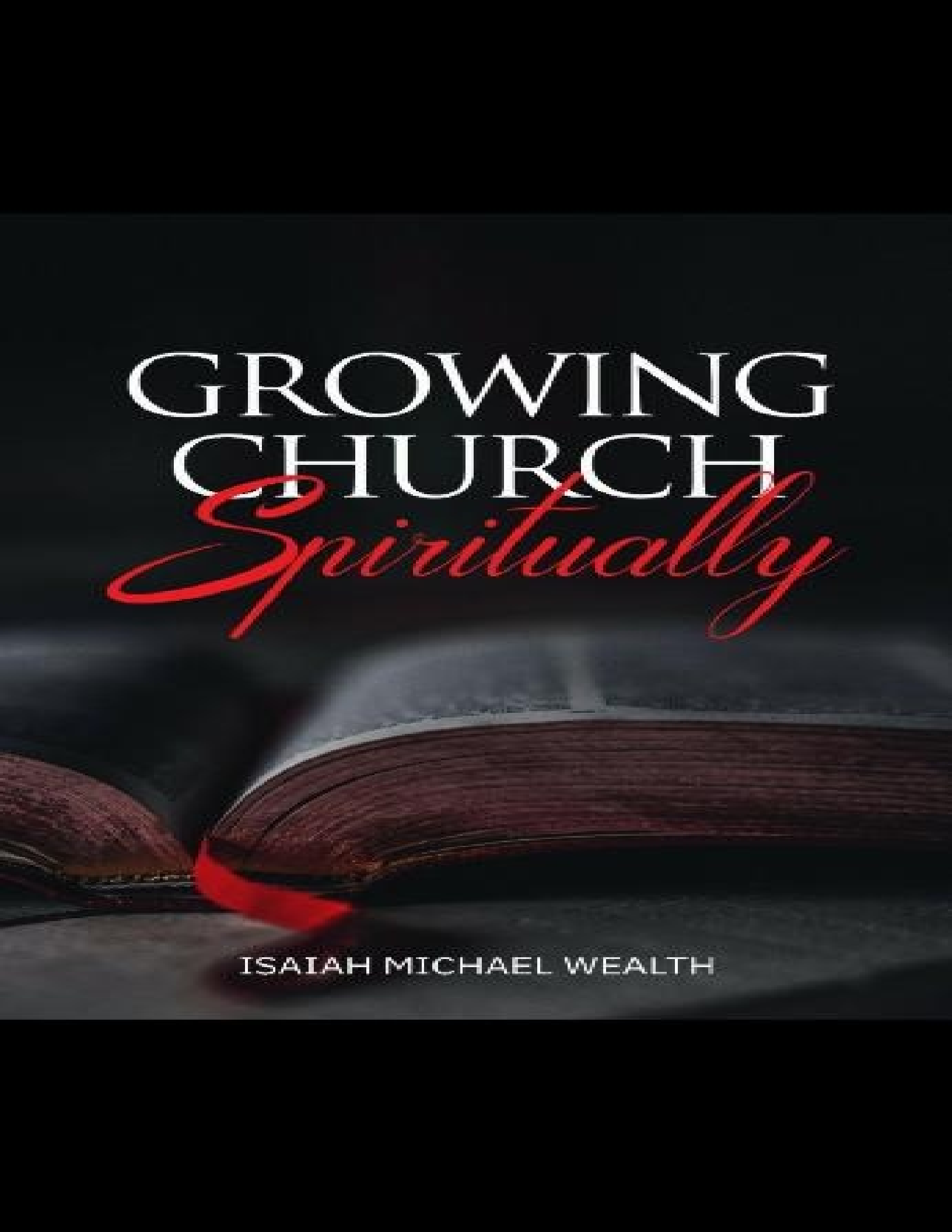
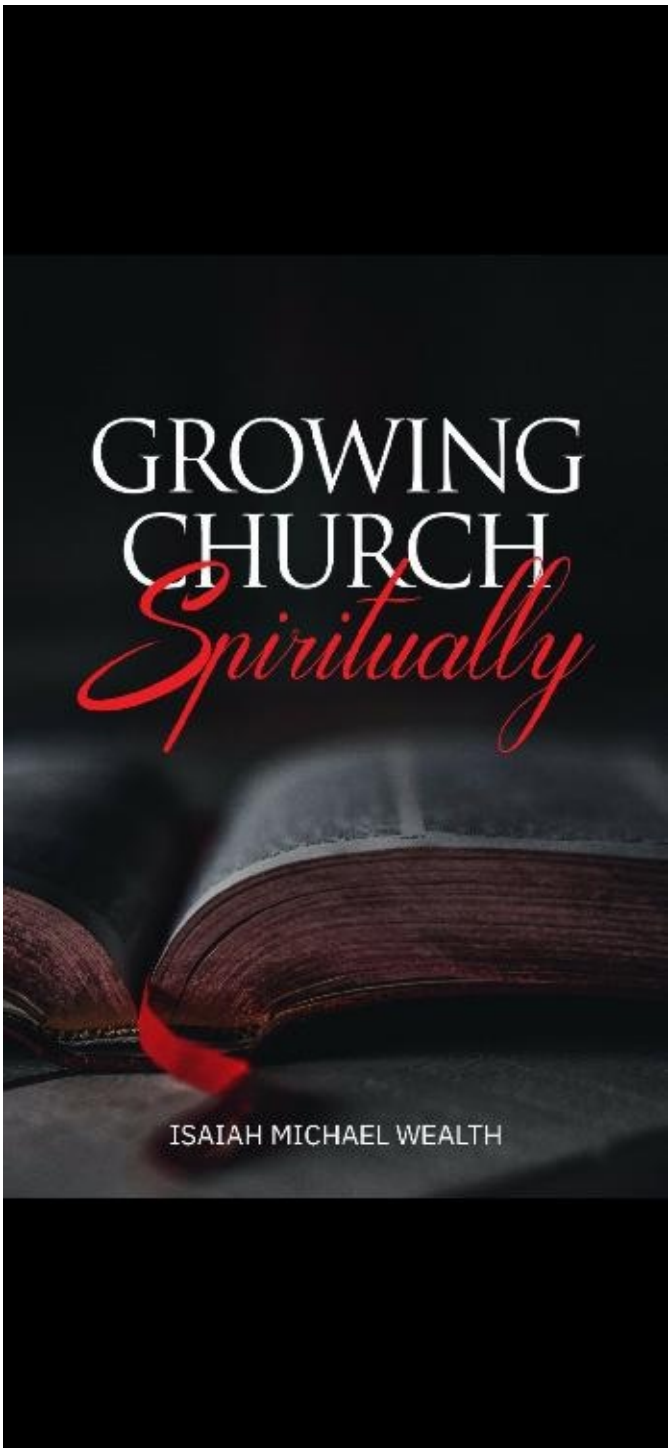

