto us the earnest (assurance) of the Spirit.**

**Revelation 21:3-5**

**[3]And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God.**

**[4]And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, *neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.***

**[5]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.**

## **Reincarnationism**

Before I draw the curtain on this chapter, I will like to talk about reincarnationism, as God's Spirit has helped me with an understanding of it. Simply put, reincarnationism is a belief that after death a soul can come back in a new body. Let this be firmly established in our hearts and minds, that all souls are unique! No soul is ever reproduced. No one soul ever wears two bodies. It is always a soul to a body. God says in Ezekiel 18 that all souls are His. That is uniqueness! So, this knocks off the idea

of reincarnation. Everybody you see walking the earth at different times and generations has a unique soul. That someone is in the likeness of another person does not mean reincarnation. Consider this, we are all in the likeness of God, but does that mean each one of us is that one God, the Creator? Definitely not! The same thing applies here. So all the rumours about reincarnation remain as sheer rumours. They are all demonic manipulations to mess up the minds of men. Let us learn to stay with the Scripture as it is.

That John the Baptist came in the spirit and power of Elijah did not make him Elijah. Elijah has his own unique soul, as well as John his. The sons of the prophets said, “...*The spirit of Elijah doth rest on Elisha...*,” and not that Elijah has reincarnated himself in the body of Elisha. (2 Kings 2:15). The spirit here means ‘acting like’, or ‘in the capacity of’. So John too was acting in the capacity of Elijah. He brought the whole nation to its knees. Even King Herod, the Pharisees, the soldiers, the lawyers and the likes came out to hear John the Baptist, right in the wilderness. Exactly what happened by the hand of Elijah in 1 Kings 18. John confronted Herod concerning his brother’s wife that he snatched (see Matthew 14 for reference). Elijah also confronted Ahab in connection with his wife Jezebel. And remember that both these wives were after these prophets’ lives, and the latter finally got beheaded by Herod’s wife’s inducement. So let no believer in Christ Jesus hold such belief of reincarnation. It doesn’t just exist!

**Ezekiel 18:4**

**“Behold, all souls are mine; as the soul of the father, so also the soul of the son is mine.”**



## **CHAPTER SIX**

### **THE SHEEP OF GOD**

#### **Psalms 100:3**

**“Know ye that the LORD He is God: it is He that hath made us, and not we ourselves; WE ARE HIS PEOPLE, AND THE SHEEP OF HIS PASTURE.”**

It is noteworthy that the Scriptures, from the Old Testament to the New, do refer to us, God’s children, as sheep, just as we have it in the opening Scripture above. If it is thus with us, I believe it will be a good thing for us to pay candid attention to things about this particular animal, that we may better understand God’s mind and how He is wanting our comportment through this life to be. So that we may live accordingly in that light. Proverbs 19:2 says, *“Also, that the soul be without knowledge, it is not good...”* God desires for our souls to be filled with the accurate knowledge of Him about us and everything without an exemption, as He is God of all things. There is no way we can walk perfect if we don’t have the accurate knowledge of God about everything in life, neither can we grow well into God as we ought to, nor properly enjoy Him. See this prayer of Apostle Paul by the Spirit of God.

#### **Colossians 1:9-10**

**[9]For this cause we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that ye might be filled with the (accurate) knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding;**

**[10]That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the (accurate) knowledge of God;**

#### **What About Sheep?**

Sheep are tame, domestic, animals that are accustomed to grazing on pasture. They are like the meekest among all animals. They do not get mingled with other animals. They mostly walk amidst their

own company. They tend to stick together and be by themselves even amid clusters of other animals. This is how it is expected of us by God to live in this world. We are to live and walk among our company, God's saints, and not getting mingled with the people of the land, the people of this world. We are not in any way supposed to blend with the people of the world. Balaam said of Israelites in the word of the Lord, "... *the people shall dwell alone, and shall not be reckoned among the nations.*" (Numbers 23:9.) Exactly! Remember Jesus' very words, that we are the salt of the earth and the light of the world. That if the salt should lose its saltiness, with what would it be salted again? He further said that such salt would be thenceforth good for nothing and thereby be cast out and trodden under the feet of men. There is certainly no how we can flow and get on well with the worldly people without compromising Christ's standard one way or another, allowing our light to be covered. It is not just possible! We will surely become useless in our representing Him before them, and in the end be trampled upon like the good for nothing salt being trodden under men's feet.

Notice, this does not mean we are to shun others, as it is practised in some religious circles. There is a clear difference between separation and ostracism. We are only to be separated unto God for effectiveness in affecting others for Jesus Christ. This way we will be able to help save as many as are ordained unto eternal life by our deportment in general and not just our words. We are not to practise ostracism. For if we ostracize, we will not be able to effectively fulfil the great commission. 2 Cor. 6:14-17 is not about ostracism but separation unto God for effectiveness. Though living in the world, yet not blending with the world. In John 17, Jesus said in His prayer for us that the Father shouldn't take us out of this world but should keep us safe from the wicked one (the devil). This is buttressing the point that God isn't in support of ostracism but separation unto Him, that the devil may not be able to touch us and for our effectiveness in His business of radicalising souls for Jesus Christ.

**2 Corinthians 6:14-15, 17**

**[14]Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?**

**[15]And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel?**

**[17]Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you,**

Just as sheep are tame, so are we also to be by the word of God. But there is no how we can get tamed by the word that we do not know. Thus it means a necessity is laid upon us to be grazing regularly on the word of God via the means God is providing us, like through our pastors, fellowships, reading Christian books, listening to messages and personally studying and meditating in the word of God. It is only by being given to the word of God that we can build characters, which we are expected to portray as God's children in this world. There is no shortcut to this! The word of God must not become stale in our mouths. There is so much in it for every time and everyone. *Loving to know more of the Father's heart should be a good reason to always fellowship in the word.* Discovering better application of it daily to matters of life should be another cogent reason for seeking it perpetually. We are to be completely meek to learn afresh every time, not getting puffed up for any reason, irrespective of our rising, attainments and greatness generally in life by the same word of God. For without meditating on the written word of God in this regard, we will not continually be able to conduct ourselves well in this world.

**Philippians 2:3-7, 14-16**

**[3]Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves.**

**[4]Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others.**

**[5]Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus:**

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

**[7]But made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men:**

**14]Do all things without murmurings and disputings:**

**[15]That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world;**

**[16]Holding forth the word of life; that I may rejoice in the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain, neither laboured in vain.**

### **Explanation on Matthew 10:16**

#### **Matthew 10:16**

**“Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves.”**

The word ‘wise’ in this scripture above is ‘phronimos’ in Greek, which means, “thoughtfully sagacious” or “discreetly cautious in character.” It can also mean, intelligent, prudent, i.e., mindful of one’s interest, or wisely disposed.

The word ‘harmless’ is ‘akeraioi’ in Greek, which means, unmixed, i.e., innocent, simple, artless, or pure as in wines or metals. Also, of the mind, it means, without a mixture of evil, free from guile, or innocent and simple. (Definitions from Thayer’s Greek Lexicon.)

Sheep have been proven by scientists to be sensitive animals. God endued them with a pair of rectangular pupils, which allow them to have a relatively wide range of vision coverage. They can easily perceive and sight danger, but will not attack nor really be able to resist an attack by themselves, because they cannot fight. They are not wired for fighting. They can only run as a way of escape and sparing their life from danger. Though they are very intelligent, yet

it is never in them to attack. If you have ever seen a sheep fighting (not referring to a ram here), I can tell you confidently that that thing you saw was not at all a sheep. This is the reason why sheep will always need a good and worthy shepherd over them.

