

# **Reign in Life**

**Live your life in the truth of  
Christ's Victory on the cross**

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Unless otherwise stated, all scripture quotations are taken from the  
KING JAMES VERSION of the Bible

This book is dedicated to my Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Without Him, I am nothing



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# PREFACE

*To reign: To have control, rule or influence of any kind; to possess and exercise power and authority*

“I don’t know which God you are praying to because it seems He cannot hear my prayers!” I was on the phone with a good friend and I was very frustrated. I was going through a very tough season in my life and it was affecting every sphere of my life. My car had broken down 3 times in just 2 weeks; twice on the way home in the middle of winter. I did not have a stable job. Rent was due and I had no idea where rent money was going to come from. For months, I had been receiving “threat of eviction” letters from my landlord. I hardly had enough money to buy food. I lived far away from home. I knew no-one I could ask for a loan and even if I did ask for a loan from someone, how was I going to pay them back?

It was during this season of difficulty that I woke up one morning completely angry at God. I remember waking up and

screaming into my empty room, “Why did you even wake me up this morning, Lord? Why didn’t you allow me to die in my sleep?” In my frustration, I thought that even death would be better than living another day on earth with all the trouble I was facing. As far as I was concerned, I was at my wits end , there was no-one who could help me and there was no way I could possibly crawl out of this hole I was in.

My story is not unfamiliar. Many of you reading this book have either been through a difficult season or you are currently going through one. This book is not about throwing a pity party or about bemoaning past troubles. This book is about reigning in life. That was and remains God’s original plan for you.

**And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. – Genesis 1:26**



God's original plan, before Satan tempted Adam and Eve, was that we, the descendants of Adam would have dominion over all the things He had created. This is a clear fact stated in Genesis 1:26 quoted above. The phrase "let them have dominion" is especially underlined because I wanted to highlight the very important fact that it is God's will for you to reign in life because it was His original plan for you. Let's look at another Scripture from the Book of Revelation.

**You have made them to be a kingdom and priests to serve our God, and they will reign on the earth. – Revelation 5:10**

The moment you accepted Jesus Christ into your life, your position changed from a person who was headed straight for hell and destruction to one who is washed in the Blood of Jesus and one who is a king (or queen if you so prefer!) and a priest who is meant to reign in life.

Jesus Christ died and rose again from the dead so that you and I would never have to be victims of this life. This does not

mean that your life will be devoid of trials and difficulties. It just means that when those challenges do arise, Jesus Christ has already guaranteed your victory. It is only up to you, to walk in that knowledge.

It is clear from this short introduction that from Genesis, the first book of the Bible, to Revelation, the last book of the Bible, God's perfect will for us is to reign in life. The Bible is very clear on this and there is no doubt about it as you read through the Bible.

**Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. - Romans 8:37**

I want to share one truth with you that you *never* have to forget: you are more than a conqueror. Yes, I realize that this might come as a shock to Christians of the “religious” kind because somehow we've been programmed to think that Christians are the most pitiable beings on the earth and that we must go around with morose faces in order to earn some kind of “holiness points”. The

more sober you look, the more holy you are. This is not what the Bible teaches.

I have met many people who despite being born again continue to live in fear, timidity and defeat. I used to be one of those Christians. Beloved, if you are reading this book I want you to know that regardless of who you are, this mentality and way of life must change because that is *not* your identity as a believer in Jesus Christ. I wrote this book to let you know that you, my dear friend, are capable of overwhelming victory in every area of your life. There's always that temptation to look at your circumstances and think to yourself, "Well, I don't feel like a conqueror". What you think or feel does not matter. The circumstances do not matter; what matters is that the Word of God says you are a conqueror. Dear Friend, we need to come to that place as Christians where each one of us can say "The Word of God says it. I believe it. That does it!"

It is my prayer that as you read this book, you will begin to see yourself as the king and priest that you truly are so that you can

begin to live the life of a person who reigns in life through the Name of Jesus Christ. Amen!

A great way to be blessed by this book is to have a notebook, a pen and your Bible with you as you read. Read the Scriptures that are quoted in your Bible and meditate on them. Take note of the things that especially have an impact on you and write them down. Let us begin.

