WISDOM Series



21 Foolish Things People do

AVOIDING THE ERROR
LIVING THE SUCCESSFUL LIFE

PAUL ENENCHE MD

21 Foolish Things People Do

By

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INTRODUCTION

Doth not wisdom cry? And understandng put forth her voice? She standeth in the top of high places, by the way in the places of the paths. By me kings reign, and Princes decree justice. Proverbs 8:1-2, 15

Wisdom is the key to ruling on earth and foolishness is the mystery behind hardship on earth. To be wise is to rise and to be a fool is to fail. In proverbs chapter eight and in the fifteenth verse, Wisdom speaking, says, “By me kings

reign, and princes decree justice." When a person rules spiritually, economically, politically and businesswise, wisdom is certainly the underlying principle. In the same vein, foolishness supports failure.

Wisdom is the key to success; foolishness is the secret of failure. Anywhere a man is in charge, wisdom is at work. Anywhere a man is in struggle, strategy is lacking. In life, hidden behind many forms of struggle, is the shortage of strategy. When a person is struggling financially, spiritually, and perhaps in business, there simply are strategies he needs to have that he does not. A man in financial struggle lacks financial strategies. A man in spiritual struggle lacks spiritual strategies and a man in business struggle lacks business strategies.

What is WISDOM? It is to know what to do, and to do what you know. To know what to do spiritually and do it; to know what to do financially and do it; to know what to do in marital life and do it, that is wisdom. It is possible that you know what to do in a situation, but that in itself is not wisdom. 'Knowing' alone is not wisdom; that is intelligence. To know what to do and to do what you know is wisdom. A man who knows what to do and does not do what he knows is an intelligent fool. True. He knows what to do, but he does not put it to practice. He is simply an informed fool.

Wisdom is applied information. It is applied knowledge. When information or revelation is applied or put to use, that is wisdom. A wise man is the one who has strategies and applies them. Just knowing a thing or celebrating what is known is not wisdom.

Any man who reigns in life does so by the power of wisdom. And if we are going to reign as kings, we will do so by the power of wisdom. A lot of people go through several painful experiences in life because of the forces of ignorance and foolishness at work in their lives. Hosea 4:6 says, "My people are destroyed, (not because the devil is too strong, but…) for lack of knowledge" (paraphrase, mine). Many People are where they are today not because of how powerful the devil is, but because of the power of their ignorance and foolishness. This book exposes twenty-one foolish things that people do: the very things that constitute failure; the very things at the base or foundation of every faulty life. When anyone escapes these things, they escape failure and frustration in life.

If you have the dream of a successful life on earth, I implore you, not only to carefully read through this book, but to study its deep truths and apply them in

your everyday life.

CHAPTER ONE

EXISTENCE INDEPENDENT OF GOD

To exist independent of God is the first foolish thing anyone can do in life. To operate without taking counsel from God; to live a life that is independent of God is a foolish lifestyle. It will certainly establish a person in failure.

The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God. They are corrupt, they have done abominable works, there is none that doeth good. – Psalm 14:1

The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God. Corrupt are they, and have done abominable iniquity: there is none that doeth good. – Psalm 53:1

Therefore I said, Surely these are poor; they are foolish: for they know not the way of the LORD, nor the judgment of their God. – Jeremiah 5:4

When a person behaves as if there is no God, it is a foolish procedure that will definitely end in failure. The Prophet Jeremiah says, “They know not the way of the LORD nor the Judgment of their God.” He concluded that, “they are foolish and poor”. Deficiency or shortage in life is a product of existing independent of God.

There are many people on earth today who live a random life–life by random motion. They live their life by randomization and inference. They do not have God on their schedule at all. To such people, if a thing happens 'that way', it probably means the other should be 'this way'. If they meet a girl, for instance, and the girl's name is like theirs and her birthday falls on the same date with theirs, they conclude she is the one they are to marry. But it does not really follow. Does it?

When a person exists independent of God, he believes that any 'seemingly' good thing that happens to him is of God. He sees every opening as an opening by God. But the truth is this: Not every 'open door' was really 'opened' by God. Some are satanic traps in disguise. Get this straight: The fact that a person gets a green card does not confirm that it is God's will for him to stay in America.

There are many people who had an opening to leave Nigeria and they left to

America, Spain, Italy and Britain but they are suffering there. Why? They decided to do what they felt like doing without consulting with God. Any journey that God is not involved, does not have a good destination.

Any step taken outside God is a step into disaster. It is a foolish thing to marry a wife or a husband or even pick up a job without asking God's guidance. Any step taken in life without involving God is likely going to lead to frustration and even death.

There are pastors today who went into ministry without any divine direction. Today, some of them have become herbalists (juju priests). They really had no business being in Ministry but they decided to force themselves in. When they got in and discovered they could not obtain the kind of results they desired, they began to look for an alternative somewhere. God does not involve Himself in a mission He did not commission.

A lot of people wake up in the morning without God in the picture. They live as if eternity does not exist. They live as if there is no heaven. They make all their investments on earth, without any thought of heaven. All the money they make is spent here on earth. There is not one penny that leaves them on a regular basis to help expand God's kingdom. That is not wisdom.

What every mortal must know is that in this (earthly) system, failure is compulsory. The moth and the rust will corrupt every riches in this world, but there is an investment made into heaven - crusades, television ministry etc. - that does not perish. Also, it is not wisdom to expend all of life's energies working for salary with no dime of energy working for God. If a man spends all his energy working just for himself and his pocket without giving any aspect of his life, energy, or time to God's work, when he grows old and dies to meet with God, what will he tell Him? What will he say he used his life to achieve?

Every believer must come to the realization that their office is their parish; their table is their pulpit and their work is their ministry. We must live with the consciousness that we are not just living for ourselves; we are living representatives of a Kingdom, and as such, we should impact as many as we come across. That is the pathway to finding real fulfillment in life.

A lady in our Ministry shared with me how, every month, she purchased fifty copies of our devotional, Seeds of Destiny, to distribute. She said, after that,

everything about her changed. She began to travel to America, the Middle East, and the UK, all-expense paid. The truth is, when we work for self we work for ‘small’ but when we work for God, we work for 'great'. It is a matter of Choice.

THINK THROUGH

Any step taken outside God is a step taken into disaster.

Not every open door was opened by God, some are satanic traps in disguise.

CHAPTER TWO

LIVING WITHOUT A FUTURE PLAN

The second foolish thing people do is to live without a future plan. It is to live without a plan for tomorrow. Jesus gave an interesting illustration in Mathew 25:1-10.

Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom. And five of them were wise, and five were foolish. They that were foolish took their lamps, and took no oil with them: But the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps. While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept. And at midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him. Then all those virgins arose, and trimmed their lamps. And the foolish said unto the wise, Give us of your oil; for our lamps are gone out. But the wise answered, saying, Not so; lest there be not enough for us and you: but go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves. And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage: and the door was shut. Mathew 25:1-10

There were ten virgins. Five were wise. Five were foolish. What is the underlying principle behind their classification as either wise or foolish? Jesus classified them as wise or foolish based on their action. What did the wise do? They oiled their lamps and also went with extra oil in another vessel. What did the foolish do? They oiled their lamps but took no extra oil.

So the wisdom of the wise virgins was in the extra oil they took and the foolishness of the foolish virgins was in the extra oil they did not take. When the bridegroom came, the foolish virgins had ran out of oil and had gone in search of

where to buy some, only to come back and realize that the door was shut against them. The Bible says there was weeping and gnashing of teeth. Why was there weeping and gnashing of teeth? Very simple: there was no plan for eventuality; no plan for anything ahead.

The foolish virgins would not have been thrown into outer darkness if they had made provision for the unforeseeable - the time of lack and weakness.

So many people are thrown into the outer darkness of life today because, like the foolish virgins, they failed to make provision for the future. They were rich in the morning of their lives and wretched in the evening of their lives. It is a foolish thing to do.

It is a foolish thing to do, when a young man who is alive and strong today does not take into consideration the fact that the energy he now has will not remain so forever. It does not occur to him that he will not be as young as he is forever and so he does not make any plans for tomorrow. It is a foolish thing to do, when people do whatever they want and live the way they like while in their working years; and it does not occur to them that they will not be on that job forever.

Some time ago, members of the Nigeria Legislature - the House of Senate and the House of Representatives - were thoroughly probed. Many were found wanting. Why was it so? Those who occupied those offices behaved as if they would be there forever.

No matter whom a person is - the president of a country, governor of a state, a member of the House of Representatives, etc. they are not going to be there for an entire lifetime. The question is, what plans have they made for the period when they will no longer be in the office? Most people have left such offices and ended in frustration as established failures. That is because they had no plans for the future while they were in office.

When a man has a future in mind, he operates with wisdom in the present. The Psalmist said, “Teach us to number our days, that we may apply our heart unto wisdom”(Psalm 90:12). A man who is in his late 60’s does not need anyone to caution him to begin to organize himself and plan for the future of his wife and children. It is the lack of a good future plan that makes many men leave their wife and children stranded after they die. As a result, very terrible in-laws come in and destroy the destiny of their children.

The question everyone alive should ask is, “If Jesus tarries by this time next year, where do I want to be in life? Two years from now, where do I want my life to be? Ten years from now, where do I want to be?” It is when we are able to answer these questions that we can take the right steps today. Proverbs 29:18 says, “Where there is no vision, the people perish:” Another translation says, “Where there is no vision, the people are uncontrolled.”(BBE), that is, the people live carelessly.

A young lady today, who lives as a prostitute, is living like that because she has no vision for her future. A young man, who is living as an armed robber today, is living like that because he has no vision for his future. When a man has a vision for tomorrow, it gives him strength and wisdom for today.

I heard of a man who inherited multiple millions from his father, but today he is still energetic and aggressive, working as a pilot. Meanwhile he has already inherited millions. A man of God who is close to me said, he asked the man this simple question: “You already have millions. You already have everything you need. What are you working for?” He said the pilot said to him, “You know, when people have nothing to live for, they begin to die.” And that is true. It was Martin Luther King (Jr.) who said, “That a man is not fit to live, if he has nothing to live for (paraphrased).”

It does not matter how rich you are, if you have no vision, you begin to perish. If you are not looking forward to a future, you begin to die. If nothing is keeping you busy, and you are not projecting towards your tomorrow, you begin to expire. To live without a future plan is a foolish thing to do.

THINK THROUGH

When a man has a vision for tomorrow, it gives him strength and wisdom for today.

CHAPTER THREE

HATRED FOR PROGRESS

A third and dangerous foolish thing people do is what I call hatred for progress. There are people who hate progress. And because they hate progress, they utter slander.

There are people who fight 'a success' they cannot understand. When someone succeeds or progresses and they do not know how, they fight it. They resist anything they cannot achieve. If success is happening and is not happening to them, they are not excited. No one dare celebrate anyone else around them because they are agitated when someone else is celebrated.

He that hideth hatred with lying lips, and he that uttereth a slander, is a fool. Proverbs 10:18

It is not wisdom to fight progress. Anywhere somebody succeeds you should not fight it. The truth is that, what you fight will flee from you. What you hate you cannot have. What you attack you cannot attract. It is an error to fight progress and restrict people's movement forward yet pray to God for the same success. Life is a seed; what a man sows is what he reaps. What you uproot from someone else's life out of hatred, jealousy or envy cannot be rooted in your life.

To fight or attack someone else's progress is not wisdom; it is witchcraft - elementary witchcraft. When someone is moving and you are angry; someone is shining and you are angry; someone is celebrating and you are angry; someone is promoted and you are angry, you have moved into witchcraft.

This is my advice to you: Anytime you see something happening somewhere, celebrate it because, according to Dr Mike Murdock, “what you celebrate, you attract.” What you celebrate you magnetize. What you are happy about will happen for you. Sow seeds where you find progress. Learn to identify with the progress of others.

I spoke with a young man some time ago and I was asking him about the secret of their Overseer's success in Ministry. I know that the man is succeeding and making it in his work and I wanted to know the secret - I wanted to learn. I had already planted some seeds in that Ministry and I wanted to know the secret of their progress.

The young man told me that their Overseer sows great seeds, even in Ministries that do not know him. He said that anywhere something good is happening, his Overseer would send money to support the work, and is not even interested in being known. Imagine that! Little wonder that man of God has come to a point where the whole world cannot claim ignorance of his impact.

Sometime ago, our Ministry decided to sponsor an international gospel minister

to preach on an international satellite cable television. And also, when we heard that a notable servant of God in Nigeria bought a number of buses to help convey their members to church, we took some offering to him and told him we wanted to support the tyres of the buses.

Anywhere good things are happening, you should sow seeds there; you should pray for them; you should send your good will; you should show excitement. When your good will is matched with good seed, what you have is good harvest. Good will, with a good seed, planted on a good soil, produces good harvest.

It is not wisdom to be angry at the success of others. Anger at someone else's prosperity does not bring prosperity. Witches never prosper. A juju priest (witch doctor), who causes people to be frustrated and die, never prospers. I do not know if you have ever seen a prosperous herbalist. I do not know if you have ever seen one and you said, “I want to be like this herbalist; I want to shine like him; I want to look like him.” I doubt! No one would want to be like that, because herbalists are horrible. They themselves look like satan.

When you celebrate good things, you also make those things happen for you. When you do not, you drive good things away from your life. The latter is a foolish thing to do.

THINK THROUGH

When you celebrate good things, you also make things happen for you. When you do not, you drive good things away from your life.

What you fight will flee from you. What you hate you cannot have. What you attack you cannot attract.

CHAPTER FOUR

LIVING ABOVE COUNSEL

To exist above counsel or live beyond advice is a foolish thing to do. There are people who live in such a realm - they are 'unadvisable' (unwilling to receive advice) and impervious to counsel.

He that trusteth in his own heart is a fool: but whoso walketh wisely, he shall be delivered. Proverbs 28:26

The way of a fool is right in his own eyes: but he that hearkeneth unto counsel is wise. Proverbs 12:15

If a person feels he is right and considers every other person wrong, the Bible says he is a fool. If a person is in a realm where no mother, father, brother, sister or pastor can talk to him, that person is a fool. Any vision that cannot receive advice is frustration in disguise. Any venture without advice will puncture.

