



THE REFINERY DEVOTIONAL

Start your day with Christ
consciousness and be refined unto all
of God's goodness.

NOVEMBER, 2018

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Blessings!

DAY 1

TOPIC: THINK ABOUT THIS

TEXT: Acts 20:24

Written by: ALADE OLUWASEGUN

“But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God.”

Growing up as a young man, I would often think and ask ‘what is life all about?’ In other words, I questioned the essence of living on the earth. Not until I received Christ did I realize the essence of living. As it is today, many persons are desirous of greater positions in their respective careers; some crave for change in their social statuses. As a matter of fact, everyone desires to make it in life and become someone of great repute. It is pertinent at this juncture to state that there is nothing wrong to desire to enjoy life and all its riches. It is explicitly stated in the word of God that God gives us all things richly to enjoy (1 Timothy 6:17). In other words, all that God has created on earth has been given to man for his use and benefit.

However, as a believer in Christ, the questions to ask are: ‘To what end are my desires and ambitions? What exactly is the essence of my riches, influence, power, control and status in life?’ The Living Bible gives a more detailed explanation to the thoughts of Apostle Paul in our scripture text thus; *‘But life is worth nothing unless I use it for doing the work assigned me by the Lord Jesus—the work of telling others the Good News about God’s mighty kindness and love.’*

Apostle Paul’s disposition is that the worth of life is doing the work of God. This explains how he sought to use all the opportunities he had to preach the gospel and be a tremendous blessing to the growth of the early church. It is profound that life is worth nothing unless we use what we have or achieve here on earth for the work of God. Surely, at the end of the age, our wealth, social status, or influence will not avail anything save to the extent that we have used it for the sake of the gospel of Christ!

AWESOME! GLORY TO GOD!

WE ARE REFINED UNTO ALL OF GOD’S GOODNESS!

DAY 2

TOPIC: THE SECRET OF GOOD SUCCESS

TEXT: Psalms 1:1-3

Written by: ALOBA TOWOJU

“1 Blessed [is] the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. 2 But his delight [is] in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night. 3 And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.”

Today’s text reveals King David’s explanation of how a man can have good success. He mentions that for a man to have good success, he will have to avoid the counsel of the ungodly. He’ll rather need to follow godly counsels. Also, he will need to meditate on God’s word day and night. In doing these, he will have results that sufficiently show great success.

As believers, one of the ways to avoid wrong counsels is by fellowshiping with other saints in a local assembly and receiving instructions from God’s word and Spirit. You will also need to be diligent in allowing God’s word to saturate your soul always. In doing this, you will be like a tree that is planted by the river side; that is, you will be supplied rightly with all that is needed for your growth and effectiveness. Consequently, the proceeds of your life will be evidences of a life that God desires. This success is an all-encompassing success as it will be seen in all spheres of your life.

Have you been far from receiving godly counsels or meditating of God’s word? It is time to return to such. You will be so amazed at the amount of tremendous results that you’ll see in your life.

AWESOME! GLORY TO GOD!

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DAY 3

TOPIC: END OF THE LAW

TEXT: Romans 10:4

Written by: ALADE OLUWASEGUN

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

The word “end”, as used in our scripture text, is the word “telos” in the Greek, which means “a definite point or goal”. It is a termination or conclusion of an act. It is natural to conclude that when a mission has been fulfilled, then there is no further need to continue such mission as there is nothing to continue any longer. From the above text, Apostle Paul made it clear that Christ Jesus has fulfilled the intent of the Law. It is rather ridiculous to seek to obey the dictates of the Law of Moses as a means to be righteous in this present age.

Doing so is to frustrate the grace of God (Galatians 2:21). Furthermore, it is important to know that the law was not given to the gentiles (non-Israelite nations) it was given to the Israelites. Hence, a non-Jew has no obligation to keep the law in the first place.

Beloved, no man is made righteous by the deeds of the law (Romans 3:20, Galatians 3:11). The righteousness of God is received by faith in the death, burial and resurrection of Christ Jesus. We do not attain righteousness by our ability to obey all the ordinances as given by Moses; rather Christ himself is our righteousness.

AWESOME! GLORY TO GOD!

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DAY 4

TOPIC: LET NOT YOUR HEART BE TROUBLED

TEXT: John 14:1

Written by: OLUMIDE ADEDOTUN

“Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me.”

In the texts above, Jesus speaks of His death, resurrection and His ascension; He was going to be physically absent from among them soon; thus, He encourages them not to be troubled. The word “troubled” therein is the same as the word “uncertain or agitated.” So, Jesus says “don't be agitated at my departure”. In the above texts, we will discover that being troubled is an offshoot of doubt, for He says “believe in me”. We can thus infer that the Apostles were in doubt possibly of what becomes of them after His departure. Faith thus is a contrary to doubt; that is, rather than be troubled, believe in Jesus Christ.

The foregoing texts reveal something very profound: Jesus says in verse 12 that he who believes in Him will do even greater works. In verse 16, He says “I will send another comforter who shall abide with you forever”; He says also “and you shall know I am in the Father, you are in me and me in you.” This is good news! It affirms that despite Jesus’ absence in the flesh, we are not comfortless. We have the Holy Ghost! Oh, Glory to God!

