

30 DAYS PRAYER GUIDE & DEVOTIONAL

Hello,

I am delighted that the Lord has touched your heart to embark on this journey for the next 30 days. God takes a journey with us to transform us inside-out. I am confident in Him that this would not be an exception. As I write this devotional, I sensed the weight of it was primarily on the Lord bringing us into a 'DEEPER' place with Him.

Psalm 42:7 "Deep calls unto deep at the noise of Your waterfalls;"

Initiating this journey is a testament of a desire in your own heart to press into a deeper place with Jesus – There's no greater decision for a believer.

Wherever you are with God, whatever season of life you have found yourself, there is always "More" with Jesus. More of Him to Know, More of His Love to be revealed, More of His Refining" to be done in our lives. When our hearts truly cry out "Here I am Lord", Our Father graciously respond back to us with the gift of Himself.

Psalm 17:15 As for me, I will see Your face in righteousness; I shall be satisfied when I awake in Your likeness.

While for some of us, this journey is a corporate journey with our Church Family or a group of friends, God wants to be personal with you!

He wants to meet you where you are, minister to you and reveal Himself to you personally. While God may invite a crowd, He never misses the one who is truly thirsty for Him.

As written in the verse above, the result would be two things: **True Satisfaction** and a **Transformation** into more of His Likeness.

As you start this Journey, this is my heart cry for every one of us and I invite you to pray with me:

Lord, take me deeper, deeper in Love with You. Deeper than I have never been before and help me continually desire to be deeper in Love with you. I release myself from every form of distractions and deceptions of life vying for my time and that this season is truly consecrated to seek your face, to know You and set my heart ignited with the fire of Your Love, leading me to trust You more and be more like You.

In the name of Jesus, Amen.

I love you and I am so honored to be on this journey together.

Mo Obayomi.

DAY 1: WITH GOD, THERE IS ALWAYS MORE.

Philippians 3:10 that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death,

There is no peak to our experience of God. Our Lord is limitless and multidimensional. There is eternity locked in our hearts that stirs our desire to know Him more.

Psalms 42:7 Deep calls unto deep at the noise of Your waterfalls; All Your waves and billows have gone over me.

This knowledge of God is beyond an academic knowledge of Him, rather our quest and thirst for Him brings us to a place of deep sense of oneness and communion that surpasses knowledge. This depth is not reserved to a superclass in the family of God, rather it is the inheritance of everyone who has received the gift of salvation through Christ.

“For through Him we both have access by one Spirit to the Father.”
Ephesians 2:18.

Jesus is our access to the Father and thanks be to God that Jesus has not given us a partial access but a Full access. When you say “yes’ to Jesus by receiving Jesus as your Lord and savior, it initiates a journey of an unfolding beauty and Knowledge of God in Christ.

I am always intrigued by Paul’s pursuit of Jesus, after his Acts 9 encounter with Jesus, it appeared that there was an unceasing longing for the Lord. I had always wondered what happened in his heart that he could count everything else as dung compared to the surpassing knowledge of Jesus.

Even as Paul was coming towards the end of his life, his desire for knowing Jesus had not faded, his pursuit of Him was still blossoming and budding.

Could it be that there is a satisfaction we draw from our pursuit of knowing Jesus that makes everything else in the world look so small and insignificant?

God calls us daily to have a living experience of “more” of Him. A growing, authentic, and living experience. Do you have a living experience or a religious obligation?

He calls us to a place of consistent pursuit of Him because With God, there is ALWAYS more of Him to know and experience.

Today’s Prayer Points

- Father, will you stir in my heart a fresh desire for You.
- Father, will you highlight the areas of my life that are holding me back from drawing near.
- Father, will you bring me to a place where I am obsessed with your beauty.
- Father, will you help me to grow in my longing and affection for You till the things of this world become so insignificant.

DAY 2: TAKE OFF SAUL'S ARMOR

1 Samuel 17:39 David fastened his sword to his armor and tried to walk, for he had not tested *them*. And David said to Saul, "I cannot walk with these, for I have not tested *them*." So, David took them off.

The beauty of walking with Jesus is that we never stay the same. We evolve consistently into our identity. Our true identity is never in what people have called us or being like the people we admire. It is only in Jesus we can truly find who we are. We cannot fully step into our inheritance and God's purpose for our lives trying to be who we are not. When we allow the Lord to expose areas of false identity and beliefs about ourselves, we step into our inheritance.

David is an intriguing example in the scriptures. He was described as a man after God's own heart. Goliath had terrorized Israelites for several days until David showed up. To help David, confront Goliath, King Saul offered David his own armor. David put it on but took it off because they were **heavy**, he **could not walk** and had **never tested it!**

If David had gone in a borrowed armor, he would have showed up in a false identity before Goliath. You cannot bring down 'Goliaths' by who you are not. There are several of us who show up to life's battles with different tags - what people have called us and acting like those we admire.

God would not use someone else's identity to bring me into where He has designed for me.

Take off Saul's armor. While it's good to admire and appreciate what others have done, it is dangerous to show up daily trying to be them. You are who God says you are.

A false identity will always be heavy, it will weigh you down. It takes so much to be who you are not. A false identity will always slow you down. You can only walk while you stay true to who God has called and made you to be. Take off Saul's armor, it will never fit!

Isaiah 62:2 The Gentiles shall see your righteousness, And all kings your glory. You shall be called by a new name, Which the mouth of the Lord will name.

Today's Prayer Points

- Father, during this season, expose every false identity I have taken on and strip me of each one.
- Lord, bring me into a fresh revelation of who I am in you and help me to be comfortable in it.
- Lord, grant me the boldness to say 'No' to any offer that will not bring me into the fullness of my inheritance in you.
- Father, help me to be comfortable and confident in who you have made me and called me to be in Christ.

DAY 3: TOTALLY FORGIVEN

Psalm 103:1-3 Bless the Lord, O my soul; And all that is within me, *bless* His holy name! **2** Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits: **3** Who forgives all your iniquities, who heals all your diseases,

Jesus did not do a partial work on the cross, it was complete and perfect! Forgiveness of sins is God's gift to us in Christ. Jesus said, "It is Finished" on the cross and not "it continues". Man can now live free of the guilt and shame of sin because of His finished work.

For many of us, this is theoretical and not a practical reality in our walk with the Lord. We live with guilt and shame, carrying the weight of our sins on our shoulders. None of us can pursue God in deep intimacy when we still think He has a record of wrong against us. Guilt from sin is a stumbling block in our intimacy with the father.

Psalm 103 began with "bless the Lord, O my Soul ", Your Soul cannot truly and fully bless the Lord when your mind is not convinced that you are truly forgiven.

When we know that there is a true and perfect forgiveness in Jesus, it stirs up joy and gratitude in our hearts. God does a perfect job to make us in awe of Him.

If His work is not perfect and total, then Jesus is not different from any man or earthly god.