Imagine how many people live in regret today because of the person they married contrary to advice. Imagine how many people spend their lives within prison walls today because of the person they continued to go along with, contrary to advice. If you cannot be counseled, you cannot advance in life. That is the truth. He cannot advance in life that cannot be advised. A man who cannot be counseled cannot be assisted. It is wisdom for a man to open his heart and ears, for a donkey might save him. Did the donkey of Balaam save him? Yes! A maid may become a saviour. The maid of Naaman, the Syrian, saved him.

When a man is full of himself, he is empty of advice. One of the reasons why people refuse to listen to advice is because they think they know it all. To such people, nobody else knows anything. That is an error. Such people do not have a quality life. No one speaks into their life. No one can suggest anything better. No one can tell them what to do. That is an empty life.

But what is a quality life? A quality life is a life with quality people. If you can have quality people that speak into your life, then you can have quality destiny.

Let me stretch it a little: If you can write a list of seven most influential people in your life; people from whom you receive advice; people to whom you can run whenever you have a challenge, any time you look at that list, you are looking at your future. The quality of their results determines the quality of your results. You cannot outgrow the results of those who are your best counselors.

If a married woman who has a stable marriage continues to take advice from a divorcée, who, probably, got divorced for headiness, it would be a matter of time before she begins to experience her marriage moving in another direction. In the same vein, if a successful person has a failure for a counselor, that success has a terminal date. If a person who does not know God is an adviser to you, you do not need to be told the direction in which your life will tilt.

Now take a little exercise. Write a list of seven top influential people in your life.

When you look at the kind of results those people have seen in their life, you are looking at the kind of results you too are bound to have. When you look at their attainment, you are looking at your attainment in picture. If you have nobody on your list, it is not safe. And if you have the wrong people on your list, it is disaster.

When I received the call of God into Ministry, I remember seeking advice from a few people. I told them the vision I had and asked them to pray with me. They decided to pray along with me. While we were praying in one place, the exact place where the church was to start was revealed. Someone else came from another angle and said, “This is what I heard God say…” and we moved. But when you say, “I hear God myself. The Holy Ghost lives inside of me. No one else can talk to me…” very soon you may start to hear 'devil ghosts' and not the Holy Ghost.

If you are in that realm where you feel too proud to receive counsel or advice, you are in a dangerous realm. For some people, the moment another person begins to advise them, they say, “What are you feeling like? What do you mean? Do you think I don't know anything?” You see, if you cannot humble yourself and come to a realm where you can listen to others, you need to ask God to change you. You need to ask God to give you an open ear.

Sometimes, a man’s wife could be such a counselor that he may despise to his own detriment. Women seem to be very perceptive. A woman can look at a man’s friend and say, “I know your friends, but that man that keeps coming here is not your friend. He is not a friend at all. I know that you have all these friends but for that one, I'm not sure.”

The man’s question would be, “How do you know?”

The woman’s answer may be, “I can't tell; you know, I just feel something.”

Such a thing makes men angry. But as a point of fact, women can easily know people. And it appears to me that they have some unusual realm of discernment much more than men. I do not know how but I sense it so. A man's wife can, therefore, be a good counselor to him.

Counsel is a major secret of advancement for the wise. When a wise man hears, he begins to write, ask questions and writes down the answers. Why? Counsel is his strength. To refuse counsel is a foolish thing to do.

THINK THROUGH

If you have quality people that speak into your life, then you can have quality destiny.

When a person’s rate of regret begins to reduce then his rate of progress begins to increase.

If you cannot master yourself, you cannot master your world, when you are defeated by yourself, you can be defeated by anyone and anything.

CHAPTER FIVE

UNCONTROLLED PASSION

Uncontrolled passion is another expression of foolishness. One of the basic definitions of passion in the dictionary is, 'intense or overpowering emotion such as love, joy, hatred or anger'. Most people allow these emotions to run wild at some point in time in their lives. It is a foolish thing to do.

When a person is offended and he cannot control himself, he has uncontrolled passion. When a person sees food and he loses control of himself, he has an uncontrolled passion. I remember a young man who was a part of a three-day dry fast we took in 1979. On the first day of the fast, he ate by twelve O'clock. By three O'clock we asked him what had happened, he said, “Oh sorry, I forgot we were fasting.” The next day, he did it again. He had an uncontrolled passion for food.

When a man sees a woman and he loses control, his passion is uncontrolled. When a woman sees a man and loses control, her passion is uncontrolled. I have seen girls who say they lose control whenever they are around a man; as a result, they always fall into sin. They find it hard to say 'No' to a man, even if the man is a chimpanzee dressed in suit.

There are people who lose control once money gets into their hands. They become extra kind - an unreasonable form of kindness. They want to order drinks for everyone they meet in a 'joint'. They want to make purchases for people they meet in a store. And everyone would think that is kindness. But it is not. It is a lack of self-control.

There are people who have never been able to say 'No' to a sales person. They may not really have the money to pay for the product but they will pick it. They are uncontrolled in their wants. The fact is, to conquer anything in this world, you must first conquer yourself. A person - a man or a woman, who is unable to conquer his or her passion, will find it hard to say 'no' to so many things in life, including the devil. Such people will find it very difficult to change the world around them.

If you cannot control your passion, you are in serious trouble. Some people cannot control their anger. Others cannot control their flesh. They cannot say to their flesh, “Lie down here and wake up to pray.” They cannot tell themselves, “Look away, that woman is not your wife; look away, that food cannot be eaten now; you have to wait on the Lord. You cannot pay for that dress now; you have to invest more this month.” They inadvertently yield to their passion at the moment and express regrets later. They only feel bad thereafter.

That is how it is with the individual who struggles to break a habit. He does it and regrets over it and does the same thing again and is asking himself, “I thought I had overcome this thing?”

There are those who cannot control their tongue. Such people lie and exaggerate so much. You know how such people are. They have to be given discount for anything they say, because they say it bigger, larger and more expanded than it is. Such people find themselves regretting over and over for getting involved in the same mess again.

Let us say a person in such a condition now gets serious and does not repeat it as frequently as he did. A week later, he does it again and then promises himself and promises God that he will never do it again. After a while, say a year, two and maybe three, he overcomes it finally. By that time, his rate of regrets has significantly reduced. When a person's rate of regret begins to reduce, his rate of progress begins to increase.

When the rate at which a person masters and conquers his flesh increases, the rate of his progress also increases. When a person has come to the point where his conquest of the flesh has gone high, the rate of his movement in every other realm also skyrockets, because there is a boldness that exudes from his inside. There is energy that flows out from deep within him. The former feelings of defeat and failure are replaced with boldness and confidence.

Sin makes a person feel defeated. A girl who goes to bed with a married man first finds it interesting and exciting. But once the whole thing is over, she senses defeat. She feels like, “How come you messed up again?” When a man who had made up his mind to back off from alcoholism goes back to drinking, he first finds it exciting. But when he moves out of that seat of alcoholism and vomits, sleeps and wakes up in the morning, the first feeling is that of defeat: “Look at you; you messed up again.” That feeling of defeat and failure does not propel real progress; it frustrates progress.

The energy to progress abates proportionately with the feeling of failure. But the more a person overcomes that feeling of defeat, that attitude of failure, the more he rises high, because the righteous are as bold as a lion. We need to have control of our passion in order to have control of our future.

A fool’s wrath is presently known: but a prudent man covereth shame. Proverb 12:16

Be not hasty in thy spirit to be angry: for anger resteth in the bosom of fools. Ecclesiastes 7:9

Once you can conquer yourself, you can conquer your world. If you cannot master yourself, you cannot master your world. When you are defeated by yourself, you can be defeated by anyone and anything. When you are defeated by your flesh - anger, lust, greed, etc. - any other thing will easily defeat you.

It is a foolish thing to allow yourself to be enslaved by your fleshly passion.

THINK THROUGH

To conquer anything in this world, you must first conquer yourself.

The energy to progress abates proportionally to the feeling of failure.

CHAPTER SIX

ENTERING INTO TRANSACTIONS WITHOUT FULL UNDERSTANDING

To enter into any manner of transaction without due knowledge is a foolish thing to do.

Every prudent man dealeth with knowledge: but a fool layeth open his folly. Proverbs 13:16

The Bible says, “Every prudent man deals with knowledge”. It follows therefore, that the man who does not deal with knowledge is a fool. To be prudent is to have good sense in dealing with practical matters. It is to use good judgment to consider the outcome of events before getting involved. Prudence is a major prerequisite for entering into any deal in life. No matter the deal, you must have full knowledge of what you are getting into before you accept it.

There are many people who got married to their wives and their husbands before they knew who they really married. I heard the story of a young man who, on his wedding day, went to someone and began to cry. Why was he crying? He said he just realized he had made a terrible mistake - on his wedding day! He said he had made a terrible mistake by marrying his wife.

There is an adage that says, “Look before you leap, and also look before you land.” Another says, “Not all that glitters is gold”. Some time ago, my wife and I were driving back from a journey and we needed to get some bananas. We saw two sets of bananas. The first looked fresh, ripe and gigantic and the other looked highly frustrated. We refused to even touch the latter. We went for the first because it was quite ripe and attractive and looked like some of the UK fruits. After we paid for it, I asked my wife to get me one ripe one to eat. Immediately I started eating, it slapped me like an unripe fruit. And I said to my wife, “You see, not all that glitters is gold.”

A woman who wants to marry a man but begins to consider and dwell on the man's looks only, might soon be signing an unknown contract. She sees that the man looks fresh and drives a good car, not knowing that it is a borrowed car. He uses the car to visit her always. Then he takes her to a borrowed house. He would always agree with his friend who has a good house so that he can let him have access to his house whenever he is away. The young lady sees everything flashy and then agrees to marry him.

After the marriage, however, she comes to terms with reality and she feels like dying. Such regrets often come too late. All that glitters is not gold.

A man wants to get married to a girl and he sees that the young girl appears so flashy and humble. He is carried away by what he sees and then gets married to

her. One day, he says something and the lady dashes him a dirty slap and he is dazed: “What! Is it a woman that slapped me like this?” There and then it dawns on him that he married what Nigerians call Agbero (street girl).

Where many people are today is neither God's nor satan's fault. They had their eyes open but they refused to see. It happened in the Bible. Jacob wanted to marry a woman but they arranged another person for him. He wanted to marry Rachel but they arranged Leah for him. He spent the entire night with the wrong woman and only realized in the morning she was not Rachel. How was that possible? What kind of person was he? Even if the women were identical twins, would not their voices be different? Jacob's passion was stronger than his wisdom. And that led him to frustration. He earned himself seven more years of hard labour, because, he did not know what he was entering into.

I should like to say this to every young and unmarried person: Before you say, “I do,” think twice. Before you enter into any business transaction, look carefully, keenly and intently. Someone comes to you with a business proposal: “This thing will give you thirty thousand naira per week.” Before you accept it, look well. Before you sign any document, read it.

There was an American musician who signed a deal without due knowledge. He was a best-selling artiste - someone everyone knew. But he left his wife and daughter in poverty, because he signed something he did not know. He signed that 90% of any money he made was going to the organization managing him. And it was legally sealed. Meanwhile, he was the one singing and expressing energy. He was the one doing everything. After his exit from the world, he left his wife and daughter in poverty. The wife decided to sell their house, but she realized that even if she did, the organization would still take 90%. So, she decided not to sell it but rather make it a museum, so that the money could be theirs. What was the problem here? Her husband got into signing a deal he did not understand. That was a foolish thing to do.

Some time ago, a young man, a member of our church, brought a document to me. He had a certain idea that he wanted to push, a very explosive one. He needed partnership with some people. The people drafted the agreement and he brought it for me to see. He said everything belonged to him but the financing was to come from the other people.

After I had read through the agreement, I asked if he had read through the

agreement. He said he did. I asked if he agreed to what they said. He said he did. I asked what percentage would accrue to him, and he said it was the higher percentage. I told him he had not read it well. Then I showed it to him, that the agreement specified that he was to take the lower percentage and his partners would take the higher percentage. He was surprised at what I said. Then he went back and read it well. When he came back to me, he told me what had happened. The people gave him the hand written agreement to go through and accept their terms before they gave him the typewritten copy to sign. The hand written copy had the proper terms of the agreement but when they went on to type, they reversed the terms and brought it back for him to quickly sign. If the young man had not noticed it in time, he would have been sweating like an elephant and eating like an ant.

That is also the predicament of most stars. They perform the functions while their managers do the eating. And it is what happens in every situation where people get into a deal without due knowledge. They do not have people to counsel them before they start, so they labour while another person inherits their profit.

Before entering into any deal, you should be able to share with people who are a bit more knowledgeable - a lawyer, parent, pastor, etc. It is a foolish thing to enter into anything imprudently.

THINK THROUGH

Before entering into any deal, you should be able to share with people who are a bit more knowledgeable- a lawyer, parent, pastor, etc.

CHAPTER SEVEN

INTOLERANCE OF CORRECTION

There are a lot of folks out there who believe that no one else can correct them. They believe that when they are right, they are right and when they are wrong, they are still right. They cannot accept corrections from anyone. They never want to be told they have made a mistake. That is a foolish thing to do.

A person that cannot be corrected cannot be assisted. We have to understand that no human being is above mistakes. We are meant to be above sin by God's mercies but not mistakes. In real life, some men get out there and discover that

they had mistakenly put on two different pair of socks. True. It does happen!

The Lord Jesus Christ, our Master, the Bible says went to a fig tree thinking there was fruit on it, but there was no fruit (Mark 11:12-13). Why was that so? That was because He was perfectly human. The Bible also says He prayed to His Father: “If it be possible, let this cup pass over me” (Matthew 26:39). Was that a good prayer? Did the Father answer that prayer? No! God planned for Him to die. But He was asking that God should take away the death, 'if it is possible'.

Why did He pray such a prayer? He did because He was confronting the reality of having to be united with the sins of the world, who had never known sin, and also the reality of the agony of the cross. His humanity was literally reacting against the realities ahead of Him.

So, in this human flesh, the time comes when you may say things - especially under pressure - that you did not mean to say or take steps that are not exactly accurate. At such times, you need to be corrected. You need to be helped. And if you claim to be above correction, then you are above distinction.

THINK THROUGH

A person that cannot be corrected cannot be assisted.

If you claim to be above correction, then you are above distinction.