With all these descriptions about sheep, Jesus still said we are sent forth as sheep amid wolves. Like seriously, Lord? Is this not like being sent into one's death? An absolute suicidal mission? Actually, this is not the situation here. We are never defenceless. Jesus Christ Himself, as our one and only Shepherd, is our covering and protection always. He is with us every step of the way.

Yet from our side, He is expecting us to be wise as serpents. Though we are sheep, we are expected not to live foolishly, nor be unalert. Remember from the definition of 'wise' stated above, we are to be thoughtfully sagacious, discreetly cautious in character, and generally prudent. It means we should not be playing ourselves right into the hand of the enemy. We should be able to catch their shenanigans every time and outwit them. We should flee when it is necessary. We should run for safety to the company of fellow believers at the sight of danger, like a sheep would.

**1 Thessalonians 5:22**

**"Abstain from all appearance of evil."**

**2 Timothy 2:22**

**"Flee also youthful lusts: but follow righteousness, faith, charity (agape love), peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart."**

Note also that the Lord is wanting us to be harmless as doves. Remember the word 'harmless' from Thayer's Greek Lexicon we referenced above means, "to be innocent and simple, and without evil at all." One might wonder that with all "be wise as serpents," the Lord is still wanting us not to be harmful like serpents are naturally and generally, but rather to be completely harmless and innocent, like doves are by nature. Just why that and how possible? For how can you know that someone is up to mischief toward you and yet you won't in reciprocation be evil-minded toward them?

All this only points to how much we will need to always depend on our Shepherd, the Lord Jesus Christ, as sheep would on their shepherd for protection and everything. Our Shepherd knows how to take on the enemies of our soul and clear them out of our way victoriously, and that much easier. *He also knows how to help us not to be evil-minded toward anyone.* He does things in His own way and far better than ours. We are only to trust Him and be ready to follow His leading promptly every time. Full protection for us all the time, and that without any complication, when we abide by His instructions.

### **Sense of Smell**

**John 10:2-5**

**[2]But he that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep.**

**[3]To him the porter openeth; and the sheep hear his voice: and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out.**

**[4]And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice.**

**[5]And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him: for they know not the voice of strangers.**

Scientific research has shown that sheep possess scent glands in front of their eyes and on their feet. Largely, they have an excellent sense of smell. They have an extraordinary instinct for recognizing the voice of their shepherd. They can also perceive strangers' voice, the voice of an enemy and in general someone who does not belong in their circle. They do not get attached to a stranger, but will stick to their shepherd all the way. The sheep are also emotional in their disposition, the reason why they do stick together and stay attached to their shepherd. This is the exact picture our Lord Jesus painted in John 10:2-5 quoted above.

In John 10:2-5, the word 'know' in Greek is 'eido', which means,

1. to see, as in, to perceive with the eyes, or by any of the senses; to notice, discern or discover; to turn the eyes, the mind, or the attention to something (as to get some facts).
2. to know of anything, to get knowledge, to understand.
3. to be aware of, or acquainted with.

In essence, the Lord Jesus is saying, just like sheep, we are to be acquainted only with His voice. We are to get our eyes, mind and whole attention only on His voice, which can only be possible via our concentration on His sayings in the Scriptures, as we don't for now see Him physically. We should be so much fine-tuned to His voice through the written word, such that when we hear a stranger's voice we will instantly pick it to be of a stranger and run away from it. Jesus factually said in John 8:31-32 that it is only when we remain and continue in His saying that we can be His disciples, His learners, indeed. That it is then we will be knowing the truth and the truth will be making us free. It can't be achieved any other way, except by following in His instructions, His sayings in the Scriptures. Escaping falling prey to strangers is only dependent on living by this.

### **Jesus and Peter's Scenario**

**Matthew 16:13, 16-17, 21-23**

**[13]When Jesus came into the coasts of Caesarea Philippi, He asked His disciples, saying, Whom do men say that I the Son of man Am?**

**[16]And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.**

**[17]And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but My Father which is in heaven.**

**[21]From that time forth began Jesus to shew unto His disciples, how that He must go unto Jerusalem, and**

**suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day.**

**[22]Then Peter took Him, and began to rebuke Him, saying, Be it far from Thee, Lord: this shall not be unto Thee.**

**[23]But He turned, and said unto Peter, Get thee behind Me, Satan: thou art an offence (snare) unto Me: for thou savourest (regard, mind) not the things that be of God, but those that be of men.**

In the Scripture above, we will notice that Jesus too was only able to detect the devil behind Peter's voice because He already knew the Father's voice through what the Scriptures said about Him, that He was to do on earth. He had been so much acquainted with the Father's voice through the holy writings, the sayings of the holy prophets of God from the Old Testament that He could easily tell any contrary voice or opinion and shut it down. He was only able to outwit the devil this way all the time. It can't be otherwise with us!

Considering John 10:2-5 meticulously, especially verses 4 and 5, the only way not to be acquainted with a stranger's voice is to first settle down and perfectly recognize, be absolutely acquainted with and be very well aware of the voice of our Shepherd, the Lord Jesus Christ, through the Scripture and His Holy Spirit in us. It is the order Jesus gave us in this passage. No two ways about it! (Carefully consider the passage again for clarity.)

Even in the business world, to avoid falling victim of buying a phoney item, one will have to know almost everything about the original item first. You do not use a fake item to identify an original one, as there may be many fake ones. And you will notice Jesus said, "... *the voice of strangers,*" (Verse 5). One voice but through many and different means, like dreams and visions, personal thoughts, situations, well-wishers, loved ones and people generally.

Peter to Jesus is a very good illustration, as we read above. The old prophet to a man of God from Judah, sent of God to Beth-el in 1 Kings 13, is another good example. The old prophet's voice was of the devil to talk the man of God out of God's instruction specifically



given to him by God and he succeeded. King Jeroboam entertaining evil thought in his heart to go against God's counsel for him and the northern region of Israel by reason of what the outward observation was saying to him, is yet another fitting example for consideration (1 Kings 12:26-33). That evil thought in his heart was a stranger's voice, the devil's, and Jeroboam was ensnared by it and got captured.

I should say this here, please, learn a lesson from the story of the man of God from Judah to Beth-el in 1 Kings 13 referred to above and don't let it slip. No matter how well placed in the spirit realm and highly anointed a minister may be, if they become careless in some ways, they can momentarily act as a stranger to you as regards God's mind for your life. They can allow the devil to lend his voice through them to you. This is why you need to be very acquainted with the Shepherd's voice for yourself. Honestly, you have to watch cautiously out there! 1 Cor. 14:10 informs us that there are many voices in the world and none is without signification. You therefore have to deal wisely through Christ and in the light of His word for guidance, that you may know which is which among the voices. Honour all men, but do not carry anyone on your head, as if they are Jesus Christ themselves. Don't be acquainted with anybody's voice more than the Lord's. That will be dangerous! Let the Spirit of God continually help you turn your eyes, mind and complete attention only on the Lord Jesus, until you can be personally and deeply acquainted with His voice and maintain it that way till you draw your last breath here on earth.

Remember that the Holy Spirit can only help you if you will be determined to constantly fellowship in the word of God and prayer, *with a sole focus on wanting to get acquainted with the Master's voice FROM THE WRITTEN WORD for yourself more than anything else.* It is safe to know the Scriptures in the light of Jesus' stance in every aspect of life. Recall that the Holy Spirit only comes to testify of Jesus Christ and glorify Him in everything. Jesus said that about the Holy Spirit and Jesus' words must be believed and held in high esteem above anyone else's words, whoever they may be. Jesus also said that His disciples would as well bear witness of Him like the Holy Spirit would, NOT THE WITNESS OF SOME MEN. It is

about Jesus and Jesus only! Do not be swept off your feet because of the anointing some are manifesting, who have made things to be about themselves. Stay with Jesus' words. You are going to be safe that way and not fall prey to the voice of strangers.

