

- SEPTEMBER 2023 -

COMPASS

DAILY DEVOTIONAL



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FOR
SALE!**

Temiloluwa Ola

Practical thoughts for a productive day

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Introduction

Every day has a lesson hidden in it. We can only draw it out if we are patient enough to look closely! Our pains can become a point of thanksgiving. Our smiles can become another's push for another mile.

What do you gain reading this devotional? There should at least be a practical thought that can make your day productive.

The story should lift your spirit. The letters should come to life. You can spot where you are in the middle of a simple story. But more, you can spot who you will be at the end of a thought.

I simply want to be a part of your story-
See you smile when you would normally frown;
See you grow instead of standing on a spot;

See you choose what is right without a fear of what might go wrong;
See you pursue life with a cause just like Christ who died on the Cross;

See you read up God's love letter to you as you beam with smiles each day;
See you love your dear ones and dare your limitations and obstacles;

See you run this race to end while taking each day with grace;
See you when time ceases to count and give you a high five that we finished the race with Joy!

I write because I love God and I love you.

Do not forget! The Compass Devotional is not a substitute to your Bible Study. It is only a complement of it.

The Lord bless you and multiply you all around.

Feedback

God bless the day(March 10th 2023) I stumbled on your tweet on - "THOSE YOU DROP THE STANDARD FOR". Thank You Sir for giving out value for FREE. I was so blessed that I quickly followed, screenshotted the tweets and clicked the link to join the WhatsApp group.

When I noticed you drop the daily devotional, I was so happy that I began sharing on my status, and to my siblings group.

People would read and enter my DM, thanking me for posting, sharing lessons gleaned and how blessed they are.

Even my class representative, when I was in school, had to add me to his group and asked that I share the daily devotional with them. God is using you Sir to bless lives. Keep up the good work.

How you begin each devotional with captivating stories with spiritual instructions, especially the ones about you and your Beloved "Irewamiri" - I love Godly marriages and homes. God Bless you, Sir. When I saw the link to download COMPASS, my joy knew no bounds. Every morning, I look forward to what God has to say to me through you. Keeps me wondering how Lawyers become great Ministers of God. Thank you for answering and honouring the CALL OF GOD on your life.

More Grace, fresh anointing and fresh fire upon you Sir! God bless you for me.

- CHISOMAGA, ABUJA

I look forward to the devotional every morning because each message has been refreshing and instructive. The first time I shared it on my WhatsApp status, someone pleaded that I keep sharing it. Just last week, someone else chatted me up and told me the devotional I share has been a great blessing to her. Well done, sir. The Lord bless you and the ministry. His grace abounds towards you. You will not run dry. I pray Kingdom financiers (including me) arise to support this.

- JUSTINA OYEDEJI, ILE-IFE, OSUN STATE

To the glory of God, the devotional is relatable and very practical. It has really kept me in check. Especially the one entitled " Why do you have to check it? It's a blessing.

TGod bless you, Pastor.

- MICHAEL, GHANA

Thank you so much sir for what God has blessed us with through you. It has been an amazing journey. I started reading from someone's status, got your link, and started posting on my status as well for others to see I posted late one day and someone noticed.

It's been a good journey for me, with so much wisdom and depth. God bless you, sir! They come with relatable stories and lessons from each day. I can't get enough of them. God bless and increase you, sir!

- TOLULOPE, IBADAN

I usually read the devotional on my friend's WhatsApp status, and then as I was reading one day, I saw a link to join the WhatsApp group on the flier. I have been so blessed by the devotional and nuggets too. One of your posts came timely last week, I was in a very bad place and didn't know what to do, your write-up was the answer I needed. Thank you Pastor for writing these devotionals in a way that I could relate with. Thanks for the graphic titles and stories too. God bless and strengthen you sir. Thank you for yielding to God sir.

- ESTHER AMOS, ENUGU

I got to know you from Twitter just a few months ago. The devotionals on marriage have made me get a different perspective on marriage and my roles therein. Not yet married, but believing to be soon, and I'm going to be the best wife to my husband.

- DESIRE, UGANDA

I've been following you for a while now and your content captivated me. My walk with God improved when I started reading them. I always look forward to reading them as it has become part of my bible study. God has really really helped me and I'm blessed. A close friend of mine also testify to knowing you from his days in Eruwa(poly) and he testified that you are a child of God and he also loves your content. I have been posting since day one and my contacts have been greatly blessed. God bless you, sir. More grace and unction to function in Jesus' mighty name. May you continue to be on fire for the Lord. May your marriage continue to be sweeter and sweeter in Jesus' name

- INIOLUWA, OGBOMOSHO, OYO STATE

Feedback

After my morning prayers, this devotional is my next activity and I always share the image version of it on my WhatsApp status and it has been blessing lives.

One of the days, I just felt like not sharing it, after some hours that morning, some persons on my contact list messaged me asking for the devotional of the day. In their words, it has been blessing them too. I felt so fulfilled that day and I also shared the group link to some of them.

Most times the devotional speaks directly to what I am going through personally and as a family with my wife. Sometimes I and my wife always end up our morning conversations with the message of the day from ATOM devotional.

May God continue to bless and enrich you and your wife and also grant you all your heart desires for the family and your ministry in Jesus' Name, Amen.

- JEREMIAH UGWULEBO, PORTHARCOURT

Your messages have blessed me in no small way sir, I'm someone that has battled with unforgiveness/anger for a long time, although the Holy Spirit to a good extent, has curbed me and cut out the excesses over time. I read a particular devotional where you addressed unforgiveness, saying the devil always come around those who have his package. I made a resolution from that instant, and it has become my favorite daily quote - (offences will always come, but I choose not to be offended, I don't keep the package of the devil). Since then, I let go of hurt easily.

Not just the forgiveness aspect, I have gotten encouragement countless times from the devotional, that sometimes I just keep scrolling through to re-read them. I also post on my WhatsApp status some times, and I get amazing replies from my viewers.

Thank you so much sir. You're a blessing!

- REBECCA OSEYI, EDO STATE

I am Marie Laurel from cameroon. I love and appreciate the way God used you to speak especially to me everyday. It has been doing much good to me at all times and making my crooked really straight. More grace to you sir.

- MARIE LAUREL, CAMEROON

This devotional has really been a blessing. After my quiet time, the next thing I check out for on my phone, is the devotional. I have also been sharing and my sisters and a lot of my contact list are part of the devotional community.

Every devotional always comes with power and as though they are written to address every season in my walk with the Lord.

Thank you Pastor and Mummy for this impact. The Lord keep you and may His anointing over your life keep increasing. Amen!

- NANCY GABRIEL, NASARAWA

The content from the devotional goes beyond here, I share and post on my status as a way of spreading the gospel. I enjoy the relatable stories and it is very relevant to present days as well as historical and biblical, honestly holistic.

Thank you so much Sir

- OPE POPOOLA, UNITED KINGDOM

Thank you for the wonderful devotionals that you do send to us every morning. Sincerely speaking, each devotional relates to my life in one way, and I am happy because I get answers from the devotionals and also directions. I thank God for bringing you my way. And I pray that God will continue to anoint you and your oil shall never run dry. God bless you and the ministry tremendously, sir. Thank you very much.

- OLUWABUSOLAMI, LAGOS

Pastor Temiloluwa and everyone working with you, thank you for your consistency in delivering the word through this devotional. I came across your tweets and everytime I read, I would be encouraged. I am encouraged to also start sharing the image version of the devotionals with my contacts.

- DUDLEY CHIDZIVA, ZIMBABWE

This devotional has been a great blessing to me and those around me. It is like my daily manna. Thank you for yielding to God, thank you, sir; for sharing your life experiences and how you react to them by the help of the holy Spirit to instruct us. More of God's insight and grace.

- PATRICIA, ABUJA

DAY 01

IT IS STILL THERE!

Text: 2 Timothy 1:6 NIV

"For this reason I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands."

I was driving home one day and I noticed something I had not noticed before. I had driven the same way. It was over a year of taking the same way.

What did I see? I saw the foundation of a building. Why did I not see it earlier? It was already overrun with thick bush. Why did I get to see it? The bush was cleared out! It has always been there but the bush covered it.

There are divine deposits in your life that have probably been overrun with weeds. The presence of the weeds does not mean that the seed is still not there. It is only proof that you have been negligent over time. If you will be deliberate, the divine deposits will become revealed again.

If you used to have an amazing prayer life and altar, the solution to your prayerlessness is not in talking about your history, it is in beginning to pray again. The divine deposits are still there. One day at a time, you are uprooting the weeds until the foundations laid are revealed again.

At times, recovery can be like fanning lighted charcoal amidst black unlimited charcoal. It may seem as though nothing is happening but with consistency, the black cold charcoal begins to respond to the glow and cracking sound of the lighted one. Soon, we have a fully lighted pot.

The passion for God and His assignment is still there. Have you seen how you have not forgotten the songs from children's Bible club days? Have you not seen how

you cannot cross certain lines? Have you not sensed the tug on your heart every time you descend the slope into unholy things? The seed is there. The weeds have just overrun it.

Why is the seed still there? The enemy cannot defeat the seed. He cannot uproot the seed. He only fights by adding the weeds. As the weed grows, it seems the seed is no longer there. It is there.

Paul told Timothy something powerful: You have been taught the holy Scriptures from childhood, and they have given you the wisdom to receive the salvation that comes by trusting in Christ Jesus. 2 Timothy 3:15 NLT

There are decisions you are taking now and moves you are making now that are simply rooted in the seeds sown in you as a child.

Beloved, this is a call to get back to the basics. Go back to a life of disciplined prayer and study. You will be surprised what you will discover about yourself. There is more under that covering. Pull it off!

CONFESSION

I stir the divine deposit in me. I will deliberately fan into flame the gifts of God inside of me. I ignite in me the passion for God and divine assignments.

