

VICTORIOUS

LIVING



God's Truth About Day to Day Lives

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INTRODUCTION

This book's thrust is to introduce a modern day believer to the concept of living victoriously as we await Jesus Christ second return. The bible tells us in Romans 9: 37 that we are more than conquerors through Jesus Christ. This means that the Devil is only fighting a lost battle, because the war was won on the Cross of Calvary, when Jesus died for our sins in order to reconcile us with God many are however living in ignorance and are living lives of defeat. This book seeks to discard ignorance and realign man to God's truth as enshrined in his Word. It is split into five chapters covering topical issues on Faith; Putting on the Whole Armour of God, Yielding to the Holy Spirit; The blood of Jesus and Commitment to and Fellowship with God, setting out and explaining the word of God in order that it is applied effectively in our lives so that we celebrate our victories through Christ Jesus. Read on and be blessed!

- Graham A Mhlakaza

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Chapter 1

FAITH

In Hebrews 11:1, the bible tells us that, faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. Faith is a vital component of the New Testament and we can also refer to it as the law of the New Testament. The application of faith in our relationship with God glorifies him, for without faith it is impossible to please God. (Heb 11:6) It is through faith in God that we recognize His existence, goodness and graciousness. By faith we see the unseen and we cause God to action. By faith we have the appreciation that the world was formed at God's command so that what we see was not made out of what is visible. (Hebrews 11:12).

A walk of faith brings about assurance that we will share in Christ's inheritance and righteousness comes by faith. Yielding to God and following him is an act of faith. Enoch pleased God because he was a man of faith. He walked with God and was seen no more. (Genesis 5:24). He never experienced death for he was justified, sanctified by his faith and thus God took him away. I believe that his walk of faith was that of close intimacy with God to an extent that he could understand the mind of God and consequently had his faith counted for righteousness. This was caused by the fact that God saw it unwarranted for Enoch to continue living among people of no-faith and thus, God took him away.

By Faith, we see the Unseen. Following the wickedness of men that had become so unbearable to God, God was grieved and wiped away mankind from the face of the earth and some birds and animals. But God was favorable to Noah a man of righteousness. In that regard God forewarned Noah of the impending disaster and instructed him to build an ark that was to save his life and that of his household and a few selected animals. In his life Noah had never seen rain falling or ever heard about it, but despite that, he believed God. Noah did not even think about the pain of constructing the ark, but was only determined to ensure his safety. In all he did, Noah believed God. (Gen 6:1-22) when the floods came, the man of faith and a preacher of

righteousness, Noah was fully covered and protected together with seven others. (2 Peter 2:5). In that regard, Noah became the heir of righteousness that comes by faith. (Hebrews 11:7) Noah thus was an heir of righteousness because he saw the unseen. Therefore believers have an obligation to believe God in whatever He tells you, because God does not lie and He always fulfills His word.

Faith is in the heart. The state of your heart testifies whether or not you have faith. In Job 2:9, the bible tells us that Job's wife urged him to rid of his integrity [faith], and die of which he refused. In his heart Job knew that his troubles were from God and he did not lose his faith in light of those difficulties. It is faith that took him out of that situation when at the end of the trials; God then blessed him in abundance. (Job 42:12). If you have faith, you yield to and follow God in any difficulties that you may get into in your lifetime. Life can be so difficult and challenging that you might begin doubting. In such times, be strong, keep heart and never forget that God loves you and cares for you. Don't compare yourself with the next person and start asking yourself why he or she is being blessed whilst you are suffering because your time will come and it shall all be well with you. The tests that God may make you go through are just but propellers to your Canaan land, a land flowing with milk and honey.

If you have faith, then all things are possible. (Matthew 19: 26). There is nothing that is impossible with God. If God is the creator of all things, can He fail your circumstance? In Matthew 19: 24, Jesus told His disciples that it is very difficult for a rich man to enter the Kingdom of Heaven than it is for a camel to go through the hole of a needle. To that saying, His disciples ask Him, who can then be saved? (Verse 25). In response Jesus says, with man it is impossible but with God it is possible. (Verse 26). The interpretation that we can derive for this verse is that, 'it is impossible for man of no faith to please God than they that have faith. Faith makes that which seems impossible possible, the unseen to be seen, and the unknown to be known. It is out of faith that we have hope for tomorrow. To live this life is faith. This means that even if we face difficulties we derive assurance that they shall come to an end when God's time comes. We all make plans for life but their success is to a very large extent dependant upon God's will. If God wants

you to take the longest route to prosperity stay on track and do not let anyone cause you to stumble. People will laugh at you but keep in mind that even if people laugh at you, greater is He that is in you than he who is in the world. If God delays that does not ultimately mean that He has forgotten about you. He still knows you and loves you and will see you through your situation. The world shall pass away but that which God planted in you will never die. Nothing should stop you from worshipping God. If the devil tempts you, remind him that he is defeated, and has no room in your life.

Lack of faith brings in more problems to he who does not have faith. Sarai after a long period of chose not to trust God for the opening of her womb and instead gave her maid Hagar to Abram to bear her a son and build up a family through her. Lest did she know that after Hagar conceives she would despise her. In retaliation to the reprisal from Hagar, Sarai mistreated Hagar to an extent that Hagar had no more choice than to flee from Sarai. (Genesis16: 1-6). In that regard Sarai had created for herself shame for her not being a woman of no-faith. You might be having a sickness that is taking you ages to heal and you have sought healing from spiritists, doctors: general practitioners and specialists, your failure to experience healing might be the result of your lack of faith causing you to seek alternative means for your healing thereby hindering God from healing you.

