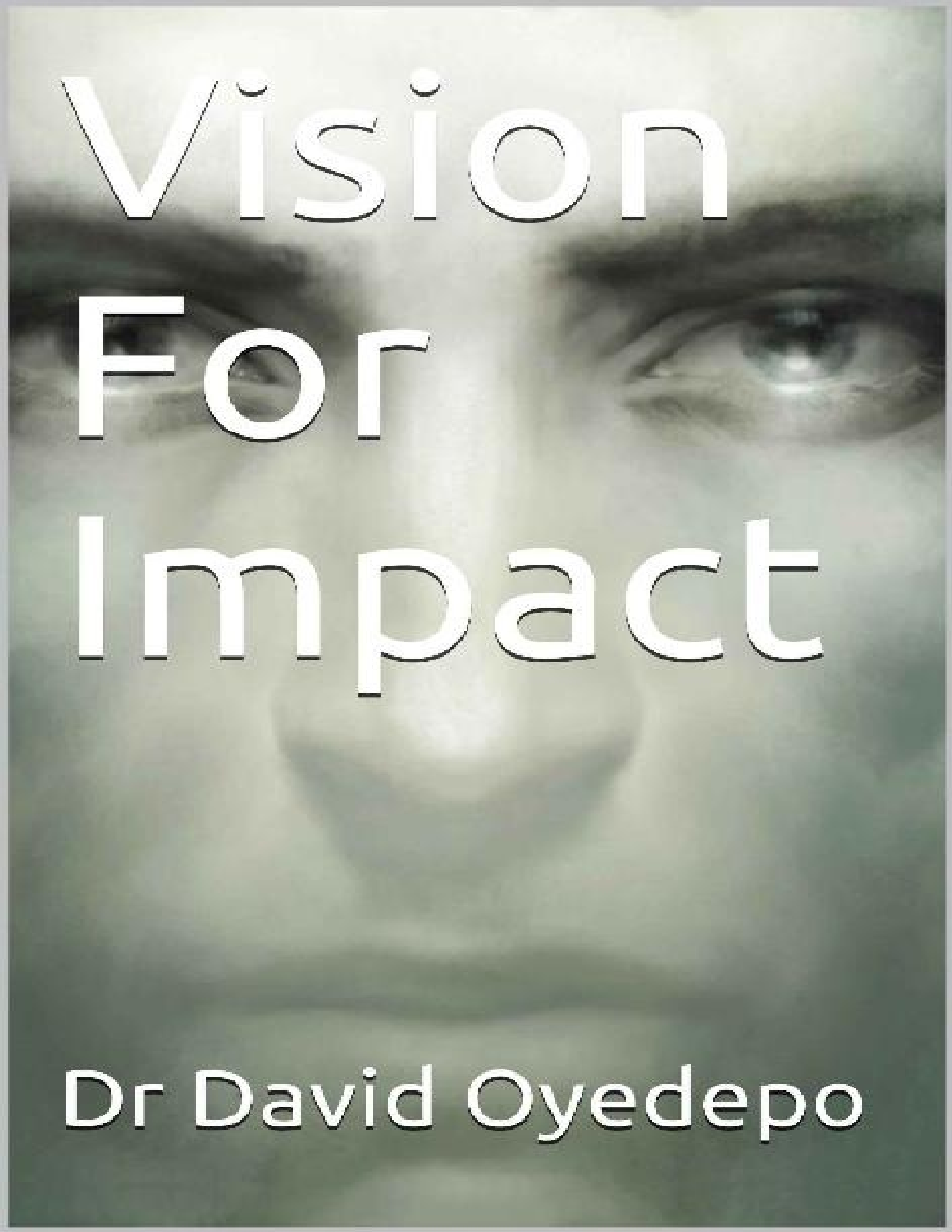

Vision
For
Impact
Dr David Oyedepo



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Chapter 2

VISION FOR IMPACT

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The word perish here does not mean to die or expire. It means to be stripped of honour and dignity; it means to loose worth or value. To live without vision is to die in frustration. That is why no matter the looks, social background or academic qualification of a man, if he does not know his purpose for living, he has no place to occupy on this earth.

Martin Luther King once said, "If a man has no purpose for living he is not fit to live".

A life of impact begins with a sense of mission; it begins with a discovery of your purpose. It will be foolish for a man to arrive at the airport with his luggage and when the porters carrying his bags ask, "Sir, where are you going?", he says, "I don't know but I want to get a boarding pass!" That's absurd! Such a man is setting himself up for embarrassment and frustration; he could even be arrested as a criminal!