DAY 02

COMMITMENT IS NOT JUST EMOTIONS

Text: Philippians 3:13 NKJV

"Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead..."

It was my Grandparents that gave me the gift of my wig and gown and other accessories as I got called to the Nigerian Bar as a Barrister and Solicitor. It was quite some cost at the time. They now had three grandchildren as lawyers.

But in service year, I knew I would be going into full-time ministry. I was honestly scared of holding conversations with my grandpa especially. He was a professor.

Eventually, he got to visit Eruwa and he kept saying to me, "Aanuoluwapo, I still do not understand what you are trying to do. I do not understand". But days later he sent a huge cash gift for the opening of the ministry office. Some months later, he gave me money to buy a new rug and flower vases to serve as our podium. He kept giving and loving even when he did not really understand.

Commitment is not just about mere words. Commitment is not about feelings alone. Great relationships are built by committed people. Commitment is a trait of greatness. A man led by his feelings can never be committed.

Commitment to God sometimes will have to say, "I do not understand you but I trust you". God will make moves in your life and with your life that you would want to ask if He is sure he knows what he is doing but you still get to trust him. God will send you to Saul and you have to go even though facts tell you it is a suicide mission. But you know God knows what we do not know.

Commitment to your marriage sometimes has to say, "I do not understand you but I will always love and believe in you". Commitment says "I am not getting what I want or the way I want it but I will seek to understand before I seek to be understood".

Commitment may be afraid of the storms but it does not ditch the boat. It stays through the toughest season. Like the night my mum lost her sight and my dad raised her hands to touch his own eyes saying, "Do not worry. From now these are your eyes". What a way to become one body.

If there is disagreement in core values, it can be a great ground to sever ties. You can choose commitment to godly values over the convenience of compromise. Why? Bad company corrupts good character. It can mislead you.

Do you know what the Word of God says about a righteous man?

They are passionate and wholehearted, always sincere and always speaking the truth— for their hearts are trustworthy. They refuse to slander or insult others; they'll never listen to gossip or rumors, nor would they ever harm a friend with their words. They will despise evil and evil workers while commending the faithful ones who follow after the truth. They make firm commitments and follow through, even at great cost.

Psalms 15:1-4 TPT

Are you a committed believer?
Are you a committed spouse?
Are you a committed friend?
Are you committed to the church?
Are you committed to God's agenda?
Commitment is not cheap!

CONFESSION

I am committed to living out God's purpose for my life. I am committed to building a quality social network. I am committed to building a kingdom home.

DAY 03

TWO FACTORS THAT MUST GUIDE YOUR RELATIONSHIPS

Text: Amos 3:3 NLT

"Can two people walk together without agreeing on the direction?"

I was speaking to a dear sister some years back. I noticed her spiritual growth as her pastor and I was excited about it. Every Pastor loves a growing sheep! I told her the truth about her courtship.

She had been talking about the man in some previous conversations. I told her, "Can I tell you this? The pace at which you are growing, if your man refuses to grow, you will outgrow him. There will then be problems because you will not be talking about the same values or have the same understanding".

It happened exactly like that. She fought for it but it dawned on her that their values were not the same even in something as simple as consistent church attendance.

Friends, two things must play strong roles in your decisions in life: First is Growth. The second is Value.

Some of the troubles you will have will come from holding on desperately to people and places you have outgrown. Can you imagine at 25, you are trying to wear a shirt you loved wearing at age 10? No matter how much you try it cannot fit. Can you imagine going back to primary school to join a class? Even the chairs will tell you that you are only stressing yourself.

Most "couple affairs" that began on campus (even fellowships) hit the rocks when one of the parties begins to outgrow the other or they realise that they were hasty in making a choice that will not fit the demand of their destiny. You just realise that you love each other but your direction is no longer the same. You will pull each other apart when the direction is different. And if one person forces himself or herself to go in with it, it will feel like being dragged on the floor by a galloping horse- there will be heavy emotional bruises.

A second challenge will be your values. For instance, you did not know the importance of a local church on your life's journey but now you are fiercely committed to learning, growing and serving in your local church but your immediate company are still full of "sleepers on service days"

not to talk of commitment to serving.

You now realise that your destiny will not be built in a weekend party but the place of prayer. The party has reduced. You now realise that you must be accountable to be responsible but you are in a company that laughs every time you say you want to visit your mentor or pastor.

You now realise that sex before marriage is a breach of the covenant but you are in a company that feels "What is the big deal with having a little fun, at least we are adults or we are getting married?"

You have chosen the high road of purity but you are in the company of those who sit down to watch and discuss the latest in sitcoms, songs and styles that promote nudity and perversion. You all go to church but you see your taste is different.

Growth and Values will always be the demarcating lines in the long run. You will love them genuinely but you know that there are lines you will not cross.

You know the demands of your destiny and nothing will make you settle for less. You know you are on a national assignment with international impact, and you cannot afford a day's rest in the bosom of a "burning beautiful housewife". Your destiny will not allow it!

Let your values and growth be tied to the demands of your destiny. Remember, when it comes to your destiny, be brutal. No sentiments!

May your head not find rest where your destiny's demand will not be fulfilled.

Do not forget the counsel of Solomon:

The righteous should choose his friends carefully,
For the way of the wicked leads them astray.
Proverbs 12:26 NKJV

CONFESSION

I give attention to growth and value systems. I move off from the circle of stagnation. I sever from things that stunt my growth in destiny.

DAY 04

FINDING DIRECTION IN LIFE

Text: Proverbs 3:6 NKJV

"In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He shall direct your paths"

About 11 years ago, I got into my office and met a note saying that a childhood acquaintance had checked up on me. He promised to come back. He left his contact. I was excited to call him.

He eventually returned to see me. He narrated how it was his birthday and while he prayed, the Lord told him, "Temi is in town. Go and see him". He did not know why I was in town. When he told me what God said, I said to him, "I do not know why God sent you to me but this I know – I know why I am in Eruwa so I will tell you why God sent me here". I shared the vision. He was on his way out of town for a different purpose but he chose to stay with me for a while. That simple decision was the beginning of a decade led by God.

One of the things that you must settle on early is the direction your life will take. To find direction in life, you must understand this: First, it is not in a man to direct his steps. God is not against planning or you having an ambition. God is simply saying "Do not add me to your timetable after you have settled it all. Add yourself to my timetable that I have settled for you". Once you have discovered what the Lord is doing with you and where He is going with you, keep pressing in one instruction after the other.

O Lord, I know the way of man is not in himself; it is not in man who walks to direct his own steps. Jeremiah 10:23 NKJV
Second, be on the lookout for the vision, things, people and places that God connects you with. God can connect you with pioneers of a business or ministry for instance. Be watchful of such connections. Like Phillip, you can hear something like "Join yourself to this chariot".

Then the Spirit said unto Philip, Go near, and join thyself to this chariot. Acts 8:29 KJV

There is nothing God will be doing with your life that will thrive in isolation. He will always connect you with others who are a grand part of His plan. Even on a new job, there are connections in God waiting for you. Your fishing boat has a "part to fulfill" in the "Jesus story". Your career path must not be isolated from this huge story that God has written already.

Take note of patterns. Oftentimes, God would have been grooming you for where he is taking you. There will be physical patterns of a spiritual move.

He chose David also his servant and took him from the sheepfolds: From following the ewes great with young he brought him to feed Jacob his people, and Israel his inheritance. So he fed them according to the integrity of his heart; and guided them by the skilfulness of his hands. Psalm 78:70-72 KJV

David went from shepherding sheep to shepherding a nation. There is more to that managerial role. There is more to that business acumen. There is more. God will never reduce destiny to mammon. Do not do it also. There is more.

CONFESS I O N

My steps are ordered by God. I align with divine leading. I am sensitive to divine relationships that God brings my way. I will not lose my place in destiny.

DAY 05

THESE TWO MUST BE READY

Text: Ephesians 2:10 NKJV

"For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them."

Irewamiri decided to sew a new garment for our daughter for her third birthday celebration. The moment I announced to Olive that Mummy was sewing a dress for her, her face lit up.

Irewamiri then told Olive to try on the clothe to ascertain the fitness before finishing it up. As soon as Olive got into the dress, she began to stroll around in it and did not want to remove it. I told Olive, "Dear, mum has not finished working on the dress. You will need to remove it. It is still yours but will you let mummy finish working on it?"

This is exactly how the picture of God's dealing with us can also be at times. God prepares something for us but at the same time, he prepares us for what he has prepared for us. But as it is written: "Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor have entered into the heart of man The things which God has prepared for those who love Him." I Corinthians 2:9 NKJV

God has things prepared for us. He has a home and a calling; he has assignments and inheritances that he has prepared for us. This first part is the easiest part of the preparation. As a matter of fact, on this part, "All things are ready".

But God has to then prepare the man for what he has prepared for the man- he takes us from Pharaoh's palace to Jethro's House and then to the burning bush to equip us with a voice and the signs that Pharaoh cannot overcome.

It is a disaster when an unprepared vessel wants to enjoy prepared opportunities. In building Solomon's Temple, only stones that were shaped in the quarry to the required sizes were used on site. They fitted perfectly and there was no noise of hammer on site. The shaping was already done. And the temple, when it was being built, was

built with stone finished at the quarry, so that no hammer or chisel or any iron tool was heard in the temple while it was being built. I Kings 6:7 NKJV

This is why a man who believes is not in a hurry. He allows the hand of God to work on him and shape him for what God has in store for him.

An apprentice or student who abandons the process is a danger to all-they have a semblance of a finished product but the character of a raw unprocessed material. They are quacks in destiny and life assignments. They can be called Christians but they raise their hands to beat their spouse. They can be called a big title but with hearts romancing lust and greed. They become a pain to anything they touch.

I know you want a great home but have you passed your quarry of shaping for great hearts, selfless living, kind hearts, and forgiving without waiting for an apology?