Isaiah 43:25 "I, *even I, am* He who blots out your transgressions for My own sake; And I **will not remember your sins.**

Romans 5:1 Therefore, having been justified by faith, **we have peace with God** through our Lord Jesus Christ,

Today, you can truly bless the Lord because your sins are totally forgiven, and you have peace with God.

Today's Prayer Points

- Father, I bless you truly because I am totally forgiven.
- Father, help me to release myself from the guilt and shame of past failures so I can follow you in Liberty and Joy.

DAY 4: Exhausted but Still in Pursuit

Judges 8:4 When Gideon came to the Jordan, he and the three hundred men who *were* with him crossed over, exhausted but still in pursuit.

Life could be exhausting. Sometimes in life as we conquer one challenge, we step into another challenge and sometimes, challenges come in multiples at the same time. The goal of these problems we confront is to sap our zeal for God, distract us and swap what is important for what is seemingly urgent. However, challenges never end because we live in a fallen world. Despite the challenges we confront, we must constantly check our zeal.

It was said of Jesus; for the zeal of the Father's house has consumed His heart- John 2:17. God's plan for our lives is never to have our best days with Jesus as historical but rather a consistent and growing pursuit of Him. Here lies the problem, the challenges we face bring exhaustion.

Gideon is such a phenomenal character in the bible as he models what God can do with the least of all. In his zeal to battle for the Lord in the company of his 300 men, they were faced with many difficulties but despite that, they kept going.

Have you stopped because challenges came?

Have you paused and become lukewarm because of the cares of this world? Those things never end, they are not meant to dull your pursuit but to drive your pursuit of Jesus.

The verse below is worth meditating over today.

Isaiah 40:28-31 Have you not known? Have you not heard? The everlasting God, the Lord, The Creator of the ends of the earth, neither faints nor is weary. His understanding is unsearchable. **29 He** gives

power to the weak, and to *those who have* no might He increases strength. **30 Even** the youths shall faint and be weary, And the young men shall utterly fall, **31 But** those who wait on the Lord Shall renew *their* strength; They shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, They shall walk and not faint.

The good news is that God has a solution for renewal of strength, it's by waiting. Waiting is not wasting. Waiting is fellowship, Waiting is trusting!

Today's Prayer Points

- Lord, I repent of every form of Lukewarmness in my life.
- Lord, I receive strength today to keep going despite the distraction around me.
- Lord, I trust you today for a fresh dose of your zeal to pursue You above all else.

DAY 5: THE JOY OF THE LORD IS OUR STRENGTH.

Nehemiah 8:10 Then he said to them, “Go your way, eat the fat, drink the sweet, and send portions to those for whom nothing is prepared; for *this day is holy* to our Lord. Do not sorrow, for the joy of the Lord is your strength.”

How do we find Strength in a tiring and changing world? It is important for us to know that what we have cannot be taken away from us. What we have is stable and reliable. This does not come from our achievement or our works. It must come from above. Joy is such!

Nehemiah was building the wall that has been demolished. Together with his team, they set out for this journey of 52 days, but it will not be without discouragement and opposition. While they had been armed with other natural tools in their hands, those were not sufficient to stop opposition neither hindered discouragement. He had to draw their attention to something else - The Joy of the Lord!

Joy is what you have because you are born again. Joy comes from the humble and solemn confidence that you are forever a child of God. It is sometimes called the Joy of Salvation. If you are saved, you can be joyful. You can switch your focus from things around and look within to “Christ in you.” You can fellowship with Jesus who is Joy personified until your soul feels it. Joy is not far away; Joy is within you.

There are several believers who are stoic and its obvious their lives lack joy. They only see what is not working in their lives and rarely see what God has done. Such believers never live in the reality of the presence of God. God’s presence is far away from such because in the Presence of

God there is fullness of joy and where there is Joy, there is God's presence.

Today, would you choose what you have? What you have already been given!

Galatians 5: 22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,

Today's Prayer Points

- Lord, today I choose Joy!
- Lord, help me to consistently draw from the well of Joy within and cultivate an awareness of your presence around me.

DAY 6: JOY HAS A SOUND.

Psalm 98:4 Shout joyfully to the Lord, all the earth; Break forth in song, rejoice, and sing praises.

The book of Revelation is a revelation of Jesus and gives us a view into the atmosphere of Heaven. The atmosphere around God's presence is the atmosphere of Joy. They are constantly speaking and singing day and night.

Revelation 4:8-11 *The four living creatures, each having six wings, were full of eyes around and within. And they do not rest day or night, saying: "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, Who was and is and is to come!"*
9 Whenever the living creatures give glory and honor and thanks to Him who sits on the throne, who lives forever and ever, **10** the twenty-four elders fall down before Him who sits on the throne and worship Him who lives forever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying: **11** "You are worthy, O Lord, To receive glory and honor and power; For You created all things, And by Your will they exist and were created."

Words activate Joy and creates an atmosphere for the presence of God. I have always been self-aware of seasons of life and environments that hinder me from verbally expressing my affection and Joy in the Lord. God has given us the gift of sound to be used for his glory. If joy is verbally expressed in heaven, how much more we, who are legitimate citizens of Heaven because we have trusted in Jesus.

Several of us struggle with this because of how we were raised or our doctrinal background. A growing faith in Jesus requires us to learn,

unlearn and relearn. If the scriptures say Let everything that has breath praise the lord -, so be it!

Today is a good day to verbally express yourself to God. “Thinking” of God is good, “verbalizing” your thoughts and emotions to Him is even better.

Today’s Prayer Points:

- Lord, I yield my emotions to You. They are yours and I release them fully to You.
- Lord, release me from wrong beliefs that hinder joy!

DAY 7: THE GIFT OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

Romans 5:17 For if by the one man's offense death reigned through the one, much more those who receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ.

Righteousness connects us to the presence of Jesus. Righteousness is the ability to stand before God without any sense of shame, guilt, or condemnation. There are several believers who are struggling to experience depth in their walk with Jesus. Their Christian life feels so dry and the Christian walk feels so unachievable. Such believers have spent time to pray, many have fasted and have practiced religious holiness on their own merits. God's presence is not primarily earned - No man can achieve by his own merit the ability to stand un-condemned before God. It is a gift we have received because of Jesus' death, burial, and resurrection.

Our bible reading for today confirms that we can receive God's gift of righteousness. It is only by Jesus' righteousness that we can stand before God guiltless. It is only by Jesus' righteousness that our prayers are answered. His righteousness draws us to a place of depth with Him. While we are called to a life of fasting and praying just like Jesus, we should never confuse those as our access to the father. Jesus is our forever access to Him.

Romans 5:2 through whom also we have access by faith into this grace in which we stand and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

Ephesians 2:18 For through Him we both have access by one Spirit to the Father.