GROWING
CHURCH
Spiritually
ISAIAH MICHAEL WEALTH


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Unless otherwise stated, all scriptural reference are from the King James Version (KJV) of the Holy Bible. Bold and italicized scriptures are for emphasis only.

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INRODUCTION

There is a spirit or attitude that is required to attain church growth. This spirit or attitude is an indication that church growth and explosion is near.

The spirit of church growth refers to the prevailing quality or attitude displayed by one who wants to experience church growth. This refers to the dominating characteristic that a church or pastor who desires church growth should display.

When I see a minister who truly wants his church to grow, there are some tendencies and disposition that I observe that make me know that the person is gearing up for church growth. I see a hunger that often translates into actions that in time triggers church growth.

Therefore, any pastor who will experience church growth must also carry this attitude or spirit. This is what I intend to expose you to in this book. I will expatiate on the spirit of wisdom, the heart of sacrifice, the spiritual prayers and the spirit of faithfulness.

CHAPTER ONE

ACTS OF WISDOM

The acts of wisdom is the priority or the functionality of the spirit of wisdom in church growth. There is no pastor who has true wisdom that will struggle with church growth because it is impossible for wisdom to exist and church growth not to happen.

The polarity of wisdom is designed in such a way that wisdom attracts increase. It is designed to attract growth and increase, just the way the magnetic poles attract each other hence the pastor does not have to struggle.

All the things that anyone can desire cannot compare to the force of wisdom because when wisdom is working in you, your church will grow. The Spirit of Wisdom is the spirit of Church growth!

Even money will come when wisdom is present.

> ***For wisdom is better than rubies; and all the things that may be desired are not to be compared to it. I wisdom dwell with prudence, and find out knowledge of witty inventions.***
>
> ***Proverbs 8:11-12***

More often than not, money is the problem of some pastors today, and if you ask them they will tell you the reason they are not growing is because they lack the finances, whereas wisdom is the principal requirement for church growth.

> ***Through wisdom is an house builded; and by understanding it is established:***

Proverbs 24:3

This is why the scriptures says for you get wisdom.

> ***Wisdom is the principal thing; therefore get wisdom: and with all thy getting get understanding.***
>
> ***Proverbs 4:7***

> ***With thy wisdom and with thine understanding thou hast gotten thee riches, and hast gotten gold and silver into thy treasures:***
>
> ***Ezekiel 28:4***

Much more, we are also instructed to get understanding because wisdom creates but understanding establishes what was created.

> ***The LORD by wisdom hath founded the earth; by understanding hath he established the heavens.***
>
> ***Proverbs 3:19***

> ***Happy is the man that findeth wisdom, and the man that getteth understanding.***
>
> ***Proverbs 3:13***

And knowledge is what moves wisdom from one level to another;

> ***A wise man is strong; yea, a man of knowledge increaseth strength.***
>
> ***Proverbs 24:5***

It is this same wisdom that gives a man honour and riches.

> ***Riches and honour are with me; yea, durable riches and righteousness.***

Proverbs 8: 18

Riches is the abundance of money, honour is the abundance of people so if you have wisdom you will not lack people on your side. The pastor who desires church growth must therefore function with wisdom. Wisdom is calling to you today because it can give you both money and people

> ***O ye simple, understand wisdom: and, ye fools, be ye of an understanding heart.***
>
> ***Proverbs 8:5***

When there is wisdom, riches and honour must follow. Riches and honour answer to the voice of wisdom. Wisdom is the commander to the army of riches and honour, so if Solomon had asked for riches he would have gotten riches alone. If he had asked for honour he would have gotten honour. But he asked for wisdom and God gave him both.

> ***Behold, I have done according to thy words: lo, I have given thee a wise and an understanding heart; so that there was none like thee before thee, neither after thee shall any arise like unto thee. And I have also given thee that which thou hast not asked, both riches, and honour: so that there shall not be any among the kings like unto thee all thy days.***
>
> ***1Kings 3:12-13***



And by this wisdom, he ruled Israel. Solomon was given wisdom by God and we see that explosion of wisdom in his life because he became so wealthy. This translates that the pastor who is poor and lacks the resources to carry out his work lacks wisdom. Look at what the bible says in 1 Kings 10:27 to show you how the force of wisdom began to operate in this man.

> ***And the king made silver to be in Jerusalem as stones, and cedars made he to be as the sycamore trees that are in the vale, for abundance.***
>
> ***1Kings 10:27***

Take note of "he made" how did he make silver to be as common as stone? Wisdom! Your wealth or growth can never exceed your level of wisdom. In the same manner, your church growth can never exceed the level of your wisdom. It will always boil down to the level of wisdom at work in you. But who is wisdom?

Wisdom is a person but it operates as a force in your spirit. The Holy Spirit is wisdom. He is a force that works in you so you know what to do always. When the spirit of wisdom works in you, you do not need to be told what to do. Wisdom finds its way out, it opens doors. It creates, it makes a way where there seems to be no way.

He shows you how to put things in order to make them work.

Wisdom produces order, order produces fame, and fame produces wealth. There are three dimensions of order, which are the order of words, the order of things, and the order of dominion, I will focus on the order of words and things for the purpose of this book.

1. The Order of Words

The first thing wisdom creates is the order of words.