CHAPTER EIGHT

LACK OF VALUE FOR WISDOM AND KNOWLEDGE

Wherefore is there a price in the hand of a fool to get wisdom, seeing he hath no heart to it? Proverbs 17:16

Wise men lay up knowledge: but the mouth of the foolish is near destruction. Proverb 10:14

Speak not in the ears of a fool: for he will despise the wisdom of thy words. Proverb 23:9

The wise man's eyes are in his head; but the fool walketh in darkness: and I myself perceived also that one event happeneth to them all. Ecclesiastes 2:14

A fool has no heart for wisdom. He has no value for wisdom - that is, he has no value for information. But the fact is, the real quality of a person can be determined in two ways:

1. His investments, and

2. His association.

Show me the things on which you spend your money and I will show you what quality of a person you are. Show me your closest friend and I will show you what quality of a person you are.

Wise people spend their money investing in the kingdom of God, business and financial advancement. Wise people spend their money to upgrade their life. They invest in information, in knowledge and in study. Foolish people spend their money on what can make them feel good at the moment. They spend on what can make them look good at the moment. They spend on what can make them feel like they belong at the moment. Their destiny is limited.

A wise person makes purchases for his tomorrow; a foolish person makes purchases for his today. A person who is going to be great tomorrow spends money on what will enhance his future. A fool spends money on what will enhance his today.

A wise man purchases books and all manner of Bible translations and computer aids to assist his study of the Bible. He attends seminars, takes courses and does anything to upgrade himself. A person that lacks wisdom has no time for such things.

It is important to note that anytime you stop growing internally, you will stop growing externally. Anytime you stop growing inside, you will start groaning outside. When you stop growing in revelation and information, you really stop growing indeed. You cannot stand still inside and move forward outside. In the same vein, you cannot move forward inside and stand still outside. Every time there is an improvement inside, there will certainly be an improvement outside.

Every time there is a forward move inside, there is bound to be a forward move outside. Anytime you are stagnated outside, there is only one explanation: you are stagnated inside. If you are standing still in business, Ministry and any endeavour, it is probable that there are movements on the inside that have not

been made.

A man's business, Ministry, finances, and other endeavours cannot outgrow him. When a man grows, everything around him grows. A business cannot grow beyond the growth of the business owner. A Ministry cannot grow beyond the growth of the Minister. Nothing grows for a man who has stopped growing. There are many people today who are not growing in any way: there is no growth in the study of the Word; no growth in the knowledge of God; no growth in revelation; no growth in information etc. and nothing is growing around them.

Until there is a change inside, there cannot be change outside. Until a people experience change inside, nothing changes around them. Someone had well said that people do not grow old, they get old. People get old when they stop growing. The implication is this: An eighteen-year old boy who has stopped growing is an old man. And an eighty-one-year old man who is still growing is a young man. Consequently, it is not a question of age; it is a question of growth. You must make up your mind if you really want to succeed in life.

No man should ever get to the point where he has stopped learning. A man's learning power determines his earning power. To the extent he learns, to that extent he earns. An accountant with Ordinary National Diploma cannot be placed on the same salary level with an accountant with Higher National Diploma. The latter cannot also be placed on the same salary level with a chartered accountant. And a chartered accountant, who just graduated, still, cannot be on the same level with a fellow who has been a chartered accountant for over ten years. A man's learning determines his earning. What he attracts into his life is determined by the growth within him.

Your position in life today is a product of what you learnt yesterday. That is what has brought you to where you are today. The distance between where you are today and where you are meant to be tomorrow is defined by what you learn today. For this reason, you must come to a point where you develop such a voracious appetite for the Word of God and for the materials that will enhance and develop you in your area of assignment in life.

A man's behaviour is a product of the quality of information at his disposal. The way a villager behaves is a product of the quality of information at his disposal. When he is at a dinner, no matter where it is, he is going to eat like a villager. If he is presented with pounded yam and soup and he is provided with cutlery, he is

likely going to ask why: “What is wrong here? Is there any challenge?” Then he will cast the cutlery aside and deal with the food the way he knows how. And by the time he finishes with the bones, it is useless for the dog.

He eats the food the way he wants, unconscious of the fact that there are people around. He does not know he is doing anything wrong. He is only wondering why some people choose to stare at him the way they do. Even when the noise of his chewing disturbs everyone, he does not appear bothered. Why? Simple: He does not know that anything is wrong with what he is doing. He just does not know better. To the extent a person knows, to that extent he behaves.

The quality of information a person carries determines the quality of his decisions and actions. Every day, people make decisions about Ministry, children, academics, etc. In all these, it is the information at their disposal that informs their decision. Subsequently, their decisions motivate their actions. And their actions determine their results. An individual who is not comfortable with his results needs to check his actions. If he realizes that he takes actions that cause him pain and shame, he needs to check his decisions. If he is not comfortable with the level of his decisions, he needs to increase the quality of information he receives.

It is a great mistake to have graduated ten years ago from a university and not study or read anything new. It is a great error. What food is to the body is what information is to the mind, and revelation is to the spirit. The Scripture says;

“Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every Word that proceeds out of the mouth of God” (Matthew 4:4).

When a man stays on bread alone, he is half-alive. When food is the only thing that keeps him alive, he is half alive. Total or full life equals nutrition, information and revelation.

It is not too late for you to go to school. And if you went to school but learnt something bad, you are free to unlearn it and re-learn. Someone has said that the illiterates of the twenty-first century are not those who cannot read or write but those who cannot learn, unlearn and re-learn.

In essence, there are illiterate graduates. They are not learning; they are not unlearning and they are not re-learning. There are things we learnt twenty years ago that are now outdated. For instance, there was a time when the world was

said to be flat, and that was the celebrated wisdom at the time. Now it is outdated. They said 'a lake was a body of water surrounded by land'. Now that definition is outdated. Consistent learning keeps you consistent with time.

Your sense of self confidence is enhanced by the possession of quality information. Learning enhances self image. Life's problems are handled and solved with confidence when you have upgraded yourself to a certain degree in God's Word. You can speak and demons will hear and obey. When you have upgraded yourself, you can speak when people are speaking.

Inferiority complex can easily set in when a man is neither growing intellectually nor 'revelationally'. If a man who is a school certificate holder, for instance, decides to marry a graduate, it is possible. The only challenge is that, after they are married, whenever the woman tries to make a point, the man will say, “Is it because you are a graduate? What are you trying to prove?” That is inferiority complex at work. Because he is not updated, he feels outdated.

Also, if a man has a wife at home that he has left behind so much intellectually, there is bound to be a problem. The man has studied for a Masters and even proceeded for his Doctorate while his wife sits at home and is not able to achieve anything. Time will come when she will begin to feel like a 'nothing'. And except something is done to assist her, there is going to be a problem.

A wise man places value on wisdom and knowledge; a fool does not. Avoid the error. Improve your life.

THINK THROUGH

Every time there is an improvement inside, there will certainly be an improvement outside. Every time there is a forward move inside, there is bound to be a forward move outside.

Until there is a change inside, there cannot be change outside. Until a people experience change inside, nothing changes orotund them.

Show me the things on which you spend your money and I will show you what quality of person you are.

Your sense of self-confidence is enhanced by the possession of quality information. Learning enhances self-image.

CHAPTER NINE

A LIFE WITHOUT FOCUS

A life devoid of focus is a life devoid of concentration. It is a life without priorities. A person with such a lifestyle does anything and everything. He is anywhere and everywhere. Such a person is guaranteed to fail. Anyone who chases two rabbits at the same time never catches any. To be everywhere is to be nowhere.

The wise man's eyes are in his head; but the fool walketh in darkness: Ecclesiastes 2:14a

Wisdom is before him that hath understanding; but the eyes of a fool are in the ends of the earth. Proverbs 17:24

The Bible tells us that a wise man's life is full of focus but a fool walks in darkness - that means he has no direction. The book of Proverbs tells us that the eyes of a fool are in the ends of the earth: he is looking at Australia, Mexico and in fact, everywhere, all at once. How possible is that?

Anywhere there is a lack of concentration there will be a lack of acceleration. Anywhere there is a lack of concentration, there will be stagnation. Lack of concentration equals stagnation. A young boy of seventeen, eighteen and maybe twenty-two, who, instead of facing his academic pursuit, decides to develop a relationship with a girl, is likely to lose focus. A young girl who does the same thing also faces the problem of a divided attention. A relationship could be highly demanding emotionally and otherwise.

I learnt from Dr. Mike Murdock that whenever the enemy wants to scatter a man's destiny, he first divides his focus. Whenever the devil wants to destroy a person's life, he gives him many things to pursue at the same time.

A man has a vision to be a pastor and also has a vision to be a local government chairman — both things equally demanding of his energy and passion. And then, perhaps, he also has another interest in business. He wants to be in charge in three dimensions at the same time. That is frustration and stagnation defined.

A young lady can have a man ask her hand in marriage and she says, “Hold on please.” Then another man meets her on the same issue and she says, “Hold on

please; I'm coming." And then another one emerges and she says the same thing. She keeps all of them waiting because she is not sure of whom to choose, or perhaps, she is waiting for a 'bigger' man to come. When we operate like that we lose everything.

Where there are no priorities, there can be no prosperity. The law of priority is the foundation for prosperity. There is a principle in life, the Pareto Principle; it says that for everything we do in life, only twenty percent will give us maximum results. Twenty percent of input will give eighty percent of the results we are looking for in life. It is great wisdom, therefore, to identify the twenty percent and give it everything we have got.

It is wisdom to find out what you are looking for in life; what God wants to do with your life; what will take you to your desired destination fast, and direct your energies there. The first of such activities, I believe, is your relationship with God - the time given to prayer and the study of the Word. The second is the development of yourself and destiny. These two things are superior to any other thing you would want to spend your time on.

DECLARE NOW:

In the Name of Jesus,

I refuse to live with a broken focus.

In the Name of Jesus,

I determine from this moment, to have focus, direction and purpose. Amen!

Without focus there can be no fire. The man who needs fire and passion for whatsoever he has found himself doing needs focus, brutal focus. He must live a life that earns him the reputation that he is a man of focus; a man of purpose; one that cannot be distracted. I recall when our Ministry was just two years old. Some journalists came to interview us on the secret of our success. We did not grant that interview. Why? It was a distraction. We were still trusting God for how to start. A two-year old baby is just trying to gain stability. Whatever happens at that stage cannot be called success. That was a distraction.

There are people that could enter your life as a distraction, without your knowledge. That is why, if you intend to go far in life, you must select your

friends. You must make friends with the people who make the most mark in your life; people who contribute the most to your life. Those are the people you should choose to get close to while you eliminate toxic relationships. You know, there are many people that are where they are today because of the kind of people in their lives.

There are some praises we receive, also, which are a distraction. There are some chieftaincy titles that are a distraction. We need brutal focus, rugged commitment and the tenacity of a bulldog to maintain focus. We need to move, not looking left or right, but straight ahead. We need to tell the world that we know where we are going and when we get there they will hear of us, but for now we are still on our way. We have not yet attained and we do not want to be bothered. The Apostle Paul said, “Let no man trouble me, for I bear in my body the marks of the LORD JESUS CHRIST.”

Let thine eyes look right on, and let thine eyelids look straight before thee. Ponder the path of thy feet, and let all thy ways be established. Turn not to the right hand nor to the left: remove thy foot from evil. Proverb 4:25-26

THINK THROUGH

Where there are no priorities, there can be no prosperity. The law f priority is the foundation for prosperity.

Anywhere there is a lack of concentration; there will be lack f acceleration. Anywhere there is a lack of acceleration, there will be stagnation.

Whenever the enemy want to scatter a man’s destiny, he first attacks his focus.

CHAPTER TEN

SPEAKING WITHOUT THINKING

A fool also is full of words: a man cannot tell what shall be; and what shall be after him, who can tell him? Ecclesiastes 10:14

He that hath knowledge spareth his words: and a man of understanding is of an excellent spirit. Even a fool, when he holdeth his peace, is counted wise: and he that shutteth his lips is esteemed a man of understanding. Proverbs 17:27

A fool's lips enter into contention, and his mouth calleth for strokes. A fool's mouth is his destruction, and his lips are the snare of his soul. Proverbs 18:6

Loquacity - speaking without thinking - is an error. It is a major cause of failure. The Bible says that even a fool, a confirmed fool, when he refrains from talking, is counted wise. It is foolish to talk at random. Scripture declares that a fool's mouth calls for strokes. His mouth is his destruction and his lips are the snare of his soul.

There are people that brought whatever evil they are facing now to themselves through their mouths. Their mouths invited calamities into their lives.

The Bible tells us the story of one man who went to King David and told a lie (2Samuel 1:2-16). He said he saw King Saul about to die and the king had said to him, “I am about to die. Can you help kill me?” Then he concluded by telling David that he killed the king. But he was telling a lie. It was King Saul who killed himself (1Samuel 31:4).

David said to the man, “Your own mouth has judged you; you killed the Lord's anointed. How wast thou not afraid to stretch forth thine hand to destroy the Lord's anointed?”(2Samuel 1:14) That man killed himself with his mouth.

How many people have destroyed their lives with their mouths? Also, how many women have had their homes torn apart with their mouths?

Men of real power are not talkative. I learnt this many years ago, that too much talk equals power leakage. The children of Israel marched round the walls of Jericho for seven days and on the seventh day they marched seven times. God told them not to utter any words while they were marching round. For seven days, they were to keep marching round without making any sound or noise. After marching round seven times, on the seventh day, they were to give a shout when they heard the blast of the trumpet. That shout was going to bring down the walls of Jericho because it carried concentrated power (Joshua 6:10).

Many people fast from food, but they could also try to fast from talk. Obviously that one is very difficult. You can actually decide to take a fast from talk with the understanding of your children and spouse. You can just take the time out and stay somewhere, not talking to anyone else except God. By the time you come out, you are loaded.

Many people can testify to the fact that, many times, when they talk too much, they feel weak, empty, aimless, useless and wasted. Something inside tells them that they have lost something. Virtue has gone out of them. Too much talk is an outlet of power. Too much talk leads to the leakage of secrets. Sampson leaked his secret to Delilah and the leakage of that secret killed him before his time. Joseph leaked his secret to his brothers: “I have seen something… all of you bowed to me,” and that brought him problems.

Many people leak their secrets to people who have no business with their destiny. They tell them everything about themselves and the enemy catches it and uses it against them. When people talk too much, they talk to the wrong people, and those people use what they have heard to fight them. It is so pathetic!