**John 15:26-27**

**[26]But when the Comforter [the Holy Spirit] is come, Whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, HE SHALL TESTIFY OF ME:**

**[27]AND YE ALSO SHALL BEAR WITNESS, because ye have been with me from the beginning.**

**John 16:13-14**

**[13]Howbeit when He [the Holy Spirit], the Spirit of truth, is come, He will guide you into all truth: for He shall not speak of Himself; but whatsoever He shall hear, that shall He speak: and He will shew you things to come.**

**[14]He shall glorify Me: for He shall receive of Mine, and shall shew it unto you.**

**Matthew 7:15**

**“Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves.”**

Apostle Paul stayed within this precinct of this in his ministry work, just like the direct apostles of Jesus Christ. He made everything to be about Jesus Christ only and nothing else.

**1 Corinthians 2:1-2**

**[1]And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God,**

**[2]For I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified.**

**Philippians 1:27**

**“Only let your conservation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ: that whether I come to 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.”**

I believe if you really desire to live as Jesus Christ wants you to live and be acquainted with His voice that you may obediently and promptly follow Him, Father God also is ready to grant you that. Just ask in faith and stay by it until you see yourself walking in that order. It is for you, because you are not a bastard, neither are you queuing up behind anybody. You are directly connected to God through Jesus Christ. All souls are directly God's (Ezekiel 18:4). No one is standing behind another per se. Someone might have led you to Christ but they should not remain His voice unto you all your life. You should grow to know His voice for yourself, just like every child grows to recognize their father's voice. So talk to God in faith today, believing the very words of Jesus Christ in Matthew 7:7-8 and John 16:23.

**Matthew 7:7-8**

**[7]Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you:**

**[8]For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.**

**John 16:23**

**“... Verily, verily, I [Jesus] say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in My Name, He will give you.”**

## CHAPTER SEVEN

### THE SHEPHERD AND THE OVERSEER

**John 10:11**

**I [Jesus Christ] Am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep.**

From Thayer's Greek Lexicon, one of the meanings of a shepherd is given as, "*he to whose care and control others have committed themselves and whose precepts they follow.*" In our opening Scripture, Jesus says that He is a good Shepherd. We can see then that the definition of a shepherd above perfectly fits Him. This is so because of His leadership style. Meticulously perusing the Scriptures, one can only come to this conclusion that God is completely charismatic in His *leading us*. God is surely of a charismatic leadership more than any other kind. Though He created us all and have power over all to make us do just as He wants us to do at any time He wants, yet He doesn't ever force anyone to do His behests. He chose to make us moral beings. Such a humble gentle God!

**Acts 17:24-27**

**[24]God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that He is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands;**

**[25]Neither is He worshipped with men's hands, as though He needed anything, seeing He giveth to all life, and breath, and all things.**

**[26]And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation;**

**[27]That they should seek the Lord, IF HAPLY THEY MIGHT FEEL AFTER HIM (desire to embrace His reality), AND FIND HIM, THOUGH HE BE NOT FAR FROM EVERY ONE OF US.**

**Psalms 113:5-6**

**[5]Who is like unto the LORD our God, WHO DWELLETH ON HIGH,**

**[6]WHO HUMBLETH HIMSELF TO BEHOLD THE THINGS THAT ARE IN HEAVEN, AND IN THE EARTH!**

**Revelation 3:20**

**“Behold, I [Jesus] stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear My voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me.”**

I believe God adopted this style of leadership that He may be fair in His judgment in the end, *being the only true and righteous Judge*. Surely, no one will stand a chance of excuse on the last day, no matter what.

God always does His best to lead everyone charismatically from whatever state they are at. He is not some gods who force people to comply. If not, by now everyone will have become a follower of Christ, because God has power over every soul, being the Creator of all and everything.

It is good to understand that charismatic leadership deals graciously. What does that even mean? The Greek word for both charismatic (adjective) and charisma (noun) is ‘charis’ (noun). Charisma, charismatic and ‘charizomai’ (a verb, a Greek word also, which means, to give graciously or freely) are all derivatives of ‘charis’. While charis itself is also from a Greek root word, ‘chairō’, which is a verb and means, “to rejoice or be glad,” and can also be used in greetings, as in, hail, or farewell.

In a layman language, ‘charis’ simply means grace; graciousness; that which affords joy, loveliness, sweetness, favour, goodwill, or loving-kindness. It also means, *“the merciful kindness by which God, exerting His holy influence upon souls, turns them to Christ, keeps, strengthens, and increases them in Christ’s faith, accurate knowledge and affection, and then kindles them to the continual exercising of Christly virtues.”*

From this definitional concept of charis, we can conclusively gather that charismatic leadership is not about merely leading the people,

but also making available the necessary resources for them, as to achieve quality and an excellent replicative followership, even as you yourself take the lead in everything, portraying in yourself the expected traits and virtues the followers are to genuinely and innately copy, replicate and manifest almost effortlessly. Exactly, Who Jesus is to us!

### **The Characteristics**

According to Torch Leadership Labs' website, these below are some key characteristics charismatic leaders should possess:

- Strong Communicator
- Empathetic and relatable
- Confident
- Motivational
- Charming and Engaging
- Optimistic

(©2021 Torch Leadership Labs, [www.torch.io/blog/what-is-charismatic-leadership/](http://www.torch.io/blog/what-is-charismatic-leadership/))

Let us scripturally consider our Lord Jesus Christ in the light of the abovementioned charismatic leadership characteristics. Hebrews 3:1 says we should consider the Apostle and the High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus. Remember that Jesus Christ is God in the flesh, the embodiment of God in a physical body. "God is a Spirit," Jesus said in John 4:24. But Jesus Christ is the corporeal body of God, Who is a Spirit and cannot be seen physically. See these Scriptures below concerning for substantiation.

#### **John 14:8-10**

**[8]Philip saith unto Him, Lord, shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us.**

**[9]Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known Me, Philip? he that hath seen Me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Shew us the Father?**

**[10]Believest thou not that I Am in the Father, and the Father in Me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of Myself: but the Father that dwelleth in Me, He doeth the works.**

**Colossians 1:15-17, 19**

**[15]Who [Jesus Christ] is the image of the invisible God, the Firstborn of every creature:**

**[16]For by Him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by Him, and for Him:**

**[17]And He is before all things, and by Him all things consist.**

**[19]FOR IT PLEASD THE FATHER THAT IN HIM SHOULD ALL FULNESS DWELL;**

**Colossians 2:9**

**[9]For in Him [Jesus] dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead BODILY.**

Now let us discuss the charismatic leadership characteristics mentioned above.

### **Strong Communicator**

One thing that was so intriguing about Jesus as soon as He began His earthly ministry, apart from doing miracles, was His manner of communication. Matthew 7:8-9 says people were astonished at His doctrine because He taught as one with authority, and not as the usual scribes. Just who can communicate like our Lord Jesus? No one ever! Imagine, just how could a man walk this earth for approximately thirty-three years without being ever faulted in His words? He never had to say to anybody, "Sorry, I didn't mean to say that," or "I'm very sorry, I didn't mean to make you feel bad." Never!

This is not because He was proud to admit a mistake. No! It is simply because He never committed any blunder in anything, so He did not have to say 'sorry' for saying or doing anything wrong. He

always said the right thing, in the right way, at the first time. He walked in such accuracy and specificity because He was and is God. Hallelujah! He was not just a strong communicator but also a perfect one! Jesus was so perfect that not even a false witness they could arrange against Him to condemn Him to death, during His trial before Caiaphas the high priest and the rest of his company, the religious leaders of Jesus' day. At one time, Jesus boldly asked the Jews antagonizing Him, "Who among you has ever found Me guilty of anything?" Amazing!