The bible tells us in Isaiah 53: 5, that by His wounds we are healed. If we believe that word and confess it with our mouths, nothing can hinder our healing. God is subject to His word and always confirms it if we ask Him to because if He does not confirm it, then He becomes a liar. For us to have the assurance that God's word is true He confirms it, and abides by it and our belief (faith) in His word causes Him to action. If ever you would want a move of God, just believe His word and ask Him to fulfill it. Don't create alternatives to faith, but exercise it in its totality. Let 'A' be 'A' and 'Z' be 'Z'.

Faith is about following God in difficulties.

Paul in his life as an apostle faced many difficulties but he kept his faith and never looked back. In writing to the Philippians he says, "I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the fellowship of his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, and so somehow, to attain to the resurrection from the dead. (Philippians 3: 10-11). Paul did not only want to know Christ as his Lord and Savior, but also the power of his resurrection. Jesus being the firstborn of all creation was also then firstborn from the dead because divine power raised him from the dead. That same power that raised Jesus from the dead is the same power that Paul sought to know. How great Paul's faith was.

Paul also wanted to become like Jesus in his death, after having had fellowship with his sufferings. This implies that Paul wanted to commune, participate and have a feel of the same sufferings that Jesus underwent unto his death. Remember that Paul was beaten and left for the dead. (Acts 14:19). All that were acts of his faith. Moreover he wanted to attain the resurrection from the dead as Christ Jesus had done. In writing to the Thessalonians in 1 Thessalonians 4:16 he says that the dead shall rise first to meet with the Lord. These dead who shall rise include him as well. Such faith is what God wants of each and every believer because it sees the future it is worried about the desired end and the means of getting there itself. Such faith sees the future not in the sense that man defines future, but eternity.

In Acts 20:22-24 Paul says that he was compelled by the Holy Spirit to go to Jerusalem even if there were hardships awaiting him there. Paul did not think of the hardships but considered his life worth nothing to him only if he could finish the race and complete the task of testifying to the Gospel of God's grace. Such teaches us that faith in the Lord overlooks life circumstances and pushes us to do as God instructs us. Even if God informs us of impending hardships that does not mean that we should not go through them, but we should tackle them on head- on. It should be our normal way of life to go through hardships and realize our victories in Christ Jesus. We live in this world but we are not of this world. Thus, we should live not as the world does but should live in accordance to God's will in which our faith rests. Persecutions are opportunities or avenues through which our faith is proven.

Life cannot just be smooth all round. It is only after a period of trials that we can stand up and celebrate our victories. But,

Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. Rejoice and be glad because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

Matthew 5:11-12

Faith helps us realize God's promises (Romans 4:16-20). It is therefore important for us to be continually strengthened in faith so that all glory goes back to God (Romans 4:20). God's promise for eternal life through our belief in Christ Jesus as stated in John 3:16, should be realized by ourselves thorough our belief (faith) in God that it shall come to pass. I mentioned earlier on that God keeps His word so we have to believe in it so that we realize His promises.

Stand firm in faith.

A lot of things are happening in the world and they are bent on destructing our walk faith. At times doubt rises that we can have some scripture quotations to authenticate our misery, pain, sufferings and view them as permanent to an extent hat we may consider abandoning the faith band-wagon. What we need to keep in mind is that standing firm in our faith will enable us to see the reality of God's word. In as much is all scripture is inspired of the Spirit of God, not all of it is relevant to your circumstance. When you want to apply scripture to your situation it is therefore of great importance to ask the Holy Spirit to lead you as you read the word and correctly apply it to your situation so that it is as relevant and beneficial as possible to your circumstance. Remember the Devil quoted scripture when he was tempting Jesus in the wilderness before his public ministry. But the quotations (by the Devil) were in the wrong context and were bent on frustrating Jesus. However Jesus countered the Devil by quoting more relevant scripture and in that way countered the enemy's attacks and was victorious.

Standing firm in the faith is about standing firm on God's promises. If God promises you something, live by it, keep saying it in the depths of your heart, make it your

chorus, when you pray remind God of it because if you do not do so, you will never realize God's goodness through his fulfillment of His promises in your life. (Isaiah 7:9). If you stand firm on your faith, nothing moves you or disturbs you. You will be like a lion roaring over its prey and even if a whole band of shepherds is called to fight it, is not frightened by their shouts or disturbed by their clamor. (Isaiah 31:4). All men can rise against you in order to steal that, which God has entrusted upon you, don't be moved, stand on your faith and realize God's purpose for your life.

Put your faith to work.

Faith is not faith until it is put to work. Faith is not an item for display neither is it a comfort zone. It is rather a means to action. Thus it does not have to be kept idle, but it has to be put to action. The young man David had never fought a battle in his life, but he in his mind believed that God would fight for Israel through him. In that regard he volunteered to fight Goliath out of a whole band of trained soldiers in Israel's camp. David had faith in God that a miracle was coming his way. Without military training, going against a trained Goliath, David had nothing else but faith. David refused Saul's amour and opted for his simple sling that he had on him with which he struck down Goliath. The lesson that we can derive from David's actions is that we should never think that God will give us weapons of warfare that no man has ever seen but God will come in through what we already have. Remember the miraculous feeding of the over 500 people with 2 loaves and 5 fish. The battle is not yours but it is the lord's and victory only comes if we let God have His way as David did. (1Samuel 17:21-50). Another act of faith-in-action was by Samson when he single-handedly struck down a thousand men using a fresh jawbone of a donkey. If these acts were possible because of faith then by our faith we should receive all we ask for in prayer. (Matthew 21: 21-22).

We are justified by faith.

