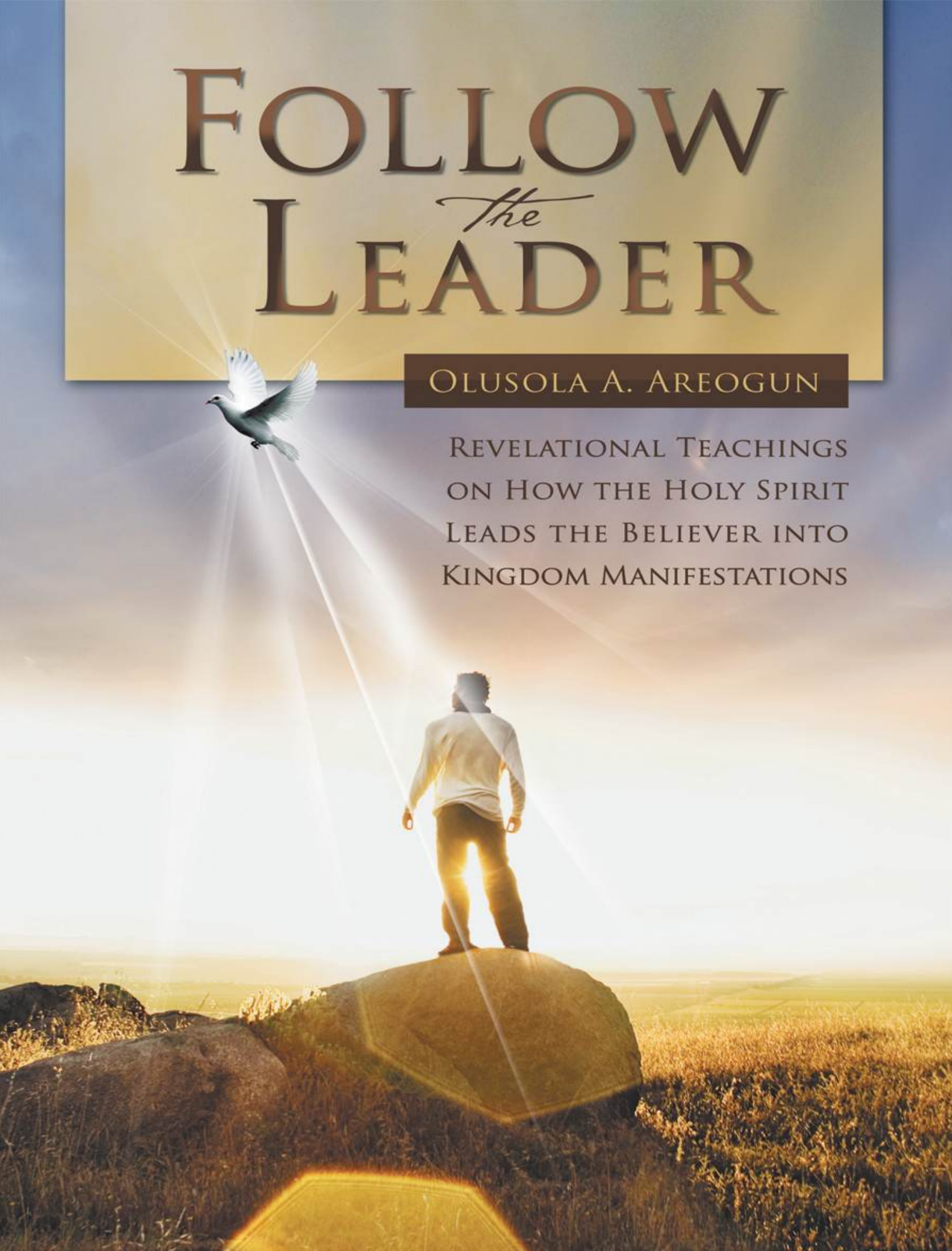
Follow the Leader

Olusola A. Areogun

Revelational Teachings on How the Holy Spirit Leads the Believer into Kingdom Manifestations



FOLLOW THE LEADER

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Introduction

Every year in our ministry, we close the year with a forty-day fasting and prayer programme. During this period, God gives me a special subject to teach on throughout the fast.

This book is the fruit of the revelational teaching during one of such periods and subsequent research on the subject. I am very sure that the truth set forth in this book will bring any child of God into a deeper walk with God and greater manifestation on earth.

Jesus, in the new birth, brings us into sonship with God, but the Holy Ghost as our leader brings us into the manifestation of that sonship. On the surface, *Follow the Leader* may sound sheepish, but God told me it is one of the greatest secrets of victory for God's people on this planet.

I trust God that you will experience the joy, peace, and power of following the right leadership in life.

Olusola Ayodele Areogun
Osogbo, Nigeria
May 2010

Chapter 1

Follow the Leader

Follow the leader is one of the key principles of God's kingdom. The kingdom of God is a kingdom that doesn't change; everything from the kingdom of God has that characteristic, and when you watch God, you will see that He works through principles. Human beings look for methods because we deal with the application side, but God communicates with us through principles, and this is what we should come to church to learn, understand, and master—the principles of God's kingdom.

When you master the principles of God's kingdom and take them into your life's situation, you cannot be defeated working those principles. The Bible says whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world. It didn't say whosoever is born of God, but whatsoever. Therefore, whatsoever comes from God, whatever is of the kingdom of God will automatically overcome the world. The Bible says,

‘His kingdom ruleth over all’ (Ps. 103: 19). It doesn’t mean there will not be disobedience or resistance and things like that, but when you apply the principles of the kingdom of God in life’s situations, it will rule over those situations. Where God is not allowed to rule, He will overrule there.

Just like you have a magistrate court, a high court, and then a supreme court, the kingdom of God is the supreme court of the universe; nothing can set aside whatsoever God has decreed, and anything that is coming from the Kingdom of God can nullify anything that has been decreed somewhere else lower than the kingdom of God. Therefore, it’s important that you understand the principles of the kingdom of God, which are not difficult to understand, and they come in the words of the Holy Spirit.

> Howbeit we speak wisdom among them that are perfect: yet not the wisdom of this world, nor of the princes of this world, that come to nought. But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery even the hidden wisdom which God ordained before the world unto our glory. (1 Cor. 2: 6-7)

The scripture above refers to three kinds of wisdom: *The wisdom of this world,* that of *the princes of this world* and thirdly, *the wisdom of God*. You can talk of the principles of the kingdom of God as a representative of the wisdom of God. 'But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery.' It begins as a mystery and then it becomes revelations, instructions, directions and so on. When you gain these things and begin to walk by them, you are going to win in life. Winning in life is not just a result of how much struggle you can put forth in life. The kingdom of God is not *Aluta Continua.* As far as the kingdom of God is concerned, it is applying the principles of God that causes us to triumph.

What the scripture is saying is that the hidden wisdom has been ordained by God before the world began. That is to say, before God created the world and everything in this world, or anything that can come up in this world, God has set aside and marked off a particular wisdom that 'this wisdom will dominate this world I'm creating and that this wisdom is the means of bringing glory or glorifying God's own people in that world.'

Therefore, if God's people in the world find the wisdom that God has reserved before He made the world, as the way to dominate the world, their glory will show forth since it is the way that God planned that we will be glorified in the world. It means that you are not going to receive the identity that belongs to a Christian, the identity of glorification by struggling with the world system and using the world system. You are going to have to find the wisdom that God has ordained, set aside, before the world, that this is what you are supposed to do. This wisdom, this principle, this is what you are to do to dominate on the earth.

And then it says 'which none of the princes of this world knew.' Two levels of princes exist in the world —spiritual princes and political, physical, and financial princes—high and mighty men in the world and in the spirit that rules the world. None of them knew this wisdom; they had no access to it, for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory because the outworking of this wisdom is connected to the death, burial, and resurrection of

Jesus Christ. If they had known that the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus will unleash this wisdom on the earth and that this will make it possible for men to have access to this wisdom, they wouldn't have done it. But they did because they were misled! Now, we must find our way to that wisdom.

> But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. (1 Cor. 2: 9)

When the scripture says 'the things which God has prepared for them that love Him,' it means God has prepared some things for them that love Him. Who are the people who love God? Jesus Himself answered it—'He that has my commandment and keeps it is the one that loves me.' You can expand that to say 'those who belong to Him.' Now God has prepared some things for them. Amen! For example, fathers prepare some things for their children. One of the things I have prepared for my children is—a bank account into which a certain amount of my income

goes monthly, and they cannot touch it until they reach a certain age. Meanwhile, I am preparing them towards that time when the money becomes theirs so that they'll not waste it.

God has prepared some things for us. God has also moved into the second phase of His work—preparing you and me for things that He has prepared for us. For example, David becoming the king of Israel was not an afterthought. David was God's original plan; Saul was an intrusion in God's plan. Saul was a stopgap. He was holding the throne until David was ready; there are many people who are holding things and places that God has reserved for you until you are ready. In the book of Esther, Haman was only occupying the position of honour until Mordecai was ready to take it. God was preparing David for the throne through the things he went through. You must understand that God has prepared some things for us and now He's preparing us for those things; you should cooperate with the Holy Spirit and allow God's preparation to be thorough and complete in you.

Most people today step into the things that God has prepared for them, and they mess up there simply because they don't allow God to prepare them for the things He has prepared for them. For example, a single lady, who is not a celibate, must know according to the scripture that God has prepared a wonderful man for her, a son of Zion. You don't need to worry about that man; God has prepared him for you and now God is trying to prepare you for him. God has prepared you for somebody and He's preparing that person for you. God knows the kind of person you are and the kind of person you will suit, and He's working it out, but most people just don't allow the preparation of God to be thorough in their lives.

God knows where He's taking you and what He has to take you through. For example, God may be taking a young man through some things and allowing him to assume responsibility; bringing maturity to him at a young age. You are not mature simply because you are old; maturity comes because you have accepted responsibility. That's why you can find some people who are getting to be fifty years old

and are still irresponsible because they've avoided responsibilities all through their lives. If that man who has been accepting responsibilities is going to marry, God will want to bring him a woman who can handle that, a woman who can be a blessing to him and not pull him down. This is a very important truth; God prepares us for what He has prepared for us.

If God is planning that a young lady is going to marry a pastor like me, and she is a solitary and introverted kind of person, then God is going to adjust her attitude and her views on life by bringing her in contact with people who will change that trait so that she will not be an embarrassment in her husband's ministry since a pastor's business is everybody's business.

> But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God.
>
> For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God.
>
> Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that

> are freely given to us of God. (1 Cor. 2: 10-12)

Notice that we don't get them from school; we get them from the Spirit and through our born-again spirit. God got our spirit to be born again so that we may know the things that are freely given to us of God.

> Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual. (1 Cor. 2: 13)

One translation says, *'Fitting spiritual truths to spiritual words.'* You must learn to listen to the principles of the kingdom every time you come to church.

Learning to Learn

One day, I was in a meeting where one of my friends was preaching, and as he was preaching, he said one of the things that Christians must learn to do is to learn to learn. I said that is the principle of the

kingdom—learn to learn. Not everybody has learned how to learn. Many people just want to display their knowledge or ignorance, whichever one. They don't learn how to learn. A wise man has learned how to learn even from a fool. That's a principle of the kingdom. Learn to learn everywhere. Solomon said in the book of Proverbs,

> I went by the field of the slothful, and by the vineyard of the man void of understanding; And, lo, it was all grown over with thorns, and nettles had covered the face thereof, and the stone wall thereof was broken down. Then I saw, and considered it well: I looked upon it, and received instruction. (Prov. 24: 30-32)

That's learning to learn everywhere. So what he's saying is that these principles of the kingdom, these key things of the kingdom come in words that the Holy Spirit speaks. Sometimes, some people call them quotable quotes. Some people call them rhymes, or whatever. They are words that have a special feel to you. When it comes in a meeting or in a message somebody is preaching, when it comes out, you know this is something from God—words

of wisdom.

For example, I say in our church that *church membership is followership*. Period! That you're attending a church does not mean you're a member of that church. Are you a follower of the church? Are you a follower of the doctrine? Are you a follower of the philosophy? Are you a follower of the teaching? Are you a follower of the principles of the church? Are you a follower of the standards? Are you a follower of the leader? This is a basic understanding. Jesus didn't call us to 'membership'—He called us to followership. He says, 'Follow me and I'll make you fishers of men.'

Therefore, when a person comes to church, one of the key questions that can help him to get the best and be what God wants him to be in that church is to settle this question—'Now that I've come to this church, is this the right church for me? Who should I follow here?' It's such a simple question. And then, 'What should I follow? What's the teaching? What's the doctrine?' The Bible says, 'Let us know them that

have the rule over us, who have spoken the word of God to us, whose faith follow.' *What should I follow in church?* It means you're not in church as a man, for example, to follow the fashion of your pastor. You are not to find the pastor's tailor. That's not as important to you as to follow the pastor's faith, because if his faith rubs off on your spirit, you will have the same kind of faith that is driving his assignment in your own family, business, career, and academics, regardless of the level of life you find yourself.

In our church, we've had women who have followed my wife, the senior pastor of our ministry, to experiencing painless delivery at childbirth. You hear some people shout 'She had painless delivery!' I'm still expecting some women who will say, 'My mother, in the Lord, had painless delivery. Therefore, it is my portion as well.' My wife was more than three quarters of the way gone by that time of delivery, still discussing with nurses and other people. She had been standing on the word that ' . . . the Hebrew women are not as the Egyptian women; for they are lively, and are delivered ere the midwives

come in unto them.' After she delivered, on Thursday or so, she was back in the office with me on Monday.

From that time, no woman in our church—the Dream Centre of the Life Oasis International Church—delivers and stays up to forty days at home, except the ones who are not followers. You can be in church for ten years and not be a follower. *Followers are becomers, followers are receivers.* Elisha followed Elijah into a double portion of the anointing of the prophet. It's such a simple principle. Many people have stayed in church long enough to become a proverb not a testimony.

In 2002, God said He has released grace upon the church to build houses. I expect everybody in church to be following us into that. Everybody should be crossing from being a tenant to being a landlord. A brother heard, when I was sharing the history of the ministry, that God said, 'As I move this ministry forward, anybody that has a hand in it, I will move him forward.' When we went to open our church in

Ghana, the brother said, ‘The ministry is going international, my business must go international.’ He attended a meeting in Abuja and was elected as the president of the West African Small Scale Industry Association just because he connected himself to that.

That is how to be a follower. You don’t come to church to learn banking. Why will God bring bankers, doctors, nurses, business people, students, and professors to church? It is simply because there is something that is available only in church that everybody needs in their different fields, and those are the things you must focus on; that’s what you should come to receive in church. Some people come to you explaining how difficult things are in their biological families. I tell them ‘In the family you’ve joined now our things are easy.’ If your father says he doesn’t have money to sponsor your wedding, go and meet your heavenly Father. Now that you have come to church, you must follow something in the church—follow grace, follow faith. The Bible says, ‘ . . . whose faith follow.’ It is more important that you have a faith like my own so that heaven can

recognise that we're coming from the same place. That's why, that's one of the principles of the kingdom.

Who Is My Leader Here?

God does not lead His people from behind, but always from the front, whether it is an individual, a family, or a church. God does not lead His people from behind. He leads His people from the front. The key issue that you must deal with is 'Who is my leader on this occasion?' and 'Who is my leader at this time?' You must be able to personally answer that question—who or what your leader is—because the key to life in the kingdom is to *follow the leader*. In Luke, Chapter 3, remember that before Jesus started His ministry at the age of thirty, He was the Son of God but He never did a miracle. He waited for the Holy Ghost to come, and when the Holy Ghost came upon Jesus as He came out of River Jordan, the heavens were opened unto Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon Him, and a voice from heaven saying, 'This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.' And immediately after, the Bible says Jesus was led of the

Spirit into the wilderness.

The first thing that happened between Jesus and the Holy Spirit was the settlement of the question of leadership. The secret of the success of Jesus' ministry was that He followed His leader. Jesus said, 'Verily, verily, I say unto you, the Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do: for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise.' Before the Holy Spirit came, Jesus led Himself, but when the Spirit came, He understood and said that that was His leader, and the Spirit led Him into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil.

Many times, the Spirit led the apostles contrary to what they expected, so much that when Jesus was about to go, He had to encourage them.

> But because I have said these things unto you, sorrow hath filled your heart. Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you. (John 16: 6-7)

There would have been many times that Jesus would have said we are going somewhere and suddenly He would say… *Oh no, we are not going now. I have just perceived something* . . . so the disciples knew He was listening to somebody else directing Him. Now He introduced Him saying, 'He is the Spirit. You have known Him. He's been with you but now He shall be in you.'

One of the things that you must ask yourself is 'Who are the people that God has called to be leaders in the universe?' And you must learn to recognise and follow them wherever you find yourself. Ask yourself this: 'Who's my leader? Is this my leader or not?' This principle affects everything. For example, sometimes I lead praise worship, and I don't allow the choir to back up. This is where many churches have democratised the things of the anointing and lost the Holy Spirit. I am not a singer, but I know the Holy Spirit, and those were times that God wanted me to lead. I teach people who are gifted in the music ministry to use their gift to boost the calling and function of the pulpit ministry, when the two come

together the gift of music should submit leadership to the pulpit ministry, that is the divine setting.

You should always know who and what is the leader in different settings. If you follow the wrong leader, it can lead you into danger and destruction. For example, if I'm leading prayer, and you want to learn how to pray as a leader, as a pastor, or as whatever, why don't you follow the leader? Apply the same principle. Years ago, because most of them did not know when I pray, one of my associate pastors hid somewhere, listening to my prayer points and noted it. Then, one day, he asked me, saying, 'Pastor, you mean one can pray like that?' He was overhearing my prayer. Now that's good for him because it helps him to know how to pray as a man of God. Many people don't know that as a minister of God, there are special needs that require special prayers. How did Paul pray? Paul prayed for himself. Why did he offer those prayers for himself? Jesus prayed for Himself. Moses prayed for himself. How are you going to learn how to pray as a man if not by watching a leading man pray?

Many people have discarded the principle of *following the leader*. The first thing that comes to the mind of many people, especially the 'smart alec' in church is 'Are you trying to say I should follow you?' Yes and no, when it comes to some issues you are going to follow me. Some brethren came for a vigil in Osogbo, and I sent word to them that nobody should leave for Ife until 6.30 a.m. They obeyed, and when they got to Ife, they called me saying, 'Daddy, thank God for that word' because the bus that left the park before theirs, which they would have boarded, ran into a ditch, and the passengers in it were seriously injured but they were safe and secure. They could have said, 'Are you saying we should follow you?' I'm saying *follow the leader*.

This instruction is for the sheep Christian and not for the goat-Christian. Have you ever noticed that before a goat is killed in an accident, it may be hit many times? More often than not, a sheep just gets hit once and it's gone. There are many sheep-Christians who follow goat-Christians. Goat-Christians may escape many times because the devil intends that disobedience and rebellion will be their

habit before he wipes them out. Rebellion and disobedience is not in the nature of the sheep-Christian; therefore, the first time he tries it, he's badly hurt in the same thing his friend does regularly without 'immediate punishment.'

Follow the Leader: Your Spirit Within You

You must find *what* and *who* is the leader in your life as a person. Remember that you are a spirit; you have a soul, and you live in a body. You're tripartite. Who then is the leader among the three parts of you? Your spirit is the leader. The Bible calls it 'the heart', 'the inner man', and so on, but that is your spirit. Therefore, if you want to *follow the leader*, you must separate your mind and body from your spirit in order to find out what your spirit is saying concerning any matter. Many things will look reasonable to your mind. 'Reasonable' is the word of the mind; your mind communicates to you by reasoning, but your body communicates to you by feelings. Sometimes your mind may communicate to you by feeling, and at other times by emotions, saying, 'I don't like this', 'I like that' and so on. Sometimes your mind also has thoughts, imaginations

and so on.

Your spirit communicates to you, and your spirit is the leader. If you want to know where God is in your life or what God is going to do or where there is safety for you, *follow the leader*. If you want to travel, and you have a check or restraint in your heart, *follow the leader*, even if the journey looks palatable, rewarding, or the trip is necessary. If the spirit says not to, then follow the spirit. Your body usually wants to do many things against your spirit, but you must recognise who the leader is between your spirit, soul, and body.

You might have woken up in the night and perceived you should pray, but your body doesn't want to do any spiritual thing—you should understand that you cannot listen to your body to know what God is saying to you. Many people are used to following their body, and their lives have become a cacophony of confusion, tragedies, and all kinds of mistakes, simply because they have chosen to follow their body instead of the leadership of their

spirit.

Suppose a brother from your tribe proposes to you (a sister), and your body says, ‘Yes, this is from our tribe. We speak the same language’; your brain also says, ‘He’s handsome, rich, and educated’, but your spirit becomes troubled, and you begin to silence your spirit saying, ‘My father must not hear’. Remember that your father is part of your body outside, and your spirit, who is the leader, is troubled. Many people have followed their brain, which said, ‘That man looks like he’s got a good prospect’ only for them to fall into marital tragedies. Their marriage is just a lifetime of sorrow.

There’s a responsible young man in a branch of our church who didn’t have a formal education but he was understudying his father and learning the critical details of his father’s business. When he started coming to our church, his mindset began to change, and a desire to go to school was birthed in him. He started taking part-time courses, and today he is a graduate. His mother-in-law originally wanted

her daughter to marry a lawyer. But the lady seeing that the young man was responsible and had the fear of God in his heart decided to marry him. Today, they are married, and have a stable home where all her needs are met and exceeded.

The point is, the body (the brain) reasons so: 'This looks like what I want.' At that time, the brother couldn't speak very good grammar. Yet there are many fantastic grammarians who are fraudsters. There are people with all manner of counterfeit documents, but they can toast a young lady. Many sisters have fallen into their snare and are now blaming God, saying, 'But God, I prayed!' God says, 'Yes, I was trying to warn you. Let's rewind the video. Your spirit was warning you, but you persuaded your spirit.'

You can always convince your spirit to be quiet. The voice of the spirit is the conscience. Usually nobody violates his conscience, but most people just adjust their conscience until they give it another standard. You know what is right by your

conscience, but people always want to do it in their brain—finding things to adjust, finding things to say until their conscience moves to a place where it talks not on that issue again. Many people have done that and landed in trouble. As a Christian, you must not do that if you want to align to the ever-increasing glory.

> But the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day. (Prov. 4: 18)

God told the late Kenneth E. Hagin that if he followed his heart, He would lead him to wealth and fulfilment. And that man followed his heart; he lived in wealth and fulfilment and went to be with the Lord at a good old age. Some people didn't even know how the man died. He had left the body a week before they knew he had gone, while they were still battling with the body in the hospital.

Some people say, 'If I had heard what you're preaching about following your heart, I wouldn't have been involved in that accident because

something told me to wait for thirty minutes.' That was their heart—the leader—trying to tell them. If you will only follow the leader, your path will be as the shining light that shineth more and more. You are not doing things because others are doing it; if your friend is selling groundnut and succeeding at it, you don't have to sell your property and jump at selling groundnut. Your sprit may tell you to go into selling water when everybody is going into another business. If you're following your heart, your leader, your path in marriage, business, and life's every other endeavour will be an ever-increasing one.

But many people follow something else. They say things like 'It looks good to me.' The Bible says, 'There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.' What part of man does it seem right to? The brain or the flesh? What is your heart saying? That is the question. What is in my heart on this matter? If three brothers proposed to you as a single sister, don't say I have the luck for men. You have just been confronted with choices, and you'll need to make a decision which must come from your heart. Go to your heart and

ask questions.

When my wife said ‘yes’ to my proposal, it was a risk for her because the best trouser I had then had holes in it, and I had to wear a jacket to cover it; also, my shoes had holes in the soles. I was facing persecution from home because I had followed the plan of God for me. Some of my classmates would give me clothes because my family was not sponsoring me. But I’ve got a future in God. You needed to see her cheeks to know she was born with a silver spoon, and my story was very different from that; to say ‘yes’ in those circumstances, you must know that it is a risk.

There was the story of a sister who, all her life, had never done anything on her own; everything was done by the home help her father employed. She was in one of the students’ fellowships on the university campus where she was then. A brother, who was the son of a struggling farmer, came to propose to her. The sister told a friend of hers how Christianity can bring embarrassment; a farmer’s son had the

effrontery to propose to her. She didn't even attempt to pray because the brother didn't appeal to her flesh. Her friend then asked her if she had prayed about it. She said, 'If I pray, what if God says "yes"?' And God did say 'yes'.

Today, that sister found out that she couldn't have married a better husband. That man cooks for her and does many things for her; he's been prepared by God to make her life easy. She could have insisted on marrying another man from a home like hers, and grammar would have been jamming grammar plus blows and all sorts of disharmony, but she decided to follow her heart. In the key decisions of life, you will find the right answers if you follow the principles of God.

God has anointed the spirit, the human spirit, the born-again spirit as the leader. Some people are not born-again, but their spirit has enough of God to guide them, and they say that they don't feel fine about that thing. They are not born-again, but they are learning to follow their hearts. There are many women who have that intuition. A man's wife says, 'My dear, every time this friend of yours comes to

our house, I feel somehow about it.' In his manly ego, the man says, 'No, don't come between us! I've been his friend before I met you… 'The man ends up swindling him, cheating them, or hurting them. And, of course, no man will go back to his wife and say 'My dear, I'm sorry. You were right!' When he's comes home, don't remind him, as a wise woman, by saying 'I thought I told you… 'Just join him to say that man is a bad man. If you say 'But I told you', he'll use you to settle the matter and vent his bad feeling on you.

God has anointed the Holy Ghost, prophecy, the Word of God, and the calling to lead. When a matter concerns you and someone else, what happens? Suppose two brothers want to go to Kwara State, Nigeria by road tomorrow. How will they find out the leader in the two of them even though both of them are colleagues? The Bible says that where two or three are gathered together in Jesus' name, there He is in their midst. How is He in their midst? Supposing one of them says 'I feel somehow about the trip' and the other disagrees, God has a leader whom both of them will submit to, and that leader is called the

anointing. The Bible says the anointing you've received of Him remains and abides in you. That anointing teaches you all things. Now, this is where Christians must focus on the right things. If the two of them are colleagues and friends, they are equals. If they've been taught to recognise the anointing, and it moves upon the words of one saying, 'This trip is dangerous. Let's turn back', and they recognise that it is the anointing moving upon one of them, then both of them will agree and cancel the trip.

In the Old Testament, the Bible talks about how the people of Judah wanted to know the mind of God in the days of Jehoshaphat.

> Then upon Jahaziel the son of Zechariah, the son of Benaiah, the son of Jeiel, the son of Mattaniah, a Levite of the sons of Asaph, came the Spirit of the LORD in the midst of the congregation. (2 Chron. 20: 14)

Everybody then recognised that was the spirit talking. That's a leader. They didn't say they followed a small boy. The Spirit was on him. Many

Christians have played a game of chance with major decisions in life. If a father and mother don't know what to do, but their child says, 'I don't feel like we should go like this', and they say 'Let's follow what the boy is saying', then that would be foolish! Was the boy in the spirit when he said that? God doesn't lead you from behind. God doesn't lead the church from the congregation. He doesn't lead His people backwards. The father is expected to be the spiritual leader of the family, but if the anointing is on the child, everybody must be able to recognise it.

Suppose a Christian is a civil servant, and his commissioner says, 'We're travelling tomorrow,' but his spirit man becomes troubled over that trip. In Acts, Chapter 27 verse 10, Paul said, 'I perceive that this trip will be fraught with danger, not only to the ship but to our lives.' Now, that's the *leader* that has spoken. Listen to me: wherever it involves a Christian and an unbeliever, the Christian is the leader in life. The unbeliever may be the leader in a skill or a job, but if you are going to live, the Christian must activate his spirit for direction.

