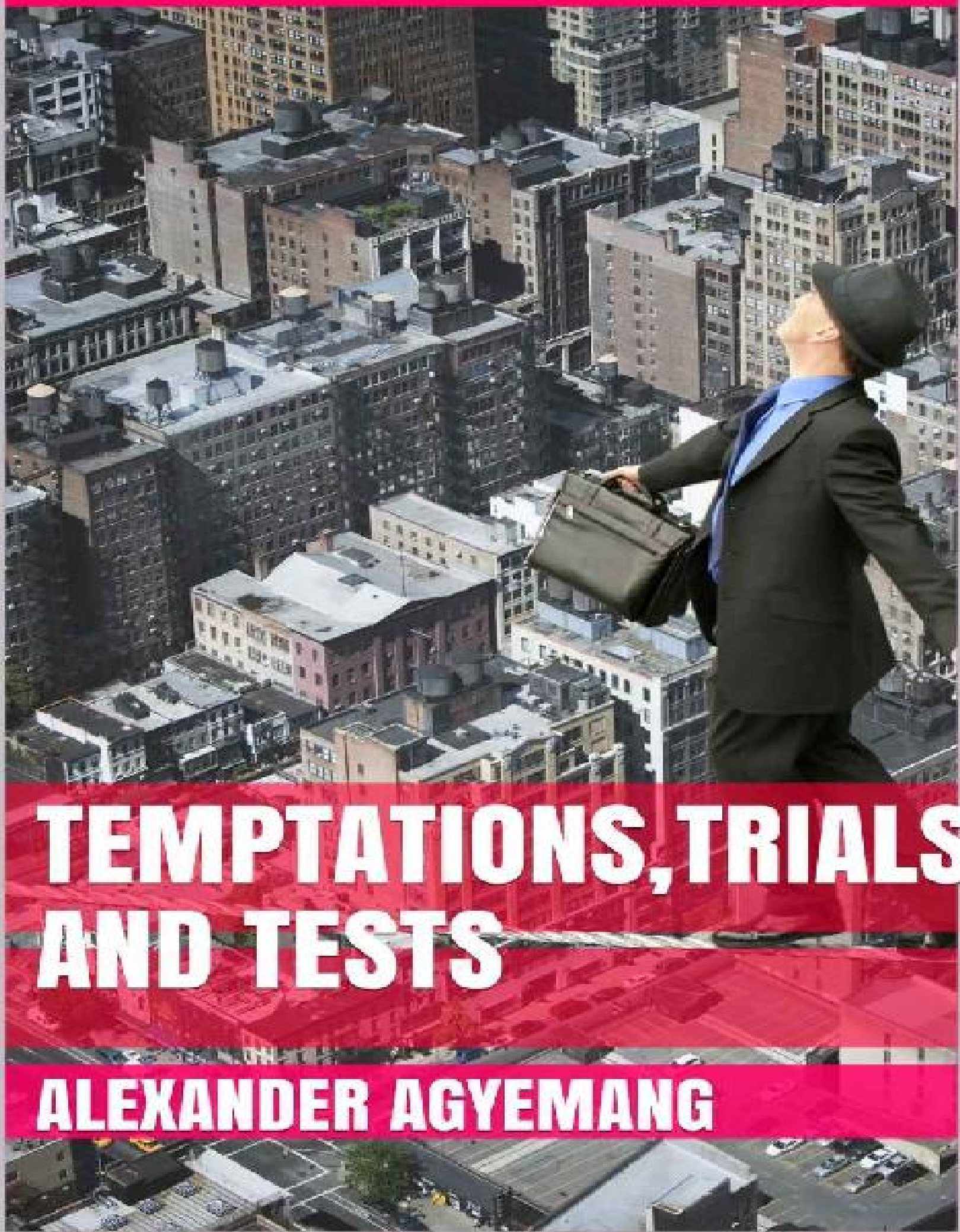
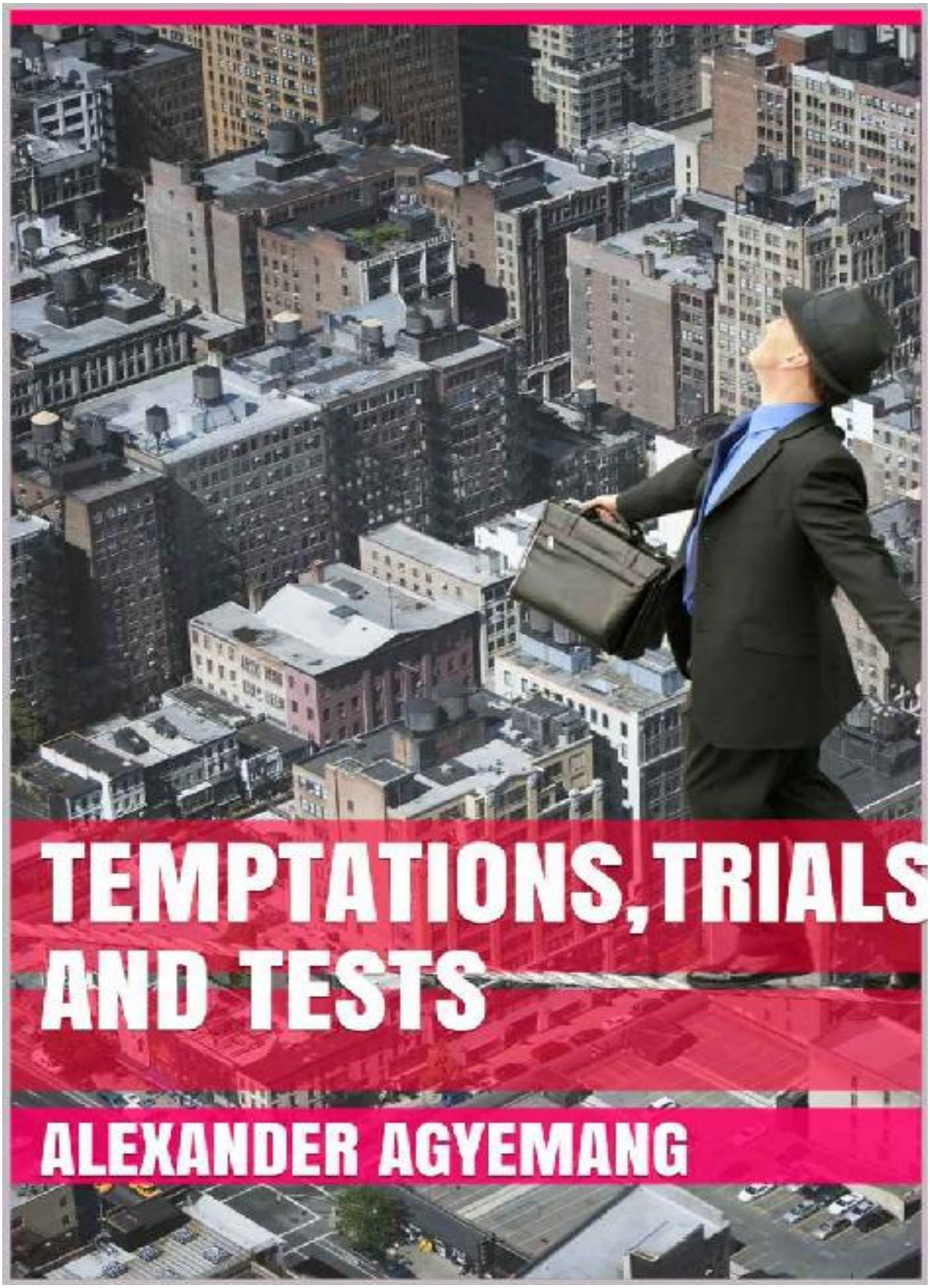


TEMPTATIONS, TRIALS AND TESTS

ALEXANDER AGYEMANG


TEMPTATIONS, TRIALS
AND TESTS
ALEXANDER AGYEMANG

TEMPTATIONS TRIALS AND TESTS

By

ALEXANDER AGYEMANG

Discipleship Series

DEDICATION

I dedicate this Holy Spirit Inspired Book to my mother Ms Constance Adjwoa Agyeiwaah Aboagye I do not know anybody who has gone through the trials, troubles and crisis you have endured but still maintains your faith in the Lord. God bless you for your faithfulness.

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FOREWORD

Temptations, tests and trials are situations Christians battle with whether as matured or new converts. Jesus, the author of our faith was tempted. It

therefore means that temptations will be an ongoing problem for believers until Jesus returns and completes his victory over sin.

The first thing to note is that temptation is not sin nor is temptation a sign of weakness. Temptation becomes sin, however, if we do not deal with it properly. It is how we deal with temptation that will determine whether we fall into sin or not. So until He returns, we will be struggling with these situations.

One of the strategy we can use in dealing with these three 'Ts' is to read about it. The Bible says 'for lack of knowledge my people perish'. King Solomon admonished us to seek knowledge and understanding. It is in this regard that this book comes in handy to help us know how they occur and to dispel the notion that only immature Christians are tested or tempted. The Christian life is one of ongoing transformation as God shapes and moulds us to become more like Jesus. Through these trials, tests and temptations God refines us so that we will be honourable vessels He can use. The book highlights how our resistance varies depending on the temptation, trail or test we face and if our attitude is that of pride how our fall will be quick.

The author, Alexander Gyimah Agyemang as a disciple of Christ and a mature one who has gone through some trails, test and temptations himself and is still going through trials or tests, is well able to relate to the subject. His choice of words and vivid description of the subject makes it a must read. You will find comfort in reading the book. He has carefully gathered such knowledge to make you understand that everyone can be tempted, tested and tried.

As we learn from this book we will be better equipped and prepared to face the temptations that will be staring down at us in the moments, days, weeks, months, and years to come. We will then understand what it's all about and how to properly deal with it when we find ourselves in such situations. So instead of trying to pretend that temptations don't faze us, let's prepare for them. This will help us to walk in the power of the Spirit.

As rightly put by the author this book is simple enough for the new convert and in-depth enough for the matured Christian.

I strongly recommend ‘Temptations, Trails and Tests’ by Alexander Gyimah Agyemang to all and sundry as a beautifully written book which will broaden your mind, help you stand in such situations and also glean some useful information to enable us correct some of the wrong notions held by Christians on temptations trials and tests.Welcome dear reader! Enjoy this elegantly crafted picturesque book!

Dr. Mrs. Gladys Quartey

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INTRODUCTION

This book has been written to demystify the occurrence of temptations trials and tests in a Christian’s life. It is to dispel the notion that only the immature are tested or tempted. As one man of God once said: every level and its devil. Every level and the sophistication of the traps, schemes and weapons the devil employs to get as to be less effective Christians or backslidden ones. This book is therefore simple enough for the new convert and in-depth enough for the matured Christian who has also discipled others to be good Christians.

Trials and tests though worrying or distressing are often used of the Lord to prepare us for a higher calling or ministry. God is a king and so needs to be sure his servants are top quality hence the many trials and tests that come our way. Only vessels which are made unto honour are thoroughly tested because they are required to stand the test of time.

This book will teach you to understand that there is nothing like an easy test, trial or temptation. However, each one is not more than your strength can bear but if not careful can lead you to sin. This book will teach you that all aspects of our being are tempted, tested and tried in our walk with the lord. You will also learn that each person’s resistance varies depending on what temptation, trial or test he or she is going through. Therefore any

temptation or test is standard to your maturity and can therefore floor you easily if approached with pride.

As you move up in maturity your temptation become more mental, then when you move even higher your they become more of things of the heart. Your tests or trials become more relationship or ego based as you mature. Many things will happened to test loyalty, humility and integrity. But many fall at these heart or mental based temptations or tests as founding bishops, associate pastors, and spouses or as workers because we think temptations should necessarily be about the works of the flesh.

This book will also talk about the consequences of failing to stand during temptations, trials or tests. As we fail a temptations more temptations will be introduced till we fall so low that we do things which will even shock us upon sober reflections. Because as you fail temptations of the heart, you are then tempted on the mind and when you fail that you are then tempted on the flesh. All these can happen in an hour. When you face a trial or test it is often repeated till you pass it. Hence people having the same troubles over and over again in many forms. No human being can escape temptation, trial or test because our body is not saved and our soul is only regenerated (i.e. it has been given the opportunity to be good) only the spirit is born again in every Christian. Most victories against the sinful nature are won in the mind and in prayer. The Christian therefore needs to work on his or mind with prayer, the word and fasting to be steadfast in all things.

Again this book will teach you the benefits of enduring temptations, trials and tests. And show you dear reader, that without contradiction, only those who stand to the end will be saved.

The Author

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CHAPTER 1

TEMPTATIONS, TRIALS AND TESTS

Introduction

For many Christians in our day trials and tests' are things to be avoided. But without tests there can never be a testimony. Without trials how can you come out refined as gold: without the fires of the furnace how can you be refined by the divine blacksmith. The knocks of the hammer of God are the mechanism He uses to shape us into what he made us to be.

I am sure if the metal being shaped could talk it will complain about how hot the furnace is and the occasional strikes of the hammer when it seems it is cooling off from the fires of the furnace.

Isaiah 64:8

8 But now, O Lord, thou art our father; we are the clay, and thou our potter; and we all are the work of thy hand.

God is a potter we are the clay, to get to the desired shape he has planned for our life he will spin us a lot till we are dizzy, squeeze us to mould us and pour water on us to soften us when we are becoming too hard to be moulded.

The more we lend ourselves to his skills as a divine potter the smoother the process will become or we will increase the length of time needed for our maturity before we can move on to greater works. We are the clay so can be moulded into any vessel by the potter who is God as the scripture above is teaching. If we will be used as vessels of honour then we should by experience prove that we are the most suitable for that job.