Through grace, God gave us Jesus to die for our sins. His blood was spilled to cleanse us of our sins. We now have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ due to the faith that justifies us. (Romans 5:1). Our belief in Jesus is in itself faith. Jesus died for us that we may have eternal life and was raised from the dead for our justification (Romans 4:

25, 1 Peter 2: 24, 1 John 2:12). By accepting Jesus and believing in him we have been justified. (Acts 13:38-39). Thus our faith in Christ Jesus has brought us justification. We are qualified as sons of God because of our acceptance (faith) that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. We received him and were thus granted the right to be called the sons of God (John 1:12). You can never be justified if you do not have faith in Jesus Christ the Son of God because only those who call on him shall be saved.

God is so wonderful that He promised Abraham that all nations would be blessed through him. (Gen 12:3, 18:18, 22:18). This implies that even the Gentiles were to be justified by faith. (Galatians 3:8). Therefore through the faith that we have in God, we are as well blessed together along with Abraham the man of great faith (Galatians 3:9). Before faith, the bible tells us in Galatians 3:23, that we were held prisoners by the law and we were locked up until faith came. Thus there was no room for our justification before faith and we were in that state until the appointed time when faith was to be revealed. However now that faith has come we are no longer under the supervision of the law but we are now under grace (Galatians 3:25). Because of faith we are clothed with Christ and are heirs of the everlasting Kingdom according to the promise of God to Abraham. In God's eyes the human race are equals and there is not one who is greater than the other (Galatians 3:25-29). How great faith is, it brings about justification.

We live by faith and not by sight. (2 Corinthians 5:7).

With our sight we cannot see tomorrow. Our sight is for the present, but faith is for tomorrow. It is by faith that we believe in or look into the future. We make plans not by our sight but through the exercise of our faith. Faith sees beyond what eyes can see. Without your own permanent accommodation, tell yourself that one day I shall have it. Don't think about how you are going to raise the funds but be determined about your possession of your own property.

Faith can and surely does move mountains (1 Corinthians 13:2). It makes the non-existent come to life. It joins the present with the future and is a vital component of our

lives that we can't live without it. In pursuit of righteousness, we should have faith because without it we cannot be righteous for the Bible tells us in Romans 5: 1 that we have peace with God through it since it is through it that we are justified and thus wait patiently for the second advent of Christ.

In that regard, we have to pursue faith (Timothy 6:11). We learn from verse 10 of Timothy chapter 6 that money is the root of all evil and because of it some have wandered from the faith. This means that instead of standing for their faith some have removed their focus from God and have sought the gratification of selfish desires. In light of that we are urged by Paul to pursue **faith**, righteousness, Godliness, love, patience and meekness. I believe that it is out of the pursuance of these things that we align ourselves to the will of God. We were created not to be endued in fleshly desires but we were made for God's glory. It is out of our righteousness and Godliness that God's glory is uplifted. It is out of the pursuance of faith that we please God.

As humans we have a lot of needs especially that of wealth and money. It is not evil for us to have such needs. It is the love of them that is the root of all evil. It is out of the love of money that many have fallen into the trap of prostitution, drug peddling, manipulation of workers for selfish gain etc. Such actions compromise our faith and we should detest from them. We should rather seek God first and His righteousness and God will in turn grant us our heart's desires (Matthew 6:33).

Fight the good fight of faith (1 Timothy 6:12). If the just live by faith, then they should fight the good fight of faith. Paul calls the fight of faith good because it is indeed good. Faith is closely related to Godliness, love, endurance, gentleness and righteousness. Thus the fight of faith is a good fight. It is out of the good fight of faith that we get hold of the eternal life that we are guaranteed as a result of our belief in Christ Jesus. Faith therefore propels us to eternity.

The fight of faith is not a lone battle, but we have a helper Jesus Christ.

Let us fix our eyes on Jesus the author and finisher of our faith Hebrews 12:2.

The lesson of what faith is, we derive from Jesus that is why we are urged to look unto him as an example. Great men in the bible conquered kingdoms out of faith: Gideon, Jephtha, David, Samson, they,

were all commended for their faith, yet none of them received what had been promised (Hebrews 11:39).

In the new covenant in which Jesus is the mediator, God has planned something better for us so that only together with us would they [early heroes of faith] be made perfect (Hebrews 11:40). This therefore implies that these men have not yet received the reward of their faith, but an appointed time is that which they are waiting for where together with us they shall be made perfect. They are waiting for us in great anticipation and we should not look back but press on toward the goal whilst ridding of the sin that easily entangles and run the race that is clearly marked for us. (Hebrews 12:1).

Keep your faith (2 Timothy 4:7)

We have learnt that by faith all things are possible, that faith brings the reality of Jesus, lack of it creates problems, we live by it and that we are justified by it. In light of these facts, a believer in Christ Jesus has to keep his or her faith. The walk of faith is not done in vain but there is a reward for it. In 2 Timothy 4: 8 the bible tells us that there is in store for us the crown of righteousness, which the Lord the righteous judge will award us. Kings are the ones that wear a crown and our being crowned is a reward for righteousness that comes by faith. It is thus a believer's mandate not to wander from faith in God but to hang on till the prize comes our way. In keeping faith, everything that we do should be done out of faith because out of it we can't please God and anything that comes not out of faith is sin. Do not linger on your faith but keep it and apply it in your life for the glory of God.

Chapter 2

Put on the Whole Armour of God

Paul in Ephesians chapter 6:11 urged believers to put on the whole amour of God so as to position themselves for spiritual battle because believers wrestle not against flesh and blood but with evil forces in the heavenly places. This amour that Paul urges us to put on is referred to as the amour of light in Romans 13:12. We live in a dark world but we are children of the light and we are the light of the world. Darkness has no power over light. As we are the light of the world, darkness cannot subdue us but we lead lives of supernatural victory everyday. The amour of God enables us to subdue the Devil and his schemes.