**Matthew 26:59-60**

**[59]Now the chief priests, and elders, and all the council, sought false witness against Jesus, to put Him to death;  
[60]But found none: yea, though many false witnesses came, yet found they none...**

**John 8:46-47**

**[46]Which of you convinceth Me of sin? And if I say the truth, why do ye not believe Me?  
[47]He that is of God heareth God's words: ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God.**

**1 Peter 2:21-22**

**[21]For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow His steps:  
[22]Who did no sin, *neither was guile found in His mouth:***

Moreover, Jesus was a strong communicator in the sense that He could connect well with the people and gently pluck and strum the strings of their hearts melodiously when He spoke. His speeches usually and captivantly mesmerized His audience. All attention was at all times fastened on Him every time He was speaking. The mind could hardly wander under the reach of His voice. People got stuck on Him for hours and even days during His meetings, relishing the divine words and wisdom coming forth of His ceaselessly precious and blessed mouth, which are for a complete restoration of souls.



Jesus would say, *"The words I Am speaking are not out of Myself (that is, not out of His brain), but the Father Who dwells in Me, He is doing the works."* You know, Eternity communicating expressly to a people living in a finite world, just how can such communication ever end! Ancient words, ever true, never-ending, changing you and changing me forever! Hallelujah! Glory to God in the highest!

Jesus was speaking in a meeting one day when some soldiers were sent by the religious leaders to arrest Him. But Jesus' words were so soul-captivating and thought-dissolving that these soldiers had a change of mind about Him and finally lost the ability and enthusiasm to arrest Him. They went back to their senders without carrying out the mission, not fearing the repercussion of their disobedience, as military men. They just couldn't apprehend Him! Upon being asked why they did not bring Him, they told their senders, "No man ever spoke like Him." (John 7:45-46.) What a strong Communicator!

Jesus once met with a woman by a well. The woman had so much messed herself up in life, emotionally and maritally, that she became ashamed of walking in public places. She tried as much as possible to eschew any suspected concourse in any place and at any time of the day. She would only choose to walk on a lonely path, less busy area, or possibly only in the evening time, just to avoid meeting bumping into people. Her city people must have been mocking her so bad that she would do anything and everything possible to avoid running into anyone on the road while going anywhere. So she must have mastered the daily timing of events and her city routines, by and large, to know when to go out and when to remain indoors.

She has had five husbands, married five times, and now she is living with a man she is not married to. Like, no point in having yet another marriage with you and after a while we will part ways. So let us just be cohabiting and when we get tired of each other, we will go our separate ways. If someone has asked her about her husband and she replies by saying, "I have no husband," it won't be a lie at all. It is that bad with her! But she is not just going to give up

on life still. She is not going to take her life despite her bitter experiences and memories, as some would resolve to.

*A lesson here: See, that you are cohabiting with someone does not mean you are their spouse legally and thus you're stuck with them forever, watching your life value being eroded right before you. No, you don't do that! Please, do learn to free yourself from any unholy and illegal relationship. Do not let them appeal to your emotion and thereby get you trapped in a destructive life. Remember you are not your emotion. Emotion is just a reaction to a situational feeling, which may be gravitating toward a disastrous ending. So, do not sell out to your emotion. Do not let your emotion rule you and eventually ruin your entire life. Do not be imprisoned by your emotion and if you have been, break free now, because YOU CAN. Your heart can still decide right, if only you will take time to think through without allowing any negative influence on your brooding. You can avoid complete future regrets now while there is a chance to correct things. Act fast!*

So on one fateful day, this woman as usual came to fetch water at the well at an unusual time of the day to do such a chore by the town people. This was just to shun meeting with any of her city people. But to her surprise, there she met Jesus sitting on this same well she was coming to. And to worsen the case, it was a man she saw sitting on this well. "Oh! Man, not again!" she must have expressed internally. So she made up her mind not to have any eye contact nor engage in any conversation with Jesus. But surprisingly, Jesus would strike one with her. Jesus as usual kindly connected to her heart, and tenderly and graciously spoke to her till she became irresistibly arrested by Jesus' words and completely relaxed and open. She opened up the rundown of her life to a total stranger she was meeting for the very first time. Unbelievable! Only Jesus could and can graciously do that. She just could not resist Jesus' elegance, nor hide anything from Him at last.

In the end, the gracious words of Jesus had so much changed her that she became the first known public woman witness for Jesus Christ in the New Testament. She cast off her garments of shame and clad herself with garments of grace given her by Jesus Christ

THROUGH HIS WORDS. This woman became so bold and audacious that she went to preach about Jesus to the men, and not just some low-class fellows but the real men, of her city. She went straight away to the city at that very hour to publish Jesus Christ. She did not bother about fetching water anymore.

Her words, however she said them, became so powerfully convincing and arresting that these men came to meet with Jesus themselves. Her face must have been so lit up by Jesus' words that nobody could ever contemptuously laugh at her anymore, even as those causative laughing-stock garments had been stripped off her, and glory and respect-commanding garments had replaced the old, long-worn garments of shame. A new aura was perceived around her, so much that everyone gave her rapt attention when she spoke. The Scripture says, "And many of the Samaritans of that city (both men and women and of different age brackets) believed on Jesus Christ for the saying of the woman." (John 4:5-42) Hallelujah!!! I pray the Lord Jesus to give you this kind of testimony also. For Jesus Christ is the same, yesterday, and today, and forever. Praise God! Jesus Christ, a strong Communicator indeed!

There are as well other cases in the Scriptures for consideration and meditation. Zacchaeus' story in Luke 19:1-10 is a beautiful one. You will not believe that Zacchaeus on his own, after hearing Jesus, made things right without being asked to do it, nor coerced into it. He acted just by the captivation of graciousness in Jesus' communication. The likes of Mary Magdalene and Nicodemus are also good cases for rumination. Jesus, a dynamically and absolutely flawless charismatic Leader!

### **Empathetic And Relatable**

To be empathetic is to be able to put oneself in other people's shoes and perfectly feel their pain live and direct. Anybody that can act in this capacity can truly relate to others' stories, experiences, feelings and pains in general. This is how God is to us. God did not just sit back in heaven, commanding us to do this and that without understanding what it means to wear this human flesh and at the same time have to deal with the devil and sin while in it. God

Himself joined us, put Himself in our situation by coming down to the planet earth in the person of Christ. He became subject to everything we are facing today. So, God is truly empathetic and can relate with all our struggles.

**Philippians 2:7-8**

**[7]But made Himself [Jesus] of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant, AND WAS MADE IN THE LIKENESS OF MEN:**

**[8]AND BEING FOUND IN FASHION AS A MAN, He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.**

**Hebrews 2:14-18**

**[14]FORASMUCH THEN AS THE CHILDREN ARE PARTAKERS OF FLESH AND BLOOD, HE [JESUS] ALSO HIMSELF LIKEWISE TOOK PART OF THE SAME; that through death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil;**

**[15]And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.**

**[16]For verily He [Jesus] took not on Him the nature of angels; but He took on Him the seed of Abraham.**

**[17]WHEREFORE IN ALL THINGS IT BEHOVED HIM TO BE MADE LIKE UNTO HIS BRETHREN, THAT HE MIGHT BE A MERCIFUL AND FAITHFUL HIGH PRIEST IN THINGS PERTAINING TO GOD, TO MAKE RECONCILIATION FOR THE SINS OF THE PEOPLE.**

**[18]FOR IN THAT HE HIMSELF HATH SUFFERED BEING TEMPTED, HE IS ABLE TO SUCCOUR THEM THAT ARE TEMPTED.**

**Hebrews 4:15**

**[15]For we have not an high Priest [Jesus Christ] which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; BUT WAS IN ALL POINTS TEMPTED LIKE AS WE ARE, YET WITHOUT SIN.**

As an understanding from the above Scriptures, Jesus had identified Himself with all manner of trials of life and can certainly

help anyone going through any today. He knows exactly what it means to suffer betrayal. His treasurer, Judas Iscariot, betrayed and sold Him off for junk, a slave's price. Peter, one of His best companions when He walked the earth, denied Him three times with swearing words in the process that he never knew Jesus Christ, despite making mouth to Jesus earlier that same evening that he would go all the way with Jesus and even die for Him (Matthew 26:31-35, 69-74).