Vessels of Honour

2 Timothy 2:20 King James Version (KJV)

20 But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth; and some to honour, and some to dishonour.

In God's house are many vessels He puts to various uses at various times and seasons. The use to which a vessel is put depends on the material it is made up of: there are vessels of gold, silver, wood and of earth. The material the vessel is made up of is the talents, skills and gifts the person has. The more talented, skilful or gifted the greater the role they play. The wooden vessels can never serve the same purpose as the golden or silver vessels.

Amongst vessels of similar materials are those which are used for more honourable purposes. It takes a lot of heating and beating to get a well-designed vessel of gold or silver. And even a lot more heat before the raw gold is processed into refined gold. Gold, though mined for hundreds of years is still rare because it is useful for most purposes: it can even be eaten. Its ability to allow itself to be moulded by the craft's man into any shape has made it a material for vessels of the highest honour. The ark of covenant and most of the vessels in the Holy of Holies were made of pure gold vessels. Because gold is extremely rare, does not rust and is useful for all kinds of designs. It is usually used for vessels of the highest of honour. Again gold as a materials retains its value from one generation to the next.

Disposable Pottery Cups

There are pottery cups made in Calcutta, India which are used by the poor in society for chai tea. These cups are made from clay which is very abundant in the Hooghly River of India. These cups are made with incredible speed though by hands and are hurriedly dried for use. These cups are fired up in an improvised kiln of a mound of mud constructed over a pit of burning wood and hay. A cup is often ready in less than 24hours costing some few dollar cents. It is so affordable that even the poor after use just break it because they can afford to buy one each morning. The potters make hundreds of these cups daily but live in poverty because they are not

valuable to customers. This is how a less valuable pottery by a hardworking potter makes no meaningful impact on his life.

Chinese ceramic or porcelain

Chinese ceramics are also made by skilled potters. Making one takes a considerable period of time, especially the ones with intricate designs. Imagine a scenario where the ceramic cup is complaining because several tens of disposable cups have been made and it was still not finished. It takes relatively longer compared to making disposable pottery cup to one ceramic or porcelain cup because of the purpose it is going to serve.

Some ceramic pottery where found to be so precious that they were kept as a works of art worth thousands of US dollars. Ceramic porcelain was so favoured that it became a favoured collectible item by the nobility of Europe in the 18th and 19th century. There are porcelain or Chinese pottery which has lasted for over a century because of the value owners attached to it. Clearly Chinese pottery which takes a long period to make is considered far more valuable than the hurriedly made Indian disposal one. The porcelain which has withstood extreme heat, been treated with various things and finally decorated before use is several times more valuable because of the processes it has endured.

Porcelain produced in temperatures of about 1400 degrees Celsius are used to produce decorative china, chemical ware, dental crown, and electrical insulators. The high temperatures gives it a vitreous or glassy quality. No wonder the Bible says our works shall be passed through fire to assess its worth.

Heaven is too great a place for anyone to inherit without his or her loyalty being tested. If God had to give up his only begotten son for it to become possible then nothing is too pricy for him take us through, so He can give it to us. The price paid by God to redeem us was the most costly to Him, His only son: He will not send us there unproven. It will never happen. The devil who lost his place in heaven will ensure we do not go

there unless we are better than him by tempting us with everything that our flesh desires or is used to. The trials in our lives are to shape us into the people that God made us to be so we can fulfil His purpose for our lives.

Understand Trials and Temptations

Without understanding the role trials, tests and temptations play in our lives we will go through life facing a lot of challenges but still end up like the tea cups of Culcutta, India. Going through a lot of hardships but never unique or valuable enough for our impact in this world to be long lasting. Most people yield to temptations because it usually promises relieve or enjoyment without considerations of future or even eternal consequences.

If only we will learn to suffer for a while and endure all things for the sake of Christ we will become a shiny porcelain worth thousands of dollars and cherish enough to be kept for years because of our beauty and uniqueness**.** Every trial or temptation is a test: one is demand by our flesh or the devil and the other by the Spirit of God. Each requires strong self-denial to pass. But once the believer stands his ground and contends for the faith his standing before the lord increases and he becomes more strengthened to deal with future temptations or tests. Let us march on Christian soldiers! As to war with the cross of Jesus going on before. Amen

PRAYER NUGGETS

Trial Temptation and Test

1) Vessel undergo many tests and trials to become valuable in the house of God.
2) Vessels which fail trials and temptations are often less valuable in the house of God.
3) Vessels which endure fiery trials become more mature and even more valuable.
4) Trials and tests are meant for our promotion and not our failure.

CHAPTER 2

WHEN ARE YOU IN A TRIAL?

Job 9:23 King James Version (KJV)

23 If the scourge slay suddenly, he will laugh at the trial of the innocent.

The word trial in Hebrew is *massậh* and it means proving something. A court is a place where innocence or guilt is proven. With the help of lawyers, jury and judges. A trial is a long drawn out test or difficulty instituted to prove your love for God. Every trial involves others so your difficulty or loss become evident to all, no legitimate trial is ever held in secret.

Typically a trial is God's way of proving that you are a better servant than a Pharisee or the other believers who failed to serve Him to the end. A trial usually involves the advocate of the Christian, the Holy Spirit and the Devil who accuses us relentlessly that we deserve condemnation and not mercy. A Classic example of a trial is what happened to Job a righteous man in the east. What happened to Job? Did he seek occultic powers? No. Did he forget to perform a sacrifice to the Lord? No. Was Job a hypocrite? No.

Job 2:1-6 King James Version (KJV)

2 Again there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan came also among them to present himself before the Lord.2 And the Lord said unto Satan, From whence comest thou? And Satan answered the Lord, and said, From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it.3 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? and still he holdeth fast his integrity, although thou movedst me against him, to destroy him without cause.4 And Satan

answered the Lord, and said, Skin for skin, yea, all that a man hath will he give for his life. 5 But put forth thine hand, and touch his bone and his flesh, and he will curse thee to thy face. 6 And the Lord said unto Satan, Behold, he is in thine hand; but save his life.

We read in chapter 2 versus 4 of the book of Job, God testifying of Job's uprightness. The devil in attempt to prove the he was not faithful touched his children, all his businesses, marriage and even his health. All the things which Job held dear in his life were destroyed in chapter1 and his health and marriage destroyed in chapter 2 all without him committing a single sin.

Typically, Job's friend accused him of having secret sins and not being as righteous as he claims because such catastrophe happen only to hypocrites and sinners. I am sure his friends were not aware of the scripture which says' many are the afflictions of the righteous but the Lord delivers them from it all'. Many people have been accused of many sins because of the trial of childlessness or loss of income. I am sure you have heard of a childless young woman who married as a virgin being accused of prostitution and abortions in the course of her life as being the cause.

The preachers of the prosperity Gospel did not start in our days but were present at the time of Job. Such people insist that the nature of God is such that He will not allow his righteous servants to suffer for long. What they fail to realise is that to Him we are made for a purpose and must be tried to ensure that we are genuinely committed to that purpose. Imagine your car tyre refusing to move your car because of the heat on the road.

You will not receive such a complaint from your tyre if it could talk with compassion but rage because that is what it was made to do. You will not hesitate to put such a tyre in the incinerator to burn.

1 Peter 4:12 King James Version (KJV)

12 Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you:

Indeed apostle Peter was surprised that a Christian could think there is such a thing as Christianity without painful and fiery trials. The word trial in the scripture above is *purōsis* in Greek which means a burning or a burning by which metals are roasted and reduced. This is the kind of heat or 'suffering' a metal goes through in the hands of a blacksmith before it is mouldered to the beautiful metal artefacts and tools we see displayed in shops and museums.

This kind of trials moulds a babe Christian into a matured one: teaching him or her to suffer for the sake of Christ. And to forsake personal pleasure for the surpassing glory of making it to heaven.

Understanding Trials: A Case Study of Job

There are eight types of Trials that befell Job in chapters 1&2 of the book of Job:

1) Trials manifested in the form of attack on workers.
2) Trials in property being robbed.
3) Trials in the form of businesses going under or losing your job.
4) Trial in becoming childless.
5) Trials manifested in natural disasters destroying property
6) Trial manifested in the form of marital disturbance.
7) Trial manifested in the form of sickness in the body.
8) Trial manifested in the form of financial lack.

Job's trials typifies the kinds of trials every Christian will face one time or the other in his or her Christian walk. These trials though painful and exacting prove our loyalty to our God and our knowledge of the scriptures.

When are Trials Used in a Believer's Life?

1 When ability is being tested

When ability is being tested then a trial is required. For memory and intelligence to be tested in school a series of tests are done over the years

the schooling will take. Only after the required number of courses have been passed can the student prove his ability to understand the courses enough for an award of a certificates. For athletes and sports men trials are organised to select those topping the group consistently or on the average doing better than the rest to be selected to go further. If the spirit of God needs to assess whether you have learnt an important lesson in your Christian life you will be put on trial to test that understanding you have received.

2 When loyalty needs to be assessed

Every leaders seeks to have loyal followers or disciples. Indeed the scriptures say that it is required of a steward to be faithful to his master who has entrusted his properties to his care. The Lord after all the investments he has made to redeem us naturally expects as to be loyal to him. This loyalty is more desired in circumstances where you have moved from the enemy's camp to the present camp: to prove you are not still loyal to your former boss.

The Bible says we were once sinners moved about by every worldly desire and in our minds enemies of God. Our loyalties will therefore be tried till we prove it beyond doubt. Job's trials were mainly to test his loyalty.

3 When you are compared against a standard

We have been called to a higher calling and have been made ambassadors of heaven. We are called to conform to a standard who is Jesus Christ. The first born of the resurrection and the only man who overcame sin throughout his life. There is therefore a foundation already laid that we are to build on and we cannot build on with a material other than has been used for the foundation which is Christ. We will therefore be put on trial throughout our Christian life to ensure we are living up to the standard set. Every Christian will therefore go through the difficulties that Christ went through because he is the standard of all Christians.

4 When your work needs to be assessed

Bible says our work in the lord will be tried with fire to ensure that they are made of the right materials. The judgement to go to heaven and earth is determined by each soul before he or she dies: the lord will not waste time on it because it has already being determined. The sheep will be separated from the goats based on the work each Christian did and not whether they qualify for heaven or not.

The white throne judgement will mainly be on what reward to give for the work done in the name of Jesus. My dear reader, are you labouring for the Lord? Have you done any meaningful work that is yielding more souls or Disciples of Christ? Please watch how you work because it will be judged.

5 When motives are being assessed

When the spirit of God wants to test your motives for the things you do then, you will experience trials. Job went through all the trials he endured because the devil accused him of wrong motives in his service of God. The devil said: does Job serve you for nothing? If the devil were to ask God that question concerning us will He be able to say yes their primary reason for labouring in the church is because of what Christ did to save them? Or it will be because we want to get a good wife or husband, or to get blessed with material blessings or to build a great reputation in our community. Will our motives be solely because we love God because he first loved us?

6 When there is the need for promotion

Mark it the anywhere: no promotion comes without a trial or tests. Any promotion that comes without a trial or test has been stolen. A test will be required of you with four fold interest very soon to prove you deserve it. The only promotion which stands is the one won through a test or trial. Throughout my working life no promotion has been handed to me. I have had to attend interviews and be grilled on various subjects and questioned on some decisions taken before I was eventually passed and was promoted from one rank to the next. Check any poor country and you will notice that most of the key positions are gotten by patronage and relationships, with promotions secured mostly because of favour instead of tests and trials.

Such countries are ineffective at solving problems because they do not have competent technocrats but only grateful ones. Countries which do not believe in meritocracy better have lots of oil or they will keep growing the gap between the few rich and the many poor who have no one to pull them up.

PRAYER NUGGETS

When are you in a trial?

1) A trial is a process of proving a Christian.
2) There are six situations where God brings trials in a believer's life.
3) There are seven main forms that trials take in the life of a believer.
4) Trials prove we are genuinely committed to the Lord.

CHAPTER 3

WHEN ARE YOU BEING TEMPTED?

Temptation

I am sure you have heard headlines of otherwise responsible men who were caught with their house help and their infamous explanation being that she tempted them. What a weak defence! Because you are only tempted by something you naturally like or by something you need but have been denied for a considerable period of time. Simply put you cannot be tempted by something you dislike, like left over food in a restaurant but if you are starving for days and there is no alternative you might be tempted to eat it.

James explains it better in the book of James chapter 1 verse 12 to 17

12 Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him.13 Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man:14 But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed.15 Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.16 Do not err, my beloved brethren.17 Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.

In the verse 12 the Greek word ***peirasmos*** is used for the kind of temptation that is meant to prove whether you are sincere howbeit with an evil intention. It is like someone reporting you to the police that you have committed a crime. That person is not doing so out of love but is putting you on the spot so you might get into trouble if you are not able to endure or handle yourself well. But in verses 13 and 14 the Greek word ***peirazō*** for tempt is to solicit to sin. James made it clear that God can be tested but not tempted because he has no lustful desires which can tempt him for there is no variableness in Him at all. Whereas ***peirasmos*** temptation can lead to a Christian proving his or her faithfulness after enduring till the end. ***Peirazaō***

temptation is driven by the sinful nature and its sole purpose is to satisfy the flesh. Amazingly everyone is tempted by something or someone. There are men who will never cheat on their wives whilst they are well but will if they travel for a long period or if their wives are too sick to perform their marital duties.