> ***And God gave Solomon wisdom and understanding exceeding much, and largeness of heart, even as the sand that is on the sea shore. And he spake three thousand proverbs: and his songs were a thousand and five. And he spake of trees, from the cedar tree that is in Lebanon even unto the hyssop that springeth out of the wall: he spake also of beasts, and of fowl, and of creeping things, and of fishes. And there came of all people to hear the wisdom of Solomon, from all kings of the earth, which had heard of his wisdom.***
>
> ***1Kings 4:29, 32-34***

The wisdom in Solomon created order in his words. Solomon sang songs by wisdom, he wrote Proverbs by wisdom. He was not a singer but he wrote songs. When wisdom is in you, songs will come, messages and teaching that will strengthen and establish your church will come. The problem with some pastors is that they do not speak with wisdom so people stay away from them. And how can a pastor who cannot attract and keep people grow a church?

The spirit of wisdom in me constantly teaches me how to speak and react to my members. He teaches what to preach at different seasons of my ministry. Right now, I have more messages than I can preach, I have written more songs than I can record. People have asked me "are you an author or a singer? You are writing songs, you are writing books, and you are preaching messages that we cannot find anywhere". Wisdom is working. That is what is called the order of words.

2. The Order of Things

How do you know a man of wisdom? You know him by the way things are arranged around him. You cannot say you have wisdom and your church or house is so scattered and everything is bent out of order. There is no wisdom there. This may be why people do not stay in your church. When you visit some churches, you will not see wisdom at all because their backdrop is bent, their pulpit is broken and they cannot see it and when people enter the church they can see foolishness. How will they stay?

When the Queen of Sheba came to see King Solomon, she was stunned by the kind of order she witnessed as the scripture below reveals;

> ***And when the queen of Sheba had seen all Solomon's wisdom, and the house that he had built, And the meat of his table, and the sitting of his servants, and the attendance of his ministers, and their apparel, and his cupbearers, and his ascent by which he went up unto the house of the LORD; there was no more spirit in her.***
>
> ***1Kings 10:4-5***

This is what should happen to people when they come to your church. They should see a level of excellence that will shock them and make them want to identify with you. When people come into your church and they see where your deacons seat, they see where your pastors seat, they see the back stage, they see how your ushers, singers, greeters, pastors and other personnel are arrayed they should say "oh my God, this man is full of wisdom!"



Therefore never say you do not know how to arrange things and put them in order. Learn! Study those who you admire and learn. You can also ask for help from those who you know may be gifted this way. Wisdom is visible but can it be seen in your church? When people see you, do they want to be close to you? When they see the way you do things do they want to be a part of it? There should be excellence in everything you do. You have to possess an attitude or make more effort to make things work.

When I enter a place, I am able to see beyond the surface. I am never satisfied until the arrangement of the place is perfect, that is an excellent spirit and that is how wisdom works.

It is not always about having too much money but making the best out of what you have. No matter how small your church or your office

is, make it excellent! You must understand that Great people are detailed people and excellence is not always in the property or in size but it is in the setting. Do everything to make your church venue, your service and your church workers excellent. People will come and marvel and want to be a part of your church.

As a child of God in the New Testament, Christ has been made unto you wisdom but you have to cultivate the attitude of the wisdom already in you.

> ***But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption:***
>
> ***1Corinthians 1:30***

You will need to develop and cultivate wisdom for it to be functional in your life.

How to cultivate wisdom

- Ask for grace to grow in wisdom.

> ***If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.***
>
> ***James 1:5***

- Speak in tongues.

> ***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:***

1Corinthians 2:6-7

- Study and Meditate on the word of God.

The wise men are ashamed, they are dismayed and taken: lo, they have rejected the word of the LORD; and what wisdom is in them?

Jeremiah 8:9

And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.

2Timothy 3:15

- Fellowship with the wise

He that walketh with wise men shall be wise: but a companion of fools shall be destroyed.

Proverbs 13:20

CHAPTER TWO

THE SPIRIT OF FAITHFULNESS

Faithfulness is one of the required attitudes or spirit for church growth. It is the state of being loyal or dedicated especially to a person, a promise, a duty from a sense of responsibility. It means to be trustworthy or reliable. Every church that will experience church growth must have the spirit of faithfulness. The people must be loyal and dedicated to the work of the ministry.

When you begin to notice the spirit of faithfulness predominant in a church, that is an indication that they are gearing up to experience massive church growth. One of the reasons some churches are not growing is because many of the members are not faithful to serving in the church. Therefore, the members of the church that will grow must begin to grow in faithfulness.

Faithfulness is also the ability to multiply whatever has been put in your care. This is a very important seed for promotion, and it is one of the first requirements for church growth. A pastor who wants to grow his church must be faithful and also teach and train his church to be so.

> ***Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful.***
>
> ***1Corinthians 4:2***

Most times when the word 'faithfulness' is used, it is in reference to the ability to keep together and maintain what has been committed to your

trust or, it can also mean reliability, loyalty, unwavering belief and dedication. But faithfulness is more than just being able to keep or maintain what has been committed to your trust; it is also the ability to increase maximally what has been entrusted to you. The parable of Jesus in Matthew chapter 25 buttresses this;

> ***For the kingdom of heaven is as a man travelling into a far country, who called his own servants, and delivered unto them his goods. And unto one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one; to every man according to his several ability; and straightway took his journey. Then he that had received the five talents went and traded with the same, and made them other five talents. And likewise he that had received two, he also gained other two. But he that had received one went and digged in the earth, and hid his Lord's money.***
>
> ***Matthew 25:14-18***

The master in the scripture above gave his servants talents so that they would trade with it and bring returns on the investment. He gave them talents based on their ability. This means that they all had the ability to multiply the investment of their master. Two of them traded and brought returns on the investment and one did not. We see what happens to them in the next verses.