You have full, unrestrained access to experience the Father's presence, love, affection, forgiveness, healing, revelation because of Jesus' gift of righteousness. Hallelujah

Today's Prayer Points:

- Lord, I thank You for your unrestrained gift of righteousness.
- Lord, I release myself from every self-effort to earn what You have freely given

DAY 8: ESTABLISHED IN RIGHTEOUSNESS

Isaiah 54:14 In righteousness you shall be established; You shall be far from oppression, for you shall not fear; And from terror, for it shall not come near you.

Righteousness is a shield. It is a shield from the wiles of the enemy. **Ephesians 6** catalogues the whole armor of God and lists one of them as the breastplate of righteousness. The righteousness by faith in Christ is our shield from the oppression of the devil. The devil goes around like a roaring lion looking for whom to devour. Believers are always on the devil's list - he wants to steal, kill, and destroy. He is after the peace and rest we have in Christ, our Joy in Christ salvation. He is after our freedom to serve the Lord and wants to bring us into bondage. However, being established and anchored in the Righteousness that is in Christ strengthens us to be able to withstand the enemy.

To be established in righteousness simply means being rooted in it. Taking root is a journey we take as we anchor our hearts in the truths of God's word solely based on what Jesus has done for us and not what we can do for ourselves. We need to grow in an unshakable confidence in the righteousness that comes by faith in Christ and not move away from that truth. Our walk with Jesus begins with Faith in Christ alone and continues with Faith in Christ alone with no additives. We need to read it to ourselves, say it again and again that we have now become the righteousness of God in Christ.

- Lord, I thank You for your unrestrained gift of righteousness.
- Lord, I thank You that I can come to You without any sense of shame, guilt, or condemnation.

- Lord, I release myself of any voice that says I am now good enough and recognize that I come before you based on Jesus' goodness and mercy.

DAY 9: FEEDING ON THE RIGHT DIET

Hebrews 13:8-9 Jesus Christ *is* the same yesterday, today, and forever. **9** Do not be carried about with various and strange doctrines. For *it is* good that the heart be established by grace, not with foods which have not profited those who have been occupied with them.

We are what we eat.

Our walk with Jesus is not an exception. We are what we choose to feed upon. God's right diet for us that would bring us into maturity is a very simple message: Christ and Him alone Crucified. Paul said to the Christians in Corinth.

1 Corinthians 2:1-2 And I, brethren, when I came to you, did not come with excellence of speech or of wisdom declaring to you the testimony of God. **2** For I determined not to know anything among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified.

Your dominant and consistent diet is a prophecy of the direction of your growth. The perfect diet has always been Jesus - yesterday, today, and forever. There are so many strange doctrines that make the presence of Jesus strange to our hearts. As you lend your ears to teachings and your eyes to books, be mindful of what you allow into your heart. A good litmus test is to ask if it is establishing your heart in the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. If it does not, flee! That is an appearance of evil. Whatever would not bring me into a closer walk with Jesus, building me into conformity into the image of the son, establishing my heart in His

goodness, may not be worth lending my ears and my eyes. Are you feeding on the right diet?

- Lord, I thank you for all that has been done in Christ.
- Lord, help me to set my face as a flint on what Christ has fully accomplished and finished for me.
- Lord, help me to recognize from afar every appearance of wrong diet that would not build up my confidence in Christ.

DAY 10: SET APART FOR YOU.

1 Samuel 9:22-24 Now Samuel took Saul and his servant and brought them into the hall and had them sit in the place of honor among those who were invited; there *were* about thirty persons. **23** And Samuel said to the cook, “Bring the portion which I gave you, of which I said to you, ‘Set it apart.’” **24** So the cook took up the thigh with its upper part and set *it* before Saul. And *Samuel* said, “Here it is, what was kept back. *It* was set apart for you. Eat; for until this time it has been kept for you, since I said I invited the people.” So, Saul ate with Samuel that day.

The coronation of Saul was quite a dramatic one. While it might look like he stumbled into kingship, we know there are no accidents or co-incidences with God. He is the God of all knowledge. When Saul got into the audience of Samuel, he was presented with a meal that had been prepared ahead for him - set apart specially for Saul and it was indeed a glorious meal.

We are not accidental sons of God. We have been born again into an inheritance that God has planned for us all before time began. There is a plan and purpose of God for your life - it is your inheritance. It is your portion. You don't need to be after another man's portion, you don't need to envy another person's inheritance; you just need to lay hold of your own inheritance and walk in it. Just like Samuel said to Saul, “it was set apart for you,” there are things God has set apart for you - They are yours in Christ.

Ephesians 2:10 For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.

There are things already prepared by God for you to walk in. They were prepared before your arrival. Your portion, tailor -made for you!

This season is a good time to ask the Lord, what have you set apart for me? There is no season of life where you cannot step into God's plans for your life. God has a definite plan for you - He has a purpose for you, and He is building something glorious and beautiful with your life. May you walk in it.

- Lord, I thank you for being an intentional creator with a clear purpose for my life
- Lord, I release myself from every form of envy of what belongs to others.
- Lord, open my eyes to the things you have prepared ahead for me.
- Lord, help me to be contented in who you have made me to be and live it out honorably

DAY 11: A COLT TIED UP.

Mark 11:1-3 Now when they drew near Jerusalem, to Bethpage and Bethany, at the Mount of Olives, He sent two of His disciples; **2** and He said to them, “Go into the village opposite you; and as soon as you have entered it you will find a colt tied, on which no one has sat. Loose it and bring *it*. **3** And if anyone says to you, ‘Why are you doing this?’ say, ‘The Lord has need of it,’ and immediately he will send it here.”

Jesus redefined purpose for us - We are made for Him!

The account in Mark 11: 1-3 is a metaphor of how our lives are meant to be consecrated for only one man - Jesus Christ. He is calling us to a life that is wholeheartedly devoted to Him alone. The colt was tied down and no one had ever ridden on it. It is the same way that God does not want anything to ride on our lives - Nothing of this world is primarily worthy of our devotion, affection, and attention **other than Him** - We are ‘a colt’ tied up for Him that nothing should take the primary place in our hearts. You are not made for an addiction; you are made for Him. You are not even made for your Job; you are colt set apart for Him. You are His Inheritance.

Isaiah 43:21 This people I have formed **for Myself**; They shall declare My praise.

Also, for a season, unlike other colts being seen by others, this colt was there separated and looked useless. Sometimes, God intentionally brings our lives into obscurity till the season of manifestation. If you feel it is taking too long for you to express God’s gifts in you or for people to recognize what God has placed in you, it may be that God has set you aside for a season so that he can use you specially for Himself only, in another season. Enjoy the gift of obscurity.

This seems to be the pattern by which God prepares His choice vessels. A good example is also John the Baptist.

Luke 1:80 So the child grew and became strong in spirit and was in the deserts till the day of his manifestation to Israel.