Unfortunately there are too many people in the body of Christ, eating and drinking, yet going nowhere. But the end-time Church to which we belong is made up of visionaries. Joel chapter 2 heralds the arrival of the endtime army:

Blow ye the trumpet in Zion, and sound an alarm in my holy mountain: let all the inhabitants of the land tremble: for the day of the Lord cometh, for it is nigh at hand;
A day of darkness and of gloominess, a day of clouds and of thick darkness, as the morning spread upon the mountains: a great
people and a strong; there hath not been ever the like, neither shall be any more

after it, even to the years of many generations. A fire devoureth before them; and behind them a flame burneth: the land is as the garden of Eden before them, and behind them a desolate wilderness; yea, and nothing shall escape them.
The appearance of them is as the appearance of horses; and as horsemen, so shall they run. Like the noise of chariots on the tops of mountains shall they leap, like the noise of a flame of fire that devoureth the stubble, as a strong people set in battle array.
Before their face the people shall be much pained: all faces shall gather blackness.
They shall run like mighty men; they shall climb the wall like men of war; and they shall march every one on his ways, and they shall not break their ranks:
Joel 2:1-7

You will observe that one characteristic of this glorious group of people is vision. They are men who have discovered the course of their lives and are marching on their ways. Each one knows where he belongs and excels there. No wonder they move like mighty men.

Called For A Purpose
Every believer has a God-ordained purpose, an assignment or a task which he must fulfil on earth. The mystery is that even before you were born, God by an act of predestination, already chose you and prepared a divine assignment for you. The Word says:

For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.
Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.
Romans 8:29-30

If you are born-again, you are a child of destiny. You have been redeemed to be glorified, therefore, you can expect a colourful future. Think about it, what did Jacob do to qualify to be God's choice? Absolutely nothing! Ever before their birth, God said, *"Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated"* (Romans 9:13).

The good news is that as Jacob was God's choice, so are we! Not of our own making, but by the privilege of divine election! You are called, and beyond that, you are called for a purpose. God told Jeremiah of his pre-selection before conception, *"Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou*

camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations." (Jeremiah 1:5).

Apostle Paul also confirms his divine selection:
But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace, ***Galatians 1:15***

Looking at Paul's life, it is evident that God separated him from his mother's womb or else being the rascal that he was, he would never have been saved at all! However, you will observe that not only was he separated unto salvation before he was born, he was also sanctified and ordained a prophet unto the nations.

In the same way, every believer is separated for a purpose, and that purpose is what we call vision. It is the discovery and pursuit of this vision that enables you to make impact. Only men of purpose and precision become distinguished in life. They know where they are going and why they are on the earth. Until you too locate where you belong and run with the vision, you cannot make impact on earth.

What Vision Does
The earlier you discover God's purpose for your life and abide in it with all excitement, the sooner you will begin to enjoy your pre-ordained glorification. So what more does vision offer?
It Enhances Focus
Any man who knows where he is going is automatically focused. He will do anything to fight distractions. He sets his face as a flint until he arrives at his expected end. Men of vision are men of focus!
It Infuses Energy
When a man is easily tired of an assignment, it is a sure sign that he is not pursuing a vision. When you are driving at accomplishing a task, you always have the energy to keep at it.
Without a bearing, life is bound to be boring. So when you're a man of vision, you enjoy a continuous supply of energy.
It Eradicates Waste

Vision is the cure for waste. Once a man has located God's plan for his life and is pursuing it, he does not want anybody to waste his time. He is focused. If you are hurrying to catch a flight and someone comes to visit you, you don't hesitate

to quickly excuse yourself and bid him farewell.

Men of vision live waste-free lives, because they are committed to the pursuit of definite goals.

Discovering Vision

I have said that making impact in life begins with vision, having a sense of mission. How then do you take delivery of vision?

Go Direct To The Father

Your vision is a secret in the heart of God. That is why I Corinthians 2:9 says,
But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.
And Deuteronomy 29:29 says,
The secret things belong unto the Lord our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this law.
If you want the secrets of where you belong unfolded to you, you must go to Him. Habakkuk 2:1 says:
I will stand upon my watch, and set me upon the tower, and will watch to see what he will say unto me, and what I shall answer when I am reproved.

So, go to God in prayer, asking, "Lord, where do I belong? What is your plan for my life? I know that I am a child of destiny. What is my destination? I know that before you formed me in the womb you knew me and separated me for something. What did you separate me for?"

The truth of the matter is, God is eager to show you where you belong, if you will only ask Him.

I took delivery of where I belong directly from the Father, at the end of an eighteen hour encounter with Him: "The hour has come to liberate the world from all oppressions of the devil through the preaching of the Word of faith, and I am sending you to undertake this task."