His forerunner, John the Baptist, who was specially anointed of God, like no one, to introduce Him to the world and who did introduce Him with a full confirmation from God, later on doubted Him. He sent his disciples to ask Jesus if He was the one to save the world, or they should expect another. That must have surely hurt Jesus' heart *as a man*. He must have also felt a deep pain when John was finally beheaded, being His forerunner. The Scripture shows that when Jesus heard the news of his death, He went by ship into a desert place alone (Matthew 14:13). Jesus also wept at the tomb of Lazarus, groaned in His spirit, perhaps because of unbelief from everyone around. So He knows what it means to be surrounded by people in unbelief when one most expects them to stay in faith for a miracle.

The Scriptures make us understand that at some point He would want to opt out of dying on the cross and going to hell for us, which was the sole reason why He came, that we might have a new life (God's very life) by His resurrection which was to follow. It became so overwhelming for Him at the last moment in the garden of Gethsemane that He wanted to drop the plan set from the foundation of the world (Rev. 13:8). The Scriptures make us understand that He was troubled and scared, like we too can sometimes be. He felt like this because He would not want to imagine Himself being separated from God for just a second not to talk of three days, where His soul would be all by itself to do battles with the hordes of darkness and settle things for men eternally. There was a very strong aversion from His flesh, completely opposing to God's will for Him.

His closest friends, Peter, James and John, could not help Him at that point in time, though He would accept all the help they could render, at least by lifting Him in prayer, which was all He asked for. He explained to them how He was feeling. He was completely plain with them and requested they should watch with Him in prayer at least for one hour. But still, they did not join Him in prayer for strength. Rather they were busying sleeping for sorrow, the Scripture says.

He had to vigorously pray all by Himself till He got the victory over His resistive flesh and then was able to bring it into subjection to the will of God. His heart was ruptured for agony while praying to break through, which resulted in Him having a bloody sweat. But His heart was at last strengthened and His mind vivified to go all the way for God's ordained will. O the Lamb that was slain from the foundation of the world, worth art Thou! He didn't automatically walk in obedience, He suffered to learn and master a life of obedience, God's word makes us understand.

**Hebrews 5:7-8**

**[7]Who in the days of His [Jesus] flesh, when He had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto Him [God] that was able to save Him from death, and was heard in that He feared;**

**[8]THOUGH HE WERE A SON, YET LEARNED HE OBEDIENCE BY THE THINGS WHICH HE SUFFERED;**

**John 12:27**

**Now is My [Jesus] soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save Me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour.**

So, Jesus can really relate to our stories and pains. He can feel our fears. He sure understands our feeling of insecurity and loneliness. He experienced the darkest hour on the cross, as the Father had to look away from Him because He was carrying the sins of the whole world combined with the respective condemnation of the whole world and all generations all at once, and God's eyes are so pure that they cannot behold iniquity (Habakkuk 1:13). The moment Jesus dreaded most, that He imagined while He was in earnest

prayer in the garden of Gethsemane, finally came upon Him on the cross. He was faced with that reality at last! No comforting words from anyone. People He was dying for were there reproaching Him to His face, stating that it was good for Him to suffer like that.

In all this, Jesus did not lose faith in God, nor become bitter towards anyone. He even prayed for mercy upon those who were ignorantly deriding Him. Such that His words of prayer arrested the hearts of the centurion overseeing His crucifixion and also of one of the two people condemned to death with Him, who were crucified to His flanks. These two actually deserved the condemnation, unlike Jesus Christ. Jesus' words touched the one of a sober mind so much that he had to rebuke the other one who was as well scoffing at Jesus. This humble one later turned to Jesus and asked Him to remember him in His kingdom. A kind of prayer of salvation, you know. And he was accepted instantly, with assured words from Jesus that he would be with Him in paradise that same day. (Luke 23:47.) What a merciful and relatable Leader! He could relate to that sober fellow what it means to die without God in one's life, because He Himself was facing that reality at that hour. So He showed him mercy.

This same Jesus is reaching out to you today. Please, don't die without having Him in your life as the Lord over your soul.

**Isaiah 63:8-9**

**[8]For He said, Surely, they are My people, children that will not lie: so He was their Saviour.**

**[9]In all their affliction He was afflicted, and the angel of His presence saved them: in His love and in His pity He redeemed them; and He bare them, and carried them all the days of old.**

By the way, let me say that Jesus Himself is the Paradise of God, the reason why He said to that man that he would be with Him in paradise that day. It doesn't mean Jesus didn't descend to hell from that cross, but because if you are in Christ you're sure in paradise automatically. Jesus sure went to hell for three days, just as He said prior to His crucifixion. Don't let His saying of being "in paradise that same day" confuse you, like it has some. Jesus speaking in Matthew 12:40, He said,

**“For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the whale’s belly; so shall the Son of man [Jesus] be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth (that is, hell).”**

Paul also said this about it.

**Ephesians 4:9-10**

**[9](Now that He [Jesus] ascended, what is it but that He also descended first into the lower parts of the earth?**

**[10]He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that He might fill all things.)**

### **Confident**

Of course, one will not go too far into the story of Jesus Christ as recorded in the gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John before realizing how confident and bold He was as a leader. Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today and forever! Amen. He doesn’t ever change! If He was confident then, so is He also today and evermore as our Leader, Saviour and Lord. Hallelujah!!!

Being born into this world to be the Author of eternal salvation unto all of us who will obey Him, that is, to be the Captain of our salvation, He grew up being bold. He was so confident from childhood, in so much that at the age of twelve He stayed back at Jerusalem all by Himself, after His parents had embarked on their journey back home. Just how was young child Jesus faring before being found in the temple after like five solid days? (Remember the Scripture says they went a day’s journey before realizing that He was not with them, plus a day’s journey back to Jerusalem and three days they spent in searching before they finally found Him in the temple. Clearly, that would be five days altogether.) And when He was found, He was found confidently drilling the doctors of the law, throwing everyone who heard Him into astonishment. For sure, only a child with a confident leadership trait could exhibit all that. And upon being asked by His mom why He had thus dealt with them, made them worrisome about Him, His response was dumbfounding. It would utterly hurl someone off balance. Yet, He



was altogether respectful and obedient to them. For the scripture says He went home with them and was subject to them. (Luke 2:41-51.)

In passing, that Jesus was born by and through Mary does not mean He just came into existence then. No! Jesus was born into this earth through Mary just to go by the order of God for our world. Mary was just a means through which Jesus was to come *bodily* to our world, even as everyone is to be born into this world through a woman and by a man's seed. Here, God's seed did the work. The Spirit of God, the Power of the Highest, overshadowed Mary to become conceived with Jesus. This is one of the mysteries of God that cannot be completely unravelled. Like I do say, we just need to grasp sufficiently enough to stay in faith toward God.

As a matter of truth, if we can explicate everything about God, He will not be God to us anymore. We know what humans are capable of, the moment they know everything about someone superior to them. Surely, how to overthrow them and take over is all that their minds will be preoccupied with. Only very few will still stay submissive, having understood everything about someone above them, and also knowing that they can come up with things needed to dethrone them.