Lastly, Jesus was very specific for the Colt he wanted. He knew exactly which colt had been set aside for Him. The two disciples would have seen several colts on the way, they could have cut short their journey and pick any other Colt on the way, but it had to be the one tied up, specified by Jesus. God knows exactly where you are! You are not forgotten, rest in Him, consecrate yourself to Him wholly and enjoy His gift of obscurity for a season. You could just be “ A colt tied up”

- Lord, help me today to set my life wholeheartedly for you.
- Lord, help me not to be hasty to step into your promises for my life but allow You to refine me and prepare me for what You have ahead for me.
- Lord, I release myself from anything that is attempting to ride on my life, consecrate myself for You and You alone.

DAY 12: THINGS ABOVE, ONLY!

Colossians 3:1-3 If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. **2** Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth. **3** For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God.

Man is a seeker! We are constantly seeking things; it could be a new opportunity, a spouse, a breakthrough in an area. Everyone is seeking something. What we are seeking could be a distraction from what we have been called to seek - The Things above!

I can seek things above because that is where I belong and that is where I draw my identity. The passage says "If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things". My New birth in Christ resets my affection and re-prioritizes my life. Only those who have been raised together with Christ can truly desire and seek these things above because eternity has been placed in our Hearts.

What are the things above? They are the things God has given us the ability to know because we now belong to Jesus. These are the excellencies and beauties of Christ - His Holiness, purity, power, divinity, righteousness et al What makes Him God. God has put a desire for Himself in our hearts because He wants us to truly know Him.

Do you have a desire for things above? Are you feeding that desire?

Phillip had such desire to know the Father and He challenged Jesus with it.

Jesus responded that as Phillip knows Him, he will also know the Father.

John 14:8-9 **Philip** said to Him, “Lord, show us the Father, and it is sufficient for us.” **9** Jesus said to him, “Have I been with you so long, and yet you have not known Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; so how can you say, ‘Show us the Father’?”

The desire is fulfilled by a blossoming knowledge of Jesus.

You cannot seek the things above outside knowing Jesus. These things are in Him. They are your “In Christ “realities.

- Lord, I receive a fresh revelation of the Father and renew my knowledge of the things above
- Lord, help me to set my gaze on heavenly things and to know who you are and who I am in you.

Day 13: NOW MUCH, BUT ALL.

Mark 12:41-44 Now Jesus sat opposite the treasury and saw how the people put money into the treasury. And many *who were* rich put in much. **42** Then one poor widow came and threw in two mites, which make a quadrans. **43** So He called His disciples to *Himself* and said to them, “Assuredly, I say to you that this poor widow has put in more than all those who have given to the treasury; **44** for they all put in out of their abundance, but she out of her poverty put in all that she had, her whole livelihood.”

Our hinderance to giving our ‘all’ to Jesus is sometimes because of our comparison to others. Jesus is the rightful judge who can adequately measure the worth of what we have brought to Him. We sometimes feel accomplished when what we have given seemingly appears greater than others. God has asked for our hearts, not in comparison with our neighbors but in comparison with what He has given me; Not much, but All!

Some would say, only if I had more time, I would devote it to the Lord; I will study, pray, give, and serve more. God is not asking for Much but for All. He is asking to give in “All you have right now.” It may be 20 minutes or 2 hours! He needs our All.

We are not called to compare ourselves with others, we are not in competition with one another!

Comparison would either bring Self- exaltation or Self-loathing. Self-exaltation is when you feel you have done much more than others and self-loathing is when you dislike yourself because you feel you have not done enough compared to others.

Whichever of the two, comparison is foolishness.

2 Corinthians 10:12 **For** we dare not class ourselves or compare ourselves with those who commend themselves. But they, measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise.

He has not asked for much, He has asked for your All. Your 'All' in this season may differ from season to season. A pregnant woman's All may be different from a single lady's All. God knows the quantity of your All. He is not asking for Much, but All.

- Lord, I repent of the sin of self-comparison.
- Lord, I release myself from everything that comparison has birth in my life, self-exaltation or self-loathing.
- Lord, give me the grace to give my 'all' in every season that I am, even if it is two mites.

DAY 14: SHE HAS DONE WHAT SHE COULD.

Mark 14:3-8 And being in Bethany at the house of Simon the leper, as He sat at the table, a woman came having an alabaster flask of very costly oil of spikenard. Then she broke the flask and poured *it* on His head. **4** But there were some who were indignant among themselves, and said, "Why was this fragrant oil wasted? **5** For it might have been sold for more than three hundred denarii and given to the poor." And

they criticized her sharply. **6** But Jesus said, “Let her alone. Why do you trouble her? She has done a good work for Me. **7** For you have the poor with you always, and whenever you wish you may do them good; but Me you do not have always. **8** She has done what she could. She has come beforehand to anoint My body for burial.

Mary of Bethany’s story is such a unique story of unrestrained devotion to the Lord. She had broken her alabaster box of oil, and as the people around complained, Jesus said in verse 8 “..... She has done what she could “

One of the tools the enemy uses to condemn us and restrain us from serving Jesus in Freedom, is self-criticism. Some of us sometimes have an expectation from our lives that Jesus has not placed on us. We are quick to feel inadequate when we have seemingly not met a particular standard, we (or people) have set for us. We never feel fulfilled with any task, our desire for perfection squeezes Joy from our hearts. Our desire to impress people rob us of the ability to walk in contentment.

Jesus said concerning Mary when she was being castigated “She has done the best she could”. The voice of inadequacy from self-condemnation will never lead to a blossoming relationship with Jesus. What if what the Lord is saying to you today is “You have done the best you could.” What if after every task, you subscribe to the Father’s voice of “you have done the best you could.”

God has not called you to impress anyone including yourself; Don’t allow the voice of the enemy to steal your joy because you have not met a certain standard. Your true evaluator is Jesus, and He does not condemn but draws you deeper into a growing intimacy with Him.

- Lord, today I receive your affirmation above the voice of condemnation.

- Lord, give me the grace to practice contentment and stay fulfilled in you.

DAY 15: THE FLOATING AXE - HEAD.

2 Kings 6:5-7 But as one was cutting down a tree, the iron *ax head* fell into the water; and he cried out and said, “Alas, master! For it was borrowed.” **6** So the man of God said, “Where did it fall?” And he showed him the place. So, he cut off a stick, and threw *it* in there; and he made the iron float. **7** Therefore he said, “Pick *it* up for yourself.” So, he reached out his hand and took it.

Have you ever lost something very tangible? I have! I searched very painfully, yet diligently. In our story from the Text today, we see the young student under the leadership of Elisha who had lost the axe-head of the borrowed axe in the process of cutting down tree. He lost something precious. Then Elisha cut down a tree and the axe-head floated.