# *CHAPTER ONE*

## **FAITH AND PATIENCE**

This book is not about what our modern world is about: the quick, the fast and the easy. If you have lived life for more than 30 seconds you probably know by now that life does not have quick, fast and easy answers. Most things in life take time. It takes nine months from the moment of conception to the day a baby is born. It takes about a year for that baby to start walking. Around the same time they begin to walk, the baby may begin to mouth some words. When a child starts talking, they start with unintelligible sounds. Eventually those sounds become words you can understand. As the months go by, their speech becomes clearer and their vocabulary increases until they can finally hold full-fledged, understandable conversations.

It is the norm: babies do not start to talk the moment they are born. Therefore, it would make absolutely no sense if a parent got impatient at their baby for not being able to talk right after he or she enters the world. Similarly, it would be absolutely bizarre if the parent of a one-year-old got frustrated at their child for not being able to have a conversation about current economic trends! Growth takes time. Most of us understand this concept when we apply it to natural things so why can't we apply this same dynamic to our spiritual lives? You do not quit your job after working for three weeks just because your boss has not paid you your retirement benefits. That would be totally absurd! Yet, this is what most people in the church do today.

There is no such thing as a “spiritual magic wand” that will solve all your problems. Many of us in the church rush and run at the sound of the latest thing in town that can solve our problems. For some, it involves calling into prayer-lines constantly with one problem or another and supposing that the prayers said over our lives will immediately solve our issues. Other people chase after

prophecies and anointing oil and seem to believe that their deliverance lies in these things. Yet for some, they jump from church to church hoping to finally find the pastor or minister of God who will bring them their “breakthrough”. Somewhere along the line, this erroneous mindset has crept into the church and has set many people on a path to disappointment, disillusionment and destruction. For many who have gone this way, when their problems are not solved by all these methods, they conclude that God does not exist or that the ministers of God are simply a bunch of deceivers. This could not be further from the truth.

Please do not misunderstand me. Calling others to agree with you in prayer is a powerful thing. However when you try to manipulate the privilege of prayer and the anointing of the Holy Spirit, you are going to end up in a miserable state.

Instead of attempting to locate a “spiritual magic wand” this is what the Bible urges us to do, “**...but imitate those who through *faith and patience* inherit the promises.**” (Hebrews 6:12)

There is an important point I want to make from the above-quoted Scripture. As believers in Jesus Christ, faith *and* patience are required of us in order to inherit the promises of God. In other words, we need *both* faith and patience to live as conquerors. We just cannot have one without the other. *You have to have faith that Jesus Christ is real and that He cares about your situation. You have to have the patience to watch His perfect will unfold in your life.*

A great example of how faith and patience work together to bring about the fulfillment of God's promises is found in Abraham. In the book of Genesis beginning in the twelfth chapter, we see God making a series of profound promises to Abraham. Abraham is described as being a friend of God (James 2:23). There had to be something that made him special enough to be given that title. Let's find out what it was.

In Hebrews 6:13-18, God made this promise to Abraham, **“Surely blessing I will bless you and multiplying, I will multiply**



**you.”** (Verse 14) and then the Bible says an interesting thing. It says in verse 15 “**And so after he** (*Abraham*, emphasis added) **had patiently endured, he obtained the promise.**” Abraham received the blessings God had promised him because he was patient.

In Romans chapter 4, we are once again pulled into the life of Abraham. Here, he is described as a man of immense faith.

**And being not weak in faith, he considered not his own body now dead, when he was about an hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of Sara's womb: He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; -**  
Romans 4:19-20

God had promised Abraham a biological son. He and Sarah, his wife, were getting on in years and still did not have one. Anyone who has lived through the pain of childlessness knows what this feels like. In some cultures, the inability to have a child soon after marriage is completely frowned upon and seen as a curse for your wrong-doing. There is definitely a lot of negative stigma attached to

being childless. And then, here comes God promising to give Abraham a biological son through his wife Sarah. We infer from the Scripture above that Abraham and his wife's bodies by all natural standards were "dead". They were too old to have children. But Abraham believed God.

Sometimes it is better for us to simply believe God. Oh, there is no doubt that your situation is hopeless. In fact people have been calling you hopeless all your life. The beautiful thing about all of this however is that God specializes in hopeless cases! I know this personally because I have seen it firsthand!