The make up of the Whole Armour of God

According to Paul, the whole amour of God is made up of six elements. It is assumed that Paul drew these constituents from his knowledge of the Roman soldier's military attire. These are;

- i. The belt of truth,
- ii. The breastplate of righteousness,
- iii. Preparation for the gospel of peace,
- iv. The shield of faith,
- v. The helmet of salvation
- vi. The sword of the spirit, which is the word of God.

The belt of truth

Paul put the belt of truth in the first place as an element characterizing fruit in the sphere of light. This in essence might mean that the believer has been drawn into the realm of God's truth and is pitted with him against all outworking of the devil and his lies. It was out of deviance from the truth that man fell in the Garden of Eden. If Adam and eve had

stood by the truth, they could not have fallen. Jesus stood by God's truth when he was being tempted by the devil prior to his public ministry (Matthew 4:1-11).

The truth therefore is and shall continue to be the central ligament of a believer's life and the battle of the believer against Satan should be conducted in the realm of God's truth (1 John 4:1-6). It is every believer's duty to get rid of all deceit and hypocrisy and fall in love with the truth and shun the Devil and his lies and deception. Endowment in God's truth does not only defend a believer against Satan's schemes, but it also offends the devil. One thing that the Devil cannot do and will never be able to do is to tell the truth. He can't afford to do that. If Satan cannot tell the truth then we should ward him off by telling the truth. If we do that then our fight with him becomes easier.

It is out of truth that God's sovereignty is upheld and realized and Satan does not want to see that happen that is why he always instills deception and lies in the believer's heart. If you live with the truth in your heart, that is just but evidence that the Holy Spirit lives in you. This is said because truth is a fruit of the Holy Spirit. (Ephesians 5:9). Therefore if then truth of God lives in you and you live by it that means you have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of the kingdom of darkness but rather you reprieve them. It is out of truth that the believer grows up into the Lord in all things (Ephesians 4:15).

A belt is worn on the outside not the inside. That means its something that is clearly seen by every body. So if a believer puts on the belt of truth, the whole world will see and know that such an individual is full of truth. A belt cannot be hidden so is the truth. Put truth on display. Let all see that the truth is one of your chief characteristics. When they plot against you, stand on your truth. Let no one take it away from you, but apply it in your life all for the glory of our God in heaven. If ever they will be anything that you so cherish it should be the truth. Live the realm of the truth and ward of the schemes of the enemy.

The breastplate of righteousness

The fruit of the Spirit is in all righteousness. (Ephesians 5:9). The Psalmist links righteousness with truth in God's word. He asserts that the righteousness of God is everlasting and that His law is the truth. (Psalms 119:142). This implies that righteousness is a key attribute that a believer should seek to pursue and achieve because it is through it that we can capture God's attention. In Psalm 34:15 the Bible tells us that,

The eyes of the Lord are on the righteous and his ears are attentive to their cry
(NIV).

Verse 17 goes on to say that,

The righteous cry out and the Lord hears them; he delivers them from all their troubles.

The meaning that one can derive from these verses is that, although we might be facing many challenges and worries, the lord is able to deliver us from them as long as we pursue righteousness. This assumption goes in line with Psalm 34:19-20 that reads,

A righteous man may have many troubles, but the lord delivers him from them all; he protects all his bones, not one of them will be broken.

It was out of the death of the cross that we were made righteous.

For Christ died for our sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous to bring you [us] to God

It is Jesus Christ who leads us unto all righteousness. The Psalmist outlined a clear pathway to righteousness. In Psalm 23:1, he says,

The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want
(KJV 2000).

In verse 3, he states that,

He restores my soul: he leads me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake (KJV 2000).

You may be weary in your Soul, don't despair; God is there to restore it to its original state. He will not end there but also leads us in paths of righteousness for his name's sake. We cannot lead ourselves into righteousness because it is intangible and Spiritual but only God, who is a Spirit, is capable of doing that for us. A believer's walk of righteousness results in all the Glory going back to God (Ephesians 1:11-12).

Preparation for the gospel of peace

Jesus Christ came with the Gospel of peace (Ephesians 2:17). Through that Gospel, all people of all tribes, races, and ethnicity are one in God through Jesus Christ. (Ephesians 2:11,12,13,16). Peace is a sign of unity and understanding amongst the believers and the Devil is not comfortable with it and always seeks to replace it with discord. The Gospel of peace is preached out of love and where there is love there is peace, kindness and understanding that are fruits of the Spirit. Lack of these is an indication that the Spirit is far from you. The absence of God's Spirit in a believer implies the absence of God Himself. In other words, if the Gospel of peace is inactive in your life, you have disqualified yourself from son ship because in Matthew 5:9, Jesus Christ tells us that if we make peace we shall be called the sons of God. Therefore believers should act, as vessels of God's peace ready to transmit it to others at any time at any place.

The shield of faith

In Hebrews 11:1, we learn that Faith is the substance of things hoped for and the evidence of things not yet seen. It is thus out of Faith that we see the unseen and believe things that have not yet appeared. The bible tells us that Jesus will come back for the rapture of the Church (1 Thessalonians 4: 16), and we await His second coming in eager anticipation. We have not seen Him but we believe He exists, that is Faith. It is through Faith that we come to the realization of God's promises in our lives (Romans 4:16-20).