In the same way there are women who will never cheat on their husbands if they are gainfully employed but will if their husbands are unemployed for more than a year. The best way to deal with temptation is to know your weakness and avoid it or work on your flesh to strengthen it against the temptation, if it cannot be avoided. No Christian ever out grows temptation till he or she is called to glory.

Types of temptations

1 John 2:16 King James Version (KJV)

16 For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.

According to the above scripture all temptations come through three channels:

1) The lust of the flesh.
2) The lust of the eyes.
3) The pride of life.

Breaking these channels of temptations further we get these main types of temptations of life

The lust of the flesh

- Uncontrolled sexual desire.
- Desire to have sex outside of marriage.
- Desire for pleasure or entertainment without restrain.
- Desire to engage in behaviours which make you feel morally unclean.

- Desire to take substances which alter the minds ability to reason.
- Desire to steal, destroy someone or something to gain unfair advantage in life.

The lust of the eyes

- Desire to engage in wasteful expenditure.
- Desire to harbour impure motives.
- Desire to control people's life's using demonic spirits.
- Desire to speak to demonic spirits or the spirit of the dead.

The pride of life

- Desire to act on your anger.
- Desire to cause divisions in a group.
- Desire to engage in the preaching and teaching of false doctrines.
- Desire to turn people against each other in a group, ministry or family.
- Desire to have what others have without the willingness to carry the cross they carry.
- Intense desire to hurt someone because of unresolved misunderstanding between you and the person.
- Desire to defend anything which is contrary to the word of God.

There are nine (8) things which make temptation inescapable to all mankind

1) Natural desires

There are natural desires of men: the feelings of adventure in wooing a woman and the desires to have sex with a beautiful woman. These desires will not disappear no matter the amount of prayers offered. I heard of a couple who went to pray on the park concerning their upcoming marriage and ended up having sex right at the park after the prayer. Did I hear you say what! Yes it happened, because they both were in the mood for sex. But typical naïve Christians they thought praying was enough to cool them down but it did not. Because prayer in not enough to neutralise a natural desire which has saturated the mind. Caution should be exercised when it comes to temptations.

Women need to be touched, felt and praised because that is mostly their love language. Then at certain times of the month their desires to be with a man also goes up. Incidentally it is this time also that the hormones secreted in their bodies makes them look even more appealing. No matter how spiritual you are as a woman these needs will still be there: because they are not caused by demons but by hormones in the body.

2) Delayed gratification

Have you wondered how even the least desirable food smells and looks good when you are in a fast? That is why there are many sexual scandals amongst celibate catholic priest because the church insist that young energetic youth should not engage in any form of sex for as long as they live as priest or nuns. The eunuchs of old had to be castrated to prevent the production of hormones which subsequently decreased sexual desire. Desire for natural things like food, water, companionship and sex are so strong that once denied for too long people will do anything to have it assuaged.

3) Encouragement of the devil or his agents

There are many people who were not thinking of yielding to a particular temptation till they were encouraged by demon possessed people or agents of darkness in the form of a relative, friend or work colleague to yield to that temptation. It is very difficult to continually refuse the encouragements of especially a spouse to yield to a temptation. Beware of people who tell you to do things because everyone is doing them. If you are underestimating the power of close associates or relatives to lead you to

yield to temptation then consider this story of King Solomon in his old age. After years of resisting temptation, King Solomon yielded to idol worship because of his wives. Without doubt evil communication or association corrupt good morals.

1 Kings 11:4 King James Version (KJV)

4 For it came to pass, when Solomon was old, that his wives turned away his heart after other gods: and his heart was not perfect with the Lord his God, as was the heart of David his father.

4) Lust

Lust is not a natural desire unless you are a sinner. Because lust is a craving, longing or desire for what is forbidden. Lust is when over time you have cultivated the habit of satisfying yourself with particular people or things. Lust is a product of a bad habit and not necessarily a result of hormones or denial of a legitimate need. Lust can also be caused by addictions of the person: causing him to crave for that activity once the conditions are right. The ultimate aim of an uncontrolled lust is sin and death: it is therefore a backslidden Christian or a babe in Christ who may still have lust reigning in his or her body.

The Beer Advert

I was watching TV with an elder of a Pentecostal church one day and a beer advert came to the screen. He stopped the conversation and asked why they allow such enticing advert showing a beer bottled chilled with a big cup draped in bubbles to be shown on air. He asked me in all seriousness: do they know how difficult it is to ignore such enticement? Because I have never drank alcohol in my life I failed to see what the fuss was all about. I saw this advert the same way I will a football advert.

Nothing moved me about the advert my concern however, as with other Christians who had watched the same advert with me was why young people were being portrayed as drunkards in adverts like that. I later got to know that this elder could connect to the advert that way because he was struggling with alcoholism: he was so enticed by this advert and relished

the site of a beer with bubbles because of his lust for strong drinks. Judas was angry with the woman who poured the alabaster box and washed Jesus's feet because of his lust to steal the money for the ministry: he was angry not because it was a waste but because he wanted a cash donation so he could steal it.

5) Need

There are many people who would not have yielded to temptation but for a pressing need for themselves or for loved ones. People have had to yield to sexual temptations because of hospital bills and school fees. For woman of disadvantaged backgrounds this is often their lot. The Psalmist knowing the danger of extreme poverty made the following appeal to God.

Proverbs 30:9 King James Version (KJV)

9 Lest I be full, and deny thee, and say, Who is the Lord? ***or lest I be poor, and steal, and take the name of my God in vain.***

Poverty or a beggarly status where basic needs are unavailable has never made anyone more righteous but rather more susceptible to temptation which often promises immediate relief.

The Man with the Head of his Nephew

Someone took his favourite nephew and handed him over to people to decapitate him for money that was not even equivalent to one hundred and fifty US dollars at the time. A whole human being's life cut short because of an amount that small! One hundred and fifty dollars twenty years ago was still too small for the life of an eleven year old nephew. That is what extreme need can do to a desperate man. He was not a natural killer so when he went to sell it and he was told soldier was coming to meet him he panicked and took to his heel for dear life.

He was obviously fearful of what he was doing but the desire to end his desperation for money was stronger. Many people have joined the occult for money rituals because of the same need to cater for their families.

6) Laws or covenants

You might be surprised to hear that laws or covenants could instigate temptation. But this is a profound truth worthy of acceptance by all. In the time of the prohibition of alcohol in the US in the 1930s the trade and distribution of alcohol became a matter undertaken by organised crime groups. Alcohol, something people use to see all around but had no compulsion to smuggle or horde suddenly increased in value exponentially giving the incentives for otherwise law abiding citizens to join the criminal groups in smuggling it.

Have you not wondered why it is so sexually attractive to sleep in the same room with your fiancé but you can now sleep on the same bed with her as a married couple for days without the desire for sex. Restrictions due to laws or covenants create this need for things which otherwise would have been ignored by most people.

This is why only unspiritual or manipulative women deny their men sex to make them desperate and ready to fall for any wish of theirs whether sinful or not. People who have entered into covenants whether in a cult or other institutions like marriage suddenly see the restrictions it brings imposing temptations they would otherwise not have if they were free. Paul agrees with this view and testifies of this when he says that the coming of the law of Moses with it many ‘thou shall not ‘triggered the desire to do those very things they were not supposed to do. He concluded by saying that this is the reason no one will be justified by following the law because the law itself triggers the desire to sin.

Romans 7:7 King James Version (KJV)

7 What shall we say then? Is the law sin? God forbid. Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet.

7) Status Upgrade

How the mighty have fallen! I know of brethren who were God fearing as hungry students on Secondary and University campuses but yielded to all

kinds of temptations when they were blessed with great jobs and were exposed to fantastic opportunities. Your station or privileges in life is itself a reason for temptation. I know of Christians who loved the Lord so much when they had little but when their businesses were blessed and they became worthy they suddenly realised their wives were not good enough for them so they fell for the charms of other women. There are wives who were faithful to their husbands till their petty business or singing ministry became big and their status in life changed.

Many people become prone to temptation once their status changes and they begin to deal with the high and mighty in society. As our status in society raises the temptation to look down on those we leave behind increases. With each rise brings the temptation to demand respect and appreciation with each promotion or growth.

The status of being a law enforcement officer or being a military officer can bring up so many tendencies to sin through the abuse of the power given to you by the state. There are people who would never have collected a bribe till they were threatened by their bosses because their position in the regulatory authority is such that their signatures are needed before a big deal can be completed.

The temptation to not go against your unbelieving or backslidden Christian bosses have also forced many to give in to temptation. Then we have temptations to do whatever it takes to maintain a newly acquired status. Thus being ready to do anything to avert returning to oblivion or the readiness to do anything to stay up there at the new status lead to temptation. This is where the ones victorious Christians tends to compromise to keep his status or to please the new crowd who are mostly not Christians.

8) Persecution

2 Corinthians 8:2 King James Version (KJV)

2 How that in a great trial of affliction the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality.

Persecution is a mainly violent trial of Christians. Persecution is the devil's attempt at frustrating the average Christian to give up his or her faith. The devil uses people under his control to afflict Christians with a lot of pain with the aim of pushing them back into the world.

The people of Corinth were suffering a great affliction of persecution because of their faith yet they were joyful and even found time to donate to others in need. A trial instigated by the devil is intended to lead to sin or compromise of a Christian's believes. All kinds of wicked things have been done to Christians for about two millennia by people who opposed our beliefs.

Hebrews 11:36 King James Version (KJV)

36 And others had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment: 7 They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented;

Persecution persist amongst Christians up to this day mainly because we are admonished to not retaliate when offended. Adherents of other religions quickly mobilise and fight back when attacked but Christ taught us differently. The Bible teaches that strive breeds more strive and violence even more violence. Hence the need to turn the other cheek.

PRAYER NUGGETS

When are you being tempted?

1) Temptations are sometime used of the Devil to prove to God that he has been right all along about your hypocrisy.

2) A temptation is the devil's scheme to lure a Christian into sin.

3) Temptations are most effective when it concerns someone or something we are already desiring strongly.

4) There are eight reasons why no Christians can escape temptations in this life.

5) There are three main types of temptations which tempt our heart, body and mind.

CHAPTER 4

WHEN ARE YOU BEINGTESTED?

A Biblical Test

You are being tested when an event occurs in your life to assess your loyalty to the lord. You also get tested on your loyalty to the truth of the word of God at all times. A test is not meant to lead a believer into sin but to proof his ministry.

2 Corinthians 8:2 King James Version (KJV)

2 How that in a great trial of affliction the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality.

A test is **Dokimȅ** in Greek and means the following: Trying a character; a means of getting a proof or a specimen of tried worth. A test provides a specimen that has proven to be worthy of whatever purpose it is serving.

Sending Back Excess Money

I was once sent to change some euros when I was in the university in Kumasi in the Ashanti Region of Ghana. This is more than fifteen years ago so the forex bureau could only be found in town. As a student in the university money was very difficult to come by so travelling all the way to Adum the central business district of Kumasi the second city of Ghana to conduct this business was a difficult task for me. I managed to make the journey all the way to town after boarding different vehicles in and out.

After I got back to the campus it occurred to me to rechecked the amount I was given. I then noticed that the attendant had used a rate which was higher than the prevailing rate: giving more money than she was supposed to. All my roommates told me that day was my lucky day but I saw it as a test that I must not fail. I therefore resolved to go back to town and give her the excess amount at my own cost. When I went there and told

her what had happened she was so shocked that she became dumfounded. So I asked the attended again when I saw she was struggling to speak: what is the rate of exchange of euros to the cedis today? After recovering from the shock, she confirmed my suspicion. After returning the difference to her she gave me transport for doing something she had never experienced before from any customer.

Types of Test

Hebrews 11:36-37 King James Version (KJV)

36 And others had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment:

From the above scripture we see that tests are things from the lord which happens to check if we are still in the faith but they do not linger for long:

- Mockings: people scoffing at you because of your faith in Christ.
- Whip: misfortune or calamity.
- Imprisonment: sudden confinement or restriction which requires a watchman.
- Bond: being restricted in an endeavour because an invisible band has bound you.

When to Expect a Test

During Examinations

In many endeavours where certificates are required examinations are inevitable. Examinations are a form of a test because they help proof a product or a student to have studied adequately. In the same way God examines us from time to time to see how well we are applying biblical principals in our lives.

During Inspections

Inspections are tests conducted practically in the field where the activity is supposed to take place. An inspector often looks at the process, management style or product in view of a known standard or agreement. Bible says we have a great cloud of witnesses who inspect our work in the lord from time to time and cheer us on when we are excelling and encourage us when we are slacking.

When promotion is in the offing

Tests always come before promotion. A promotion before a test has been stolen and it will be lost in due course. Leaders who have not been tested often falter at the least crisis. Such people have not developed shock absorbers to deal with the pains and troubles which may arise in such times of difficulty. Are you being tested in a matter then stand firm because it could lead to a promotion in your calling, gifts or level of blessings? A test is to be endured and not avoided or escaped if you want to be a blessed child of God. Remember you cannot be promoted unless you pass a test.

Before Testimonies

Testimonies are the victories we share in our Christian lives to inspire others. As a member of a group whose stock in trade is to use testimonies to reach out to unbelievers I am very conscious when people are sharing testimonies. Believers who share only old testimonies are telling people that they are no longer submitting to the tests which come to their lives and passing, that is why they have no recent testimonies to give. I always become uncomfortable when I realise I have no knew testimonies to share. We should be having testimonies every year of our lives because we overcome the devil by the blood of the lamb and the word of our testimony in every year.

PRAYER NUGGETS

When are you being tested?