Many Christians throw their *leader—the regenerated spirit* out of the window because a non-leader, for example, a superior at work is telling them what to do. I read the story of a woman who was attacked, during which her escort was killed. Supposing the escort's wife had a bad dream the night before he was killed, would he have agreed to stay behind? The impending danger is that many people take their jobs as more important than their lives. Your boss wants you to go on a trip but your leader, your spirit man within you, restrains you. You can ask yourself, 'What if I lose my job?' or 'What if I lose my life?' The greatest gift anybody can have is the gift of life. It is only a living man who can look for another job. Yet there are many Christians who don't understand that and allow the devil to defeat them and destroy them because they follow a wrong leader.

> And said unto them, Sirs, I perceive that this voyage will be with hurt and much damage, not only of the lading and ship, but also of our lives.
>
> Nevertheless the centurion believed the master and the owner of the ship, more than those things which were spoken by Paul.

> And because the haven was not commodious to winter in, the more part advised to depart thence also, if by any means they might attain to Phenice, and there to winter; which is an haven of Crete, and lieth towards the south west and north west.
>
> And when the south wind blew softly, supposing that they had obtained their purpose, loosing thence, they sailed close by Crete.
>
> But not long after there arose against it a tempestuous wind, called Euroclydon.
>
> And when the ship was caught, and could not bear up into the wind, we let her drive. (Acts 27: 10-15)

In the passage above, many things transpired. The first thing that came is that the *leader* spoke, and God will always speak. Jesus said the Holy Ghost will show you things to come, that is, before they come. The Bible says it was not commodious to winter in that abode, which implies a difficult situation and that the south wind blew softly (i.e., improving circumstances). Then the captain of the ship, the expert, said, 'I know this sea route very well. Let's go.' The majority agreed. They sailed straight into Euroclydon (a violent and tempestuous wind on the Mediterranean Sea, also known as a

‘levanter’). Only after they had entered this predicament did they start listening to Paul, and they were saved. They were helpless, but God said to Paul, ‘I have given you all the men that sail with you.’

> And when neither sun nor stars in many days appeared, and no small tempest lay on us, all hope that we should be saved was then taken away.
>
> But after long abstinence Paul stood forth in the midst of them, and said, Sirs, ye should have hearkened unto me, and not have loosed from Crete, and to have gained this harm and loss.
>
> And now I exhort you to be of good cheer: for there shall be no loss of any man’s life among you, but of the ship.
>
> For there stood by me this night the angel of God, whose I am, and whom I serve, Saying, Fear not, Paul; thou must be brought before Caesar: and, lo, God hath given thee all them that sail with thee.
>
> Wherefore, sirs, be of good cheer: for I believe God, that it shall be even as it was told me. (Acts 27: 20-25)

If they had listened to Paul, they wouldn’t have suffered such huge losses because Paul was

following his spirit, *the leader*. The other travellers were all following their minds; when the circumstances improved, they reasoned that the journey would be safe. Please understand that where your spirit says is safe, it is safe, but where your body says is safe, it might be unsafe.

A man was on his bed on a particular night, and the rain was falling lightly. The man perceived in his heart to move his bed from where it was to another side, and he got up to do so. As the night grew darker, the rain fell more intensely. Suddenly, a part of the wall where he had moved his bed collapsed, and his life was spared. He could have died, but he followed his heart away from the impending danger.

Follow the Higher Leader

When there is a clash of leaders, which one do you follow? Always follow the higher leader. Your recreated human spirit in you is higher than your mind, but it is not higher than the Holy Ghost in you. You will hear the still small voice of your recreated human spirit and the authoritative voice of the Holy

Spirit inside you. The recreated human spirit in you is not higher than the Holy Ghost in you. The Holy Ghost in you is not higher than the anointing on the anointed. Always follow the higher leader. When there is a written Word of God and a direction you're receiving, follow the higher leader. The Word of God, written, is higher than anything you're receiving now.

When you have the Word of God on a matter, the Word of God is the leader. If you don't receive any leading in your heart, you only need to find out what God has said on the matter. In 2 Samuel, Chapter 6, David wanted to bring the ark of God from the place where they left it during the reign of Saul, and they carried the ark on a cart drawn by mules, which was against the written Word of God. When the ark stumbled, Uzzah touched it, and the Lord broke out against him because they were disobedient to the written Word. The people said, 'It is OK, let's bring back the ark'; the people loved the idea. That the majority support something does not make it right before God. They were dancing, rejoicing, and making merry, but God was displeased because they were doing something in conflict with the written

Word of God, the higher authority. If you have a dream that conflicts with the Word of God, drop the dream and take the Word of God.

Wherever there's a clash of leaders, always follow the higher leader. Let your loyalty be to the leader. The first relationship between us and the Holy Ghost is leading. Most people think that the job of the pastor is to feed the flock, whereas the first relationship of the pastor is leadership. You cannot feed a sheep that will not follow you to the pasture. If a sheep is not going to follow you to the pasture, there's no way you can feed the sheep. David had an idea in his heart but the way he was going about it conflicted with what God had said on the matter.

You must always ask yourself, 'Who or what is my leader?' In some cases where the husband is the leader, the wife should follow. As David was dancing before the Lord (2 Sam. 6: 20-23), the Bible says, 'And Michal, the daughter of Saul his wife saw him from the window and despised him in her heart because she felt that David was exposing himself

before the people.' The woman missed it there; she ought to have followed her husband. That was the same problem with Ananias and Sapphira—the husband had come to church but the wife came three hours later.

Most women get into serious trouble by not following their men in doing the will of God. Michal ought also to have been dancing and shouting; she ought to have been leading the women's section in dancing and shouting glory, hallelujah! Rather, she despised the king probably because she was a princess, a queen, the daughter of a king and married to a king. David explained that it was before the Lord who chose him before her father's house; she didn't have eyes to see. She was the only barren woman in the entire Bible; barren throughout her life because of that error of followership. Don't follow Christians who laugh at the holy things of God. They mock the pastor who dances and rejoices in the presence of the Lord.

The Bible says David returned to bless his house

like a true and correct head. Men should learn a lesson from there. When you have a mighty move in church and the anointing lands on you, go home. Even if your family came with you, gather everybody and say 'Let me bless you'. Bless your family the way you saw your pastor blessing the church. Return home from your encounters in God's presence to bless your family. That's what David returned to do. When I'm in the presence of God and I catch a revelation and something lands on me the first person I look for is my wife. Even if she's in the kitchen, she kneels, and I bless her and show her the revelation that I caught.

Michal should have acknowledged that her husband was the leader, the anointed one. He was the husband, and the wife missed it by a mile. She ought to have been there and not incur that damage to herself; when the man returned to bless her, she ought to have knelt down and said, 'My lord, welcome. I saw the way you were giving God glory today I was also dancing at home…'

Whenever there's a clash of leaders, follow the higher leader. In 2 Chronicles, Chapter 18, verse 17, when the word of King Ahab conflicted with the word of the prophet Micaiah, every wise Jew followed Micaiah. Those who followed Ahab to the battle died and never returned. When there's a conflict between your husband's word and your pastor's word, you must know the higher leader. When your father's word conflicts with your father in the Lord's word, you must know the higher leader.

Recognise that God has put the calling as one of the leaders. In 2 Kings, Chapter 3, verse 11, they needed to know what to do. Three kings were sitting, looking as though they were trapped, and Jehoshaphat said, 'Is there not here a prophet of the LORD, that we may enquire of the LORD by him?' He knew the leader. Although he was a king giving orders and making decrees, he acknowledged his need for direction in that situation. Yet there are many kings who order prophets, saying, 'I command you to prophesy to me… 'and because many people are promoting themselves without a calling from God, they bow to such pressure. The fact that you

attended a seminary does not mean you're a man of God. Education and titles won't make you a man of God; rather, it's a divine calling and anointing. Having a title does not make you a man of God. Today, in America, there are various certificates that you can get through correspondence courses, but it won't make you a man of God.

Many times you see some Christians say, 'I'm not a fool. Why should I talk to a pastor before I travel?' What it just means is that you don't have a pastor. That you go to church doesn't mean that you have a pastor; I'm talking of following a leader. Sometime ago, I had a revelation and told all the pastors in our church to announce in their branches that people should not travel early in the morning or late in the night. If they must, they should call me, and I'll pray for them. There was a son of one of our members who heeded the instruction and called for prayers before travelling to Akure; he saw that the first vehicle that left Ilesa for Akure ahead of his had an accident at the outskirt of Akure, with corpses littering the scene. That was the vehicle that he would have boarded if he hadn't responded to the

instruction. It is very important that you understand these things; this is not about the man of God making himself anything. It is for your safety because God has placed callings as leaders.

What makes a man of God is not his education, but God's calling upon him and God's commitment to walk with him, he must now commit to saying only what God tells him to say. One year, during an early morning prayer, I knelt at the altar praying, and the word of the Lord came to me expressly, 'Tell your wife to get on TV on first Sunday in January next year… 'and He also sent me to tell another woman, a member of the church, to resign her teaching job to found a primary school. The instruction was very clear, and I shared with the people what the Lord had told me after the service.

I told my wife to prepare for the programme, part of which was seeking God's face to know the right name to call it while I prayed as well. We met that same afternoon to compare notes. My wife and I received 'Joy of Every Woman' and we knew we

were on. That same day, before any of those I spoke to went to the bank to draw any money, a sister from our Ife church came with a message from a lady to me in Ilesa. When I opened the letter, it contained a small passport-size photograph and a note. The note read, 'Rev. Areogun, God bless you. You may not recognise me in the assembly. Only about two people can recognise me. I attended your fellowship in Ife twice and I was blessed. I am now in Sweden. God said I should send this money for the work of the ministry… 'That money all the way from Sweden arrived on the morning that I received the instruction; it was £300, and it was enough to start the TV program. Hallelujah! Following the leader will lead you into your wealthy place. The world is full of the devil's traps, and it is the leader who knows everything. I told the other woman what the Lord said (she was the vice-principal of a secondary school, which looked like a big office at that time), but she didn't resign as the Lord instructed.

Which leader are you following? Is it your brain? Or are you reasoning that something is right because it looks nice to you? Or is it your spirit which is the

candle of the Lord? Some brothers claim to have received a sister to marry, but I know they are following their flesh because of the sister's shape, and some sisters also don't pray. Some have followed their heads and they are having problems, claiming that God led them. If God actually led you, you'll be able to say anywhere and before the Lord Jesus Christ that He led you. Did God lead you? How does God lead? Who are the personalities that God has chosen to lead His people? The Bible says by a prophet He brought Israel out of Egypt and by a prophet He took them to the Promised Land.

One of my friends was travelling from Ibadan to Ife. He had barely settled in his seat when the Holy Spirit said to him, 'Alight from this bus'. He responded, saying, 'Not me and you, sir, I'm staying here.' The Holy Ghost said again, 'Alight from this bus', but he still didn't. Suddenly, for no reason except for God's mercy, the bus conductor insulted him, and in anger, he came down and somebody else entered. He was forced to wait for the next bus. By the time his bus eventually got to Asejire, the bus he alighted from was involved in an accident; the front

half of the bus was crushed. He said, 'Holy Ghost, Holy Ghost, thank You! Holy Ghost, thank You, thank You… 'That was the Holy Ghost, the leader in his life, who said 'Alight from this bus'.

How much better if your heart just tells you 'make sure you don't form the habit of last-minute obedience to God'! You may have pushed yourself so far that you don't get last-minute instructions. Some people are so busy that the still small voice of the Holy Ghost in their hearts is swamped by the pressure from other things around them. You don't have to be an orthodox person. Over the years, people around me have known that I'll listen to God until the very last moment. Some of my senior associate pastors know that anytime they are travelling, and I call them on the road, they'll tell one another 'We're not making this trip'. If I ask 'Where are you?', I may ask them to return because we've got a leader, and if the leader says the road is not clear, beloved, don't get into trouble.

When there is a clash of leaders, and you are not

sure of what your spirit is saying, then go to the Holy Ghost. If you're not sure how to get it from the Holy Ghost, go to the anointing. God has this hierarchy of divine leaders for His people, and you shouldn't get it wrong. If you are following prophecy, then don't follow a prophecy that is directly contradicting the Bible. God can't tell you anything diametrically opposite to the Bible even if you saw it in a dream. The Bible is the higher leader.

> 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. (2 Pet. 1: 19)

If many people had followed their regenerated spirit, the leader, they wouldn't have got themselves in all kinds of horrible things that they've got into. In order to do that, you need to learn how to suppress your flesh so as to bring up the operations of the spirit. Christians need to hear more of this message because it is critical to our success on the earth. Hear it until you are angry at it. Hear it over and over again. By the time you finish reading this book, you

should at least be able to separate, at least in your personal self, the voice of the spirit from the soul and from the voice of the flesh. That's where your stand and your commitment to the Word of God will make all the difference. You should only follow someone who is getting the result of God. People who despise the things of God never get the results of God.

Hebrews 4: 12 tells us the key to separate the sprit from the soul from the body—that's the Word of God.

> For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. (Heb. 4: 12)

This is because your soul has many faculties—the emotion, the will, and the thought.

I met a brother at a conference in Ilesa many years

ago, and he was introduced as a man of God. My spirit put a question mark on him, so I kept him at arm's length. Although everybody was elated with his oratory, I was not carried away because the Holy Ghost gave me a caution even though I was seeing him for the first time. At about the same time, there was a sister in our ministry's missionary arm who had just broken her three-year-long courtship and was in a moment of traumatic withdrawal syndrome. I felt she needed counsel, so I travelled to see her in Lagos. I was surprised to see her excited, so I sought to know what was happening. She told me she met somebody she's going out with ('going out' is not a kingdom vocabulary). That was about a year after I met that man, and every enquiry I made about him did not yield any result apart from people telling me that he was a fantastic preacher.

However, I asked the sister whether the man told her he had pastored in so and so place, and had two churches there. She said 'No' and that maybe it was an oversight, but I disagreed because a man in telling a lady the story of his life, can't overlook the detail of where he started from. He was then in Lagos; I told

her it was a strange sign and that her emotion was deceiving her. Her emotion made it looked like he was the right man to marry. I found out later that the man had raped and impregnated some women compelling him to run away from his previous location to Lagos, where nobody knew his past, and it was my church member that the devil was pushing him to but God had prepared me a year earlier. Some years later, we went to Ibadan for a meeting, and I saw that man again in the office of a man of God, wooing the man's secretary. Presently, I learn he is in the United States. You know, some people are so smart they can wangle their way through anything.

Now, you see, if my heart didn't pick that caution, my church member would now have been in sorrow and pain, wondering, *Is my pastor called? Can my pastor hear God?* If they call you a hawk, you should be able to carry chickens. If you're called of God, there should be something from God that follows your life. Many people are in trouble because they are not following the right leader. It may not look reasonable to you, but you need to follow the right leader correctly. It's important that we need to

understand how to recognise God where He is moving.

Lay your hand on your belly and make this confession:

I have a leader. There's a spirit in me, and the inspiration of the Almighty gives me understanding over every issue of life. The anointing that I've received of God remains and abides in me and that anointing is teaching me everything. And because I have unction from the Holy One, the unction is in my spirit and I know all things. I am not subject to the deception of the devil; I will follow my leader in the name of Jesus. The Holy Ghost dwells in me; the devil cannot deceive the Holy Ghost and because he cannot deceive the Holy Ghost, he will not deceive me because I choose to listen to the Holy Ghost. The Bible says as many as are led by the Spirit, they are the sons of God. Holy Ghost, I am leadable—lead me, Holy Ghost, in Jesus' name. Amen.

Chapter 2

The Lord—Our Overall Leader

One of the things I tell our Bible school students is that there are some important subjects in the Bible. Every subject is important but there are some that are more important than the others. Also, there are some decisive subjects that if you don't understand, you will have difficulty enjoying the Christian life or fulfilling your destiny or your mission on the earth. One of such decisive subjects is faith. You must understand how to live by faith. The Bible says, 'The just shall live by his faith.'

Another decisive subject is how to be led by the Holy Spirit. In fact, if you can get these two together and understand them very well, you can be sure you're going to pass every other subject in the school of life. Interestingly, lots of Christians trifle with these two subjects, but the results in their lives show they do not know how to live by faith and there's no

worse place to find ignorance of living by faith than in the ministry. If a minister doesn't know how to live by faith, he's going to be a beggar somewhere down the road, or people are going to hold him to ransom somewhere in the future.

We, as Christians, also need to learn how God leads us and guides us, and that is essentially what this book is about. I've mentioned the fact that there are a number of things and personalities that God has ordained to lead His people. There are also some things and personalities that God does not want us to follow. God does not want us to follow our body. For example, the Bible says 'For we walk by faith, not by sight.' Therefore, when there is a conflict between our sight and faith, we should go with faith, but lots of people still walk by sight. They say things like 'I can't deceive myself. I will tell it like it is' and so forth, and they still fail. But we don't want to fail; we want to succeed all the time.

> For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. (Rom. 8: 14)

This passage could be read thus: ‘As many as are not led by the Spirit of God, they are not the sons of God’, but that’s not what it says because there are plenty of sons of God who are not led by the Spirit of God. Remember that sonship is where leading is. It is when a man has become the son of God that he is ‘leadable’, and there’s a difference between being ‘leadable’ and being led. If a person is not born again, God can’t lead him. Regardless of your power, you cannot turn a stationary car. You will need a lot of energy to move the car. That is what it is like when a man is not born again, but when somebody is born again, his life gets moving and his spirit is alive; then God can turn that person and move him. He’s a son of God, and he is ‘leadable’.

But Romans 8: 14 is saying that those who allow themselves to be led or those who enjoy the leading of the Holy Spirit or experience the leading of the Spirit of God are the ones who enjoy the benefit of sonship. The sons of God who are ‘leadable’ are the ones who enjoy the benefit of sonship. There are so many benefits of sonship. If you’re not led, you

cannot enjoy them. 1 Corinthians, Chapter 2, verse 9 supports this truth, and your desire should be 'Lord, I want to be led. I want to know how you lead, and when I know how you lead, I'm going to submit myself to the process of divine leading so that I can be led. And when I'm led, I can enjoy the benefits of sonship.'

> But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. (1 Cor. 2: 9)

There is a difference between working for God and being quiet for God to lead you. A lot of people are religious in their coming to church; they come to church over and over again but they don't listen. They don't even pay attention in church. And when something contrary to the Bible happens to those people, they do more damage to the testimony of God than somebody who is not even born-again because people have identified them with God so much by their continuous coming and religious activities. However, religious activity is different from

building a relationship with God. Christianity is not a religion—it's a relationship. The God of the Christian is not described as a distant God; He's described as the Father. He calls His people 'children'. It's not a title; we're actually His children, and there is no family without communication. Once it's a family, there's fellowship, relationship, and interaction, and that is the same way God wants to interact with us.

So God doesn't want our fellowship with Him to be a religion—He wants it to be a relationship in truth. 1 Corinthians, Chapter 2, verse 9 tells us the natural human eye has not seen nor has the natural human ear heard these things; therefore, you cannot hear it in classrooms, you can't hear it in your place of work, and neither can you hear it at home.

Nor has it entered into the heart of man, the things which God has prepared for those who love Him. (1 Cor. 2: 9)

> For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them. (Eph. 2: 10)

The Amplified Bible says there is a preordained path that you are supposed to take, a preordained work that you are supposed to do so that you can enjoy a predetermined life.

> For we are God's [own] handiwork (His workmanship), recreated in Christ Jesus, [born anew] that we may do those good works which God predestined (planned beforehand) for us [taking paths which He prepared ahead of time], that we should walk in them [living the good life which He prearranged and made ready for us to live].—AMP

God planned a particular kind of life for the born-again Christian to live, but it doesn't just drop on us like oranges; it comes as we take the paths that He wants us to take and do the work that He wants us to do. If we are going to do that which is similar to 1 Corinthians, Chapter 2, verse 9, we need to be led by His Spirit. Interestingly, the word 'leading' means that God doesn't trust our intelligence because if He did, He won't say that the Holy Ghost will come and guide us into all truth. That is a difficult pill for human beings to swallow because we like deceiving

ourselves that we can handle our lives, but from the Bible we understand that we cannot. That is why some people mock Christians and say things like this —'I'm not a foolish person. If you cannot use your brain, I can. Can't you think on your own?' In fact, one of the allegations of Europe against former American President George Bush was that he used too many religious terminologies in his speeches.

The world just wants to take God out of everything and assume we can handle ourselves. This is what the antichrist is waiting for; in fact, he'll be the greatest humanist. He will say, 'Remove God. Man can take care of himself without God.' Man is simply fighting the fact that one day he'll give account to God. He assumes this—'If I can deny the existence of God long enough, I will silence this fear inside my heart that tells me one day I'm going to face this God that I'm denying.' But we are humans, we are Christians, and we don't need to follow that line of foolishness. The Bible says, 'The fool hath said in his heart, there is no God… '(Ps. 53: 1). But everybody knows that there is a God.

As Christians, God does not trust the human being to lead himself. He didn't create a world in which man will live without a need for God. Rather, man was deliberately created with a need for God. How we meet and satisfy that need is what we call religion. Different people try to satisfy that divinely created need for God in different ways, and as long as that need still exists within human beings, there'll be all kinds of religions springing up. The devil cashes in on the fact that men leave the path that God predetermined for them. For example, hunger is part of God's creation for man; you don't satisfy that need by eating sand. Though you'll stop feeling the hunger, people will call you crazy because you are satisfying a legitimate need in a way contrary to how God planned it should be satisfied. That is the same problem with human beings; when some people say 'Well, we want to go and worship one idol in the river.' We worship some idols on the road and use oil and pepper; others slaughter animals and angels are wondering, *That's not the way to satisfy that hunger!* But the people say, 'No, that's the way we want to satisfy it.'

In the New Testament, He sent Jesus; the only way to satisfy that hunger is to become born-again. Yet many people go about trying to satisfy that hunger in different ways. God put the hunger there and also allowed a lack in our lives. We don't know what is best for us—only God knows what is best for us, and unless you agree with that, you'll be choosing many things that you think are best for you. Many people have made wrong marital choices simply because they felt they knew what was best for them; it is also common to find natural fathers who sometimes think they know the best kind of wife or husband their children need. Many people feel they know what is best for you, but only God knows what is best for you and me. He created us; He designed us, and knows what is best for us. We go about seeing people when, in reality, we should go to God who knows us and what is best for us. This requires humility; humility is simply submitting to the wisdom of God, aligning yourself with the truth that God is wiser than you. Submit to the choice of God —*God knows what is best for me.* Whenever you say, 'No! I know what's best for me. I'm not going to do that… 'then you are not humble.

Pride simply means you have an unscriptural estimation of yourself. Pride isn't a way of walking nor is it a way of dressing—it's a way you think about yourself. Humility is a way of thinking about yourself in relation to God. The Bible says 'There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.' Man usually doesn't know that the end of that road is perdition. You should note that every time you choose what is contrary to what God plans for you, the end of that road is perdition. It will destroy something in your life. It could be a job, a marriage, or it could be anything. It seems right for you, but is it the best for you? We should understand that the Bible always talks absolute terms. This world is looking for a religion that does not speak in absolute terms. This world is looking for something that does not present issues in black and white, and many Christians are also like that; but won't we be serving a very confused God if He doesn't have an opinion about every issue?

Moses asked, 'Who is on the Lord's side?' (Ex. 32: 26), but the world wants us to believe that God is

in everything and on every side, on the side of everything and everyone. The Bible indicates that there are two sides to every issue—the Lord's side and every other side. Once you're not on the Lord's side, you're against Him. Jesus said, 'He that is not with me is against me.'

There's no neutral position, and the world doesn't like that. They complain and say, 'It is too blunt; it is too black and white. Can't you create a grey area that we can use our intelligence? Can't you create a grey area for us that we can reason in our own way?' I need to tell you that that spirit of the devil is creeping into the church. 'Pastor, can't you create a grey area, where nobody is really sure so we can escape?' The Bible doesn't present any grey area. Some people say, 'In essentials, let us hold firm to things like this; in non-essentials let us do that.' All these are foolish philosophies.

Once God says no, it is no. It can be as dangerous as God says 'Don't go home through your usual route'; yet some people will say, 'That's a non-

essential. Why do you spiritualise everything?' We are not spiritualising everything; we are spirits already. Hallelujah! To say we are spiritualising everything is to think we are human beings trying to experience some spiritual things; that is why some say you are trying to spiritualise everything. Why don't you say you are humanising everything? You can't say you are humanising human beings.

By divine creation, we are spirits; we are not trying to spiritualise anything—we are spirits. Our job is to master how to live in the flesh while not losing our spirituality. The difference between the born-again Christian and angels is not whether we are spirits or not; it is in the natural life we are trying to live. For example, angels don't marry, so they don't understand why you are praying for a wife. Angels don't eat food like we eat; they don't understand what it means when you're hungry. Those are things we need to cope with because we are in this body. We are spirits as they are, but they don't have the constraints that this body has put on us. Therefore, learning to function in this body does not cancel our spiritual status.

When people say you are spiritualising everything, asking why you have to listen to God on every issue, asking God whether you should travel or not, don't be intimidated even if they say you are not pragmatic. When Christians, including ministers, talk that way, people call them pragmatic; in fact, describing a man as pragmatic is not a compliment because a pragmatic man is a man who is practicing the principle that 'the end justifies the means. I will get the result regardless of what I do'. That's a dangerous thing! Pragmatism will land you in hell. When you say you are practical, then remember that everything of God is practical when you apply it. Spiritual decisions in the Holy Ghost are always practical in their manifestations. It is demonic decisions that are stupid.

When Pharaoh had a dream (Gen. 41) and didn't know the interpretation, Joseph told him the meaning; seven years of great plenty would come, and seven years of grievous famine afterwards. He told him to save a fifth of the produce of every harvest and stockpile it. When they were stockpiling, other

countries would have thought they were crazy, saying, 'What kind of finance minister did you appoint?' It is weird that the man was using spiritual interpretation of dreams to give national food policy. However, when the year of famine came, everybody saw how practical Joseph had been. Contrary to the lie of the devil through the so-called pragmatists, if you violate the directions of the Holy Ghost, your practical life is going to suffer.

> But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.
>
> But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. (1 Cor. 2: 9-10)

The only way you are going to get the things God has prepared for you is that they will be revealed to you because no eye has seen them; therefore, you can't find them by looking around. Also, no ear has heard them; you can't find them by listening around or studying them. *But God has revealed them.* 'Revealed' is the language of divine communication.

You don't go to a school, and they say this is the class of revelation, that is why science is always following God. Science has never gone ahead of God. Science does not create anything; it only discovers what God has created. Therefore, science is millions of light years behind God.

Science is yet to discover many creations of God. So when a scientist discovers an aspect of this vast mystery, the world says, 'That man is a fantastic scientist! Let's hear him.' They'll prefer to listen to a scientist instead of a pastor when, in reality, the scientist is only following what God has said in the Bible. Long before Galileo discovered that the earth is round and not flat, Isaiah, Chapter 40, verse 22 had already said God sits upon the circle of the earth.

> It is he that sitteth upon the circle of the earth, and the inhabitants thereof are as grasshoppers; that stretcheth out the heavens as a curtain, and spreadeth them out as a tent to dwell in. (Isa. 40: 22)

The Bible tells us underneath the earth is turned up

as it were fire (Job. 28: 5). It also says the earth is still expanding, and scientists have only recently found out that new universes are being created; they are just discovering it, but it's already in the Bible. There are some things that science is still arguing about the Bible. Drop science and follow the Bible. If Jesus tarries, fifty or five hundred years to come, they'll find out that this Bible is still true. But you shouldn't miss God's leading simply because science has not proven it. You can't take the things of God to the laboratory; maybe it would take five thousand years to come, but if the Lord tarries, science will find out that divine healing is real. Some branches of science are now discovering the connection between confession and health. They've discovered that confessing the Word of God has an effect on your health. Those suffering psychiatric problems can talk to themselves in order to resist and break the power of the devil. That truth had always been in the Bible; therefore, it's important that we, as Christians, know what we have and don't let anyone intimidate us.