The axe-head of our lives is our spirit. It is the cutting edge of our lives. It is in its fervency we draw our strength. For many of us, we have lost our fervency, though we have a form of godliness, but it lacks power. There is not much substance to our walk with Jesus outside a set of religious obligations and activities, but God wants you to recover what you have lost.

2 Timothy 3:5 **having** a form of godliness but denying its power. And from such people turn away!

In the floating axe-head story, the young student cried out loud, though incoherently, he did not keep quiet when he observed something

precious had been missing. This is the starting point of restoration- A deep and genuine cry to the Lord. Crying out is not necessarily yelling, but an authentic desperation for a divine intervention. Have you lost your cutting edge? Has your spiritual life lost its fervency, or you have never even been fervent? The starting point it to cry out loud to the Lord.

- Lord, I thank you because you are a God of restoration - there is nothing missing that cannot be restored.
- Lord, restore and increase my Spiritual fervency.

DAY 16: AUTHENTIC AND VULNERABLE BEFORE THE FATHER.

2 Kings 6:5-7 But as one was cutting down a tree, the iron *ax head* fell into the water; and he cried out and said, “Alas, master! For it was borrowed.” **6** So the man of God said, “Where did it fall?” And he showed him the place. So, he cut off a stick, and threw *it* in there; and he made the iron float. **7** Therefore he said, “Pick *it* up for yourself.” So, he reached out his hand and took it.

Back to our story of the floating axe-head. the young student did not keep quiet, he did not cry out to his friends, he cried out to the master. The starting point of restoration is a desperate outcry to the one who can restore. Elisha confronted him with a simple question: Where did it fall?

Elisha, who was used by the Lord to cut down a tree and make the iron-float, would have known where the axe-head fell. Could it be that He confronted the young student with that question, so he could come to a place of humility and acceptance of his own flaws. God does not ask us questions because He doesn't know the answer but rather to expose our own foolishness and weak choices. Not to shame us but to humble us.

Where did it fall? Where did you lose it? Where did you miss it? When did you abandon God's plan for your own plan? This is how the Lord calls us and draw us to the place of repentance.

Can you imagine if the young student did not answer the question honestly? He would have missed the opportunity for restoration. Thank God he responded authentically and vulnerably. Today, where do you need to expose yourself to the one who can restore you - restore your fervency, your relationship, your marriage, your health, your mind. You

may need to expose to Him where the addiction started, confess the wrong association and friendship that have quenched the fire of God in your heart.

True repentance would start from being authentic and vulnerable before the Lord. Restoration then follows!

- Lord, I thank you because you are a God of restoration - there is nothing missing that cannot be restored.
- Lord, I release my deep secrets to you because they are not hidden from you in the first instance.
- Lord, I repent of the decisions that I have made that have weakened my walk with you.

DAY 17: SAFE IN HIS HANDS.

Isaiah 42:3 A bruised reed He will not break, and smoking flax He will not quench; He will bring forth justice for truth.

I am blessed to have four young kids with varying level of strength and agility. They love to climb on me, throw them up and roll them on the floor - I enjoy it dearly. However, I have learned to be intentional not to go over their individual agility. They need to know they are safe in my hands.

You are safe in the hands of Jesus. The passage for today is a prophecy about Jesus - It says "a bruised reed, He will not break, a smoking flax he will not quench."

A reed is a very weak plant, one of the weakest of all plants, yet the scripture talks about a bruised reed will not break in the hands of Jesus. It also stated that A smoking flax, He will not quench - A smoking flax is a fire that is almost burned out completely. The scripture says both, are safe in His hands. If you have been bruised in any way; taken advantage by the people you loved and trusted, bruised by your own error and misjudgments or you are in a season of exhaustion - You are safe in His hands.

Jesus is a trusted friend! You can safely run into His love. Humans could be rough with their words but not Jesus; He knows very well how to bring healing to our wounded soul and bring strength back to our weak bones. Today is a good day to run back into His love for a time of refreshing.

- Lord, I release unto you the bruises of my soul; the words that have wounded and damaged me.

- Lord, I trust your love and make myself vulnerable before you.
- Lord, I believe that you can heal me totally and completely.

DAY 18: TAKE AWAY THE DROSS.

Proverbs 25:4 Take away the dross from the silver, and there shall come forth a vessel for the refiner.

God is a refiner. He refines every vessel he wants to use. He refines our character, confidence, and conviction in Him. The God who loves us also refines us.

May I say that the process of refining is always very inconvenient and uncomfortable but that is His process of bringing our lives into conformity with His own life in us.

Our passage today is not necessarily asking us to do something by our power but calling us to a place of surrender and submission to the working of God in our lives. The father corrects our lives until there is conformity to His life in us. Are you in a place where you are fighting the corrections of God in your life? It is really a fight against conformity to His image.

Hebrews 12:6-7 For the Lord disciplines those he loves, and he punishes each one he accepts as his child.” **7** As you endure this divine discipline, remember that God is treating you as his own children. Who ever heard of a child who is never disciplined by its father?

The correction from God is also a proof of the Father’s love. As I respond to His correction, I get refined, the dross (dirt) is washed away and a vessel is provided for the master.

- Lord, I submit my life to your divine disciplining and correction.

- Lord, help me to see that your corrections reflect your love for me.
- Lord, help me to respond in obedience in areas where you are taking away the dross off my life.

DAY 19: FIT FOR THE MASTER'S USE.

2 Timothy 2:19-20 Nevertheless the solid foundation of God stands, having this seal: "The Lord knows those who are His," and, "Let everyone who names the name of Christ depart from iniquity." **20** But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and silver, but also of wood and clay, some for honor and some for dishonor.

There are several church goers, but the Lord is not confused about those who are His. Those who have received His life and thereafter following Him in His path. Sometimes, there is confusion among believers about who truly belongs to God. Our passage today is a reminder that while men may be confused, our Heavenly Father is not confused - He knows those who are His. In fact, it went further to say that it is the seal of a solid foundation in the Kingdom. May I say this, if you have received Christ as your Lord and Savior, you are His. You are forever His, never to be lost - You are kept by the power of God.

There is a caution to those who are His - Depart from Iniquity. We depart because we are already His and a lifestyle of iniquity is not in agreement with our new creation life.

Also, we depart so we could be a vessel; a servant fit for the master's use. The degree to which God would use me for His glory is not only dependent on Him, but He has also called me to a place of separation to Himself and as I do, the Lord finds a vessel worthy to be used for His own glory - A vessel of Honor.

Just like an athlete who needs to be fit for his sport; he relinquishes some things because not every kind of food is permitted so he could be fit. Also, not everything in our lives is permitted for the sake of being fit for the master's use, because the master is worthy. This is a burning passion in my own heart; to be fit for the master's use. God calls us out from the crowd to a life of consecration just unto Him simply because He wants a vessel fit for His use.

- Lord, I thank you for your seal on my life because I belong to you.
- Lord, help me to stay fit for your use.
- Lord, help me depart from the things you have called me to relinquish in my life.