There are people who meet other people for the first time and tell them everything about themselves: “My mother's name is Mary. My father's name is Joseph and my name is Emmanuel. We come from Azunna village. Our village has five districts. The districts have five hamlets. The hamlets have five roads and there are ten towns in each hamlet. My father is the chief of the town in our own hamlet.” In one day, the stranger has known their every detail and secret. That is not wisdom.

The Scripture says a man of knowledge spares his words (Proverbs 17:27). When a man can spare his words, he can spare his life.

People who are given to too much talking are given to too little thinking. Too much talk equals too little thought. A man who talks too much thinks very little. When talk is abundant, thought is shallow. And when thought is shallow, life is shallow; for as a man thinketh in his heart so is he. When people are given to depth of thought, they are given to depth of life. It is foolish to talk so much and think so little.

THINK THROUGH

When talk is abundant, thought is shallow. And when thought is shallow, life is shallow; for as a man thinketh in his heart so is he.

There are people that brought whatever evil they are facing now on themselves through their mouths. Their mouths invited calamities into their lives.

Too much talk is an outlet of power. Too much talk leads to the leakage of secrets.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

A LIFE OF NO INTEGRITY

A life of no integrity is a life of no character. It is not wisdom for a man to live such a life that cannot be trusted or relied upon.

Better is the poor that walketh in his integrity, than he that is perverse in his lips, and is a fool. Proverb19:1

Someone has said that the greatest thing that can be said about anyone is that they have integrity - not that they have money; not that they are gifted - but that they have integrity. A man of integrity means what he says and says what he means. He does not touch what is not his.

There is something called CHARACTER CAPITAL, which is superior to any other form of capital on earth, including money. Someone with a character capital has a future, even if he does not have money. It does not matter how poor he may be at present, he has a future if he has character. But nobody has a future who has no character. Billy Graham said, “When wealth is lost, nothing is lost. When health is lost, something is lost, but when character is lost, everything is lost.” When a man loses money, he loses nothing. When he loses health, he loses something. But when he loses character, he loses everything.

A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches, and loving favour rather than silver and gold. Proverbs 22:1

A good reputation and respect are worth more than silver and gold. Proverbs 22:1(CEV)

If you must choose one of two alternatives - a good name or riches - it is better to choose a good name. A name will take you where your money will not. Think about this: Whenever your name is mentioned in your absence, what comes to people's mind - a prostitute, seducing spirit, Jezebel, Judas, thief, liar, proud man, cheat, trickster, or criminal? That which comes to their mind is what determines your destiny. Whatever comes to the mind of people when your name is mentioned is either assisting or resisting you.

I recall when we were young men growing up in those days. When someone mentioned a girl (a wayward one) he was thinking of getting married to, all the young men would say, “No, that one is not for marriage; she is everybody's wife.” At the time they say this, the girl is not there. Her destiny is determined in her absence. The verdict is passed in her absence. In her looseness, she earned a bad name for herself and lost it all.

A certain young man took a lady he wanted to marry, to his uncle. Later on, the uncle called on him and said he was sorry he did not want him to marry the girl. Why? The uncle said he had already slept with the girl and he would not be able to visit the young man in his house and meet with a woman he had slept with. That was a factor that contributed to the ruin of that relationship. The lady had earned a bad name for herself.

If a man is sacked from office because he stole something, when next he has a job somewhere else and he is asked for a recommendation from his former office, what would he do? A bad name shuts the door against him.

One young girl was approached several times by her boss in the office for a sexual relationship. She refused. After several advances from the man and she refused firmly, he sacked her. She left the job and kept her name. After spending a few months at home, an opening came and she went for the job. Unfortunately or fortunately, they asked her to get a recommendation from her former boss. With all audacity, she went to her former boss and asked for the recommendation. The ex-boss agreed. In his recommendation, he said:

If you are looking for a person that will not compromise principles; if you are looking for a person that will not betray trust and confidence; if you are looking for a person of integrity and character, then this is the right person(paraphrased).

From what I read, that recommendation alone, gave her a great head start in the new and probably, better employment. In every circumstance, a good name is rather to be chosen than riches. Long after people have forgotten how rich you were, they will not forget the strength of your character. Fast deals have led to many fast deaths. Short cuts have cut many destinies short. Cut back is a setback.

When a thing costs fifty thousand and a person says it is seventy thousand, and a company or office gives him seventy thousand, the twenty thousand he holds

back is a setback to his life and destiny. Anything a man touches and takes, which does not belong to him, will prevent him from having whatever is his in life. Life is a seed.

The money that does not belong to you that you take; the woman that does not belong to you that you sin with, will hinder you from having access to what God planned for you on earth. Take it from me: taking what is not yours, forbids you from having what is yours.

It is a bad mistake for someone to entrust you with, say money, and when it is time to have it back, there are discrepancies. It is a terrible, foolish and stupid thing to do. It is extreme foolishness, for someone to come face-to-face with an opportunity to enter into business with a multinational corporation, for the first time, and instead of being truthful, he develops a dishonest desire to get all the money for himself and decides to deal with the people. It is terrible stupidity.

When a person's name is neat, his character is neat and his integrity is neat. Anywhere his name comes up, people recommend him. They know that working with him is safe. They know that every dealing with him is safe. It is only when you are trusted that you can be entrusted. God will entrust you with great things when you are trusted. Humanity will entrust you when you can be trusted.

A few years ago, some big companies in America crumbled all at once. And they crumbled because of a lack of integrity. They would often declare profits that were not real. They would manufacture figures that attracted the applause of the public and elation of the share holders. Five years down the line, many people realized it was all lies. There were no such profits. And everything began to crumble.

Charisma can take you up but without character, you are likely to crumble from there. It is better, far better, and more wisdom, to be genuine, real, sincere, and true, than to be fraudulent, insincere and dubious in character.

THINK THROUGH

Strife takes your focus off your future and places it on another person.

No man ever live to reach his destiny if his focus is on how to outdo or undo another person.

CHAPTER TWELVE

LIVING IN STRIFE

To live in strife is to live in competition and contention.

For wrath killeth the foolish man, and envy slayeth the silly one. Job 5:2

It is an honour for a man to cease from strife: but every fool will be meddling. Proverbs 20:3

The Bible tells us that it is honourable for a person to back out of strife. That implies that it is foolish to want to continue in strife. Only a fool will continue in competition, contention, envy etc. Strife can affect you negatively in several ways.

Strife will deprive you of life. The Bible says envy slays the silly one. Real life is taken from you anytime you enter into heated competition and strife with someone else: “Buy a car, I buy a car. Build a house, I build a house. Send your children to America, I send mine to Canada.” That is not life. Strife deprives you of the energy to progress. And that is because the time that would have been invested to make progress is used in fighting someone else. Strife takes your focus off your future and places it on another person. Imagine what would happen to a car driver who is driving forward while looking at other drivers on the road and not where he is going - indescribable disaster.

Strife makes you live to create an impression. And whenever you strive to create an impression, you cannot give expression to what God has deposited inside of you. There are people creating an impression, and there are some other people giving expression. Which is better? We must give expression to what God has deposited in our lives.

No man ever lives to reach his destiny if his focus is on how to outdo or undo another person. God's Servant, Bishop David Oyedepo has said that those who strive for excellence do not strive with people.

When you meet with people who say they are bigger than you, you should applaud them and go your way. And whenever people try to prove their superiority over you, you should let them say what they have to say, while you go your way. You are not in competition with any man on earth. You do not have

any classmate on earth. You are the only one in the class with God as your teacher. Your destiny is in God's hands. He alone determines your promotion per time.

When the sons of the prophets said to the Prophet Elisha, “Do you know that God will take your master from you today?” he said, “I know it; hold your peace.” In other words, Elisha was saying, “Face your front, I face my front.”

The Archbishop Benson Idahosa, of blessed memory said, “There is enough space in the sky for two birds to fly without colliding.”

Barrack Obama, the United States President said, “You don't need to fulfill your vision at the expense of my vision.” By implication, face your vision, I face my vision!

THINK THROUGH

Take it from me, taking what is not your, forbids you from having what is yours.

Charisma can take you up, but without character you are likely to crumble from there.

When a man loses money, he loses nothing, when he loses health he loses something, but when he loses character he loses everything.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

REPEATING MISTAKES

As a dog returneth to his vomit, so a fool returneth to his folly. Proverbs 26:11

The persistent repeating of mistakes is the thirteenth foolish thing that people do and experience failure in life. When a person continuously repeats his mistakes, success will be far. When a man does not learn from his mistakes, failures and defeat, he is not wise.

Every failure experience, defeat situation or disappointment in life is meant to be a learning process. Someone has said that when a person has learnt from anything, it was no longer a problem; it was a school. Someone else said that those who do not learn from history, repeat history.

When a person does not learn from the history of his parents, he repeats their history. When a person cannot learn from what made his or her parents fail, he or she repeats their failure. When a person does not learn from the failure and success of the people in time past, he repeats history.

The rule, as someone has said, is, “Never make the same mistake once!” The familiar thing we know is, “Never make the same mistake twice,” but here it says never make it once. What does this mean? What it means is, when you see a man mistakenly fall into a ditch, you do not need to make the mistake of falling into the same ditch. It is a foolish thing to fall into the same pit that someone else just fell in.

We often hear about the rise and fall of empires. When we see the rise and fall of people, we should decide not to rise and fall. We should examine what happened to them and rise and rise.

The children of Israel wandered through the wilderness for forty years. The Bible says it was supposed to be an eleven days journey from Egypt to the borders of the wilderness. And from the borders of the wilderness to the Promised Land could have taken them a maximum of forty days. But the journey took them forty years. They went back and forth and round and round until they spent forty years for a journey of forty days. A cycle of frustration is repeated when lessons are not learnt.

When you are given to the repeating of mistakes, you would always say, “Oh, I have passed here before. I have been here before. I have experienced this thing before, but I thought I had overcome it…” Yes, the cycle is going to be repeated many times as long as lessons are not learnt.

If you go through the same cycle of problems or habits all the time, it means there were lessons you could learn per cycle, which were not learnt. There were some things you were meant to see, which you never saw.

Progress is only made when lessons are learnt. Even in the University, a person does not move from one class to another or one level to another, if lessons are not learnt. If a student writes an examination and it is proved that he or she did not know what was taught, he or she is not permitted to move to the next class. It is the same in real life. Progress in life is never made if lessons are not learnt.

Someone has said that the definition of insanity is, doing the same thing over

and over again and expecting different results. But how can you do the same things and expect different results? That is not possible. It is only a change of action that can produce a change of outcome or result. When you have not changed your actions, you cannot see a change of outcome or results.

Now, if you are reading this book, you have to cast your mind back. Think through the cycle of failure in your life. Find out, where you failed before, what caused it? What were you supposed to learn that you did not learn? What actions were you supposed to change that you did not change? You have to open your mind and find out the reason for the failure in any aspect of your life.

Take for instance, a couple argue and quarrel all the time. Time after time, they settle their differences, but in no time there is another argument with an ensuing quarrel. The question they should ask themselves is, “what is always causing this argument? What is the root of this frequent arguments and quarrel?” Until they have searched and found the root cause and dealt with it, the fruit will continue to show up.

Imagine the life of a little girl who speaks at random. Whenever her parents have visitors, she will tell a visitor how his shoes are not good or how his tie does not go with his shirt. Let us assume the parents of this little girl just watch on and think that the child is playing. She grows up to attend a primary school where she insults her teacher, and she is sent back home. Her parents go pleading and they take her back.

In secondary school, she slaps one of her tutors and is punished but the parents go pleading again. She attends a university and goes wild. After graduation, she lands a job. In her office, she insults and nearly fights the MD. She is sacked. Eventually she grows to marriageable age and is married. In her home, she treats her husband like a boy. In the end, she is kicked out of her husband's house. If this girl's history were carefully studied, one would realize that one thing followed her from childhood. If she had found out why they sent her home from primary and secondary school and why she lost her job, she could not have lost her marriage.

If a young lady keeps moving from one broken relationship to another and all the time, it happens when they are ready for her introduction, one question she should ask herself is, “we have prayed, fasted, bound and cast out every witch and wizard, what is left? What is the consistent factor in these broken

relationships?” If she sits down to think, she may realize that one of the problems is pre-marital sex. She may have slept with the first man; the man got used to her and left because he felt he needed nothing else from her.

Then she met with another man, but before they could say, “Praise the Lord”, they had committed immorality, and the man feeling he had no more use for her, abandoned her. She met with the third and the fourth man and the same thing happened. She then decides to see her pastor and ask for prayer. No matter how long she prays, until the cause is removed, the effect remains.

A young man gets a job and, in no time, loses it. He gets another job, loses it, and then gets another but the same thing happens. In all probability, he is highly intelligent and knows the job very well. If he is certain that it is probably not the devil or witches and wizards, he should ask himself, “what I'm I doing that is causing me the loss of my jobs?”

He could sober down to discover that he is too arrogant. He is so proud he cannot work with other people. His boss cannot work with him. His colleagues cannot stand his arrogance. All the time a recommendation is needed, he does not have a good one. And he keeps on losing good jobs despite his First Class Certificate. Until he can address the root cause, the fruit remains.

Life is calculated for us to learn from mistakes. When we are able to learn from the challenges of others, there is no way we can fail in life. We can maximize our lives by looking at the things that are working in our lives and then work them over and over again. Also, we can look at the things that are not working in our lives, then learn from them and avoid them. That is a good strategy for moving forward. We have to find out what people are saying about us that is not good. And when we know about it, we must make adjustments in our individual lives. That way, we can make progress. Never forget this: Progress is never made when lessons are not learnt.

My wife and I have been married for eighteen years and our children have never heard our argument and quarrel. It is not because two perfect people got married to each other; it is because we keep on learning all the time. We keep making adjustments in different areas so that progress can be made.

THINK THROUGH

People die rapidly and untimely when they have nothing they are pursuing.

When there is no vision, people perish.

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Progress is only made hen lessons are learnt.

A cycle of frustration is repeated when lessons are not learnt.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

A LIFE OF LAZINESS

The fool foldeth his hands together, and eateth his own flesh. Ecclesiastes 4:5

The folding of the hands to do nothing is the mark of a fool. Laziness is not wisdom; it is foolishness. Doing nothing, waiting for rescue, and hoping for things to change is not wisdom.