While we are encouraging Christians to be bold in God, occultism is applying science to itself; the

newspapers are now becoming replete with many occult things and are propagating occultism through intellectualism. Fantastic professors and other notable individuals now speak in defence of the occult things. They say, 'I am involved in that, and we're not doing anything occult.' That is a lie of the devil. The leopard cannot change its spots neither can the devil change his colour. The devil is only trying to put a stamp of respectability on demonism. They want to elevate some occult societies and cults into the same class as Christianity.

The devil is launching a multidimensional attack these last days. Therefore, we, as Christians, need to understand that this Bible in our hands is not like any other book and Christianity is not like any other religion; it is a relationship between the Father and His sons. We should be convinced beyond any doubt that the Holy Ghost is not an influence but a real person who is living in us. *He is our leader, and if we listen to Him, our lives will reflect the fact that we're following Him.* Unbelievers will soon start asking us 'How did you do it?' because no matter how they intellectualise occultism, demonism, and the devil, it

will fail; they can't change what the devil is to any other thing apart from the devil. People will still need to find God and should be able to find God in your life.

> But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. (1 Cor. 2: 10)

You even find some occult groups with tags that say 'I'm born again.' Strange groups call themselves born-again with all kinds of books that they're reading. Even born-again people read some of those books and open themselves to some demonic operations because they're seeking after strange things. You must not seek after strange things. Just stay with the Holy Ghost. 'God has revealed them unto us by His Spirit.' It means that if we're going to find those things God has prepared for us, we must know how the Holy Spirit operates. We didn't receive the Holy Ghost for the sole purpose of speaking in tongues. He comes into our lives to do more than speaking in tongues. Since many Pentecostals are not allowing the full operation of the Holy Ghost in their

lives, people don't respect them these days, and instead mock them, saying, 'pente-rascals.' We are not rascals.

On the contrary, there is no more powerful segment of Christianity than the Pentecostal segment. This is because when the Holy Ghost comes, He says you shall receive power (the Greek word is *Dunamis*), effectiveness, and power to live, after the Holy Ghost has come upon you. That power negates any mistake from your background when you're born-again and when the Holy Ghost comes in—whether you have education or not is no more the issue; whether you have human connections is also not a factor any more. He makes all the difference when you allow His full operation in your life.

Learning to follow the Holy Ghost will lead you to a place of honour and dignity in this world. It will lead you to the thing that God has reserved and prepared for you. Don't be a peripheral Christian. The core issues in Christianity are learning to live by faith and learning to be led by the Spirit. If you can

master these two, you will be able to get through every other issue in life. If you know how to be led by the Holy Spirit, you will know who you should or should not marry, where to work, what kind of work, what kind of investment to get involved in, when to travel, and when not to travel.

Man Is Not To Lead Himself

He's our leader. God didn't plan that you should lead yourself and you need to understand that.

> O LORD, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps. (Jer. 10: 23)

No matter how intelligent you are, you can't direct yourself; but the devil is always in the business of making you believe that you can direct yourself since he knows that if you take the direction of your life from the hands of God, you're a cheap prey for him to deal with. It's not an insult to call you a sheep. 'Sheep' only means you follow the leader, and once you follow the leader, you will not follow a stranger.

Will you rather follow God or the devil? Don't let any unbeliever intimidate you for following the leader. Many politicians are proud to say they are following a particular person as their leader, a man like yourself, whose life is a story of mistakes and errors and whose chanced wealth has brought him into the limelight; they make such people their leader because he has some money.

Once this truth settles in your spirit, you'll understand who you should follow and who should order your steps. David, another great man who lived on the earth, said, 'The steps of a good man are ordered by the LORD: and he delighteth in his way' (Ps. 37: 23). It is not in man who walks to direct himself, yet many of us are trying to direct our lives by ourselves. Some people come to church and claim they are adults and they assume they can direct themselves. What have you done with your life since you turned sixty? Is it a testimony of failure and pain, or that of joy and gladness for you and your family? The testimony of pain and failure will continue when an individual struggles and argues with the leader, because it is in not in man to direct himself.

Everyone of us should start seeking the One who can direct us. When some medical students finished their MBBS, I asked them for their plans for housemanship. I understood that most of them had not prayed; they were simply making contacts with one uncle or aunty somewhere and applying to different places. Why not go to the One who knows where He wants you to be? It's amazing how Christians, even though they go to church, don't even listen to the leader when making key decisions in life. God said it's not in us to direct ourselves or direct our steps. Regardless of how many mistakes you have made in the past, to know the next step you need to take, find out from God.

You should settle down and say, 'Father, I agree. Please direct my steps'. If you can take ten steps in your life as directed by God this year, you'll be amazed where God's way will lead you to instead of taking a thousand crazy steps. God didn't plan that we should live a life of trial and error. Even if motivational books tell you Thomas Edison tried a thousand times before he succeeded, you must

understand that his experience is not scriptural. It's amazing how some people just build their lives around funny things. Since it happened to Thomas Edison, they encourage young graduates to try out as many jobs as possible before they find the right one when, indeed, a Christian graduate can spend one week to find out what the Lord will have him do in life.

I never wrote an application since I knew as far back as my second year in the university that I will be in the full-time ministry. It wasn't about fasting and praying since God had already told me what I would do. I told God, 'God, when it comes to marriage, I don't want to propose to more than one person. When the time comes, just tell me the person I'm to marry—I'll propose to her and marry her.' You can't find any woman on this earth or in heaven who will say that I proposed to her, except my wife. A Christian is never meant to live a life of trial and error. When people say a man is experienced, is it negative experience or positive? Rather, you should be an experienced person in the way the Lord operates. Let your experiences be in the Bible. Be

experienced in practicing the Word of God; be experienced in the Holy Ghost.

> But when the Philistines heard that they had anointed David king over Israel, all the Philistines came up to seek David; and David heard of it, and went down to the hold.
>
> The Philistines also came and spread themselves in the valley of Rephaim.
>
> And David enquired of the LORD, saying, Shall I go up to the Philistines? wilt thou deliver them into mine hand? And the LORD said unto David, Go up: for I will doubtless deliver the Philistines into thine hand. (2 Sam. 5: 17-19)

Though David was a warrior who didn't run from battles, he didn't just rush into battles either. When you read in the Bible that 'the battle is the Lord's,' it is telling you that God only fights for us in the battles He chooses for us. He doesn't fight the battle that you choose for yourself. You don't go into a battle because somebody says he wants to fight you; if you go into such a battle, God is not going to fight for you. *David enquired of the LORD* but the people of the world will say, 'Why do you need to enquire since the enemy is out there? Go out and fight them.'

If God said no, David would not have gone.

> And David came to Baal-perazim, and David smote them there, and said, The LORD hath broken forth upon mine enemies before me, as the breach of waters. Therefore he called the name of that place Baal-perazim.
>
> And there they left their images, and David and his men burned them. (2 Sam. 5: 20-21)

I'm showing you the Lord as the overall leader. It is not in man to lead or direct himself. Do you talk to Him? Do you ask Him? Do you seek Him? Do you seek Him as if your life depends on Him? Or do you seek Him for cosmetic reasons or as a way of silencing your conscience? Ezekiel, Chapter 14 shows how people can come to God with their minds already made up and they're asking God to guide them. David didn't get overconfident. You'll never grow to a place that God will say 'Now, you're an experienced Christian. I don't need to lead you again. You can lead yourself.' You will never get to such a place, although some people think otherwise.

In the world, maturity is seen in continuous independence and not rebellion; independence gives you a do-it-yourself mentality. However, in the kingdom, your maturity is seen in your continuous dependence on God. Among human beings, maturity is seen in independence from your parents. You want to do things, you want to get your own house, your own car and so on. No one enjoys a forty-year-old man who still goes to his dad to ask for directions; they would say, 'Can't you think?' But that is exactly the opposite of what happens in the kingdom. The more mature you are in the kingdom of God, the more you know you can't lead yourself. In the kingdom, you can recognise an immature Christian whenever he or she says 'I don't have to talk to the Holy Ghost about everything. I have sanctified senses. God has given us common sense. He didn't say you should throw it out of the window.'

Such a Christian is simply immature because the more you know God, the more you don't trust your brain. The more you listen to Him, the more you depend on what He tells you. Don't regard people's mockery; you know more than they do. Why should

I be intimidated if my daughter starts laughing at me, when I know much more than her? Imagine you are about to travel with your boss who knows nothing about God and he despises you while praying—why should the laughter or jeering of a spiritual infant disturb you? Rather, it is your prayer that will save him in time of his need.

On another occasion, 'The Philistines came up yet again, and spread themselves in the valley of Rephaim'. David didn't say 'We defeated them the other time, but they didn't learn their lesson. Gather everybody and let's go.'

> And the Philistines came up yet again, and spread themselves in the valley of Rephaim.
>
> And when David inquired of the LORD, he said, Thou shalt not go up; but fetch a compass behind them, and come upon them over against the mulberry trees.
>
> And let it be, when thou hearest the sound of a going in the tops of the mulberry trees, that then thou shalt bestir thyself: for then shall the LORD go out before thee, to smite the host of the Philistines.
>
> And David did so, as the LORD had commanded him; and

smote the Philistines from Geba until thou come to Gazer. (2 Sam. 5: 22-6: 1)

And when the inhabitants of Gibeon heard what Joshua had done unto Jericho and to Ai, They did work wilily, and went and made as if they had been ambassadors, and took old sacks upon their asses, and wine bottles, old, and rent, and bound up; And old shoes and clouted upon their feet, and old garments upon them; and all the bread of their provision was dry and mouldy. (Josh. 9: 3-5)

The spirit of deception will always use something external to deceive you. Therefore you need someone invisible before you can win deception. The devil always tries to deceive you with things you are familiar with. If you will not be deceived, you need to listen to someone that is inside you.

Everything the Gibeonites used was external and old.

And they said unto Joshua, We are thy servants. And Joshua said unto them, Who are ye? and from whence come ye?

> And they said unto him, From a very far country thy servants are come because of the name of the LORD thy God: for we have heard the fame of him, and all that he did in Egypt, And all that he did to the two kings of the Amorites, that were beyond Jordan, to Sihon king of Heshbon, and to Og king of Bashan, which was at Ashtaroth.
>
> Wherefore our elders and all the inhabitants of our country spake to us, saying, Take victuals with you for the journey, and go to meet them, and say unto them, We are your servants: therefore now make ye a league with us.
>
> This our bread we took hot for our provision out of our houses on the day we came forth to go unto you; but now, behold, it is dry, and it is mouldy:
>
> And these bottles of wine, which we filled, were new; and, behold, they be rent: and these our garments and our shoes are become old by reason of the very long journey.
>
> And the men took of their victuals, and asked not counsel at the mouth of the LORD. (Josh. 9: 8-14)

Can you compare what they did to what David did? How many times have you done what these people did here—entering into a league with people who are going to hurt you, simply because you didn't seek the face of God and didn't ask God nor check with Him?

Even in ministry, some people are more excited than others. My kind of calling is not built around excitement. I'm going to check out in the spirit. We've had people who tried to come to our Bible School that we didn't accept. Someone applied to be in the Bible School, but my spirit didn't just agree. I asked him to bring a letter from his pastor. The Bible School coordinator was too excited to sense any caution. The man brought the letter, and interestingly, the pastor of the church he was attending in Lagos was a son of this house during his undergraduate education. He wrote two letters: one greeting me without referring to the brother applying to attend Bible school and another neutral and official letter. Despite his claims that the pastor was his pastor, my reservation was confirmed. I called 'his pastor' on the phone and asked him what he knew about him. He said, 'That man just came to our church two months ago. That's why I wrote to you. I know you'll understand it.'

I told the brother, 'You can go. I will send for you when I need you'—because I have a leader.

Some Christians have welcomed dangerous people into their homes because they said I'm a brother. The Gibeonites said they were from afar, yet they were among the people that God instructed Joshua to destroy, and you know the problem they caused them later when Saul was king, all because they asked not counsel from the Lord.

David also inquired of the Lord.

> One thing have I desired of the LORD, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the LORD, and to inquire in his temple. (Ps. 27: 4)

He was a great champion of the kingdom. Look for your heroes in the Bible; don't look for your heroes in Hollywood or in movies or in politics—look for your heroes as Christians in the Bible. Look for your heroes among the champions in the Bible. The Bible says, 'Follow them who through faith and patience obtained the promise'—who, through the leading of the Holy Spirit, got to their expected end in

God. Moses did not say he was a mighty man. He was learned in all the learning of Egypt and a warrior of a rare kind, yet he led Israel by following the glorious cloud; the pillar of fire by night and the pillar of cloud by day. He didn't say 'No!' Where the pillar stayed, they stayed. If it stayed one year, they stayed. If it stayed one day, they stayed one day. If it moved one night, they moved. He didn't say 'Can't we think?'

The Idol in Your Heart

Nowadays, you see many have taken their lives from the Holy Ghost. Some pastors are preaching all kinds of strange and dangerous things on the pulpit. They are building the heads of people to be bigger than their hearts, and their spirits are so lean. You see Christians talking like the world. Sometimes you don't know the difference between a Christian and an unbeliever in their craziness after things in the world. But Christians are supposed to be listening people, listening to counsel. We are a people with a leader. Don't follow people who are following their brains and their intelligence. Don't follow people who say an unbeliever is their leader. Sometimes you read an

article in the newspaper of one who ought to have travelled by air but the plane had a fault and that person went on to board a car and was involved in an accident; he alone died. Maybe the leader was trying to stop him, saying, 'That journey is not safe—don't go.' But he disobeyed. We, on the other hand, are not foolish people; we are just 'led' people.

Don't forget who you are. It is when you forget who you are that you compare yourself with the world. A day in God's court, David said, is better than a thousand elsewhere. This means that what you will get in one day of waiting upon the Lord will do you more good than three and half years of struggles by your effort. A thousand days' running helter-skelter cannot compare to the result of one revelation you will get from waiting upon the Lord. People keep struggling when they refuse to pay the price. I counselled a woman and told her that three days of waiting on the Lord will solve all her problems, but she wouldn't listen.

Some people have substituted prayer meetings and

miracle services for the Holy Ghost in their hearts. Is your husband angry with you? Do you have a counsellor? Why not go to Him? He'll show you what to do to pacify him. Even if he is an unbeliever, God knows how to lead you into a place of peace with him. There was a sister that the Holy Ghost told to give her husband a glass of cold milk when he comes home from work one afternoon. She did and that solved all the problems and eased all the tension in their home. Just listen to the Holy Ghost in your heart. Do you have a Counsellor? Whenever you don't ask the Leader, He will not force Himself on you.

Some people go to God saying, 'Oh God, talk to me', but God will reply, 'You are deceiving yourself, but you can't deceive me.' Before you enquire of the Lord, let us see what qualifies a man to do so.

> Then came certain of the elders of Israel unto me, and sat before me.
>
> And the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, Son of man, these men have set up their idols in their heart, and put the stumbling block of their iniquity before their face:

should I be enquired of at all by them?

Therefore speak unto them, and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Every man of the house of Israel that setteth up his idols in his heart, and putteth the stumbling block of his iniquity before his face, and cometh to the prophet; I the LORD will answer him that cometh according to the multitude of his idols. (Ezek. 14: 1-4)

Pastors feel this kind of things when people come to seek counsel. They are supposedly good Christians, yet they have idols in their hearts and put the stumbling block of their iniquity before their faces. The idol Ezekiel speaks of here is not a shrine, but the idol of their personal opinion—the things they want to do that they have set in their own hearts, but they just came to humour you. And they say, 'Please, let's find out'; what does God want us to do? They have already planned what they're going to do. If you're ever going to get God to talk to you, tell God what is in your heart already. 'Please, sir, this is what I'm thinking on this matter.' A young man praying said, 'Lord, I want you to show me who I am to marry.' Why don't you tell God thus: 'God, what I have in my mind is a plump sister or a sister who is light in complexion—in fact, I'm already thinking of

Sister XYZ. This is what is in my heart—you know it, and I don't want to hide it. I put it aside now. Show me who you want me to marry.' That's being honest, and God can guide you.

It is better for you to say, 'Lord, this is what I want to do. It's already in my heart. This is what I'm thinking. I want you to guide me.' You see, trying to say there's nothing in your heart is like the little child who goes to his father with biscuits, and the father says, 'Give me that biscuit' but the child hides the biscuit on top of his head, saying, 'I can't give you.' The fact that the child cannot see the biscuit does not mean that the father can't see it too. That's how foolish many Christians behave with God. The child is hiding the biscuit on top of his head. 'I'm not giving you. I can't find the biscuit.' Because he can't find the biscuit, he forgot that the father is looking at the biscuit. You must understand that God is looking straight into your heart. He knows exactly what you're thinking. He knows what you're going to do with all the fasting. He knows the decisions you've made in your heart regardless of what anybody says. Why don't you tell him? Don't keep deceiving

yourself, praying, ‘God, please show me… ‘That is where religion comes in. Don’t insult God; He doesn’t like that. It’s as if you are insulting God’s intelligence as it were. This is a wrong way to approach God and the implication is that if you want to travel, and you have made up your mind and all the plans to travel, you’ve bought the ticket and everything is set and the Lord says don’t travel, and yet you say you need to ask God while you continue planning, He will most likely answer you by telling you to travel. Many Christians have died in accidents and experienced all kinds of horrible things because God answered them according to the idols in their hearts. If you’re going to get divine direction from the leader, it is better for you to come plain with what is in your heart already.

> That I may take the house of Israel in their own heart, because they are all estranged from me through their idols.
>
> Therefore say unto the house of Israel, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Repent, and turn yourselves from your idols; and turn away your faces from all your abominations.
>
> For every one of the house of Israel, or of the stranger that sojourneth in Israel, which separateth himself from me, and setteth up his idols in his heart. (Ezek. 14: 5-7a)

God is saying when you have an opinion in your heart before you ask Him, you are separating yourself from Him. That's a very serious matter. We are not like the people of the world; an unbeliever may not seek God's counsel before travelling or making major decisions, but if a Christian tries the same thing, he may get into trouble. Stop following the believers who are not following the leader. Just like people raise fowls to slaughter them during festive seasons, they feed them until the day of death; that is what the devil is doing to every unbeliever because they are already in his cage. He's just feeding them so that the bigger they are in the world, the greater the sorrow in the world when he wipes them out. That is why the devil doesn't eliminate the unbeliever until he has reached a stage of prominence and he wipes him out in an instant.

> And putteth the stumbling block of his iniquity before his face and cometh to a prophet to enquire of him concerning me; I the LORD will answer him by myself:
>
> And I will set my face against that man, and will make him a sign and a proverb, and I will cut him off from the midst

> of my people; and ye shall know that I am the LORD.
>
> And if the prophet be deceived when he hath spoken a thing, I the LORD have deceived that prophet, and I will stretch out my hand upon him, and will destroy him from the midst of my people Israel. (Ezek. 14: 7b-9)

When some people come to me for counsel, and I perceive that they have what they want to do in their hearts, I tell them to do what is in their hearts. They may say, 'Excuse me, sir, please pray on this matter.'

I reply them, saying, 'I am receiving that you do what is in your heart.' This is because I don't want to run afoul of what God has already said on this matter; if I tell them what is already in their hearts, I will face the consequences. Imagine a sister saying, 'Is it right to marry this man?' whereas the man has proposed to her, and she has already given her consent. Another person says, 'I'm thinking of going for this interview' when he has already received the letter of interview. If you say no, he'll come up with a different story.

> O LORD, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps.

> O LORD, correct me, but with judgment; not in thine anger, lest thou bring me to nothing. (Jer. 10: 23-24)

Here Jeremiah was attesting to the fact that he could miss the mark, and he was asking the Lord to correct him.

Take Advantage of the Lord's Entourage

> The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want.
>
> He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters.
>
> He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.
>
> Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.
>
> Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over.
>
> Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever. (Ps. 23: 1-6)

When David said ‘The Lord is my Shepherd’, what he meant was ‘that is the person I’m following’. The truth about this passage of the Bible is that goodness and mercy don’t follow us, but the Lord, and as many as follow the Lord will have goodness and mercy following them.

In Israel, the shepherd leads the flock from the front. The shepherd leads in front. We know Jesus said, ‘I am the Good Shepherd’; He leads in front, and His sheep follow Him. Just as the governor of a state goes out with an entourage, God also does not come anywhere alone. When He came in the Old Testament, He came with an entourage of angels, two of which are called goodness and mercy.

> Thou crownest the year with thy goodness; and thy paths drop fatness. (Ps. 65: 11)

Therefore, if you are walking in the path of God, you’re walking in the path of fatness. If you’ve been on the same road that a government official’s convoy was moving, you will notice that the road will be

cleared for him and some smart drivers take advantage of the entourage and go faster than the others. God is saying here that a Christian should take advantage of the Lord's convoy. The Lord is my Shepherd; you only need to put yourself between the Lord and goodness and mercy. Goodness and mercy will allow the children of God to get into the Lord's convoy but they won't allow demons. I assure you that after reading this book, goodness and mercy will follow you as long as you are following the Lord.

A man of God, E. B. Hill, said he went to Palestine to meet Rev. Jesse Jackson, the black American politician, and they both went to see the late Yasser Arafat, and the king of Jordan hosted them to a dinner. Jesse Jackson was allowed to enter the hall but they refused E. B. Hill's entry until Jesse Jackson acknowledged that he was with him. In an instant, their attitude changed towards him and they started giving him the same honour they gave Jesse Jackson. How much more when you are following the Lord and He tells His entourage 'He is with Me'!

All the entourage recognise that you are in the number, and that's what happens when you follow His guidance because he is going ahead of you. He will never lead you to where His presence will not go in front of you. The Lord is going in front of you, and the glory of the Lord is your rear guard; goodness and mercy are following you all the days of your life. If you just learn to follow the leader, you'll enjoy all that goes with it. The president just can't come to a state, and his special advisers will be denied entry. Once you are in the entourage, all the privileges, protection, and the blessings will follow you. That is how it is, but most of the time we just take ourselves away from Him and say that it doesn't look right to us. Even if the road will be rough, He will go before you and make the crooked places smooth. He will level the mountains; that you saw a mountain does not mean that God is not leading you, but God is saying that He will take personal responsibility.

God will never lead you where His presence will not go ahead of you. You will find out that before you get there, He has arranged people to wait for you. He

will never lead you to a company that will say they don't know you. When you get there, they will be expecting you. He's working on the heart of men to your advantage, and He will go ahead of you if you're following Him. The only way God will go ahead of you is for you to follow Him. He can't go ahead of you if you're ahead of Him, but if you'll follow Him, He'll go ahead of you.

Make a decision today to wait on Him; say, 'I won't follow my idea, I won't follow my opinion, and I won't follow my education. I'll wait on You, even if it doesn't look logical. But if You say I should do it, I will do it.' That's the leading! You may ask, 'Sir, what if I'm wrong?' God is more interested in your wanting to be right than in your being right. There are so many people who don't want to be right. That is to say 'I want to follow my heart. I check my heart, and this is what I feel God is saying. I've removed what my idea is, I've presented it, I've laid it on the table, and I've opened my cards face up and said, "Lord, whatever you say, that's what I'm going to do".' The devil attacks everybody, no matter your maturity and no matter how many years you

have been walking with the Lord. Every one of us still has the devil trying to attack our receiving, saying, 'Are you sure you're doing the right thing?' That's where you follow the Lord by faith. That's where God covers the risk. If you want to be right, but you take a wrong step, God will take you back. But if you don't want to be right, He allows you to have your way. You may ask, 'How do I know?' The Bible says 'With the pure thou wilt shew thyself pure; and with the froward thou wilt shew thyself forward'. That's God saying if you appear like that, you'll find me like that. 'God is not mocked, whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap' (Gal. 6: 7). You can't sow sincerity of wanting to be right, and God allows you to be led wrong. No! No! No! God will not allow the devil to hijack your leading.

A man of God said, 'If I kneel down to call the name of God, and God allows the devil to answer me, that's His business.' If my daughter calls me, and I keep quiet just because I want to teach her something and I allow another man to answer, then it is not correct because it is my responsibility to

answer my own daughter so that nobody deceives her. If you call the name of Jesus, God will not let a demon talk to you because you want to be right. But there are so many Christians who don't want to be right, and they're claiming that they're right. *God wants you to want to be right* because He knows that we are not perfect. He covers us in areas we may make mistakes. Sometimes He comes to you by sending somebody to ask 'Do you want to do this? No don't do it!' I believe that this teaching will make a whole lot of difference in your life if you follow it and practice it. Start talking to God. David inquired. The prayer of inquiry is 'Lord, should I do this? How should I do this? How should I go? Which way should I go? What should I do next?'

Be very sincere with God, ask Him to guide you. He'll go ahead of you if you will follow Him. If you have developed some ideas in your mind that you want to drop, it's time to drop them. Tell the Lord, 'I'm going to drop it.' Tell the Lord 'This is what is in my heart concerning that matter. But I want to find out your will, I will lay it down.' I've met some born-again Christians who refuse to drop

relationships they have been involved in as unbelievers, saying they will make the relationship right; if you are like that, why don't you lay it down before God? 'Lord, this is it. I've always had this mind with God.' When our ministry was starting, I said, 'Lord, if you are not in Life Oasis, take it away. I don't want to get involved in anything you are not involved with. My life is precious to me and precious to God. You're a serious God, and I'm a serious person. I don't want to waste my time, and I know you don't waste anybody's time. If you don't want this ministry or this church, close it down, I give you permission. If you don't want me to do this, let me know.'

If you're sincere and you want to be right, God will help you to be right. But many people don't want to be right. They want God to sanction their own plans. God is not like your uncle or your husband or your wife that will 'rubber stamp' things for you. The Word of God is clear on the matter—if you come to God with an idol in your heart, He will answer you according to that idol. There is a better, richer, sweeter, and more excellent way when you

follow the Lord, our overall leader.

The Lord wants to go ahead of us; if God is going ahead of you, there is no mountain that can stand before Him and there's no Red Sea that can wait for Him. There's no valley that is too deep for God to take you across. There's no number of enemies that can defeat you if God is going ahead of you. He told David, 'Wait until you hear the sound of footsteps in the tops of the trees; go forward quickly, for the Lord has gone out before you to overcome the army of the Philistines.' If the Lord fights for you, you don't need to fight. You don't choose battles on your own; let it be those that the Lord chooses, and the way to fight is to follow Him. Don't just look for methods; learn to follow God because when you do, God will never lead you wrong. He will never lead you into problem.

Father, thank You for Your word that is gone forth. I pray for your children who will read this book; I ask that you anoint them with understanding. Take them beyond the letters of this book into the reality of

it. Take them into the truth of it. We choose to follow you. You are the leader. We submit and lay on the table everything that is an idol in our hearts. On every issue we want to be right and pray, oh God, that everyone of us will know the joy of the leading of the Holy Spirit. Thank You, heavenly Father. In Jesus's name I pray.

Chapter 3

When there are Clashes in Leadership

> Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber.
>
> But he that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep.
>
> (John 10: 1-2)

Now, this is warning you, as a Christian, to beware of people who come to you in crafty funny ways contrary to scriptural ways. Over the years, I have gone out to preach for many churches, and one thing I tell them (though it sounds funny) is this —'Supposing you see me next week in this town, and I come to your house without your pastor, you should beware of me!' Yet many Christians today are opening themselves to robbers, and many who steal from them because they don't take heed to this.

Every sheep is expected of God to know his shepherd. The beginning of your problem as a Christian is when you're confused about who your shepherd is. Anything and anyone that comes contrary to the way a shepherd comes is wrong. 'He that entered by the door is the shepherd of the sheep.' You know the owner of the house doesn't enter through the window. When somebody is entering the house through the window, everyone knows he doesn't have the key to the door!