1. A test is used to proof the worth of someone or something and for the same reason God also test Christians.
2. There are about four different times when tests are employed in a believer's life.
3. Tests include some misfortune, whip, mocking or bond which is are caused by us.
4. Tests confirm what someone claims to be or to have.

CHAPTER 5

TEMPTATION, TRIAL AND TEST ACCORDING TO TEMPERAMENT

Introduction

There have been a number of books on humans and their uniqueness due to their varying temperaments. There have also been books which have sought to explain the various character traits as it relates to the four main temperaments of men. The four temperaments are a broad division of human behaviour and may be recombined to produce a combination of other traits in some individuals who may not strictly fall in one broad group exclusively**.** The change in temperament can be as a result of trauma, extreme change in circumstance or the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

Becoming born again can change a person's temperament completely. I was a very choleric person before I became born again but through the work of the Holy Spirit on me I became somewhat melancholic in outlook. There are also known extroverts who have become introverts because of a trauma they witnessed or experienced. There are introverts who have become extroverts because they needed to adopt that attitude to survive due to change in financial circumstances. Extroverts are Cholerics or Sanguines whilst introverts are melancholics or phlegmatics.

Choleric

The dominant character traits of the choleric both positive and negative are listed as below.

Positives: Enthusiastic, Ambitious, Determined, Focused, Positive, Born leader, Dynamic, Practical, Justice-oriented, and Strong-willed, Independent, Confident, Motivator

Negatives: Easily Angered, Stubborn, Vain, Argumentative, Inflated Self-confidence, Judgmental, Aggressive, Over-ambitious, Lack of sympathy[1]

The ambitions of the choleric will be tested to ensure goals set are achieved with sympathy and the love of God. The spirit of God will use various situations in the life of the choleric who desire's to lead to submit to the leadings of the spirit and not move with selfish ambitions. The sanguine will be tested to ensure he or she has learnt to lead with the heart: to not set targets without considering the human cost of achieving them. He will need to reject the temptation to be a ruthless leader whose preoccupation is meeting targets and making money.

A choleric wife's test will be submitting to the leadership of a more introvert husband. A man she will often see as lacking initiative or the drive to see things through. The admonition for wives to revere their own husbands will be very difficult for her to accept. She will often be tempted to revere other people's husbands whose drives are even more than hers. She will often be caught taking decisions before informing her husband. Sanguine females often accomplish a lot at an early stage but often lack the humility to marry or stay married. A choleric husband is even worse in terms of how much he invests in his career to the detriment of others. His preoccupation if not checked will be getting to the top in whatever he is doing. He is often a dreamer who has failed the test to stop and be available to the people who love him. A choleric husband is often the founder of a ministry or business and needs to pass the test to be humble.

Sanguine

The dominant character traits of the choleric both positive and negative are listed below.

Positives: Agreeable, Energetic Carefree, Friendly, Flexible, Sociable, Optimistic, Cheerful, Communicative, Pleasant, Compassionate, Forgiving, Storyteller.

Negatives: Slothful, Lustful, Envious, Impulsive, Easily Distracted, Lacking in perseverance, Moody, Superficial, Unstable, Fickle, Vain, Self-complacent, Overly flirtatious, Gossipy[2]

Sanguines make friends easily and are therefore surrounded by lots of people wherever they are. The sanguine will be tempted many times to give up on godly things. They may be driven by lust to make impulsive decisions which could lead to marital unfaithfulness, fornication, impulse buying or may be easily distracted to abandon godly principles. Sanguines are often tempted to be envious of others and their achievements. They often need strength to resist or persevere all the way in till they achieve their set goals.

The sanguine will therefore be tempted to fall for the negatives in his or her life like the tendency to reject advice or set ambitious goals which may require many compromises of Christian principals to bring them to pass. People with this temperament often believe in the end justifying the means but as Christians the means is as important as the desirable end. A sanguine will be tested to ensure he is matured in his or her dealings with people, especially friends of the opposite sex. A typical sanguine's test will be painful experiences with friends. A sanguine's test or trial will also help mature him or her in the art of making time tested decisions. A sanguine will be tried or tested till he or she has learnt to be more calculating in decision making.

A sanguine wife will feel caged in the house and will always be seeking for an outing with an often more introverted husband who will tend to stay at home. She is the wife who will invites guess before telling the husband and complain the husband is anti-social if he protests. A sanguine spouse will start many initiatives but will not have the resolve to finish them.

The greatest of a sanguine spouse's test is a more persevering and calculating spouse: such a person will drive him or her crazy till they learn to work together. Such a team of husband and wife does great things and has been responsible for a lot of the great inventions over the years. Marrying the strength of a more calculating, deliberate, persevering, temperate spouse with that of an energetic, carefree and optimistic spouse can achieve wonders.

Melancholic

Positives: Deliberate, Prayerful, Naturally inclined to piety, Affectionate, Good counsellor, Prudent, Trustworthy, Sympathetic, Sacrificial, Analytical, Introspective, Conscientious Dreamer, Studious, Reflective

Negatives: Gluttonous, Timid Overcautious, Lacking initiative, Low self-confidence, Compliant, Moody Oversensitive, Reclusive, Pessimistic.[3]

Melancholics are tempted to be moody and even suicidal at times. Many melancholics after years of lack of initiative tend to fall behind their peers and tend to have low self-esteem. Many melancholies deal with issues of betrayal by eating: the temptation to overeat is always there for a melancholic. Melancholic have to be extra vigilant and discipline to stay thin or avoid obesity. They are also tempted with keeping faults and find it difficult to believe in the things of God. All melancholics will need to fight the tendency to be alone or overly pessimistic at their chances in life. A melancholic will be tested as he follows others to also add to their loyalty initiative. A melancholic will be used and abused many times in life so that the pain of those trying experiences will put a little fire in him or her to act.

Melancholics tend to marry Cholerics or Sanguines who are more outgoing and domineering. The test of melancholics in marriages is being heard, respected and appreciated by the more outgoing spouse. In a marriage, when the man is a melancholic he will often face a lot of pressure from the more outgoing wife if she is not a matured Christian to get out there and achieve for the family. That constant pressure if not checked could lead to him resenting his wife for her ‘nagging’

Phlegmatic

Positives: Deliberative, Persevering, Composed, Thoughtful, Practical, Calm, Witty, Practical, Mediator, Compassionate, Good listener, Dependable, Intuitive

Negatives: Slothful, Lacking ambition, Slow in accomplishing tasks, Sarcastic, Selfish, Stubborn, Irresolute, Detached.[4]

The phlegmatic is tempted to be lazy, to go through life without goals and to slack at accomplishing tasks. He goes through life thinking there is not much to lose and often needs a good dose of painful trials to jolt into action. An energised phlegmatic is inventive and very artistic. A phlegmatic will have situations in his or her life which will test his or her compassion, faithfulness and intercessory role in the life of others. These tests in a phlegmatics life will embolden his or her heart and make him or her more sociable.

A phlegmatic worker will be the proverbial worker with an 'MBA' long service credentials with little to show in terms of initiatives and productivity. He will often be by passed for the more productive worker when it comes to leadership or promotion. He will go through this trial of not been seen or heard by the powers that be until he learns to assert himself. People of this temperament are tempted to resort to diabolical means to get ahead in life because they are unwilling to do it the hard way. The phlegmatics is always thinking of what is in it for him or her: whether the step to take will not inconvenience him or her. He is the man who sees danger in every step forward but is quick to claim the 'spoils' when victory is won.

A phlegmatic wife will have to resist the temptation of becoming a jealous and controlling wife. One who analyses every move of her often more outgoing husband. Such a wife's mantra is 'I feel something is off' about so and so: her instincts will then be used to harass the husband in every relationship he strikes with a member of the opposite sex. A phlegmatic husband is often the one who never changes his mind no matter how wrong he is. His focus in life is how he and all that is his are doing: he needs to fight the tendency to be selfish all the days of his life. Phlegmatic have to avoid using their calm persona to plan and skilfully execute sin at the blind side of most people. Phlegmatic can often get away with murder because of their unassuming nature. All phlegmatic should fight the temptation to live a double faced life: one for the public and one in secret.

PRAYER NUGGETS

Temptation, Trial or Testing According To Temperament

1) People respond to temptations, trials and tests according to their temperament.
2) Cholerics respond to tests, trials, and temptations according to their strengths and weaknesses.

3) Sanguines' respond to tests, trials, and temptations according to their strengths and weaknesses.
4) Melancholies' respond to tests, trials, and temptations according to their strengths and weaknesses.
5) Phlegmatics respond to tests, trials, and temptations according to their strengths and weaknesses.

CHAPTER 6

TEMPTATIONS, TRIALS AND TESTS: THE DEVIL AND THE WAR WITHIN OUR MEMBERS

The Devil and his Agents

The devils uses a lot of strategies to get us to fall into sin or lose our testimony before others. As it is often said '*no one walks around with a scan to determine what is in people's hearts*', it is therefore important to show what is in our heart by our deeds. Let us be reminded every day that the devil has not hidden his intensions when it comes to Christians: he wants to steal from us, kill or destroy us.

1 Peter 5:8 King James Version (KJV)

8 Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour:

Let us go into the animal kingdom and learn from the lion. The lion roars in the animal kingdom to convey a message. The devil is also roaring even as the lion does, what message is he sending Christians or what call is he making? There are many calls in the forest. *The most famous of these calls is that of the lion. It is one of the loudest calls in the animal kingdom and can be heard from up to 8km away. The male's roar is deeper and louder than the female's. Lions roar to tell other lions where they are, to show how big they are and to warn lions from other prides to keep away from their home territory. They do this mostly just before sunrise and sunset when they are most active*[5].

Like the lion, the devil shows his presence and the extent of his involvement in our lives by the roar he makes in our hearts as we make decisions inspired by our flesh instead of our spirits. But his roar is a warning all the same for us to be vigilant. There is an Akan proverb which cautions us by saying that *when a big trouble is brewing there is no warning flag ahead of it.* So we should learn to be careful when we hear him roaring

as a lion so we can escapes his strategies. What are some of the schemes of the devil which he uses against us? They are wiles, snares, threats, appeals and suggestions

Wiles

Ephesians 6:11 King James Version (KJV)

11 Put on the whole armour of God that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.

Wiles in Greek is ***methodeia*** and means cunning arts, deceit, craft, trickery. It can also mean a lie in wait with the intension of ambush. The devil often presents situations to our mind creating the impression that it is for our own good but in the end leads us into trouble. There are many times addictions for example start as solutions to emotional or physical problems. Wiles therefore are tricks the devil uses to get us to sin or ignore godly counsel.

Snares

Psalm 141:9 King James Version (KJV)

9 Keep me from the snares which they have laid for me, and the gins of the workers of iniquity.

A snare in Hebrew is ***pach*** and it means bird trap, trap, plots or agent of calamity.

A snare is for trapping fliers or birds and is often designed to catch the birds as they land or attempt to feed. Most birds learn to avoid traps by not perching or feeding from strange places. The same strategies are effective in dealing with the snares of the devil. Snares are mostly effective for trapping Christians who are preoccupied with things on earth instead of the word of God. Christians who are not careful of what puts food on their table often fall into the snares of the devil.

Threats

Acts 4:29-31 King James Version (KJV)

29 And now, Lord, behold their threatenings: and grant unto thy servants, that with all boldness they may speak thy word,

Threats are used when the devil suggests that we will come to some harm if we do not compromise our faith. Threats are used by agents of the devil to make Christians too afraid to stand for the truth. Many people who are in areas where false religion dominates are often threaten with death not to become Christians. There are countries where becoming a Christian is tantamount to high treason. There are other places where people's citizenship are cancelled when they become Christians. The devil through these governments or dictatorships use the threat of force to keep people in sin or compromise. May the grace of God abound to all people who find themselves in areas where becoming a Christian is seen as a crime punishable by banishment or death.

Suggestions and Appeals

Genesis 3:1-5 King James Version (KJV)

3 Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?2 And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden: 3 But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die. 4 And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die: 5 For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.

The most widespread scheme of the devil and his agents is the use of appeals or suggestions. These schemes of suggestions and appeals landed all of the human race into sin, a fall from glory. The devil used this scheme in the Garden of Eden by suggesting that there was more to the instruction God gave them than what Eve heard and appealed to her senses to see how good the fruit will be for food. The devil will always suggest to people

especially young people that there is more fun in yielding to temptation than sticking to godly instruction. Many people have been lured into secret cults by falling for the suggestion that there is more knowledge than the Bible teaches.

Now that you are no longer ignorant of the devices the devil uses in your life you should be victorious in overcoming every scheme he brings into your life. Because he no longer has the advantage.

2 Corinthians 2:11 King James Version (KJV)

11 Lest Satan should get an advantage of us: for we are not ignorant of his devices.

War within Our Members: Soul, Spirit and Body

1 Thessalonians 5:23 King James Version (KJV)

23 And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The Bible clearly teaches that every human is a spirit living in a body with a soul. This clearly shows we are indeed made in the image of the Godhead not because God necessarily has a nose or hands but that God is three persons. The denial that we are tripartite beings is always a direct challenge of the belief in the Godhead. The arrogance of depraved men insisting that until they can explain God in a way they can understand they will not accept the truth of scripture. How we deal with tests, temptations and trials depends on which member of these tripartite beings is in control.

There are three scenarios:

1) The Body Control the Soul and ignores the Born Again Spirit

This is the lustful stage: the worst stage for a Christian. This is the stage where a Christian has once again developed the habit of only heeding to the lustful desires of the flesh. He or she has gone back to his or her worldly lifestyle or even worst. He or she is now a backslidden Christian and needs to be rescued again from the fires of hell. This is where the fallen Christian is now tempted by all the works of the flesh and is routinely living to please the body. The Christian at this stage only believes in natural laws like 'Cause and Effects' and believes more in his efforts than the power of God.