Now, remember we said that Jesus Christ is God in the flesh. Yes, He has been before the world was created. He created the world because He is the Word of God. John 1:3 says, "*All things were made by Him (Jesus) and without Him was not anything made that was made.*" Micah 5:2 is one of the Old Testament Scriptures which talk about Jesus and it has this to say:

**Micah 5:2**

**"But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall He [Jesus Christ] come forth unto Me [God] that is to be ruler in Israel; WHOSE GOINGS FORTH HAVE BEEN FROM OF OLD, FROM EVERLASTING."**

In John 8:58, Jesus said to the Jews questioning Him of His person, He said, "*... Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I Am.*"

Can you imagine the grammatical construction of His response, before Abraham was, I Am? Yes, Jesus has always been! So before Abraham was, He is and not was. Actually, 'I AM' is the Name of God, which is therefore buttressing the point that Jesus is God. God said to Moses to tell Israelites that 'I AM' sent him to them, if they asked for the name of God who sent him to them. (Exodus 3:13-14.) See, Jesus is the very Life in and of God, the eternal Life of God. And ETERNAL LIFE IS ALWAYS IN EXISTENCE. Hallelujah!!! Jesus said to Martha in John 11:25, "*I Am the Resurrection and the Life (eternal Life).*" He also said to John in Rev. 1:18, "*I Am He that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I Am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death.*" John too said this about Him.

**1 John 1:1-2**

**[1]That Which was from the beginning, Which we have heard, Which we have seen with our eyes, Which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life;**

**[2](For the Life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and show unto you that eternal Life, WHICH WAS WITH THE FATHER, was manifested unto us;)**

I quickly showed the above references to clear the air regarding any thought that might spring up when a reference is made to Jesus Christ and His earthly parents. It is all mysterious working of God, it cannot be completely explained. As my constant saying, we just need enough to stay in faith and move on. Besides, talking medically, Joseph was only a stepdad to the child Jesus, because Mary conceived Him by the Holy Spirit. Please, don't get things twisted. Do not let the devil confuse your mind. He is good at that, but don't allow him. Believe the Scripture, all of it and just as it is, even as God's Spirit helps you with God's understanding of it bit by bit and make sure you do maintain a complete humble heart toward God always. We get to know things of God better every day, never at once.

### **Back to Jesus being Confident:**

As Jesus began His earthly ministry, everyone could testify of how bold He was in His preaching and teachings. He confidently and wisely did wonderful things, all manner of miracles, signs and wonders. He spoke bravely before the religious leaders and the general people without mincing words. He confronted both political and religious leaders of His day, who held the people in bondage of all kinds by traditions and laws they set up, making God's word be of no effect in the life of God's people. God's fear wasn't well understood by God's people, so they weren't living by the reverential fear of God but of their leaders. God's fear was trampled under by those religious leaders, so He tackled them.

In Luke 13:31-32, when certain of the Pharisees came to ask Him to run away because king Herod would kill Him, Jesus boldly said to them, *"Go and tell that fox..."* He actually and openly called Herod a fox. What a confident and bold Leader!

Jesus Christ also confidently chased out of the temple those who were buying and selling. He flogged them out and rebuked them that they were not abiding by God's word concerning His House. That it should be a house of prayers for all nations, but they had turned it to a den of robbers, with all manner of ungodly activities going on there.

Jesus confidently went to the cross for you and me and the whole world, bore everyone's sins (past, present and future) and died the deaths of sinners. Also according to God's set judgment, He went to hell to enforce God's victory over the devil and his hordes completely, hell itself and eternal death and then boldly and bodily resurrected to perfect eternal salvation, eternal redemption, for all who will believe on Him, believe His report, God's report of Him, as the only true Saviour for them and that He did all He did for them. What a confident and great Leader indeed!

### **Motivational**

A motivational leader provides people with incentives, of whatever kind, to do what is expected of them. He does not force people to

do anything, but encourages them and makes them see how capable they are. He also stands by them every step of the way. This is impeccably who our Lord Jesus is. A motivational Leader to the core! A good Shepherd indeed! A motivationally exemplary Leader! He never forces Himself on any, but by motivation and soothing words, He leads everyone on in discipline, anyone who chooses to obey Him. He has the power to force, being the Creator of all, but He will not. He believes in absolute willingness and deliberate submissiveness, and therefore He goes only by the path of encouragement and persuasion.

**Revelation 3:20**

**“Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear My voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me.”**

**Isaiah 40:11**

**“He shall feed His flock like a shepherd: He shall gather the lambs with His arm, and carry them in His bosom, AND SHALL GENTLY LEAD THOSE THAT ARE WITH YOUNG.”**

**Isaiah 49:10-11**

**[10]They shall not hunger nor thirst; neither shall the heat nor sun smite them: *for He that hath mercy on them shall lead them, even by the springs of water shall He guide them.***

**[11]And I will make all My mountains a way, and My highways shall be exalted.**

**Psalms 32:8-9**

**[8]I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will guide thee with Mine eye.**

**[9]Be ye not as the horse, or as the mule, which have no understanding: whose mouth must be held in with bit and bridle, lest they come near unto thee.**

## **Charming And Engaging**

Similar to motivational in a way, a leader with this characteristic easily gets people's attention and also makes them sincerely get committed without being compelled. They make people fall in love with their personality and whatever product they are marketing or project they are working on. Everyone will want to desirously patronize, or follow, them to any length. This surely defines our Lord Jesus Christ.

His gracious life and comportment made Peter say to Him, having first fallen down at Jesus' knees, "*Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord.*" This was after Jesus had helped him with a draught of fishes after he had earlier suffered throughout the night without any success. Jesus would respond to him most graciously, "*Fear not, henceforth you shall catch men.*" He didn't make him in any way feel unworthy. (Luke 5:1-11.) And remember Peter ended up becoming the number one apostle of Jesus Christ. O sweet Jesus!

Christ's life was truly charming and engaging! Sinners did and still do find solace in Him anytime, anywhere. His appearance makes many do what is right on their own without being told. His charming elegance commands people's attention on God and His gracious words melt the very stony hearts, like a candle wax that is exposed to heat. And such hearts eventually get engaged in God's love and fear, exhibiting God's righteousness better every day. What a charismatic Leader! (My prayer is that God would again make His ministers in our generation be like Him, as we've heard of testimonies of some gospel ministers in the past generations.) Zacchaeus and the Samaritan woman referred to under strong communicator are a good illustration. The likes of Matthew, James Zebedee and John Zebedee left all instantly to follow and get committed to Him when He called them, just like Andrew and Peter also did.

### **Luke 5:27-29**

**[27]And after these things He [Jesus] went forth, and saw a publican, named Levi (Matthew, according to Matthew's account in Mat. 9:9), sitting at the receipt of custom: and He said unto him, Follow Me.**

**[28]And he left all, rose up, and followed Him.**

**[29]And Levi made Him a great feast in his own house: and there was a great company of publicans and of others that sat down with them. (See an instant commitment!)**

**Matthew 4:18-22**

**[18]And Jesus, walking by the sea of Galilee, saw two brethren, Simon called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea: for they were fishers.**

**[19]And He saith unto them, Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men.**

**[20]And they straightway left their nets, and followed Him.**

**[21]And going on from thence, He saw other two brethren, James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, in a ship with Zebedee their father, mending their nets; and He called them.**

**[22]And they immediately left the ship and their father, and followed Him.**

### **Let Us Pin It Down**

It is noteworthy that the Lord Jesus Christ does not shepherd over a ram, goat, cow, fowl, and the likes, but a sheep. God does not like dragging with anyone as it would require in leading a goat and many other animals. God wants us to be presented unto Him as sheep, because of His charismatic leadership style. God wants us to willingly and obediently follow Him as sheep do a Shepherd. God will not want to struggle with anyone. A sheep cannot be termed stubborn in any way. We should therefore not be stubborn for Him. Israelites suffered a great deal on their journey to the Promised Land because of their stubbornness toward God. Remember God has set them as a prototype for us. Thus we should learn lessons from them, that we may know how to trust God *and be helped to be ideal sheep unto Him always.*

Let us see John 10:3-5 again.