Furthermore, it means that believers are not without power because Jesus is absent for we are empowered by the Holy Ghost and can do greater works. Finally, and more exciting, despite Jesus’ absence in the flesh, He is always with us for we are in Him and He is in us.

Alleluia! The believer thus shouldn't live his life here on earth with uncertainty and agitation, never see himself as not sufficient because Christ is not here rather he should respond to God's power, he should see God's ability at work in him or her. Amen.

AWESOME! GLORY TO GOD!

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DAY 5

TOPIC: THE LORD IS MY SHEPHERD

TEXT: Psalm 23:1

Written by: MAY AYINTETE

“THE LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want.”

The idea of a shepherd is one who cares for and watches over his sheep. He leads them out and in so they can find good pasture. He knows how and where they can find food at every point in time. He keeps them from being destroyed by ravenous beasts. He brings them to the shade in times of scorching heat, and takes care that they lack no manner of thing that is good.

In this Psalm of David, he expresses his entire confidence in the Lord God, who had delivered him from all kinds of evil. He compares the Lord to a shepherd who meets the every need of the flock. He boldly declared that the Lord will withhold no good thing from him (Psalm 84:11). We can learn a great deal from David's complete trust in the Lord as his Shepherd. We can be confident at all times that God will withhold no good thing from us; for He has promised to never leave us, nor forsake us.

Child of God, your heavenly Father is capable of providing for you at any given point in time. It is in His power to provide everything that is good for you. He cares for you affectionately and as such He instructs you to cast your cares upon Him (1 Peter 5:7). Be conscious of this truth that you are God's responsibility and whatever your needs are, spiritual or physical, He shall provide.

AWESOME! GLORY TO GOD!

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DAY 6

TOPIC: WE BELONG TO THE MIGHTY GOD!

TEXT: Jude 1:24

Written by: ADEBAYO KOLAWOLE SAMUEL

“Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy,”

There is a very popular song that has the lyrics “I belong to the mighty God”, but many have sung this song without much understanding. The words “I belong to the mighty God” are an affirmation that you’re God’s possession. In very simple terms, you are His belonging. This means God owns us, and not that we own Him. The belonging cannot lose itself. Only the owner can lose it by either neglect, or misplacement, or by a deliberate act arising from disenchantment with the said belonging. The belonging is the owner’s responsibility. An owner is responsible to the degree that he is able to keep his belongings safe and secure.

The implication of this is that the popular question of whether a believer can lose himself is very unnecessary, as the believer doesn’t own himself. That question is often addressed to the wrong person. The right person to address this question to is God. He must be asked “Almighty God, can you lose this precious saint whom you purchased with the precious blood of your Son, Jesus?” Perhaps a keen reader would have seen the answer to this question already. He has just been referred to as “Almighty God”. What is God's almightiness if the one who He gave His all to save is lost and perishes?

Any God that loses the one who He saved is not worthy to be God. This is no God, but an inept, unable fellow who has tricked us into thinking He is powerful. But this is not our God! This is not our Father and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Our God is powerful. He is greater than all. He saves, keeps, preserves unto the uttermost. This salvation is His power. It is His omnipotence! Hence, we say we can never perish, we affirm that we can never be lost, we shout it upon the mountains, and it echoes all around the corners of the earth: Our God is greater than all, and there is not one who He has saved who shall be lost. As God, our Saviour, abides forever, so shall we, His saved, abide evermore!

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DAY 7

TOPIC: GIVE YOURSELF TO READING

TEXT: 1 Timothy 4:13

Written by: ALADE OLUWASEGUN

“Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine”

Apostle Paul was a man who contributed greatly to the work of the ministry of the gospel of Christ. Without an iota of doubt, he is regarded as the “Apostle to the Gentiles”. He did not only reveal the salvation plan of God, that the Gentiles will be partaker of the kingdom of God; he also preached the gospel to the Gentile nations. In his letter to the Galatians, Apostle Paul explained that after his encounter with Christ on his way to Damascus, he went to Arabia and later returned to Damascus for about three years before returning to Jerusalem.

Some persons believe that this was when he wrote all his epistles having been locked up in the cave hearing the voice of God. This belief has no biblical basis. However, it can be said that what Apostle Paul did was a thorough study of the Old Testament scriptures, which were written in scrolls. He stated himself that the gospel he preached was (is) according to the scriptures (1 Corinthians 15:1-3). Furthermore, to corroborate our point that Apostle Paul wrote out of an understanding of what was written in the Old Testament scriptures, let us consider this example;

Galatians 3:16: *“Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ.”* Here, Apostle Paul explained the promise of God to Abraham (Genesis 12:17, 13:16); and out of diligent study, he revealed that the promise was to “seed” and not “seeds”. Having great regard for reading, Apostle Paul instructed Timothy his son in the faith to give attendance to reading.

It is worthy of note that Timothy is to read, exhort and teach. Although he is to do all but, reading comes first. To give attendance to something means to give keen attention to such thing. Beloved, we have an instruction to devote our time to reading and studying the bible. We are assured of insight and revelation knowledge as we sit to study the scriptures with the intent to understand Christ.