2) Soul Controls Body and overrides the Born Again Spirit

This is the mental stage, this is where the Christian is yet to learn to listen to the voice of the Holy Spirit. At this stage many Christians ceased to hear His gentle promptings whilst speedily returning to following only their physical senses. This is also the stage for baby Christians who are yet to be led by the Spirit of God. The temptation of Christians at this stage is mostly wrong imaginations. The soul is in control here and most actions are taken from the things he or she sees. Here the walk is mostly by sight and not by faith. This is the lust of the eyes situation and needs a thorough knowledge of the word of God for the born again spirit to reassert himself. At this stage most of the thoughts of the Christian are sensual and so needs the unadulterated word of God to discern his thoughts and intentions.

Hebrews 4:12 King James Version (KJV)

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

3) Born Again Spirit Controls the Soul and the Body

This is the Spiritual Stage, the place the spirit of God wants to find us. The place where we are full of the word of God and are full of the Holy Ghost. The place where we hear the voice of the Lord and follow it. This is the sons of God stage where we are mentoring or leading other Christians. A place where we are now matured Christians and are making disciples for other Christians. Here the temptations a Christian faces are mostly issues of the heart like pride and anger. The issues of love and hate of those who wrong us or those who have decided to be our enemy.

The temptation of becoming religious instead of a Christian must also be fought here. After all the accomplishments of the Christian over the years the heart either grows weary or proud. As matured Christians we will mainly be tried and tested to ensure our hearts are right before the Lord. If the mature Christian fails to resist temptations he descends to the mental stage and if still unrepentant he backslides and gets to the lustful stage.

1 Peter 1:22 King James Version (KJV)

22 Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently:

PRAYER NUGGETS

Temptations, Trials and Tests: The Devil and the War within Our Members

1) The devil roars to show the extent of his involvement in our lives as we follow the flesh instead of the Spirit.
2) The devil's schemes which he uses against us includes: snares, wiles, threats, appeals and suggestions.

3) There is a constant war within our soul, spirit and body for the control of our decisions.

4) The matured Christian's born again spirit controls his soul and body. This is the best state to resist temptation and endure trials and tests as a child of God.

CHAPTER 7

NINE (9) POSSIBLE CONSEQUENCES OF YIELDING TO TEMPTATION

1) Leads to sin

Yielding to temptation leads to sin: which is usually a violation of God's perfect will for our lives. Sinning ultimately leads to death: death of dreams, end of life due to violence or disease or end of a peace of mind. A sin is going against the nature of God so yielding to temptation is deciding to do the biding of our flesh or the devil.

2) Leads to demotion

Yielding to temptation often leaves one falling out of favour with God and men. There are people who have lost great opportunities in life because they could not resist the temptation to do one shameful thing or the other. Things done in the dark or in the secret could come out to bite you thirty years later because you could not control your lust.

3) Leads to loss of faith

Yielding to temptation has led to many people losing their faith in Jesus the Christ. There are people who were God fearing who fell into adultery or found a woman or man from another religion that they desired so much that they have been led to abandon Christianity altogether to join that religion. There are people in the church who have no faith in the power of Jesus to deal with their needs because they have yielded to temptation and are living in sin. Living in sin erodes our confidence in the word of God and its power to change our lives for the better because sin brings us under the influence of our body or the devil.

4) Makes you a hypocrite

Yielding to temptation if not confessed and forsaken makes hypocrites of Christians. The day you gave yourself to an unreasonable boss to keep a roof over your head and could not confess it. You developed another personalities who sleeps with her boss aside the Christian personality everyone knows. Having some 'cold' personalities and when amongst Christian a 'hot' personalities makes you a 'hot and cold' person.

5) Leads to other temptations

The saddest thing about yielding to temptation is that will it will not end but open your life to even more temptations. These temptations will continue yielding even more temptations till the person's death, shame or till the backslidden Christian loses faith completely and abandons God all together. Never listen to the lie from those who lure you into temptations that it will be just one time event. It is a lie from the deepest part of hell: such people or their cohorts will use the shame of the event or the threat of losing whatever gains you made by compromising to lure to yield to even more temptations.

6) Leads to addictions

There are many whose whole lives have gone down the drain because of addictions to various substances. There is a popular Ghanaian musician known all over the world for his abilities on the keyboard who sold all the property he acquired from being part of a very successful band in the 70's, 80's and 90's to buy cocaine. There are men who have fallen from very lofty heights of ministry because of addictions to sex of all sorts. Every addictions starts as a temptation but as you keep yielding to it its power over your will or mind increases till it becomes powerful enough to override your will. It does not matter if the password to your phone is holiness you will access it and use it to watch pornographic materials because the frequent yield to it has made it powerful enough to override your better judgement.

7) Leads to backsliding

If you have been a Christian for more than ten years then you have experience periods of backsliding. Before you get all holy on me for your impeccable service to the Lord over the years let me explain to you what I mean by backsliding. Backsliding is failing to grow from glory to glory in your Christian walk. There is no place for stagnation in our walk with the Lord because we are first babes then we become children, then sons of God. And even that is not the end because we will transform even further to look more like Christ when He appears in His glory. It is a walk with the Lord not a standing with him**.** It is a race to the finish for a crown of glory and not a camp on the way up. If you have not been doing better in the lord over the year in and out then you are not doing well enough to be considered a victorious Christian.

8) Leads to death

Sadly many people yield to temptations but die even before they have the chance to repent. There are people who lost their mind on just a smoke of marijuana: young boys who yielded to the temptation to smoke in a bush on the campus of a secondary school in Ghana and lost their minds, never to have the ability to accept the lord or to be saved ever again.

There are young men like that still roaming the streets after decades of madness with no mind of their own. Such people are dead men walking till they encounter the delivering hand of God which gives everyone a second chance at repentance and life. I can go on and on about dreams, visions, ministries, movements which are now dead because the leader or leaders yielded to temptation of pride, lust or selfishness. Temptation when yielded to does not only lead to physical death but the second death which is eternal suffering in the lake of fire.

9) Leads to hell

Yielding to temptation has landed many people straight in hell because they died in the very act of disobedience or they died before they could

repent of the sins committed. Hell is the place unbelievers and Christians who backslide back into the world but did not repent go when they die in that state of sinfulness. Hell is the waiting place for the enemies of God. One of the major reasons many people in the developed world will go to hell is because they have yielded to the temptation to believe there is no Hell.

The word hell appears in various forms in scripture from the Old Testament all the way to Revelation in the New Testament where together with death it was cast into the lake of fire. There is a word for grave and yet people are claiming hell is grave. How can going to the grave be a punishment when both the sinner and the righteous are buried in the grave. The fear of hell is the number one reason sinner turn to salvation: they do this mostly before they even understand there is also a glorious reward in heaven.

PRAYER NUGGETS

Nine (9) Possible Consequences of Yielding To Temptation

1) Yielding to temptations lead to more temptations.
2) Yielding to temptations can lead to addictions.
3) Yielding to temptations can lead to death.
4) Yielding to temptations can lead to eternal damnation.

CHAPTER 8

FIVE (5) THINGS WHICH CAN HAPPEN WHEN YOU FAIL A TEST

1) A failed test Is repeated till the lesson is learnt

Abraham is a typical example of a man who succeeded in many things but failed consistently when it came to the test of not having children. I hope you remember how his wife Sarai was introduced the very first time she was mentioned in scripture. But Sarai was barren: her beauty was not mentioned though she was strikingly beautiful but the fact that she was barren. Because Abraham's strong desire for children made her inability to produce them obvious.

Abraham was so desperate to have children that he jumped at the opportunity to have children with Hagar without consulting Jehovah. Abraham became so attached to this child that he closed his eyes to his mother's insolence till God intervene. Again when the Lord told him he was blessed he retorted: what is all these for since I have no child. Again God had to reassure him he will have children by showing him the stars of the skies as the number of his descendants.

When Isaac came he became so attached to him that God had to test him again to ensure he passed that test of serving God without children finally, by telling him to sacrifice him. Even here the Bible says he believed God would raise the dead Isaac back to life after he had killed him. Finally he passed the test of serving God without Isaac, even if it was for a while and proved his faithfulness to the Lord. The Lord showed his approval of him then by saying: now that I know you fear me.

2) A failed Test Delays promotion

Jacob manifesting the blessing he had stolen from Esau delayed for twenty years because he kept falling victim to the seed of deceit he had sowed

years earlier. Jacob was an impatient man: he exhibited this trait right from the womb when he brought his hand out of the womb first to try to claim the first born title from his twin brother. Jacob was always trying to get ahead by any means necessary. This attitude made him inconsiderate to a point where he had to even use a bowl of soup as bargaining chip to move ahead of his brother. Then for fourteen years he was stopped by his uncle Laban and his children from even having his own space to grow.

Typical of Jacob he wanted to marry Rachel the younger daughter ahead of her elder sister but was stopped by his uncle. His supplanting attitude cost him another seven years of labour, being deceived and his contribution to Laban wealth unappreciated. Jacob's failure to be patience almost cost him his life and sent him to exile where he endured abuse from his own uncle till he learnt to be patience for God to give him what is his. Every new level and its devil, hence the need to be tested before anyone is promoted. Jacob had learnt his lesson by the time he was about meeting Esau and was ready to submit to him: something he had fought all his life. After Jacob passed this test and was ready to let Esau lead, he kept increasing in prominence but Esau and his descendants were hardly mentioned.

3) Failure to pass tests Delay our maturity in Christ

Oh! The babes in Christ: Christians who are often looking for one excuse or the other to exit the church. Those easily offended brethren: members who always have to be pampered to keep attending church. The Christians who have remained babes in Christ and have refused to grow to 'the children of God state' let alone become sons of God.

Hebrews 5:12-13 King James Version (KJV)

12 For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat. 13 For every one that useth milk is unskilful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe.

The strong meat of Christian life is the enduring of tests which come our way. Things which teach us faith, perseverance and patience. The Christian who results to doing things of the flesh when confronted with a test will never mature and will not be trusted with important things by the Lord. The Lord requires that we grow from grace to grace: He demands that we grow enough to bear fruit which will abide.

4) Failure to pass tests Delay understanding of the word of God

Hebrews 5:14 King James Version (KJV)

14 But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.

Matured Christians need to eat the bones of the word of God: understand and embrace difficult messages which call for total commitment to the things of God. The Christians who has not matured by learning to choose right over wrong any time they are tested will not understand hard messages from the Lord. Once Jesus told his disciples that they will eat his flesh and drink his blood. After the message many became offended because they misunderstood his message. Jesus then turned in the direction of his core disciples and asked: are you also going to leave? To which Peter replied no because you Jesus, are the one with eternal life. One message but two understandings because one was a matured disciple whereas the others were baby disciples.

John 6:58-68 King James Version (KJV)

58 This is that bread which came down from heaven: not as your fathers did eat manna, and are dead: he that eateth of this bread shall live for ever. 59 These things said he in the synagogue, as he taught in Capernaum. 60 Many therefore of his disciples, when they had heard this, said, This is an hard saying; who can hear it? 61 When Jesus knew in himself that his disciples murmured at it, he said unto them, Doth this offend you? 62 What and if ye shall see the Son of man ascend up where he was before? 63 It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life. 64 But there are some of you that

believe not. For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that believed not, and who should betray him. 65 And he said, Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father. 66 From that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him. Then said Jesus unto the twelve, Will ye also go away? 68 Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life.

5) You will not be recommended by Godly People

Acts 6:3-6 King James Version (KJV)

3 Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business. 4 But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word. 5 And the saying pleased the whole multitude: and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost, and Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolas a proselyte of Antioch: 6 Whom they set before the apostles: and when they had prayed, they laid their hands on them.

The first deacons were selected by the multitudes of disciples numbering thousands: people from different backgrounds and nations. People who had lived together since Pentecost or the immediate aftermath and had gotten to know each other fairly well**.** Other believers were put in charge of sharing resources amongst all the peoples gathered before they were chosen .They failed to execute that duty without prejudice or favour and as a result the people they were serving rejected them by complaining to the Apostles. Remember this was the same time the Holy Ghost was at His freshest: striking down liars and convicting people in their thousands at one sermon.

However people were still discriminating on the basis of nationality or ethnicity. These men failed the test of being fair despite the presence of

their tribesmen in the face of hunger and so lost their exalted position and a mention in the books of the 'Acts of the Apostles'. The congregation however agreed that Stephen and his group were men of integrity and were glad to recommend them to the Apostles for this all important task of ensuring that no one especially the marginalised went to bed hungry. If you keep failing your test you will soon develop a reputation as someone who is unreliable and unworthy for important duties of the church. A vessel unto dishonour and not a vessel of honour.

PRAYER NUGGETS

Five (5) Things Which Can Happen When You Fail a Test

1) Failing a tests consistently slows the maturity of the believer in Christ.
2) Failing tests consistently gives a believer a less desirable reputation amongst the congregation.
3) Failing tests delay promotion in the things of God.
4) Failing tests lead to a repetition of the test till it is passed or till the lesson intended is learnt.

CHAPTER 9

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOU LOOSE A TRIAL

A trial is a long drawn out painful situation in your life designed to test your faith in the Lord and His promises. Every trial should leave us believing more in the things of God. Every trial should bring us closer and closer to the frame of mind Paul had when he said: what can separate me from the love of God is it persecution, trial, depth or height and so on. So why do people lose trials? The answer mostly is because it is tasking and often tiring. But Paul admonishes us to never tire of doing what the Bible teaches.