I know you want to raise the dead and call down fire like the prophets of old but have you honoured Eli and have you stayed through with Elijah?

I know you want to bring Goliath down but has pride been dealt with after you killed the lion or bear? Or has it become the alias of "your" ministry- Pastor Temi, the lion slayer! God has things ready for you. The question is "Will you be ready for him?"

CONFESSION

I yield myself totally to the workings of God in my life. I will not leave as a deformed vessel. I am an unfinished project in the hands of God. My best version is yet to come.

DAY
06

A COUNSEL TO INTENDING COUPLES

Text: Proverbs 21:20 AMP

"There is precious treasure and oil in the house of the wise [who prepare for the future], But a short-sighted and foolish man swallows it up and wastes it."

The day after our wedding, a dear one called and we responded that we were already in the place we chose for our honeymoon. We were to be there for the whole week. She said to us, "You both are very smart. We did not have any honeymoon. We just went back home to continue life and we had spent all we had on the wedding. It was a rough start".

One lesson that you must learn early as an intending couple is this – Do not feed everyone else at the expense of your new home. What is the essence of making an expensive cake and then getting home to an empty kitchen for the next one month while you await your next salary? That is an expensive joke. My dear ones, sit down and plan your wedding according to your capacity and not according to Daddy, Mummy, Uncle or Aunt's wealth. If you are to have a wedding based on what you earn, you know what you are capable of.

Have you ever asked yourself if those willing to spend for your wedding have ever sat down with you to even ask for your plan for your future? Have they ever written you a cheque to say "We have 5 million saved for your wedding but we would rather give it to you to invest?"

It is amazing how the pressure to feed people will produce the money you never knew was there yet your business idea that you have discussed with the

same people has not gotten a response of any support. We are willing to spend more on pleasure than on purpose.

Should you throw a party? Yes! If your net worth and network can carry it and you desire it. But make sure that the capital of a great life and marriage is not resting in the belly of men on its trip to the septic tanks of history.

One of the huge gifts we got as a couple is what became the capital for the first business that my wife started. Till date, we still get profit from the machines we invested in.

I know a couple who at the end of the first month of their wedding, the company where the husband works started having challenges with paying salaries- it was a rough ride for the young couple.

Do not ever plan your life on promises and the dreams of others. Do what you can afford. If you have support, take it with joy but make sure it is not at the expense of your new home. Focus more on your home than on the stomach of men and the dresses that will fade.

CONFESS I O N

I am prudent in building my home. I receive divine wisdom to manage the resources God blesses me with. I am not wasteful.

DAY 07

WARNING SIGNS (1): WHEN YOU FORGET HOW WEAK YOU ARE

Text: Philippians 3:3 NKJV

"For we are the circumcision, who worship God in the Spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh."

I still remember where I was standing that day some years back when my Sagem phone rang. The voice on the other end was sober. It was that of a dear brother.

He said in hushed tones, "My brother, I have sinned against God and disappointed you". My heart skipped when he told me how he had impregnated a girl he could not even dream of marrying.

We both went silent and then I said to him, "I do not condemn you, my brother. Your fall reminds me of how weak I am also. It could have been me. We will take this walk together".

My dear one, if the devil or life makes you forget how weak you can be, it is a warning sign. When you throw stones at others who are weak thinking you are stronger, it is a warning sign!

People who relish in the skeletons hidden in their mental cupboards or secret compartments of their hearts or at times locked phones that no one can access but the Holy Spirit can see will throw stones at the "serious sister or brother" who fell into sin.

Judah had just taken a trip out of the place where a lot of people know him as a Patriarch. He sees a prostitute by the way. He negotiates for sex. He cleans his mouth as though nothing happened.

When the prostitute requested a young goat as payment, Judah did not have it at that moment. He left his seal and symbols of identity as collateral for a few minutes of pleasure.

When his friend returned with the goat, the prostitute had disappeared. It would be a shame to ask, "We are looking for a prostitute. We owe her". So Judah and his friend kept mute. Yet, his identity and seal were already gone.

He returned to life as the Patriarch. People

respect and honour him. Then news comes—"That your daughter-in-law Tamar has played the harlot and she is pregnant".

Judah in his hypocrisy said, "Good riddance to bad rubbish. Take her out and stone her to death". The Patriarch who fell has become the judge of the "prostitute" he fell for. What an irony.

Tamar had proof. Here is Daddy Judah's identity card and his seal. Tell him the owner impregnated me.

At that moment, all self-righteousness ended. He realised he was not better than her. He was even worse off. He said, "She is more righteous than I am" (Story ref: Gen. 38)

If you are not careful, "It can never happen to people like us" will become "I did not even know how it happened".

The fall of a brother is a warning and not an opportunity to point fingers. In battle, when the bullet hits a fellow soldier, you don't laugh or point fingers.

While you laugh, you lose sight of the enemy. The next bullet may be coming for your head. You improve on your guard! You strengthen the wounded.

Hear Paul: These are all warning markers—We are just as capable of messing it up as they were. Don't be so naive and self-confident. You're not exempt. You could fall flat on your face as easily as anyone else. Forget about self-confidence; it's useless. Cultivate God-confidence. 1 Corinthians 10:11,12 MSG

CONFESSIO N

I rely daily on divine strength. I refuse trade my identity cheaply. I will not be a slave to the works of the flesh. I find strength in the Lord and in the power of His might.

DAY 08

WARNING SIGNS (2): “WHEN THERE ARE THINGS YOU CAN’T LET GO”

Text: Proverbs 11:24 NKJV

“There is one who scatters, yet increases more; And there is one who withholds more than is right, But it leads to poverty.”

It was difficult to say but I told my lovely wife, “Asides from our offering today, this is the last dime on me. Please, let us kindly get some things into the house for food”.

God in his miraculous way showed up. A few hours later, someone sent me a cash gift. It was a good amount. I was overjoyed. While I was still rejoicing over it, God said to me, “It is not for you. Give it to so and so”.

That was a hard truth moment. My jumping stopped. My heartbeat got faster. I told my wife then we let it go. It was tough!

One of the warning signs you must not ignore as a believer is this: Once you find it hard to give, your soul is becoming tied to things!

Jesus warned us about that soul tie to things. He said, “Be alert and guard your heart from greed... For your life can never be measured by the amount of things you possess.” Luke 12:15 TPT

Look around you. What is one thing that the Lord can point to that you will find impossible or very hard to let go of?

Your Christian maturity will always involve that curriculum on giving. It is always a tough course for the flesh but you must pass it. There is no mature believer who is not a master in giving.

Only children have a tight fist over what they have been given even when it is the giver who is asking for it. What do you have that you did not receive?

Self-preservation is not a kingdom attribute.

Why? He that keeps his life will lose it but he that loses his life will find it. In this kingdom, when you scatter by giving, it increases. But when you withhold, you enter into poverty.

If you can track your expenses by headings, what consumes the most? Sin, Self or Spirit! Think about Solomon- He used seven years to build the temple. But guess how long it took to build his own house? Thirteen years. Solomon would have been judged a great giver but wait, how much did he invest in his flesh? (1 Kings 6:37 to 1 Kings 7:1)

Do you give more attention to your career than you do to your calling? You pay heavily to get a new certificate but can you do the same to reach souls?

You stay awake because of professional examinations but do you wake up for spiritual evaluation in study and prayers?

A friend said, “God knew I was crazy about perfumes. At a point in my life, God kept telling me to give out my perfumes”. It was tough but she kept obeying it till her soul was not tied to it again.

What can God point to but He can never have? What are you building that is taking more than what you are building for the Lord? That is your “yellow card.”

CONFESS I O N

I am not a slave to the things God has given me. I grow in giving. I am intentional about giving for kingdom expansion.

DAY 09

WARNING SIGNS (3) – “WHEN IT TAKES A GUEST TO SHOW YOU THE TRUTH”

Text: Jeremiah 3:15 NIV

“Then I will give you shepherds after my own heart, who will lead you with knowledge and understanding.”

A senior friend and dear brother went to preach in a church. When he was done, one or two people wanted to sow seeds into his life and ministry. He asked them a powerful question, “When last did you give to your pastor?” Interestingly, they could not remember. He asked them to give the seed to their pastor.

One of the warning signs that you must not take for granted is this: If it takes a guest minister to wake you up to what your pastor has always said, you need to check your heart. If you are in a hurry to bless a guest minister but have never taken the pain to bless your pastor, it is a bad sign.

There is a way that the smell from your neighbour’s kitchen seems to be more alluring than the finished meal in your own home. Why do you think you crave the jollof rice at wedding receptions? Can you imagine you plan your meal for life around party food?

Beloved, if your Pastor’s voice has become so regular and familiar that it does not sound attractive or persuading to you again, there is a huge trouble. It may sound like he is telling you the same thing but it takes routine to groom champions. Even sicknesses are dealt with through regimented treatment.

And your Pastor does not even have to sound persuasive, he only needs to be able to play his role as a shepherd. Your pastor has taught a whole series on forgiveness but it takes a guest minister before you saw the weight of your folly- you need to

wake up!

What grew the early church? What made them a force? They met daily. They shared daily. They devoted themselves to the Apostles’ teaching.

This season, are other voices now more attractive? You will return to church with a different spirit- you were not feeding at home.

When the sons of Eli would not listen to the voice of their biological father who doubles as their pastor, God had to send guest ministers (1 Sam. 2:27), God even sent unusual “Samuel” but by then even Eli was tired. He said, “He is God. Let him do whatever pleases him” (1 Sam. 3:18).

When your Pastor’s voice becomes like that of a commoner, you will begin to get dry spiritually.

Do you still take notes?

Do you still revisit them?

Does it point you to Christ?

Do you have a reminder by the Spirit of a word from a sermon when you want to misbehave?

Do you yield and obey?

Are you waiting for a guest minister?

CONFESSIO N

I do not display familiarity with the word of God. I do not treat my pastor with disdain and contempt. I honour the shepherd God has placed to feed me.