Now it is up to you to believe God and disregard all the things that your natural circumstances are telling you. By the way, in case you were wondering how long it took before Abraham finally had the son God had promised him, I would like to tell you. It took 20 years.

Dear Christian, if you are going to overcome childlessness, hurts, financial difficulty, the death of a loved one, abandonment and pain, bitterness and rejection, you are going to need *faith* to

believe that as you pray and pour out your heart to God that He is more than able to turn the ship around. The second thing you are going to need is *patience* to wait for God to turn the ship around.



# *CHAPTER TWO*

## **ONE THING YOU HAVE TO KNOW**

Well actually, there are a number of things we need to know to reign in life but for now, there is one thing I would like you to know. No matter what happens: you, my friend, cannot give up! You cannot give up on your marriage. You cannot give up on your child who has gone wayward. You cannot give up on a sick spouse. You cannot give up.

I am not saying “you cannot give up” just because I want to give you a pep talk. There is a very legitimate reason why you must not give up. Dear Christian, when you give up, Satan, the enemy of our souls, gets excited because he knows he can now fill your head with all sorts of lies.

Beloved, Satan is not going to wear a red suit, wield a pitchfork in his hands with smoke coming out of his nostrils to present himself to you as the enemy of your soul. Those are amateur

tricks. He is a master deceiver who uses clever tricks and lies to get you to give up on your stance in Jesus Christ.

As I mentioned earlier, there was a morning I was angry at God when I woke up in the morning and found I was still alive. My situation looked hopeless and at the time it seemed I would be better off dead. One day, as I was walking up to the door of my house, I was suddenly hit with a very loud and negative thought (it was almost as clear as someone standing next to me) “Even if you died, nobody would find your body for weeks because nobody cares.” I was at the lowest moment of my life at that point. The devil was actually beginning to convince me that nobody cared and that I would be better off dead.

I almost immediately recognized that this was not the voice of God but indeed the voice of the enemy of my soul, the devil. I rebuked the voice and I believe it was at that moment, on that day that I determined in my heart to put total trust in Jesus and believe that I was a conqueror over my current battle.

Beloved, the first step you are going to have to take is to decide today that in your current battle, you are a conqueror and that you are no longer going to allow the devil to run your emotions and your home. You have to decide that you are not going to give up no matter how long it takes. You have to decide definitively that today is the day you draw the line between defeat and victory. Today is the day you are going to choose to rise up, take your rightful battle position behind our King and Commander-in-Chief Jesus Christ and that with Him leading, you have already won!

I remember hearing the story of a swimmer who was challenged to swim across an important water body in the world. As the story goes, the day came for her to swim and she began to swim. After swimming for a long while, this swimmer decided to give up because a fog had gathered and she was unable to see ahead of her. The rescue boats following her pulled her back in and went back to shore. Later on, the same swimmer found that she was actually no more than a few more yards from actually finishing the swim. If she

had swam for a just little while longer she would have indeed finished the challenge!

This swimmer had swum for a long time but as soon as the fog gathered she gave up and for safety reasons that was probably a good idea. However, the point I am trying to make here is that, once you make up your mind to be the conqueror God has made you to be, you must decide definitively that there is no room for retreat. The truth is that many have given up just before the breakthrough; but that is not going to be your story.

One of the main reasons why you should not give up is because giving up will rob you of your testimony. One day the Holy Spirit spoke to my heart and He helped me understand that a difficulty I was experiencing was not just for me. I believe that in that moment, God was telling me my trouble was going to end up being a testimony to bless at least one person's life one day. Of course, this makes absolutely no sense when you are in the middle of a crisis! But consider what the Bible says in Romans 3:4 "**yea, let**



**God be true, but every man a liar**". If God says it then it certainly is true.

Revelation 12:11 says **"And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death."** I just want to focus briefly on a few points from this Scripture.

Revelation 12:11 says "they overcame him". Who are "they" and who is "him" they "overcame"? I am glad you asked. Let's find out. Go back to Revelation 12 and let's look at verses 9 and 10.

**And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.**

**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.**

There is one point you have to get straight before we move on. The devil is a liar and a master deceiver. I am not making this

up. The Bible clearly says so. Every lie proceeds from him. Now let's go back to Revelation 12:11. The one who was overcome is Satan. Those who overcame, in other words, those who won the battle, are the brethren (Christian believers).