Resisting or overcoming trials is one of the best thing a Christian can do to prove his love for his saviour. Most Christians however fail to do this and often fail to remain in the faith during trials. What are the consequences of failing trials as a Christian?

You become impatient

James 1:2-8 King James Version (KJV)

3 Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. 4 But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.

Faith is tried to ensure it is genuine. For there are many gone out saying lord! Lord!, but are not true Christians. People who are joining the church with motives other than making it to heaven. Such people run out of the church at the slightest sign of a trial. Many have fallen victims to the humanist version of the gospel which says that all difficulties are as a result of a curse or a lack of seed to be sown to the problem.

The devils accusations about you stands

Revelation 12:10 King James Version (KJV)

10 And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night.

As has been discussed earlier the devil is constantly accusing you before the lord even as you are undergoing a trial. Overcoming a trial means the lord has won and the accusation of the enemy that you are not a genuine child of God. Failing a trial therefore proves that the devil's accusation about you stands. It means the devil was right in telling God that you will not stand through the trial to the end.

You suffer long for nothing

There are many who never leave the period of suffering. This is not the doing of the Lord because the burden he gives us are always lighter than what we carried in the world.

1 Peter 5:10 King James Version (KJV)

1*0 But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you.*

A trial is to prove us before we get into the season of promotion or expansion. When a trial is abandoned it leaves the Christian with doubts concerning his or her loyalty and commitment to the Lord. Escaping a trial before it comes to an end is like enduring torture till your eyes and limbs have been removed before revealing the secret eventually. All the suffering would have been for nothing. You would have suffered for so long and also lost the reward of keeping the secret till the end.

The Bible is categorical about this: only those who keep themselves till the end will be saved. Again it says those who turn back I will have no pleasure in them. So long us we remain righteous or overcome the trials in our lives the lord will deliver us from them all.

Evil is let loose and righteousness is despised

Those who get discouraged and give up on God like the headlines we read of pastors who have stopped preaching the gospel of Jesus and are now involved in visa racketeering. Such scandals all started because as pastors they failed to stand their ground through their trials to the end. The reason we have so many Christians who lack the conviction of right and wrong is because they have refused to be tried. Trials keep us sharp and mature, knowing how to decipher between the right and wrong spirits behind the things in our life. When we fail to overcome a trial we become carnal and become too weak to resist temptations.

Once temptation is yielded to sin is the outcome. Sin then makes more room for more sin until the Christians backslides and is dominated by evil tendencies. This can happen to any Christian, no matter his or her title in the church. Such a Christian, like King Saul will now come under the influence of demons. He will keep sinking until he begins to consult demonic spirits and become apostate. Like Saul he or she will be calling himself or herself a king or queen (Christian) but will be lost to the grace of God and will need rescuing to restore his or her salvation.

You Escape scrutiny

Everyone is uncomfortable when he or she is under the microscope or under scrutiny. But King Solomon after he was blessed of the Lord was also subjected to several searches, trials and tests. The Bible says a wise queen called queen of Sheba travelled a great distance to scrutinise him but he passed with flying colours.

1 Kings 10:1 King James Version (KJV)

10 And when the queen of Sheba heard of the fame of Solomon concerning the name of the Lord, she came to prove him with hard questions.

The tendency to escape scrutiny by today's children of God is the reason many Christians think persecution has ceased in democratic countries. Most persecutions come in the form of trials. And the Lord is counting on us to stand us people who value the blood of His son which was used to ransom us from eternal death.

PRAYER NUGGETS

What happens when you lose a trial?

1) Losing a trial creates a situation where the believer escapes scrutiny and therefore appears unproven.
2) Losing a trial lets evil win and creates a situation where righteousness is despised.
3) Not enduring a trial to the end leads to a situation where the believer in the beginning suffer for nothing.
4) Not enduring trials breeds impatient Christians who are unwilling to sacrifice for the cause of Christ.

CHAPTER 10

HOW TO OVERCOME TRIALS AND TESTS

Dealing with trials and tests is a habit every mature Christian has to master. A test is basically examination or unannounced inspection to assess how faithful you are to the Lord Jesus. They can come in any form so long as it stretches you beyond your physical limit and requires strong convictions to see it through to the end.

A test is not intended to lead you to sin but to prove your worth. Test and trials are usually troubles that Christians fall into by no fault of theirs but because of His divine plan to pass our works though fire to test whether they are genuine.

There are four main trials and tests in a believer's life that he or she must deal with:

1) Dealing with sickness.
2) Dealing with great loss.
3) Dealing with great pain.
4) Dealing with disappointment of all sorts.

The following are six ways to deal with or overcome trials and tests that we encounter as Christians:

1) Bear the fruits of the spirit

Galatians 5:22-26 King James Version (KJV)

22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, 23 Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law. 24 And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts. 25 If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.

26 Let us not be desirous of vain glory, provoking one another, envying one another.

Every one of the fruit of the spirit is an antidote to the tendencies which arise when undergoing a trial or a test. The fruit of the spirit is a spiritual super drug which help neutralise the urges which arise during times of trouble.

2) Be a strong Christian

Proverbs 24:10 King James Version (KJV)

10 If thou faint in the day of adversity, thy strength is small.

The strength of a Christian is his or her resolve to go all out for the lord. It is that unwavering conviction that, Jesus Christ is the only way to go no matter the contrary view held by others. That unwavering focus on Jesus irrespective of the storm surrounding the believer. That stubborn faith which says: only Jesus or nothing else. This is stubbornness needed to thrive in the midst of trials and tests. It is this strong conviction which translates into a resilient Christian in the face of trouble.

3) Develop the habit of praying in tongues

1 Corinthians 14:4a King James Version (KJV)

4 He that speaketh in an unknown tongue edifieth himself

Due to the many battles we fight in the spirit and the many temptations we resist during the day, it is necessary at all times to replenish the spiritual energies exerted during these exercises. To be strong therefore in spirit, a Christians should recharge his batteries by praying in tongues at least thirty minutes a day. Because it takes a lot of spiritual strength to stand during trials and tests.

To understand what to do when in trouble be strong enough to pray and trust God to use all that is happening in your life for your good in the near future. Being strong in the spirit helps the believer to hear the promptings

and directions of the Holy Spirit. It is by following the still small voice of the Holy Spirit that you will be able to navigate through the difficulties which come about because of tests and trials in your life whilst cruising to victory in the lord.

4) Learning to hear the voice of God above the noises in your lives

John 10:27 King James Version (KJV)

27 My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me:

There are many strong able bodied young men and women who have abandoned skills acquisition or education because they have received a call from the Lord. Many of these people will be able to tell you that they had a strong conviction to go into full time ministry but have no fruit to sustain their lifestyles. Who the Lord calls He provides for through the fruits or people they win to their ministry.

The disciples He sent two by two came back rejoicing because they lacked nothing. Many full time ministers are going through trials and tests of their own making because when they heard 'go' they did not wait to get the power which will bring the resources but decided to set off. A man or woman of God provides for the spiritual needs of those he or she ministers to and they in turn provide for his or her physical needs. Please hear the voice of God throughout your ministry or call as you did at the beginning before you start following your own mind. Following the mind will certainly lead to temptations because the things of the spirit are spiritually discern. Being led by the Spirit therefore helps you to avoid many pitfalls.

5) Developing Accurate Knowledge of the scriptures

Romans 6:17 King James Version (KJV)

17 But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you.

There are many tests and trials which have rocked ministries, churches and individuals lives because people have simply abandoned sound

doctrine. The Bible says that we should not stray too much to the right or left in the interpretation of scriptures because in so doing many have wrecked their faith. Unfortunately this over emphasis of one interpretation of scriptures still continues leading to many avoidable pains and disappointments. One man of God asked this question once: where is it written that the wife of the founder of a church should be the women's leader? There have been conflicts in ministries because an unspiritual founder's wife insisted on being the women's leader whilst there were more appropriate women to do the job. This situation has led to many conflicts in the house of founders of churches because pastor wanted to choose someone apart from their own wife.

Every wife who has been a wife according to the scriptures will not be by passed by her husband for the position of women's leader. Because she will already be an example of how godly women behave to the congregation. Inaccurate teachings on giving, tithes and free will offering have led many into lack and poverty with its trials or tests. These difficulties could easily be reversed with the right knowledge of scripture. 'It is written' does not only deal with temptation but also serves as confessions or decrees which puts the devil in his place and restores the Christian to his or her victorious position in Christ in heavenly places.

6) Becoming certain of your purpose in Christ

1 Corinthians 7:20 King James Version (KJV)

20 Let every man abide in the same calling wherein he was called.

If there is something that the devil has corrupted to lead mankind astray more than anything, it will be his influence of people's penchant to abandon their calling for someone else's call. A calling does not mean standing in front of people or becoming a public figure. Unfortunately a calling for many young people today is stardom, travelling the world and wielding great influence on the political elite in society.

This misunderstanding of Christian ministry and the call of God has led many Christians with some gifts of the Holy Spirit to jump into ministry without the needed steps to make their calling and election sure. Having a

call from the Lord has almost become fashionable these days though many in the ministry are not fulfilling their call. Many full time minister are disappointing the Lord they purport to serve.

In many parts of the developing world many people have gotten into ministry with ill motives leading to many trials of pain, lack and even sickness. There are others whose calling is teaching of the word but have forced themselves into another ministry and are therefore struggling to take care of their families. Others in the bid to enjoy what the senior pastor enjoys have become rebellious and have incurred many curses in the process leading to many troubles or trials.

The best way to deal with tests is to be obedient to the voice of God and the dictates of the Holy Scriptures. Being sons who commit our ways to the Holy Spirit will save us from a lot of avoidable troubles. The Bible warns us to suffer for the sake of Christ and not because we have done something wrong and are reaping what we have sown.

PRAYER NUGGETS

How to overcome trials and tests

1) There are four (4) main trials and tests that a believer must overcome to be a victorious Christian.
2) The habits of praying in tongues lifts our spirits and helps us deal with trials and tests.
3) Developing accurate knowledge of scripture helps as overcome trials and tests.
4) Bearing the fruit of the spirit helps as deal with trials and temptations.

CHAPTER 11

HOW TO OVERCOME TEMPTATIONS

How to overcome temptations

Overcoming temptations or as it is known in Greek ***Peirazō*** (i.e. a solicitation to sin from the devil, the flesh or by others) has never been easy. But the Bible is clear on the truth that temptations can be overcome by all Christians. The Bible makes no excuses for those who fall to temptations: it says temptations are nothing strange but normal occurrences of life.

1 Corinthians 10:13 King James Version (KJV)

13 There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.

Temptations are in levels so no Christian is allowed to be tempted beyond his or level of endurance in his walk with the lord. Temptations which are meant to lead to sin are best dealt with when the tempted escapes them. Trying to endure temptation which solicit for sin is dangerous and counterproductive. Example, it is foolishness to share the same room with a woman you are sexually attracted to with the assurance that you will pray during the period to endure the sexual attraction.

Seven (7) Ways to Overcome Temptations

1 Deal with Faults

Galatians 6:1 King James Version (KJV)

6 Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou

also be tempted.

Where there are faults people are easily tempted: people when offended fall easily for temptations of the devil. People who think others are at fault easily yield to temptations to gossip and are prone to the spirit which causes strife amongst the body of Christ. Such people will not hesitate to spread rumours which will tarnish the image of upright people of the congregation.

2 Have a humble Spirit

Proverbs 16:18 King James Version (KJV)

18 Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall.

I have been a witness in a situation where a brother was warned about his dealings with people of the opposite sex but he will not heed to this counsel because he taught he was too strong to fall for such a temptation. Pride is the best environment for temptations to thrive. There are people who have committed fornication and have been shocked they did such a thing because their pride will not allow them to see the warning signs.

3 Follow Up of New Converts

1 Thessalonians 3:5 King James Version (KJV)

5 For this cause, when I could no longer forbear, I sent to know your faith, lest by some means the tempter have tempted you, and our labour be in vain.

New converts are only born again in their spirits and have therefore not learnt with experience to differentiate between right and wrong in every situation. You will be shocked to know the things new converts who have not had much exposure to biblical teachings think they can still do which is actually sin.

I read about a man who got born again and still thought he could continue to fornicate because no one had told him it is sinful to do so. This man was in the adult movie industry and had never been exposed to the

Bible. So when by divine grace he got born again he thought fornicating as his work demanded was not sin but just work till the Holy Spirit convicted him. To establish new converts against sin several follow up teaching needs to be done to root the person in the faith before old habits draw him or her back into the world.

4 Learn of Jesus

Hebrews 2:18 King James Version (KJV)

18 For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted.

The Lord was tempted in every way and yet without sin. He therefore has all the power and wisdom to help us deal with temptations. He will direct you when to flee and how to deal with other situations which are tempting you to sin. Being close to the master Jesus will give you a lot of strength as you expel the darts of the enemy he throws at you every day to end your Christian life.

5 Escape for dear life

2 Timothy 2:22 King James Version (KJV)

22 Flee also youthful lusts: but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart.

When it comes to youthful lust the biblical admonishing is to flee. I once saw a group of our seniors at the university literally running from a particular location. I wondered what the commotion was about because I knew them to be honourable men. When they could finally catch their breath they told me they were fleeing youthful lust. That they had visited this very beautiful sister in the Lord and had made it clear before going that they will be visiting but this sister with another in lady in her company had met them in her house with an almost transparent dress, hence their decision

to flee for dear life. I thought it was an over kill at the time and laughed to my heart content.