> ***And so he that had received five talents came and brought other five talents, saying, Lord, thou deliveredst unto me five talents: behold, I have gained beside them five talents more. His Lord said unto him, Well***

done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy Lord. He also that had received two talents came and said, Lord, thou deliveredst unto me two talents: behold, I have gained two other talents beside them. Then he which had received the one talent came and said, Lord, I knew thee that thou art an hard man, reaping where thou hast not sown, and gathering where thou hast not strawed: And I was afraid, and went and hid thy talent in the earth: lo, there thou hast that isthine. His Lord answered and said unto him, Thou wicked and slothful servant, thou knewest that I reap where I sowed not, and gather where I have not strawed: Thou oughtest therefore to have put my money to the exchangers, and then at my coming I should have received mine own with usury. Take therefore the talent from him, and give it unto him which hath ten talents. For unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance: but from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath. And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

Matthew 25:20-30

The one who had received ten talents multiplied the investment by one hundred percent and he was made ruler over many kingdoms. The one who had two talents was also rewarded because

he also multiplied his investment by a hundred percent.

I want you to notice that their master called them good and faithful. They were adjudged good because they did not incur losses for their master and they were considered faithful because they multiplied his investment a hundred fold. But the one with the one talent did nothing with his and this incurred



the wrath of his master. His master expected him to at least give his investment to the bank so that he can make returns no matter how small, but he did not. We can see clearly that he did not receive any reward instead he was cast into outer darkness.

> ***And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.***
>
> ***Matthew 25:30***

This shows us God's mind about faithfulness; He expects us to multiply all that is given to us no matter how small the percentage. So being a good and consistent pastor is not enough, you have to add faithfulness to goodness and steadfastness.

In Luke's account of this same parable, we see that the two servants who made profit on investment were both rewarded based on their capacity.

> ***Then came the first, saying, Lord, thy pound hath gained ten pounds. And he said unto him, Well, thou good servant: because thou hast been faithful in a very little, have thou authority over ten cities. And the second came, saying, Lord, thy pound hath gained five pounds. And he said likewise to him, Be thou also over five cities.***
>
> ***Luke 19:16-19***

Notice that one was given authority over ten cities and the other five. They were both re warded based on what they had produced. This shows us something else about God. God will not increase a church beyond their capacity so that they will not incur losses. The pastor and the church therefore need to develop their capacity to handle more because capacity is the seed for trust. And when God finds the church faithful, he favors the church, He increases them and expands their territory and reach.

> ***His Lord said unto him, Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.***
>
> ***Matthew 25:21***

> ***Take therefore the talent from him, and give it unto him which hath ten talents.***
>
> ***Matthew 25:28***

Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his Lord hath made ruler over his household, to give them meat in due season?

Matthew 24:45

....I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.

Matthew 25:21b

He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much.

Luke 16:10

Therefore, the Pastor that desires church growth must ensure that each member grow in faithfulness. A faithful church is measured by the individual and effective faithfulness of the individual members. God in his wisdom has provided all the church needs to grow in each of her members but they need to be faithful to supply their own part.

How faithfulness grows a church

When the church walks in the spirit of faithfulness, God commits more into their trust and the church grows. But how does the spirit of faithfulness grow a church? I will explain this using the scripture below;

But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure

of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.

Ephesians 4:15-16

Step 1 - The effectual working of every part: God's design of the church is that it will grow by the working of every part. When each part or each member works effectually, that is to their full capacity, that is the first step of faithfulness that will surely result in growth.

Step 2 - That which everyone supplies: In the second step, the effectual work of each member is supplied into a common system which is the church. Here, the faithfulness in working and supplying is what begins to lead to church growth.

Step 3 - Maketh increase of the body: In the third step, after what is made is supplied, it makes the increase we are talking about. This therefore shows how increase happens. Faithfulness in working plus faithfulness in supplying maketh increase. For example, a member who is faithful in developing himself and working hard at his job would earn money. That money he has earned has come into the kingdom. That is faithfulness in working. When he then from that money gives his tithe or any form of giving, that is faithfulness in supplying. The aggregate faithfulness of all members in a certain church will lead to increase in the church finances. It is this kind of increase that would soon lead to church growth.

Step 4 - The edifying or growing of its self: To edify means to build up. The increase that comes from the faithful supply from each part or member now culminates in a growing body. As long as this increase continues to accumulate, growth would continue to result. As every

member of the church develops themselves to the fullness of their capacity and are putting this ability to work, both in their place of work and in the church faithfully, they would be producing value. The faithfulness to supply part of that value to the church would result in increase in that church which will produce growth in the church.

This is why the pastor needs to focus on building the spirit of faithfulness in the church.

The members have to be taught and trained first to be the best they can be in all aspects of their lives, then they should be trained to supply to the church to the highest of their capacity and this will lead to increase and growth of the church.

For instance, members should be empowered with wisdom and grace for financial success and as they grow financially, they should be trained to give according to the measure of their financial blessing per time. This will make the church have sufficient enough to carry out its plans for church growth.

A church that has this attitude of faithfulness will constantly be on the rise. God has put the capacity for church growth in the members of the church, they only have to be faithful with their resources and the souls God has given to them, maintaining and multiplying it for church growth to manifest.

CHAPTER THREE

THE HEART OF SACRIFICE

The growth and establishment of the church in these last days is a prophecy that must come to pass. God's house shall be established at the top of the mountains.

> ***But in the last days it shall come to pass, that the mountain of the house of the LORD shall be established in the top of the mountains, and it shall be exalted above the hills; and people shall flow unto it.***
>
> ***Micah 4:1***

No matter what the media or the world thinks and say, they cannot stop it because it is a prophecy that must come to pass.

The scripture above also says that "people shall flow into it". This means that in these last days, a multitude of souls will flow or rush to the church.

The bible also says in the next verse that "many nations shall come".

> ***And many nations shall come, and say, Come, and let us go up to the***

mountain of the LORD, and to the house of the God of Jacob;

Micah 4:2



This is a prophecy about the church. God's vision for the church is to have people from different nations, tribes, tongues and occupation fill the church, but there is a final ingredient before this can happen. That final ingredient required is the spirit of sacrifice.