Now let's find out how the Christian believers overcame Satan. Once again let's read Revelation 12:11

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

According to this particular Scripture, a Christian is able to overcome Satan in these three ways;

1. The blood of the Lamb
2. The word of their testimony
3. By not loving their own lives even to the point of death

Like I mentioned earlier, the reason you cannot not give up is because Satan would like very much to rob you of your testimony. He is not happy that you could potentially have a testimony that

could expose him for the liar that he is. He is not happy with the fact that your testimony could potentially win people over to Christ and in so doing release them from the prison Satan had them in. Thus, his ultimate job is to get you to give up because once you give up, you will not have a testimony and if you do not have a testimony then he has won. So now you see why, your mind is continually assailed with thoughts of giving up?

Beloved, there is a great testimony about to come out of your trials if only you will be patient and have faith in God. Your testimony is going to change somebody's life. Your testimony will bring healing to someone. Your testimony will save someone from committing suicide. Somebody's very life and existence depends on your testimony. There is someone whose salvation and eternal destiny depends on your testimony. Are you just going to throw it away just so you can be comfortable temporarily? You cannot afford to do that.



# CHAPTER THREE

## JESUS ALREADY FOUGHT AND WON THE BATTLE

So far, I pray I have been able to convince you of at least three things.

1. You are going to overcome by having faith and patience.
2. You have to decide that you are already more than a conqueror.
3. You cannot give up because you cannot allow Satan to steal your testimony

Now, before we move on to the keys to truly walking as a conqueror, let us take a look at *why* you are a conqueror and *why* you cannot be defeated.

Let me reiterate this point (I cannot emphasize this enough!): the Christian life is not a life of defeat. People are not

supposed to feel sorry for us because we are Christians. We are the least pitiable of all beings as believers in Christ no matter your present circumstance in life. You see, the basis of our victory is not of a physical nature. Our victory and overcoming does not depend on principles of nature or on certain practices per se. Our victory and the assurance of conquering are based on two profound truths.

1. Jesus Christ died and rose again from the dead
2. The devil is an already defeated foe awaiting his doom

Let us look at some Scriptures that speak about these truths.

**...according to the working of His mighty Power which He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right Hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality and power and might and dominion and every name that is named not only in this age but also in that which is to come. - Ephesians 1:19-21, NKJV**

**And He is before all things and in Him all things consist. And He is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the**

**firstborn from the dead, that in all things He may have the preeminence.** - Colossians 1:17-18, NKJV

**Having disarmed principalities and powers, He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in it.** - Colossians 2:15, NKJV.

Let us expound on these scriptures a bit. First and foremost, when Jesus died, He conquered sin, death and the devil. In fact Colossians 2:15 says He made a public spectacle of principalities and powers (that is the devil and his wicked angels). Most of us may not understand what it means for a “public spectacle” to be made of someone. In the olden days, when people went to war and triumphed over their enemies, the conquerors would bring back prisoners or slaves or sometimes dead parts of the people they had killed back into their cities and towns to show that they had indeed triumphed over the enemy. The public spectacle was the fact that they brought back all these “souvenirs” from the war for everyone to see and rejoice that the battle had indeed been won.

When Jesus Christ died and rose again, He made a public spectacle of the devil in the spirit realm. The entire spirit realm was duly notified that the devil and his demonic cohort had been defeated and from that day on, anyone who would appropriate the Name of Jesus Christ and walk in the knowledge of this victory would never have to fall victim to the tricks of the devil.

In the same Scripture (Colossians 2:15), the Bible says that Jesus “disarmed” principalities and powers. In other words, Jesus rendered the works of darkness powerless over the believer who truly and wholeheartedly accepts this truth.

Secondly, in Ephesians 1:19-21 we see that God the Father placed Jesus Christ above all principalities, all powers, might, dominion and every name. In simpler terms, by dying and rising from the dead, Jesus has power over everything and anything.

In Colossians 1:17-18, the Bible says Jesus has preeminence. The word preeminence is translated from the Greek word “proteuo” which means to be first in rank. So Jesus Christ is



first in rank and above all things. “All things” includes everything you are facing.