That is precisely why I am where I am today! Life without a vision will be clad with frustration.

Discover Your Divine Endowment!

And unto one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one; to every man according to his several ability; and straightway took his journey.

Matthew 25:15

There is an endowment inside every one, called a gift or a talent, God has given something to everyone to occupy his place on the earth. Some have five, two, or just one, but every one has something.
A discovery of divine endowment is a very great avenue for locating your purpose.

Very many Christians are yet to fulfil their destinies because they have not discovered their divine endowment. In case you have waited to hear from God and have not, then know that you can make a discovery of your gift from within, by yourself. Some of the questions to ask that will help you uncover your potentials are: “What do I do effortlessly? What do I do with great excitement? What do I do that gives me fulfillment? What am I productive at?” The answers to these questions are pointers to the gift of God on your inside.

It is lamentable that many people are doing what they are neither gifted at, nor graced for.
Please note that the underlying factor in a call from God into ministry is grace. You may not be originally gifted in the area of ministry He has called you to, but He will always back you up with grace to perform.
For instance, it was grace that enabled Moses to fulfil his life assignment. He was a stammerer yet God gave him the job of an orator. How was he going to carry out his assignment? Grace.
This is the major difference between the first and second avenues of obtaining a vision — that is, hearing from God and self discovery. To succeed at the former you need grace; to succeed at the latter you need your gift.
Make A Choice!

I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live:
Deuteronomy 30:19

A third way to discover where you belong is by an act of your will, you choose what to do.
For instance by training, I am an architect. That was my choice, and I had a very nice time in it. In fact when you enter our premises, you see a touch of that discipline reflected. That was my choice.

God respects your choice. Whatever you choose becomes your lot in life. You can choose a particular career and by following the principles of God, prosper there.
Note however, that although God reckons with your choice per time, if He has called you to do something, your choice becomes irrelevant. Outside of this, the discovery of His endowments in you and your choice count before the Lord.
Have A Dream!

When we were children in school, our teachers would ask us, “What do you want to be when you grow up?” Every one of us said something, but very few actually believed in what they said. Those who did and kept driving towards their goals arrived at their destinations.

Many people have left their future blank, they are not expecting anything, so they get there to find nothing.

Your expectation will always set the pace for your experience. Someone said, “Aim nothing, hit nothing”. It is time to have an expectation for your tomorrow. What you see, the mental picture you paint concerning your future, will set the pace for what you experience.

That is why God said to Abraham:

And the Lord said unto Abram, after that Lot was separated from him, Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward:
For all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever.
Genesis 13:14-15

He had to see the land to possess it. We are all Abraham’s children by the covenant, and if Abraham had to see, so do we. Mind you, seeing here does not mean physical sight but seeing with the eyes of your understanding or perceiving with your mind.

What you see of your future, your expectation, is what is known as a dream. It is unfortunate that this dimension of vision is presently being ignored in the body of Christ, yet it is of tremendous significance to the believer, if he must make maximum impact in his generation.

Dreams are so powerful that in Genesis chapter eleven, when the sons of men

were building the tower of Babel, God had to come down to see that remarkable work of their imagination.
As a result of the picture they had in their minds, God knew that they could not be stopped:

And the Lord said, Behold, the people is one, and they have all one language; and this they begin to do: and now nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined to do.
Genesis 11:6

So, what do you see in your future? It is your picture that determines your future! What do you see ahead of you?

It is important at this juncture to distinguish between a vision and a dream. Whereas a vision tells you where you belong, a dream determines its existence. For instance, God has called someone to preach, but all he sees is a church of 500. Inspite of the great vision he has, he will never have more than 500 members. Why? Because there is a law in place that says, it is as far as your eyes can see that shall be given to you.

To live a life of impact you must discover your purpose for living and be a committed dreamer. It takes both visions and dreams to make a mark on the earth. One cannot survive without the other.
The easiest way to paralyse a vision is to be dreamless, because a dream is what drives vision. It is what gives motion to vision. On the other hand, to lack vision is not to have a purpose for living. Vision sets the pace, dreams determine the extent.
Three things that dreams do for you are:

• They become a force that drives you on to accomplishment. That is why most successful men are dreamers. They are the ones who make a mark in their generation. Friend, we live in a dreamer's world. If you do not have a dream, you are doomed. A dream is the gateway to a boom.

• A dream establishes your expected end. In Jeremiah 29:11, God makes a very powerful declaration concerning your future:
For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end.