WARNING SIGNS (4): “WHEN YOU EXCUSE WHAT YOUR SPIRIT CONDEMNNS”

Text: Ephesians 4:13 NKJV

“And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption”

A beloved one reached out and said, “I should have done this two years ago. My heart has not been at peace but I would love to do it today”. He went ahead to apologise for an action of his that the Spirit of God had been dealing with him about.

One of the warning signs you must never ignore is that of the conviction of the Holy Spirit. When you begin to excuse the conviction of the Spirit, you will end up ignoring the Lord. The end is never pleasant.

A hardened heart must never be an attitude of a believer. Your heart must be fully yielded.

How do we know a heart that is fully yielded? It never takes time to apologise for doing wrong neither does it take a long sermon to forgive when it is wronged.

Repentance and forgiveness are the first fruits of yieldedness. If you find it hard to repent, you will find it hard to forgive. It is neither about repentance nor forgiveness rather it is about the hardened soil of your heart.

If “I am sorry” is hard, “I forgive you” will also be hard. Why? The ground of the heart is hard.

The sons of Eli amaze me. How can sons of a priest who are priests themselves have such an unyielded heart? Does their heart not even smite them at all?

It takes legendary hardness of heart to commit adultery as a child of God and not

break down in godly sorrow. It takes an amazing height of unyieldedness to steal offering and the fear of the Lord does not grip you.

But it is not developed overnight. Our mindset is just like concrete pillars- they were once wet and flexible but over time, it solidifies and becomes hard if not impossible to bend or break.

Every little moment that you excuse and gave reasons why your decisions are smarter than that of the Holy Spirit, you harden up bit by bit.

Have you ever failed to check up on someone before? A week, a month and a year! Then suddenly, it becomes so hard to reach out or make a call because you keep asking, “What do I want to say?”. Your heart then excuses it till it fades. That is how friendships die.

In the same way, when you fail to yield to the Spirit of the Lord and you keep giving excuses, that is how you lose kingdom signals.

Can you see how far you have gone? When last did the Holy Spirit warn you about that matter? Well! He is doing so now! What’s your response?

CONFESSION

I am yielded to the prompts of the Holy Spirit. My heart is configured to obey the voice of the Holy Ghost and act upon divine direction. I will not grieve the Holy Spirit with adamancy and disobedience.



WARNING SIGNS (5): “WHEN SIN BECOMES YOUR ALARM TO DO GOOD”

Text: Proverbs 28:13 NKJV

“He who covers his sins will not prosper, But whoever confesses and forsakes them will have mercy.”

Whenever you walk in on my daughter doing what you have warned her not to do, she announces by herself, saying, “Daddy, I did not ...” By then, you know what she did. Her wrong deed has become her megaphone for announcing her good act. It is an alibi of the flesh.

It is the same for a man already caught up in sin. A man picks up his phone to check up on his wife after he has spent some time speaking on the phone to a new flame. He tries to fight the guilt by checking on his spouse.

There are times that the gift you are buying for your spouse is a cover-up for the many gifts you have gotten for your “boy or girlfriend”—the new ‘love’ on the block. Some expensive gifts are a cover-up for costly sins.

One of the things you must not forget is that doing good will never erase the guilt of doing evil. The bribe of a gift or sudden attention will distract your spouse, pastor and those who hold you accountable for your sinful conduct, but you cannot deceive God or yourself.

There are times that the person with the extra energy has some personal secrets to hide. The energy is a cover-up for what has been broken.

Have you ever wondered why David said after his adultery with Bathsheba and his murder of Uriah that “Sacrifices and burnt offering you do not desire”? He attempted to cover up his evil by doing a lot of religious activities.

Building a church does not make you a saint as much as building a hospital does not make you a doctor. You can be dying of cancer and donating to hospitals. It has not removed cancer. You still need attention.

Take a pause! Stop lying to yourself!!

You feel guilty, and you are then trying to do good- sin has become your alarm clock.

Solomon had that alarm clock moment right after he married an Egyptian Princess and built her a palace for herself because a foreigner must not stay near the Ark of God. Guess what he did next:

Then Solomon presented burnt offerings to the Lord on the altar he had built for him in front of the entry room of the Temple. He offered the sacrifices for the Sabbaths, the new moon festivals, and the three annual festivals—the Passover celebration, the Festival of Harvest, and the Festival of Shelters—as Moses had commanded. 2 Chronicles 8:11-13 NLT

Sin became his alarm clock. He hurriedly built an altar while building a palace for his sin. He then offered several sacrifices (maybe he had even skipped some earlier while on a sinful frolic).

God does not want your bribe!

Your spouse does not want your cover-up gifts.

They want a spouse who loves the Lord and loves them too.

Who wants to be the second fiddle that takes the alarm clock of sin to be reminded of their existence? Not God! Definitely not your spouse!!

Has sin become your alarm clock to do good?

CONFESS I O N

I acknowledge my wrongdoings before God today. I open my heart to divine correction. I have the spirit of God inside of me, and I always do good.

WARNING SIGNS (6): “WE DID NOT ACTUALLY HAVE SEX”

Text: 1 Thessalonians 4:7 NIV

“For God did not call us to be impure, but to live a holy life.”

One of the challenging jobs of a pastor would likely be that of confronting people with tough questions and challenging them to holy living. Sitting with that young man in my office that day took a lot of courage.

When I asked, “Have you been fornicating?”. His eyes dropped, but his answer reflected the deficiency that hell fed on as a delicacy. He said, “We did not actually have sex”. My heart got heavy.

One of the warning signs that you must never ignore as a believer is what I call “a diminishing sense of holy living”. You look at the sin, but you now have an explanation. You can fornicate as long as you did not go all the way. You did everything but “no sex”.

Purity is not the presentation of your private parts as holy unto the Lord. That is the idea that the devil and his demons from hell would love you to have.

When God challenged you to Holy living through the Apostle Paul, he said:

I APPEAL to you, therefore, brethren, and beg of you in view of [all] the mercies of God, to make a decisive dedication of your bodies [presenting all your members and faculties] as a living sacrifice, holy (devoted, consecrated) and well-pleasing to God, which is your reasonable (rational, intelligent) service and spiritual worship. Romans 12:1 AMP

Did you see the words “your bodies” (all of your members and faculties)? That includes your mind. It also includes your lips. It includes your hands.

God wants all your body to be a vehicle of holy living. Your lips know no kissing. Yes! Don’t explain it away. Your mind is not thinking silly

thoughts and is not filled with dirty images. And your hands are not touching anyone in inappropriate ways.

If you are a couple looking towards marriage, resist that thought of “at least we will get married”. The day he proposes is not the day to kiss him. Why light your flesh on fire when you are not ready to take the meal.

Solomon taught us a vital lesson about purity. He said to us: Your lips are like scarlet ribbon; your mouth is inviting...

Song of Songs 4:3a NLT

Have you seen a wrapped gift before? Have you been at the commissioning of a new project before? They always tie a ribbon to show that it has not been used. Your lips are to your body what a scarlet ribbon is to a new project. Don’t cut it if you are not licensed to use it.

On the day of commissioning, in the presence of witnesses and there is always a special guest, they get to cut the ribbon and then the project is then accessed (That sounds like your wedding day).

Do not commission an uncompleted project. What’s the hurry about?

Do not ignore that warning sign. Your sense of purity must never be reduced to “we can do anything as long as we don’t have sex”. That is hell pulling strings on your soul, and the rhythm is never pleasant to heaven. Resist it!

CONFESSION

I present my body daily in holiness to God. I do not light up the desires of the flesh. I am committed to holy living.



WARNING SIGNS (7)- “HARMLESS SOCIAL MEDIA CLIPS”

Text: Galatians 5:16 NLT

“So I say, let the Holy Spirit guide your lives. Then you won’t be doing what your sinful nature craves.”

I noticed that in a bid to catch some rest off work, I spent time from one social media clip to the other. You click on one video teaching that blesses you. The next is also a powerful teaching, but the one afterwards is a movie clip with suggestive words, indecently dressed and suggestive scenes.

Then you stumble on clips that make you laugh at obscene jokes, and if caution is not taken, you are some hours lost in reprogramming your mind.

Just try praying afterwards; it will seem like you are jumpstarting a car with a dead battery.

One of the warning signs that you must never ignore is that of unguarded drift when you think you are taking a well-deserved rest. Your intention to rest may be a good one, but the devil would always be there to hijack the rest if you have no concrete plans.

As a believer, your rest plan must be a rest of the body and not a relaxation of the Spirit. Do not take your legs off the pedal of the spirit. Your spirit man must always be alert, afresh and aflame.

If you are not careful, your soul will desire to introduce lethargy that you must resist. You begin to feed on things that can ruin all you have built.

David surely deserved that rest, but the devil hijacked his stroll in the palace in the evening.

The devil will patiently introduce the things that will break down your walls of self-

control until you wake up. However, you are naked already.

Screen whatever gets access to your mind. Do not fill your mind with silly ungodly images.

A dear friend said, “If my child cannot watch it with me, then I will not watch it. I also want to be a child of God forever”. That’s simple yet profound.

If you take a rest, but you come back at a lesser spiritual level, you were arrested by the devil during your rest. Do not drift. Do not compensate yourself with poison. No one in their right frame of mind does that.

Those who fell did not plan to fall. If you are already drifting, stop the drift now. You now talk suggestively and look lustfully at sisters. Stop that drift. Close the doors you left open for that indiscipline. Kick that demon out. You now smile sheepishly at compliments that should annoy your spirit.

Now do not lie to yourself- Is your time of devotion still anointed? Is the Word in your mouth still potent? Is the force of character still behind the words and the songs? Can you pray without distraction? What does your inbox look like? What images are now on your mind?

Catch the drift now!

CONFESSION

I am alert to spiritual living. Sin will not manipulate my mind. I will not drift away from the path of righteousness.