The Christianity many practice today is one that is a product of popular opinion and if we continue with popular opinion, we will end up not achieving God's purpose in our time. Also because of the indifference of many believers, so many people today do not believe in God. This is because believers are not willing to sacrifice for the Gospel. The problem is that we have many people who are Christians by religion and they have never really served God and given up anything for the kingdom.

If we will experience the coming church growth and explosion prophesied by the prophet Micah, we must be willing to sacrifice and lose for the kingdom. The Apostle Paul says this about himself in Philippians 3;

But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ.

Philippians 3:7

Today when you lose something for Christ they tell you, you are deceived. This is foolishness and the wisdom of the world. Serving Christ, knowing him and sacrificing for the Gospel is the greatest privilege any man can have.

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

Philippians 3:8

The Gospel will never excel until men lose something. Our Lord Jesus gave his life for us to be saved and for us to receive salvation.

For then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.

Hebrews 9:26

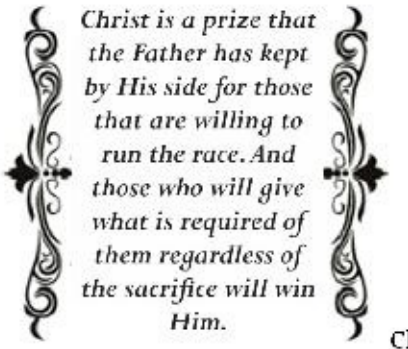
And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood.

Revelation 1:5

For that circle to continue and for men to continue to receive the Gospel, we too should be able to sacrifice even our own lives.

Many of the Apostles also lost their lives for the cause of the Gospel. So we must be willing to do all to continue the ministry. So many people commit themselves to irrelevant things yet find it difficult to commit themselves to the things of God. They go to any extent to achieve earthly success and to acquire things for their pleasure. Some persons even forget to eat or take care of their families just to win an earthly prize or award that has no eternal value but some Christians do not make as much effort to win Christ.

> ***Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ.***
>
> ***Philippians 3:8***



Christ is a prize that the Father has kept by His side for those that are willing to run the race. And those who will give what is required of them regardless of the sacrifice will win Him.

We must also understand that the heart to sacrifice is the heart that releases heaven on earth. Sacrifice is the door way for heaven to access earth. Heaven can never penetrate the earth without sacrifice. The spirit world can never access the physical world without sacrifice because sacrifices are portals. Even the people of the occult and the negative world tap into this same principle as it is a universal law. Thus you will not be able to plant a church, and grow the church without getting the backing from heaven that is a product of sacrifice.

The reason why the church has spread all over the world was because the devil made a mistake by allowing the blood of Jesus to be shed that is the sacrifice, which opened the biggest portal ever that gave man access to eternal life.

> ***Which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.***
>
> ***1Corinthians 2:8***

And he made another mistake by allowing the blood of the saints and early Christians to be shed. These loved not their lives even unto death.

> ***And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death.***
>
> ***Revelation 12:11***

Their sacrifice has sustained the Gospel till now, and we need to recognize this and to continue making our sacrifices to keep the Gospel alive. Satan's strategy now is to make church people love the world, because he knows that people

who love the world cannot sacrifice for the kingdom.

This is evident in the fact that today many churches are more concerned about the secular lives of their people without much consideration on the effort they make to reach out to the lost. That is why we have big churches and small impact.

Many fail to realize that for the church to continue to exist and grow, it will take more than one man because God is not going to establish His kingdom on earth by Himself. It is our duty to pay the sacrifice today for the Gospel to continue to spread.



The question to you as the pastor of your church is, are you making the necessary sacrifices for your church to grow? Have you given yourself totally to your ministry? Can you die for the Gospel? Are you still more concerned about your convenience?

I have heard stories about pastors who were transferred to a new location but because it would inconvenience them, they refused to go. This is not the heart of sacrifice.

There are some religions today that are spreading so fast because of the sacrifice the people are

willing to pay. Some even strap themselves with bombs to kill themselves and others in a bid to please their god that is no God, and spread their message that is not true. But we know the true God and have the true message yet we are not willing to sacrifice for the truth. For the Gospel to spread and for your church to grow, you must be glad and willing to spend and be spent.

> ***And I will very gladly spend and be spent for you; though the more abundantly I love you, the less I be loved.***
>
> ***2Corinthians 12:15***

You cannot command sacrifice as a pastor when you have not offered yourself on the altar of sacrifice. I constantly remind my church about the sacrifices I have made and keep making for the Gospel and this has inspired them to make their own sacrifices. A church that is still struggling with tithes and offering is not ready for growth. Those are the basic things about Christianity. Those are a part of our worship and our responsibility.

People must be willing to not only give their money, but their time, convenience and even occupation as the Spirit will lead for the Gospel sake. I am a trained electrical engineer that graduated with honors and I sacrificed it all for the Gospel and every day I make greater sacrifices and am willing to make more. This is the mind you must have and teach your people to have. This is the only way the prophecy that God has given us about the growth and domination of the church over the world will come to pass.

Who says it must be convenient? The mind that church must be close to you, giving should be when you have, meetings should be when you are free, submission should be when you feel like

is what is killing your church. Do not be afraid to teach them the truth. A kingdom whose foundation was laid on sacrifice cannot be propagated any way else. So teach them to pray when it is difficult, to give when they do not have, to reach out to others with their last, to serve God with their best, and if they are called to, they should be willing to lay down their lives for Christ.

> ***And Jesus answered and said, Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake, and the gospel's, But he shall receive an hundredfold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come eternal life.***
>
> ***Mark 10:29-30.***

When we know that sacrifice for Christ is never lost, we will sacrifice more as eternity awaits to tell the story. This is the spirit of church growth.

CHAPTER FOUR

SPIRITUAL PRAYERS

Prayer is the engine for church growth, hence, it is a compulsory element of church growth. A church or pastor that will not or cannot pray will not experience church growth because church growth is a spiritual activity that must first be activated in the realms of the Spirit.

As a pastor, you must recognize that church is all about souls and that there is an enemy who does not want souls to be saved and also does not want the church to grow.