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DAY 8

TOPIC: THE REALITY OF THE NATURAL MAN

TEXT: Ecclesiastes 9:11

Written by: ALOBA TOWOJU

“I returned, and saw under the sun, that the race [is] not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong, neither yet bread to the wise, nor yet riches to men of understanding, nor yet favour to men of skill; but time and chance happeneth to them all.”

The book of Ecclesiastes contains many diligent observations of the realities and happenings on earth. These were King Solomon’s thoughtful and keen observations. In the text above, he states how the most powerful do not always win contests, how the fastest of men don’t always win races, etc. He concludes by saying that the ruling factor on earth is time and chance; that is “luck”. Evidently, this is an obvious reality of the fallen earth! Men don’t always have what they desire or what should belong to them.

However true this may be on earth, we must realize that although the believer in Christ lives on earth, he is born from a realm that supersedes the earth. He is supernatural and not restricted to the realities of the earth! He is from heaven. He may be affected by certain realities on the earth but he is not restricted by such earthly realities or under the dominion of such realities. Hence, when an ordinary man expects to win and fail at times (depending on luck), the man in Christ can expect to win always! He can always be in the confines of God’s goodness.

As a believer in Christ, it is wrong to live our lives as though we are bound by the happenings of this earth. When there is fear around us, we can pull our faith from our realm, rather than sorrow, we can bring our joy. We can always live without expecting failures. God wants us to win at all times! Learn to live beyond the reality of the fallen earth.

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DAY 9

TOPIC: DO WE PLEASE MEN? (1)

TEXT: Galatians 1:10-12

Written by: ALADE OLUWASEGUN

“For do I now persuade men, or God? or do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ. But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ.”

‘...You are heretic! You are preaching to please your hearers... Preach to please God...’ Those were the words that echoed in my ears some years back. These statements were made as a reaction by some persons to the gospel of the grace of God that I preached. These men believed the message of the gospel was too pleasing to the listeners. They opined that preaching to make people cry and wail for their sins, preaching about the fear of hell, and preaching about the ‘anger and terror’ of God against sinners is same as preaching to please God.

According to Bible history, this was one of the allegations that were made against Apostle Paul, to which his response was rhetorical in our scripture text. The Judaizers alleged that the preaching of the Apostle Paul was to please the Galatians such that He had to make the gospel easy to accommodate them. Undoubtedly, many New Testament believers have been accused of this fact as well. As a matter of fact, several ministers of the gospel have been publicly defamed. They have been called heretic, liars, false prophets and many other defamatory names all for the sake of the gospel.

Apostle Paul’s rebuttal to their allegation is that the gospel which he preached was not inspired by man neither was he sent by any man to preach. He went further to narrate how as a Jew he had sought to destroy the same message which he was now defending with his life. In other words, he emphasized the fact that the content of the gospel has never been any man’s invention. Hence, to say a man is preaching the intention of God to please men is mere folly.

The fact that people rejoice and embrace this message does not mean the message is meant to encourage them to sin the more. The message is the power of God to save. It is the information that brings liberation from the law of sin and death. It is expedient to remind ourselves of the content of the gospel.

“And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation.” (2 Corinthians 5:18-19)

This is the gospel! This is the will of God! When we preach this exact message, we are definitely pleasing God and not men.

AWESOME! GLORY TO GOD!

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DAY 10

TOPIC: DO WE PLEASE MEN? (2)

TEXT: Galatians 1: 1-3

Written by: ALADE OLUWASEGUN

“Paul, an apostle, (not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who raised him from the dead;) And all the brethren which are with me, unto the churches of Galatia: Grace be to you and peace from God the Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ.”

In the first part of this devotional, we looked at the content of the gospel. We reemphasized the fact that we do not preach the gospel (as simple as it is) to please men. We rebutted the allegations of many that the message is made easy in order to encourage sin. Much more, we saw that God is the author of salvation; in other words, the message of the gospel is not inspired by man but by God. Today, we would consider another aspect of this topic which deals with the challenge of many believers seeking the authorization of fellow men before they set out to preach the gospel with boldness.

Many get discouraged to preach the gospel because some ‘great men of God’ are against it. It is necessary to reiterate that the gospel is not inspired by any man. Hence, there is no point seeking a man’s approval before opening one’s mouth to preach. Prior to Apostle Paul’s rebuttal to the allegations made against him which we have dealt with in the first part of this devotional, he had earlier introduced himself as a man sent by God. This we see clearly in our scripture text;

‘Paul, an apostle [special messenger appointed and commissioned and sent out] not from [any body of] men nor by or through any man, but by and through Jesus Christ (the Messiah) and God the Father, Who raised Him from among the dead’ [AMP]

This is the mind-set every believer must have. The believer was commissioned to preach the gospel the very day he received the life of Christ. God did this commissioning by giving us the Holy Ghost. No other commissioning can be greater than this. As a matter of fact, God has made us His ambassadors such that we are doing the work of reconciling men on earth in His stead. This fact is aptly put by Paul thus; *‘Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ’s stead, be ye reconciled to God’* (2 Corinthians 5:20).

Dearly beloved, our work is unto God. We have no obligation to obey any man whose teachings or instructions are contrary to the gospel of Christ. We are not seeking men’s approval; we have God’s approval.