Beloved, your victory is based on the tangible fact that if you are in Christ Jesus then automatically, you are a conqueror and you must identify yourself as such. Unfortunately, many Christians fail to recognize this and so go through life living under oppression and in defeat. You are not a loser! The devil would like you to think that you are but you are not.

You see, because the devil is a defeated foe and his fate is already determined, he finds it necessary to convince wonderful believers like you to disbelieve God and his promises. If he can get you to be deceived about the finished work of Christ and about your identity as a conqueror through Jesus Christ , then he has gotten to the very core of what a Christian stands for and he can destroy you.

**“The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy...”-**

John 10:10

Please desist from thinking that there are certain problems that God can solve and others which He cannot. I used to think this way too and I lived in such defeat, self-pity and depression. It took me understanding that Jesus Christ has *preeminence* (absolute, complete and total power) over *all things* to be set free from that mental prison.

You too can be set free from that prison today as you meditate on these Scriptures and realize that Jesus Christ did not die and rise again on the third day so we could celebrate Easter. His death and resurrection have more far-reaching consequences than that. One of them was that you and I would live an abundant life (John 10:10).

Henceforth, you have to see yourself the way God’s Word describes you. The Bible describes you as a formerly hopeless sinner who is currently saved by the grace that comes through the

sacrifice of Jesus (2 Corinthians 5:21, Romans 2:23-24). Because you have been saved by the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, the Bible says you are more than a conqueror (Romans 8:37). You are more than a conqueror because the One who lives in you (Jesus Christ) is greater than anything in the world (1 John 4:4). Jesus Christ purchased you with His Blood when He died on Calvary and so you reign in this life (Revelation 5:9-10). Beloved, this is how the Bible describes *you!*

Let us now explore the victory keys.



# *CHAPTER FOUR*

## **THE KEY OF SPENDING TIME IN GOD'S WORD**

There is a story of a man who saved up for months to go on a cruise he had been dreaming to go on for years. Eventually, he was able to purchase a ticket and go on this much-desired cruise. This man had spent all his savings on his cruise ship ticket and so he had very little else to spend on food. He only had enough to buy some bread and some juice. He bought these items hoping that this would sustain him on his trip.

Each night during his trip, the man would observe as his fellow “cruisers” would enter a grand ballroom in which was served every conceivable kind of food and delicacy. He longed to go in there to get some food but he couldn’t because he thought to himself “I cannot afford the food”. The day finally came when the man ran out of food. He made a bold decision: he would enter into

the grand ballroom where the buffet was served every night and steal some food for himself. He went ahead and entered the ballroom and began to eat as much food as he could before someone would show up with a bill. He ate to his fill and realized no-one was coming to him with a bill. Being a man of integrity, he felt he should at least confess to one of the waiters his wrongdoing and ask for mercy. “Dear Waiter” he began, “I have to tell you the truth. I have been very hungry all day. I have no money to pay for this food I just ate. Please pardon me and don’t turn me over to the authorities”. To the man’s surprise the waiter simply smiled. The waiter seeing the man’s confusion said “Sir, your meals were paid for when you bought the cruise ship ticket. Did you not read your information packet?”

Dear Christian, we have an “Information Packet” called the Bible. Sadly, many of us do not read it or we read it devoid of understanding and so we walk through life not even knowing who we are in Christ. In fact, some of you reading this may not have

read your Bible in weeks! How will we know what God's will concerning our lives is if we do not read the Bible?

Please go with me to the first chapter of the Book of Joshua. God Almighty knew Joshua was going to face some challenges once the Israelites crossed over into the land He had promised them, Canaan. God could have sent mighty angels to fight on behalf of the Israelites which actually sometimes did happen. God could have made some spectacular spiritual moves on behalf of Joshua and the Israelites as well. Instead let us look at what God told Joshua.

**“This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success. Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the LORD thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest.”** - Joshua 1:8-9.