So church growth activities without prayer is an exercise in futility. The pastor should therefore spend time to pray for souls and for the members of the church.

Prayer for souls

The kind of prayer required for church growth is not ordinary prayers, but spiritual prayers done in tears. This is because true church growth is a product of salvation of souls and soul wining is

a crying business. If you want souls to be saved, you have to cry for them with passion in your heart. Prophet Joel shows us this in the book of Joel chapter 2

> ***Let the priests, the ministers of the LORD, weep between the porch and the altar, and let them say, Spare thy people, O LORD, and give not thine heritage to reproach, that the heathen should rule over them: wherefore should they say among the people, Where is their God?***
>
> ***Joel 2:17***

The pastor or ministers of the church must weep before God for the salvation of souls. This is not the kind of prayer made in convenience or in a position of rest. In this prayer, there is no consideration of time. It is a prayer that involves using your whole body, spirit and soul.

Ezekiel puts it this way:

> ***Sigh therefore, thou son of man, with the breaking of thy loins; and with bitterness sigh before their eyes.***
>
> ***Ezekiel 21:6***

Jesus' prayer in Gethsemane is an example of how we should pray for souls. Luke's account of this story shows the fervency and intensity of His prayers.

> ***And being in an agony he prayed more earnestly: and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground.***
>
> ***Luke 22:44***

This is the kind of fervency required when we contend for the souls of men in prayer. Jesus was about to embark on a journey to save the soul of mankind hence the seriousness and fervency in his prayers. We too as a continuation of His mission are in battle for the souls of men. Jesus has paid the ultimate price but Satan has blinded the eyes of many so that they will not receive the Gospel. This is why we should pray fervently.

> ***But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them. For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake.***
>
> ***2Corinthians 4:3***

If we must prevail always in the realms of the spirit, set men free, obtain territories for the kingdom of God, and ultimately get results in prayer, we must pray this way as often as possible. It will take consistency and diligence on our part. God wants to see souls saved. All souls are His to do as He wills;

> ***Behold, all souls are mine; as the soul of the father, so also the soul of the son is mine: the soul that sinneth, it shall die.***
>
> ***Ezekiel 18:4***

But we have a role to play; we have to ask in intense and tearful prayers.

> ***Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and***

the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession.

Psalms 2:8

Some pastors wonder why they are unable to win souls into their church. It is either they are not actively involved in praying for souls or they are not praying with passion.

The Necessity of Passion

Passion is what gives efficacy or power to prayer. This refers to a strong and compelling desire for something or for someone. The pastor has to have strong and compelling desire to see souls saved. Without passion you cannot liberate souls in the place of prayer. You cannot pretend or assume passion; it is either there or not. But the good thing is that you can develop it.

Developing the passion for souls

To develop passion for souls, you need to meditate on the reality and end of the man who is not saved.

He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.

Mark 16:16

You need to meditate on the truth that anyone who does not believe in Jesus and accept His sacrifice is damned or lost for eternity. There is no hope for him. When he leaves this world, he will suffer in hell first and then in the lake of fire with Satan forever.

And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to Kill the soul: but rather fear him which is

able to destroy both soul and body in hell.

Matthew 10:28

This should stir up passion in your soul for the lost. One of my mentors early in my ministry taught me this. He said that I should step outside on the street and look at the lost and meditate on their eternity and cry for them. I did this sever ally and my passion for souls increased. As you go about your activities and meet people, think about their eternity and their fate after death and you will find passion for lost souls.

Furthermore, you can also ask the Holy Spirit to help you develop this passion, because He works in us to will and do the desire of God.

For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.

Philippians 2:13

It is God's will that souls be saved and you can ask the Spirit to work in you a passion for the lost that would lead you to spend quality time praying for them.

Some prayers for lost souls

Pray for light to shine in the dark places of your city. The evil that holds men in sin inhabits the dark places of your city, and for the people to be saved, light needs to shine in the dark areas.

Have respect unto the covenant: for the dark places of the earth are full of the habitations of cruelty

Psalms 74:20

There are places in your city where prostitution flourishes, where atheism prevails, where drug trafficking is the order of the day. Their host is darkness, therefore you should pray that God will cause His light to shine upon the dark places of your city so that salvation will come to many in those places.

Pray for the outpour of the Spirit. It is the Holy Spirit that tills the land for harvest.

> ***Until the spirit be poured upon us from on high, and the wilderness be a fruitful field, and the fruitful field be counted for a forest.***
>
> ***Isaiah 32:15***

This is why you would notice at the inception of the church that until the Spirit was poured out, even the church could not begin.

> ***But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.***
>
> ***Acts 1:8***

> ***And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with***

other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance

Acts 2:1-4

So as you put into practice all that you learn in this book, you must remember that you would need the outpour of God's Spirit to successfully turn many to righteousness and add them to the Kingdom.

Also, you would notice that it took the move of God s Spirit in Genesis 1 for God to create all that He had made.

And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. And God said, Let there be light: and there was light.

Genesis 1:2-3

So before you say anything in soul winning, you need the Spirit of God to move first. This is why you should pray that God would pour out His Spirit upon your city so that many would be saved.

Pray for the eyes of the lost to be opened.

Many in your city have refused to give their hearts to Christ because their eyes have been blinded by the devil who would rather want them to continue in sin and be destroyed.

But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ,

who is the image of God, should shine unto them.

2Corinthians 4:3-4

We see the Lord Jesus affirm this truth when He said,

For this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted

Matthew 13:15

In other words, until the eyes of the people be opened supernaturally, and their dull hearing unstopped, they will not be able to receive salvation. Therefore, your desire to see many saved in your city and added to your church must be followed up with intense prayers for the eyes of the lost to be opened.

Prayers for members of the church

It is also important that the pastor spends time praying for the members of the church. If they do not mature, they will not participate in church growth activities or the work of the ministry. It is the pastor's responsibility to pray every member into maturity. So irrespective of the membership challenge of your church, I have highlighted some spiritual prayers you can pray for your members below:

- Galatians prayers

The church in Galatia had been taught the truth about their liberty of the Gospel, but deceivers crept up among them with the intent to deceive them into the bondage of the law and Apostle Paul was saddened by this because he had bestowed much labour upon them. He did not want his labour for them to be in vain, so he prayed this prayer for them.