But a similar thing was done to me years later when I visited a sister. She met me at her door with a transparent dress without brassier and asked me to make myself comfortable in a chair by her bed. I quickly came up with an excuse and left immediately because the picture of my senior brothers in the Lord running from an almost naked woman never left me.

6 Be Watchful

Matthew 26:41 King James Version (KJV)

41 Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.

To be effective at dealing with situations which leads to temptation, a child of God needs to be watchful of what he touches, sees, drinks and the places he or she goes. Being watchful or cautious is the number one strategy for avoiding temptations. One of the most effective ways of arousing sexual desires is to look into the eyes of a woman who is in love with you in a secluded place. The fires that will ignites in your bodies will surprise you.

I know of some brothers who could not believe they had committed fornication even after the act. Their false sense of immunity blinded them to the point that they were in denial even after falling into sexual sin. The fires of passion within them ignited so fast that they were still in shock after the event. They could hardly believe they had fallen into sexual sin after all the warnings. Please watch your dealings with people you could be sexually attracted to during times of sorrow, loneliness and excitement. Being watchful does not mean being paranoid: it means being true to yourself and avoiding acts and places which could arouse you to sins of any kind. If you were once a drunkard do not go to the bar alone with the idea of preaching to your former drinking buddies.

7 Pray

Mark 14:38 King James Version (KJV)

38 Watch ye and pray, lest ye enter into temptation. The spirit truly is ready, but the flesh is weak.

The physical body has not been redeemed it is the spirit that is born again and the soul sanctified to be able to choose between right and wrong. The flesh is still an enemy of righteousness: it therefore fights the spirit to regain control of the mind so it can choose to sin all the time. This was the case when we were all unbelievers. The Bible testifies of this concerning the people in Noah's generation: their thoughts were evil continually. To win the tussle between the flesh and the spirit, it is important to boost the strength of the born again spirit through prayer. Prayer helps to tame the desires or keep in check the desires of the flesh by making the spirit stronger than the flesh. All that is done on earth because of jobs or careers are meant to take satisfy the body. But the things which satisfies the born again spirit are: Bible reading, spiritual prayer and fasting.

Praying in the spirit is a very effective way of dealing with temptation both as a preventative measure and also for resisting it. Going for long periods without praying, especially in the spirit is setting yourself up to be too weak to resist temptation when it occurs. The Bible is clear on this: if you fall when you are tempted it can only be because you were spiritually weak. Pray in the spirit or in tongues for about 30 minutes for at least four times a week and you will spot temptation afar off and also have the strength to resist it when it catches you off guard.

PRAYER NUGGETS

How to overcome temptations?

1) Temptations is the devils solicitation or appeal to the flesh of believers to fall into sin.

2) Having a humble spirit helps believers to escape temptation: indeed pride goes before a fall.
3) Forgiving people who offend us helps as overcome temptations in relationships.
4) Being watchful in what you see, touch and think helps avoid many temptations.

CHAPTER 12

HOW DAVID DEALT WITH THE TRIALS, TEMPTATIONS AND TESTS IN HIS LIFE

Temptations

David was known as the man after God's heart because he walked intimately with Him. Throughout his life His spirit upon him enabling him to do many exploits. David pleased the Lord as a man with the Holy Spirit upon his life an empowerment we also have as spirit filled Christians. David also rose from obscurity to become the most powerful king in the history of Israel.

I believe David is the reason the messiah descended from Judah. An accomplished man by all standards: he was a shepherd, warrior, worship leader, psalmist, king, emperor and a transformational leader. King David's great accomplishments were reason enough for him to be prone to temptations. The sense that everything he touched turned to gold exposed him to many adversaries. Many poor, lonely and rejected people are strong in the Lord because they have nothing else to rely on.

However many as they rise in prominence in society easily fall when tempted because they often mistake the temptations they face as privileged opportunities. There are many young women who will say no to fornicate with the average young man but will find it difficult to say no to a prominent man of God or celebrity.

David's major weakness was women, this might have resulted from his first marriage to Michal, Saul's daughter. Michal felt David was too uncultured to be her husband and made this dissatisfaction plain when she complained about his boisterous dance before the Lord. Not dealing with the emotional inadequacy it might have made him feel grew the need in him for women who appreciated him. This opened him up to other temptations and sins till it almost cost him his life. Temptations often link up with the

emotional needs in our hearts and are difficult to deal with because these needs are deep seated.

2 Samuel 6:16 King James Version (KJV)

16 And as the ark of the Lord came into the city of David, Michal Saul's daughter looked through a window, and saw king David leaping and dancing before the Lord; and she despised him in her heart.

Trials

David's trials were mostly with his children. He thought he had to constantly prove that he was a better father than his father Jesse was to him. David must have felt that as a leader and subsequently a king, he now had the resources to give his children the kind of life he longed for as a child. David therefore avoided punishing his children irrespective of how much they erred. These children from different prominent women felt privileged and highly entitled. They had anything young people could desire and a very rich king for a dad. David was also busy expanding the kingdom into an empire and spent many months away from them in campaigns to subdue all the enemies of Israel around him. These spoilt children embarked on escapees that will make the average bad boy or girl in our generation look like a saint.

Second rebellion

1 Kings 1:8 King James Version (KJV)

8 But Zadok the priest, and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, and Nathan the prophet, and Shimei, and Rei, and the mighty men which belonged to David, were not with Adonijah.

Adonijah could not wait for his father to anoint him as king but decided to take it by force. He decided to overthrow his own father from the throne. Though Adonijah was the fourth born son he felt the need to rebel against his father after Absalom the third son had failed in this attempt some time ago. Once again David's procrastination when it came to taking decisions

which will cause his children pain almost led to another successful rebellion. Dear reader, not all the pains of the trials you went through growing up were bad. Most times your resolve and persevering attitude in life come from the painful experiences you were exposed to in life. These pains taught you good lessons in life: things to do and those to avoid. It is therefore counterproductive to raise children with the mind that you do not want them to suffer any form of pain.

Foolishness, wrong decisions and the punishment it brings will be accompanied with pains to remind us not to repeat them. People must therefore learn to use these good pains to mature lacking nothing. Children are to be trained and not reared.

Incest, Rape and Murder

2 Samuel 13:14 King James Version (KJV)

14 Howbeit he would not hearken unto her voice: but, being stronger than she, forced her, and lay with her.15 Then Amnon hated her exceedingly; so that the hatred wherewith he hated her was greater than the love wherewith he had loved her. And Amnon said unto her, Arise, be gone.

Amnon was David's first son who was born to him in Hebron. Amnon was a typical spoilt son who got tired of all the mischief such sons get up to and developed a new obsession: strong love for his half-sister Tarmar. After scheming with his cousin, he got Tarmar where he wanted and brutally raped her.

Like any bad boy he quickly got over the obsession after the deed had been done and proceeded to completely dishonour her before all the virgins of Israel. Amnon's behaviour was repulsive to say the least: especially since it was the king who ordered the sister to attend to him.

Absalom the third son waited for two whole years for David to take action but he did not. As he thought about this injustice for two years his dislike for his brother metamorphosed into pure hatred. Amnon's unrepentant natured infuriated Absalom even the more till he masterminded his death.

2 Samuel 13:28 King James Version (KJV)

28 Now Absalom had commanded his servants, saying, Mark ye now when Amnon's heart is merry with wine, and when I say unto you, Smite Amnon; then kill him, fear not: have not I commanded you? be courageous, and be valiant.29 And the servants of Absalom did unto Amnon as Absalom had commanded. Then all the king's sons arose, and every man gat him up upon his mule, and fled.

David's failure in passing the trials of punishing his relatives when necessary was only learnt on his death birth. He finally crown Solomon king and proceeded to write the wrong he had harboured concerning his relatives by telling Solomon to be swift to punish with death when they misbehave again. Solomon dealt swiftly with erring relatives and so had a peaceful reign.

Tests

David's tests were always to ascertain whether he will go ahead of God in taking the kingship from Saul. King Saul failed this test when he rushed to make a sacrifice that Samuel was meant to make because he feared his army will get tired of waiting and desert him. Saul's false believe that his kingship was secured by the army and not God caused him to fail to respect the laws concerning sacrifices to the Lord, costing him his reign. Saul went ahead of God and lost the kingdom to David because he did nothing without seeking for God's approval.

1 Samuel 24:4 King James Version (KJV)

4 And the men of David said unto him, Behold the day of which the Lord said unto thee, Behold, I will deliver thine enemy into thine hand, that thou mayest do to him as it shall seem good unto thee. Then David arose, and cut off the skirt of Saul's robe privily.

David had to fight the edge to take power by force with the excuse that that he was anointed by Samuel as king long ago. He could have, as is usually the case for many rebels enumerated all the failings of Saul but he chose not to. David had to run for his life for years and even sought shelter with former enemies but never yielded to the temptation to take power by force. Had he done that his kingdom would not have lasted for decades. He even had to settle for a reign over just Judah for seven whole years but was still patient to wait for God's time. David was thirty years old when he began to reign, and he reigned forty years. Remember when David fought Goliath he was not qualified to be in the army. The age for joining the army then was twenty years: so David had to wait for ten years or even more before he became king over all of Israel. Though he was anointed to be king by one of the most powerful prophets who ever lived.

2 Samuel 5 King James Version (KJV)

*5 In Hebron he reigned over Judah seven years and six months: and in Jerusalem he reigned thirty and three years over all Israel and Judah***.**

David is an example of a man who fell for almost all the temptations we can think of. He was so dirty because of the things he got involved with that the Lord did not even allow him to build him a temple though he was willing and prepared for it. The Bible says he was told: you have too much blood on your hands. David was so much of a hit man that even on his deathbed he gave instructions to Solomon his son concerning people he had to kill: because he failed to finish the job of neutralising all those who opposed him**.**

Yet David under the law still managed to win the heart of God. He was called the man after God's own heart. The story of David, a man who lived under law but could obtain mercy is an inspiration to Christians in this dispensation. A man who made more mistakes than you can ever imagine but on each occasion went back to God and truly repented before Him when convicted of his wrongs. David's attitude of asking God before any major decision also endeared him to the Lord as a man after His heart. David was a man who got to know the Lord as a teen and served him with all his talents, gifts, positions and skills. David was a man who came to know God

closely and grew to honour him despite his many past failures in the face of temptations, trials and tests.

PRAYER NUGGETS

How David Dealt With the Trials, Temptations and Test in His Life

1) Temptations often link up with deep seated emotional needs we may have forgotten about hence the difficulty in dealing with them.
2) David's experience as a child motivated him to ensure that his children were well pampered: he even neglected to punish them when they erred.
3) David's patience was tested several times to ensure he will wait for God's appointed time to be king.
4) David's unwillingness to allow his children to endure trials or punishment when they erred made them feel entitled and unrepentant.

CHAPTER 13

HOW JESUS DEALT WITH TRIALS, TEMPTATIONS AND TESTS IN HIS LIFE

The scripture in James is explicit on the truth that God does not tempt anyone but it does not say he will not allow us to be tempted. In fact Jesus taught us a prayer in the gospels to use as a model when we pray. This prayer is what is popularly called the Lord's Prayer: it includes the need to ask God to not leave us in situations where we will be tempted.

We see again in Proverbs a prayer lifted to God to not put people in too much or too little material blessings so they are not led into temptation. So temptation is an integral part of humanity: no one can be human and never be tempted. For Jesus to be fully victorious in all things human, he was allowed to experience every type of temptation known to man.

Matthew 4:1-11 King James Version (KJV)

1Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil. 2 And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he was afterward an hungred.

The three main types of temptations known to men are: the lust of the flesh; the pride of life and the lust of the eyes.

The lust of the flesh

Matthew 4:1-11 King James Version (KJV)

3 And when the tempter came to him, he said, If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread.4 But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.

The pride of life

Matthew 4:5-6 King James Version (KJV)

5 Then the devil taketh him up into the holy city, and setteth him on a pinnacle of the temple,6 And saith unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down: for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee: and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone.

The lust of the eyes

Matthew 4:7-10 King James Version (KJV)

7 Jesus said unto him, It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.8 Again, the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them;9 And saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me.10 Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.

Angelic Empowerment

After Jesus passed every form of temptation he received divine strength. Why will Jesus be strengthened after the fact? First, resisting temptation takes spiritual strength and like any virtues you run short of it after it has been used. That is why we need strengthening after we have been tempted or we will gradually run out of the strength to resist and finally give in. This spiritual truth was proven in natural life when an experiment conducted by scientist proved that self-control also runs out when consistently drawn out without break. This truth is used by evil doers a lot to elicit information by consistence force or torture.

Tyrants or cults also make people do their bidding by forcefully brain washing them over a long period of time to do things against their will.

Remember what the unrighteous judge said: I do not fear God or care about man but I need to do what this widow is asking or she will 'wear me down' (Luke 18:4-5). Please avoid or flee situations where you are constantly tempted in the same area or by the same person. You will gradually lose your resistance and begin to compromise little by little because you will be too weak or drained of virtue to keep saying no.

Matthew 4:11 King James Version (KJV)

11 Then the devil leaveth him, and, behold, angels came and ministered unto him.

The Trial of being made Reigning king On Earth before His time

John 6:15 King James Version (KJV)

15 When Jesus therefore perceived that they would come and take him by force, to make him a king, he departed again into a mountain himself alone.

The prophecies of the messiah were full of images of a liberating king. Since Jesus was born at a time when the Israelites were subjects of Rome, many of His people wanted him to fight for their liberation and then reign as king forever. Jesus had to overcome this trial throughout his ministry. He therefore admonished people not to talk too much about His spectacular miracles and often went into hiding when he sensed people wanted to make him king without his consent.