> To him the porter openeth; and the sheep hear his voice: and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out. (John 10: 3)

This is your key to divine direction. The sheep hear His voice and He calls His own sheep by name and leads them out. One of the things that we are dealing with is this; when there's a clash of leadership, who do you follow? As a congregation, for example, a visiting minister is not your leader; it is your resident shepherd that is your leader. I've gone

to preach for people over the years and seen some rebellious members of the church ask some questions from me as a visiting minister, to get the second opinion to what their pastor is dealing with in their lives so that if I say something contrary, they can use that against their pastor. No! I've learnt over the years to separate issues that have to do with the church and issues that have to do with the general body of Christ. They say, 'What do you see about this particular church practice?' Now, if 'that' is the way your pastor has received it from God to guide you and lead you to stay right, then stay with it. I don't impose our church practices over other churches whenever I go out to preach though some people want me to. No! In such instances, you must know who your leader is.

> And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice.
>
> And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him: for they know not the voice of strangers. (John 10: 4-5)

They follow their leader, the shepherd, for they know His voice. A stranger here is not necessarily

talking of the devil, but someone who is coming into the sheepfold in an improper way. Let us consider the story below:

> And, behold, there came a man of God out of Judah by the word of the LORD unto Bethel: and Jeroboam stood by the altar to burn incense.
>
> And he cried against the altar in the word of the LORD, and said, O altar, altar, thus saith the LORD; Behold, a child shall be born unto the house of David, Josiah by name; and upon thee shall he offer the priests of the high places that burn incense upon thee, and men's bones shall be burnt upon thee.
>
> And he gave a sign the same day, saying, This is the sign which the LORD hath spoken; Behold, the altar shall be rent, and the ashes that are upon it shall be poured out.
>
> And it came to pass, when king Jeroboam heard the saying of the man of God, which had cried against the altar in Bethel, that he put forth his hand from the altar, saying, Lay hold on him. And his hand, which he put forth against him, dried up, so that he could not pull it in again to him.
>
> The altar also was rent, and the ashes poured out from the altar, according to the sign which the man of God had given by the word of the LORD.
>
> And the king answered and said unto the man of God, Intreat now the face of the LORD thy God, and pray for

me, that my hand may be restored me again. And the man of God besought the LORD, and the king's hand was restored him again, and became as it was before.

And the king said unto the man of God, Come home with me, and refresh thyself, and I will give thee a reward.

And the man of God said unto the king, If thou wilt give me half thine house, I will not go in with thee, neither will I eat bread nor drink water in this place:

For so was it charged me by the word of the LORD, saying, Eat no bread, nor drink water, nor turn again by the same way that thou camest. (1 Kings 13: 1-9)

One key principle that I've been passing across to you is this: you must recognise and identify who your leader is in every given instance. Lack of recognition of who the leader is can be very dangerous. In fact, it can be lethal; it can also destroy. There are Christians who have walked straight into the jaws of death because they followed the wrong leader. I have just pointed out the leader between your pastor and other men of God.

Now, you must be clear who your pastor is under God and who is not your pastor so that you don't

follow the wrong leader and get into trouble. There are Christians who come to see me. I am not their pastor; I don't know them, yet they say, 'Well, I'm planning to marry so and so person. Can you pray about it? Which one of them is God's choice for me?' That is a recipe for disaster! Even if that man is a man of God, because he doesn't know you or any of those concerned, to be prophesying into your life on whom you are to marry can endanger you. There are people who have lost their money and their future to such dangerous prophecies. The reason is they didn't settle the question of 'Who is my leader?'

Now the king told this young prophet to follow Him, but he declined because the Word of the Lord had said to him, 'Eat no bread nor drink water nor turn again by the same way that thou camest'. So he went through another way. It's just like God says to you, 'You came to Osogbo through Ilorin road. When you are leaving, don't leave through Ilorin road, but go through another road.' So you went through Ibadan before going to Ilorin.

Now, as he was going through another way in obedience to the Word the Lord spoken to him, he violated the instruction he had received.

> Now there dwelt an old prophet in Bethel; and his sons came and told him all the works that the man of God had done that day in Bethel: the words which he had spoken unto the king, them they told also to their father.
>
> And their father said unto them, What way went he? For his sons had seen what way the man of God went, which came from Judah.
>
> . And he said unto his sons, Saddle me the ass. So they saddled him the ass: and he rode thereon, And went after the man of God, and found him sitting under an oak: . . . (1 Kings 13: 11-14)

That was his first mistake; God didn't say he should sit down. When you begin to take undue rest that God didn't allow you, unnecessary problems will catch up with you. It was undue rest that David was taking before he stained his career. When he should have gone to the battle, he delegated it to others. He must have said to himself, 'Oh, I'm tired. I can't kill myself. If nobody praises me, I will praise myself.'

When you are under the mandate of God, He is the one who chooses your rest time. When God was leading the children of Israel from Egypt to Canaan, it was not they who chose when they rested—it was the glory cloud. When the glory cloud rested, they rested. When the glory cloud moved, they didn't stop.

> And he said unto him, Art thou the man of God that camest from Judah? And he said, I am.
>
> Then he said unto him, Come home with me, and eat bread.
>
> And he said, I may not return with thee, nor go in with thee: neither will I eat bread nor drink water with thee in this place:
>
> For it was said to me by the word of the LORD, Thou shalt eat no bread nor drink water there, nor turn again to go by the way that thou camest.
>
> He (the senior, the old prophet) said unto him, I am a prophet also as thou art; and an angel spake unto me by the word of the LORD, saying, Bring him back with thee into thine house, that he may eat bread and drink water. But he lied unto him.
>
> So he went back with him, and did eat bread in his house, and drank water. (1 Kings 13: 14-19)

This was a prophet that the Word of the Lord came to, and now another prophet came to him, bringing another word that contradicted the word that God spoke to him, saying an angel spoke to him. There were two leaders now trying to lead him. The Holy Spirit had spoken to him, and an angel spoke contrary. How do you know that it is the wrong word? Every lesser authority must speak in consonance with what the greater authority has spoken. If a lesser authority speaks contrary to what the higher authority has spoken, it is an error! So you need to be able to know who is the higher authority —is it the Holy Ghost that spoke to this man, or the angel that spoke to the other prophet? It is only a higher authority that brings a contrary word that you obey!

Many Christians don't understand such simple principles, and they've fallen into the hands of great and grievous satanic deception because somebody spoke all kinds of crazy things. So this man went back. Now, look at what happened:

> And it came to pass, as they sat at the table, that the word of the LORD came unto the prophet that brought him

back:

> And he cried unto the man of God that came from Judah, saying, Thus saith the LORD, Forasmuch as thou hast disobeyed the mouth of the LORD, and hast not kept the commandment which the LORD thy God commanded thee, But camest back, and hast eaten bread and drunk water in the place, of the which the LORD did say to thee, Eat no bread, and drink no water; thy carcass shall not come unto the sepulchre of thy fathers. (1 Kings 13: 20-22)

What a painful thing!

> And it came to pass, after he had eaten bread, and after he had drunk, that he saddled for him the ass, to wit, for the prophet whom he had brought back.
>
> And when he was gone, a lion met him by the way, and slew him: and his carcase was cast in the way, and the ass stood by it, the lion also stood by the carcase. (1 Kings 13: 23-24)

The lion didn't eat him; it just killed him and stood beside his corpse. The ass stood there because the lion didn't kill it; it killed the man because he had violated the laws of following the leader. So you must be able to recognise who your leader is at every instance. Part of the problem of many Christians is that some are going to wrong churches, some go to a church that God did not found, and some follow a

man that God did not call. A pastor is never chosen by the people he is to pastor; the office of the pastor is a calling, a supernatural equipping to do a supernatural work. Now, if you look at this man's judgment, how many people will think it's fair? The man had done everything, but he committed just one mistake. It looked like a simple mistake. Well, it's a cardinal sin in the kingdom to follow the wrong leader! Note this well and don't forget it. It is lethal, and it can wipe out your existence.

Whenever there is a conflict between a higher authority and a lesser authority, go with the higher authority. It is only a higher authority that can bring you a word, contrary to what a lesser authority has brought. That is to say, if you receive something by a lesser channel, the higher channel holds its way. This man had received the higher channel by the mouth of the Lord.

Let us consider another example.

> Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria, and preached Christ unto them.
>
> And the people with one accord gave heed unto those things which Philip spake, hearing and seeing the miracles

which he did.

For unclean spirits, crying with loud voice, came out of many that were possessed with them: and many taken with palsies, and that were lame, were healed.

And there was great joy in that city. (Acts. 8: 5-9)

While the miracles were happening in the city, something happened in verse 26:

And the angel of the Lord spake unto Philip, saying, Arise, and go toward the south unto the way that goeth down from Jerusalem unto Gaza, which is desert.

He knew that this was the angel of the Lord and he proceeded. When he got to that place, he didn't know what to do next, so he waited. He didn't lead himself there so he could not take over control. Some of you have gotten to a place that the Holy Ghost led you; you now took over from Him. You began to rack your brain, *What do I do next?* If God brought you there, let it be Him that will tell you the next step. Now look at the following verses:

> And he arose and went: and, behold, a man of Ethiopia, an eunuch of great authority under Candace queen of the Ethiopians, who had the charge of all her treasure, and had come to Jerusalem for to worship, Was returning, and sitting in his chariot read Esaias the prophet.
>
> Then the Spirit said unto Philip, Go near, and join thyself to this chariot. (Acts 8: 27-29)

He didn't just do anything. God will lead you one step at a time, and you will listen to the next instruction. God was leading him; He wanted to send the gospel to Africa through this Ethiopian. He took an evangelist from a major crusade to a desert to preach to one person. After that, the Bible says he experienced supernatural transportation and went to Azotus—he didn't go back to continue the crusade. If it were many of us, we won't just go. Most Christians are not flexible enough for God to lead them. They are too rigid. But in your flexibility, do not be flexible like the young prophet who violated the law of following the leader. Don't violate the law of following the leader. For example, this does not belittle any of our pastors, but if I say 'This is the will of God for us in the church concerning a matter'

and a pastor in this ministry says anything contrary, he will be endangering the life of any member who follows him—even if it seems reasonable to him! This is because that is violating the law of following the leader. Who is the higher leader?

There are principles of divine safety that blesses your life, and there are Christians today who have fallen prey to all kinds of stupid demons, just like this man became a prey. There was really no angel who spoke to him; he lied. The thing is why would God speak an authentic prophecy of judgment through the mouth of a man who just lied to a man who had diligently obeyed Him? That's to tell you that God does not violate His principles; God respects His principles more than men do. God is a God of principles, but men look for methods. Always look for God's principles.

There are leaders whom God Himself has ordained. I've mentioned some of them to you—your spirit, the Holy Ghost, the anointing, the calling, prophecy, and the Word of God. Angels can lead you; they can bring divine word, but when the word of an angel contradicts the word of the Holy Ghost that you've heard, or contradicts the Bible, that's a

false angel talking to you. God has set principles in place. If you understand those principles, your life will be OK.

If a man of God just appears in your house and says 'I brought a prophecy to you', and you have never known his ministry, why don't you bring him to your pastor if you don't know what to do? You see, some Christians say, 'I don't want to sin against the anointing.' But if a man of God is violating principles of the Bible, he's not under the anointing; the anointing does not violate itself. Someone came to me and said, 'This is the counsel given me in our church about marriage.' I directed him back to his pastor because as an officer in the body of Christ, I must recognise the place that God has given to the local shepherd to head his local church. Most Christians haven't been taught that.

Now you must understand there will be clash of leaders. Some people have received something in their spirit supposedly. Some people have had dreams supposedly that were so powerful, yet there's a point in those dreams that contradicted the Bible! A minister was dying of a disease after building such a mighty work; the brethren prayed but nothing

happened. The late Kenneth E. Hagin went to meet him, and said, 'Why do you want to die?' The man said he had a vision one morning in his bedroom where a man appeared in a shinning garment and said to him, 'My son, it is not my will to heal you!' And he believed it! Don't you see it in the Bible that healing is the will of God? Why will Jesus be beaten with lashes for fun? The Bible says ' . . . by the stripes of Jesus we were healed'.

You don't need a vision to tell you whether it is the will of God or not. It's already the will of God written in the Bible. That vision was a false vision. That was a minister of God that missed it because he placed visions above the Bible; vision is not above the Bible. The prophetic ministry brings divine intervention while the teaching ministry brings the understanding of God. Sometimes, when you're operating under the prophetic anointing, things happen fast. But then, God doesn't say that your life as a Christian will be a crisis event. If you read the Bible, in Acts of the Apostles, it was not every day that they were having miracles.

They had normal daily living where they had to live by their faith, and practice the word of God on how

to use the fruit of the Spirit to relate to their husbands and wives. It wasn't everyday that fire was coming from heaven in form of flames of burning fire on their heads nor did they have the lightning and thunder experience daily.

> Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world. (1 John 4: 1)

It says believe not every spirit. Test the spirits. How are you going to test the spirits? A man of God was talking, and he said a lady in his church came to him and said the Lord spoke to her that the pastor should walk around the pulpit seven times that Sunday before preaching. Seven times! And that was what one man of the occult did and he was sharing it as a testimony. I said, 'Isn't it crazy?' If I'm going to do something stupid like that, God will speak to me directly, not through someone else.

One Sunday, a lady appeared at Ilesa (Osun State, Nigeria) and brought a message on a sheet of paper. She said God told her to go to all pastors in town,

and give them the message they should preach that morning. There are some foolish pastors who will collect that sheet and preach a message from the devil to their church on Sunday because they don't understand that God doesn't lead His people from behind. God will feed his flock; He said I should receive the food from Him to feed the people. He broke the bread and gave it to His disciples. He didn't give it to somebody to give it to His disciples; He gave it to the disciples, and they gave it to the people. It's so contrary to the principles of God, yet people do that.

A man of God, Kenneth Copeland, said that one day he was going out for a meeting. He had just been reading the book of Joshua where the Word of the Lord said, 'Today, I will begin to magnify you before the people of God.' And as he was going into the meeting, he heard a voice that said, 'My son, I will magnify you so seriously… 'As he took three or four steps, his spirit was troubled, and he said, 'No! That's contrary to the Word of God. God doesn't magnify men—He magnifies Christ.' He rejected the thought in Jesus' name.

That can't be the voice of God because he knew

the Bible. Yet you have seen people sit down in church and somebody brings prophecy for the pastor, saying, 'My son, what I will use you for, I've never used anybody like that before, and I will never use anybody like that. Look, I will use you to shake the world', and everybody starts clapping. The spirit of error wants you to get into pride. What will God use you for that He has not used anybody for before? The Bible says there is nothing new under the sun. Which way is he going to use you that he had not used Moses? That He had not used Jesus? You must be able to know if that is the voice of the shepherd. Know the leader. Follow the leader. Between the Holy Ghost and an angel bringing a supernatural word, you must know the leader. When one contradicts the other, know the one you're going to follow. This young prophet followed an old backslidden prophet who lied, and he died.

I want you to pray for yourself. *Father, help me to know Your principles. I will follow the leader. Let me know who my leader is at every point in time* Who is the leader between the Word of God and the Holy Ghost? The Word of God is the leader. No wonder many prophets have walked out of the ways of God into familiar spirits and demonic operations. This is

because when he begins to move away from the Bible, he won't know when demons will start telling him, 'You are the next Elijah. You are the second Elijah to God.' No! He's not using the Bible. He thinks the Holy Ghost is superior to the Bible or to the Word of God. There are instances where you see evangelists bringing their gifts above the Word of God. We are not following miracles; miracle is not our leader. The devil does miracles. There's no place where the Bible says signs and wonders are your leader. Many people have followed signs and wonders and wandered away from life, God, and safety. Sharpen your spirit to know the truth. Don't fall prey to all the lies and all the deceit of the devil in the world today.

Jesus didn't say, 'By their signs you will know them'; He said, 'By their fruits… ''Fruits' is more of a leader than signs. The fact that people are rushing somewhere does not mean the truth is there. Don't promote signs above the Word; don't promote miracles above the Word. Don't even promote the Holy Ghost above the Word. Some may wonder and say, 'How can you say that the Holy Ghost is not above the Word? Don't you know what the Bible says in Psalm 138, verse 2—'You have magnified

your word above your name'? That is God saying His word is superior to His name. You must know that.

Once you master this principle, you'll be safe. The fact that somebody has done a miracle, a gift of the Holy Ghost, it's not superior to the Word of God. If we see miracles, thank God, but the Word is what we are to follow. Follow the fruits and not the signs. Some say, 'If God is not using him, why is the cripple walking?' Don't you know the devil also does signs? Be balanced. Follow the Holy Ghost by the Word.

Chapter 4

Who is My Leader?

We have identified for ourselves different kinds of leaders that God has chosen for His people. We have also studied what should be done when there seems to be a conflict between what two leaders say; which leader do you follow? We have established that you follow the higher leader, and it is necessary for you to know which leader is higher. Romans 13: 1 tells us a truth concerning higher authority in the Bible:

> Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God.

Young's Literal Translation says, 'Let every soul to the higher authorities be subject, for there is no authority except from God, and the authorities existing are appointed by God.'

God operates by principles, and you must always

understand the principles of God. For example, the principle of God as regards dealing with spiritual authority or physical authority is that the spiritual authority is always higher than physical authority. Therefore, if there is a conflict between a spiritual leader and a physical leader, always go with the spiritual leader. Among the different categories—the physical realm or the spiritual realm—there are higher authorities.

> Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation. (Rom. 13: 2)

Verse 5 goes on to say 'Wherefore ye must need be subject, not only for wrath… 'which means you should not be subject to spiritual authorities or higher authorities because you are afraid of the anger of God—' . . . but also for conscience sake.'

One of the scriptural ways to cultivate your spirit is to develop the voice of your conscience to become stronger. Start practicing by submitting yourself to a higher authority. When you submit yourself to a

higher authority, you do it for two reasons. The lesser reason is for wrath: ‘I don’t want God to judge me. I don’t want to sin against God’ and so on. But a higher reason is for your conscience’ sake so that your conscience will not be dead. Your conscience will not become callous, seared, neutral, or follow a wrong standard. Many Christians have become like this—they mock people who subject themselves to higher authorities without knowing they are destroying their conscience. For example, a teacher demands silence in the class, but a student is talking behind. The other students may say, ‘I don’t want to talk so that my teacher will not spank me’, but God is asking me to obey the teacher, because obeying the teacher—a higher authority in a secular setting—will enhance the ability of your conscience to guide you in some other issues in life.

People who violate this principle eventually manoeuvre their conscience to a strange end, permitting them to do anything. For example, if you’re driving your car and the traffic light says ‘stop’ and you cross the line because there’s nobody to arrest you, you damage your conscience such that it is also unable to stop you when you want to do something dangerous to yourself. The man who

flouts the red light will also mistreat his wife or children somewhere along the line since he is losing caution in his life. However, a man who obeys the traffic sign even though there is no oncoming car or law enforcement agent to arrest him is enhancing the ability of his conscience to pick divine direction in the future since the traffic light is a higher authority. However, every time you shunt the queue in a public place and disobey such rules, you also violate the ability of your conscience to pick signals.

The Bible says we should obey and submit ourselves to higher authorities for the sake of our conscience. Most people don't understand this and, as a result, they damage their conscience to a place that it just allows them to do anything. Just like if you drink hot tea daily, very soon your throat will stop discomforting you. The hot tea will burn your throat so well that it will deaden the cells there. That is what a seared conscience (1 Tim. 4: 2) looks like. Every time you violate anything, any emblem or a symbol of authority, you deaden your conscience a little bit more. But every time you obey a symbol of authority, you awaken your conscience a little bit more. You sensitise and sharpen your conscience a little bit more, so much so that when you come to a place

where you need to make a life-and-death decision, and you have less than five seconds to make such a decision, your conscience will alert you.

What you do in the seemingly unrelated instances of submitting or not submitting yourself will determine whether you're going to make a mistake or be correct in a critical hour. If an usher directs you to a seat in church and you refuse that direction, you affect your conscience because that usher directing you to a particular seat is representing the authority of the pastor, representing the authority of the church, and representing the authority of Jesus, the head of the Church. When we understand this, we will be more careful. God is challenging us as Christians that we should know the things that we need to do for conscience' sake. 1 Peter 2: 13-20 tells us something very interesting about this matter:

> Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake: whether it be to the king, as supreme; Or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers, and for the praise of them that do well.
>
> For so is the will of God, that with well doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men:

> As free, and not using your liberty for a cloke of maliciousness, but as the servants of God.
>
> Honour all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honour the king.
>
> Servants, be subject to your masters with all fear; not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward.
>
> For this is thankworthy, if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully.
>
> For what glory is it, if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently? But if, when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God.

There's no glory in suffering for misbehaviour, but if for conscience sake you do right and are punished, bear it patiently because it is of great price before God. As Christians, we should do things because of our conscience since it is the voice of God in our life; our conscience is the standard of God in our life, and it is representative of the Divine within us. When you become born-again, your conscience is awakened from the sleep of death that sin has consigned everybody's conscience. In Christ, your conscience is alive, but it needs to be developed and kept alive and sensitive. Beware of activities that destroy your

conscience and deaden it altogether so you are not a born-again Christian who still does strange things, since your conscience can permit you to sin without restraint, not minding the consequence. For such people, nothing pricks their heart to say what they are doing is bad.

If you allow your conscience to dwell too long in the dead zone, your living on the earth will get to a dangerous extreme where you won't be able to pick up the voice of God any more, and you will not be able to know what is right or wrong. Therefore, the Bible is saying we should always obey all authorities in order to keep our conscience right before God. Failure to do this is one of the reasons why many Christians don't know how God leads them. The same person who trembles at his boss on Monday flagrantly disobeys his pastor on Sunday, forgetting that his pastor is a higher authority compared to his boss. Yet he thinks that is the proper thing because his boss pays him, forgetting that everything in his life is tied to the spiritual.

Just as the man who violates the traffic light endangers himself and other road users, people who violate their conscience endanger themselves and the

people around them. The Bible is saying that there's a principle of higher authorities. When there's a clash of leaders, we must choose intelligently, by understanding which of them is the higher leader in the situation, and follow the higher leader.

The Higher Leader among Ministry Gifts

When we talk about the body of Christ, we should understand that there's a general body of Christ, the universal body of Christ and Jesus is the head of that body. Nobody can take the place of Jesus. That body is made up of several local assemblies of believers, but not every church (local assembly) is recognised as part of the body of Christ because there are churches today that were founded out of reasons that are contrary to God, but let us focus on local assemblies that God Himself established. Each of these churches or local assemblies has a candle in heaven. God gives them a leader, a shepherd.

This example of local assemblies could, in a broad sense, include ministries that are ordained of God, including apostles, prophets, evangelists, and teachers. They may not be pastors over an assembly

but they will have a ministry. God can instruct a teacher to establish a Bible school. The Bible school becomes a local representation of the body of Christ under the watch of that teacher, and within the context of their relationship, between teacher and student, God will speak to the teacher concerning the student so that he can counsel the students and minister to them; anything beyond that is going outside the scope and jurisdiction of that ministry.

Evangelists can have ministries—evangelical outreaches, ministries, and so on, and then they have staff and so forth. God will hold the man, whom he has called to set up that ministry, accountable and responsible to cover that ministry. When we come to the local church, we should understand that it is the primary place where God develops His body. Everybody is a member of the body of Christ through a local church, and in this context, understanding should be supplied and therefore, every ministry officer should have a local church from where they function in the body of Christ. The head of the local assembly is the pastor. That is how God ordained it. He set up the pastor to help the local assembly, and in that context, when a Christian member of a local assembly wants to find out who is

the leader between my pastor and another man of God over my life, it is very plain: your shepherd is your leader.

The first relationship between a shepherd and a sheep is leading. It's not a relationship primarily based on feeding, just as the first relationship between us and Jesus is leading us and not just feeding us. Whenever you think of God only as one who blesses, you are actually blaspheming Him. Don't think in your heart that God just wants to bless human beings. That's why many times people have wrong ideas about God. The cause of God blessing the human race is seen on the cross of Calvary. The blessings that God gave us are free to us but it was costly to Jesus. The only reason why they are free is that somebody paid for them, and we should always respond in that light. This truth is very important because many Christians are falling prey to counterfeit ministries. In my book, *Understanding the Ministry Gifts*, I explained that a man's ministry can become a false ministry when he starts operating under an assignment God did not give him, or operating under the anointing that God didn't put upon him. That is how people become false ministers.

When God puts you in church, He puts a shepherd in front of you to lead you, and He expects that shepherd to lead you supernaturally, by following Him, the overall leader (1 Cor. 11: 1). Therefore, when you're listening to the voice of your shepherd, you're listening to the voice of the Chief Shepherd (1 Pet. 5: 4) through the voice of your shepherd. God does not expect your pastor to counsel you with the aim of personal benefit from the counsel; in fact, that's one thing that differentiates a genuine pastor from others—he doesn't counsel you for what he will gain. He counsels you as someone who is going to give account to God. This law will keep you from charlatans: never seek counsel from someone who has something to gain from the counsel he is giving you. It is as if you are asking a bread hawker 'Is this bread fresh?' What do you think she will say? She will definitely say it's fresh, in view of selling the loaves.

A genuine pastor will not give you counsel because he wants to keep you in church. Some people do so but it is wrong, and we are going to give an account to God. You should give counsel to people because that is the best counsel for them from the Chief Shepherd. This is where the dilemma comes in; here

is a church member who is saying ‘this is what I want to do’. Ordinarily speaking, that seems like a good decision. But the pastor is sensing it in his heart that such a decision will not profit that person, and he tells the member so. If the member insists, you can’t force it. You will have to let some people pray through on some things, and sometimes, some people will get to learn through difficult experience because decisions have consequences. Nobody has a right to take Holy Ghost initiative for anybody.

I remember a brother who left town, relocating in order to advance his career, and I said it’s OK. I prayed for him, and he left. Later on, I had a vision of the Lord that I saw him back in the church at his post of duty. I sent for him and told him that I saw him in a vision that he was back, doing his assignment in the church, and that it meant that his time in the church was not yet over. He didn’t make any comment, and I didn’t push the matter. I left it so that he could pray. About a year later, events proved that he should not have left the church in the first place. At the time, leaving the church was not the issue; *the real issue was leaving the covering.* Just as a young child of eighteen years, in the first year of the university, who thinks because he can

vote, goes to the father and says, 'Well, Daddy, I'm an adult now. I don't expect anybody to ask me what time I come back home any more'.

And his father says, 'It's OK, you also shouldn't expect anybody to give you food any more.'

The son retorts, and says, 'No! I only meant that you should treat me like an adult.'

The father should also say, 'All right! I'll treat you like an adult, but you must also take the responsibilities of an adult.'

Some years ago, one of the young brothers, who was a staff with me in the ministry, left to start a ministry. Two years later, he came back with some issues that needed attention—he corrected himself. How I wished he mastered those things very well because there's that thing that tells you to leave the covering of God that God provided for you before you are ready for it. The Bible says we are sheep, and sheep don't lead themselves—*they follow a leader*. There are some Christians who want a second opinion to the counsel their pastor gives them. Over the years, I've tried to guide my ministry in the body of Christ by certain principles, one of

which is this: when I go to preach for another church, I don't build a personal relationship with associates of another pastor. No matter how nice and wonderful they are, I always relate with associates of another minister through their pastor. Some have tried to bypass their pastor, coming to me with an offering. I say 'hold on', call their G. O. in their presence, saying, 'Your pastor is here and he brought an offering to me… 'I believe this has kept me safe and given me integrity with the people that God has connected me to in the body of Christ. Occasionally, I find some people looking for such relationships with me because they want an alternative to the leader that God has chosen for them.