> ***My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you***
>
> ***Galatians 4:19***

He travailed for them in prayers that Christ will be formed in them. He prayed that the person and likeness of Christ will be formed in them because it is only when Christ is formed in them, that they can live like Him, act and respond the way Christ would have if He were in their situation. This is an all-encompassing prayer.

- Ephesians prayers

The Ephesians church was a growing church, a church that faced a lot of persecution. They needed a revelation of the purpose of their calling and their authority in Christ Jesus so that they could be strong and overcome.

Here we see Apostle Paul craft a prayer for them.

> ***Wherefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus, and love unto all the saints, Cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers; That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him: The eyes of your un-***

derstanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power.

Ephesians 1:15 -19

He prays for them that God would give them the spirit of wisdom and revelation that would open their eyes so that they would know the following;

Firstly, that they would know the hope of their calling: The reason a lot of believers give up in the face of challenges is because they do not know the hope of their calling. As believers, we have been called to a life of triumph in this world and in the world to come.

Although we face challenges, God's promise to us is sure but it is the spirit of wisdom and revelation that reveals this hope to us so that we may be strong even in seemingly impossible situations and the Bible says that this hope is the anchor of our soul.

Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast

Hebrews 6:19

We must also remember that the believers in the early church faced a lot of persecution, so this prayer was to give them a revelation beyond their present state of persecution, and to make them see reasons to hold onto the truth they had received.

This prayer is important to us today because it is this revelation that will give us strength to hold

on, no matter the opposition we face as a church as we see beyond our present life even into the great hope of the life to come

Secondly, he prays that they would know the riches of His inheritance in the saints. He prays that God would give them the spirit of wisdom and revelation that would open their understanding to know how much God has willed to the individual saint - the deposit God has made in their account that which they can enjoy now, and the ones that await them after putting away this corruptible body.

That they will know the greatness of God's power towards them that believe.

There are yet deeper levels of revelation of God's power that is available unto us. We are not helpless wimps or a bunch of hopeless fellows. The power of God is available for us regardless of the circumstances. But it takes the spirit of wisdom to open us to this revelation.

> ***And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us- ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places***
>
> ***Ephesians 1:19-20***

The same power that raised Christ up from the dead is the same power that is made available to us who believe. Glory to God! But why do some of us still fear, and still feel intimidated? We may lack this revelation. This is why the pastor must pray that God will give the church the spirit of wisdom and revelation so that they will comprehend the greatness of His power at their disposal against all forces of intimidation and fear

- that power to live and operate the kingdom of God on earth with great results.

Also in Ephesians chapter 3, Apostle Paul prays another powerful prayer for the Ephesian church. You have to understand that this man was caught up to the third heavens. When he prays, we should be concerned about the content of his prayer and pay close attention to the focus of his prayers as these are a revelation of heaven's focus. Take a look at this from verse 14;

> ***For this cause I bow my knees un to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man; That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, May be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God.***
>
> ***Ephesians 3:14 -19***

He prays for God to strengthen them in their inner man by His Spirit, according to the riches of His Glory. He also prays that Christ will dwell in their hearts by faith, that they may be rooted and grounded in love and be able to comprehend with other saints the breadth, the length, the depth and the height of God's love and finally, that they by this knowledge be filled with the fullness of God.

Do you know what happens when a believer is filled with the fullness of God which indeed if not possible would not have been prayed by Apostle Paul? These prayers are more spiritual than we can explain. This is a Prayer a pastor must pray daily for his members. Let us simplify this prayer.

Firstly, we must pray that God will strengthen our members in the inner man by His Holy Spirit. The reason many believers are not able to stand strong through tests and temptation is because they are not strengthened in the inner man. The Bible says that if we faint in the days of adversity our strength is small.

> ***If thou faint in the day of adversity, thy strength is small.***
>
> ***Proverbs 24:10***

So no matter how much they try to be strong, they still fall. True and lasting strength is spiritual, meaning that if they are not strengthened by the Spirit in the inner man, no matter how much they try, they may still fall to sin or draw back into perdition.

More so, that strength gives the ability to access and operate in the deep things of God which the human capacity cannot contain.

Secondly, we must pray that Christ by His love will dwell in their hearts by faith and that they will be able to comprehend His love for them. It is this understanding that will make them walk with God confidently even in the midst of their mistakes and then beyond the realm of mistakes. His love for them surpasses knowledge and is not something that can be understood by the senses. It is only His spirit that can unveil

it to them, this is the reason the pastor should pray this prayer.

Finally, the pastor should pray that they will be filled with the fullness of Christ, so that they will become all that He is. That He will fill them with His wisdom, power and grace. What a prayer!

The growth and survival of the early church was hinged on these prayers and as a pastor today, these prayers are more important to you now than they ever were because of the opposition we face. The devil is constantly evolving better strategies to stop the growth of believers and the expansion of God's kingdom. But he has lost already, especially as we pray these prayers.

- **Philippians prayers**

> ***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 offence till the day of Christ;***
>
> ***Philippians 1:9 -10***

Apostle Paul prays that their love will increase more and more in knowledge and in all judgment and when this happens they will approve things that are excellent and would be sincere and without offence till the day of Christ.

True and lasting love is a product of knowledge. True judgment is the understanding of wisdom, the hatred of sin, the passion of mercy and the protection of love. This is what Paul is praying, that when the believer is making decisions that it would not be based on a mental assent love but that which is in line with true judgment.

When their judgment is excellent and sincere, they will make fewer mistakes in life and walk according to the wisdom of God in every situation they face.

This is a very important prayer the pastor should also pray. As their love increase more and more no matter what they experience, they will judge all things and all men by the standard of God's love, hinged on knowledge and spiritual judgment.