Faith qualifies us as sons of God. In other words we are justified by faith. In essence therefore we can say that faith is the victory that overcomes the world (1 John 5:4), because, we walk by faith and not by sight (2 Corinthians 5:7). When the devil casts

doubts and brings about negative imaginations in us, we cast them down and put them to the obedience of Christ. Faith therefore becomes a shield that safeguards our relationship with God.

The helmet of salvation

Central to the head is the mind that receives information, processes it and entices man to action. It is out of the state of the mind that one either sins or pleases God. The life that we live is representative of the state of our minds. The mind is in the head and thus the head has to be safeguarded to ensure that no filth enters our minds and entice us to sin against God. I have seen a lot of construction people and cyclists putting on helmets to protect their heads in case of an accident. On the other hand, a fighter might put on a helmet to protect his head from an opponent's arrows.

Salvation that comes from our belief in the word of God is contained in our heads/minds. Through the belief in God, we know that we are no longer under the curse of the law (Gal 3:13), but have become heirs according to the promise. (Galatians 3:29). This is so because we have received adoption as sons. (Gal 4:5). By being saved we are no longer under the dominion of Satan but have been translated into the kingdom of Christ Jesus, through the power of God. (Colossians 1:13). The same Christ through whom we are saved has made us a Kingdom and Priests unto God the Father. (Rev 1:6). Through salvation we are no longer liable to the wages of sin but have been made heirs of the Kingdom of God. Thus we have total redemption and glorification through Jesus Christ. (Romans 8: 30)

If you have accepted Jesus Christ's call for salvation, keep it, guard it jealously, and don't let the devil take it from you. Ward off his enticements by declaring that, "I have saved, I'm no longer subject to you but to God". When you tell and remind the devil that you are saved as and when he tempts you, that brings him to frustration and he will leave you for another person. In other words we fail the devil through constantly

reminding him that we are saved. Thus the helmet of salvation becomes a guarantee of us in our quest to inherit the Kingdom of God.

The sword of the Spirit

To complete the armour, Paul tells us to embrace the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. The bible (word of God) is our final authority and we cannot live without it.

All scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

2 Timothy 3: 16-17 [NIV]

Our lives should be based on the application of God's word to our circumstances.

As believers we counter Satan's attacks by speaking the word of God. When Satan tried to induce Jesus to sin prior to his practical ministry, Jesus simply warded him off with the word of God. The devil quoted scripture but Jesus also retorted using scripture. The devil knows scripture and quotes it correctly but in the wrong context to authenticate his lies. Therefore as believers we should not only know the word of God, but we should be in apposition to apply it correctly deriving meaning of our quotations in the proper context in which we draw them. If the devil reminds you of your past sins, refrain him by telling him that when you received Christ, you were made a new creature and old things are passed away. (2 Corinthians 5:17)

The word of God is so powerful and effective that it penetrates to the innermost were the bone separates with the marrow. Applying it against the devil and his schemes hurts the devil to the innermost, to the core of his heart and he will flee from you. James 4:7 says that we should submit to God, resist the devil who will then flee from us. Submission to God is believing God and His word, which in turn frustrates the devil. If the devil is frustrated by you, that means that he has found no room in you for him to

stay so he will find another person. In order to haunt the devil continually, use the word and he will never have a chance in your life.

The interrelationship between the components of the amour

No part of the amour is independent of the other, as we shall see in the following paragraphs.

One cannot be geared for the gospel of peace without having received salvation. Salvation in itself would have come by the application of God's word in your life through various means. The word of God represents the truth of God to which we have faith in and are therefore made righteous by it.

Let us go to Ephesians 1:13. Paul writes and says;

And you also were included in Christ when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of salvation. Having believed [faith], you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit.

Let us simplify this verse by saying; truth lives in us, because we received the word of truth that is the gospel of peace that brought us to salvation. Having faith in that word, we were marked in Jesus Christ with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit. In my own understanding of the word of God, to be marked by the Holy Spirit implies that we are sanctified and made holy (righteous) by the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit is in conflict/disagreement/hostility/rivalry with the sinful nature. (Galatians 5:17) If the Holy Spirit is in control of your life, you walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit, who makes you whole as he is. Holiness implies unceasing truth, righteousness, peace and faith. As you grow spiritually, fruits of the spirit become evident and these include; love joy, peace, long suffering, gentleness, goodness and faith. (Galatians 5:22)

The role of Prayer

Paul does not include prayer as part of the amour but brings it out separately in Ephesians 6: 18. The context in which he brings it up arouses interest in the author as to

why such is so. It is the author's assumption that prayer is about communication with God, whose amour a believer is urged to put on. It is therefore of importance that a believer embraces prayer in conjunction with the amour so as to bring the amour to action.

Let us go back to Ephesians 6:12, it says,

For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of the dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.

A simple analysis of this verse tells us that we fight a spiritual battle. Prayer is Spiritual. Thus, when we pray we are in a spiritual battle against our enemy who is located in the heavenly realms.

As we fight spiritual forces, we also have to pray in the spirit on all occasions. (Ephesians 6:18) Praying in the Spirit puts us at a vantage point and our victory becomes certain. This is especially true in that if the Holy Spirit directs our prayer it becomes relevant and as practical as is possible to derive God's attention. This emanates from the fact that as believers we have weaknesses that impede on our prayers and the Holy Spirit is there to help us overcome them as he makes intercession for us. (Romans 8: 26-27). If you are in the realm of the Spirit, the devil cannot impede your prayers because your utterances are a directive of the Holy Spirit. In other words, the Holy Spirit is our strategy to counter obstructions to prayer.