Let's analyze the scripture;

1. *This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth:* In other words, you cannot stop confessing God’s Word. Your heart should be so full of it that you have no choice but to allow the Word of God to spill out of you. How do you get full of the Word of God? You have to read it.
2. *Thou shalt meditate:* Meditate is translated from the Hebrew word “hagah” in the Bible. “Hagah” has the following meanings: *to murmur, to ponder, to mutter, to study, to imagine, to speak.* Meditation on the Word of God refers to that murmuring and pondering over the Word when you have read it. What are your thoughts filled with? I agree that with our busy world it can get quite difficult to fill our thoughts with the Word of God but it is not impossible. You think about those things that you spend the most time with. As you spend more and more time in studying the Bible, you learn to meditate on the Scripture. If you do not understand something you read, ask the Holy



Spirit to provide you with understanding (Ephesians 1:17)  
or to send someone your way who can explain it to you.

3. *...that though mayest observe to do according to...:* When you know the Word of God, you will know the godly thing to do when you are faced with a situation and you therefore will act accordingly.

What was going to be the result of Joshua's study and meditation of the Word of God? He would be prosperous and successful. Think about it: The only thing that God told Joshua to do in order to be courageous, prosperous and successful was to study, meditate on and obey God's Word. "Is that all I really have to do?" Do not just take my word for it; read Joshua 1:8-9 for yourself. In John 15:7, Jesus made a similar statement "**If you remain in me and my words remain in you, then you will ask for anything you wish, and you shall have it**" (GNB).

Let me share a personal story with you. In college, it became harder and harder for me to afford my tuition. I had to work two

jobs just so I could pay my rent and a few other bills. I had nothing and no-one to help. I could not qualify for student loans because I was neither an American citizen nor permanent resident. Almost every semester I had no idea how I was going to pay my tuition. In fact, I always thought I would not make it to the next semester just because I had no idea where the money would come from to pay the tuition.

One day, a friend of mine suggested that I repeat Psalm 23 to myself each morning and believe that God would indeed meet my needs. So I would recite Psalm 23 to myself as I walked to school. Whenever fear began to creep up on me, I would quote Psalm 23 again and any other verse I knew that had to do God's provision. I encouraged myself in the Lord with these Scriptures and simply believed in God for a miracle.

Every semester, the money for school came just before classes would begin. I finished my bachelor's degree in nursing without dropping a single semester. Glory to God!

Was it easy for me to be quoting Scriptures in the face of glaring difficulty? Of course, it wasn't. I cried a lot. Everything seemed so uncertain. I kept asking God why and then God would always remind me of what His Word says about the current circumstance. Beloved, the God we serve is called Jehovah Jireh (The Lord Who Provides) and so He is more than able to meet every need no matter how impossible that need may look. So how do you get to know the Word enough that you quote it spontaneously? You are going to have to become a diligent student of the Bible.

As a young girl of twelve, my older cousin who incidentally is called Love, taught me to have my “quiet time” everyday. This was a time (usually at dawn before my parents and siblings would wake up) where I would take my Bible, a devotional as well as a pen and notebook and go into our living room so I could be alone with God. I would first of all pray and ask the Holy Spirit to help me understand what I was about to read. I would then read the Bible verse the devotional suggested before I would read the devotional

itself. This would then be followed by meditation on what I had read.

I would then write down any Scriptures that really stood out to me or any lesson I sensed I was learning from reading my Bible and devotional. At the end of my quiet time each day I would ask myself “What is God teaching me from this Scripture?” All of this would take me about 15 to 20 minutes. This is how I really got started studying the Bible.

As you keep doing this for days, weeks, months and years, the Word begins to stick with you. Your heart and mind will begin to get full with the Word and you will not have much of a choice but to spill over with the Word of God. I have to confess that at Bible Study meetings or in meetings with other believers where there is an opportunity to share the Word, I always have to literally force myself to stop talking because by the grace of God, I always have a lot to say when it comes to the Word of God !

Studying the Bible is very much like touching the end of a sponge to water. At first, only the end of the sponge will get wet. However, as time goes on and as the sponge continues to stay close to the water, it soaks up more and more water. Eventually the sponge becomes so saturated that the only thing that happens when you pick it up is that water drips out of the sponge.

Don't be frustrated if in the first few days or even months you start studying the Word, you still seem to forget. As you stay in the Word, you will get soaked and as you get soaked, when situations and circumstances come to "squeeze" you, all that will come out of you will be the Word of God. Praise God!