DAY 14

WOULD YOU BE PROUD OF YOUR FINAL MOMENTS?

Text: Numbers 23:10 NIV

"Who can count the dust of Jacob or number even a fourth of Israel? Let me die the death of the righteous, and may my final end be like theirs!"

I was working late into the night. Irewamiri was also awake. I looked at her and asked, "Do you know one of my reasons for resolving matters with you early and on time?" She answered in the negative. I said to her, "I always ask myself that 'if these were to be my last words to you, would I be proud of it?'"

It has worked for me all the time. It drives my desire to invest in the atmosphere of our home and our marriage. I cannot carry on with a cold atmosphere for even an hour.

If you constantly live with eternity in view, it will change how you live today. You will realise that a lot of things you are worried about do not count, and many things you take for granted are the more essential things.

Would you still treat your parents the same way? Would you still talk to your spouse the same way? What will change in the narrative of your behaviour and disposition?

Apostle Paul told us to live with our focus on things above: Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. Colossians 3:2 NIV

Apostle James drove it home with a harder punch: Yet you do not know [the least thing] about what may happen in your life tomorrow. [What is secure in

your life?] You are merely a vapor [like a puff of smoke or a wisp of steam from a cooking pot] that is visible for a little while and then vanishes [into thin air]. James 4:14 AMP

What is the point here? Love graciously. Enjoy the grace of the Lord and extend grace to others. What is the point of the three months malice? What do you gain from those hurtful words you have spoken?

Now, think about all the vital relationships in your life and ask yourself: "If the last way I treated my spouse or family or the last words I said were my final words to them, would it be gracious, or would I be full of regrets?"

So what is stopping you from reconciling now?

What is stopping you from speaking right?

Why do I sense a husband needs to speak to his wife now? Drop the phone. Go and say kind words to her.

Thank you!

CONFESSION

I am committed to living right. I exist to edify others. I constantly live with eternity in view.

DAY 15

THE OLD PASTOR THAT BLESSED YOU

Text: 1 Timothy 5:17 NIV

"The elders who direct the affairs of the church well are worthy of double honor, especially those whose work is preaching and teaching."

My mentor shared with me how he visited a retired Pastor. He was alarmed about the state he met the man who had served the Lord and his church with the active part of his life. He committed to ensuring that this retired Pastor has a smile on his face till heaven calls him home.

You probably have a story of a Pastor who served with all their heart in his days but, in his old age, has little or nothing to show for it. There are many sides to it, but my highlight is on remembering those who served with all their hearts while they are still with us.

The life of a Pastor is a life of sacrifice. A true Pastor must be willing to lay down his life. There are times that gifts he is given are handed over to the church so that the work can move on. There are times when properties are sold so the work can expand. Yet, in old age, men they blessed and disciplined only pay lip service to show care.

Some are hurt and in a terrible emotional state but would cover it up with the strength of "God takes care of us."

Was this how God intended it? No! We must remember those who laboured over us spiritually. David was returning from recovering all from the Amalekites, and he did something essential: He remembered the elders of the lands where he had dwelt.

On returning to Ziklag, David sent portions of the plunder to the elders of Judah, his neighbours, with a note saying, "A gift from the plunder of God's enemies!" He sent them to the elders in Bethel, Ramoth Negev, Jattir, Aroer, Siphmoth, Eshtemoa, Racal, Jerahmeelite cities, Kenite cities, Hormah, Bor Ashan, Athach, and Hebron, along with

a number of other places David and his men went to from time to time.

1 Samuel 30:26-31 MSG

Even if the man who pastored you is doing very well, you bless them as a reminder of their labours over your life. If they ministered life to you, bring their smiles back to life in a critical season of their lives.

What if it was a Pastor that fell into error? The question is, was he ever a blessing? If he was, a soldier should not be stoned to death. We are quick to throw fallen soldiers under the truck.

A senior friend shared how he began to show love to a Pastor who fell into an error. A lot of others abandoned him. He visited the old pastor periodically with gifts. God has forgiven the man, but the ministry was not the same. He did it consistently for years until one day; the man was provoked to pray blessings over him. They both cried. The atmosphere and the anointing were heavy.

Who has blessed you as a priest?

Where are they today?

When last did you show appreciation?

Do you know it can be the encouragement that they really need?

Would you show appreciation today?

Would you allow your love minister strength to them?

CONFESSION

I am a blessing to my pastors through my resources. I will show gratitude through giving. I am intentional about giving for kingdom emancipation.

DAY 16

"IT IS NOT EVERYTHING THAT YOU CAN EAT"

Text: Ephesians 4:14 NKJV

"that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting."

A dear family was spending some time with us. They have a beautiful baby girl. I had a flashy pack with me. I handed it over to her. She loved it. She began to play with it. The mother looked at her and said, "I know everything goes into your mouth now". I smiled and said, "Make sure you do not eat this one". The end of the story is clear.

Friends, one of the signs of infancy is the craving to have everything. A baby puts virtually all things in their mouth at the oral growth stage. What keeps them from danger? The presence of an adult who cares for them.

If you are constantly jumping from church to church without sitting down to feed and grow in a God-ordained church for you under a divinely appointed pastor, but you take pride in saying, "we belong everywhere, and we go to church as led by the spirit", you are a baby! You were on your way to the same church you attended last week, but as you heard the music from another, you just said, "I sense in my spirit to go there today" it is not the proper approach. Next week, you are led to another church. You see! That is not right.

First, God said he will give you shepherds after his own heart to feed you with knowledge and understanding. When the sheep finds green pasture, it lays down there. (Jer. 3:15; Psalm 23:2).

Your jumping about will not lead to any form of spiritual growth. You will decline. There will be no sense of responsibility because you have no accountability structure. You are not pastored. In the journey of destiny, there are things

you must not eat, and there are places you must not feed from. This was the error of the young prophet. He was instructed not to eat in the city but return to his base. He went back after listening to a strange and deceptive old prophet. He lost everything, including his life.

When a man begins to misbehave, you must check what he has been feeding on. There are times I have heard the words of some people, and I can say they had been feeding on some meal. You simply know this is not the voice of my seed or my spouse. They got involved in eating the wrong things or hearing from the wrong person.

Friend, structure your life. You cannot eat everything or eat everywhere. If you are lost in sexual sins, retrace your steps. This is how Proverbs put it:

My son, share your love with your wife alone. Drink from her well of pleasure and from no other. Why would you have sex with a stranger or anyone other than her? Reserve this pleasure for you and her alone, and do not share it with another. Your sex life will be blessed as you take joy and pleasure in the wife of your youth. Let her breasts be your satisfaction, and let her embrace intoxicate you at all times. Be continually delighted and ravished with her love! My son, why would you be exhilarated by an adulteress— by embracing a woman who is not yours?

Proverbs 5:15-20 TPT

Do not eat everywhere.

CONFESSION

I am mindful of what I feed on. I live my life with a sense of responsibility and accountability.



THE PORNOGRAPHY VIDEO DISC: THE DECEPTION OF THE CHURCHY YOUTH

Text: Psalm 1:1 NKJV

"Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor stands in the path of sinners, nor sits in the seat of the scornful;"

I made friends with some of my classmates at the State University. I had settled in fast. I began to fall in love with some of the music of that season. I would borrow music discs from another colleague to listen to at intervals.

One day, I borrowed some music discs as usual. When I got home, I began to play them. Then I saw a blank one without any inscription. I played it. Alas! It was porn. I was curious. I sat down to watch it and then returned it to the pack.

Some minutes later, my colleague came to my place and said, "Temi, there is a plain disc in the pack. Can I have it? The owner needs it" (if you know the distance between our houses). I returned the disc pretending like I had not watched it. He left, hoping that I had not seen it. We never discussed it.

Friends can smuggle things into your life. If your foundation is weak, bad friendships can tear down the whole building. It took a while for me to recover from the grip of porn on my soul.

Anytime the devil succeeds in planting a seed, he will always return to check for the harvest. The best is to ensure that he does not succeed.

Bad friendship will mislead you and will end up corrupting you. Bad communication corrupts good manners. It is not friendship if you are only deceiving one another. It is not friendship when truth cannot be spoken in love. It is not friendship when a

bad character becomes the driver. If it is not propelling you towards spiritual growth or capacity development, or character development, it is not worth it.

Friends are not neutral in life- they will always bring something into your life. You must be cautious in choosing friends.

A friend suggested to Amnon to rape Tamar. That was the ticket of Amnon to death. A friend supported Judah as he engaged in casual sex with a prostitute, not knowing she was his daughter-in-law.

The person who has your ears has your life. The devil needs just a man to smuggle corruption into your soul. Look at the terrible tendencies and habits you picked – at what point did it begin? Who was the messenger of corruption that you accepted?

Beloved, friendship is not built by pretence and packaging. Good character, desire for growth, and truth must be at the foundation of your friendship.

This is how Apostle Paul puts it:

So stop fooling yourselves! Evil companions will corrupt good morals and character. 1 Corinthians 15:33 TPT

CONFESSION

I weed out bad seeds planted in my soul through bad association. I am courteous about the company I keep. I am blessed with godly companions.

DAY 18

USE THE NIGHT!

Text: Acts 15:25 NIV

"About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the other prisoners were listening to them."

A young man reached out to me some time ago and said to me, "You dropped a note for me some years back with the words, 'Great men make use of the night.' Sir, that brought a shift in my life." He backed it up with a 'Thank You' seed.

See these verses:

Ex. 14:20- "...throughout the NIGHT..."

Ex. 14:21- "...all that NIGHT, the Lord drove the sea back..."

Ex. 14:24- "During the last watch of the NIGHT, the Lord looked down..."

The scripture reveals that God is a night worker! Have you ever realised that the order of recording the days during creation was 'evening and morning was the first day' and likewise for all other days (Gen. 1:3,8,13, 19, 23,31)? Jesus in the New Testament also would be awake "long time before dawn" (Mark 1:35). IT SEEMS TO ME THAT GOD'S DAY STARTS IN THE EVENING!