**John 10:3-5**

**[3]To him the porter openeth; and the sheep hear his voice: and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out.**

**[4]And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice.**

**[5]And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him: for they know not the voice of strangers.**

From the 4th verse, we should notice that it is when we perfect this relationship of sheep and a shepherd, as it is expected to be between us and the Lord Jesus Christ, that we can enjoy being led by Him into God's best for our life and enjoy it maximally to the end because whatsoever God does, it shall stand forever: nothing can be put to it, nor anything was taken from it. (Ecclesiastes. 3:14.)

Also according to verse 5, we will not fall for strangers' deceptive moves, when we abide by this sheep-and-shepherd relationship. We will always be protected from satan's voice through different means he may be trying to get our attention, overwhelm our mind and thereby enslave us ultimately. How so, so, so important we are to maintain a sheep's disposition toward our Lord Jesus Christ, the true Shepherd of our soul!

**Hebrews 3:7-14**

**[7]Wherefore (as the Holy Ghost saith, Today if ye will hear His voice,**

**[8]Harden not your hearts, as in the provocation, in the day of temptation in the wilderness:**

**[9]When your fathers tempted Me, proved Me, and saw My works forty years.**

**[10]Wherefore I was grieved with that generation, and said, They do always err in their heart; and they have not known My ways.**

**[11]So I swear in My wrath, They shall not enter into My rest.)**

**[12]Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God.**

**[13]But exhort one another daily, while it is called Today; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.**

**[14]For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end;**

## **Jesus, The Overseer**

### **1 Peter 2:25**

**“For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls.”**

The word ‘bishop’ in this scriptural verse above is ‘episkopos’ in Greek, which means, any curator, guardian, superintendent or overseer. In a simple definition, episkopos means “*a man charged with the duty to see that things to be done by others are rightly done.*” (From Thayer’s Greek Lexicon.)

According to 1 Peter 2:25, we see that Jesus Christ is not only the Shepherd of our soul but also the Episkopos, the Overseer (Bishop), of our soul. This means that Jesus is not just leading us to find pasture and drink from the blessed brooks of God, which are for the continued restoration of our soul (according to Psalm 23:1-3), but also the Overseer of our soul, in making sure that we take up responsibility and rightly do God’s ordained things for us.

### **Ephesians 2:10**

**“For we are His [God’s] workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.”**

The liberty, freedom, we have in the salvation brought to us by our Lord Jesus does not justify us to be doing just anything we like, anything at all that comes to mind, but rather to rightly serve God and others according to the will of God. It means, by our manner of life, we are not to piss others off, who also really want to serve God sincerely. Everything of us should be pointing to Jesus Christ,



serving as an encouragement to others. Just what is it that we cannot let go for the sake of Christ? There really shouldn't be anything that we can't lay down for our Lord Jesus Christ and for the gospel, in faithfully and unselfishly serving God and others as God desires.

**Romans 14:19**

**"Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another."**

**1 Corinthians 8:9**

**"But take heed lest by any means this liberty of yours becoming a stumbling block to them that are weak."**

**Galatians 5:13**

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

**1 Peter 2:16**

**"As free, and not using your liberty for a cloak of maliciousness (an evil covering), but as the servants of God."**

**1 John 3:16-18**

**[16]Hereby perceive we the love of God, because He laid down His life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.**

**[17]But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?**

**[18]My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed (act) and in truth.**

**John 13:34-35**

**[34]A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another.**

**[35]By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.**

By the way, note that this is not about religious dispositions, which have no life, nor any eternal value. It is absolutely about Christly things in general! We cannot love and be compassionate for people more than God. We must not let the devil manipulatively push us beyond God's precincts for us. We can't satisfy everyone. We can only do our best and leave the rest in God's hands. No one should be overconfident or over compassionate about anything. There is always a boundary in everything. We must be wise via God's word not to let some people, regardless of their position, dip us into fleshly obedience about things generally, as a way of always maintaining a status quo of lordship before the people. God's Spirit gives you understanding.

**Galatians 4:17 (MESSAGE)**

**"Those heretical teachers go to great lengths to flatter you, but their motives are rotten. They want to shut you out of the free world of God's grace so that you will always depend on them for approval and direction, making them feel important."**

**Galatians 5:4-8 (NIV)**

**[4]You who are trying to be justified by the law have been alienated from Christ; you have fallen away from grace.**

**[5]For through the Spirit we eagerly await by faith the righteousness for which we hope.**

**[6]For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision has any value. The only thing that counts is faith expressing itself through love.**

**[7]You were running a good race. Who cut in on you to keep you from obeying the truth?**

**[8]That kind of persuasion does not come from the one who calls you.**

**Warily Take Note Of This**

We should always remember that satan is not going to back off on our matter just because we are saved. That, just because we are already in Christ Jesus, he will not anymore want to try to get our

soul to follow him into his destination of eternal doom (Matthew 25:41). No, he is never going to back down! There is an important thing we all need to know well about the devil, which is, he has an unflinchingly rugged faith, so to say, that he can still get everyone that is physically walking the earth and in their physical body to follow him, no matter how serious they are with God at the moment. And even if this is not going to be possible, he at least hopes he can push them to do some things that will negatively affect their life and journey in some ways, since he may not be able to completely *push them to get themselves out of God*. Actually, the devil CANNOT get anyone out of God. As a matter of fact, no one can! *He can only slyly talk people into talking themselves out of God.*

But he is a liar anyway and his expectations can certainly be made futile if we stick to our Lord Jesus Christ, just as a sheep who would not stray would closely follow its shepherd. Nonetheless, we should know that the devil is very serious with his moves. Read through the Scripture and you will see how he has by hook or by crook managed to get some down and robbed them of ending their journey strong. By some means he denied some of God's best for their life. While with some he in the end succeeded at cutting them off God completely by cunningly persuading them into talking themselves out of God. If we also closely look around in our contemporary time, we will see how seriously he is working hard. Recall Apostle Peter admonished us in his epistle to be sober and vigilant, because of our adversary the devil, who as a roaring lion walks about, seeking whom he may devour. (1 Peter 5:8.) But thanks be unto God, Who always causes us to triumph over him in Christ (2 Cor. 2:14). Hallelujah!

**1 Corinthians 15:57**

**“But thanks be to God, Who giveth us THE victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.”**

**Jude 1:24-25**

**[24]Now unto Him that is able to keep you from falling and to present you faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy,**

**[25]To the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen.**

All this is just strongly necessitating our need to always let Jesus Christ properly oversee everything we do, because anything we are not letting Jesus oversee as He wills, the devil is surely directly or indirectly having a hand in it. Remember nothing is too small or trivial to be a tool in the devil's hand. Songs of Solomon 2:15 says only little foxes do destroy the vines.

If you claim that the things you do are monitored by Jesus Christ, do also make sure that they are according to His stand in the written word. Do not be deceived! Christ will not lead anyone against or apart from His word, as contained in the Scriptures. Jesus Christ does not stand for anything that is not according to the New Testament order of life, which He established by the shedding of His blood, and which was also according to the prophecies from the Old Testament, as everything was well planned by God from the foundation of the world. Of which Christ only showed up to manifest and perfect all at the appointed season and in the fullness of time. Rev. 13:8 says, "*...the Lamb (Jesus Christ) slain from the foundation of the world.*" Everything Jesus Christ came to do was set up and set in place before this world was set in motion.