DAY 20: IT'S NO LONGER I.

Galatians 2:20 I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the *life* which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.

Herein lies the heart of the Epistles- It is no longer I that lives.

If we can remember this in our daily walk, we will be more fruitful. There are two "I" s in that passage of the scripture. One "I" signifies who we were without Jesus and the other "I" represent who we are now in Christ. The old "I" is the person who was under the rulership and leadership of the devil. The one who could not control his affections, emotions and desire but spent them wholly on things that do not profit his soul. The good news is that Jesus dealt with these things on the cross. He dealt completely with the Lordship of the devil over my life so that I will not be a slave to Him and his desires. I am now a slave to righteousness (Romans 6:18) .

There is a new "I"; There is a new person living within me and that is Christ, the risen Lord, and our savior. We ought to be reminded that Jesus is the one who dwells in us now. It's His desires in me now, it's His Joy in me now, It's His passion in me now. The old "I" who was the producer of anger, lust of the flesh, pride, and all the things the scripture call the works of the flesh is no longer in me. I have the potential of bearing fruits that are in accordance with righteousness because I have become the righteousness of God. Why? Christ lives in me. How do I produce this fruit? I Live by the faith of the Son of God. As I daily anchor my faith in Jesus and trust Him, I will produce good fruits and will not look like who I used to be. Hallelujah!

- Lord, I thank you because you Live in me, there is no greater Joy

- Lord, thank you for releasing me from the rulership and influence of the enemy.
- Lord, I release myself to trust you daily, living by the Faith of the Son of God.

Day 21: THE CRUCIFIED LIFE.

Galatians 5: 24 And those *who are* Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.

These are passages in the scripture that are uneditable; clearly dotted by the Holy Spirit to birth a wholesome life. Those that are Christ's have crucified the flesh. The Crucifixion of the flesh does not primarily come by self-discipline, it does not come by making a new year or weekly resolution, it comes by a life that has truly passed through the Cross and daily trusting Jesus for a life that reflects his own life.

Our emphasis this morning is a desire for a life that reflects such as Christ's. A life that has no resemblance with the "flesh life". As the passage says, the flesh life has its passions and desires; the things that it loves and produces. You can be a healthy evaluator of your own life; is it producing the passions and desires of the flesh life or is it a life crucified with Christ?

The solution is simply - The Cross.

Galatians 6:14 But God forbid that I should boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.

Our boast of victory over the flesh life, its passion and desires is simply the Cross of the Lord Jesus. The cross is not just an emblem around the neck or a symbol around the house. The cross is a reality in my heart. A life that has truly been confronted with the sacrifice and atonement of Jesus, producing fruits in accordance with the new life of Christ in me. This is indeed the true Christian life and every one of us can produce such fruits.

- Lord, I thank you because you live in me, there is no greater Joy
- Lord, thank you for releasing me from the rulership and influence of the enemy.
- Lord, I release myself to trust you daily, living by the Faith of the Son of God.
- I have no other boast outside the cross of Jesus through which I have been crucified to the world and the world to me.

Day 22: OUR PURPOSE FOR LIFE - HIM!

2 Corinthians 5:14-15: For the love of Christ compels us, because we judge thus: that if One died for all, then all died; **15** and He died for all, that those who live should live no longer for themselves, but for Him who died for them and rose again.

In this new life in Christ, we are constantly being drawn by the master's love. Our love for Him, our devotion to Him and our sacrifices in His name are simply a response to His own Love for Us. Indeed, we love Him because He **has first loved** Us. The peak of Love for Humanity was what Jesus did on the Cross - His death, burial, and resurrection. We would have never known how much God loves us if the Son never demonstrated it on the cross. Thank you, Jesus.

There is also a corresponding response to His Love in our Hearts. His Love bestows on us a new purpose for Life - Him!

Jesus died for all so that every beneficiary of His death would now **Live for Him**. We now have a new purpose: To know Him and make Him Known, To Serve the one who has Served Us. The Life of God in Us is meant to elevate Christ in all that we do. No More, No Less.

God gives us platforms in life, through our careers, community involvement, academics et al. The purpose of those platforms is simply to make Him Known. Those platforms are not our purpose but rather vehicles for our purpose.

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

This ought to be our Mantra - Christ! He has become our life's Purpose. May our eyes be opened to this truth.

- Lord, I thank you for the expression of your love for me on the cross.
- Lord, I thank you because you have called me to One thing - To know You and make you known through your life in me.
- Lord, help me to live out my life purpose and unfold the Christ life in me day after day.

Day 23: THE EMMAUS ROAD

Luke 24:17 And He said to them, “What kind of conversation *is* this that you have with one another as you walk and are sad?”

Luke 24:32 And they said to one another, “Did not our heart burn within us while He talked with us on the road, and while He opened the Scriptures to us?”

Luke 24 is such a beautiful account of Jesus post-resurrection. Jesus joined two of His disciples as they journey 7 miles from Jerusalem to a Village called Emmaus. Luke 24:13-53 would be a good passage to be immersed into in this season. At the beginning of their journey, they were filled with sorrow and their hearts were sad but as Jesus inserted himself to their journey, A sorrowful heart changed into a burning Heart. The difference between their sorrowful hearts and their burning hearts was Jesus revealing himself to them from all the scriptures.

A sorrowful Heart reflects a heart missing out of the revelation of Jesus. Our salvation experience puts us into a journey of Christ being revealed to us. Our journey from here to eternity needs to be filled with a daily unfolding revelation of Jesus in all His beauties and excellences. The permanent solution to a sorrowful heart is a revelation of Jesus. The recipe to an ever-burning hearts filled with love is Jesus.

The scriptures are never meant to be riddles to our hearts but rather meant to unveil to us a revelation of Jesus that turns a sorrowful heart to a burning heart.

Ephesians 1:17-18 that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him, **18** the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that you may know what the hope of His calling is, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints,

This was Paul's prayers for the new believers at Ephesus- for their hearts to be overwhelmed with the freshness of the revelation of Jesus. Would you also go on this journey with Jesus today- The Emmaus Road?

- Lord, I partner with you on this journey of an unfolding of your beauty.
- Lord, I submit to the Inner Teacher - The Holy Spirit to lead me into the beauty of Jesus in all the scriptures.
- Lord, I receive a daily passion for your word, to know you better and deeper.

DAY 24: MERCY, NOT MERIT.

Luke 18:9-14 Also He spoke this parable to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others: **10** “Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. **11** The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, ‘God, I thank You that I am not like other men—extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this tax collector. **12** I fast twice a week; I give tithes of all that I possess.’ **13** And the tax collector, standing afar off, would not so much as raise *his* eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, ‘God, be merciful to me a sinner!’ **14** I tell you, this man went down to his house justified *rather* than the other; for everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.”