There are a few important truths to note about laziness. The first is that, laziness equals decadence. Where a man is lazy, his life and destiny decay. The easiest way to get a destiny rotten is to be inactive. When water is left open for a while it becomes stagnant - it stinks. It does not flow. It does not move. And water that is stagnant becomes a breeding ground for diseases.

A house that is not occupied, a house without active living, becomes a breeding ground for rodents, rats, and lizards. The walls may even begin to crack. A car that is parked for a while degenerates and dilapidates. The part of the human body that is not consistently put to use begins to dry up. If you were to consistently use one of your hands to do everything while you leave the other dormant, the dormant one may begin to dry up. The easiest way for a person's life and destiny to dry up is by laziness. People die rapidly and untimely when they have nothing they are pursuing. When there is no vision, people perish. When there is nothing they are pursuing; when there is nothing they pour their energy into, they die rapidly.

I heard the story of an old man in America. He was above one hundred years of age. Some journalists arranged a live television interview to find out the secret of his longevity. When the old man got there, he started arranging the stage instead of talking. The programme air time was running and the interviewers were

getting angry. Their time was going and the man had not said anything. The old man was actively arranging the stage.

When he was through, the time was far spent. The interviewers quickly asked him to tell them the secret of his longevity. He said to them, “Look at that flower that I was watering; it will blossom by this time next year, and I am going to be alive to see it.” In other words, the secret of his longevity was energy and action. He placed a focus ahead of him and worked towards it.

When people have nothing to look forward to, they begin to go down. People that have no dream die untimely. If you do not want your life to end miserably, you must be active. You must be agile. You must be up and doing spiritually, socially, materially and in everything.

A second thing to know about laziness is that it limits potentials. Diligence and hard work release potentials. Until the eagle spreads out its wings and decides to fly, it does not know its potential. It does not know it can fly ten thousand feet above sea level.

I read something some years ago, about the training of eaglets. The nest of an eagle is about ten thousand feet above sea level. That is where the eagle delivers its young ones. She leaves the young ones there and moves to distant places to get food for them. She does this regularly until one day when she arrives with a different look in her eyes - a very unfriendly and unfavourable look. All of a sudden, she begins to tear apart the nest where the eaglets lay. Having torn apart the nest, she begins to push out the eaglets using her beak.

The eaglets fall from that great height as if they were going to crash. By the time any of them is about to reach the ground, the mother will come under and carry it on her back, up to about ten thousand feet high and leave it again. She will repeat this cycle again and again for as long as the eaglet has not learnt a lesson. Once the eaglet, in the process of falling, mistakenly or incidentally spreads out its wings, it stabilizes.

I can perceive the young eaglet say, “Wow, so I have what mama has!”

When we rise up to do what we should do, our potentials begin to manifest. Many of us have been in God's training session where our potentials will be revealed in the end. God knows that there are great potentials inside of us and He wants us to spread out our wings, fly and reach our destiny.

Once the eaglet begins to fly, no more will it depend on the mother for food. It can follow the mother anywhere she goes to get food and also get food. But until it spreads out its wings, it does not realize its potential.

Until we spread out our wings; until we are determined to work; until we push out what God has put inside of us, we will not be able to realize our full potential. It may require a lot of work, risk taking and unusual steps. But until we are ready to push out our wings, we are not able to realize our potentials.

How much rubber can extend can only be known by stretching it. How fast a car can move can only be known by driving it. We do not always know our possibilities until we accept our responsibilities. The extent of our responsibilities determines the extent of our possibilities. The extent to which we are able to step out determines the extent to which we can stand out. The extent of our action determines the extent of our manifestation. The guiding rules are simple:

Do not just survive, succeed.

Do not just exist, excel.

Do not just make a living, make a difference.

Do more than have a job; have a passion and vision.

No man should ever get to a point in life where he just sits by doing nothing. How can someone just sit down for six months waiting for the result of a job interview while he does nothing?

How can someone sit for one year waiting for a proposal he submitted while he does nothing? That is not wisdom. Wisdom places the demand on a man, at every point in time, to do something, irrespective of what he is waiting for. While on a cue, you can read something.

Many times, on my way to church, I can read three to five chapters of the Bible while I am in the car. In the same way, when there is traffic, you can read or listen to a message. In the same interval of time, another person can think on something he would like to do.

Decide never to allow life slip or pass you by. Make the decision that life will

not act on you; you will act on life. Someone who had a First Class in Mathematics from the University of Ibadan in 1968 once described his experience. He said he was always lagging behind in his class, but when his mind changed, he began to work. He said whenever they were on a cue for food, while others were talking, he was studying his sums. When they were on a cue to fetch water, he was studying and reading. While other students were whiling away time, he was working with time.

In the end, he had ninety-eight percent in Mathematics, the overall best graduate in the University of Ibadan. That man is Pastor W. F. Kumuyi, the General Superintendent of the Deeper Life Bible Church. Hard work makes many succeed, and laziness makes many fail.

My counsel to you is, per time in life, make sure you are taking steps. Make sure you are doing something. Invest your expertise in the work of God. While you are waiting for a job or waiting to practice your profession, do something. Work for God. Contribute your expertise to the advancement of God's kingdom.

What else can you do? Take a course - a computer course, a people management course, etc.

What else can you do? Learn a skill. Learn how to do something. A man with a certificate may lack a job, but a man with skill can never be stranded.

There was a lady, a chartered accountant working with a big organization in Nigeria, who left Nigeria with her husband to America. For the first few months she was in America, she could not find a job immediately. But she knew how to plait the hair in an unusual style. She began to plait hair in America and was making some unusual amount of money.

You see, while you are waiting for one thing or the other you can learn a skill. You can take a course. You can learn a language - Chinese, French, etc. You can never tell where it will take you. In time, an accountant may be needed at the Chinese or French Embassy.

You must sit down and strategize: “What can I do to move my life from where I am to where I need to be?” That is mental work. A wise man should sit down and think, calculate, and generate ideas - twenty, fifty, one hundred - and find out which one can give him success fast. From there he can make a move, think, and set up a small scale business, something that can generate money. For such a

person, even if salary were delayed, he would not be stranded. No way. There is dignity in diligence.

DECLARE NOW:

In the Name of Jesus:

I am moving forward!

I refuse to be stagnant!

I refuse to be inactive!

I refuse to be lazy!

I am going forward!

You must begin to re-direct your time. Time is a commodity that can be directed. Everyone has equal time. What really happens is that when men do not direct time, time directs them. Many are under time pressure because they have deliberately refused to give direction to time. They cannot specifically say, “I must spend one, two, and maybe, three hours daily, studying God's Word. Nothing can stop it. I must take one, two, or more chapters of the Word of God daily.” Nothing can stop such men. Laziness is not found with such men and failure is not a part of their achievements.

THINK THROUGH

When people have nothing to look forward to, they begin to go down. People that have no dream die untimely.

Where there is premature contentment, there can be no ultimate fulfillment.

Diligence and hard work release potentials. Until the eagle spreads out its wings and decides to fly, it does not know its potential.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

A LIFE OF NOISE WITHOUT EFFECT

There are a lot of people whose life are so noisy. The noise they make is bigger

than the effect they produce. One day while we were on a road, there was this big, slow moving, truck in the middle of the road and it was making tremendous noise as if it was an aircraft. We drove past it very quietly, and the moment we passed it, I told my driver, “This confirms that noise does not equal speed.”

For as the crackling of thorns under a pot, so is the laughter of the fool: this also is vanity. Ecclesiastes 7:6

A quick look into the picture presented by the above verse will enhance understanding. A pot having thorns under it, if it is to crackle or make audible noise, must be empty. If it were filled with water or anything else, it would not make any noise. It is the empty barrel that makes the loudest noise.

There are people who have more publicity than productivity. They have so much celebration without appreciation - of God; celebration without concentration. They are the kind of people relaxing when they should be re-firing.

Some time ago, a man said he had discovered a HIV vaccine. In a short while, he had been to newspaper houses, television, and in fact, everywhere. There was no scientific backing for what he claimed. He had not subjected his discovery to the expected procedure of scrutiny, observation and examination.

The medical world and other experts subjected his discovery to good tests and it could not stand the tests. That man nearly lost his medical certificate, if he had not lost it. Where there is so much noise, there is very little effect. So much noise produces very little results.

There are two basic things involved in a noisy life - the presentation of the life and the reality of the life. A life of noise is one in which the life is louder than reality. A man is driving a car of four million naira, but he does not have one hundred thousand in any account anywhere. When he appears in his village, the people see him as a millionaire while in reality he is struggling to live. It is a life of false impression without real manifestation.

A life of noise is that of someone who has suddenly arrived. And when a person arrives too soon, he arrives too small. Where there is premature contentment, there can be no ultimate fulfillment.

A life of noise is that of a man who comes to a point where he feels so big; in fact, very big; he feels like he is one of those men that matter, meanwhile, he has

not even started. He is finishing when he should be starting. He is relaxing when he should be running. He is generating unnecessary attention when he should be having a lot of concentration. And when a man receives more attention than he gives concentration to his life assignment, what he has is really a distraction of destiny.

Some people unnecessarily invited thieves and tricksters into their lives because of the lifestyle they presented. Some people have invited unnecessary hostility, enmity, and adversity because of the kind of attention they wanted to generate.

I remember one time when we were going for a meeting and the cars ahead of our convoy had started generating unnecessary attention by putting on double trafficators. I really had to ask God to forgive them. I immediately directed the protocol to tell them to put off the trafficators. I began to imagine, supposing they decided to add a siren to the double trafficators and then arrived for the meeting, only to discover that God was not there, who would help the people? Who would heal the sick, open blind eyes, unstop deaf ears, save the afflicted and the sinners?

Supposing, after the undue exaggeration of who we were, we got there and God decided to let us go ahead while He stood by to watch us, what would we do? I was determined to stop if they were not going to put off those trafficators.

A real man of God does not blow his trumpet. He does not need to carry a 'big' title to manifest solid mantle.

A man may be so rich he has as much as one billion in his fixed deposit, yet it does not show on him. He keeps it simple. You see, simplicity is what powers destiny. Only small minded people exaggerate their greatness. Great people downplay their greatness. It is better for people to see a person small but later get to discover he is a very great man, than for a person to try to appear bigger than he really is. When the head is bigger than the body, what you have is a monster.

At the point where you conclude or decide that you have arrived, you are devoid of momentum. You are devoid of the energy needed to reach your destiny.

Imagine if you were in a race, and so many people were talking to you and applauding you, and you were responding to the encomiums and perhaps shaking hands with as many as you could, while the race was still on. Would you win? The key is to be simple! You should quietly make impact. When people say

you have succeeded, you should let the people know that you are just about to start. You should never claim to have arrived until you see Jesus face to face. And until that time, you are still growing, you are still in training, you are still moving. You should never claim to have arrived, spiritually, financially, materially and otherwise. You must make up your mind that you shall never arrive. It is the power of simplicity that compels the manifestation of destiny.

A lot of people have faded away untimely because of living an ‘evangelastic’ lifestyle - a life of telling very elastic stories. Such people blow up and expand a happening beyond reason. It is an elastic story, when a pastor comes up to say that over fifty thousand people gathered in a church service, when there were only less than five thousand people. That is evangelastic; it does not pay anyone. It is better to remain humble, cool and focused.

I will never forget the man of God, mightily used of God - John Alexander Dowie. He had a hundred thousand recorded healings within a few short years. That included all manner of afflictions. He built a one man city he called Zion City, which is still in existence today. The city was said to be ten kilometer squared. Zion City had everything - a bank, police station, everything.

As time went on, some people began to tell him how mighty he was. They began to tell him he was the Elijah to come: “Oh, don't you know? Can't you see all you have done? Who else than you should be the Elijah? You are the Elijah the whole world is expecting.” John Alexander had a kind of Old Testament beard and he really looked it. He rejected the praise and acclamation at first, but he eventually accepted it. He began to make proclamations: “I am the Elijah. I am the messenger of the Covenant. I am the first Apostle.” He began to give himself titles that belonged only to Christ.

A train was chartered to convey over one hundred thousand people from Chicago to New York for what Dowie called the ELIJAH DECLARATION. Imagine a crowd of over one hundred thousand, one hundred years ago! He conveyed the crowd to New York to declare to the whole world that Elijah had returned. After that declaration, he never returned a normal person. The great healing Evangelist later died on a wheel chair.

As I read that story, I could hear God tell me just one thing: “The man ended when he should have been beginning.” The LORD ministered clearly in my spirit that the point where Dowie went down was just where He planned to move

him up to greater dimensions in the anointing. That is what happens every time you think you have reached the peak. Of course you know that when you have reached up, there is no other way upper than up. The only place to go is down. You have to trust the Lord that the visions of your heart will never get finished.

In the Book of Kings and Chronicles, the Bible tells us that when Solomon had finished the building of God's temple and that of his personal house, he began to marry more wives. When he had finished all that was in his heart, he began to mess up (1Kings11:1-4).

You have to finish what God placed you on earth to achieve. Never claim you have finished. Our Master, Jesus, on the Cross of Calvary said, “It is finished.” Did he live after that? Paul the Apostle said, “I have finished my course; I am ready to go.” If you want to remain relevant on earth, you must not claim to 'finish' while you are still in the process. Jesus said, “It is finished” because He had finished His assignment. He had finished, so He had to go.

When it is not your time to go and you decide to finish, you go by force. Paul the Apostle knew that it was his time to go, so he said, “I have finished…” When it is not yet your time to leave this world and you begin to say, “I know God too much. I can preach and miracles happen. Who has more money than me in my village?” that is the end. When God asked Elijah, “What are you doing here?” and Elijah said, “I cannot do more than my fathers,” God said, in essence, “Hand over the anointing to Elisha, Jehu, Hazael and then get ready to go. In other words, you have ended.” I declare to you reading this book: that you will not go before your time.

At every point in time in your life, make sure your vision is intact. Make sure there is something more you want to do or achieve. Make sure you are connected to God and you hear from Him.

May you never come to a point where your heart is empty while others are applauding you as a success; a level where men say you have succeeded but heaven says you have failed. That shall never be your portion in Jesus' Name.

THINK THROUGH

You see, simplicity is what powers destiny. Only small minded people exaggerate their greatness.