There are vital lessons here:

First, "Whatever you will see in the morning must be settled at night! The final thing for the evening should be a plan for the morning. Write what your day will look like. Sleep with a vision and wake up with a mission.

Also, the quietness of the night is a good avenue for prayer, meditation, thinking etc. without distraction. Prayer must

enhance your thinking as a believer. No matter the size of your prayer, if you have a 'small, uncultivated mind', you will reduce divine revelations and insight to the size of your mind. Learn to think. Henry Ford said, "Thinking is the hardest work there is. That is why few people engage in it." The night is good for thinking.

Third, spending some time awake at night for productive engagements has placed you a step ahead of many others- 'it is like extending your 24 hours.' By the time they are waking up, you have finished half the day's task.

Finally, if your night will be well utilised, cut down on late-night meals. Yes! eat light at night. Men of Old, especially, preachers keep this secret! Does that not tell you something? Beloved, use the night!

CONFESSIO N

I am consistent in utilizing the night. I do not waste the night moment. I win my battles through the night season.

DAY 19

PLATFORMS ARE TESTS

Text: 1 Kings 11:28 NLT

“Jeroboam was a very capable young man, and when Solomon saw how industrious he was, he put him in charge of the labor force from the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh, the descendants of Joseph”

One of my dear ones had an invitation to teach in a church. When he returned, what I heard gladdened my heart as a pastor. Someone said to him, “You are not the same person I used to know.” This was in reference to the capacity with which he ministered.

Beloved, when doors open for you, they are your tests. It will expose whether you have been trained or you have remained untrained.

Some people would not know that they have not grown until they meet someone who knew them some years back. Godly character must never change but capacity must never remain the same.

Do not just think that it is because you are a blunt teacher or preacher that you have not been invited to that platform you had a while back- it may simply be that you failed a test.

As much as ministry is not performance, the capacity of the minister can be placed under the ray of light and we can see low or high capacity.

You cannot spend time with God in prayer and not speak as such. Jesus and the Pharisees taught from the same scroll but when the people listened to Jesus, they knew that there was something different-Authority.

The congregation said Jesus taught as one that had authority. How did Jesus get authority? He was not sold out to letters

without communion with the Holy Spirit. From the onset of the calling, he was full of the Spirit and led by the Spirit. His intimacy with the Holy Spirit translated into authority in ministry. Jesus fasted and prayed.

The disciples he trained could not do less. Those who knew Peter knew something had changed. Those who knew John knew this was more than what they knew about him.

Since you became a believer, what has changed? What growth can your friends and family point to? Do you still talk the same way? Are you still fond of the same weaknesses? Where is your proof of training?

Training prepares you for platforms. Platforms expose your capacity. Do not cry for platforms. Cry for the blessing of training and trainers.

When you step on a platform, training will speak and not folly. May your opportunities not become a burial ground. May your platforms be springboards.

CONFESS I O N

I am diligent in training and consistent in learning. I enjoy the blessings of training and trainers.



YOUR SPIRITUAL WALK AND “FIGHTING FOR YOUR RIGHT”

Text: Romans 12:18 NLT

“Do all that you can to live in peace with everyone.”

About ten years ago, my sister-in-law came to Eruwa a few weeks before delivery. During her stay, her office requested that she needed to come and get some things fixed. It was meant to be a short trip to and fro for a maximum of five hours. I thought I could catch up with office work.

As the day turned out, it became a full-day affair. I had to wait for her all day. We did not get back to Eruwa until late in the evening.

The following morning, I heard her telling Mum that she wanted to get her fish, but I refused to stop so she could buy it. I got angry and said to her, “I sacrificed my full day for you. You did not appreciate that. All you remember is the fish. And I explained to you that I do not like driving at night.” I was angry.

But then the Holy Spirit stepped in about ten minutes later with a firm instruction- “Go and apologise.” “Holy Spirit, I am the one that needs an apology here,” I responded. Then He went quiet on me. I went to apologise to her, and then she equally did, and peace reigned.

One of the things that will stunt your growth spiritually and hinder your walk with God is insisting on your right rather than obeying the instructions of the Lord. You will be in moments when you will be right, but God will ask you to choose peace. It pains, but it is your circumcision- a cutting away of fleshly and carnal tendencies.

There is no other pathway into a glorious spiritual life outside the crucifixion of the

flesh. The flesh will scream, but it has to be mortified.

For instance, marriage involves two people ready to forgive and forbear one another. There are times that you must be mature enough to say “I am sorry” even though it is clear that you are right. Marriages crash when you have two “Personal Rights Activists” in the union. When you know you are there to serve the purpose of God and the pleasure of one another, you will forget about rights and serve each other in love.

Paul made a reference to this about the rights he had, but he put it up for the sake of Christ:

If others have this right of support from you, shouldn't we have it all the more? But we did not use this right. On the contrary, we put up with anything rather than hinder the gospel of Christ. 1 Corinthians 9:12 NIV

What is the dividing line here? When fighting for your right becomes a hindrance to the gospel, and especially when it is disobedience to the prompt and instructions of the Holy Spirit, you will need to exercise caution, apply brakes, repent genuinely and ask for the help of the Lord in that matter.

It is always better to obey God in all matters than to have your way and be caught in the web of disobedience.

CONFESSION

I will not sacrifice the voice of the Holy Spirit for my rights. I choose obedience over rights. I choose peace with all men, even amid chaos.

DAY 21

INTIMACY DOES NOT COME CHEAP

Text: Exodus 33:11 NIV

"The LORD would speak to Moses face to face, as one speaks to a friend. Then Moses would return to the camp, but his young aide Joshua son of Nun did not leave the tent."

When mobile phones were just getting popular, there were just a few people who had phones, and there were a few places where we had connections; I remember my parents would drive quite some distance to find the network to make calls. It was a sacrifice.

When it improved, I remember hanging the phone on the window at the exact spot where the network was strong enough. I would then connect an earpiece that will drop from the height where the phone was to the level where I was standing.

I would stand for hours talking with friends and my lover. I did not feel the pain or pressure of standing. It did not even feel like a sacrifice. It was fun.

There is a price to pay for intimacy. You do not slide into intimacy. You have to be deliberate to enjoy it. You oil relationships until intimacy is established.

The literal translation of an intimate or bosom friend in our language is "a friend that you must sleep before you sleep. If you do not see that particular friend, you cannot sleep". You cannot become intimate with the Lord if you are not willing to pay the price. There is a price to pay.

First, you should know that you are as close to God as you choose to be. You must draw near to Him deliberately. It is not just based on your convenience. You must plan for it deliberately. Any distractions that will make you double-minded must be treated as a threat to your intimacy with God.

Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners;

and purify your hearts, you double-minded. James 4:8 NKJV

Second, you draw near in fellowship. Fellowship with God will mean you are a student of God's Word, and you do not joke with prayer. Abraham was an altar builder in his days. God would later say of Abraham: The Lord said, "Shall I keep secret from Abraham [My friend and servant] what I am going to do. Genesis 18:17 AMP

Third, you must not toil with sin. Someone said of the Bible, "This book will keep you away from sin, or sin will keep you away from the Bible," and another person said, "A praying man will find it hard to sin, and a sinning man will find it hard to pray. Sin will either choke prayer or prayer will choke sin". For instance, a person who truly loves you is also jealous over you. For instance, I get jealous when the children seem to have stolen Irewamiri's attention at critical times. Do you know that God is jealous over you? (for you shall worship no other god, for the Lord, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God) Exodus 34:14 NKJV

It is a dishonour to allow other things to replace a loving God. Never let it happen. A lover must never feel like he or she has to fight for space in your life. In the same way, your love for God must be distinct from every other relationship.

Build intimacy. Invest in your God-walk!

CONFESSION

I eject whatever impedes and obstructs my relationship with God. I build intimacy through consistent fellowshiping. I enjoy daily communion with the Holy Ghost.

DAY
22

BURDENED YET BLESSING OTHERS

Text: Proverbs 11:25 TPT

"Those who live to bless others will have blessings heaped upon them, and the one who pours out his life to pour out blessings will be saturated with favor"

Some years ago, I was seated by my daughter, who was admitted to the hospital. It has been days of physical, financial, and spiritual demands. At the same time, I was doing my best to help a dear one in another city find help through a naughty case that was almost becoming a criminal. It was not one of the best seasons. It took much mental toll on me.

During that season, someone I did not even have a great relationship with kept bombarding me online with financial requests. I eventually got a friend in her city to send her something. But the way and manner she spoke throughout the time was quite terrible. First, never take the source of help for granted. Can I honestly say to you that there are times people who are stretching to meet your needs and attend to your cry for help also have matters that they are trying hard to resolve? You must never develop a sense of entitlement or become rude because your needs were not attended to. The fact that you see a man smiling does not mean he has no matters that need to be solved. He has only chosen a response that nothing would stop his joy.

Second, never take the scale of help for granted. You must be grateful if you need 10,000 and someone helps you with 2000. Some people will even boldly say, "It was 10,000 I asked for," or "Sir, you are bigger than this now" in a sarcastic tone.

Third, I want to say thank you to every pastor who is taking the matters of his people to God in prayers while at the same time stretching hands of care to the needy. The Lord strengthens you.

Do you know that the priests carrying the ark

were the first to step into the Jordan River, but they were the last to leave? Once they were in it, the river opened up for the people to pass. They stood in the river carrying the ark and trusting the Lord until the last of the nation passed over.

Dear pastor, I know you are commissioning new houses while your rent has not been paid. I know a dear father in the faith who shared how he was blessing the new cars of his church members when he had a terrible shoe that everyone's eyes seem to be blind to. It was a trying season for his heart, but he pulled through.