This idea that Jesus was a king on earth was so pronounced that he had to answer many questions on his earthly kingdom. However he kept saying to them time without number that my kingdom is not of this world. Interestingly it was this very accusation that he was seeking to be a king on earth that the Jewish leadership used to persuade Pilate to have him crucified. Do not be surprised when false charges are brought against you, our Lord had to face it all his life on earth.

John 19:12 King James Version (KJV)

12 And from thenceforth Pilate sought to release him: but the Jews cried out, saying, If thou let this man go, thou art not Caesar's friend: whosoever maketh himself a king speaketh against Caesar.

Test of dying on the cross

Matthew 26:39-41 King James Version (KJV)

39 And he went a little farther, and fell on his face, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt.40 And he cometh unto the disciples, and findeth them asleep, and saith unto Peter, What, could ye not watch with me one hour? 41 Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.

Jesus had never experienced death for all of eternity when he lived outside of time before the foundations of the earth were laid. Here was God becoming man and having to let go of His power to face this unfortunate lot of sinful humans: death! Of all the things that he had to endure as God becoming a man, death was the hardest to endure or experience. He lifted up prayer many times to God the father to find other ways of saving mankind but in the end always said ‘not my will Lord but your will be done.’

Matthew 26:38-39 King James Version (KJV)

38 Then saith he unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death: tarry ye here, and watch with me.39 And he went a little farther, and fell on his face, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt.

Death is horrible to humans: it is so horrible that all kinds of concoctions are taken in the name of medicine to avoid it. Again our bodies are subjected to many cuts in the name of operations to prevent it from taking our lives. People even make all kinds of covenants with demons just to postpone it or get the assurance that it will not take them too soon. So

imagine the God of the universe dying and going down to hades to take the keys of death from the devil. But the Lord Jesus because of the love He has for us endured the cross, ignoring its shame and its excruciating pain.

The Lord Jesus went through all of these things without failing in any of them. He went through all these temptations without yielding to any of them. Temptation is therefore not synonymous with sin: the devil's main trick is to tell you that since you feel tempted you have already sinned and so why not finished the process by committing the act?

The fact that you are feeling dirty because dirty thoughts are being projected into your mind does not mean you should allow them to stay there or act on them. Jesus is our example because he is God who became man yet he was victorious in every temptation, trial or test he encountered. He proved that it is possible to live a victorious life in this dark world of sin. Jesus is the best form of David, no wonder he was called the son of David. He is a type of David without a sinful nature: David without multiple lovers, killings and sins. A man who came from God to please Him and eventually returned to Him.

PRAYER NUGGETS

How Jesus dealt with trials, temptations and tests in his life

1) When Jesus overcame all the three types of temptations he received angelic strengthening.
2) Jesus was tempted with the lust of the flesh, the pride of life and the lust of the eyes.
3) Jesus had to endure the greatest test in His life: God going down so low to even death on the cross.
4) Jesus had to resist the trial of becoming a king on earth as the Jews were expecting: remaining the king who came from heaven.

CHAPTER 15

THINGS MISTAKEN FOR TEMPTATIONS, TRIALS, AND TESTS

Consequences of Sins

Galatians 6:8 King James Version (KJV)

8 For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.

Many people are quick to claim they are undergoing trials when they are reaping the evil they have sown in their lives. Many people are under the false impression that after confession of sins unto God there is no need to make right the wrong done. Sins are committed against God, a place, person or a spirit and are recorded in the realms of the spirit unless they are confessed and forsaken and the person wronged approached for forgiveness[AA1]. The repented person needs to then cancel whatever record that sin has made in the spirit and blot it out with the blood of Jesus.

There are people who contracted a disease through a sinful lifestyle and still died of that disease even after conversion to Christianity. Those however, who had the leading of the Holy Spirit to also cancel the consequences of their sinful lifestyles using the blood of Jesus or by undergoing deliverance have been healed of the disease too. The scriptures are therefore admonishing us to only suffer because we are right with the Lord and not because of the consequence of sins we have committed and have not sought for redemption.

1 Peter 3:17 King James Version (KJV)

17 For it is better, if the will of God be so, that ye suffer for well doing, than for evil doing.

Guilt

1 Corinthians 11:27 King James Version (KJV)

27 Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord.

Guilt is the force which comes into play when we refused to seek forgiveness of an act we are convinced is wrong. Many people will scream, walk away or even become violent all in a bid to cover their guilt. In the developed world laws have been passed to prevent Christians from sharing their faith in public schools and offices because people do not want to feel guilty. There are many people who have ended their lives because of guilt. In fact Judas Iscariot who had come under the influence of demons after betraying his master Jesus came under guilt and killed himself. People who choose guilt instead of remorse, shame instead of seeking for forgiveness inevitably fall into many hardships which are often mistaken for trials or even persecution. Guilt is not a sign of righteousness but a sign that your conscience is still active. Guilt should never be used as an excuse not to go to our maker but a reason to run to Him before the devil gets involve and invoke the spirit of depression and suicide to torment us.

Manipulations

2 Chronicles 33:6 King James Version (KJV)

6 And he caused his children to pass through the fire in the valley of the son of Hinnom: also he observed times, and used enchantments, and used witchcraft, and dealt with a familiar spirit, and with wizards: he wrought much evil in the sight of the Lord, to provoke him to anger.

Anyone who seeks to make people do things they will not otherwise do, especially with spiritual help is a manipulator. Manipulating people whether through emotions, threat or incentives will eventually lead to witchcraft or sorcery. Anyone who is obsessed with controlling people to a point where they do things they would otherwise not do without that influence is using the power of familiar spirits. People who control people's emotions or

actions through the songs they sin, write or produce are using enchantments and will have many evil consequences as a result. All manipulators are practising witchcraft and are therefore under a heaven of brass: they need to repent and forsake the act to come under an open heaven.

Cultivating dependence

Proverbs 25:28 King James Version (KJV)

28 He that hath no rule over his own spirit is like a city that is broken down, and without walls.

Christians are once again getting into the habit of depending on things instead of the Holy Spirit. Believers are now dependent on stickers, drinks, oils, cloths instead of the word of God. Many church leaders are cultivating dependence by making their presence or objects from their person necessary for their followers to deal with demonic attacks. In the beginning such a move is profitable when congregants buy the materials for their deliverance and the pastors because very wealthy. The consequence of having dependant congregants however is that they will never stop needing help from their pastor. Remember the Bible says that cursed is anyone who relies on the arm of flesh.

The leader cultivating dependence on himself instead of God will have negative consequences from the Lord as well as his followers. Only Satan dominates or cultivates dependence so those in this act are obviously in leagues with him and will therefore fall under a curse. The difficulty the dependant congregant will face in life will not be a trial or persecution but a curse for the cultivation of dependence on flesh.

A man who is under the control of another is open to all kinds of invasions of evil spirits. This is why people who frequent false prophets are always in one difficulty or the other necessitating them to keep going. Creating a vicious cycle which enriches the charlatans whiles impoverishing the desperate believer.

Stubbornness

1 Samuel 15:23 King James Version (KJV)

23 For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because thou hast rejected the word of the Lord, he hath also rejected thee from being king.

Anyone who rejects clear teachings of Christ because of convenience or because of indulgence of some kind or the other is stubborn. Anyone who rejects sound doctrine is stubborn and that attitude is the same as erecting an idol for worship. The act of obstinately rejecting sound instructions is a very evil act and in the Old Testament parents were allowed to call for the stoning of any child who was stubborn.

Refusing sound biblical advice whether from the church or from matured Christians in the context of marriage, belief etc. invokes curses and other forces which will fight your progress and peace of mind in life. Being firm or confident is not the same as being stubborn because stubbornness is resisting to do the right things for selfish reasons. The stubborn person who suffers or is entrapped because of his attitude cannot claim to have been tempted, tested or undergone a trial because of his faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.

Thorns in Your Sides or Flesh

Numbers 33:55 New International Version (NIV)

55 “‘But if you do not drive out the inhabitants of the land, those you allow to remain will become barbs in your eyes and thorns in your sides. They will give you trouble in the land where you will live.

A thorn in your flesh is something that has the spiritual right to exist to remind you that you are not perfect. A thorn in the flesh for Paul meant a messenger of Satan sent to buffet him. A thorn can also be a source of continual annoyance or trouble. A situation which kept him, Paul humble or grounded and reminded him of his humanity. This ‘thorn in the flesh’ is obviously not a trial or test because Paul did not add this condition when he was listing his trials, persecutions and tests. Persecutions, tests, temptations

and trials all happen at a time and cease to happen at some other times: they never continue forever.

Luke 4:13 King James Version (KJV)

13 And when the devil had ended all the temptation, he departed from him for a season.

Persecutions, Test, Trials and Temptations happen because the devil wants us to fall or God wants to promote or refined us for greater works in His kingdom. A thorn in the side or flesh is there with us continually to remind us that we have no power of our own but we are mere flesh bestowed with grace. We can therefore lay no claim to any power that he manifests through us. This thorn in the side or flesh is a constant reminder to the Christian that he is only a vessel and not the source of God's power to determine how it works in his life.

2 Corinthians 12:7 King James Version (KJV)

7 And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure.

The Love of Money

1 Timothy 6:9-10 King James Version (KJV)

9 But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition.10 For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.

They that love money and are willing to do anything to get it will encounter many difficulties in life which will not be as a result of a trial or test. The rush for money will lead the believer to take many short cuts which will lead to the occult, lottery, corruptions etc. These short cuts will

yield many sorrows and bring a lot of destruction to his or her life. Loving money will open the average Christian to every king of temptation known to man. Money indeed is a good servant but a very terrible master.

PRAYER NUGGETS

Things Mistaken For temptations Trials, And Tests

1) Having a thorn in the flesh or the side is not the same us as being tempted, tried or tested.
2) Suffering from the consequences of unconfessed sins and guilt is not the same as being tried or tested.
3) Stubbornness or rebellion is like witchcraft and attracts God's wrath on many levels.
4) Those who engage in manipulating others using powers from the dark world will suffer consequences which will not be because of a trial, test, persecution or temptation.

CHAPTER 16

BENEFITS FROM BEING FAITHFUL IN THE FACE OF TEMPTATIONS, TRIALS AND TESTS

1) **You will receive the crown of life.**

James 1:12 King James Version (KJV)

12 Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him.

2) **Trying of faith works in the believer patience.**

James 1:3 King James Version (KJV)

3 Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience.

3) **You will receive a good report through faith**

Hebrews 11:36 King James Version (KJV)

36 And others had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment:37 They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented;38 (Of whom the world was not worthy:) they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth. 39 And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise:

4) **You will be kept in the hour of temptation**

Revelation 3:10 King James Version (KJV)

10 Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth.

5) That our faith might be found unto praise, honour and glory.

1 Peter 1:7 King James Version (KJV)

7 That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ:

6) It makes believers partakers of Christ's suffering.

1 Peter 4:12-13 King James Version (KJV)

12 Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: 13 But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy.

7) Leads to Christian maturity

James 1:4 King James Version (KJV)

4 But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.

8) It brings the spirit of glory and of God upon the believer

1Peter 4:14 King James Version (KJV)

14 If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you: on their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified.

9) Brings humility in the heart of the Christian

1 Peter 5:8-9 King James Version (KJV)

8 Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: 9 Whom resist stedfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world.

10) Allows the endowment of believers with strength from the Holy Spirit

Acts 1:8 King James Version (KJV)

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

11) Proofs commitment to the lord

Philippians 2:22 King James Version (KJV)

22 But ye know the proof of him, that, as a son with the father, he hath served with me in the gospel.

12) Brings the baptism of fire in the life of a believer

Luke 3:16 King James Version (KJV)

16 John answered, saying unto them all, I indeed baptize you with water; but one mightier than I cometh, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire:

13) Help Deal with Imperfections in the character of a Christian

James 1:2-4 King James Version (KJV)

2 My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; 3 Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. 4 But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.

REFRENCES

1- 4) The Habits of Your Temperament © 2013 - 2018 GoodConfession.com & Catholics Come Home, Inc.

5) http://lionalert.org/page/how_do_lions_communicate. It's 12:55pm CAT on 10th November

DECISION PAGE

If you are not born again the promises in this book cannot be your portion because they are meant for those redeemed by the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world. If after reading this book you want to be born again say these words aloud wherever you are right now and Jesus will come and live in your heart.

Dear Lord Jesus forgive me for all my sins and cleanse me with your precious blood shed on the cross of Calvary. I forsake all my past evil deeds and plead that you take me and make me part of the family of God. Remove from me any curse that is following me because of my bloodline and link me to the blessings of the children of Abraham. I promise to obey and follow you all the days of my life. Please baptise me with the Holy Spirit and with power for the Christian walk.

Amen.

If you prayed the prayer above aloud then Congratulations! You are now a born again Christian and a child of God. If you are not in any church find a well-established church which believes in the baptism of the Holy Spirit with the evidence of speaking in tongues and commit to it with all your strength, gifts and talents.

Please write to me and tell me how this book has impacted your life to the following addresses

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1) **Fear versus Faith: The Battle for the Control of Your Destiny**
2) **15 Things I Wish I Had Mastered By Age 30 For Maximum Achievement**
3) **5 Things I Wish I Had Mastered By Age 30 For A Life Of Excellence**
4) **20 Things I Wish I Had Mastered By Age 30 For A Life Of Excellence**
5) **BUT: Key For Turning Sinking Sand Into Stepping Stones**

6) Familiarity and The Anointing