At every point in time in your life, make sure your vision is intact. Make sure there is something more you want to d or achieve.

A real man of God does not need to carry a “big” title to manifest solid mantle

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

FORGETTING YOUR ROOT

O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you? Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh? Galatians 3:1,3

Paul the apostle calls it foolishness for someone to start in the spirit and conclude in the flesh. The sixteenth foolish thing that people do is to forget their root.

It is a foolish thing to forget your root. When you forget your root, you forfeit your future. When you forget your origin, you forfeit your destiny. When you lose sight of where you came from, you lose sight of where you are going. If you cannot remember your history, you may not be able to recover your destiny.

Paul called the Galatians foolish because they started in one way and then they forgot and abandoned what they knew. If you lose grip of your history, you will lose grip of your humility. And when you lose grip of your humility, you lose grip of your authority.

I do not believe that there is anyone that is a born nonentity. No matter who you are reading this book, I want you to know that you will not leave this world without fulfilling God's purpose and destiny in your life. People may look down on you today but “who is he that speaks and it comes to pass when the LORD has not commanded? He frustrates the tokens of liars, and makes diviners mad. He disappoints the devises of the crafty, so that their hands cannot perform their enterprise.”

It does not matter what anyone is saying. As far as it is not the LORD who is saying it, it cannot come to pass. May you, in a short time from now, shock those who look down on you! May you surpass the expectation of your adversaries! May you arrive at the place of your destiny in an incredible way!

To reach your destiny, you must remember your history. You must remember where you came from, because, the humility you need to sustain your authority, is connected to your memory of history.

If you remember that there was a time in your life when there was no food in the house; when you had to eat like a beggar; when you had to trek long distances, and God changed your story, it will give you the humility to sustain your authority. If you can remember that there was a time in your life when you could not take care of your younger ones; when you could not take care of your own children; when you were ashamed to go to the village because people would look at you and think something was wrong with you, and all of a sudden, God changed your story and made you into a multimillionaire, you will be humble enough to sustain your position.

Today you are taking care of other people's children, and you are building big churches. Today you are affecting your generation and spreading the Gospel around the world. If only you can remember where you came from, how it looked like, before God changed your story, it will give you the humility to sustain the authority. It will give you the humility to sustain the notoriety. It will give you the humility to sustain your publicity. It will give you the humility to sustain the power.

The reason why many people do not last long in a position of prosperity is because they forget their history. And as they forget their history, they lose their humility and as they lose their humility, they lose their prosperity.

When prosperous people do not remember their history, they begin to look down on everyone. They begin to mess up and as a result they miss it. When people begin to mess up, and disconnect from God, they begin to miss it. When you lose memory of your history, you lose contact with the mercy that made you.

The Bible tells us that 'It is not of him that willeth nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth Mercy." Behind the making of a man is the mercy of God, and if you remember your history, you will maintain contact with the mercy that made you. You will realize that where you are today is neither a function of your wisdom nor your strength and connection. It is not a function of the people you know; it is a function of mercy. If you remember your history - where God has taken you from - you can remain connected to the mercy that made you.

Get this: When you remember your history, you can remember your sacrifice - the sacrifice that changed your story. Know that what you did to bring you out, you will need to continue doing same to remain out. It is not a wise decision to stop doing what you did that has taken you where you are. What you got by the knees can only be kept by the knees. What you got through fasting can be kept through fasting. What you got through soul-winning can be kept through soul-winning. What you got by a devotion to the study of the Word can be maintained by that same devotion. And what you got through a life of worship can be kept through a life of worship.

It is a foolish thing to do, for you to spend many days in fasting and prayer, live a worship life, study the Word, etc. and all of a sudden God's power comes upon you in such a great dimension that signs and wonders follow you and devils are cast out then you stop fasting, praying, worshipping, and studying the Word. If you get to a place where you think you have arrived, and you do not fast, pray, give, live a holy life etc., you cannot maintain the anointing. When you stop paying the price for the anointing, you lose the anointing.

For a lot of people, before they came out of trouble, they spent quality time with God. They fasted and prayed. They gave some offerings. They made some sacrifices. They made the determination that they were going to serve the LORD.

The ladies were determined not to sleep with a man who is not their husband. The men made the same commitment to study and live by the Word of God. When God saw their sincerity, He began to change their story. But some of them, after they saw that they had arrived, relaxed. Very unknown to them was the fact that, when a man is disconnected from his root, he is disconnected from the grace that flows through the root. When a man is disconnected from his root, he is disconnected from the anointing that produces the results.

The Bible tells us that when lot followed Abraham, God changed his life. Lot was Abraham's nephew. After Lot's father died, Abraham decided to bring him up. Abraham did this until Lot grew up to become very rich. Lot felt he had grown to be of age, so he asked his uncle that they separate. He forgot his root.

Abraham asked him to choose first, which direction he preferred most. He said to Lot, “Any land you choose, I will choose the opposite.” Lot looked up and chose the well watered fields of Sodom, and Abraham chose the dry land

(Genesis 13:7-12). Lot was actually digging a pit for himself. Think about it: Your uncle asked you to make a choice before he did and you agreed to it? Wow! Pride goes before a fall, and a haughty spirit before destruction(Proverbs 16:8).

Lot went with all he saw, but it did not last long. In Sodom and Gomorrah, he became corrupted to the point where he began to call the Sodomites his brothers, and offered to give his daughters to them in immorality (Genesis 19:7-8).

Eventually, Lot left Sodom without a penny. His wife, who was so corrupted by the jewelry and vanities of Sodom, turned back to look at her pieces of jewelry and valuables on fire, and became a pillar of salt (Genesis 19:26).

Lot became the progenitor of bastards. He slept with his two daughters and they gave birth to the Amonites and Moabites - two tribes that must not survive (Genesis 19:37). You see, when you lose connection with your root, you cannot maintain your fruits. Lot brought a terrible disaster on himself and his family.

There are people who suddenly disconnect from their root and completely disappear after God has used someone to touch and affect their life. Sometimes they even begin to speak against the same hand that blessed them.

Imagine a pastor that led you to Christ, helped you to experience the Baptism of the Holy Ghost, and under his ministry you found whom to marry. He joined you in marriage, laid hands on you, poured oil on you to commission you into ministry and taught you everything you know. When you say such a man has suddenly become a devil and you go against him, you simply go against your destiny.

No matter how high God raises you, may you never claim to outgrow your root. When you become bigger than your root, collapse is inevitable. There is a proverb from Benin Republic that says, “The reason for the shadow is the sun.” What that means is that anytime the sun goes off, the shadow disappears.

My counsel to you reading this book is, always remember where you came from. Erect what I call a memorial altar, an altar of remembrance. That is to say, you should frequently prostrate before the Lord. Try to see where He brought you from and where He is taking you to.

At the brink of the River Jordan, three tribes of Israel - Reuben, Gad and the half tribe of Mannaseh - erected an altar. When the other ten and half tribes tried to

question them, they said they were erecting a memorial altar that, in the years ahead, would remind their children how God delivered them through the tough and terrible wilderness. Similarly, once in a while, you must go before the presence of the Lord and thank Him for delivering you out of alcoholism, prostitution or other forms of destructive habits. Remind yourself that apart from God, you would have been forgotten. It was Oral Roberts who was told by his mother, “Oral, people are going to praise you and think of you a big person. But no matter how big you grow, remain small in your eyes.” That is the secret of greatness tomorrow.

And Samuel said, When thou wast little in thine own sight, wast thou not made the head of the tribes of Israel, and the LORD anointed thee king over Israel? 1Samuel 15:17

God sent Saul to carry out an assignment but he disobeyed God. Note what the Prophet Samuel said to King Saul: “When you were little in your own eyes…did God not anoint you king over Israel?” God lifts up people when they are little in their own eyes and he leaves people alone when they become big in their own eyes. And it is a fearful thing for God to leave a man alone. God takes you up and holds you there when you are little in your own eyes, but He leaves you to remain there and keep yourself when you think you have arrived.

No matter how far you go (and you are going to go very far), and no matter how high you go (and you are going to go very high), may you never forget where you came from. May you never forget where God met you before He pulled you out. May you never forget how terrible your situation was before God changed it.

Some people have not experienced change in their lives because God knows their hearts. He knows that when they are lifted, they will forget where they were lifted from. He prefers that they remain where they are, so they can succeed and make heaven, rather than lift them up and they forget Him and go to hell.

God prefers that you be poor and go to heaven than for you to be rich and go to hell. That is a very hard statement. Is it not? God prefers that you remain where you are in life and make heaven, than to change your story and you end in hell. You have to keep on checking your heart to be sure that you do not forget in a hurry, where God has brought you from.

It is very easy for people to make pledges when they are in trouble. They tell God that once He changes their story, they will give the first one million to the church. They say, “LORD, my first salary will come to You when you change my story. I will personally organize a crusade in my village.” But once God answers their prayers, they forget to pay their vow as rapidly as they made it. The Word of God says,

When thou vowest a vow unto God, defer not to pay it; for he hath no pleasure in fools: pay that which thou hast vowed. Better is it that thou shouldest not vow, than that thou shouldest vow and not pay. Suffer not thy mouth to cause thy flesh to sin; neither say thou before the angel, that it was an error: wherefore should God be angry at thy voice, and destroy the work of thine hands? Ecclesiastes 5:4-6

Take a close look at the case of Hannah. She had made a vow to give her child back to the service of the Lord if God gave her one. She got pregnant and gave birth to Samuel. Once the child was weaned, she gave him back to God. For doing that, God opened her womb and she had many more children (1Samuel 2:21).

Every time God brings you from the pit to the top; every time He brings you from the back to the front, think back and remember, whether you made some pledges, vows or you had said some things to Him. If you discover some, outline them and begin to pay up, so that where God has taken you to can be established; so that you can move from there to the next level.

A lot of people's progresses are arrested because of an unpaid vow - an unfulfilled obligation. They took God for granted. The moment God did what they prayed for, they took it to be just an accident. They began to regret that they had made a pledge. They wish they did not make a pledge. They believed it could still happen without a pledge. Not long after, their lives and progress are arrested and their journey truncated.

I pray that you will remember all the vows and pledges you had made in your times of trouble and pay them. As you do, I pray that your arrested progress be released in the Name of Jesus Christ.

Finally, when God brings you out of a pit, never you forget those God used to change your story. Do not forget the pastor that prayed for you and spoke into

your life. Do not forget the church where it happened. Do not forget the prophetic declarations and the releases. Do not forget the person that invited you to the church. Do not forget your mother. Do not forget your father. Do not forget the friend that assisted you. Do not forget those whom God used to change your story, because life is a seed. When you forget those who helped you from yesterday into today, God will block the chance of anyone helping you from today into tomorrow.

Life is a seed. What a man sows, he reaps. When you begin to talk down those who spoke into your life, fasted for you, assisted you and helped you, God will block your chances of moving ahead. Some people get a testimony of breakthrough in one church, but they go and pay their tithes in another church. That is inappropriate! Some people attend a church because of a specific problem in their life and once that problem is solved, it becomes the last time they are seen in that church.

If you will not forget your history, you will not forfeit your destiny. As long as you are sensible enough to remember the person you were, the place you were, and the circumstances of your life, before you got to the top; and you are sensible enough to bless the church that blessed you, and the instrument God used to bless you, you will not forfeit your destiny. As long as you can reach back to your root and affect them, God will take you higher. It is a foolish thing to forget your root. Avoid it!

THINK THROUGH

The reason why many people dot last long in a position of prosperity is because the forget their history. And as they forget their history, the lose their humility and as they lose their humility, they lose their prosperity.

When you stop paying the price for the anointing, you lose the anointing.

Behind the making of a man is the mercy of God and if you maintain Contact with your history, you will maintain contact with the mercy that made you.

Knew that what you did to bring you out, you will continue doing to remain out. It is not wise decision to stop doing what you did that has taken you where you are.

To reach your destiny you must remember your history. You must remember

where you came from because, the humility you need to sustain your authority is connected t your memory of history.

When you forget those who helped you from yesterday into today, God will block the chances of anyone helping you from today into tomorrow.

When you become bigger than your rot, collapse is inevitable.

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

A LIFE OF INGRATITUDE

A life of ingratitude, ungratefulness, being unthankful is a mistake.

Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Romans 1:21

To be unthankful is to be foolish. Living a life that cannot say, “Thank you” to God or man, is foolishness.

The fact is that we live in a very unthankful and ungrateful generation. There is a constant display of ingratitude in our generation: Children collect school fees from their parents without saying, “Thank you”. They just get it and off they go.

Wives collect feeding money from their husbands without saying, “Thank you”. Husbands eat the food that their wives cook. They like the food. They enjoy it, and even lick their fingers without saying, “Thank you”. Ingratitude is so much in display in our generation. Every person thinks it is their right to have what they have.

Some children would say, “Is it not my right for my father to pay my school fees?” And I say to them, go and ask all the children that have no father, who is paying their school fees. Go and ask all the children whose fathers have no money to send them to school, then you will know whether it is your right or not.

Many women would say, “Is it not my right for my husband to buy food?” And I say to them, go and ask all your age mates who are trusting God for a husband. Who is buying them food? Go and ask them.

Husbands would say, “Is it not my right for my wife to cook for me and I enjoy it?” And I say to them, go and ask the man who cannot keep a wife in his house; who is keeping some street girl as a wife. Go and ask him who is cooking for him to enjoy.

I read in a newspaper some time ago that a woman killed her husband. The man gave her eight hundred naira for food, and the woman said it was not enough for anything. She gave it back to him.

The man got the money and said he was going to give it to his girl friend. On hearing that, the woman picked a knife and stabbed him several times in his abdomen until he was confirmed dead.

Go and ask that man, in case you think it is your right to have a wife that is obedient enough to cook food for you. Go and ask that man where he is now.

This world would be a better place if only we knew how to say 'thank you'. It is so amazing to me every time we drive on the road and have to stop for someone to cross the road, only for them to just pass by without any manner of appreciation.

Our generation is so loaded with indiscipline: nobody thinks that anything is worth anything. That is why many people are where they are today. It is not our right to have what we have; it is a privilege. We do not deserve more than what we have. God, in His wisdom, knows that what we have now is good for now. And as we appreciate Him, He will move us to the next level.

Get this: The other person is not better than you. Until you know the issues of people, you do not really know who is better than you. I saw a woman some time ago, and she was dying with a cancer in her leg. She dressed all the way down in gown with very expensive jewelry and she was in millions.