A crooked person can use this understanding to imprison his people so that they cannot have any relationship with other ministries, and several other burdensome limitations, but I am speaking of when somebody is looking for a second opinion to the divine guidance that his shepherd has given him. I remember a sister who said she received a vision to start a drama ministry and she had contacted some men of God, and now she needed my opinion. I didn't see anything about it; I wasn't even going to pray about it. I said, 'What has your pastor said

about it? That's the man who knows you—he knows your growth, your background, and where you are in the programme of God. Why don't you go and meet your pastor? Whatever he tells you, come and tell me. All these Christian leaders you are talking about, some of them are just members of fellowships; they are old Christians, and are nice and wonderful people, but they may not be accountable to God over your life.' She went to meet her pastor, and he asked her if she had finished the work that she was doing in the drama sub-group of the church. I said, 'That's good counsel for you. Why don't you stay and let God finish what He's doing with you?' Months later, while I was travelling, I saw the same lady by the road. Her clothes were torn, and her hair was scattered; she was actually really mad on the street. Her husband had deserted her, and everybody abandoned her. I was touched; I can't say exactly what happened to her, but the truth is that when you enter into a calling that God is not giving you, you enter into battles that God has not assigned for you.

There was also this case of a young associate pastor whose former classmates had started ministries and they kept nudging him to start his own thing. He came to see me for counsel, and I

encouraged him to stay, saying that God had a different plan for him. The brother stayed and laboured along with his wife for about ten years. When the man and his wife left that ministry, the testimony was that the president of that ministry needed ten different brethren to do the work both of them were doing. That was how faithful they were. I have a friend who saw a vision that God was sending him to a state that was regarded as a graveyard of the gospel in those days. His General Overseer was not convinced, and he told God, 'Lord, that is the person you put me under. Whenever he agrees, I'm ready.' And he left it at that and continued working. Three years later, God spoke to his G. O. and said, 'Release him, he's been faithful. I want him to do this work.' Today, their church is the largest in their state, doing a work for God.

Some people have gone to start ministries that God did not assign to them; they have wasted time and resources, and gone in to all kinds of battles because they did not have a headship call. Nobody is trying to intimidate you with senior-pastorship; rather, pastors encourage us not to do something contrary to the

scriptures. Before you go into ministry, ask ‘Who is my leader?’ God has put you somewhere; He didn’t make a mistake. Maybe God wants you to have the kind of road that your leader walked; serve diligently so that you can be released with honour into the body of Christ somewhere. Many brothers have started failed ministries because there was nobody to tell them that they didn’t really have a calling to head ministries. If only they settled the question of ‘Who is my leader?’, the man would have told them not to go. My friend could have been the best associate that man could ever have if God didn’t call him to start a ministry.

Being an associate pastor doesn’t make you inferior to the set man; it’s just different. This is the mistake of many people—they think that God can’t call somebody permanently as an assistant. If you say that, you are also implying that there must be a promotion for a wife somewhere in the future to become a husband, because a wife is called permanently as a wife. Why shouldn’t we believe that God can call somebody as an assistant permanently? Jesus is permanent; He is serving permanently as the Father’s assistant and He has not dethroned the Father ever since, and that is what the devil tried to

do. God can call an associate genuinely to start a ministry on his own, but if Christians understand this, they will be greatly helped. If you have relatives who have gone into that kind of ministry error, and you support them with your finances, you'll lose your finances because you are sowing not only on barren ground, but you are also sowing against the purpose of God, and God cannot allow you to finance what is working against His interest on the earth.

Let us look at John 10: 1—it will help us dispel some human misunderstanding that has invaded the body of Christ:

> Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up… some other way, the same is a thief and a robber.

Notice the word 'climbeth up'. There is a great difference between coming in through a door and climbing up. First, *before you come in through a door, you will have to wait.* Most people are not prepared to wait for their time under God. Second,

you have to be identified before the door is opened. Most people are not ready for that. In this day and age of technology, you can climb into the body of Christ by many means. Some people who have nothing to say are now on television and on radio, just to show that they've got money, just spouting off nonsense; these people are not sent to the general body of Christ. They would have done well just to stay with their congregation.

> We, however, will not boast beyond measure, but within the limits of the sphere which God appointed us—a sphere which especially includes you.
>
> For we are not overextending ourselves (as though our authority did not extend to you), for it was to you that we came with the gospel of Christ. (2 Cor. 10: 13-14)

The more knowledge you have, the better you become; in one of our ministers' conferences, a minister said, 'Please explain this to me—I've gone to big churches and I wasn't fed as a minister, but when I come to your conferences, I receive feeding.' The problem is that he's confusing the assignment of someone called to shepherd sheep with someone

called to minister to ministers. These are two different things. Some of the wisest ministers in the body of Christ don't even have churches. The late Kenneth E. Hagin fulfilled his ministry and he wasn't a pastor, but you can't argue with the fact that he was sent to minister not only to the body of Christ but ministers of the gospel as well.

Because of these warped standards, some people confuse their real leader in the body of Christ. God doesn't want us to climb up some other way. The Bible says, 'Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber.' There are many thieves and robbers today.

> The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly. (John 10: 10)

People have popularly interpreted 'the thief' to mean the devil, but Jesus was primarily talking about false ministries in John, Chapter 10. False ministries steal, rob, kill, and destroy. False prophets will

always or eventually steal from you, kill you and/or destroy you all together. Evangelists who start churches without God calling them to do so will tell lies to the people; they'll bring what is to work among unbelievers into the church, and they will turn Christians to perpetual babies and kill them eventually. Jesus was *primarily* dealing with false ministries here and not the devil; notice, he said 'whosoever' and 'he that does not enter'—that is a false prophet!

He that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. He comes in. I don't have to climb into our church by any means. There was a young minister who came to work at our church. I had not introduced him to the church, but the members had been seeing him. I had not officially introduced him, but he had been hanging around me. They knew he hung around me, he was in the office and all that. He assumed that being seen around me will give him authority with the flock. Pastors should understand that a well-taught church is a protection for the pastor and every other person.

One day, I was late to church since I was returning from a trip. This young minister noticed that I didn't come on time; so he got up and started

making some announcements, and they looked at him and asked him, 'Who are you?' He felt bad, but that is what the Bible is saying here. 'You've not been presented, and you expect people to accept you because they've seen you with me? No way!' Many Christians have fallen prey to people like this. The fact that you saw a minister with your pastor does not mean you should open your door to him. Has your pastor told you about him? Do you know there are some people who want to relate with the pastor in order to gain influence with the flock? There are some wolves in sheep's clothing who are so mischievous that when they get to a church, the first thing they do is to start relating with the leadership. Today, one fast way to get close to the leadership in the body of Christ is to sow a special seed. People like these say, 'I just want to give a prophet offering' or 'I just want to do this and that' and they will bring it directly and in person; they'll do anything that'll link them up with the man of God, especially the set man.

Politicians like taking pictures with the president. Even if they were not invited to a party, they do all they can to hobnob with the people there. That is why the Bible asks us observe them who serve

among us—observe them. The true people serve without seeking to be known, but the politicians want to relate without serving the set man. They just want to come and get at you every time…—'how are you, sir?'

Some years ago, there was a young man who was new in church, but I noticed rather strangely that he always hung by the door; anytime I arrived, despite the fact that the ushers were there, he would be the first person to come and open my car and collect my Bible. I thought, *This is a new person in church. Why is he jumping like this? Something is fishy somewhere.* Most Christians are naive until they walk into traps. Why? What is your goal? You're not a steward in the church; you're a new person. Why do you jump and take the ushers' work from their hands? I told the pastor to take note of him. Good truth will liberate you; it will save you, especially from people like these that *climb up* through another way. They want to worm their way to leadership without serving through the ranks.

It's only naive people that trust the untested. If you will be identified in the kingdom, you will need to serve your way up. One way the devil deceives the

body of Christ is to place gifting above character. Rather, we should say, 'Brother, please take your gifting out of the way. We want to know your character first.' The kingdom of God is built on character and not gifts. Many churches have been robbed because they put people's skills, gift, and education before their character. Let us know you without that gift; let us know you minus your voice; let us know you apart from that oratory. Who are you minus that gift of yours? Let's know the person behind all that razzmatazz. Let's know you. This is how pastors and leaders in the kingdom should approach people that approach them.

> To him the porter openeth; and the sheep hear his voice: and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out. (John 10: 3)

Even if you're the greatest preacher in the world and you go to a new church, Christlike quality requires that you submit to their process. Even if you are a man of God with an undeniable calling, and God calls you to join another man of God, you need to submit to the policies and principles of the ministry

that God chose you to join. You can't be a pastor in a ministry you are not willing to submit to. If God brought you to a church, He knows what He has assigned for you there.

But nowadays, in Lagos and some other places, you find pastors hiring members like football clubs that poach players from rival clubs. 'How much are they paying you in your church? I'll double it.' That is the error that has brought the body of Christ to where we are today, and somebody must start calling the church back to the standards of the Good Shepherd.

Verse 3 says, *'To him the porter openeth; and the sheep hear his voice:'* Do you hear the voice of your Shepherd? If animals are smart enough to hear and understand the voice of their shepherd and not another, why do human beings behave more foolishly than animals? A brother was about to travel when another man showed up saying he was once a prisoner and now he's saved. He mentioned the names of some prominent ministers in the body of Christ—names you can pick from anywhere without being associated to the ministries. That someone knows the name of a man of God does not mean he

is known by that man of God.

The man came in with a district overseer of a denominational gospel church, and they welcomed him in as a brother. The host brother travelled, and left his wife at home with the stranger who needed a place to stay for the night. The man's wife said, 'My dear, I feel somehow about this.'

The husband said, 'Shut up, I'm the head of this house!' and travelled. Although nothing happened in the night, the following day, the man woke up and said, 'Sister, come, you've taken care of me. I want to bless you… 'and he looked at her, narrowing his eyes as if he was perceiving something—you know there're some people who have studied the manner of Pentecostal manifestation even though they are strangers to the commonwealth of Israel.

He continued, saying, ' . . . sister, you have certain dreams like this.' And there are some dreams that everybody has; thank God, one of my pastors was their neighbour. He ran upstairs and grabbed the man. The man said, 'Sorry, I'm your brother. It's the devil that made me do it… 'They came to call me in the office, and when I got there, the first thing he said was, 'I'm a brother. See the letter…'

I said, ‘No no, the Holy Ghost will tell us who our brother is—you are not to tell us.’ The point is that the brother who travelled without his wife, violating the feeling of her conscience, didn’t understand *how to follow the leader.* They had a pastor because they were attending our church that time. They had a pastor living in the apartment below theirs—a single pastor with whom they could have housed the stranger. They could have taken the man to the pastor and said, ‘My wife feels somehow about this, Pastor. What do you feel about this?’ Some people attend church without following their pastor. If not for that pastor, the man would have raped his wife and maybe stolen their properties, and they would have thought they were doing a service for Jesus.

> Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. (2 Tim. 2: 19)

Every true pastor knows his sheep—‘ . . . and he calleth his own sheep by name’, and what? ‘and leadeth them out.’ When you’re dealing with a question like ‘Who is my leader between my pastor

and some other men of God?' and when the counsels they give you conflict, you ought to know who your leader is. If I don't trust the ministry of a man, I'll never bring him to my pulpit. During our church convention, I don't give my guest ministers any topic; I just receive the theme and say, 'Just go up there and be free to minister what God has laid on your heart—minister to the people, flow and bless them.' Since they have different callings, they can come and bless us. Christians like going from place to place, seeking counsel. The ministry of counselling is vested in the office of the pastor. Counselling in the body of Christ is not like Guidance and Counselling that some study in the university.

A woman came to us and introduced herself as a pastor; she wanted to invite my wife to preach for her at a women ministers' forum where she would launch the forum among other things. My wife looked at me. I said, 'She'll pray about it.' Then I asked a question out of my spirit: 'What does your husband think about what you're doing?'

She smiled, saying, 'I can't lie to you. I must tell you the truth… 'We discovered that she was doing those things in direct rebellion against her husband.

Her husband was a pastor, but she wanted to start a ministry of her own. I told her that if I could see both of them, I will know what to say. The woman was stepping out without her husband's blessing. If your husband is a pastor, he should bless what you are doing; if not, you are not following the principle of God.

I refused to let my wife go to the woman's meeting because the woman would be laying negative hands of people, and if people see my wife at that meeting, they will assume the ministry of the woman is right. You must always remember that leadership determines your safety, leadership determines whether you live or die, and it determines whether the spirit inside you is guiding you or it is your flesh that wants to do something. The leader you follow determines whether you'll succeed or not. It will also determine the decisions you take, the counsels you receive, and the choices you make.

The Holy Ghost spoke to the young prophet, but he followed another man that *an angel* spoke to; he lost his life in the process. You must know the higher leader in every situation you find yourself. That the man of God is the prophet that God is using all over

the country does not mean he knows you. God may not give him counsel on issues regarding your life. It is a different thing if your pastor brings him to your church and he prophesies to you. It is wrong to say 'that man sees visions. Let us go and see him.' That is why many people go and see prophets today, and some people have been prophesied into crazy marriages.

> And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice.
>
> And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him: for they know not the voice of strangers. (John 10: 4-5)

Christians should understand that God has placed the voice of His own ministry of 'Shepherd' in the ministry and calling of the pastors He gives us. Therefore, when a pastor is functioning in the supernatural office and anointing of a pastor, we hear the voice of our Chief Shepherd through his ministry. Today, in the body of Christ, people know the voice of many strangers but it ought not to be. Some years ago, a young lady went to consult a herbalist simply because she failed her examinations. That shows

who her leader is.

Who is your real leader in life? I heard the story of a mother who was rebuking her wayward daughter and denied her access to the house because of her promiscuity. The woman's friend offered that wayward daughter a place to stay in her own house, saying, 'My friend is too strict. Come to my house.' Eventually, the wayward girl snatched the woman's husband. How do you think she'd tell her friend, the mother of the girl? The girl's mother was her real leader.

In our church, sometimes, when members of other branches come to me for counsel, I ask, 'What has your pastor said about it?' When their pastors send them to me, they will either tell me ahead or say, 'Pastor said I should see you on this.' Whenever someone doesn't say that, I say, 'Go and call your pastor' or I ask the pastor, 'What are you dealing with in this case?' If God had not shown me, the pastor may be dealing with a personal issue that I don't know about, and the person will tell a story that will try to get you to say something contrary to the pastor's counsel, for example, 'Daddy told me to go ahead.'

My daughter knows how to play that game. When she was growing up, if she wants something where the brethren are and they disallow her, she'll come to me without telling me any precedence. 'Daddy, can I do that? Can I take that thing?' and in my own innocence, I say yes. She goes downstairs, and says, 'Daddy said you should give me that thing. Daddy said… 'and she's telling the truth because daddy did say so, although she didn't give me the full picture.

Many Christians play that game with their pastors today. The pastor would say, 'The man that you are walking with is not born-again' but the person would start looking for a way to get a different counsel. I remember a sister who played that trick on me some years ago. Her unbeliever boyfriend of several years proposed marriage to her, and because she thought she was getting old, she agreed to his proposal and told me she has found somebody to marry. I said, 'Are you sure?' I asked one of our pastors living in the same town, and he said, 'Sir, the young man is a drunkard.' The pastor told me he visited him and met him drinking gin. The sister denied it. I said, 'I can't consent to your marriage unless I have proved the man.'

Sometime in December, the sister came to see me, saying, 'Sir, I forgot your birthday. I must bring your birthday gift to you.' I thought, *Look at this criminal. My birthday was in May, and you are bringing a gift in December when I'm dealing with a matter that you shouldn't marry a drunkard.* Eventually, she brought a fat-looking envelope. I refused it and said, 'Put it in your bag.' There are all kinds of people that cross the path of pastors in the body of Christ. The sister wanted to settle me so I'll keep quiet on her marrying a wrong man. She was bringing a gift in December when we were dealing with this matter in her life. Can you imagine a Christian sister doing that?

Ministers of the gospel need to be careful about gifts. The Bible says 'He that loveth gift is not wise.' A gift blinds the eyes of the wise.

> Thou shalt not wrest judgment; thou shalt not respect persons, neither take a gift: for a gift doth blind the eyes of the wise, and pervert the words of the righteous. (Deut. 16: 19)

Gifts are given to bless, not to blind. There are sincere givers of gift—sons who bring gift to honour

their fathers, but that sister was trying to bribe me. When I brought her to confront that associate pastor, she later called him a traitor because she had settled him. It is important that you understand who your leader is. If she followed me, she wouldn't marry that guy. If she decides to follow somebody else, she will marry him and bear all her troubles alone with her drunkard husband. I didn't have any candidate for her but I'm just saying that they said this young man is a drunkard and if you marry him, remember drinking problem is not easy to overcome. A Yoruba adage says 'You are complaining to a drunkard that you don't like what he did yesterday; you don't know what he's planning, or what he's going to do tonight when he comes back from the bar.'

Christians need to understand that God gives us shepherds as part of His guidance system, as part of His protection programme for the sheep. Every Christian, at all times, must be able to say 'This is my pastor. This is my shepherd.' Joshua knew that the victory he was having on the battleground was because Moses was lifting his hand up (Exod. 17). Who is the man or woman through whom God ministers to your life through the supernatural functioning of their calling and ministry? This must

be someone who has accepted responsibility for your life, not just a titular pastor.

Most times, Christians have this conflict of counsel, and you find some people saying they have a ministry of counselling. That doesn't make you a counsellor. Counselling is in the ministry office of a pastor. You can't counsel somebody you don't know. This is just as wrong as people coming to a prophet to say, 'Excuse me, pray for me about… 'The man would ask, 'What do you want me to pray about?' and they say 'Let God speak to you, sir.' They tell the prophet to perform when God is not moving. You need to be careful, especially in this kind of days that problems are pushing people to seek for counsel by all means. Let us stay with the Word of God; if we do that, we're going to be safe.

The difference Between the Holy Ghost and the Word of God

> I will worship towards thy holy temple, and praise thy name for thy lovingkindness and for thy truth: for thou hast magnified thy word above all thy name. (Ps. 138: 2)

Most times, when Christians don't listen to God patiently, they open themselves up to simple errors. For example, somebody said, 'When a prophet is talking, the teacher must sit down. After all, what they are teaching is the Bible. I'm talking of what God is saying now.' The error that this person committed by saying such a thing is that he had promoted the calling of a prophet above the Word of God and *that* is a blasphemous error. Such a man will get to a point where he will say, 'We have gone beyond that thing called Bible—we are operating on revelations.'

It is because of this that God did not put the maturing and the continual watch of His flock into the custody of other ministry offices, except the pastor. One of the characteristics of a pastor in the Bible is that he *must not* engage in speculative doctrines or extrapolation of the scriptures. No, he must not do that, and it's very important that we relate everything that we do to the Word of God. That is the Bible, not the word of any man: 'Thou has magnified thy word above thy name.' When you are talking of the leader of leaders, the scriptures take precedence over any other leader, even a God-chosen who contradicts the scriptures. The scriptures reveal

some things to us on four different levels:

#1. The scriptures reveal the truth of God to us.

#2. The scriptures reveal the nature of God to man.

#3. The scripture reveals the principles of God to us.

#4. The scriptures reveal the mindset of God to us.

There are some things in the Bible that may not be written in black and white but is consistent with the nature of God. One day, I was dealing with a set of our Bible school students, and one of them said something like Jesus drank wine. I said, 'No, it's not so.' There are no bases for arguments. The fact that you didn't read it in black and white what kind of wine He turned it to, you must go to the next level of interpretation, that is, the nature of God. The nature of God, the consistently good, incapable-of-doing-evil nature of God tells you that God cannot turn

water into something that is devastating or destructive. I have heard some people say, 'Show me where it is written in the Bible that you shouldn't smoke cigarette.' I challenge such people that the things that the Bible says, you are yet to obey it, but you are looking to obey the one that it has not said. However, you must understand that when you're dealing with interpreting the scriptures, you must look at the truth of God and the nature of God. Is that thing consistent with the nature of God, the good God, the One who is incapable of error, the One who is incapable of evil, and the One who cannot lie—is it consistent with His nature? If it's not, drop it!

Whenever you see something that the Bible does not directly contradict but it contradicts the nature of God, you should know you are looking at an error. God can't tell you such a thing because the nature of God tells us the kind of things God can say and the kind of things God can't say. God cannot tell you to leave your husband and marry the pastor, who is married, and you are requesting that your husband and the wife of the pastor should die; that is inconsistent with the nature of God. Always ask yourself: 'Is it consistent with the nature of God?' A woman told some girls that God led her to marry her

husband when he was an unbeliever and now he's a minister of the gospel. She misled those girls, and they returned to picking their former boyfriends.

You cannot use an exceptional and occasional situation to build a doctrine. That a world-acclaimed man of God got married when he was a drunkard and a worldly musician does not mean everyone will have such an experience. An experience will never prove the Bible true or false; it is the Bible that proves your experience as true or false. God can allow anything in His sovereignty but that is an experience, and you cannot build doctrine based on an experience. Somebody said that you preach what you have experienced, but I say if that is true, then Jesus must have failed because He preached healing without experiencing healing. He preached marriage without getting married. You preach the Bible because it is the truth, not because you have experienced it. You then bring your life up to the level of the Word. This is where some people get into inferiority complex.

> Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness?

> and what communion hath light with darkness? (2 Cor. 6: 14)

You cannot find anything clearer than that. But many Christians are always looking for one single example to support their error and they go on to build a doctrine around it. No! You can't do that! When somebody promotes the Holy Ghost above the Word of God, what it means is that he is promoting His gifts; he's promoting the things of the Holy Ghost above the Word of God. The Father, the Son, the Holy Ghost, the three-dimensional as we call them; co-equal, co-eternal, co-omnipresent, co-omnipotent, co-omniscience. But in the scale of leading, the Father has given the Word the number one leadership position. *To be safe in these last days, first of all be a man of the Word before becoming a man of the Spirit.* Don't be a man of the Spirit before you become a man of the Word; you may not find your way back to the Word.

Many people have followed the 'spirit' and they never came back to the Word. In seasons of Holy Ghost revivals, the most sensitive people to things of the Spirit are the ones that the Holy Ghost falls upon

and they may be Bible illiterate. That's what led to some of these white garment churches. Some of the people that were in the white garment churches actually had an encounter with the genuine God, but their Bible illiteracy allowed the devil to hijack the move of God in their lives.

I led a herbalist to Christ years ago at a village when we were still a missionary organisation. The man inherited it from his father, who also inherited it from his grandfather. We burnt his charms and everything, and I could see that God had something for the man at that time; but he wasn't settling down to follow the Bible, in study and meditation. One day, he said the Holy Spirit told him that He would give him twelve maidens. If you check the Bible, you will find out that God will never give you twelve wives; that is the beginning of error, and many people who are sensitive to the things of the spirit must be careful because there are many voices in the spirit realm. It is the Word of God that weighs, tests, and confirms whether whatever you receive in the spirit is from God or not.

Chapter 5

Profiting by Visible Leaders

We have learnt to always go with the higher leader in a clash of leaders. There is another key I want to give you in this chapter. When you try to receive direction from a higher leader and you don't seem to get it, always go to the lower leader that you are sure of. That is, when you try to get direction from a higher leader and you miss it or you are not sure, then refer to a lower leader.

This chapter will explain this, and as we go on, that principle is going to help you. If you try to get direction from an invisible leader, and you don't get it, always go to a visible leader, or if you receive directions and you are not sure of what you are receiving from an invisible leader, then always confirm from a visible leader. God put the visible leader there for confirmation.

The Bible as a Visible Leader

The Word of God is visible. I believe you know that the Word of God is visible. That is why I qualified it again because the Word of God is not a lower leader—it is the highest leader. What would you do if there is a conflict between the Holy Ghost and the Word of God? Is such a conflict possible? There can never be a conflict between the Word of God and the Holy Spirit, but the problem is that many people thought they received from the Holy Ghost whereas, most probably, they did not. There can never be any conflict between any of the leaders that God has given to His people. There may be a conflict in what you are receiving, and that is why you need to know whom to meet for confirmation.

For example, a young brother came to see me saying that he received a direction to give a gift to another brother for his wedding. He heard an announcement that somebody was getting married; he didn't know it was not that particular brother, so he said he perceived he should buy a gift for that brother. I said, 'That brother is not getting married, at least not in the nearest future. That is not the person getting married, and since that person is not getting married, you can keep your gift and use it. Obviously, it can't be the Holy Spirit that led you to

give that.' God can't be wrong. The leaders that God chose for us can't be wrong. They are not wrong—we are the ones who are wrong. Let us imagine that someone wants to receive from his spirit. If his spirit is okay, his spirit will get something right from the Holy Spirit, but there is a possibility of error between transmitting what you receive from your spirit to the mind, and everyone must admit this. That you could be wrong is should drive you to go and check from places you should confirm what you're receiving. This teaching is important if you won't get into problems these last days.

How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation which at the first. (Heb. 2: 3)

It is possible to neglect what God is saying to you. It is possible to neglect divine direction which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord. Now it is God who starts speaking anything that has to do with direction for your life. It is God who drew the plan and the journey for your life; it's God who mapped out the geography of your destiny; He mapped out the people of your destiny; He mapped the locations there—the road that you are to walk. There is nothing wrong in anything that God has chosen, but

now in your trying to find out you could make mistakes.

Mistakes could come because you are insincere; mistakes could come because you are rebellious; mistakes could come because you are unwilling, and different things can lead to mistakes. Many Christians are refusing to acknowledge their errors with God. God is never wrong. If you ever say ‘God failed me’, you are only giving yourself away to the devil. God never fails anybody, and He’s not going to start with you. God starts talking by communicating and giving information to the leaders He has chosen for His people. For example, one of our friends, presently in Europe, some months ago was to travel to the United Kingdom to minister, and we were in our house praying. He said a word ‘pray with us about this trip’, and as we were praying, there was a word of prophecy: ‘God is about to open another door, a great door for you’ but we all forgot about it. Then just about two weeks ago, I got a call from him saying somebody was in that London meeting, who was a Romanian, and that he has gone back to Romania; they sent a letter to me that I have to get to Romanian

embassy in two days time, and he wanted me to pray along. So that was what God said that there is going to be a great door that was opening. Now, it was the prophecy that was creating that door; sometimes, prophecy can open doors for you. Prophecy can be the Word of God. Sometimes it is creative, and sometimes it is revelational.

You need to understand that sometimes when there is a problem in your life, God can bring a creative word to create something that was not there. A lot of times, prophecy is revelational—just revealing what has always been God's intention for your life that He is showing you 'This is my plan for you'. God's plan for that brother (he is an evangelist) has always been that. I always told him, 'I don't see you in this kind of work that you are doing. This is what I believe is God's plan for your life—to take you to nations and that prophecy is just showing that a door will open.' You need to understand how to relate with God's dealings in your life accurately so that you can return the glory to God.

Leading Versus Guidance

The ministry of a prophet is one of the leaders that God has chosen for His people. When our friend got to Romania, and from the time that the word came, he had to listen to other leaders, particularly his own spirit—the anointing in his life—to find out details of what to do. He didn't have to do anything. In fact, he didn't write any letter. The person just phoned from Romania, sent a letter, and said he wanted him to come; he'll be there for one month.

Now when he got there, from meeting to meeting, and from place to place, he had to listen to a leader. For example, there is a way that God will lead you from Abuja to Lagos. In leading, He tells you 'Go to Lagos from Abuja.' That's leading. When you get to Lagos, He will guide you from the motor park to Victoria Island and then to Surulere or wherever. That is not leading now—that is guidance. Guidance involves the intricacies. You know by divine leading that you are to move from one city to another. There is no ambiguity; you are not going to stop at Ibadan. You have heard 'from Abuja go to Lagos'; You get up and take a vehicle going to Lagos, and all you need to

ask is ‘Is this Lagos?’ If the answer is ‘No,’ you don’t alight.