Jesus in this parable exposed to us two kinds of believers; Those who come to the father trusting in themselves and those who truly trust in Him for all. Those who come on the platform of merit and those who come based on His Mercy. The pharisee pridefully began pointing to his good works as the qualification before the father. He mentioned his prayer, giving, fasting and sacrifices. However, the tax collector had only this phrase “God, be merciful unto me.” Is God against praying, fasting, studying the word, giving? Absolutely not! However, as beautiful as those things are, they are not our qualification, mercy is! We do those things as a response to His mercy we have received. It is Mercy not Merit. I have learned to daily cry out for His Mercy. It’s by His Mercy I love, I forgive, I Give, I pray, I fast, I draw near. Mercy!

The Christian life is fully dependent on His mercy - Lord, if you do not, I cannot.

Are there things you are trusting the lord for, don’t approach the courts of heaven through the route of good works, it never works, take the Mercy Lane! It always lead there.

Hebrews 4:16 Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

- Lord, I cling to your mercy today and every day of my life.
- Lord, help me to live above self-justification but to lean into the Mercy that comes from Christ.
- Lord, help me to live above self-comparison or judge others but rather to remember I am what I am simply by your mercy.

DAY 25: SWEEP THE ENTIRE HOUSE.

Luke 15:8 “Or what woman, having ten silver coins, if she loses one coin, does not light a lamp, sweep the house, and search carefully until she finds *it*?”

When we consider the father’s intense pursuit of our hearts, it humbles us. This parable not only shows us how God pursues the Lost but also how God does a detailed job in our hearts. God does not want a part of my heart; He wants my whole heart - He desires to have everything. God wants to light the lamp of the word of God into my whole heart and sweep it through until the lost areas are captured. Would you allow Him?

The lamp of the word of God exposes, does not shame. When I allow the word of God, it will expose secret places of my heart where the father still wants to do a deep work; it could be a work to expose ingratitude, unforgiveness, inordinate affection et al - Areas that are yet to experience the Lordship of Jesus in my life. The word of God when lighted, sweeps through our entire lives, may we allow him to do His work.

When I approach the word of God with a dire desire for the Lord to capture my heart, it would sweep through every corner and expose areas that need His divine touch. This has been my own prayer; Lord don’t take your hands off my life until everywhere looks completely like you.

- Lord, can you sweep through every corner of my heart for your glory.

- Lord, expose the hidden areas of my life that need your divine touch. Areas that I do not even know about.
- Lord, I allow you to do a detailed work in my heart now and forever.

DAY 26: MAKE ROOM FOR JESUS!

Luke 2:7 And she brought forth her firstborn Son, and wrapped Him in swaddling clothes, and laid Him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.

The first place that could have had opportunity to host God physically on the earth missed it because they were full and had no room. Jesus: the most important personality in Heaven and on earth was crowded out because of other personalities in the Inn. If the manager of the Inn had known about the potential of the newborn baby, perhaps would not have missed the opportunity of a lifetime.

What is crowding Jesus out of our lives? What are the ‘personalities’ that look more important and give no room for the prince of peace in our lives, homes, and local churches. There are things that look more important; they also do have an appearance of urgency and then veil the potential of what Jesus would do in our lives. We need to always do an inventory of our lives occasionally, Is Jesus having a growing space in my life or being crowded out?

Most times our homes are always filled with additional stuffs, many times they are things we don't need, and hoarded items now begin to choke and compete with us in our space. This is descriptive of our walk with Jesus; we take on projects, add friendships, even career positions that succeed in doing only one thing: encroach on the room that belong

to Jesus in our lives. Jesus needs a growing space not a crowded space. Occasional audits are necessary, clearing out the debris and trash of our lives that choke our walk with Him

Make room for Jesus!

- Lord, expose my heart to me in areas where I need to make room for you.
- Lord, grant me the boldness to confront areas where you are drawing my attention to those things that are choking my walk with you.
- Lord, help me to continually prioritize and give you a growing space in my life.

DAY 27: A NEW BOWL AND SALT.

2 Kings 2:19-22 Then the men of the city said to Elisha, “Please notice, the situation of this city *is* pleasant, as my lord sees; but the water *is* bad, and the ground barren.”

20 And he said, “Bring me a new bowl, and put salt in it.” So, they brought *it* to him. **21** Then he went out to the source of the water, and cast in the salt there, and said, “Thus says the Lord: ‘I have healed this water; from it there shall be no more death or barrenness.’” **22** So the water remains healed to this day, according to the word of Elisha which he spoke.

The miracles of God through Elisha point us to the work of Jesus in our lives. We see here in this story how God heals our barrenness and most importantly destroys the power of death in our lives - Spiritual death. A city that looks good externally, but the content is bad. This is how the world system looks like, very well packaged with destructive substance. Sadly, our lives sometimes mirror this where we look pleasant, but things are bad within, marriages look like this and sadly even the local church could look well package, but the water of the word is bad- there is no sound doctrine and little consideration for a high view of the scriptures.

Elisha asked for two Things: A bowl and Salt. He requested for something deep and not just for a flat plate. It’s the same thing, the transformation God works in our lives begins with us surrendering the depths of our hearts and not just the surface of our lives. Our deepest place not our flat surfaces. This is the starting point for every enduring

transformation, a change of heart not a change of style, Internal change and not an external adjustment. Jesus is not just the salt of the earth but also the true salt for our hearts. The only one that would take care of the tastelessness of our hearts when we allow him.

Today is an invitation for something deep, not just something casual. We present to Him our deepest hearts again and not just the flat surface of our external lives, we ask for substance and not just style.

- Lord, I present the depth of my heart to you for you to do a deep work
- Lord, deliver me from hypocrisy where I am contented with appearance but no substance.
- We pray for our local church and all the churches in our city that you will touch the ministry of the word for it to be life giving and transformational.

DAY 28: A DURABLE TRANSFORMATION

2 Kings 2:19-22 Then the men of the city said to Elisha, “Please notice, the situation of this city *is* pleasant, as my lord sees; but the water *is* bad, and the ground barren.”

20 And he said, “Bring me a new bowl, and put salt in it.” So, they brought *it* to him. **21** Then he went out to the source of the water, and cast in the salt there, and said, “Thus says the Lord: ‘I have healed this water; from it there shall be no more death or barrenness.’” **22** So the water remains healed to this day, according to the word of Elisha which he spoke.

God does not do an imperfect work that does not endure, His work is always everlasting. It is His desire that we bear fruits and our fruits remain (John 15:16). There are times when we seemingly have an illusion of victory; victory over addictions, over fear, over anger but then few years, or months or even days down the line, the problem resurfaces, and we wonder what happened. Friend, it is His desire that your victory would endure.