She told me that, every occasion she attended, someone would look at her and say, “I want to be like you”. She said she would always say in her heart, “No! I don't want you to be like me. If you really knew my details, you won't want to be like me.”

She told me that it was then she realized that when people say they like to be like someone else, they do not really know what they are saying. Because, behind some smiling faces are some frowning issues.

Gratitude is the attitude of great altitude. In other words, nothing takes you up like gratitude. Gratitude opens doors and changes you from level to level.

Ingratitude closes doors and establishes stagnation. If you gave someone money and he collected it and started moving, would you think of him another time? Even God Almighty, after His first day at creation, looked at what He had created and saw that it was good. There was no one he could thank, so He had to appreciate His work. He moved to the second day and after He finished, He saw again that it was good. If you want to move from level to level, you must move by gratitude; by appreciation. Do you really want to move from phase to phase in your destiny? It will be by gratitude.

Someone once said to me, “I have given all the offerings I know how to give, and I have not yet received financial harvest”. I asked him if he was thanking and he said, “Wait a minute, I have never thought of it.” Then I told him to go and start thanking. You must, please, learn to thank God for one naira as if it were one million naira. You will be amazed at what happens.

One man came to my office to ask for help some time ago. He came from the oil city of Port Harcourt in Nigeria. He works for Shell Petroleum. He had under budgeted for his journey, so his money got finished. Fortunately he remembered that he knew me, so he came to the office. When he came, he narrated his predicament. He was too ashamed to go asking from just anyone.

After I got some money for him, he looked at me in the eyes and said something like, “Pastor, I am deeply touched. It bothers me that instead of bringing money to church, I'm coming to take money. I'm really, really sorry. But it's not my doing. It's not in my power to do otherwise right now.” The moment he said that, it moved my heart, and I dipped my hand into my personal money again and added to what I had previously given him.

That day the LORD showed me that it is exactly how He acts with His children. When they have the capacity to appreciate Him for the little He gives them, it moves Him to give them more.

When a person is not thankful, he is not excited. When a person does not see any reason under heaven to say, 'thank you', he is not excited. And when an individual is not excited, he is tensed up. As far as he is concerned, God is not fair. The world is not fair. No one is good. No one is doing him well. But what

we need to know is that when life is tensed up, it is fenced off. Nothing good enters, nothing good comes out. People run away from a person whose life is tensed up because he is not an exciting company.

When you are tensed up, your potential is locked up. You do not do anything well.

A secretary will make mistakes under tension.

A pastor whose wife put him under pressure will want to open to the book of Galatians but tell the people to open to Corinthians.

That is why you must allow your gratitude to flow. The flow of that gratitude is the flow of excitement. And when you are excited, your life opens. Your mind opens. Your spirit opens. Ideas can flow. Your potentials are realized. People can relate more with you. And you need people to get to your destiny. The Bible says that “the Joy of the LORD is your Strength” (Nehemiah 8:10b). When you are not thankful and excited, you lack joy. If you lack joy, you lack strength, and when you lack strength, you end in defeat. There are many people moving around very powerless, weak, unable to pray, unable to deal with even one tiny devil, all because they are too depressed.

Everything has got to change in your life. Once in a while, you should stand before your mirror and begin to laugh, jump, scream, and dance. Tell the devil he is not in control of your life. God is in control of your life. Put an up-beat praise music and begin to celebrate and jubilate to the glory of God. When you begin to do that, your joy will come back. When your joy is restored, your strength will be restored. And when your strength is restored, you can decree a thing and it shall be established.

Please know that if there is anything the devil is after, it is your joy. But you must get the devil frustrated by rejoicing. To rejoice is better than to be depressed. Joy is more profitable than sorrow. Medical science teaches that you need more muscles to frown than you need to smile. A smile makes you more beautiful than a frown. Frowning enhances ugliness. It spoils everything.

Let appreciation well up inside you all the time. That you are alive is a miracle. That you are sitting up reading this book is a miracle. That you are in God and no longer in alcoholism is a miracle. That you are in God and no longer in prostitution is a miracle. That is enough to make you lift your hand and say,

“Thank you LORD.”

That you are sane and not walking on the road, naked, looking for groundnuts on the road side, is a miracle. Ingratitude is a mistake.

There are three keys to living a life of gratitude:

Always take a look at your life, and be very quick to acknowledge where God has done something for you. Always take inventory of your life - where you had been and where you are coming from. Never sleep over what God does for you. Thank Him the same day.

Testify to God's goodness publicly. When God does something for you, stand before a crowd of people and say God is faithful. Psalm 22:22 says, “I will declare thy name unto my brethren: in the midst of the congregation will I praise thee.”

Give a thanksgiving offering as frequently as you can when something important happens to you. It is not out of place.

THINK THROUGH

Gratitude is the attitude of great altitude. Gratitude opens doors and changes you from level t level. Ingratitude closes doors and establishes stagnation.

This world would be a better place if only we knew how to say “thank you”’

The other person is not better than you. Until you know the issues of people, you do not really know who is better than you.

Let appreciation well up inside you all the time. That you are alive is a miracle.

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

RELIANCE ON NATURAL WISDOM

It is a foolish thing to rely on human wisdom.

For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe.

1Corinthians 1:21

DECLARE NOW:

In the name of Jesus, I refuse to rely on worldly wisdom.

I refuse to rely on natural wisdom.

I refuse to rely on human wisdom to handle my destiny.

To rely on human wisdom is to attempt to solve your problem your way, and not God's way or means: “I have a challenge; I must get married now and I want to handle it my way. I must get a job now and I want to handle it my way. I must get money now and I want to handle it my way.”

What was the problem of Abraham? God promised that He was going to give him a child of promise, but Abraham decided to handle it his way. What did he do? He followed the advice of Sarah, slept with Hagar and had Ishmael. Right now Israel has not recovered from the problem of Ishmael.

Solving your problem your way can worsen and complicate your destiny. When you say, “God has refused to give me a husband on time,” and you want to give yourself a husband, you complicate your destiny. When you think God has refused to do it for you and you want to do it your way, you complicate your life. Those who wait on the LORD do not waste in life. Do not handle it your way.

To rely on human wisdom is to attempt to carry your problem on your head. That is tantamount to collapse.

To rely on human wisdom is to labour without instruction. When a man lives without God in the picture, he runs into trouble. He does not present anything before God: “LORD there is someone I want to marry. Is the person Your will for me? LORD I was invited for two interviews and I have succeeded in both. One is a bank and the other is an oil company. Which one is the best of Your will for me? I am ready for you.” Or, “LORD, I have a green card. Do You want me to travel out to America to live there?” It will amaze you to know that, because things work out positively does not make them God's will.

When a person lives his life without asking questions, he will eventually run into trouble. Those who do not ask questions do not have access to answers. When a

person is living his life without asking God questions and asking for His direction, it is not wise. Such is a life of aluta continua - the struggle continues. Such a life is a life of failure and defeat.

Peter said to Jesus, “Master we have toiled all night and caught nothing, but nevertheless at thy word I will let down the net.” And one Word from God changed the story (Luke 5:5). Only one Word, one revelation, one inspiration, one direction; only one thing God will tell you will change your story.

It is a great deal of wisdom to rely on God. It is a great deal of foolishness to rely on natural or human wisdom. Every individual has the choice to make. You have the choice to make.

THINK THROUGH

Solving your problem your way can complicate your destiny.

CHAPTER NINETEEN

SPENDING WITHOUT DISCRETION

There is treasure to be desired and oil in the dwelling of the wise; but a foolish man spendeth it up. Proverbs 21:20

Spending without discretion is an expression of foolishness. A wise man saves something. A foolish man spends up everything. It is not wisdom to live an expenditure-centered life. A person that only seeks for what to spend on - what to eat, wear, drive, etc., is not wise. A life that is focused on expenditure at the expense of investment is not a wise life; it is a foolish one.

Investment is the key to achievement. Investment - whether it is that of money, time, resources and attention to spiritual things - is the secret of achievement. Where there is no investment of money, time, energy, etc. there can be no achievement on earth. Low investment equals low achievement. High investment equals high achievement. The limit of a man's investment is the limit of his achievement.

The absence of investment equals the presence of embarrassment - embarrassment today, embarrassment tomorrow. We read in second Kings chapter four verse one, the story of a widow whose two sons had been taken to

become slaves because their father had died in debt, and left his two sons as collateral. It took divine intervention for those children to be delivered. When a man is not investing his time, money, and energy correctly, he prepares himself for a life of embarrassment.

When people are in the classroom but someone is playing up and down and is not investing his time and attention in academic excellence, he is preparing for embarrassment. When someone is buying toys instead of investing for his future, he is seeking embarrassment. A life devoid of investment is a life full of embarrassment. It will always be an embarrassment for the man who has a pregnant wife and does not plan towards the delivery day, the pregnancy having given him nine full months advance notice. When it is time for delivery and there is no money to pay the hospital bills, it will be a great embarrassment.

Where there is no investment, the future is not guaranteed. There is no guaranteed future where finances are not invested, time is not invested and energy is not invested. You do not have a future if there is nothing you are putting forth for the future. Of what use is it to drive a good car today and go on foot tomorrow? Of what use is it to live in a good house today and end in a dilapidated one tomorrow. Of what use is it to wear good dresses today and be naked tomorrow? Of what use is it to appear successful today and be stranded tomorrow? It is not how a man looks today that matters, but how he will look tomorrow. It is not where he lives today that matters, but where he will be tomorrow. Where there is no investment, the future is not guaranteed.

It has been confirmed that resources flow in the direction of wise managers and away from people who manage poorly. It is confirmed by research and in Scripture that when a man knows how to get money and opportunities, and also knows how to manage them well, through savings, investments and generational impact, resources will flow in his direction. When a person, on the other hand, does not know how to manage, handle, and impact his generation with his resources, it flows away from him. Imagine that two people got ten billion naira each. One uses his to purchase a private aircraft for his personal enjoyment and builds a non-profit entertainment centre for himself. The other builds an industry, a factory where five thousand young men are employed. The latter will achieve more in life and money will flow in his direction. God will favour him because he has managed his resources well and also impacted humanity positively.

Anything you manage well will multiply and anything you mismanage will

diminish. Take a look at Adam in the Garden of Eden. When God gave him the Garden to manage and he mismanaged it, he lost it. When you manage well the resources that God puts in your hand, you are going to multiply it. Your colleagues and age mates will look at you and be wondering what your secret is. But when you mismanage what God gives you, it diminishes. Understand that there is a time when the money you have, is not for a change of car or house but for multiplication. When you can properly handle what you are given and multiply it, you will have more. When you cannot properly handle and manage what you have, you lose all. Jesus illustrated this with the parable of the Talent.

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. After a long time the lord of those servants cometh, and reckoneth with them. 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. His lord said unto him, Well done, 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. 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 is thine. 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. Matthew 25:14-29

The crux of Jesus’ teaching in the above parable is that, unto everyone that has

and can multiply, shall be given more and he shall have in abundance. So, investment is the secret of abundance. From him that has but can neither manage nor multiply, it shall be taken away, even that which he has. So, mismanagement is the secret of loses. In essence, then, the man who knows how to multiply will have wealth flow in his direction.

Where there is no mentality, there is no opportunity. Where there is no mentality, there can be no prosperity. God is watching the way you think. He is watching the way you behave. He is watching the way you spend money. Sometimes, the way you spend money is the reason why money does not come as you want it to. God gives you money and you go purchasing new clothes and many other things. The money disappears and you start asking Him for more. He gives you more money and you go buy more things. And all of a sudden, everything disappears again. Then you start crying for Him to give you more. God is not prodigal with His resources. He will rather send what you are asking for, to the person who knows how to invest.

The question is, “What are your channels of investment?” Let me share with you, three channels you need to consider:

KINGDOM INVESTMENT

The first and most important investment in your life is kingdom investment. You must pay your tithes and give your offerings. And when any major thing happens in your life, let the kingdom of God be involved. One man vowed that he would not drive a car until he had given God a car through His servant. That is another level. You know things are in levels. The first time I handled five hundred thousand naira, God ministered to me, 'It is not yours; it is mine.” And I dropped it. The first time I received one million naira, God again ministered to me, “It is your investment.” And I dropped it.

Kingdom investment is a key investment in your life. Do not play with your tithes and offerings. Do not joke about it, when God moves on your heart to do something major for the kingdom of God. Do not joke with it. It has eternal benefits.

PERSONAL INVESTMENT

The second investment is personal investment. Personal investment is investment into personal development. It is investment into who you are. When

you increase the quality of your person, you multiply your prosperity. When you increase the quality of your person, you increase the quality of what you can have. For instance, a young man studied physics, chemistry and biology in secondary school and eventually studies medicine in the university. If he eventually becomes a medical doctor, was his money or time wasted? No! If, after becoming a medical doctor, and while his colleagues are busy enjoying private practice (pp), he decides to spend more money to specialize and become a Consultant General Surgeon, is that money a waste? Oh no! When they need a general surgeon at some specialist hospitals, they look for him. When they are looking for doctors in Iraq, Iran or some of the Middle East countries, they look for him, because he invested money to upgrade who he is. Now let us say he decides to move forward and specialize in neurological surgery, he again, increases the quality of who he is, and his life increases.

Nothing around you changes until something inside you continues to change. You cannot have the same mentality and change your prosperity. You cannot have the same mentality and change your opportunities. You must determine to change the quality of who you are on a continuous basis. Any money you spend to acquire information is not wasted. The reason is, the quality of your information determines the quality of your decision. The quality of your decision determines the quality of your action. The quality of your action determines the quality of your outcome. If I went to my village now, where most of my age mates tap palm wine, and we were asked a question, my reasoning would be far different from and higher than theirs. The decisions I will take; the actions I will put forth and the results I get will be far different from theirs. We are the same bodily but different mentally. We are the same 'age-ically' but different mentally. What defines who you are, is not the dress you put on or the car you drive but what you have upstairs.

The reason why people spend money the way they spend is because they do not know better. If they picked up one book on financial intelligence and carefully read about how to multiply their money, they would think differently. Any money you spend to increase yourself, to learn a trade, to learn a skill, to purchase Bible resources and increase your revelation or information, is never wasted. It will pay you in time to come.