When you have a dream, the expected end God has for you is secure, and

nothing can stop you from arriving at it. That dream infuses into you an unusual drive towards achieving your goal. So what you see, the picture you have in your mind is crucial if you will make maximum impact.

I am persuaded that the devil knows how important the mind is in charting a course for the future. So he makes it the hottest battlefield for man. You must guard your mind jealously because the devil is looking for how to corrupt and pollute it.

• A dream brings about the dawn of a new day for you. Every turn around begins with a dream. No matter how young or old you may be, once you have a dream it marks a turning point in life for you.

Josiah, for instance, was only eight years old when he began to reign in Judah. Abraham, on the other hand, was seventy-five when God unveiled the divine plan for his life. Purpose is never late. All you need is a decision to pursue it, and that decision determines what happens.

Apostle Paul was a man who pursued definite goals. He said, *"I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air"* 1 Corinthians 9:26 In other words "I am pursuing a definite goal". At the end of everything, after he had accomplished his purpose he said, *"...I have fought a good fight..."* (2 Timothy 4:7).

Even Jesus while on earth was a man of purpose. He said in response to Pilate's question, *"...Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth..."* (John 18:37). He had one end and came for one cause. That's why He said "end" not ends, and "cause" not causes. Jesus has set an example for us that we should walk in His steps.

I have discovered that men who make outstanding impact on their generation are men of purpose. You too must become a man of purpose to become a man of accomplishment. You are not every man, you are just one man. That means one thing is sufficient for you to pursue. Give it all you have got and you will get all it contains.

I am doing only one thing in the world, and that is what He has sent me to do. I have not invested money into any organisation, yet I am blessed as I pursue my goal.

Show me a man with a goal and I'll show you a go-getter in the making.

Pursuing Purpose

There are many people in the world today who have taken pains to discover where they are going, but who are yet to accomplish anything, because vision is not automatically equal to distinction. It must be coupled with action. That is to say, it is purpose plus pursuit that results in achievement. Habakkuk said:

And the Lord answered me, and said, Write the vision, and make it plain upon tables, that he may run that readeth it. ***Habakkuk 2:2***
God was saying through the prophet, "Don't sleep with the vision, don't just talk about the vision, don't dance with it, "run" with the vision! Every day dreamer, the one who does nothing with his dreams, — will have nothing to show for it.
Apostle Paul says,
Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain. ***1 Corinthians 9:24***
The book of Hebrews also talks of the race of life saying, *"... let us run with patience the race that is set before us"* (Hebrews 12:1).
There is a race set before you, you must discover what it is and run it. There is a prize to obtain, but it is only for runners, not talkers or sleepers. It is time to run the race of destiny.

A young man who wants to be a medical doctor, he must first know which subjects to take. Then must be prepared to give it all he's got, otherwise that dream will never become a reality. Many Christians know where they are going but are not ready to give it what it takes.

People come to share their dreams with me. They say, "O, about twenty years ago, I knew I should go into business, but I was getting myself ready" or "Fifteen years ago, God called me into ministry, but as I was sorting myself out, God called someone else to do it."

God cannot be stranded! Whatever purpose He has for your life is transferable to another, if you are not ready for it. Men of action are men of distinction. Get ready to step out, because until you step out, you never stand out. No matter how slow your steps may be, take them any way. One wise man said, "If you cannot fly, run. If you cannot run, walk. If you cannot walk, crawl. By all means keep moving". I have kept moving.

In conclusion, let me say that God is not a respecter of colour, country, or gender. He is not a respecter of persons, everyone that fears Him and walks uprightly is accepted with Him. So no matter your colour, education, gender or

tribe, you can get to the topmost position in life.

I am a living witness to this truth. God has blessed me beyond my wildest imagination, yet I am not surprised that He has. I am not surprised that God has brought our church to where it is today. I would have been surprised if He hadn't.
Also, I am not surprised that our marriage is hitch-free, I would have been surprised if we had troubles. It is not because I am special, but because I saw from scriptures what it takes to be successful and I have committed myself to doing those things.
Friend, you are a man or woman to be envied.
Eyes have not seen, nor ears heard, neither has it entered into the heart of man what God has in store for you (1 Corinthians 2:9).
All you need is to have a dream and be committed to it. Remember Joseph? He had a dream, and was committed to it, so he ended his journey in the palace. The fact that he was hated did not cancel his future.

Many years ago, I was walking around the premises of Oral Roberts University in America, and looking at those fantastic structures, I told myself, "It can happen anywhere." That was on about 500 acres of land. Today, by the grace of God, our ministry has over 700 acres of land.

Dare to dream beyond where you are now!Stay committed to your dream, and the world that hates you today will envy you tomorrow!