And you kept asking yourself, "But God, I have the ark with me. Why do I have to stay in the same spot"? The answer is in the question already- you are carrying the ark. The burden of responsibility is on you. The demand of destiny is on your shoulders. Do not break down. Take sincere joy in seeing everyone pass over into the promised land. Take delight in seeing those who hurt you enter the promised land. Take delight in those who take you for granted and cross over ahead of you. Your assignment is bigger than small fights.

I pray for Grace for you today.
Will you say thank you to your Pastor today?

CONFESSION

I do not take source of help for granted. I am not ruled by the entitlement mindset. I choose to be a blessing to others in different ways.

DAY 23

YOUR OBEDIENCE; ANOTHER'S REJOICING

Text: 1 Samuel 15:22 NLT

"But Samuel replied, 'What is more pleasing to the LORD: your burnt offerings and sacrifices or your obedience to his voice? Listen! Obedience is better than sacrifice, and submission is better than offering the fat of rams.'"

I was returning from a trip to the South-South about ten years ago. A dear one picked me up at the airport in Lagos. He was to drop me off at the park so I could pick up a cab to Ibadan en route to Eruwa.

Just before we got to the car park, he pulled out a pack and handed me a gift. It was a Lenovo Tab. I was overjoyed. I needed it. Once I got home, I began to plot the use of the tab. Around 2 am, I woke up to pray. The Holy Spirit said, "The tab is not yours. Give it to ____."

This is the interesting part: When I handed the tab to the person, he said, "I woke up around 2 am, and I was just full of joy. I did not know why. But seeing this now. I understand." That was the same time I promised the Holy Spirit that I would obey. It means that the moment I decided to obey, the communication of joy landed in the recipient's spirit without knowing what was happening.

Your obedience is the joy of another. You are not just blessed for your own sake. There is more—you are blessed to be a blessing.

"I will make you into a great nation, and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing." Genesis 12:2 NIV

Giving is divine communication.

Let him that is taught in the word communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things. Galatians 6:6 KJV

It is a divine communication that can erupt in joy in the recipient's heart. That is, the moment you obey the prompt to give, you have become a divine courier of joy.

Notwithstanding ye have well done, that ye did not communicate with my affliction. Now ye Philippians know also, that in the beginning of the gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no church communicated with me as concerning giving and receiving, but ye only. But I have all, and abound: I am full, having received of Epaphroditus the things which were sent from you, an odour of a sweet smell, a sacrifice

acceptable, well pleasing to God. Philippians 4:14-15, 18 KJV

When Paul received the gifts from the Philippian church, it was a communication of joy for him and a secret-smelling sacrifice well pleasing to God.

Giving stirs great joy. Never hold back when you have a prompt to give. Do not debate it. Do not delay it. Ask the Lord to bless you with a liberal heart. There is the grace to give. You can ask the Lord for it.

But since you excel in everything—in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in complete earnestness, and in the love we have kindled in you—see that you also excel in this grace of giving. 2 Corinthians 8:7 NIV

Whose joy are you delaying?

This is why we pray for men! Some delays are happening simply because a man is struggling with obedience.

Months later, the recipient sent me a message. The tab was a saving grace for him during his service year. He had a device loaded with a lot of teachings that kept him sane in the middle of opportunities to derail.

Know the things meant for you.

Know the ones that you are simply a channel and courier for. Never mix it up.

May you be willing.

May the channels of blessing to you also be willing. Amen.

CONFESSION

I walk in obedience. I am a problem solver through my obedience to God. I inspire joy in people. I enjoy the fellowship of the Holy Spirit.



DAY 24

JUST BEFORE YOU BECOME A BALAAM...

Text: Jude 1:11 NIV

“Woe to them! They have taken the way of Cain; they have rushed for profit into Balaam’s error; they have been destroyed in Korah’s rebellion.”

I was on my way to a meeting when some of the things we needed at home at the season began to flash through my mind. I quickly shoved it aside because I reasoned already that once I get the honorarium where I was heading, the needs would be solved.

As simple as it seems, I knew it was a dangerous slope. Before I know what is happening, I would weigh and calculate the place that will likely give the fattest honorarium before accepting an invitation. At times, when I see that my heart is tied to it, I either do not collect it at all, or I sow it all as a seed to the Lord the moment I get it.

At another time, it was the season that I sensed that I should not go out for preaching engagements when invitations to some big meetings began to come. Beloved, beware of the pattern of Balaam. You must be hardworking in ministry but beware of the pathway that leads you to become a Balaam. Training your heart is key in life’s journey so you do not become seduced.

Apostle Peter warned us about the wages of unrighteousness. He mentioned that it is possible to train the heart in covetous practices. And if we do not heed the warning, we would soon forsake the right way and go astray.

having eyes full of adultery and that cannot cease from sin, enticing unstable souls. They have a heart trained in covetous practices and are accursed children.

They have forsaken the right way and gone astray, following the way of Balaam the son of Beor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness; but he was rebuked for his iniquity: a dumb donkey speaking with a man’s voice restrained the madness of the prophet.

II Peter 2:14-16 NKJV

Apostle Peter concludes that if a man stays on that path, especially as a minister of the gospel, he will be plagued by a sickness called “the madness of the prophet.”

Your heart is your greatest asset. If your heart is seduced, lust has taken over the steering wheel of your life, and it never ends well. If your heart is not right, you lose your part in the ministry.

Can I act the dumb donkey for you today? Turn back from Mammon. Deal with the tendency to become a Balaam.

Before you run and say, “Thank God I am not a Pastor,” have your needs redefined your commitment to the Lord? Why was it your tithe that you stopped paying because you now have greater needs? May we all finish well.

CONFESSION

I am not given to covetousness. My heart is not tied to material possessions. I trust the Lord for my supplies.

DAY
25

DO NOT KILL YOUR ABEL: DRAW CLOSE IN HUMILITY AND LEARN

Text: Ephesians 5:21 NIV

"Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ"

One of the greatest blessings I have had in the past year is a dear brother and sister who are also amazing ministers of the gospel. Our mental shift started when we decided to attend one of their major meetings. When we got there and saw the organization's operations, we knew we had to learn the wisdom behind the operations. Without saying many words to us then, we learnt a lot by observation. Initially, we would just say a warm hello to one another in meetings, but that visit changed everything. We were humble enough to draw close and ask questions to seek clarification for matters we were trying to solve.

Listen, I know you are doing great already, but even if you are a king in your space, kings are humble enough to learn from other kings. Did the Queen of Sheba not travel all the way to learn from King Solomon?

If by the election of grace, you see the approval of God resting upon the Abel of your generation, never allow pride mixed with envy to make you throw stones at them or pierce them with swords of accusation like Cain. If Cain is humble enough to learn from Abel, Cain would also raise an excellent sacrifice.

If you are stuck to your age biologically, or the years of growth in your career or ministerial journey, you will insist that you are the elder brother and would despise God's move on Abel's obedience. Be humble enough to draw close and learn.

Kings learn from kings. Queen of Sheba came with hard questions and got all her answers: So Solomon answered all her questions; there was nothing so difficult for the king that he could not explain it to her. And when the queen of Sheba had seen all the wisdom of Solomon, the house that he had built, the food on his table, the seating of his servants, the service of his waiters and their apparel, his cupbearers, and his entryway by which he went up to the house of

the Lord, there was no more spirit in her.

I Kings 10:3-5 NKJV

And when you get answers, kings are humble enough to admit and appreciate those they learn from and highlight specifically what they have learnt. Admit it when you have learnt from someone. Do not package it like "personal revelation."

Then she said to the king: "It was a true report which I heard in my own land about your words and your wisdom. However I did not believe the words until I came and saw with my own eyes; and indeed the half was not told me. Your wisdom and prosperity exceed the fame of which I heard. Happy are your men and happy are these your servants, who stand continually before you and hear your wisdom! Blessed be the Lord your God, who delighted in you, setting you on the throne of Israel! Because the Lord has loved Israel forever, therefore He made you king, to do justice and righteousness."

I Kings 10:6-9 NKJV

Whenever you learn from your Abels, be humble enough to honour them with your giving also. You can never compare what you have received with what you will give.

Then she gave the king one hundred and twenty talents of gold, spices in great quantity, and precious stones. There never again came such abundance of spices as the queen of Sheba gave to King Solomon.

I Kings 10:10 NKJV

Refrain from competing with those you can learn from. It will be a major error. Be humble!

CONFESSION

I do not despise those ahead of me. I deal with every element of pride in my life. I learn from them in humility. I enjoy breakthroughs through destiny associations.

DAY 26

BELOVED, IT IS STILL POSSIBLE!

Text: Job 14:9 NKJV

"Yet at the scent of water, it will bud and bring forth branches like a plant."

Just as we were wrapping up the communion service, I sensed a prompt in my heart that it was still possible to use our new facility for the 10th anniversary and convention of the Church. I asked the church, "Do we believe it is possible?" The answer was not too strong, and I understood. But that evening, I requested that we dance before the Lord as we trust him for what He could do. We danced and gave him all the praise.

The journey's highlight was that when it looked like it was not going to happen, God stepped in. In seventeen days, the roofing sheets were installed, plastering was done, plumbing was settled, electrical installations were fixed, and the tiling of the auditorium was finished. We knew it was all a miracle. We danced. We shouted. We gave him praise.

Beloved, let faith be stirred in your heart and let it find expression in your mouth, back it up with thanksgiving, and dance with your feet. Settle it that God does the impossible. It is His specialty.

And he said, the things which are impossible with men are possible with God.

Luke 18:27 KJV

And Jesus looking upon them saith, With men, it is impossible, but not with God: for with God all things are possible. Mark 10:27 KJV

Settle it that nations are compelled to favour you. Settle it in your heart that your case is different. Be soaked in the Word of God and not just get lost in the news feed of social media. One lifts your spirit, and the other feeds it with junk that bloats your soul. It will seem that you are getting bigger, but the

discomfort you feel is only sensed by you. Be honest with yourself.