Unceasing prayer is a spiritual arsenal. In Philippians 4:6, Paul stresses that we should be anxious for nothing, but in everything in prayer. In simple terms, prayer is a believer's way of life. Thus, a believer should pray without ceasing. (Thessalonians 5:17). If you pray without ceasing with all humbleness, God's power will be releases to you in tremendous ways that you have ever seen. That power is burden removing and yoke destroying. Through that power we have dominion over the devil and his schemes. Thus prayer brings the answers we so cherish and desire. Through fervent and effectual prayer, we have the inherent ability to continually dedicate our mouths to God. Thus we avoid sinning as David says in Psalm 17: 3 that,

I have purposed that my mouth shall not transgress. (Amp), [the Author adds by saying]..., because of unceasing communication (prayer), with my God.

Chapter 3

Yielding to the Holy Spirit

We learn in Romans 8:4 that those who are led by the Spirit of God are the sons of God. It is therefore of utmost importance that believers are led by the Spirit in their walk of faith so that the demands of the flesh do not have precedence upon their lives. If you live by the Spirit, you will not gratify the desires of the sinful nature. This is so because,

the sinful nature desires what is contrary to the Spirit and the Spirit what is contrary to the sinful nature. They are in conflict with each other, so that you do not do what you want. (Galatians 5: 17 NIV)

Because we fight against Spiritual forces, it is therefore of importance that we do so as we are enabled by the Holy Spirit, who gives us divine capability to accomplish God's purpose. (2 Chronicles 24:20).

We have life and peace in our minds because of the Holy Spirit (Romans 8:5-8); we belong to Jesus because of Him (Eph 4:30). Holiness on the believer's part comes as a result of no other person except the Holy Spirit because he is there for our sanctification (Rom 15:16). Sanctification is translated from the Hebrew word 'Gadash'; which means to make clean, dedicate, purify, and be made holy for God. (1 Thessalonians 4:3-8). Moreover He is there for our consecration; that is to be set apart solely for Him for His service; to minister unto the Lord (Rom 15:16). Compulsion on our part to do the work of God also comes about through Him even if hardships await us along the way. (Acts 20: 22).

Effective ministry to the Lord comes about out of the enablement of the Holy Spirit.

Wondrous exploits took place through the ministry of the Apostles in the book of Acts because it was the Holy Spirit in control. You cannot preach the truth of God unless it is the Holy Spirit enabling you because as human beings we tend to interpret the bible the way we want, but the Holy Spirit enables us to interpret it the way that God expects of us. This is so because He confirms God's word. When Peter in Acts 10:44, was preaching about the anointing of Jesus with the Holy spirit and power, part of the congregation was also baptized as he spoke in confirmation of God's word. Before Jesus ascended to

heaven, he instructed the disciples not to leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift that God had promised and that he had spoken about which is the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit was going to empower them for service before God in witnessing in Jerusalem, Judea, and Samaria and all over the world. (Acts 1:4,5,8). The power we receive from the Holy Spirit is power to preach and demonstrate the Gospel of the kingdom of God, not only in word, but also in power. (1 Corinthians 4:20). When Paul preached to the Corinthians, he did not use persuasive words, but preached with the demonstration of the Spirit and power that their faith would not rest on man's wisdom but in the power of God. (1 Corinthians 2: 4). There are a number of demonstrations of the power of the Holy Spirit including; healing the sick and casting out demons. It is therefore imperative that we abide in the anointing of the Holy Spirit as we carry out God's work. (1 John 2:27)

Access to God comes by the Holy Spirit. In Eph 2:18 we learn that we have access to God by Jesus through the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is the communicator of the Godhead and Jesus is the mediator between God and man. When we communicate with God (pray), the Holy Spirit helps us pray because He knows the will of the Father. (Rom 8:26-27). So as the Holy Spirit helps us to pray in the name of Jesus (the mediator), we derive access to God the Father. So there is no component of the Godhead that is independent of the other. Thus, when we pray as the spirit enables us, with Jesus mediating for us, God the Father in turn hears and answers our prayers. Make it a habit to pray in the Spirit in line with God's will. As we pray in Jesus' name, as the Spirit enables us, God's Glory is revealed to us. (Acts 7: 54-57). Not only is God's glory revealed by the Holy Spirit, but also God's kingdom unto us. (Rev 4:1-11, Daniel 7:13-18). Therefore I urge you to pray in the Spirit at all times. (Eph 6:18), and that as believers let us build ourselves in faith and pray in the Spirit (Jude 1:20)

The Holy Spirit never dies in us but is forever alive. We shall rise from the dead through him;

And if the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit, who lives in you. (Romans 8:11 NIV)

The Holy Spirit that raised Jesus from the dead lives in us and he shall also give us life upon Christ's second return. If it happens after we had died, then mortality shall be clothed with immortality and death will be swallowed up in victory. (1 Corinthians 15: 52-55)

After Elisha had long died, it so happened that Moabite raiders entered Israel's land as was Moab's custom every spring and as some Israelites were burying a man and saw the raiders, they had to run for dear life and in that regard threw the body of the dead man into Elisha's tomb and upon contact with the bones of the man of God, the dead man rose again and stood on his feet. (2 kings 13: 20-21). The dead body had a rub off of the anointing of the Holy Ghost. Elisha had long died but the anointing was still in his bones. It is for this reason that Paul says, fear not them that kill the flesh but he who is able to kill the spirit, because if they kill your flesh, they do not have access to your spirit/anointing.