The above passage shows us that the water remains healed until this day. This is firstly the goodness of the gospel in that when God gives me a new heart, what we call Salvation; it endures forever, it is not temporal. In addition, we can also see that the key to an enduring transformation with Jesus is when I allow Him to go to the source of the problem. Elisha went to cast the salt at the source of the water. There is no enduring transformation without a genuine repentance that brings Jesus to the source of the situation. We must take him to the source of

the problem, humbly accepting our inadequacy and our need for a divine touch for him alone. When we allow Him to cast the salt of the word of God into the source of that situation, His healing endures. When did the addiction of alcoholism begin, the sexual perversion; the solution is not simply some emotional response to Him but rather a deep-rooted work of God by His word and spirit in my heart?

- Lord, I give you permission to do a deep work in my heart.
- Lord, I expose the source and starting point of the issues of my heart, surrender them to you lord.
- Lord, do an enduring work in my life, now and always.

DAY 29: COUNT IT ALL JOY.

James 1:2-4 My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, **3** knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience. **4** But let patience have *its* perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing.

The scriptures strengthen us to maintain an eternal perspective during times of trials. Jesus never promised us a life void of challenges. In fact, in part of His closing statements, He said.

John 16:33 These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.”

Why do believers go through trials and tribulations? It is simply because we live in a fallen and imperfect world that is also under the sway of the wicked one - 1 John 5:19.

Our God is faithful, He ensures we are not confronted with more than we can bear, and, in His sovereignty, He helps us maintain a heavenly perspective during our life’s trials.

James 1 opened with a seemingly contradictory statement in the same sentence; To count trials as Joy! While we can understand enduring trials, rejoicing during trials seem foreign to the natural mind. However, for us as believers, we can understand because right in the next verse (verse 3), it says “Knowing”.

It is what we know that keeps our heads-up during trials. We know that God is in charge and much more the providential ability of God makes Him to use the trials and tribulations He did not cause to bring about a deeper walk and Knowledge of Him in our lives.

We are never to allow the trials of life to pull us away from the Lord but rather to plunge us into the depth of Him that is available in the valley of life.

There is no height or low of life that God cannot be experienced. We are to look at trials from the aspect of eternity; through this I will know the Lord deeper, and it would express Christ life in me in a fresh way.

- Lord, thank you that there is no season of life that I cannot plunge into a deeper walk with you.
- Lord, I ask for grace to maintain an eternal perspective during the confusing and inconvenient seasons of life.
- Lord, thank you because by your providence, trials would bring out Christ life in me and not sink me.

DAY 30: THE FATHER'S ENDLESS LOVE IN TRIALS.

Romans 5:3-5 And not only *that*, but we also glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation produces perseverance; **4** and perseverance, character; and character, hope. **5** Now hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us.

How trials work together for our good surpasses our understanding, yet they do work for our good. Another translation puts Romans 5: 3-5 this way.

“3 But that’s not all! Even in times of trouble we have a joyful confidence, knowing that our pressures will develop in us patient endurance. **4** And patient endurance will refine our character, and proven character leads us back to hope. **5** And this hope is not a disappointing fantasy, because we can now experience the endless love of God cascading into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who lives in us!”

In trials, we can maintain a joyful confidence, develop patient endurance & proven character, and then build a living hope. What a mystery to absorb during our trials. However, the Lord does this by His Holy Spirit in Us. The Holy Spirit in us reminds us of the endless and immutable love of the Father. It is only this kind of love that can shift our perspective during conflicting pains. This love changes us from within in a way nothing else can.

Friend, as you are confronted with difficult circumstances around you, the Holy Spirit wants to use those situations to open you up to another

dimension of the Father's love that makes those mountains look like nothing because everything fades away and shrinks in the light of the Father's love.

- Lord, thank you for the gift of the Holy Spirit that never leaves irrespective of the season of life.
- Lord, I partner with the Holy Spirit to see another dimension of your love in season of trials.

DAY 31: QUENCH NOT THE SPIRIT.

1 Thessalonians 5:16-19 **16** Rejoice always, **17** pray without ceasing, **18** in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.

19 Do not quench the Spirit.

As we wrap up these 30 days journey together, it is imperative to know how to stay fired up beyond a season. Thankfully the scriptures are not silent on this. In the passage above, we are encouraged not to quench the Spirit. The Holy Spirit in us is immortal, cannot be killed but our relationship with Him could go silent, the intensity of our relationship could be quenched, if we allow it.

We are encouraged to "rejoice always." Joy is not primarily a series of feelings; joy is a choice that I make that locks negative emotions out of my life. One of the ways many quench the Spirit is the absence of the practice of Joy. Joy has a song, Joy has an emotion, Joy has an atmosphere. Be intentional about the environment you constantly create around you - Let it be Joyful. Sing a song, laugh out loud, dance along because Joy is a choice. Our Joy is in the Lord and not in things. Just make sure you do not quench the Spirit. Prayer keeps the fire

burning in our hearts. When prayer is seemingly becoming events rather than a lifestyle, the fire of the Spirit begins to quench. Prayer is not an option for the believer, it is the oil that continually sets our hearts ablaze. Pray alone, pray in group, whatever it takes by His Mercy, do not quench the Spirit. Lastly, in that passage, we see thanksgiving. An ungrateful heart would never stay on fire because it lacks the Spirit of gratitude. Don't join the band wagon of those who never see anything good happening in their lives nor in the Church, such never burn for long. Whatever it will cost, quench not the Spirit my friend. Keep Burning!

- Lord, I receive the grace to maintain the atmosphere of Joy
- Lord, strengthen my feeble knees and keep me in awe of you.
- Lord, I repent of the sin of ingratitude, and I choose to be grateful for all You've done and still doing in my life and the Church.

DAY 32: BURN AND NOT BURN OUT

Romans 12:11 not lagging in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord.

Romans 12:11 (MSG) 11 Don't burn out; keep yourselves fueled and aflame. Be alert servants of the Master,

I am always dazed when I see wild forest fire. Most times those fire began with a simple spark that consumes the entire forest. Whoever despises a simple spark has despised a potential forest fire. If the fire continues to find trees to Burn, it will not burn out.

One of the ways we stay aflame is through kingdom service. A kingdom service that is born out of deep devotion and intimacy and not just some religiosity. There is no one who is on fire for Jesus who is not pouring the fire into something - Kingdom service. God has called us to serve Him as a way of staying in awe of Him and burning for Him. We serve Him by serving the Local Church and Humanity. Be a fire lighter, who is lighting up everywhere you go by serving the Lord. God does not want you to just be a consumer who is not involved in the life of the local church but rather someone actively blooming in kingdom service where you are planted.

We sometimes struggle to know where we fit in the local church. Well, serve first and then your gifts would begin to make space for you and consequently identify the areas of your dominant calling.

You were born to Burn and not Burn Out.

- Lord, I receive the grace to burn and not burn out.

- Lord, I ask for grace to recognize the opportunities and areas where I should serve to keep the fire of God alive in me