A bloated soul needs to be detoxified. This is the time to retreat and de-program yourself so that the Word and the Spirit can re-program you for alignment with kingdom-focused words and actions.

Be honest with yourself.

You will see God's possibilities when you are loaded with God's Word. You will not join naysayers. You would know that great things can still happen this year. Stop pushing the possibilities to another year. God can still do it now. He only needs your cooperation. Take your eyes off the storm or any other physical evidence around you and focus on God and His Word. You will come walking on the same issue that is trying to bury others.

There is no shame in Zion. You will not be put to shame. Do you know mercy is on your side? Do you know that favour is working for your good? Do you know His presence is with you? Why is your head down? Refuse to give up. Your truckload of testimonies is on the way.

What junk do you have to deal with?

Will you live like you are on retreat?

Will you feed strong on the revelation of His Word and deal with that "soul-bloat"? You cannot feel full, yet you are so empty. Deal with it!

CONFESSIO N

Faith is stirred in my heart. The word of God comes alive in my heart. I refuse to give up on what God has said concerning me.

DAY 27

IT IS NOT NORMAL: DO NOT TAKE RESISTANCE AS CIRCUMSTANCE

Text: Mark 9:23 NLT

"What do you mean, 'If I can'?" Jesus asked. "Anything is possible if a person believes."

I pastor young people in a very unique setting. Let me explain- the average young person in the town is either a student, a corps member, an indigene looking for greener pastures or a worker seeking to be transferred to the city. Some folks would leave their families in cities while they work in our community. They often travel to their families.

The students would be in town for about two years, and they move on. The corps member is in town for about eleven months. The young indigene moves once there is hope for a job in the cities. The worker in town is highly mobile.

When most of them are transitioning to cities, they have glowing words of how they would miss church, but that was the end. If you visit the church, you will never meet the same set of people every year.

I settled for the advantage in it that we began to say, "We are a church of people in transition." We would grow to sixty and then shrink to 25 when people move. It was just like that. We built our systems and structures around that circumstance.

I heard a father in the faith say, "Do not settle for resistance thinking it is circumstance. Break that pattern." A new vision was birthed. I dug into the Word of God and saw that crowds were always there, even when Jesus was in remote places. That was our change. The image we had changed. We prayed and began to work towards it. In a matter of six weeks, we doubled in number.

Today, we have in attendance what we

sometimes have in special meetings. People travel from two neighbouring towns (some about an hour away) to attend services. We have brilliant minds working in the ministry also today. I mean brilliant minds.

As a believer, there are things you must never explain away. It had become the norm to sell stuff in the temple. The table for money changers was also there. Everyone accepted it as a norm except Jesus. He came in and turned the whole place upside down.

And He said to them, "It is written, 'My house shall be called a house of prayer,' but you have made it a 'den of thieves.'" Matthew 21:13 NKJV

He drove all those who were merchandising. Only then did those who needed healing come in, the blind and the lame. Afterwards, people marvelled at the wonders that were happening.

You cannot bring anything extraordinary out of a situation you have accepted as the norm. If you think it is normal, you will be an ally. But once you see it as resistance, you fight back.

What is in your life, marriage and ministry that you have accepted as the norm? Could it be that it is a veil so that you would not be able to resist it? What will happen if you wake up today and fight back?

CONFESSIO N

I do not accept resistance as a circumstance. I fight back. I trust in the Lord for strength to multiply results.

DAY
28

THINGS TO SETTLE BEFORE MARRIAGE (1)

Text: Ephesians 2:3 NIV

"Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves"

Just some three weeks or so into courtship, our planned meeting for a study was not going well. Every question I asked Irewamiri was met with a one-word answer.

After all attempts failed, I decided that we change location- we drove to a quiet location and I began to probe again.

Well! I did not know when the tears began to roll off my cheeks- all my attempt was hitting a brick wall. She joined me in crying and then told me, "I feel I cannot know the things you know. You know so much. Can I ever measure up?"

That day our courtship changed gears and moved into a new level of understanding. It takes a broken man to lead a broken woman. Marriage is actually two funerals and one wedding. The man and the woman must die to self and all its manifestation if the joining will be smooth.

Layers of ego will be peeled. Layers of pride must be pulled away. It takes two living sacrifices to make a loving marriage. It takes sacrifices to cause a marriage to live- it must be two on an altar. Only then can the sweet fragrance be released.

If you keep thinking about "my thing" rather than "our thing", the sharp unbroken edges will scratch and injure each other so bad that before one wound heals, another one is inflicted.

You will wound one another with words and actions yet you will be unrepentant about

it. Why? Self is not dead. You will take turns at taking offences and it will build a wall in your home. The bed will be full of sighs. Warmth will fade. Heat will reign. Verbal cudgels will replace cuddles.

If you bypass the altar where self is sacrificed and you take a walk to the altar where the two are declared one, then the marriage itself is sacrificed and the home will miss the sweet-smelling fragrance of love and joy!

It takes brokenness to know your spouse. If you stop when you hit a wall and turn back when it is not working, you miss out on an opportunity to get into deeper things in marriage. Handle conflicts in humility and love. That is how broken people do it.

Depths come in strategic layers- you must keep digging till you hit the fountain locked up beneath.

Your marriage can stop being a mountain in your heart. It can become a fountain that refreshes you and all around you. May it be so!

CONFESSIO N

I am not ruled by ego but by the Spirit of God. I walk in brokenness. My marriage keeps flourishing

DAY 29

THINGS TO SETTLE BEFORE MARRIAGE (2)

Text: Proverbs 21:20 AMP

"There is precious treasure and oil in the house of the wise [who prepare for the future], But a short-sighted and foolish man swallows it up and wastes it."

When we made up our mind that we would be getting married, we made two important decisions- the first was a question that helped us to engage wisdom. The second was a decision that reduced contention and friction.

The question was simple- "Temi and Ronke, if you will be getting married based on what you have now, what will the wedding look like?"

Friends, do not deceive yourself. I know you have a dream wedding but you cannot use a "daydreaming income" to plan a dream wedding. You should sit down now and ask yourselves tough questions. That is why courtship begins with "court". We examine, cross-examine and re-examine.

Jesus warned us about planning in life: "But don't begin until you count the cost. For who would begin construction of a building without first calculating the cost to see if there is enough money to finish it? Otherwise, you might complete only the foundation before running out of money, and then everyone would laugh at you.

Luke 14:28-29 NLT

A lot of people conclude the foundation (wedding day) and then run out of money. They become a laughing stock. They had a big wedding but now have a lean pocket and huge liabilities. Do not

plan on promises.

The second is a statement that gave us rest. We told ourselves: "We know we will get married. At any point that we run out of money while planning, we would not be pressured until the next supply comes". We kept to that with all our minds. It got shaky at times but having no principles would make your journey to the wedding day and marriage worse. Principles are rail guards on a cliff. It keeps you away from a huge fall.

As you approach your wedding day, your values will come under test. It will expose the tendencies of the home you are about to build. If you borrow to wed, you will end up borrowing as a family to impress and you will likely not invest. It will reveal if you will be a home driven by emotions and sentiments or by the Word of God and solid principles that will lead to greatness.

Do not be disappointed when those you expect to rise for you do not. You deal with that expectation by planning with what you have and not "expectations that were never spoken".

May you be blessed with wisdom.

CONFESSION

My marriage does not suffer a setback because of wasteful spending. I am frugal in expending resources. The Lord is my supply.



THINGS TO SETTLE BEFORE MARRIAGE (3)

Text: Proverbs 29:25 AMP

"The fear of man brings a snare, But whoever trusts in and puts his confidence in the LORD will be exalted and safe"

When we returned from our one-week break after the wedding, someone complained that there were people who did not get to eat at our wedding. My response was simple, "Can I have a list of those who complained that they did not eat so I can know the list of people to unfriend. Both my wife and I do not even know the taste of any of the food served on our wedding day". That settled the contention.

Friends, one of the things that you must settle before marriage is that you will not allow the pressure of public opinion to dictate the tune of your life and marriage.

One thing that will put you in trouble is the popular statement "What will people say?" Train yourself to live a life to please the Lord and pursue purpose rather than please men. Whatever you decide to do, the opinion of men is not your control.

Tell yourself that you will not do anything beyond your means. It is absolutely unwise to either spend all you have earned on a wedding or take a loan because you want to get married. Must your suit be a new one? If you wear the one you already have, did they say the Lord will reject it?

There is no rule that says people must eat. If you or your parents cannot afford it, do not do it. Some people's capital for a family business is fully resident and digested in the belly of men. Your family finance after your marriage must be your priority.

The combined monthly income is just about a hundred thousand but you have a wedding budget of about three million. If you have wealthy parents who want to pay the bills. Fine! But have they even given you half of

that amount ever to do something for your new home or invest in a business? You can ask them to invest the money in your marriage and not your wedding.

If you are not free from the trap of people's opinion, you are not ready for marriage yet. You will not be able to defend your home when it is necessary.

Let us see what King Solomon said about the fear of men:

Fearing people is a dangerous trap, but trusting the Lord means safety. Proverbs 29:25 NLT

It is dangerous to be concerned with what others think of you, but if you trust the Lord, you are safe. Proverbs 29:25 GNT

The fear of human opinion disables; trusting in God protects you from that. Proverbs 29:25 MSG

Some people have lived their entire lives pleasing men. Their wedding too was a perfect summary of trying to please men. Their marriage is now in a mess tied to the same trap of trying to please men.

Beloved, if you say "Yes" to everything and everyone in life, you will remain small. "No" is a handy tool for every man or woman that will be great. Say No to pressure. Do what you can with what you have. Enjoy yourself while it lasts.

CONFESSION

I am not pressured by public opinion. I make decisions by the wisdom of God. "What will people say?" will not wreck my marriage. I enjoy fruitfulness.



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