A rub off on the anointed one brings about extra ordinary miracles. God did extraordinary miracles through Paul, that handkerchiefs and aprons were taken from the body of Paul to were the sick was and the sickness departed, upon taking the same to the demon afflicted, the demons jerked out. (Acts 19:11-12). Those pieces of cloths had no life on them but carried the anointing of God. If you want to experience the inexperienced, do it under the anointing of the Holy Spirit. It is the anointing that breaks every yoke of bondage; it makes evil spirits cry from the core of their hearts.

We have been given a supernatural life of victory everyday because of the anointing that we received. We live not of our own accord but we live in the realm of the spirit because it is the spirit that leads us all the way. As you carry on your day-to-day business, release the anointing so that those who see you will always cherish the goodness of God

being released through you. We should not expect to see angels coming down and performing miracles with us watching, but it is us the church that should be used of God to carry out miraculous exploits. This only comes by yielding to the Holy Spirit. It is him who guides us into all truth, convicts us of judgment and righteousness, and reveals God's glory to us. Let us give him first place in our lives.

If he leads us we will never go wrong.

Chapter 4

The Blood of Jesus

Speaking from a scientific perspective, the blood of an offspring only comes from the father. Therefore the proof of fatherhood is in the blood. In his conversation with Nicodemus, Jesus mentioned the need for rebirth if one was to see the Kingdom of God. (John 3:3). Jesus did not mean physical rebirth but Spiritual birth, for flesh gives birth to flesh but the spirit gives birth to the Spirit. The last Adam Jesus was a life-giving Spirit and because of re-birth through him, we bear his likeness. (1 Corinthians 15: 45-49) This means that we reflect God's Glory through Christ. Rebirth in Christ brought about our being cleansed from all sin through our being washed in his blood. (1 John 1:7).

Jesus was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities and by his stripes we are healed. (Isaiah 53:5). Unless and until your life goes under the blood are you cleansed by it. You cannot live without blood because life is in the blood. You cannot afford to live without the blood of Jesus. I am my father's son, because I share the same blood with him. Believers are partakers of the everlasting Kingdom with Christ because they have been washed in his blood. It is Jesus' blood that gives us strength from day to day and it never loses its power, because it is divine blood. Being washed in the blood means that you are possessed with divine blood. If you are possessed with divine blood it implies that you are an offspring of the divine nature. As a product of the divine nature you live not according to your will but according to God's will and you are not subject to the lust of the flesh. (2 Peter 1:3-4)

You cannot claim to be saved when you do not share the same blood with Jesus and cannot inherit the kingdom of God. It is only through sharing the same blood with Jesus that you can have the right to be called a child of God. This comes about as a result of rebirth. The bible tells us that to those that received him, he gave them the power to be called the sons of God. (John 1:12) If you believe in Jesus you share the same blood with him and you have the power to be called child of God. Thus, you have a share in the everlasting Kingdom of God. Believing in Jesus brings about life in you⁸. In other words

you have the life of God in you. He who has the Son of God has life (John 3:36). Without the son (and his blood, you cannot have life, because God so loved the world that he gave us Jesus that who ever shall believe in him may not die but have eternal life (John 3:16). Because of Jesus, we do not walk in darkness but we have the light of life (John 8:12). In Jesus we have redemption and forgiveness of sins (1 Col 1:14). We were once alienated from God because of evil, but God reconciled us to him though the death of Jesus who made peace for us through his blood, shed on the cross. (Col 1:20-21)

Reconciliation between God and the sinful man is only through the blood of Jesus. It was out of love that God gave us Jesus to die for us. Love in itself is a fruit of the Holy Spirit (Galatians 5:22). God is a spirit and being full of love of him authenticates his sovereignty. If you do not have the Holy Spirit you cannot know love because it exists in the realm of the Spirit. It is that love that draws many to salvation. You cannot share your faith with an unbeliever if you do not have love. God could not have sent Jesus to die for us if he did not love us first. We did not love him but he loved us.

There is power in the blood of Jesus. We not only preach, teach or testify about Jesus Christ, but we release his power enshrined in his blood. This is so that man might not dwell on man's wisdom but see the power of God. If we do not do that, we empty the power of the cross because the message of the cross is power unto salvation to them that believe. (1 Corinthians 1:18). When you apply the blood in your life, you experience true transformation. It will not be you that lives but Jesus. Paul says,

I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me
(Gal 2:20a NIV).

Jesus redeemed us from the curse of the law by himself hanging on a tree. By belief in the death of the cross we are justified.

If you are in pain call on the blood of Jesus because by his wounds we are healed. The work is already done. It's up to us to just say it. The power in the blood of Jesus is

greater than the strength of man-made medicine. On a deathbed call on the blood of Jesus. When you pray keep saying it, don't stop, keep saying it. We are products of the divine nature and we should live under divine operation. We are not made of perishable seed but of imperishable. When the devil rises against me, God will raise a standard against him. God revealed to me that of the things that the devil fears most is the blood of Jesus. The devil can't take away your good health, job, husband, children, money, business, and house. Take it back by declaring the blood of Jesus. When you talk about the blood of Jesus, the Devil loses his standing.

AIDS, HIV, Cancer, Ulcers, TB, Arthritis, Asthma, Colds, Flu, Headaches, Meningitis, Leprosy, Malaria and any other disease have no stand against the blood of Jesus.

When the going gets tough, you have prayed but no answer seems to be coming your way, the Devil might be blocking your prayer in the heavens, call on the blood of Jesus to intervene.

If you are sick and tired of poverty, get out bed in the middle of the night and speak the blood of Jesus. When you can't sleep, get up and shout the blood of Jesus. Jesus has made us a Kingdom and Priests unto God through his blood. (Revelation 1: 6). And we must live like such no matter the situation, or what the Devil may say. If Jesus was equal to God, and yet agreed to die on the cross to make us like him, we cannot afford to continue living in sickness, poverty, disease, broken homes, etc.