**Galatians 4:4-5**

**[4]But when the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the law,**

**[5]To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.**

In essence, everyone who is saying Christ is the Overseer of everything of their life ought to make sure that this "their everything" is within the precincts of Jesus' words, which are spread over the entire Scripture, from the Old to the New Testament. Let us be well guided! Let us let God's Spirit guide us into all truth, as Jesus said He would do, so that we do not fall prey to satan's tactics.

Let me reiterate this point for emphasis. Apostle Peter in 1 Peter 2:11 admonishes us to abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul. Fleshly lusts, which are always fueled by the devil, have a way of influencing our heart in decision making, if not well constantly quelled. The issue with the flesh is not a one-time event, but an everyday thing till we depart this world. So we must make sure that Jesus Christ is indeed the Overseer of our soul, as He is the only one who can help us subjugate our flesh perpetually, just as He perfectly subjected His when He walked this earth. Then we can boldly assure ourselves before the Lord Jesus that, by the help of His Holy Spirit in us, we are rightly and perfectly doing things that are meant for us to do, following in His details always.

**1 John 2:27-28**

**[27]But the anointing which ye have received from Him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teacheth you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it has taught you, ye shall abide in Him.**

**[28]And now, little children, abide in Him; that, when He shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before Him at His coming.**

### **Labour Loss**

To avoid labour loss, we need to be asking the Overseer of our soul WHAT He wants us to do per time and HOW it should be done. For except the Lord builds the house, they labour in vain that build (Psalm 127:1). Let us save ourselves from labour loss now, by making sure we hold firm to Jesus Christ as the Overseer of our soul in everything. *Don't carry Him along in anything, let Him rather lead you along in everything.* Do not be suggestive before Him, as if He doesn't know what is best for you. Our God is an intelligent God, Who perfectly planned everything well from the foundations of the world. I mean, everything!

It is the reason why Ecclesiastes 5:2 says we should not be rash with our mouth, nor let our heart be in a haste to utter anything before God when we come before Him. We should learn to be

sincerely humble before God and let Him take the lead always in all things. God asked Ezekiel if the very dry bones could live. Ezekiel was wise to tell God that only He could tell. He answered like that not because he was not a man of faith, but because he would want God to take the lead. That is a good thing to learn!

Get engaged only in eternally rewarding labour. For why will you do the work that shall be burned in the end? Why will you suffer a complete labour loss, or even a partial one, and only for you to be saved as by fire, when you can perfectly get things right now and be fully rewarded in the end? Think about this.

### **1 Corinthians 3:10-15**

**[10]According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise master builder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon.**

**[11]For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.**

**[12]Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble;**

**[13]Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is.**

**[14]If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward.**

**[15]If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.**

## **Final Word**

As we have returned to the Shepherd of our soul, let us trust Him for the best in life. Remember He is THE good Shepherd, Who gave His life, His soul, for us His sheep. (John 10:11.) The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof, the Scripture says. The earth is not the devil's. Though he might have been the god of this world, as he stole that position from man in the Garden of Eden, yet it is not his permanently, because God did not will it to him, but man (Gen. 1:26-28). Remember whatsoever God does abides forever, Ecc.

3:14. Recollect also what Rev. 4:8 says, “...*Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, Who was, and is, and is to come.*” That is, as God set everything at the beginning, so it is now and ever it shall be. Nothing has changed it! Nothing is changing it! And nothing will ever change it! Not even unbelief from all men!

**Romans 3:3-4**

**[3]For what if some did not believe? Shall their unbelief make the faith of God without effect?**

**[4]God forbid: yea, let God be true, but every man a liar; as it is written, “That Thou [God] mightest be justified in Thy sayings, and mightest overcome when Thou art judged.”**

We need to know that there is now a full restoration for us in Christ Jesus. So let us take full advantage of the restoration Jesus made happen for us to relish God’s best in every aspect of life. Let us let His Spirit guide us into maximally enjoying all that is rightfully ours from the foundation of the world, both for this present world and that which is to come. So that God may be All in all for us and permitted through us to successfully continue with His work of restoration of all things on earth without any restriction, till the set time for everything to be over, as Peter said in Acts 3:21. Do not allow yourself to be denied of God’s best for you on earth. Do not suffer needlessly. That of heaven is sure and secure in Christ Jesus (1 Peter 1:3-4). Don’t be negligent of the one for the now too. When God presents you an opportunity, please, do maximize it. Do not let ignorance offer you a permanent domicile.

**Mark 10:28-30.**

**[28]Then Peter began to say unto Him [Jesus], Lo, we have left all, and have followed Thee.**

**[29]And Jesus answered and said, Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake, and the gospel’s.**

**[30]But he shall receive an hundredfold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers,**

**and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come eternal life.**

### **PRAYER OF SALVATION**

To accept Jesus Christ as your Lord and Saviour (if you haven't formally done so), say this prayer out with your mouth, plus a firm conviction in your heart:

**Lord Jesus, I believe that You are the only Saviour of the whole world and that You took away all my sins. In Your Name, my sins are forgiven me. Now and always, I confess You as my Saviour and Lord and believe in my heart that God raised You from the dead for me to have a new life. I have an Eternal Life now and forever. Jesus Christ, You live and reign in my heart henceforth. Forever You remain my Lord. Thank You, my heavenly Father. In Jesus' precious Name I pray. Amen.**

I believe there is an inexplicable peace in your heart right now, especially if you said the above by faith. I congratulate you and pray for you never to lose your joy of salvation, but like a well of water, it should in you keep on springing up and forth into everlasting life. I also pray God to fill you with His Holy Spirit, that you may properly begin to enjoy all the benefits for you in Christ Jesus.

I will also encourage you to be fellowshiping with a Christ-teachings-based church or group, as the case may be. God's Spirit guide you. Be determined as well to be studying the Scripture for yourself, meditating in it, especially in the light of all that Jesus Christ did for you and everyone who will believe the written word just as it is. You can start a proper study from the book of John in the New Testament part of the Bible. Surely, you will relish it. From there, I believe God's Spirit will lead you on.



### **About The Author**

Funmi P. Adebayo is a preacher of the gospel of Christ, who believes that Christ's gospel covers everything in life, as God is God of all things without an exemption at all. (All things were made by Him and without Him was not anything made that was made.) He believes the focus should and must always be only on Jesus Christ, and Him alone crucified. God has helped him found a ministry by the name, THE SIMPLE LIFE OF CHRIST MINISTRY (AKA THE RESTING PLACE). By the help of God's Spirit, he is determined to continue preaching only the gospel of Christ to the end, with all simplicity and by the demonstration of the Spirit and of power, which is solely for the defense and the confirmation of the same gospel of Christ.

# About the Book

THE SHEPHERD, THE OVERSEER AND THE SOUL is a book that is so rich in God's depths. It shines bright light on the internal composition of man, to help everyone understand what they are made of. The understanding here will certainly enable anyone to be well guided and guarded in their comportment as they go through life.

This book also brings spotlight on Jesus Christ. It gives a clear revelation about His leadership style, as to help the individual better understand how their relationship with Jesus Christ should be, just according to the primordial settings of God, so that they may enjoy God's best both in this world and in that which is to come.

Generally, the discourse in this book amplifies the simplicity God primitively set up from the foundation of the world. Following this understanding will surely help anyone to lead a life of continual victory over the devil and his hordes. It will help them navigate wisely and consequently, live excellently in the journey of life.

*Funmi Adebayo*