- Colossians prayers

The book of Colossians contains three major prayers we will consider in this chapter. We see the first one in Colossians chapter 1 from verse 9;

> ***For this cause we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that ye might be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God; Strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power, unto all patience and longsuffering with joyfulness; Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light:***
>
> ***Colossians 1:9-12***

Apostle Paul's desire and prayer was that they would be filled with the knowledge of God's will in all wisdom and in all understanding. The

bible tells us that there is the good, the acceptable and the perfect will of God.

> ***And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.***
>
> ***Romans 12:2***

So his prayer is that they will walk in the perfect will of God, in all wisdom and spiritual understanding. They will know the exact and present will of God about every situation and every stage of their lives. And when they have this, he tells us what will happen to them in the next verses-

> ***That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God; Strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power, unto all patience and longsuffering with joyfulness; Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light:***
>
> ***Colossians 1:10-11***

1. They will walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work and increase in the knowledge of God. This means that when they are filled with the knowledge of the perfect will of God, their walk will please God leading to fruitfulness in every good work. We are called to a life of fruitfulness, so when we are equipped with God's perfect and present will for our lives, we will produce fruits and not

be barren in our walk with God, thus walking worthy of our calling which is meeting up with God s purpose for calling us in the first place. This is another way of defining success. He also says that they will increase in the knowledge of God.



2. They will be strengthened with might, according to God's glorious power unto patience, longsuffering with joyfulness. This means that they will be strengthened according to the measure of God's power. God's power is immeasurable so they will be given unlimited and immeasurable strength to have patience and longsuffering with joyfulness in the midst of adversity. Patience is simply waiting for the manifestation of a promise but long suffering involves coping joyfully with some form of suffering while you wait. So whether it is patience or long suffering, they will be strengthened to wait in joy.

3. Finally, thanksgiving unto the father who hath made them qualified to partake of this inheritance in Christ Jesus.

These are the kind of prayers you have to pray as a pastor regularly for all your members. They are spiritual prayers that fortify them and build them up in Christ.

We see the second Colossians prayer in chapter 4;

> ***Withal praying also for us, that God would open unto us a door of utterance, to speak the mystery of Christ, for which I am also in bonds:***
>
> ***Colossians 4:3***

This is a prayer the Apostle Paul asked the believers in Colossae to pray for him. He asked them to pray that a door of utterance will be given unto him to preach the gospel. When the door is given to him, he would speak and preach the gospel with confidence and boldness.

Also, the door of utterance would create opportunities for him to preach the Gospel. This is a prayer you should pray for yourself as the pastor of the church, your leaders, other pastors, and for missionaries all around the globe. You should pray that God would open doors of utterance for you and your members and also give them the boldness to preach when the opportunities come, regardless of the consequences.

In Colossians chapter 4 verse 12, we see another important spiritual prayer we need to consider.

> ***Epaphras, who is one of you, a servant of Christ, saluteth you, always labouring fervently for you in prayers, that ye may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God.***
>
> ***Colossians 4:12***

Epaphras was a disciple of Apostle Paul and a servant of Christ and he prayed for the believers in Colossae that they would stand perfect and complete in all the will of God. This means that

in every area of their lives they would be at all times in the perfect will of God, that they will be well grounded and have a deep understanding of the will of God with respect to situations and in every area of their lives. As believers, this is the only way our actions can please God because they will always be based on or in line with His perfect and complete will.

These prayers are a must for the believer in Christ Jesus, so you should pray them over and over again until your members become all that Christ Jesus wants them to be.

- **Thessalonians prayers**

Finally in this chapter, we will study two very important prayers in the book of 2 Thessalonians chapter 3, from verse 1;

> ***Finally, brethren, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may have free course, and be glorified, even as it is with you: And that we may be delivered from unreasonable and wicked men: for all men have not faith.***
>
> ***2Thessalonians 3:1-2***

This is another prayer Apostle Paul asked the believers in Thessalonica to pray for him. The first prayer we see is that the word of God will have a free course and be glorified. The devil does not want the word to grow and prevail in the hearts of men because their salvation and deliverance is dependent on the word of God. So he puts imaginations and obstacles in their hearts to stand against the knowledge of God's word, we see this in 2 Corinthians 10;

> ***For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;***

Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ;

2Corinthians 10:4 -5

So when we pray this prayer, we are praying that the word of God will move unhindered in the hearts of men and have a free course so that it can prevail over their unbelief, doubt or even their circumstances. And when the word prevails in the hearts of men, it is glorified. The pastor should pray this prayer for his leaders, other pastors and missionaries who minister the word to people every day.

We see the second prayer in verse 2. He asks them to pray that he will be delivered from wicked and unreasonable men who have no faith. Satan is working in men to wrought evil through them and some of these evil acts are directed towards believers all around the world. The bible describes these evil men in Jeremiah chapter 5 verses 26 to 28 and in Proverbs chapter 1 from verse 11 to 13;

For among my people are found wicked men: they lay wait, as he that setteth snares; they set a trap, they catch men. As a cage is full of birds, so are their houses full of deceit: therefore they are become great, and waxen rich. They are waxen fat, they shine: yea, they over pass the deeds of the wicked: they judge not the cause, the cause of the fatherless, yet they prosper; and the right of the needy do they not judge.

Jeremiah 5:26 -28

If they say, Come with us, let us lay wait for blood, let us lurk privily for the innocent without cause:Let us swallow them up alive as the grave; and whole, as those that go down into the pit:We shall find all precious substance, we shall fill our houses with spoil:

Proverbs 1:11-13

But despite the intentions and plans of the wicked, a pastor can pray that God will deliver his members so that their activities will not touch them and all those that concern them.

The wickedness in this world is increasing every day and as a pastor, you should refuse to allow your members become victims. This is the reason you should pray this without ceasing. You should take advantage of these spiritual prayers that have been made available to you.

I have taken a lot of time to explain these prayers because, for your members to be involved with you in soulwinning, they must grow and mature in the things of the Spirit and they must have spiritual pastoral cover against the attacks of Satan. So the pastor who wants church growth and does not pray for the members he already has, is wasting his time. He should be able to care for those he has already to qualify to receive more from God.

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