Develop the habit of reading your Bible daily. Pray and ask the Holy Spirit to help you. For people that are beginning to study the Word of God, I suggest you get a good devotional that can help you gain some insight into the Scriptures you are reading. It is also always good to start your quiet time/Bible study time with a prayer asking the Holy Spirit Himself to teach and explain the Scriptures to

you. Jesus explained that one main functions of the Holy Spirit is to teach us and to remind us of things we have learned (John 14:26). Thus, you are more than welcome to enlist the help of the Holy Spirit.

As I had mentioned earlier on, it is also good to write down lessons and Scriptures you have acquired in a special Bible study notebook. This has been particularly useful for me. Sometimes I forget a very powerful verse I had read sometime before. When this happens, it is always good to go back to my notebook and immediately find the Bible verse I am looking for.

We live in the age of technology and fast advancement. These days, it is not uncommon to get Bible Study resources on the internet. One of such tools is the e-Sword© compiled by Rick Meyers, an electronic Bible that can be installed on your computer for free. This resource has been especially helpful to me in looking up the meanings of words I read in the Bible. There are so many

Bible study resources out there these days that we have no excuse *not* to study the Word.

As you take time to personally to read your Bible and glean wisdom, your life will be utterly changed by the treasures found therein.

### **Ten Good Reasons to Know the Word of God**

The reasons to know God's Word are innumerable and I pray that as you spend more time in the Word you will find more reasons to study the Bible. Here are just a few reasons why reading God's Word should be a daily practice for anyone who is looking to live as a king and priest who reigns in life.

1. **God's Word is food for your soul.** When you choose not to feed on the Word of God, you starve spiritually. (Matthew 4:4)
2. **Knowing God's Word and acting upon what you know will make you prosperous and successful** (Joshua 1:8)

3. **God's Word will make you wise.** Godly wisdom will allow you to make the right decisions at the right time and in the right place. (Psalm 19:7)
4. **The Word of God will encourage you and give you joy** (Joshua 1:8-9, Psalm 19:8). There is a lot of unhappiness in the world today. Everywhere you turn people are taking medication for anxiety and depression. The Word of God has the ability to give you the kind of joy you cannot buy in a bottle.
5. **God's Word will bring peace into your life** (Isaiah 26:3). Peace is not the absence of trouble in your life. Lasting peace refers to the kind of peace you will enjoy even in the midst of a storm. Jesus was sleeping on the ship when a storm hit. In fact, he was sleeping so peacefully that His disciples rebuked Him! I pray that you will enjoy the peace that only God can give.



6. **As you renew your mind continuously through the Word of God, you will tend to be more confident in your day to day activities and decisions because you will be aware of what God has to say about your particular situation**
  
7. **The Word of God is described as a sword** (Hebrews 4:12, Ephesians 6) and so knowing the Word means you get to wield a powerful weapon that is able to take down spiritual strongholds and you will advance in life.
  
8. **God's Word brings deliverance.** To be delivered is to be set free from bondage. Jesus said "If ye continue in my word, *then* are ye my disciples indeed; And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free (John 8:31-32). You can get delivered from anxiety, depression, fear and hopelessness right in your bedroom. All you really need is the Word of God in your heart.

9. **God's Word will keep you from sin.** King David wrote “Thy Word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee” (Psalm 119: 11)

10. **God's Word will bring light into your life.** The Word of God is also the Word of Light because God Himself is Light. Darkness and all the things associated with darkness, is dispelled and driven out as you study, mediate and live out God's Word (Psalm 119: 105) When you study and meditate on the Word of God you are fellowshiping with God Himself!

Listening to other people preach the Word of God on TV, on the radio or on the internet is great. However, there is nothing greater than having a deep, personal knowledge of the Word of God. Begin spending time in the Word of God today.

# CHAPTER FIVE

## THE KEY OF PRAISE AND THANKSGIVING

Psalm 100:4 says “**Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him, and bless his name.**”

Psalm 34:1 also says “**I will bless the LORD at all times: his praise shall continually be in my mouth.**”

As Christians, the praises of God Almighty always ought to be on our lips. Every minute of the day, we have to be giving thanks. The scripture says “I will bless the Lord at all times”. This means that it does not matter what is going on, our praises to God should be continuous.

I have shared this with people time and time again and I will reiterate it here. God is good. It does not matter what is going on, He is good. His goodness and His faithfulness are the only

constant in an ever-changing world and like the Bible says His mercies are new every morning (Lamentations 3:22).