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DAY 11

TOPIC: GOD IS FOR US

TEXT: Romans 8:31

Written by: ADEBAYO KOLAWOLE SAMUEL

“What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?”

Quite very explicitly written by the Apostle Paul— God is for us. The word “if” here is not a conditional word. In the original Greek rendering, it is a word that implies “since”. Hence, Paul was making a statement of fact. Many have been taught wrongly and thus formed wrong thoughts in their minds, thinking that God can be against them at times, especially when they sin. Nothing could be farther from the truth. There is nothing more convincing than knowing that while we were sinners, Christ died for us (Romans 5:8). How much more now that we have believed in Him?

In the equation of life, we can be sure that God is not against us. This is the assurance with which we live life. We are assured because He already gave up His son to die for us as a demonstration of His love. As you go and grow through life, you must constantly remember this fact. God is on your side. He is for you. He is the God of all comfort who comforts us in all tribulations. He is the one who causes us to triumph always. God never orchestrates evil for us at any time. He is on our side and this is our confidence. We are assured of this. We bask in it. We joy in it. We rejoice in it. We are strengthened by it. God is for us, and nothing can ever change that!

Romans 8:35; 37-39

“Do you think anyone is going to be able to drive a wedge between us and Christ’s love for us? There is no way! Not trouble, not hard times, not hatred, not hunger, not homelessness, not bullying threats, not backstabbing, not even the worst sins listed in Scripture: None of this fazes us because Jesus loves us. I’m absolutely convinced that nothing—nothing living or dead, angelic or demonic, today or tomorrow, high or low, thinkable or unthinkable—absolutely nothing can get between us and God’s love because of the way that Jesus our Master has embraced us.”

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DAY 12

TOPIC: YE ARE SERVANTS OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

TEXT: Romans 6:18

Written by: MAY AYINTETE

“Being then made free from sin, you became the servants of righteousness.”

Whomever and whatever we present ourselves to obey, we become its slave. Be it food, clothes, money, etc., we become a slave to it, and as such, knowing this, we have a choice in our slavery. A slave is one whose will is swallowed up in the will of another. He serves his master to the disregard of his own interests. With regard to when we were slaves to sin, our will was swallowed up and captive to sin within us. We served sin to the disregard of our own interest, even when it destroyed us.

But Glory to God, after we became born-again, it is the Lord’s will that matters to us. We now willingly serve the Lord to the disregard of our own interests. We have a new master who sets us free from the bondage of sin. Righteousness is our new boss, so we serve Him with all gladness and we never have to obey our fleshly lusts again.

Child of God, think and live as a free born of the Most High God. Be who you are; a slave of righteousness, for sin has no more dominion over you.

AWESOME! GLORY TO GOD!

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DAY 13

TOPIC: MINISTERING TO THE LORD

TEXT: Colossians 3:16

Written by: ALOBA TOWOJU

“Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.”

The activities of this present world keep getting higher by the day, hence the world is far busier than it used to be and the situation keeps getting worse; the world keeps getting busier. We have our busy secular work or job to do, we stay held on by busy road traffic, we attend to our rigorous academic and career works, etc. In all these, the believer must be reminded that he has a duty to create time for ministering to the Lord, either when he or she is alone or in the midst of other believers.

“Ministering to the Lord” is a Bible term that explains the act by which believers consciously give thanks and worship to God from their heart and with the fruit of their lips. This could either be done by singing in understanding or in tongues. Paul shows us that ministering to the Lord is an aftermath of allowing God’s word to dwell richly and abundantly in our hearts. As you learn to saturate your mind with God’s word, you suddenly realise what God has done for you in Christ, what He is doing at the moment, etc. These spur you into thanksgiving and consequently, edification.

Many complain that they hardly have time for these. Amazingly, they wouldn’t know what they have been missing until they return to such practices. The fact remains that you don’t and may not always have time, but you create time for what is considered important. As you do your home chores, drive on the road, lay on your bed etc., learn to make melody from your heart unto the Lord; singing in tongues and understanding. A lot of supernatural experiences happen in this activity and the believer is greatly edified. Decide to practice this often, God wants you to enjoy the vitality of our fellowship with Him.

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DAY 14

TOPIC: STAND ON THE WORD

TEXT: 2 Peter 1:19

Written by: ADEBAYO KOLAWOLE SAMUEL

“We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts:”

Many times, we go through experiences that make it seem as though what is written in the Bible about us are not true. For instance, we know in all scriptures that God wants man whole, healthy, lacking in nothing materially. But there may be times where all these do not aggregate into a whole and we begin to think “Oh, maybe this part of the Bible is not true after all”. Other times, it may just be that we have erred in certain areas of our lives, and we begin to think “Oh, maybe I am not righteous after all”. This happens to many of us.

One vital fact that must always stay with us and never elude our minds is that God’s word is true. In the face of seemingly contradictory life events and experiences, we must be rest assured that if it is written in the scriptures, then it is true, and I can stand on it.

Beloved, God’s word is true, powerful, and able to work wonders in your life. Whatever the experiences may be like, know for sure that the written word supersedes all experiences, and as you stand upon the word via your confession, through study, and in the place of prayer, you will your experiences conform to what the word says about you. Know certainly that we have a more sure word of prophecy and this is greater any experience. Let the reality of the word overwhelm your mind, and you will see triumph in every area of your life.