That is leading, but then when it comes to guidance, you have to work some things out and that’s why many people fail. They can get some leading correctly but fail to follow the guidance of God. God begins to speak it and give it to those leaders who will communicate it to us. If you don’t get it right or you are not sure what you are receiving, then go to the visible leaders among them for confirmation or cancellation. If somebody gives you a prophecy that brings confusion into your spirit, know that God doesn’t bring confusion. The Bible says ‘God is not the author of confusion.’

Other Visible Leaders

I remember when we finished a convention some years ago at Ilesha, Osun State, Nigeria, the convention was going on very fine from Sunday to Friday, and on Saturday, we had the final guest speaker. When he came up and said, ‘Thus saith the Lord. Man of God, I’m moving you from Ilesha to

Lagos—you are going to do three things there… . ‘To make it very easy, a special offering was raised. My family members were there and they were very happy, but my spirit sank as soon as that prophecy came. I said this was serious and I looked at the whole thing and went to the other visible leaders in my life.

The first visible leader is *the pattern that God has dealt with me over the years.* In relating with God, He doesn’t change pattern with you. I said this is contrary to the pattern of God’s dealing with me. When I was coming to Ilesha, God spoke to me in a certain way; when I was to get married, God spoke to me in the same way. God cannot move me out of the town He sent me in a different pattern. If God is going to move me out of town now, He’s going to talk to me. If I leave town now and get in trouble, I would become an associate of this man, and I know I’m not called to be an associate minister.

Second, *it was contrary to the written prophecy that we had received in the ministry.* Third, *my spirit*

reacted against it and, of course, there were pressures. After I didn't obey it, some felt oh! *You made a mistake. You should go to Lagos!* Later, I found out that a number of people were only speaking out of concern for me, out of the concern that they felt that this man of God with this kind of anointing, you can't be staying in a place like Ilesha! They were saying, 'Go where you will be known.' I didn't know that such discussions have been going on and maybe somebody was just bold and forward enough to say, 'Well, let me move him', and you have got to be careful. Sometimes you can be concerned for people so much that you are prophesying out of concern instead of the mouth of God. You need to be careful that you don't fall for that kind of thing. Anyway, I had to deal with that, and we didn't leave town because I had other visible leaders that I could confirm from. You should understand, however, that my relationship with a guest speaker is different from a church member's relationship with me.

It is very important that you understand that. Most Christians don't understand. It is just like a school

principal and his staff and a principal of another school. If a staff is crossing to another school he will say go and get a reference letter from your principal. That principal is accountable for you, but a fellow principal is not accountable for another principal so that prophecy was violating a number of the principles of the scriptures.

Thank God that I didn't obey that prophecy. There are many ministers that such prophecies moved them into ministry offices that God did not call them into, and today most of them are out of ministry—some have entered into serious problems and if they don't stop, a lot of them will go before their time. Some ministers are just called to the music ministry and they've had such prophecies like 'God is calling you to establish a church' and he takes the music calling which is the help ministry to establish a church and, after about one year, every grace is drying up on his head, the music ministry is not developing, he is not doing well as a pastor, and he's getting involved in battles that God did not assign to him because somebody prophesied to him.

Some wives have prophesied their husbands into ministry. ‘My son, I’m saying this to you… ‘one of the key words in Christianity is *sincere* meaning unmixed. If you are sincere, you will ensure that nothing is mixing with your motives. I don’t have a motive to be popular, I don’t have a motive to be seen, I don’t have a motive to be known, I don’t have a motive for fame; I just want to serve God. You must check your motives at all times. The same way you must be sincere with yourself so that you don’t convert your desires into revelations. This is especially true of sisters who receive brothers that don’t even have any idea of getting married to them. A young lady worked as my secretary some years ago, and she was a fine lady; one of my pastors was also single at that time, and the lady started entertaining thoughts that ‘something’ was going to click. I could see that she was having such thoughts, but the young man was not thinking in that direction at all.

Year in year out, I see it happen, and I ask why they make that mistake. People can assume ordinary sincere friendship to mean something deeper. That’s why we discourage people from undefined relationships and then when that single associate

pastor brought the person he wanted to marry and it was announced in church, I saw shock and disappointment in the eyes of that lady. About two months later, she said God was leading her to resign from the office and leave town. She left town but I knew that she entertained those thoughts and it had become an issue with her. You can become obsessed with a thought and a desire until it enters into your spirit and you will start prophesying it out.

People can just put two and two together because they see you and a brother together. Some brethren in church are busy bodies and self-appointed spiritual counsellors for people; they have something like Holy Ghost barometer. They have appointed themselves to be spiritual checkers, they are always checking people. Once you are not somebody's pastor, God is not obliged to talk to you about that person. It is only a prophet in the Body of Christ that God can talk to like that. If you are a true pastor, God owes you an obligation to talk to you about your sheep because if you are going to give account over them, you must know something about them. Most people don't understand when they are stepping outside their spiritual jurisdiction; out of concern they say things like 'this brother and sister in the choir fit each

other… ‘There are couples who talk like that, they are sincere, they are concerned. But it is wrong to convert your concern into a ministry; you then start wishing that something happens. I have never wished even when I knew who someone should marry. I have always disciplined myself emotionally not to go beyond what is my responsibility to pray for people to get it right.

You Can Be Wrong

Sometimes when people come with a matter and they are missing it, I say, ‘Have you prayed about it?’ If they prayed, I ask them, ‘Why don’t you pray again?’ That’s the maximum I have ever said to people to give them a hint, and most people who work with me know that if Daddy says ‘Pray about it again,’ something is wrong somewhere. Why don’t you pray again about it?

Do you think you should do it, should you do it like that, that’s all I will say. This is important so as not to take that initiative of the Holy Ghost from people. And there are people who are always taking that kind of role in their lives, taking that kind of

responsibility for themselves but God has not called them. Therefore, we need to be careful in choosing the visible leaders we go to. If you had a confusing dream, take it to the Word of God; it's a visible leader. Most leading who people attribute to the Holy Ghost who contradicts the Bible is actually the devil trying to deceive them, and they are holding on to it. They say 'Holy Ghost said so' but it's against the Bible. Obviously, the Holy Ghost cannot go against the Bible, and that should tell you it is something else.

A young brother told me God had dealt with his heart that he was going to be a Missionary to a North African Country. I said, 'It is OK, take your training seriously.' But suddenly he came afterward saying God told him he was going to start his ministry in Calabar, Cross Rivers State. It is different from what God told you before; I said to him, 'How do you know?' He said that God said he was going to start from there. I asked him what proof he had, and he said God told him that he would be posted by the National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) to Cross Rivers State.

I told him, 'Good! You have a reference point to confirm. Let your NYSC posting come out so we

know whether God is leading you or not.' A peculiar thing happened; he didn't graduate from school, he had to repeat. When he came to see me, I said, 'Let's sit down and talk.' The first thing you should agree with is that you missed it. He said his confirmation was one meeting where I came up and the first song I led was 'God will make a way.' and he said that is the confirmation. Do you know that when you are in error, you can make everything tally with what *you* want to do? Therefore, his singing 'God will make a way' has nothing to do with what he's dealing with, yet he had interpreted it is a prophetic song from the Holy Ghost for him. Some Christians walk into error and destruction with their eyes wide open. How can you interpret that song as a confirmation that God will make a way; that God will work on the lecturers and make a way that you will graduate, and NYSC will still post you?

That was a matter of faith. Let's wait. There was nothing they could do, he repeated. I counselled him to settle down so that the devil does not confuse him or attack him. I asked him, 'If you are a leader in your school fellowship, and a member of the fellowship comes to you with exactly what you are telling me, what will you tell him?'

He said, ‘I would tell the person that he’s missing it.’ If that is so, what makes you think you can’t miss it?

Many Christians fall into error when they say ‘I can’t miss it’. Everyone that has a testimony of being accurate today started from the point of *I could make a mistake, I could be wrong*. The day you say ‘I can’t make a mistake’, you are already in mistake. Only God cannot make a mistake. The fact that you say I can make a mistake means you will cross-check with others who are matured, or else you must have told me that you heard an audible voice say it to you clearly. If that is the case, then you have opened the door for a strange spirit to operate in your life. The Holy Ghost can’t tell you a lie; therefore, accept that you are wrong.

The first thing you need to do is to close the door to that spirit and cast it out of your life; second thing is to find out how you opened the door to a spirit that is talking to you audibly? Something is false. A brother says that he has received a sister and goes to propose to the sister; the sister says that she is already engaged. A brother was still insisting on his receiving a sister as his wife even after twelve years

that the woman had started producing babies. This is bordering on the realm of insanity. The only thing is that he's not yet a patient in the psychiatric ward. He speaks in tongues but he is insane because at that point he ought to agree that I made a mistake.

The unwillingness of many Christians to agree they made a mistake has sentenced many people to insanity, holding on to a crazy thought, a crazy receiving that is conflicting with everything—common sense and every sensible thing. For example, you say, God says you shouldn't cook for your husband for the next seven days. Who will cook for your husband? *That* is against the Bible. God can never tell you that in the first place. Even if you are fasting, God allows you to cook for your husband. Women have asked me over the years 'What if I'm fasting, and my husband wants sex?' I say, 'Give it to him.' But they say, 'Won't it break my fast?' No! Your husband is responsible for any break of your consecration. Let him give an account to God, but you continue your fasting.

God can't say you should deny your husband. He says if you are going to abstain from sex, it should be by consent. Once your husband says he doesn't

consent, then you are free from that scripture. If two of you are going to abstain from sex, it should be by consent, but if you don't agree, then you are free from the obligation of that scripture. Go ahead and do your fast. God will treat that case as your partner does not consent case. If your partner is a Christian, God will hold him responsible. But if you say God told you, then no, you can't go with that. It's important that we understand this principle. This is why when a Christian has failed, you cannot take a major decision that is going to affect other people in your life based on the subjective leadership of what only you alone know.

For example, a man says the Lord told him to sell their house. It is subjective because you alone received the leading; but your wife and children would be affected, so you can't take that decision unilaterally—there must be some visible leaders who must confirm it or cancel it. You must consider what your wife is receiving on such a matter; your wife says, 'I didn't receive the same thing.' You've got a big problem on your hand. It's important that you understand these basic principles of divine leading so you don't fall into error and you don't allow the devil to hijack your conscience, hijack your receiving

channel and then begin to talk to you. God can't lead you into something wrong. If you say you received a brother to marry him and eventually the brother showed up and there are some major issues that conflicts with the Bible in the brother's life, then it is either you are wrong or God will give you an explanation.

You are led to a brother in the church and the first time you visited the brother, you saw a bottle of beer in his fridge. You saw beer and but you want to convince yourself it was a bottle of kerosene. It can't be a bottle of kerosene in the fridge! Either you have made a mistake or the brother needs a major deliverance before you go ahead. That is the time to turn to your visible leader; that's why you have a pastor. If a member of my church brings that to my notice, I will first of all tell them to suspend the relationship immediately. Let us be sure he is free from alcohol and drunkenness before you continue; otherwise, if you marry a drunkard, there's nothing anybody can do when you are in his house. But most times, the lady has gone fifty miles into the relationship emotionally.

Most Christians don't take heed to visible leaders

for confirmation or consultation. Just like the brother who said God told him that I should ordain him in September; if it is the same Holy Ghost that I listen to, He has not told me to ordain you. One of us must be right or wrong and I'm not wrong. Even if I've not received anything, I know the visible leaders in the Bible one of which says don't lay hands suddenly on any man. You don't put a novice into an office. There are too many scriptures that go against my ordaining him in September, a student who has not graduated. Imagine a Reverend struggling to pass his final papers? That would be a dangerous thing.

That I sang a song does not make it a confirmation; Christians should refrain from picking teachings out of context. One thing that can release you from the grip of error is to agree and admit 'I'm wrong'. That was what David said, 'I've missed it, let me fall into the hands of the Lord' unlike Saul, who said, 'Still honour me.' What is there to honour if you've missed it? It is not a crime to miss it. Two wrongs cannot make a right. When you are on a wrong road, you don't need consistency; what you need is change—agree you are wrong and correct yourself. Our persistence in learning to listen to and follow the direction of our God is a proof of our

Christian growth because when a child is trying to walk even though he falls down, he picks himself up and continues; he doesn't stop to mull over it. Some people think they have missed once they have failed. If you have missed the leading of God on an issue, we can sit together to discuss until we identify how you missed it.

Unless you know how you made a mistake, you won't correct that mistake next time, especially when it comes to receiving. Revisit the time that you received this instruction. What happened around that time? Were you under pressure or angry? What exactly? I have seen ladies that were jilted in a relationship who went ahead to agree to the proposal of another person in less than two weeks after the former relationship ended. I say in a situation of hurt and trauma you are not likely to make a sensible and straightforward decision. Why don't you get healed first, before you enter another relationship? You cannot cover the hurt and pain of the previous relationship by jumping into another relationship. It is not likely to be right.

There are many men who are fast to cash in on the wounds of women; they say things like 'Sorry, that

man didn't know how to treat you. I've also noticed that about the brother' and so forth; all kinds of error have resulted from there; some have fallen into fornication from there. Therefore, if you try to get something from an invisible leader like your spirit, like the anointing, or from a dream and you don't know or you are not sure of what you are receiving, go to a visible leader; the visible leader includes the Word of God and the anointed man of God. If the marriage of a person has failed because of a wrong leading into it, and that person asks me whether he or she can still fulfil their destiny and calling on the earth, I say sure, you can fulfil your destiny, because the gift and the calling of God are without repentance. God doesn't choose you to be a minister because your marriage is going to succeed or fail. Your calling preceded your existence. And nothing in your existence is going to cancel your calling, or else that is to say that God made a mistake in calling you in the first place and God doesn't make a mistake.

I've heard some people say reading the Bible has made some people crazy; that is impossible except you were listening to the devil. You can never read the Bible sincerely and you become insane. Everyone who is quoting the Bible in the psychiatric ward has

listened to the devil somewhere. If you have spent enough time with the Word of God as a visible leader, you will know what God cannot say.

2 Corinthians 6:14 says 'Be not unequally yoked together with unbelievers'. This immediately tells you the kind of person you cannot marry and you shouldn't even bother praying about such people. If a brother proposes to you and you are not sure whether he is born-again, or you have doubts about his salvation, then go to a visible leader, to help you confirm. For example, in our Bible school, God dealt with us to give scholarships to full-time students, and we started receiving all kinds of requests from different places especially from Lagos and far places we didn't know. Some would even bring handwritten letters from supposed pastors that we didn't know. Some phone numbers never got through. After questioning some of them, I saw that some of them were too light and too unserious to be put in a Bible school, and I came up with some requirements: a reference from a police officer of a deputy commissioner rank, a magistrate, a letter of identification from your local government, letter from two pastors who are members of Pentecostal Fellowship of Nigeria (PFN) that can vouch for you.

I got that practical wisdom from walking with God, from reading the Bible, because we have to be sure of who we are bringing in, we have to go to the visible leaders. If a teacher is crossing from one school to another and the principal is sensible enough to say 'get a letter from your principal' and he calls the principal and says any reason why he's changing? He goes to a visible leader to crosscheck. That's the Bible principle. Yet there are Christians who don't believe in going to a visible leader. The sister says 'I like the man' but somebody who is supposed to know him says he drinks alcohol. That you like him doesn't mean you have to marry him. There are many people that I like who have all kinds of problems in their lives. Some of you have family members, uncles that you like, he's the most lovable uncle in the world yet he's the worst adulterous man you have ever seen. Are you going to say because you like him you will take him to heaven if he doesn't get born-again? Go to a visible leader.

One of our sisters brought the man that she wanted to marry and said he was ministering in a particular church and I had to investigate the church he was ministering at because I didn't want to release my member into any spiritual warfare. The sister

brought the brother to me, a visible leader in her life, and I'm helping her deal with the matter; many Christians wouldn't have been robbed and duped if they raised issues with their God-ordained pastor.

Samson began to fall when he licked honey from the carcass of a lion and didn't tell his father and his mother. On the road of error one of the first things that happens to people is that they refuse to tell the spiritual overseers in their lives. The devil tells them you are mature, you don't have to tell anybody. Several Christians have been duped because they refused to tell the critical people in their lives. Nobody can dupe you if you are not looking for illegitimate money. These scammers and fraudsters will always look for something in you that God is not giving you so that you can lose what you already have. If you are looking for something that God isn't giving you, the devil is going to offer you and if you would only discuss with a visible leader, the visible person could be your wife, you'll be saved from loss and sorrow.

How can somebody tell you not to tell any living soul and it is the money you and your wife put together in a joint account? The man says don't tell

your wife. It is a simple trick aimed at cutting you off from those people that God has placed in your life to provide safety. Notice Christians that want to backslide, they begin to walk alone; you don't know for sure anything about them, and the devil allows him to walk alone for sometime before he strikes. When a man begins to walk with strange people, he stops telling his wife his whereabouts. The wife asks, 'Where are you coming from?' 'Somewhere', he retorts.

'Where is somewhere?' she asks. 'When did you start querying me? Who is the head in this house?' When your husband begins to talk like that, something is fishy somewhere. The devil is entering somewhere. Politely say, 'I'm not querying your headship, I'm just saying you have never come this late, and I know there is no prayer meeting.' When a man begins to cover up, he will tell some lies but if he will open up and tell somebody, that will solve everything.

Most Christians will be deceived when they walk alone, that's why Jesus sent his disciples two by two and that's why he put you and your wife together, but many men suffer today because they don't invest

in the spiritual development of their wives. You and your wife should spend time together; when you listen to a message that is powerful, call your wife. One man, who was a Muslim convert, came to see us, and he heard my wife preach on *Power for Home Building*. He phoned and said he wanted to bring his wife to see my wife and after I spoke to them, he still said, 'Mummy, don't you have anything to say?' The first person you want to build up is your wife, when God saw that it was not good for man to be alone, he gave him a wife, he didn't give him another friend, and he gave him a wife.

You need to start investing in your wife because what you invest in your wife is what you will have as dividend. Invest in the spiritual development of your wife so that you can stand strong together. Give her tapes, buy books, and encourage her to read; most women don't like reading but prefer that men talk to them. In those days, women would wait for their husbands to come back home and tell them the news. The devil succeeded to come through Adam's wife to deceive her; he said, 'Did God say you shouldn't eat of every fruit of the garden?'

She said, 'Hold on. God didn't say that except this

one in the middle, He said we should not even touch it.' *God did not say they shouldn't touch it*, Eve's answer to the devil is enough to tell us that Adam didn't pass across that information effectively.

The man is the teacher of the family, and when you see a man that is a business giant but a spiritual midget, his family is going to have lots of problems that he's going to spend money solving. Young men need to get the critical things right before they get married. Go to the visible leaders. Anytime the disciples were confused about any matter, they went to Jesus and asked him questions and he always explained it to them. You will always find the explanation of God in the visible leader.

> And ye shall know that I have sent this commandment unto you, that my covenant might be with Levi, saith the LORD of hosts.
>
> My covenant was with him of life and peace; and I gave them to him for the fear wherewith he feared me, and was afraid before my name.
>
> The law of truth was in his mouth, and iniquity was not found in his lips: he walked with me in peace and equity, and did turn many away from iniquity. (Mal. 2: 4-6)

I have discovered over the years that people who have formed the habit of telling lies, technical or outright lies, almost always have problems receiving the leading of the Holy Spirit accurately. That principle has never failed, whether in the pew or on the pulpit. When you see a preacher that exaggerates on the pulpit, his receiving will almost always be faulty as well. If you see Christians that tell lies, their receiving will also be faulty. You cannot divorce the spirit of truth and accuracy in receiving from each other.

> For the priest's lips should keep knowledge, and they should seek the law at his mouth: for he is the messenger of the LORD of hosts. (Mal. 2: 7)

Just as the Holy Ghost is the messenger of the Lord of hosts, the priest is also the messenger of the Lord of hosts. When you need to clarify your receiving, go to the visible leadership; the Word of God is a messenger of God to us. The Bible says *we have a more sure word of prophecy to which we do*

well to take heed. Go to the visible leadership. Sometimes the visible leadership is your spirit inside you that is troubling you. When it is your spirit and you're not sure of what your spirit is saying, check what the Bible says. If it is an issue like you are not sure whether you should travel or you had a bad dream, go to the visible leader God has given you.

I remember a situation that I was in sometime ago. I was supposed to go for a meeting in our Abuja church; I wanted to travel by air; they had bought the ticket and all but I had this very strong impression not to travel and I told everyone to start praying. A pastor was already waiting at the airport in Lagos; I knew it was something between Lagos and Osogbo or in the air and I had to make that decision in an instant. I called those of them that I knew were mature, saying, 'You've been learning over the years, and I can trust your receiving. Let us pray about this.' Go and pray about it; everybody prayed and then words began to come. 'I saw a cloud around the plane and then there was a wave and the cloud that covered moved… 'I said let's get ready and when we got downstairs my spirit picked up the

caution again and I called the Abuja pastor and said, ‘The worst that will happen is that you will get angry that the meeting had been publicised. It’s our meeting, I fixed it, but God is saying no, so I’m not going to come.’

Sometimes I would pray and have peace and as soon as I get up from the prayer the restraint in my heart will pick up again and you should understand that when your receiving looks like the hand of Jacob and the voice of Jacob. Stop and go to your visible leader tell him you are not sure. Go to the last point at which you were sure. In 2 Kings Chapter 6 when the sons of prophets wanted to go and cut beams to enlarge the place of their dwelling, one of them borrowed an axe and the axe head fell while they were cutting.

You must understand that the sharp cutting edge of your life is your sense of accuracy. Do you understand the voice of God? If you ever get to a place in your life that you are not sure where you are, go back to the last correct place. Elisha said where

did it fall, and he pointed the place to him. Go back to the last point that you were sure you received from God. There are couples that have been married for several years; they have had children together and they are not young people anymore. They have reached a place that they felt they made a mistake and they want to end their marriage of several years. They were saying things like 'I'm not even sure why and how I married you.' I told them there is a principle of the Bible that says 'if you're not sure of where God is in your life let us trace it back to when last you were sure.'

'Did God lead you to him?' I asked.

'Yes, I am sure.'

'Go back to the thing that brought you to him.'

'Yes, I am sure, very sure God led me, sir.'

'If you are sure that God led you, then you have found God.'

The next principle is this:

> For I am the LORD, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed. (Mal. 3: 6)

God never changes his mind. If He led you to each other, we are convinced that He does not change. We understand that there are many problems in the marriage, but if God led you to each other, we should go to the next visible leader: God, who never changes. But we are the ones that change our minds and we claim it is God changing His mind. When I went into ministry about twenty-six years ago, God directed me to go into the full-time ministry. Many things may change but that decision isn't going to change. The late Kenneth E. Hagin said of the years that he went into ministry that many pastors behave like yo-yo; when the attendance at Sunday school is low, they are down; when the attendance is up, they are up. He also said there are some decisions you must settle once and for all. The question of whether I'm to be in the full-time ministry is settled once and for all—we never discussed that before. Whether I'm to marry my wife is settled once and for all.

Those are settled questions; I'm sure God led me,

and God doesn't change His mind. Many things may change. I didn't have any grey hair when we got married, and I could carry her on our wedding day, now many things have changed; but one thing is not changing: our decision to stay together. Many people change along the line and claim that God is changing. If God doesn't change, we should be honest to say who is changing because you will never find God in dishonesty.

> For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of his majesty.
>
> For he received from God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.
>
> And this voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with him in the holy mount. (2 Pet. 1: 16-18)

The scripture above is talking about the supernatural spectacular encounter they had on the mountain of transfiguration. It was the same experience they saw in Matthew, Chapter 17 that John also recorded: 'And we beheld his glory, the

glory as of the only begotten of the father, full of grace and truth.' Peter said of the same event, 'when we were with him in the holy mount' but he now goes to say we are not building our doctrine on that experience.

There are people who build a ministry based on the fact that Jesus appeared to them. I do not dispute that because it is a manifestation of the gift of the spirit; that you are called of God does not permit you to come in conflict with the Word of God. God appeared to some people, saying, 'I'm going to use you'; some have seen themselves in visions holding a Bible and preaching to multitudes, and the next thing they want to do is to start a ministry. Those things may be visions of your future; why don't you follow the scriptural process? The Bible says 'Don't let a novice be set in office.' You are still a novice; why don't you mature?

Take the vision that you have received, take it to the visible leadership, and when it's time, God will tell you; everybody will know it is time. Everything will be right but many times we move before it is God's time. There's nothing more dangerous than for a man with a calling to step into that calling before time. It

will look as if God didn't call the man. Many times, he would have disappointed and discouraged many people that could have eventually supported him. They will just believe God didn't him. The fact that you saw a spectacular vision doesn't mean you are going to have a spectacular road. Even though you saw a spectacular vision, God didn't show you the other things. God's method is that He may not show you or tell you the difficulties on the road so as not to discourage you. He just shows you where you are going.

God told the children of Israel, 'I'm giving you the Promised Land.' He didn't tell them about the giants, and the key issue is that anything that God did not discuss with you cannot stop you. The giants cannot stop you, but you've got to deal with the giants. It's important that we understand this truth as we try to follow God. Verse 19 says, '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.' The word 'more sure word of prophecy' is a comparison between the vision and the Word. Therefore, whatever you receive from your spirit or by prophecy or by any other spectacular encounter,

if anything contradicts as little as one principle or truth of the Bible, drop it. It cannot be God because God will never violate His Word.

If you are not sure about what you have received, go to a visible leader; that is why God has set some in the church. And he gave some apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers; these people are not who they are called because of the age or gender or education but because of the calling and the anointing on them. Jesus is the only person who stood as apostle, prophet, evangelist, pastor, and teacher together. He carried an anointing without measure. When He was going, He called men and transferred a portion of Himself to them. To the apostle, He gave the apostolic portion of Himself; to the prophet, He gave the prophetic portion of Himself; to the evangelist, he gave the evangelistic portion; to the pastor, He gave the pastoral portion; to the teacher, He gave the teaching portion. And whenever you go to them, you are actually going to Jesus in that portion.

When people come to tell me ‘Daddy, I am travelling’, they are not talking to me as if they are not adults. They are talking to me as somebody that

is like a bus stop. So that if there is any danger on the trip, God could put a check in my spirit about that trip, and say 'why do you want to go?' I may say you should postpone it, or ask you whether you prayed about it. That is why we are actually sensitive to the anointing.

> Wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh: yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him no more. (2 Cor. 5: 16)

This scripture indicates that as born-again Christians we should stop relating with ourselves in the flesh and start responding to ourselves in the spirit; and in the calling and the anointing that is upon each person. I need to respond to my wife in her calling and in the anointing that is upon her. I tell my wife, 'If God speaks to you as a prophet tell me, don't think how I will take it.' I have never been known to fight divine communication.

Many people endanger their lives when they fight divine communication. I should know how to respond to my wife as my wife and how to respond

to her as a prophet; somebody that God talks to. She will also respond to me as someone on whom God has put a portion of Himself. We have learned to flow with each other in that way when we are under the anointing. When it comes to husband-and-wife relationship, we have good husband-and-wife relationship; we talk as husband and wife, but when the Holy Ghost begins to move, we give deference to the Holy Spirit. However, some Christians say, 'That man is my friend, that woman is my colleague' and so on, instead of responding to the person in the anointing.

We must be careful that we do not use our anointing for personal advantage. For example, it is wrong if a single pastor starts using his pastor position to manipulate sisters to marry him. This matter is sacred, and as Christians, we must understand how to confirm and cancel things we have received. We cancel them if they need to be cancelled. If we need confirmation, we should confirm it, and that's where the issue of sincerity comes in. I know it when some brethren who know what they are doing is wrong, yet their mind has latched on it; and I cannot force my receiving on you. If you go ahead with your decision, I'll still

stand by you as a pastor. I can pastor you in pain or in joy. Some people marry wrongly and they come down from whatever height they had attained before marriage. The situation is obvious to everybody, but as his pastor, I will need to bear him up and carry him till we get to heaven. It is your choice, and we can't do anything about it. This is a major issue that Christians need to understand, and most people have not embraced this truth.