BUSINESS AND FINANCIAL INVESTMENT

The third area in which you must invest is in business and financial endeavours.

You need to find out from people who know better and get their help. Find out what you can do with one hundred thousand naira if you have it. Find out what you can do with five hundred thousand naira if you have it. Rather than keep the money in an account and keep spending it over unnecessary issues, get it to work for you. Multiply your money instead of keeping it. Find out from financial counselors and experts where you can plunge in your cash with subsequent multiplication and growth.

Put a perpetual end to indiscriminate spending in your life. It is a foolish thing to do.

THINK THROUGH

A life devoid of investment is a life full of embarrassment.

It is not how a man looks today that matters, but how he will look tomorrow. It is not where he lives today that matters, but where he will leave tomorrow.

There can be no supernatural prosperity without financial integrity.

Where there is no mentality, there is no opportunity. Where there is no mentality, there can be no prosperity.

CHAPTER TWENTY

MONEY BY UNGODLY MEANS

Getting money by ungodly or unrighteous means is a foolish thing to do.

As the partridge sitteth on eggs, and hatcheth them not; so he that getteth riches, and not by right, shall leave them in the midst of his days, and at his end shall be a fool. Jeremiah 17:11

There can be no supernatural prosperity without financial integrity. A man or woman, who wants heaven to be involved in his or her endeavours, must have clean hands. Some people rather than strive for clean hands in all their endeavours, define a way for themselves. They say they do it the Nigeria way. God's servant, Bishop David Oyedepo said, “To do it the Nigeria way is to end with the Nigeria plague.”

Get this: Any money you get that is not your right is not an addition to your life; it is a subtraction. It does not add anything to you; it rather subtracts everything from you. When you live as an armed robber, you are subtracting instead of adding to yourself. When you falsify figures, you merely cheat yourself. If, for instance, you are a purchasing and supplies officer and for a thing of three hundred thousand, you quoted for five hundred thousand, the two hundred thousand extra is destructive cash. Your destiny is too big. Do not let anything spoil it. Your future is very bright. Do not let stolen money destroy it. If you were sent to the market and you were meant to return some change, but you kept it back, what you have kept back is destructive and calamitous cash.

You are too big for someone to be looking away and you pick his money. You are too big to be looking for money on the ground that fell from someone else's pocket or hand bag. This is the rottenness of our generation that has destroyed the destiny of so many. Today a pastor can start a church only because of money. He is very lazy and slack. He is too lazy to work for a living. All of a sudden he says God has called him. At the end of every service he carries the church offering to his house to count. The tithes and offerings are his. Everything is his. That man is on the path of destruction. The Bible tells us that judgment will begin in the house of the Lord.

Several times I have had church members bring me large sums of money. When I ask them, they say, it is tithes. What I do is to simply take the money to the church. The tithes of church members is meant to be paid in the church. It is to God we pay it because He said, “Bring all your tithes and offering into the storehouse.” Am I a storehouse? I take the tithes to church when the people bring it to me. If I do not take it to the church no one will know. The man that brought it to me would not tell anyone. But I return it to the church because I want my future and the future of my children to be secure. Someone has once brought me an offering and he said it was for the LORD. The question is, “It is an offering for the LORD, and you are handing it over to me. Am I the Lord? Put it in the offering basket.” I returned it. And I have returned hundreds of thousands that people brought into my hands. They brought it ignorantly but I knew where it should go. I would not pretend that I do not know.

I want you to understand that any money that you got, that you were not given rightfully by God, man or labour, is a trap. Such money comes to trap you, your destiny and your future. That is why you must make up your mind to live clean. If a bank overpays you, return the extra money to them. Let them say, “It is not

our fault. We have checked and everything is correct. Go with it. It is your money." Let them tell you that. Do not keep the extra of what does not belong to you.

When I was an unbeliever, I once assisted a man in beer distribution. There was a man we made supplies to, and he mistakenly overpaid for the cartons of beer he bought. When I wanted to let the customer know he had overpaid, the man I assisted in distributing the beer collected it. He said I should not bother myself, that it was not a mistake. I felt very bad. Although I was an unbeliever I had a conscience not to be dishonest financially, how much more should Christians be outstandingly honest in financial dealings. But that man did not end well. He is not even alive today. He did not end well at all. Dealing in alcohol was terrible enough, but being fraudulent in addition was absolutely disastrous.

DECLARE NOW:

In the name of Jesus, I shall end well.

I shall not touch anything that is not mine.

When money is your master, it can send you to do anything - kill, shed blood etc. - and that puts you on the highway to hell. But is it really worth it? The gift of God makes rich and adds no sorrows. If God did not give it to you, it is sorrow-loaded. There are multimillionaires that died of heart attack. They died before their time and their children could not manage their money because of how they got it. No fraudulent money has generational perpetuation. It does not have the power of trans-generational transfer. It does not have a future.

Whatever we do today affects our children. Take a look at Achan who stole the babylonish garment after the destruction of Jericho. What happened to him? Joshua pulled him out from the congregation and he and his children were stoned and burned to ashes (Joshua 7:23-26). Take a look at Gehazi who went after Naaman the Syrian to collect money he was not given. He lied and collected the money. What happened to him? Elisha told him that the leprosy of Naaman shall come on him and his generation (1Kings 5:27). That means that in his lineage, there would not be anyone that would not be leprous. Why would you allow your behaviour today to implicate your children?

Then said he unto me, This is the curse that goeth forth over the face of the whole earth: for every one that stealeth shall be cut off as on this side according

to it; and every one that sweareth shall be cut off as on that side according to it. I will bring it forth, saith the LORD of hosts, and it shall enter into the house of the thief, and into the house of him that sweareth falsely by my name: and it shall remain in the midst of his house, and shall consume it with the timber thereof and the stones thereof. Zechariah 5:3

A thief does not have a future. The house that a thief builds does not have a future. The investment of a thief has no destiny. God says He will introduce the curse into what he does. He will ruin it. Imagine that God has one billion dollars for you to acquire and you steal ten million dollars and mix it up with the future God has for you and it destroys it. May that never happen to you!

As a Christian, there is a job you may need to resign from, so that God will give you a better job. A job that causes you to compromise and tell lies on behalf of your boss is not a good job. A job where corruption is legal, and if you do not do it, you are an enemy, is not a good job. Christians in such jobs need to begin to ask God to give them their real jobs. I believe that there is soon going to be a global change beginning with Nigeria. In a short time from now, there is going to be an “invironmental sanitation” – internal cleansing.

Let God make you rich in a genuine way. Labour honestly. Do not let the devil make you. Jesus said, “Follow me and I will make you…” God is the maker of men. He has not lost that ability. He will make you what He wants you to be. There are many in millions today that no one employed and who became wealthy without corruption. You do not need to steal to make money. It is a foolish thing to make money by ungodly means. Your future is guaranteed when you make up your mind never to take or keep what does not belong to you.

THINK THROUGH

Any money you get that is not your right is not an addition to your life.

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CHAPTER TWENTY-ONE

HEARING WITHOUT ACTION

Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock: And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock. And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand: And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it. Matthew 7:24-26

To keep learning without doing is a foolish thing. A wise man hears God's Word and acts upon it. A fool hears and discards what he has heard. The blessing of God is not in the hearing; the blessing is in the doing. It is not what you know that gives you victory, it is what you do. Your stability in life is by the acceptance of responsibility. The celebration of knowledge is not wisdom. Wisdom is the celebration of action. The celebration of information is not wisdom. Wisdom is the celebration of practicalization.

In life, if you continue to receive instructions and you do not do them, the time will come when it will no more make meaning to you. People sit in a church and neither can perceive nor feel anything because their information pathway is blocked. Whenever there is information without action there must be stagnation. If you come to a point in your life where it looks as if something is not moving the way it should, just check yourself to find out what you are meant to be doing that you are not doing. The moment you begin to do it, the results will begin to flow.

This book has taught you twenty-one foolish things that people do. Anyone that is involved in them is guaranteed to fail. Anyone that can avoid them is guaranteed to succeed. Will you just read and discard them? Will you put them to practice? I believe the latter will change your life. Research shows that anything you consistently do daily for twenty one to thirty days becomes a habit. Once it is your habit, it can become your character. Once it is in your character, it can affect your destiny.

I challenge you today to begin to do what you hear, learn and read. Begin to be consistent. Handle one issue at a time and you will certainly succeed. God bless you abundantly. Amen!

THINK THROUGH

People sit in a church and neither can perceive nor feel anything because their information pathway is blocked. Whenever there is information without action there must be stagnation.

Anything you consistently do for twenty ne to thirty days becomes a habit. Once it is your habit, it can become your character. Once it is your character, it can become your destiny.

VERY VERY IMPORTANT

Beloved, before you drop this book, I intend to address the most important issue both in time and eternity. It is the matter of the soul. It is the matter of life. It is the matter of life after death.

Please note the following:

A: LIFE IS TERMINAL.

And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment: – Hebrews 9:27

Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it. Ecclesiastes 12:7

B: DEATH IS NOT THE END OF LIFE.

Beyond death, life continues either in heaven with God or in hell with satan.

And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt. Daniel 12:2

The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God. Psalm 9:17

And there shall in no wise enter into it anything that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, nor maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life. Revelation 21:27

C: HOW YOU LIVE ON EARTH DETERMINES WHERE YOU WILL END IN ETERNITY.

Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter:

Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil. Ecclesiastes 12:13-14

So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God. Romans 14:12

D: WHO YOU LIVE FOR DETERMINES WHO YOU LIVE WITH IN ETERNITY.

Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved. – Acts 4:12

Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me. – John 14:6

Beloved, in order not to end in a regrettable eternity in everlasting flames and torment, you must answer the following questions with all sincerity and accuracy:

1. Who are you living for? Who controls your life? Who directs your actions and lifestyle? Is it self, the world or Christ?

For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. – Philippians 1:21

1. What are the controlling desires of your life? What do you desire above every other thing in life? What drives you? Is it God, worldly pleasure or self?

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. – Psalm 27:4

1. What is your public testimony? Do you represent Christ to your world? Are you living an exemplary Christian life to the world around you? Who do they think you are?

And when he had found him, he brought him unto Antioch. And it came to pass, that a whole year they assembled themselves with the church, and taught much people. And the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch. – Acts 11:26

… be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity. – 1 Timothy 4:12

1. Does God know you as His Own? Is He proud of you as His child? Can you say that He is pleased with the way you are living your life?

Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, Let everyone that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity. – 2 Timothy 2:19

And the Lord said unto Satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil? – Job 1:8

1. What are you looking forward to in eternity? Are you sure that a pleasant welcome awaits you? If you had died before this time, where do you think you deserve to be, considering your action, lifestyle and life's priorities?

For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing. – 2Timothy 4:6-8

Beloved, are your answers in the affirmative to all of the above questions? If not, it means you either need to surrender your life to the Lordship of Jesus Christ by accepting His sacrificial death on Calvary for you or you need to re-dedicate your life to Jesus Christ.

IF SO, PRAY THIS PRAYER WITH ME:

Lord Jesus, I come before You today to surrender my life completely to You. I have lived a self-centered life that is far separated from God. I have had priorities that are not eternity-centred. I have always lived in rebellion, disobedience and sin up till now.

Lord, I am sorry for the way that I have lived and I ask for Your forgiveness and mercy. Lord, please cleanse my sins by Your Blood and take Your place of leadership and rulership in my life. Fill my heart Lord with the right desires and priorities. Deliver me from the vanity and fantasies of this world. Give me the grace to say no to sin and compromise. Give me the grace to live in righteousness and represent You well to my world.

Help me escape the tragedy of eternity in hell. Help me Lord to make Heaven at the end of my journey on earth. Help me Lord to live both in the consciousness of Your Presence and of eternity. Continuously reveal to me everything that would make me unworthy of Heaven.

Thank You Lord for hearing and answering me in Jesus' Name, I pray. Amen.

If you prayed this prayer, please do the following:

1. Send to us, your name, phone number and contact address by email: info@dunamisgospel.org or by phone: +234 803 3200 320.

2. Become serious with God by identifying with a righteousness and eternity-conscious church.

3. Study your Bible daily to receive the Word from God.

4. Speak to God daily in prayer and let Him know your feelings and challenges.

5. Disconnect from every wrong association. Don't follow them to hell if they won't follow you to Heaven.

6. Speak to others about God. Share your testimony of transformed life. Be instrumental in assisting someone to escape hell.

7. Repent promptly. Do not sleep over unconfessed sins. Apply the Blood over your soul for cleansing continuously. Live eternity-ready.

The Lord bless you.

THE END

IF YOU HAVE BEEN INSPIRED AND BLESSED BY THIS BOOK WE WILL LIKE TO HEAR FROM YOU.

Connect with Dr. Paul and his ministry via:

Website: http://www.Dunamisgospel.org

Facebook: http://www.facebook.com/DrPastorPaulEnenche

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YouTube: http://www.youtube.com/DrPastorPaulEnenche

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Dr Pastor Paul Enenche is a trained Medical Doctor, called of God into full time ministry, with a heavy Apostolic and Prophetic mantle for the restoration of human lives and dignities. His ministrations are characterized by deep undiluted insights from the Word of God, accurate Word of Knowledge and the demonstration of the power of God in Supernatural healings, miracles, signs and wonders. His ministry is geared towards causing our generation to:

1. Experience God's Person and Presence in our lives,
2. Realize our true purpose for existence,
3. Comprehend our full potential in life,
4. Discover God's life-changing and life-lifting principles,
5. Connect with God's power to overcome the negative forces of life and above all, to
6. End our journey with God in eternity in Heaven and to escape the torments of hell.

He is the Senior Pastor of Dunamis International Gospel Centre, with the headquarters situated beside the Old Federal Secretariat, Area 1, Abuja— the Federal Capital Territory of Nigeria. They currently run five services every Sunday and two over-flooded services every Wednesday evening, among other

services. His passion is to see that the earth be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord as the waters cover the sea. As a result, his ministry is involved in aggressive spread of the Gospel via every possible media— the Commission's Television Station— Dunamis TV, their 24/7 Web-TV and Web-Radio broadcast as well as campus revival meetings, crusades and aggressive church plantings.

He is married to Dr Becky, a beautiful, intelligent, submissive, supportive and hardworking Medical Doctor, also called of God into full time ministry. And together, they have four blessed children.

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