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DAY 15

TOPIC: GLORIFY GOD IN YOUR BODY

TEXT: 1 Corinthians 6:19-20

Written by: MAY AYINTETE

“What? Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you which ye are of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God’s.”

Staying within the context of our Bible text, Apostle Paul admonishes us to possess our bodies with honour. He instructs that we do so for our bodies are the temple of the Holy Ghost. Our bodies are no longer ours to do as we please, for we have been bought with a price, which is the precious blood of Christ; the perfect sacrifice for sins.

The Spirit of God that resides in us was not ours but was given us of God. We were translated from darkness to the kingdom of God. Hence, all we do now is by the Spirit and we must endeavour to walk by the Spirit at all times. We have the ability of the Spirit to exhibit the fruits of the Spirit effortlessly, which is love, joy, peace, self-control, etc. We must never for once doubt this ability on our inside.

As believers, we are to stay conscious always of who we are in Christ. We are not to get carried away with the issues of life that we forget whose we are. We are the temple of the Holy Ghost; therefore, how we view and treat this temple of God is indeed very important. We are to revere and honor God in our body by possessing it with sanctity.

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DAY 16

TOPIC: RAPTURE!

TEXT: 1 Corinthians 15:51-53

Written by: OLUMIDE ADEDOTUN

“Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.”

What we call rapture is simply the putting away of mortality in the flesh and putting on immortality. Observe how rapture is preached in the Bible; notice it is explained without an ounce of doubt. The word “shall” is a word indicating “certainty of occurrence”, meaning it will surely happen. Thus, teaching about the rapture is with a certainty that it will happen.

Going forward, we will see that not only are we sure that the rapture will happen, we are also sure that it will happen to us. Oh, the Apostle Paul is so sure; he says “we shall all be changed”. The word “all” here also means “every; wholly”, that is, there will not be an exclusion of anybody. It means no believer will be left un-raptured— dead or alive. Rapture thus is for believers in Christ. The rapture is made for believers and believers for the rapture.

Paul says also “incorruptible”; that is, believers in their mortal bodies must put on immortality. The word “must” depicts certainty; it means this event is mandatory. It must happen. There is not one believer that will remain mortal— simply put; no believer will miss the rapture.

Finally, you will never find a statement that says “prepare yourself for rapture” in the entire Bible. See what Apostle Paul says; he says “in a twinkling of an eye”. This means there is no time to prepare; we will just find ourselves raptured already. It means right now, as we are, we are made ready for the rapture already. Hallelujah! So, quit trying to do something, the deed has been done in Christ. Glory to God!

AWESOME! GLORY TO GOD!

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DAY 17

TOPIC: GATHER YOUR BOUNTY

TEXT: 2 Corinthians 9:5

Written by: ADEBAYO KOLAWOLE SAMUEL

“Therefore I thought it necessary to exhort the brethren, that they would go before unto you, and make up beforehand your bounty, whereof ye had notice before, that the same might be ready, as a matter of bounty, and not as of covetousness.”

Apostle Paul was teaching giving in the context of the verse above. He exhorted that the saints make beforehand their bounty. The phrase “make beforehand” here means “to prepare ahead or gather ahead”, while the word “bounty” implies “gifts” or what could be referred to in modern day language as “offerings”. This implies that it is scriptural for saints to prepare ahead their offerings in the gathering of the saints.

Many today have a very strong passivity towards giving. They give as though they do not want to give. This ought not to be so, beloved. Who else should be more passionate about giving if not the saint? The saint is the one to whom God has bestowed His all for free. In other words, the saint is product of God’s divine benevolence. Hence, he ought to mimic and show this same character he has seen in God unto others also, most especially in the household of faith.

It is not wrong to prepare what you are going to give in church on Sunday through the week. It is not wrong, as a matter of fact, to save money through the week for the purpose of giving. We are to give bountifully and cheerfully. If you have had a very passive disposition towards giving, you ought to stop doing so, and take upon yourself your true character in Christ, which is kindness and goodness. Give bountifully. Give willingly. Give cheerfully. Be glad about “offering time” in church, for it is a time again to give expression to the divine character of God’s benevolence within you. Look forward to giving. Prepare ahead for it. This is the way of the saint. This is how he lives his life.

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DAY 18

TOPIC: TAKE DELIGHT IN GOD'S DIRECTION

TEXT: Proverbs 3:5-6

Written by: ALOBA TOWOJU

“5 Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. 6 In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.”

As Christians, we are often tempted to think that certain aspects of our lives do not matter to God. We think this way because we feel that such aspects are too small for God to handle, hence we rather leave the “big” issues of our lives for God to handle. The truth is that God is very interested in every area of our lives. Some also shield certain aspects of their lives from God because they are unsure if God’s desire for that aspect of their lives is good enough. Such attitudes are not good enough for a believer.

Our text shows us the need to acknowledge God in all our ways, rather than leaning to our own understanding. By trusting him in all areas of our lives, we will receive His leadings on the things to do. We must realize that God knows all things and can help us avoid pits that we may not see due to our human limitations. Moreover, we must recognize that he cares so much for us that He numbers the hairs on our head (Matthew 10:30). His plan for us is also perfect— He has a great future for us! These are obvious scriptural truths that should guide our earth in trusting God wholeheartedly. He is our Father and source.