Chapter 6

When You Don't Know What to Do

The first principle I want to share with you in this chapter is *if you don't know what to do, look at what a visible leader is doing or saying.* If God has not told you what to do in a particular instance, and there are a number of instructions, God expects you to follow a visible Godly leader. Imbibe the nature that follows the leader. When you start practicing the principle of following the leader, it will deliver you from the tendency towards error. 'Follow the leader' does not mean just follow any leader. When you are strong in following the leader, you will be delivered from error. You won't follow the wrong leader; the more you practice following the God-given leaders of the kingdom.

If you start practicing how to follow your spirit regularly, you will become proficient in automatically yielding to the direction of your spirit, following the things of the spirit. If I don't know what to do in any situation, I just ask myself, what does the Bible say

about it? Then I go with what the Bible has said if I don't have anything in my spirit. If I have something in my spirit that contradicts with the Word of God, as we have learnt earlier, I'll go with the Word of God. Always drop anything that contradicts the Word of God. In the previous chapter, I explained to you that the leaders of the kingdom do not contradict each other.

The born-again spirit inside you, the Holy Spirit inside you, the anointing of God, prophecy, the Word of God, and the gifts of the Spirit don't contradict each other if we hear their instructions correctly. But if my receiving creates things that look like they are contradicting each other, I go with the Word of God. All these leaders of the kingdom are perfect in themselves, but in the transmission to the human mind and human understanding, there is the introduction of the possibility of error, and you must always allow for that possibility of error; that's why we need to cross-check.

> And it was so, when Gideon heard the telling of the dream, and the interpretation thereof, that he worshipped, and

> returned into the host of Israel, and said, Arise; for the LORD hath delivered into your hand the host of Midian. (Judges 7: 15)

Notice that it was only Gideon who understood what God wanted them to do. You should understand this in your walk with God that divine leading is always a subset of divine order. Divine order comes out of divine command, out of divine pattern; divine leading comes out, and it's always in the context of divine order. For example, the forty days fasting and praying we do in the ministry is something that God has dealt with us to do over the years, but it is not in the class of a divine instruction or a divine commandment. If, for example, God has spoken to us and said once a year I want every member of this ministry to do forty-day fasting and praying as part of the commandment of God to this ministry, anyone that does not do it who believes that they are part of this ministry will be out of divine order. But it is not a commandment in that class; it is part of the programme of God, leadings of God for us to seek His face once a year. It's a direction of God but not in that class to establish an order.

This means that members of the church will have two choices to make, and this chapter will be of an immense help. When you are between two decisions —for example, *Should I fast or not? I'm undecided. Either way, I can, I may not*—whichever way you go, it's not as if you're sinning if you don't. When you find yourself in such a situation and you want to know which of the options is best for you, go with the visible leader.

Imitating the Wise

In Luke, Chapter 6, the Bible says, two men came to hear Jesus: one was foolish, who laid the foundation of his house on the sand and the other one was a wise man who dug deep and laid the foundation of his house on a rock. When the storms came, it couldn't shake it. You don't have to be a wise man to get the result of a wise man. All you need to do is identify a wise man and do what he's doing. For example, I grew up a little differently in my family. I have a sister who's a lot on the sophisticated side, and I went to visit her. I was in her house when she was hosting a dinner party for some of her friends; lots of people came some of

who were Europeans. There were all kinds of forks and spoons on the table. I just decided to ‘follow the leader’. I didn’t know this doctrine then but it seemed sensible to me!

When everybody started eating, I identified the person that seemed to be the most proficient at understanding the table. I waited and followed this person. Anytime he took one fork, I’ll do the same. If he took another material, I did the same and people thought that I also understood what I was doing. As a result, I got by in that dinner without much embarrassment. That is the fastest way to learn how to use fork and knife; just look at somebody using it and start doing what they are doing. Start talking while you’re doing it so that people will not know. It’s just a simple principle that works. If you don’t know how to dress, just look at somebody that dresses well and then try to do your shirt or your head gear like theirs. It’s even better if you can see them where they are dressing so you can copy them.

However, if you are proud, you will not learn

much. You don't have to be a wise man to get the result of a wise man. There's no better place than in spiritual things settings to learn, and this is not a sign of foolishness. In fact, it is one of the highest evidences of wisdom. If you don't know how to heal the sick, attach yourself to a minister who is a proven healing minister; follow him and understand him. When Jesus says follow me, He actually means 'imitate me.' The Greek word rendered as 'follow' is *'mimitai'*—the root word from which we derived 'imitate' and 'mimic.' Jesus says we should mimic Him. Do what He's doing and you'll get the result He's getting. You don't have to have the understanding that He has but do what He's doing.

If you can drive today, you followed a leader. You watched how somebody was placing their hands and their legs and you don't have to go to driving school to know how to drive; just keep studying the people that are driving you. Keep watching them, and if you are a good student, one day you can just get in and start doing what they have been doing, and then you get better as you begin to practice it. This is something so simple that many Christians have failed

to get it. You want to learn how to pray well, find somebody that has it upon them. It is in following a leader that you receive the spirit of the reality in that person's life. Spirits are transferable.

Recently, I did a teaching on 'spirits and man' and I said, 'If you are following somebody that knows how to pray, just watch him doing it.' This person prays one hour every morning. What does he do? If he speaks in tongues for one hour, you should also speak in tongues for one hour. This is one of the keys to the fastest kind of growth in church, but Christians have been deceived by the devil. The devil knows his job, but most Christians don't know their job; they've been deceived by the devil to think that copying another person means they are wrong. That is not true. There's no copyright in the kingdom of God, just *copy it right.*

I was listening to Creflo Dollar Jr. preaching, and he said he was watching Kenneth Copeland speaking in tongues. And he said 'I receive that in Jesus' name.' I thought you can only receive what you're

praying in your understanding. You can receive what you're praying in tongues because the Bible says if you're speaking in tongues, you're praying only that the other person does not understand. So he said I agree with you in Jesus's name. He is a pastor and that is his spiritual father, so he's learning from him and he began to practice it and it's working for him.

Mentoring For Marriage

There are many things that we don't know. There were many things that we didn't know as humans growing up in this world that you learn by following the human being in front of you. Even the Yoruba people (South Western Nigeria) have a proverb that the horse at the back looks on the horse in front in order to run its race well. Why then do Christians find it difficult to practice this truth? To become a better wife, find a godly woman. The Bible says that elderly women in the church should be good role models of how to be homemakers to younger sisters and other women in the church. Most single ladies have never chosen a mentor to mentor them for marriage.

One of the young men came for vigil, and I was sharing with them. He asked a question that many of them had in their hearts. Some of the brothers that stay at home with us have also asked me the same question: 'How can we find sisters like Mummy?' And I said to them, it's a very simple thing. My wife didn't just appear on the horizon. You come around, sit down with me, ask me questions, I answer your questions, you get close to me, and you watch me at close quarters among other things. When you find a lady that you want to marry, you can take her to Mummy and say 'Please, Ma, can you take her under your wings and help me mentor her? Just as you're fitting into Daddy's life, I want this lady to be prepared for when we're going to be married.'

Most people don't take their marital issues as serious as that. You hardly find single ladies come to say I want to be mentored. Many want mentors for ministry, but what about mentoring for marriage? If many men will open up, they will admit they're covering up a lot of pains in their marriage and this is not the ladies' fault. It is a basic manifestation of the truth that you cannot give what you don't have. In

the work of ministry also, there're ministers that come around and assume 'I already know what I want to do' and then some find out that it's not just what I read alone, I want to get the nitty-gritty of ministry. Sometimes, I tell people that serve me, watch the way I'm dealing with people, watch how I'm handling different situations, how I'm handling different things, and dealing with different issues. How do I cope? Those are the things you want to receive for yourself.

The Blessings of Observing a Visible Leader

There are certain things that you are not going to receive unless you observe them in a visible leader. You'll learn some practical things that you don't see from books and then you'll receive a spirit of what you are looking for. The preaching and teaching aspect of my ministry is the easiest to catch. Even if you are an ordinary member in our ministry, you are going to start preaching. You will see that grace resting upon you. You are going to start ministering. Over and above that, there's a need for you to understand the leadership aspect of my ministry. If God has brought you to me, there is that dimension

that you need to imbibe and that isn't going to come upon you by sitting in church, you need to get close, you will need to look at somebody.

> Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do: and the God of peace shall be with you. (Phil. 4: 9)

Note the word 'both'—it means that you do them together, not one after the other. There are some things that you need to *learn* and some things you need to *receive*. There are some things that you need to *hear* and there are some things you need to *see* in your visible leader and then *do*. Doing is the last part of a five-step chain. Most people make mistakes today because they jump into the doing part of marriage, the doing part of business, the doing part of ministry, the doing part of leadership and the doing part of many things without doing the other four steps. It is like the trinket that is a set having necklace, earrings, bangles, wrist chain, and ankle chains. If you buy the trinket, and they don't give you the earrings, you say it is incomplete. You know what you're looking for, because it's a set. The same

way, life practices come in a set.

Most of us got our life practices from our fathers, and if your father was a failure who himself didn't know what he was doing, you'll learn the wrong things, and you don't want to learn that. If you learn how to be a wife from a mother that failed in her marriage and became divorced, if you walk in her practices, you may end up like her, but that was not the way God planned it. There are some things that you have to learn, and learning requires some ministry. Even Jesus learnt obedience through the things that he endured. The apostles came around Jesus and learned ministry. One time, when He had just finished praying somewhere, they said to Him, 'Teach us how to pray.'

You should note it that there was no place in the entire Bible that the disciples ever asked Jesus to teach them how to preach. But the Bible said He taught them how to pray. This tells me that you can't be a better preacher than you are successful in praying. And that's what many people, many ministers have not learnt. They want to do more preaching than praying. Jesus taught how to pray but He didn't teach them how to preach; but one day,

Peter preached, and three thousand people were saved. The Pharisees who thought they were unlearned suddenly found out that there was *something* that Jesus' disciples had learnt that they didn't learn in their own schools, because they got close to him.

Many times they asked him questions. I find it amazing when I ask people if they have any question and they say no. It does not mean they understand everything I have said, either they are lazy or they want to go home quickly or they are pretending. In the kingdom, asking questions is a sign of thirst after knowledge, and God is always seeking to satisfy that thirst. He says 'Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.' There are things to learn, and part of the learning process is asking practical questions. 'Excuse me, sir, how do you deal with this kind of situation? What do you do in this kind of situation?'

Having been in ministry for more than twenty-six years as a pastor, I can turn over the benefits of my years of experience to people under me. Some of these were the experiences of pain; some are experiences of divine communication. Sometime ago,

I was sharing with my wife that I can now handle people better as a result of the mistakes I made in the earlier years of my ministry; I understand how to handle different situations better and I found that there are not necessarily any new situation under the sun. You are meeting the same kind of people you will meet ten years from now, even though their age may be different. The same kinds of people you are meeting in Nigeria now are the same you will meet in America, though their colour may be different. People are selfish, and they're everywhere.

Experience is what you call learning from your own mistake, and wisdom is learning from other people's mistakes. They are two different things and you must have both experience and wisdom before you can make it in life, marriage, or ministry. You need to have somebody from whose mistakes you are learning. There are some things to *learn* and there're some things to *receive*. The Bible says concerning us, 'what do you have that you didn't receive?' We have the *anointing*. We got it from God. We *received* it. There are things we can only receive —we can't work for them; for example, *blessing* and *calling*—you can only receive them.

There are some things we need to *hear*, if you are not a hearer, the 'hear-say' can confuse you. What you overhear can confuse you; therefore, you must *hear*. Martha was trying to overhear what Jesus was saying while Mary sat down. The Bible says Mary heard His Word. Jesus didn't say He wanted food. Martha's mistake was that she was not the leader in the setting although it was her house. She was only trying to be a nice hostess by putting up a nice dinner. Jesus sat down and He was already leading. Martha didn't need to get a vision from heaven to know that was where God was, not in the dinner she was fixing.

The difference between prophecy, truth, and the anointing is that *truth* is where God has been; the *anointing* is where God is now while *prophecy* is the next place God is going. You need to have these things in balance in your life. Jesus, the anointed, was sitting down and teaching—this was where God was. God was not in the kitchen where Martha was running around struggling. She was distracted, and the Bible says, 'Mary sat at the feet of Jesus and heard His word but Martha distracted with much

serving, came up and said, Master careth not that my sister has left me all alone to serve… '—this is why I advise those who serve in church to know the time they should sit down to receive the Word that God is bringing.

Many times some people keep serving until they are distracted; they stay in church for three hours, and all they do is overhear the message, not hearing the message when the Bible says 'faith comes by hearing *not* overhearing.' We need to understand that there must be a time that these people should also sit down to listen to the message being preached. The worship leader also faces this risk; he may not get into the presence of God because he is overly concerned with carrying people along. It is equally important that the worship leader experiences God in his heart. Martha was distracted, only hearing fringes of the message and she wasn't happy about it and she started rebuking the Lord, and Jesus said, 'Martha, Martha, you are careful about too many things but only one thing is needful and Mary has chosen that good part which shall not be taken away from her.' Therefore, to hear the things that you can

hear, you need to listen. You can listen without hearing, just as you can look without seeing. You must always leave church with something tangible and cogent.

Our lives are packaged in parcels of time. When you wake up tomorrow morning, you're given a parcel containing twenty-four hours; that is one day of your life. You will meet everyday twice. The first is at twelve midnight at the commencement of the day even though it is still dark till twelve midnight the following day when the day ends. And then it is beyond the realm of your control forever. You will not see that day again. The second time you're going to see that day is when you are going to stand before Jesus Christ to give an account for that day. It will be brought back again, and God will bring His own account of what He wanted you to do on that day and the angels will bring the book of what you did that day—they'll weigh it together, and you will know whether you passed or failed.

That's why David said, 'Teach us to number our days.' He didn't say teach us to count our days. Counting your days implies that nothing is happening

that day, but numbering your day is like you have it in the order of a formal occasion: 7 to 9: arrival of guests; 9.05: governor arrives and so on. In the same manner, specific divine assignments have been attached to each hour. Therefore, David saying 'Teach us to number our days' is a prayer, saying 'teach us the wisdom of attaching specific assignment to each day of our lives.' People fill their diaries in two ways; either in the morning or in the night. People who write their diaries in the night only record the things that happened to them that day. People who write their diaries in the morning write the appointments they want to keep; they are in control of their time, and are using their time while the other set spend their time. There's a difference between using your time and spending your time. There's a difference between using money and spending money.

You need to spend time waiting to hear the things you ought to hear. Yet there are things you need to observe. The Bible says 'And the things that you have seen… 'many things in the kingdom are not taught but caught. Some years ago, I was in the

office of a man of God and in five minutes, I got a lesson on the spirit of excellence. The man of God wanted to give me a calendar of their ministry and despite his busy schedule and serious ministry involvement, he took the calendar and folded it, got a rubber band, and gave it to me in a decent way; he could have given it to me in any way, but he did it in a very decent way, and I told somebody, that *that* is one of the secrets why he is where he is today.

The difference between something good and something great is attention to details. God doesn't make bad Christians; there are only good and great Christians, and the difference is attention to details. Some Christians will pay attention to the little details of their Christianity, some will not pay attention to it and that's where the difference between good and great comes into the kingdom.

Observe the Right Things in a Leader

You must look and open your eyes to see. Kenneth Copeland said when he was attached to the ministry of the late Oral Roberts to be his driver (later his

pilot), the person that assigned him said, ‘When you pick up the man of God, just drive him to the meeting and keep your mouth shut. Don’t talk to him in the car. Just drive him.’ Copeland said he observed the man of God and watched him. That man was the leading healing minister of his days. He said he studied the late Oral Roberts to the point that he knew when he was to release his faith for healing to come into people’s body. He watched him repeatedly! He watched everything meticulously. He watched every step he took. Many people that have come to ministry today are just waiting for an opportunity; they say things like ‘Let them give me an opportunity, let them give me an opportunity to show a sample.’ It is a lie. It is empty air. These people should rather be busy observing and learning before their day of manifestation comes.

When a father starts a business, and his son graduates, he doesn’t make him the managing director immediately. He takes him through every department in the company because you can’t lead and monitor things successfully if you don’t know what goes on in every department. He works for some months in the accounts department, and some months in the production department, he says ‘yes

sir' to people that are still going to say 'Yes sir' to him. He's learning because he wants to know how to manage his company. There are several big buildings owned by these old wealthy men; the man looks tiny, but mighty things proceed from his mind.

Many times when such a man dies, the children can't manage it. Many of those things start depreciating; the businesses don't run as before. Many times, it may be the fault of the man himself because most of the time having faced the suffering and struggles of a pioneer; he says, 'I don't want my children to suffer like I suffered.' And he brings the spirit of softness into their lives. That is why Elijah produced Elisha and Elisha produced Gehazi. Elijah didn't tolerate weakness when he was training Elisha. He didn't tolerate nonsense. Elisha was described as a man pouring water on the hand of Elijah. But look at Gehazi, himself and Elisha were discussing; as a result, when Elisha was seeing the spirit of the prophet, Gehazi was seeing the briefcase of the prophet.

Today, many are associating with men of God so as to carry their briefcase; they don't want to carry their spirit. They want to know their tailor; they don't want to know their fasting and prayer schedule. They want what is in their pockets; they don't want what is in their hearts. That is why you find many flaky ministers today in the body of Christ who have not been made and they are trying to make men. Paul explained that there are four steps before the 'doing part' in the kingdom. If we check you and you don't have the four steps before the doing part, then you are fake! Because anything without a history cannot command a future, and there are plenty of these around today. I've gone to preach for some people with big titles but the first thing they want to see is your size, your dressing and other accessories but when I finish they are sorry for looking at the wrong things.

You need to have some substance inside you. The fact that you are in Lagos, with all the high-tech mass media shouldn't make you a mass-media produced fake, rather be a God-made person. Mass media can put the razzmatazz but do you have

anything real? You need to settle down if you will receive something real. One day, a journalist came to see me and said, 'We want to blow you up… 'and I said, 'If you blow me up, what will remain?'

He said, 'I want to interview you.'

But I said, 'I've never done an interview and sorry, I'm never going to do one.' God didn't call me to do that now.

> Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do. (Phil. 4: 9)

The crux of this matter is in two words 'in me.' 'In me' tell us that *there must be a visible person with whom you are taking those first four steps.* Notice that when you get to the level of 'doing' it has nothing to do with 'in me'. But the first four steps are connected with a visible leader, 'in me.' The things that you have learnt, received, heard, and seen in me *do; on your own.* That's why you see a lot of young ladies today that don't know how to cook. While their mothers are kitchen artistes, they know how to measure the amount of salt for a bowl of rice

just by looking at it and when you taste the thing, all is perfect. But some of their daughters never learned, never received, never heard, or saw anything while their mothers were cooking and today their husbands are complaining about their food. They spend more time on dressing than learning how to cook. I'm sure when their mothers were calling them in those days, they were complaining of smoke in their eyes. In every stage of your life, there must be somebody you are looking at. Experience has shown that it's not cookbooks that teach you how to cook but the woman at home who is a kitchen manual herself.

These days, a lot of people don't know how to do many things because they didn't follow the person God chose to be their visible teacher and leader. If you don't know what to do, look for a visible leader. Paul said, 'The things you have learnt, received, heard and seen in me, do.' A simple question that will solve problems for you is to ask and answer the question 'What would so and so do in this situation?' and 'What would my pastor do in this situation?' This can connect you to the anointing on that person and quicken your understanding to flow in the same wisdom. Some people practiced 'What would Jesus do?' sometime ago in America and they saw miracles

and transformed lives. As a result, you do whatever Jesus would have done in the same situation and you start becoming like Jesus. Jesus is visible. He says 'Imitate me' He also says, 'He that has seen me has seen the Father.'

We're called to imitate the right things and not the wrong things.

> And he divided the three hundred men into three companies, and he put a trumpet in every man's hand, with empty pitchers and lamps within the pitchers.
>
> And he said unto them, Look on me, and do likewise: and, behold, when I come to the outside of the camp, it shall be that, as I do, so shall ye do. (Judges 7: 16-17)

That was confidence! Today, if a pastor tells his church members 'If you want to succeed, look at me', they may grumble. Sometimes, I pull the legs of some young men; when I see somebody with Mike Tyson's haircut, I ask, 'Don't you know Mike Tyson is defeated? But Jesus is still a champion.' Gideon said, 'Look on me, and do likewise.' The Bible says, He tore his cloth and took the mantle of Elijah and did

the last thing he saw Elijah do, wrapped it around and smote the water hither and thither like Elijah did, he got the same result. Those who can drive today, still hold the steering like their teacher held it.

If you like driving very fast, most likely the person who taught you how to drive also drove fast. If you have a good handwriting, you owe it to the person who taught you handwriting. This principle has permeated all of life. 'Look at me and do likewise.' And if we would only take it further into the spiritual realm, we will have spiritual giants in no time. I always tell people that God wants every church member to at least be like their pastor. How glorious it would be if every man in our church operates like I do in leadership, in ministry, in the anointing and in faith!

In marriage, if you don't know what you'll become somebody will make you something else. In providing leadership for people over the years, I have seen people follow shallow men. This world rates men and women on every standard except God's standards. Christian ladies must be careful that they are not taking their examples from the world. Don't

take your value from actresses; most of them are shallow people or even worse. They've acted so many parts that they don't know their own identity any more. In the newspapers, a popular woman was advising young girls to get experience in sex before they marry. Everyone following that woman will follow that demonic counsel. Don't forget you are Christians in the world. God called you to be instructors to the world and not diplomats. God didn't call you to learn how to get along with the worldly system. He told you, 'Go and show them how to live, show them excellence, show them beauty, and show them my glory.'

I challenged the bricklayers that worked on the site of our church. I saw the way they were plastering the walls and I queried a crack in the plaster. The brother that was with them said it was a small crack but I said if it is for God, let it be excellent! Most people have excellence as an event in their lives and that is how they only buy clothes for their children at Christmas and if they buy any piece of clothing for their children, they will ask 'Is it Christmas?' Let excellence be your lifestyle. The lifestyle of love is

our normal life. You don't have to have a lot of money to do it. I know many people that cover a lot of lapses with money. If we remove the facade you are using to hide your faults, will you be real?

> And he said unto them, Look on me, and do likewise: and, behold, when I come to the outside of the camp, it shall be that, as I do, so shall ye do.
>
> When I blow with a trumpet, I and all that are with me, then blow ye the trumpets also on every side of all the camp, and say, The sword of the LORD, and of Gideon. (Judges 7: 17-18)

That's the key to victory. There are some situations that God will choose this way to lead us into things. As we learn from somebody, we not only learn, but we also receive the spirit of that thing from that person, especially Christian things. If you want to be a Christian woman, find a godly Christian woman and stick to the person. If you're going to be a pastor, you'll need a pastor like me. Do you want to have a full-time ministry? Come and get close, ask questions 'how do you balance ministry and family?' 'How do you cope with pressure?' If you don't

know how to flow in gifts of the spirit, why don't you stick with somebody that does?

When you look at the ministry of Benny Hinn, you will see that he had something to do with the ministry of Kathryn Kuhlman in the past. He stayed with that ministry, served as an usher, and watched that woman. He said one day he was in Kathryn Kuhlman's meeting and then suddenly she began to cry. She said, 'Don't grieve the Holy Spirit, don't grieve the Holy Spirit… 'that registered an impression on his spirit and mind. When he returned home, he was asking God as to what happened to that woman and why she did that. That's following the leader. He was so enraptured in what she was doing that he carried it over. That's how spirits flows to your life. Many people are enraptured with soap operas, comedies, and other kinds of movie stars that they don't know when they begin to dress like them, talk like them, and the spirit of those personalities come upon them. If you are having the spirit of a movie star and you're coming to church, how can you have the Holy Spirit mantle on you at the same time? Instead of movie stars, you should watch Jesus in

the Bible.

The late Oral Roberts said that God told him to read all through the gospels in a month; read it through and read it through. He said watch Jesus, watch Jesus… and he began. He said he saw Jesus become a living person to him; lay hands on the sick, cast out devils. He got up from that place knowing that God is good. He saw somebody, he saw a living person as it were, that he followed his ministry. Many Christians don't read the Bible like that; they read the Bible as a historical book. No! It's a living book. When you read the stories of the Apostle Paul, follow Paul as he's going to places. When he said he was grieved in his heart, in Acts Chapter 16, stop there and ask: 'Have I ever been grieved in my heart? Paul, what do you mean by this?'

When you were reading Mills and Boons and James Hadley Chase novels, you used to fantasise and transport yourself into that world; why don't you fantasise when you read the Bible? When did you last fantasise with the book of Mark? That you can see

Jesus standing over Peter's mother-in-law, rebuking the fever and it left her? When you see that spirit going out, you will be able to stand up and say, 'You, that malaria, I rebuke you in Jesus' name!' Some people read the Bible but they imagine something else. There are powerful aspects of nature that God wants us to use to attract the holy things of kingdom into our lives and unto ourselves. Don't be engrossed in a newspaper report written by human beings like yourself; rather, be fed with the Holy Ghost.

Choose Your Heroes from the Kingdom

The Bible says holy men spoke as they were moved by the Spirit. Job said, 'I esteemed the word of his mouth more than my necessary food.' Jeremiah said, 'Thy word were food and I ate them' David said 'The entrance of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple.' Choose your heroes from the kingdom, not from outside the kingdom. If you can find one in the Bible or in the kingdom, don't choose for heroes men that have sickly legs as you go because you'll be struggling. Rather, follow somebody who has proved something with the Word of God. The Bible says follow them

who through faith and patience obtained the promise. Imitate somebody who has prayed and has received an answer. Listen to a prophet.

We were talking with an elderly man recently who was sharing his dreams! He said they were planning a faculty election and he had a dream about it; he saw two numbers 255 and 88, and the secretary of the faculty said we have been vetting all the people that are qualified to vote and they are 255 in all. When the result came out, he said he checked the five votes voided, two were for the losers and it was true because he saw 88. You want to listen to that kind of a person, you don't want to listen to somebody that drank a bowl of *garri* (cassava flakes) with water in the night and had a dream that he was swimming in the night.

The Holy Ghost is available for all of us; the Word of God is available for all of us. This is following the leader. This man said look on what I do, do likewise. There are issues like that in the kingdom; they help to teach you some of the key principles of the kingdom and transfer the spirit of the kingdom to us. You want to catch the spirit of faith? Find someone that is

walking daily in living faith. I'm not talking of somebody practicing tricks but somebody working by living faith. I tell members of our church who want to build, to build by faith. That's all we've been doing as a ministry. Go to your building site; work should never cease on site for a single day. I ask some, 'What's happening on your site?' Some say 'Nothing… no money.'

Have you lost the words of your mouth? If there's no cement on site, go and speak words of faith and start confessing: 'Father, I thank You that this wall is rising, I thank You that this window is in place, I thank You that this floor is settled, I thank You for this decking, I thank You that the roofing is in place' and so on. God works with what you confess.

Three Levels of Christian Work

There are three levels of work that Christians must do. First is *prayer work that* is on your knees. Second, you do *faith work* that's in your mouth and then you do *hard work* that is with your leg. You work hard! Most people only work hard without

prayer and faith behind it; no wonder the devil defeats them. But if you are to have the spirit of faith, then you're to find somebody that's walking by faith and living by faith and then follow him. If you want to have the spirit of love, find a man on love and just observe. That's why we're coming to church; every man of God must be bold enough to say 'follow me as I follow Christ'. I've never had the difficulty telling people to follow me. If you say you can't say that, it is because you have something to hide. The calling to be an example is part and parcel of our calling as pastors. We will be judged for our preaching and for the example we are setting for people. I have accepted that and I have made up my mind to be a right example to people.