If we say that there is power in the blood of Jesus, the pressures of life cannot stand in our way. His blood was spilled not in vain. Power implies dominion, control, dominance and victory. So by the power in the blood we have dominion over the Devil. He cannot stand in our way. If we have dominion we are in control of our lives and destiny and are more than conquerors. Through the blood of Jesus we have an inherent ability to cause change in our lives.

When the blood of Jesus takes over, sickness departs, devils jerk out. Separation is replaced with unity. Tearing apart replaced with joining, disunity replaced with unity, darkness replaced with light. Because you are a child of God you can never suffer rejection, you cannot be refused, you cannot be despised, you cannot be denied. Because on all these things we are more than conquerors through the blood of Jesus.

Chapter 5

Commitment to and Fellowship with God

There is a high need for one to identify with God. In other words, one has to say yes to God and choose to be removed from the things of this world. Identification with God is all about commitment to Him. If you have committed to him and constantly identify with him, He will always visit you. Remember Enoch he was so committed to God, he walked with God and God took him away.

It can be assumed that the relationship that Enoch had with God was so intimate that if God could visit him, he would accompany God as they parted ways. In the 365th year of Enoch's life, God was so impressed with Enoch that as he was about to go back to Heaven, said to Enoch, 'its better that we go to heaven to be together forever, and Enoch was seen not'. If you impress God, you will encounter exploits that no man has ever seen or heard.

1 Corinthians 2:9, says,

No eye has seen, no ear has heard, no mind has conceived what God has prepared for those who love him. (NIV)

If you are loved of God, you do not live an ordinary life, but an extraordinary one, because God is just but 'Super-ordinary'. Remember, you can do all things through Christ who strengthens you. It is imperative that each and every believer gives his or her all to God. Thus, one's focus, mind, perception should all be fixed and aligned with God's will. God's will is his word. Meditate upon the word of God and do as it says. Commitment to God allows God's will upon our lives to be fully accomplished whereas deviance from the same results in the Devil taking advantage of our situation and casting doubts in us as well as fear and resentment so that he penetrates our minds and we submit to his will that is forever contrary to God's will.

Commitment to God also calls for fellowship with him. Fellowship is about communion, company, and friendship. Through fellowship, we share ideas, opinions and views. It needs a lot of time. If you want to know someone closely, you should develop fellowship with him/her. It is out of love that fellowship develops. In other words, a chief characteristic feature of fellowship is love. You cannot fellowship with someone whom you do not love. Love is a fruit of the spirit (Galatians 5:22). The early church in the Book of Acts was a fellowshiping church. Sadly nowadays the Church has sidelined fellowship. In Acts 2:46 (b), we are told that the early church would eat together for they loved one another.

Miracles were their way of life because of love. They carried each other's burdens, but that feature is no longer in existence in the Church today. There is now a common prevalence of the adage 'one man for himself and God for us all'. In Corinthians 13:13, we learn that out of Faith, Hope and love, the greatest is love. To have love calls for fellowship with the Holy Spirit (Romans 15:13). To know Jesus, is to love him. Paul in his letter to the Philippians, wrote,

I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the fellowship of his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, and so, somehow to attain to the resurrection from the dead (Philippians 3:10-12 NIV).

Paul faced a number of tribulations in his ministry but he did not look back because he chose to align (fellowship) himself to God's will. At one time he was flogged, and lashed but his love for God did not cease, he pressed on towards the mark of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus (Philippians 3:14). From Paul's life, we learn that, fellowship with God is about giving your all to Him (God) till death/rapture. Christianity is not cheap, it is not easy and a price should be paid always. The Psalmist wrote,

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

Thus, craving for God, and being accustomed to Him also evidences fellowship with God.

If you have fellowship with God, you are always informed of impending disasters. Abraham the man of great faith was informed of the due destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah due to the fellowship that he had with God. God did not keep it a secret to Abraham, but told him. God will always update you of his plans if you fellowship with Him. (Genesis Chapter 18). His ability to identify with God also resulted in him being told of his having a son in due season. Interesting, though is that Abraham also accompanied God, 'half way' to destroy Sodom and Gomorrah. Lot his nephew was spared for his sake (Genesis 19:29). If you have fellowship with God, even those whom you love will be spared because of you. Your commitment and fellowship with God should not be stopped by anyone. Remember Absalom; he burned up Joab's field because he was obstructing him from fellowshipping with his father David. Absalom demanded attention, and had to use violent means to get it (2 Samuel 14:29-32). That same Spirit should be captivated in you if someone obstructs you so that you enjoy undisturbed fellowship with God.

Fellowship with God is about commitment to Him as I have mentioned earlier on. In other words if you have fellowship with God, you are committed to him and seek to serve him only. Thus, you have no fellowship with the devil, because there is no relationship between light and darkness (2 Corinthians 6:14).

Fellowship is a calling. The bible teaches us that;

*God is faithful, by whom you were called unto the fellowship of his son
Jesus Christ our Lord*

1 Corinthians 1:9 KJV 2000

The NIV says,

*God, who has called you into fellowship with his son Jesus Christ our
Lord is faithful.*

If fellowship is a calling this therefore implies that it is with God and for God. 1 John 1:3 says;

That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that you also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ. KJV2000

Fellowship is limitless, John writes that,

If we walk in the light as Jesus is in the light, we have fellowship with one another 1 John 1:7 NIV

This verse can be taken to mean that as believers in Christ, we walk in light as he is in light and due to the commonality of interest among us, we fellowship with one another, as we do with Christ.

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