Are there aspects of your life where it seems God is not involved? Open up to God and let Him guide you on how to go about those aspects. His wisdom and direction are perfect enough, just trust Him.

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DAY 19

TOPIC: THE GUARANTEE OF OUR INHERITANCE

TEXT: 1ST Peter 1:3-5

Written by: MAY AYINTETE

“Blessed be the God and Father of our lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy, hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.”

The inheritance that the believer has in Christ is the sum total of all God has promised him at salvation. Our Bible text lets us know that this inheritance is incorruptible, undefiled and reserved for the believer. Not only does the believer enjoy his inheritance in Christ while on earth, he'll also enjoy it in heaven; hence he is preserved and sealed until the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. It is common knowledge that when a seal is placed on a document, it assures the bearer of the endorsement of an office.

Ephesians 1:13-14

“In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory.”

Beloved, we have been sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise. Hence, the sealing of the Holy Spirit that resides within the believer endorses us. It authenticates us as sons of God, and it is a guarantee to assure us that God will in fact perform all that He has promised us. Knowing this truth, we rejoice at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ; for we will not be left behind at His appearing. We shall be as He is and be raptured with Him.

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DAY 20

TOPIC: THIS IS HIS DIVINE OMNIPOTENCE!

TEXT: John 10:28-29

Written by: ADEBAYO KOLAWOLE SAMUEL

“28 And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. 29 My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand.”

Today, many affirm that God is great but do not really understand what that means. For if they did, many notions and assertions about the assurance and security of the believer's salvation will have no place amidst the Church. When many think of God's greatness, they only think within the purview of His benevolence in meeting needs miraculously, healing diseases supernaturally, and securing one divinely. They often fail to extend His mightiness to their salvation. This ought not so to be. Jesus reveals to us in our texts of consideration that God's greatness is seen in His ability to save, and keep the saved forever saved!

Beloved, say not “God is great” only when He rains manna down from heaven miraculously for you. Say not “God is great” only when He delivers you out of the fowler's snare. Say not “God is great” only when He calms the raging seas. Say not “God is great” only when He stems the noisome pestilence. It is good to say He is great when these are done; but much more, say He is great because He is able to keep you saved forever. This is the greatness of God; that nothing, whether it be in the heavens above or in the earth below, shall be able to pluck the man who has put faith in Christ out of His holy hands.

Jude 1:24

“Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy,” Dearly beloved, this is His greatness: that He saves us and keeps us secure forevermore! In our eternal security is His divine omnipotence revealed!

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DAY 21

TOPIC: THE GIFT AND CALLINGS OF GOD

TEXT: Romans 11:29

Written by: OLUMIDE ADEDOTUN

“For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance.”

The word “repentance” used in this context is more clearly put as “irrevocable”. Such a strong word! It means “final; cannot be reversed”. In the context of the passage above, the Apostle Paul talks about the election of the Jews by God as the means through which salvation will come to the gentiles; so he tries to explain that God cannot make an election and then change His mind about that election.

Believers are in the predestination of God, we have responded to God's calling. Hallelujah! Therefore, God will not change about us. All that God purposed for the believer in Christ is irrevocable, it cannot be reversed.

It is for these reasons that the realities believers enjoy in Christ are in definite and present terms. For example, believers have passed from death to life. We are accepted in the beloved; we have eternal life. It is never written or said in a doubtful or uncertain or conditional term, but with assurance— the gifts and callings of God in us are irrevocable.

You will never find where it is written that the Holy Spirit departs from the believer in Christ or that the believer loses salvation or his sins are counted against him or he lacks authority or the gifts of the Spirit. Never ever will it happen, for we have received His gifts, and we are in His calling and this is forever. Amen.

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DAY 22

TOPIC: HOW TO CURE GREED AND COVETEOUSNESS

TEXT: Hebrews 13:5-6

Written by: ALOBA TOWOJU

"5[Let your] conversation [be] without covetousness; [and be] content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. 6So that we may boldly say, The Lord [is] my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me."

Most times, in our desire to avoid greed and covetousness as believers, we often go mechanical. We forget that all God wants us to do, He already gave us His word to guide us on "how to" and the Holy Spirit to enable us do them appropriately. The epistles and even the teachings of Jesus in His earthly ministry are replete with how God expects us to live a life without greed.

Observe that in the text above, the writer of Hebrews was instructing believers against covetousness. However, he didn't just stop at the instruction, he went further to state the reason why a believer shouldn't be covetous; God is our helper and he will never leave nor forsake us to be stranded. Hence, it is therefore clear that once a believer knows that God is his helper and that he will never leave him, such believer will not have struggles with dealing with covetousness.

As believers, we all must be persuaded that God cares for our needs and He will never leave us nor forsake us for the same purpose. This is the only way we will not trust in earthly riches or become covetous. Our hearts will be at rest knowing that God is for us.

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DAY 23

TOPIC: RISE UP!