Suppose some people are separated from access to the Bible, and you are one of them, and without your knowledge you are watched for thirty days and those thirty days are recorded on tape. If they take the videotape to people that have never heard of Jesus, can they believe in God by watching that video? By watching what you and your wife do for a whole month, can they live for God? Jacob called God 'the

fear of Isaac my father' because he knew there was someone his father was always reverent and afraid of, he knew him and he called God the fear of Isaac. What will your children call your God? Or they are not aware of any God in your life?

Following the leader is the best way to get acquainted and proficient with a lot of kingdom principles. The disciples followed Jesus. They were there when he preached. Would you have loved to be there when Jesus was preaching? I wanted to see him. I studied Jesus as a pastor, Jesus as a teacher, Jesus as an evangelist, Jesus as a prophet, and as an apostle. Have you seen the music ministry of Jesus in the Bible? You don't know the Bible says, I will sing unto Him? Jesus sings! It's there in the Bible. But most people didn't see it. You've seen Him as a deliverer casting out devils; follow Him. Lay hands on the sick, follow Him. Somebody says 'Well, I lay hands on somebody.' I say I'll pray for you six times. Why? I say Jesus laid hands on somebody twice. If Jesus laid hands on somebody twice, if I lay hands four times before you get your miracle, I'm not a failure yet. He laid hands on a blind man and

said, ‘What do you see?’

He said, ‘I see men like trees walking.’ He laid hands again, and the blind man said, ‘I’m normal now.’

Somebody asked me, ‘Why don’t you go to hospital and heal the sick?’ I never saw Jesus go to the hospital to prove that He could heal the sick, so why should I respond to somebody’s stupid demand to ‘come and heal every sick in the hospital.’ No! Jesus didn’t do that, so why should I? Why don’t you follow Mary if you want to be sensitive? Mary chose the wise path; why don’t you study every encounter Jesus had with Mary, Martha, and Lazarus? He loved the family and branched in their house a number of times, but Mary’s case was always different. If you follow Mary as a woman, you’ll be more intuitive. You’ll have more sensitivity. But some will follow Martha, busy but dense. Even when she said, ‘Master, if you had been here, our brother would not have died.’

Jesus said, ‘Have I not told you if you believe you’ll see the glory of God?’ and she went and told

Mary, ‘Mary, Mary, the Master is calling for you.’ Number one, Jesus didn’t even send her. Did you notice He didn’t send her?

Follow God, you’ll become more sensitive. Peter and John ran into the tomb, and John outran him. He saw the tomb; he saw the cloth that was wrapped around the face of Jesus. The Bible says, ‘He saw it where the head of Jesus laid and saw it folded and the Bible says that he saw and believed.’ What did he see? When Peter came, Peter saw and scratched his head and ran back again. Peter was impulsive; John was intuitive. He must have said, ‘This is the face wrap. I know the Master is meticulous; He’s the one that folds the napkin like this… ‘The Master is alive, He knew. He knew that Jesus took it from His eyes and folded it. When Jesus told them on the sea, He said, ‘Children, do you have any meat?’ It was John who said, ‘It’s the Master’ and Peter jumped into the river and started swimming.

God Will Give You Somebody to Follow

You will need to choose who you want to follow.

God will always give you somebody to follow in order to get to a good end and to get something good. The devil will also give you somebody to follow to get to a dangerous end. We had a convert some years ago who was a medical doctor and then we attached a pharmacist to him because they were staying together in a place to follow him up but the devil attached another medical doctor who was a drunkard to him and it became a tug of war. Since the medical doctor was working more directly with him, he took him and he started drinking. That's the devil's trick. God places somebody in front of you and says look at that person—that's what I want you to become like, not just physically, but spiritually—sound, solid, deep, anointed—he has it altogether. Also, the devil says I want you to follow this other person. He won't show the negative side of the person as light, crooked, and shallow; he'll only show you the colourful side, and if you follow, you won't only learn but you'll receive spirit. There are some uncles who taught you how to lie and do several things your dad never taught you and you need to break such things off your life.

I don't know how you're going to work with me and you won't like vigils or working all night. If you say I don't like working all night, I'll say 'No problem, you'll soon like it.' You'll soon learn to pray and do different things, but most times, people don't stay around enough. When God wanted to train prophets, He sent them to a prophet. Also, in the world too, people don't learn to be mechanics by going to school. I know a brother in Ibadan with a wonderful mechanical workshop. He graduated with a Higher National Diploma (HND) in the Polytechnic after which he went to serve as a mechanic apprentice for three years under a rugged illiterate mechanic. Today, he has one of the best automobile engineering workshops. He got the theory right and he also got the practical right. I still ask some mechanical engineering graduates what a part of the engine is but since they didn't see it in school, they don't know what it is. That's why doctors go for housemanship after they finish their MBBS; they stay under some seasoned doctors to see all kinds of cases and learn from them.

We should apply the same truth in the spiritual

because most of us are practicing it somewhere in our secular lives. You should start applying it spiritually because it will make you a spiritual giant faster than any other thing. There're some things you'll never master even though you've read them in books until you see a human being exemplify those truths. God still speaks to people! During one of our conventions, I said God spoke to me that on Tuesday we should have connection to destiny and one of our guest ministers came and said, 'The Lord told me to preach on "Connected to your destiny"'. The next day, I said what God said to me, and another guest minister came and confirmed everything; then one of my pastors said, 'Daddy has moved to another realm!' No, that is not the matter; he has not been watching me over the years.

You need to take your study in the kingdom more serious. You are a student of the kingdom. Don't come to church carelessly. Come to observe, come to hear, come to receive, come to learn, come to take something, see it and see it, hear it, receive it, learn it, and then do it. When you get to the doing part in marriage, it is what you've learned, received, or

heard that you're going to be doing. There are some brothers that slap their wives because they saw their daddies slap their mothers. There are some sisters that insult their husbands because they saw their mothers talk back to their fathers. If that will change, you will need to learn something better from somebody else in the kingdom. If you grew up in a home that they eat outside, you are not likely to enjoy your wife's cooking, and if you are a lady, you will not enjoy cooking for your husband, and those are things you should learn.

Follow The Leader. Paul said, 'Those things, which ye have both *learned*, and *received*, and *heard*, and *seen* in me, *do*: and the God of peace shall be with you.' A son doesn't seek a separate identity from his father; he shouldn't say *I'm just trying to be myself*. No, that shows you're not learning from the kingdom. That's not the way the kingdom functions. I didn't write the Bible, I'm just interpreting and explaining it. I've never seen anybody that is really given to the fashion of this world that is also spiritually deep at the same time. I remember several years ago, I was discussing with the daughter of the

late Pa S. G. Elton, and she was talking about a couple in the Netherlands who are like spiritual parents to her. There was a brother who was intending to join the ministry work, and when she mentioned the brother's name to that couple in Denmark, they prayed and said he wasn't the will of God. Such things tell me there is a realm of reality in God where all these mundane things are not the issue, and anybody is welcome who will pay the price.

God said to Moses, 'And the LORD said, Behold, there is a place by me, and thou shalt stand upon a rock:' not on shifting sand. There's a place by me and you'll stand on a rock. You can't get there but you see it. It depends on who you choose for a role model. Don't choose for a role model people who have run away from fasting, from prayer, and tell you stories and fables. I have had different pastors come to our ministry at one time or the other. Two of them resigned from this ministry because, according to them, we pray too much. How can a Christian say you pray too much and you're trying to be a pastor? How are you going to watch your flock? It doesn't

matter whether you have a crowd in your church if majority of the people that come are crooked. They don't spend time praying. Five minutes prayer is grossly inadequate for a church service. No wonder people rate people on the size of tithe they're paying and on the car they bring. But it is time for us to change. God says this is a season of correction. Make sure you're not holding on to error. This may be a hard saying but it is important because God is preparing us for some glory. Make a commitment to God that you will walk His road, just like Jesus followed the Father.

Chapter 7

God's Word as the Leader

I want you to note that any time you do anything contrary to any of these leaders that God has given; you are out of the will of God. The primary responsibility or ministry of these leaders is to show us the will of God and where God is. If you do anything that is contrary to any of these leaders, you are out of the will of God. And when a Christian is out of the will of God, he's out of the jurisdiction of God, anything can happen to him. It is as good as a citizen of a country going to another country, expecting that the government of his country would protect him in the country he's visiting if he violates the law of that country.

When you are out of the will of God, you are out of the sphere of God's authority. The devil likes to deceive Christians to think they can have their way and still enjoy the best of God. That is not true! You cannot have your way and experience the best of

God. You will pay for choosing your way. The first commandment in the *Bible of Satan* is '*Do what thou wilt'* and the central theme of God's kingdom is *Thy will be done on the earth as it is in heaven*. What shows us as real Christians is not just that we are born-again, or because we speak in tongues, rather, it is that we live by the will of God; we choose the will of God.

The will of God is not something that happens automatically to us—we need to choose it. That means we need to seek it or it is revealed to us, and if you want to find the will of God, go to any of the leaders we have been learning in this book. If God wants to communicate His will to you, He will choose any of these leaders and the number one leader is the Word of God. I believe that the order of importance as it were of these leaders is the Word of God as number one, the Spirit of God as number two. The others come one after the other. Don't forget that vital truth!

Many times, people assume the Spirit of God is

above the Word of God, but it is not so. The Word of God and the Spirit of God don't disagree. None of these leaders disagree with each other. But in a quest to find out, we can promote our interests, our feelings, and our desires without being honest with ourselves. That is one thing that is very strange to find out that human beings can actually deceive themselves. If people deceive you, you're still safe but when you begin to deceive yourself, you are lost. You must make up your mind, not to deceive yourself; instead, determine to be honest and true to yourself.

These leaders will show us the will of God. Any time you do anything that contradicts what any of these leaders has released to you, you are out of the will of God. If your spirit tells you 'Don't make the journey', you will be out of the will of God if you embark on that trip. You may travel and nothing happens though, but that does not mean that God approved of your going on that trip. Many times, when things happen to Christians, we try to blame it on God or try to blame it on something else. Playing the blame game will make you miss the plan of God

for your life. God doesn't want you to play the blame game; He wants you to accept responsibility so that you can find out where you missed it and how to correct yourself.

> Again, David gathered together all the chosen men of Israel, thirty thousand.
>
> And David arose, and went with all the people that were with him from Baale of Judah, to bring up from thence the ark of God, whose name is called by the name of the LORD of hosts that dwelleth between the cherubims.
>
> And they set the ark of God upon a new cart, and brought it out of the house of Abinadab that was in Gibeah: and Uzzah and Ahio, the sons of Abinadab, drave the new cart.
>
> And they brought it out of the house of Abinadab which was at Gibeah, accompanying the ark of God: and Ahio went before the ark.
>
> And David and all the house of Israel played before the LORD on all manner of instruments made of fir wood, even on harps, and on psalteries, and on timbrels, and on cornets, and on cymbals.
>
> And when they came to Nachon's threshing floor, Uzzah put forth his hand to the ark of God, and took hold of it; for the oxen shook it.
>
> And the anger of the LORD was kindled against Uzzah; and God smote him there for his error; and there he died by the

ark of God. (2 Sam. 6: 1-7)

He didn't die in the shrine of the devil; he died by the ark of God.

And David was displeased, because the LORD had made a breach upon Uzzah: and he called the name of the place Perezuzzah to this day.

And David was afraid of the LORD that day, and said, How shall the ark of the LORD come to me?

So David would not remove the ark of the LORD unto him into the city of David: but David carried it aside into the house of Obededom the Gittite.

And the ark of the LORD continued in the house of Obededom the Gittite three months: and the LORD blessed Obededom, and all his household. (2 Sam. 6: 8-11)

Can you see this? The Lord struck somebody for touching the ark and then blessed another for having the ark in his custody. One may ask, 'What is

happening here?' But I want you to know that God is not confused. Let us look at 1 Chronicles 15: 1-2 for an amplification of this story.

> And David made him houses in the city of David, and prepared a place for the ark of God, and pitched for it a tent.
>
> Then David said, none ought to carry the ark of God but the Levites: for them hath the LORD chosen to carry the ark of God, and to minister unto him for ever.

The first point to note is, *When the word of God is the leader, you must find out.* You need to ask yourself, 'What has God said already on this issue?' If you will start out asking that question, you will not go wrong on many things. In fact, when you put that question ahead of you on every issue, it will be easy for the other leaders to support you with the information concerning the will of God. If, for example, as a single brother, you are planning to marry, ask 'What has God said about marriage?' and then you go into the Word of God and find out what God has said.

One of the things that God had said concerning marriage is, 'Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers.' So the question you are going to ask anybody that crosses your mind is 'Is she born again?' If the person is not born-again or you cannot prove her Christianity, then don't even consider it. Don't deceive yourself to think that you knew someone who married an unbelieving sister and later the sister got born-again. No! Don't do that. That's trying to use somebody's experience as your leader, promoting somebody's experience above the Word. Many people like to do that, especially when they want to do something contrary to the will of God. The devil will help you to find people who have experiences that support your rebellion to make you go against the Word of God. And once you go against the word of God on an issue and seemingly escape it, you will go against the Word of God on other issues until it becomes your habit and you should expect the devil to come to collect payment soon.

If every Christian will practice the question *What*

has God said already on this issue? More often than not, people will not even need pastoral counsel. What do you really want to see the pastor for when you know that the matter is not the will of God? For example, if you are from a masquerade-worshipping family but later got born-again and the tradition in the family requires that you worship the masquerade once every year, the question you need to ask is 'What does the Word of God say about it?' I received a phone call from a brother many years ago. His wife was just delivered of a baby, but before this, he had some demonic attacks. As a result, I told him to beware because of impending spiritual warfare around him. I cautioned him not to go back to his father's house until he had enough strength with which he could fight the warfare. He later told me his mother wanted to spend some weeks with him, and during this period, he would be away from home. And he asked me if he could allow his mother to come. I said, 'There's nothing wrong in your mother coming to visit you, but let her come when you are at home. Don't let your mother be at home alone with your wife.' I got that from the Word of God concerning husband and wife. People don't go to the Word of God first of all and so they form opinions

and make decisions based on things that are contrary to sanctified sense.

There is common sense and there is sanctified sense. Everybody has common sense. You have common sense to see a trailer coming on the road and you don't drive your car across that trailer's path. That is common sense. Even a drunkard should have a little bit of it when he is drunk, to match the brake pedal while driving. But not everybody has sanctified sense, and God wants us, as Christians, to walk in sanctified sense. Sanctified sense means that God wants your senses trained so as to think and operate spiritually. A sanctified sense is ruled by the Spirit of God and does not relate to things from the physical standpoint alone. A sanctified sense sees things as they really are in the spirit and bases his reaction on it, rather than being carried away by mere facade. We must train our senses. Our senses are physical but we are spirits and we are operating in a spiritual world. Everything physical has a spiritual dimension to it, and we must train our senses to go beyond the physical to the spiritual and see something beyond the obvious. Train your ears to hear beyond

the audible when people are talking.

One man of God said that some years ago, a faithful fifty-year-old brother in his church suddenly started missing church services. He was so faithful that his truancy was easily noticed. Apart from this, the brother started putting on necklace and shirts that exposed his chest. Everyone was puzzled at his sudden change. The man of God knew something was wrong beyond his physical facade. He eventually found out that the man was planning to divorce his wife and marry a younger lady. So he was dressing like a younger man.

My wife and I visited a family in Lagos some years back. When you see this family, you would think they were having the best of marriage you could ever find in the world. In fact, they won 'The best couple of the year' on two occasions in their church, yet their marriage was on the verge of breaking apart, and nobody noticed it. Do you know you can play religious game and win award in churches and still go to hell? It is happening everyday. The brother works

twenty-four hours, seven days as a medical practitioner. To him, he thought he was being the best husband and father by working hard to provide for the family, but unknowing to him, his wife was drying up inside.

On that day, the husband was about going out of the house and he greeted his wife, and the wife just said 'Goodbye.' When I heard the wife, I sensed something was out of place. I picked something behind her voice. So I asked her if anything was wrong, but she said there was nothing wrong. I said, 'No, something is wrong.' I told the brother to go ahead, that I would catch up with him later, and that I wanted to talk with the wife. So he left my wife and I with his wife in the house and set out for his office. After he left, the wife still insisted there was nothing wrong, and I said, 'I picked something when you said goodbye.' Then she started crying and began to tell me about her marriage on the verge of collapsing. Beloved, what do we say of their church members that awarded them 'Couples of the Year'? They did not see beyond their noses. They did not hear beyond the visible. They heard the voice, but did not hear the pains behind it. That is what I mean by sanctified sense.

A man of God shared the testimony of how a friend of his died in an air crash. His death caused a stir in the body of Christ that many believed his death was the will of God but his friend said he died as a result of his bad choice. We have misconstrued our stupidity and foolishness to be God's will many times. It was not the will of God for that man to die like that. He went to Mexico, according to this man, and met a young man who had just bought a plane. The man was an inexperienced pilot and offered to show him around the bush in his newly bought plane. And he allowed himself to be flown by an inexperienced pilot in the jungle. They flew around and got to the mountain region and didn't know what to do and crashed the plane into a mountain, and both of them died. That wasn't the will of God. In such a situation like that, sanctified sense would have told him not to fly with an inexperienced pilot.

If you are driving a car and it takes a while before it halts when you step on the brakes, sanctified sense tells you to discontinue driving the car until you service the brake and get the car overhauled. You

don't even need an audible voice from God to know that you should stop driving the car. That is what sanctified sense will do. Allow your sanctified sense to take the lead over your common sense.

Look at the book of Hebrews 5: 12-14—

> For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat.
>
> For every one that useth milk is unskilful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe.
>
> But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.

'Have your senses trained'—this is the whisper of God here. God is saying that you can bring your senses, these physical senses of your body to come to a place that it can discern what is good and what is evil by exercising yourself in the Word of God, practicing the Word of God, living by the Word of

God and by soaking the Word of God into yourself over and over.

I told the young single brothers in our church that many of them were so excited at discovering who they were to marry. I said finding the right person was just the first step. The second step is to test the right person, while the third step is to trust the right person. Most young men of today find the right person and jump to trust the right person, only to later find out that they didn't understand each other, they didn't know each other before they started trusting each other. You need to test the person you are to marry, and one of the ways to do this is by testing them in the light of the Word of God, getting to determine if they believe in the doctrines of the Bible. If your wife disagrees with the Word of God somewhere and you tolerate it, you are inviting trouble in the future. You are putting the future of your children on the line because your children will follow your wife, being the one that spends more time with them; this is by natural design.

Invariably, if there is an area that your wife does not agree with the will of God, your children will

rebel against that will of God because they will pick it from their mother and that is how the homes of weak men are formed. Who is a weak man? A weak man is not a tiny man; a weak man is a man who is not strong enough to demand that everyone in his family abide by the will of God that he has found out.

> For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the LORD, to do justice and judgment; that the LORD may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him. (Gen. 18: 19)

When you find the will of God and are praying again, you are in rebellion. That was what Baalam did. The man who is going to be the head of a home must find out what the will of God is for him and his family, on every issue. There are four critical questions you need to answer as a man before any woman comes into your life, and these questions will set your feet on the right path of your destiny because if you do not settle these questions before a woman comes into your life, she will mislead you out of the will of God. The questions are:

1. Where does God want me to live?

You must have settled the question of where to live before you bring a woman into your life. If this is not settled, you may be incapable to resist the lures of your wife because naturally, women love nice places. The fact that something is good does not necessarily means it is God, but if it is God, no matter the challenges on the way, it is always good. She may come up to tell you that she would love not to live far from her parents. In fact, she may want you to live in the same town she works. This should not be tolerated as a man that wants the will of God done because this is a very sensitive issue of your destiny and it is only in your right location that heaven's allocation for your life and destiny fulfilment can reach you.

2. Which Church does God Want Me to Attend?

The church you attend is your spiritual family. You did not choose your natural family when you were coming into the world, so also you cannot choose a church based on your feelings—it is God who

chooses a church to plant you.

> God setteth the solitary in families: he bringeth out those which are bound with chains: but the rebellious dwell in a dry land. (Ps. 68: 6)

You are to ask God to show you the spiritual house He has prepared for you, and when you discover the church, settle down there. That is where all the nutrients you need to mature will be sent to you from the Head of the Church. *You can succeed with a wrong tailor or a wrong barber but not if a wrong pastor speaks into your life on Sunday*, because the rest of your life will be far from Divine order. God is still in the habit of leading people to their God-ordained pastor and church family. This pastor will know you in your God-ordained destiny, and staying in that church will move you from your problems in to the height of your purpose.

3. Who Has God Prepared for Me to Marry?

Ensure the first two questions are settled before

you think of having a woman in your life. You cannot afford to be careless with this because if you miss it in marriage, 80 per cent of your life's effectiveness is gone. Let God lead you. It is only in His hand that you are safe. Let me say it again: if you miss it in marriage, 80 per cent of your life's effectiveness is gone; you'll only try to succeed with the remaining 20 per cent. It is only when you get your marriage partner correct in the will of God can your team of two chase ten thousand.

4. Which Job Should I Do?

Some job offers will take you farther away from fellowshipping with God because of the time and demands of life it will place on you. Avoid them. Ask God to choose your job for you and the job God gives you will draw you closer and closer to Him because He is the Source, and whatever you get involved in, it connects you back to its source. It is the job that God anoints for you that will prosper you without adding sorrow to it.

Women only need to answer one of these questions by themselves, namely 'who am I to

marry?' When you meet the man that God has prepared for you, all other questions will be settled. Don't be married to a man that you cannot trust the quality of his decision, and you are not to manipulate your husband—you are to follow him so that witchcraft spirit of manipulation, intimidation, and control, will not take you over.

> There are many devices in a man's heart; nevertheless the counsel of the LORD, that shall stand. (Prov. 19: 21)

When a woman puts pen to paper to sign the dotted lines on the wedding day, she signs away her right to two things: her right to where she is going to live and her right to the church she is going to attend. These she signs away to her husband. Anything short of that is not marriage. It is wrong for a lady to continue answering her father's name after she's married. For example, if her maiden name was Kemi Taiwo and her husband's surname is Kingsley, it is wrong for her to be called Kemi-Taiwo Kingsley. This is wrong. Some people may say this is a matter of agreement between the couple, but I stand to tell you that it is only a weak man that tolerates this. On

the wedding day, you sign away your father's name, irrespective of your status in the society. That is how God planned it.

As a single lady, get it right. Start praying pre-emptive prayers for your future husband to be a man that is sound in the will of God. The job of a single lady is very simple; find the right man and then ask him, 'What is the next step?' Married women should pray for their husbands to grow more and more in the knowledge of the will of God.

> And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment; That ye may approve things that are excellent; that ye may be sincere and without offense till the day of Christ. (Phil. 1: 9-10)

That is a sound prayer; you should not have a husband who is veiled, thoughtless, and confused about what the will of God is for your family as well as for the children. That is one of the most powerful prayers you can pray as a woman for your man because the body of Christ is full of men that don't even know their left hand from their right hand spiritually. As a man, you also must say this prayer

every now and then. You must pray to be sound and increase in the will of God for your life and your family.

> For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment; that the Lord may bring upon Abraham that which He hath spoken of him. (Gen. 18: 19)

From the scripture above, one can infer that many men lose the commitment of God to fulfil His promise to them because they don't stand firm for the will of God or because they don't even know the will of God. I regularly warn young men to test the person they want to marry. 'What does she see to the will of God for you?' You must not marry a lady that is in contention with the will of God for your life; never marry a woman that wants you to follow the path that embellishes her lust.

You ask, 'Can God lead someone to marry a man that is younger than her in the Lord?' The answer is yes. But I've always found out that if he is the right person for you, he will accelerate and overtake you in

spiritual matters. I have seen this happen many times. You cannot survive having a husband that remains a babe in marriage because you cannot head what you are behind. The man must have the substance with which he can lead the home. You must know more than what you are telling the people now. You must always be able to say 'There is still something in reserve' after you have finished talking to your wife. At least in spiritual and life matters, the husband must be ahead of the wife.

When it comes to life decisions, you cannot lead somebody that you are behind spiritually. Most people don't know what it takes to be a man. Being a man goes beyond growing beards, having a broad chest. In fact, it takes more than ability to impregnate a woman. There are lots of responsibilities hanging on your shoulders. As a man, you are to be the leader, the coach, the motivator, the encourager, the strengthener, the one that she can lean on your shoulders, and many more.

> And said unto them, ye are the chiefs of the fathers of the Levites: sanctify yourselves, both ye and your brethren, that ye may bring up the ark of the Lord God of Israel unto

the place that I had prepared for it.

For because ye did it not at the first, the Lord our God made a breach upon us, for that we sought him not after the due order. (1 Chron. 15: 12-13)

Why did they make that mistake in the first place? They didn't read the Bible. God instructed that 'Once you enter the Promised Land, you will choose a king over yourselves, a man who is your brother, and the first thing you will give your king is not a crown—it is a copy of the law. That he must read day and night so that he will know how to behave.' Every king who failed that, God judged, because they violated the written Word of God, they were supposed to read the Bible day and night.

Get the Word of God. Allow yourself to be ruled by the Word of God. God's will is revealed in the Word of God.

For My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways, saith the Lord.

For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thought. (Isa. 55: 8-9)

We are to find God's thought in His Word. The Word of God is a direct expression of the thoughts of God. Don't think for God on any issue. Go to what He has said. Those are His thoughts on those issues.

For I know the thoughts I think towards you. (Jer. 29: 11)

It's a very dangerous thing to think for God. That is what is called the sin of presumption. Presumption is the mother of the great transgression. Presumptuous people are the ones that lie against the Holy Ghost—'Holy Ghost told me'—when He's not saying anything to them. Once you are able to find out what God has said about a matter, your need for counselling will reduce by about 80 per cent. God's Word addresses every sphere of life. There is nothing in this world that the Word of God does not address. He has set due order for everything under the sun; your responsibility is to find out what He has said.

The Word of God is the leader. If you want to know the will of God over any subject of life, go to the Word of God. This leader will show you. Don't

do anything without finding out the will of God for that thing. Find out what God has said about that matter. If you don't know it, ask your pastor or get a concordance and check through. What has God said about bribe? What has God said about respect? What has God said about premarital sex? What has God said about adultery? What has God said about the situation you are presently in? It is somewhere in the Bible—find it.

The voice of the people is not the same as the voice of God. The fact many are involved in a particular thing does not mean that God wants you to do the same. There is a blueprint of God concerning your life, and you are under obligation to find it out. The fact that young people lose their virginity in recent times does not mean you should also lose yours. The fact that many cut corners does not mean you should also cut corners. The Word of God is a light unto your path, and it will give you light and insight into all things. It is the leader that you are to follow.

The Word of God will never lead you astray; it can only lead you upward and forward. It will abolish confusion because it is light unto your path. Don't

ever go against the scriptures because it is the Word of God which will settle many confusing questions for you. Make a commitment today that you will not make it difficult for yourself to be led by the Word of God that you will follow God's Word. Commit yourself to studying the Word of God more than ever before so as to find out the will of God on every matter of life. Get a 365-day Bible; get a devotional (you may request a copy of our Spirit Meat devotional, available in English, French, Yoruba (hard copy), and in other foreign languages on www.spiritmeat.net).

Follow the leader. Let your heart be sensitive to the Word of God. Stop violating the Word of God; this will make you unfit to perceive the leading of the Holy Spirit. Start practicing the Word of God; it will connect you to all the other leaders that God has positioned for your profiting. Start asking the question, 'What has God said on this matter?' If you follow the Word of God, you can never go astray.