TEXT: Proverbs 24:16a

Written by: ADEBAYO KOLAWOLE SAMUEL

“For though the righteous fall seven times, they rise again...” (NIV)

It is in the character of the righteous to rise up whenever he falls. This implies there is an ability in the righteous that enables him to bounce out of any failing, however grotesque or injurious. The righteous man is not comfortable with staying there on the ground, swimming in the mud, wallowing in self-pity and murmuring about giving up. He is not one who easily gives up, who easily lets up, who easily gives in to life’s sometimes daunting challenges, he is not one who easily backs out, who easily rolls under the carpet. No, he is not; for the righteous is as bold as a lion! There is an ability within him, by the Spirit of God, that constantly spurs him on. If he falls seven times, seven times shall he rise up!

Now, who is the righteous man? It is the man in Christ. It is he who has believed in Christ Jesus—this is the righteous man! It is you and I who have been saved by grace through faith in Christ Jesus— we are righteous men! We do not easily cave in to pressures and challenges. We weather through the storms. We run through a troop. We leap over the wall. We break asunder that bars of iron. We are strong and mighty in Christ. See to it that just a loss in your business doesn’t deter you from going again in your business; see to it that a challenge in your academics doesn’t make you break into sadness and gloom. Rise up, and break into a shout, for you are full of joy and power and glory in Christ Jesus.

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DAY 24

TOPIC: THE HAND OF THE DILIGENT

TEXT: PROVERBS 12:24

Written by: MAY AYINTETE

“The hand of the diligent shall bear rule: but the slothful shall be under tribute.”

One true rule of business and life is that hard and smart work pays. It leaves the diligent at the top and the slothful at the bottom. The rewards that diligence brings cannot be overemphasized, though being diligent requires focused attention, maximum effort and persistent patience. From our Bible text, we see that the diligent man is the one that bears rule; that is; he is the one that dominates, controls and enjoys a place of authority. But the reverse is the case with the slothful man.

The slothful man avoids hard work, paces himself in tasks, resents pressure, is slow and sluggish, is easily distracted and intimidated by challenges and has little or no drive to do anything. Diligence brings rewards in compensation and comfort that a lazy man can only dream about, for it requires hard, smart and continuous labour. Diligence is crucial to a successful life; from handling your marriage to taking care of your home, your children, business, and most importantly manifesting spiritual things.

Beloved, this is a call for us not to be like the slothful man who dreams about nice things but finds it hard to work to achieve the things he desires (Proverbs 21:25). Rather, we are to be diligent at whatever our hands find to do. We are to work hard and put in our very best in our endeavors, for a profitable reward awaits us at the end of the day.

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DAY 25

TOPIC: THOU SHALL NOT MARRY

TEXT: 1 Timothy 4:1-4

Written by: ALADE OLUWASEGUN

“Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron; Forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth.”

In our scripture text, Apostle Paul outlined some of the false doctrines that would be preached by many false preachers in the last days. Part of these teachings includes ‘forbidding to marry’. One would not have ever thought that a teaching that forbids people from marrying is a false doctrine. Today, some persons claim that it is the will of God that a man and woman stay single all through their lives. They opine that staying single (not marrying) ushers one into a deeper realm into the things of the Spirit. They use their lives as examples of how God has brought them into a deeper level of relationship because they did not marry. Some even go further to state that Apostle Paul was able to achieve so much in his ministry because he refrained from marriage. This is outrightly inconsistent with the word of God. Forbidding a man to marry is nothing but false doctrine.

Apostle Paul himself wrote this with his own hands; ‘But the Holy Spirit tells us clearly that in the last times some in the church will turn away from Christ and become eager followers of teachers with devil-inspired ideas. These teachers will tell lies with straight faces and do it so often that their consciences won't even bother them. They will say it is wrong to be married...’ (1 Timothy 4:1-3; The Living Bible).

Again, Paul says one of the things people will say in the last days is that ‘it is wrong to be married’. According to the Apostle Paul, this opinion is a devil-inspired idea. Beloved, whoever forbids you from marrying at all is definitely not speaking the mind of God. Stay with the word of God and be renewed in your mind.

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DAY 26**TOPIC: WALK IN THE SPIRIT****TEXT: Galatians 5:16****Written by: OLUMIDE ADEDOTUN*****“This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh.”***

The conduct of believers cannot be over emphasized in the earth realm. Believers should be reminded often that even though we live in this world, we are not of this world. We must be aware that though we are in this world, we cannot be entangled with the ideologies of the world. The Apostle Paul thus admonishes believers to walk in the Spirit. The word “walk” is the same as “to be occupied”. So he says “be occupied in the Spirit”, that is “be consistently conscious of the Spirit”; when we do this, we will not fulfill the lust of the flesh.

He addresses the believer’s conduct in this regard, saying “be led of the Spirit”. He lets us know that if we are preoccupied with the Spirit’s leading, we will find ourselves demonstrating our nature in Christ.

In Galatians 5:22-23, he mentioned the fruit of God's Spirit as love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness and temperance. So, for example, he says “stay in the consciousness of God's love, see that you put to remembrance joy and you will see yourself constantly demonstrate peace and joy. Understand that we are different from the world; we have put on the nature and the character of God.

In conclusion, the more we yield or dwell on the consciousness of our nature in God; the more we will walk in the Spirit and not fulfill the desires of the flesh. Hallelujah!

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DAY 27

TOPIC: THE PRACTICE OF SOUL WINNING

TEXT: Matthew 28:18-19

Written by: ALOBA TOWOJU

"19 Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: 20 Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, [even] unto the end of the world. Amen."

Upon the resurrection of Jesus, He gave an instruction to His disciples. That instruction is often referred to as the "Great Commission" today. He gave them this instruction having enabled them for the work. The instruction was for them to baptize and teach people in His name. These two things they were to do till the end of the world with the blessed assurance that He will be with them always.

Every man who has believed the same gospel which they received has also been saddled with this same responsibility by the power of God. Baptism here does not refer to water baptism. It makes zero sense to give people divine power just so they can immerse others in water. Jesus' baptism is baptism by the spirit. To baptize here means to get people saved (1 Corinthians 12:13, Galatians 3:27). To teach people is to disciple them by the words of Jesus. This is the responsibility of every believer. He's also supposed to do this with the consciousness of the ever-abiding presence of the Spirit within him, irrespective of wherever he may be in time.

Dear believer, I hope you are still faithful to this blessed instruction? It is your responsibility to preach the gospel to unbelievers and teach them after they must have been saved. You must never be found wanting in carrying out your responsibility. If you have grown weak in evangelism, this is a call for you to return to such practice. Initiate a conversation that will lead to the sharing of the gospel today and continue in this practice always

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DAY 28

TOPIC: RISE UP AND WALK

TEXT: Acts 3:6

Written by: OLUMIDE ADEDOTUN

“Then Peter said, Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have give I thee: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk.”

The statement “rise up and walk” is a command with certainty of result— that is, you are expecting that having given a word of command, the hearer must not just rise up, he must walk also. In the story above, the Apostle Peter commands the man born lame to rise up and also walk— what a confident demonstration of authority! He was not only sure that the lame man would stand up, he was also sure he would walk also. In the above passage, we see clearly on what premise the Apostle was very confident: he was confident in the name of Jesus Christ.

Owing to the aforesaid, we have clarity that there is authority in the name of Jesus. It means we can demonstrate power by a word of command in Jesus' name. What it further means is that we can expect to see results in the authority in Jesus' name.

Now in this same passage, we see something more exciting. The Apostle Peter says “such as I have, I give to you”, which means we have or possess an authority in Christ. Oh, glory to God! Authority is in our possession in Christ and we can show power by that authority. This means furthermore that we are never to be in doubt of authority, for we have all authority in Christ Jesus! So, speak in authority, walk in confidence, and speak so assuredly for we have all authority.

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DAY 29

TOPIC: JOINT-HEIRS WITH CHRIST

TEXT: ROMANS 8:16-17

Written by: MAY AYINTETE

“The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God: And if children, then heirs; and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together”.

The believer in Christ becomes a son of the Most High God when he becomes born-again. He is no more a servant to sin. Not only is he a son, but also an heir of God through Christ. That is to say, the death, resurrection and glorification of Jesus made him a joint-heir with Christ. All that Jesus is before the Father is what and who the believer is before God also.

As Jesus is holy, so the believer is holy. As He is righteous, so the believer is. As He is seated at the right hand of the Father far above principalities and powers, so also the believer is seated in a place of authority with the Father. The believer enjoys all that Jesus enjoys. All that belongs to Jesus also is the believer's.

Beloved, you need not struggle to be accepted of the Father. You already are and it isn't by your works but by the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross (Ephesians 1:6). You have an enormous inheritance in God through Christ. Therefore, do not live as one who is without hope. Be conscious at all times of this truth, that you are an heir of God and a joint-heir with Christ Jesus.

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DAY 30

TOPIC: AFFIRMING YOUR IDENTITY

TEXT: John 5:17

Written by: OLUMIDE ADEDOTUN

“But Jesus answered them, My Father worketh hitherto, and I work.”

In today's devotional, we are going to learn of Jesus Christ on affirming our identity while He was on this earth. The Lord Jesus Christ was never tired or afraid of revealing His identity as the Son of God even in the face of diverse persecutions. In all the gospel texts, we see Jesus repeatedly affirm His identity as the Son of God. He always called God “Father”.

In the text above, Jesus called God “Father” to the displeasure of the Pharisees. The word “Father” is the same as the word “parent”, which infers “I am born of God or God is my progenitor or my origin is of God”. The above words mean that you bear the same nature as God and thus equal with Him.

The Pharisees knew this and were sorely grieved for they knew Him from birth as Mary's son, born in a manger, the son of a carpenter; it vexed them to think Him the Son of God. Nevertheless, Jesus' incarnation does not invalidate His identity as God's Son; thus, it didn't matter whoever tried to disprove it, He was sure of His identity.

All believers should learn of this persistency too for we are made sons of God. See Hebrews 2:10; *“For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings”*

Every saved person is a son of God; so we should learn of Christ not to be afraid of affirming we are sons of God. Speak it always. Say to yourself: “I am a son of God!” Affirm it everywhere and anytime, never at any time doubt this reality for you are a son and you are always a son. People's disapproval doesn't invalidate sonship. You are your Father's son and praise be to God, He (God) is your Father.

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