Beloved, you have to get the fact that God is good into your understanding. Once it becomes ingrained in your mind and in your heart that God is good regardless of the physical happenings in your life, you will be able to rise above and overcome.

Praise and thanksgiving should come without exception and without ceasing. We already saw from Psalm 34:1 that praising God should occur in your life always. Well, praise should also come from you without exception. You cannot give excuses as to why you do not want to praise the Lord because the Bible does not give us exceptions.

I have heard it said (and I have said it myself, admittedly) “Well I feel like whining today and it does not matter what goes on, I choose to whine”. In fact in college, there were programs in my residence hall called “Cheese and Whine”. Students would get together over cheese and wine and essentially would spend the whole time complaining and whining about their problems.

Although I did not participate, I simply found these programs funny because after the cheese and the wine and the complaining the problems were still there, unsolved. Back to square one!

Beloved, you can be sick and still decide to praise God. You can be in between a rock and a hard place and still praise God. You can be in any situation and still decide to praise God. It begins with one thing: *deciding* to praise God. You have to make the decision to praise God no matter how badly you are hurting. I do not think this necessarily means you are thanking God for the problem. On the contrary, I believe that in thanking and praising Him, you are saying “God, even though I am in a tough place, I know that You are still King and Lord and so I give you permission to come and take over this situation and deal with it on my behalf”.

Let’s look at a Biblical example. You will find this account in Acts 16:13-29 about the Apostle Paul and his ministry companion Silas. Paul and Silas were on a ministry trip to Macedonia and got into serious trouble for casting a demon of fortune-telling out of a local slave-girl. The owners of the girl became extremely angry at

Paul and Silas because they had now lost a key source of income: the slave-girl's fortune telling. Out of pure agitation, they had Paul and Silas thrown into jail. Today, most of us would move tooth and nail to justify ourselves by getting lawyers immediately to defend our cause. On the contrary, take a look at what these two men did.

**And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God: and the prisoners heard them. And suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken: and immediately all the doors were opened, and every one's bands were loosed. – Acts 16:25-26**

At this juncture, allow me to make an important point: the Bible is not a fictitious book. It is full of real events that happened to real people who dared to believe in a Holy God who is more powerful than you and I can ever imagine.

Paul and Silas lived in the first century AD. Prisons were not as nice as some prisons are today. There was no electricity. I

doubt if they had any proper beds to sleep on. There were no televisions or computers to pass the time. The plumbing in these prisons was most likely very bad. Infestation with rodents and lice was very likely a problem. The prisoners were chained *inside* of the prison. On top of all that, Paul and Silas had been beaten and wrongfully jailed. There was nothing to be happy about. Yet, Paul and Silas were not only praying but were singing hymns to the Lord. In my mind's eye, I can just imagine them. In the darkness, with mice and all sorts of critters milling around and with hands and feet bound, Paul and Silas were praising God. The Bible says the other prisoners began to listen to them. Probably before Paul and Silas got there, there was a lot of cursing at the government, yelling at prison wardens and all kinds of other eerie prison noises. However, the praises and prayers of these men were powerful enough for prisoners, some of whom were very likely hardened criminals, to keep quiet and listen. Beloved, I believe that the very peace of God entered the prison that night as Paul and Silas lifted up praises to God.

Our testimony to others can come even from the praise we give in the midst of a difficult circumstance. When other people see you praising God *in spite* of your current situation, they will take note and will be changed by that simple act of praise and thanksgiving.

In verse 26 of Acts 16, we go on to read how as Paul and Silas were still praying and singing hymns there was suddenly an earthquake which was violent enough to open the doors of the prison as well as break the chains off the prisoners. Praising God has the ability to break chains and set you free from any kind of prison you might find yourself in today.

**In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you. - 1 Thessalonians 5:18**

God is great. He is great in His person. He is great in all His creations. Have you taken a moment to look at the creatures that live in the ocean alone? They are fearsome and beautiful and God



Almighty made them. The magnificence of the sun and the moon and the stars is all His doing. The massive, immovable mountains are all His handiwork. I mean all around us we observe the immense attention to detail that God has paid to nature around us. So if he can create such beauty in flowers that are here today and wilt by evening, how much more will He take care of you, a being made in His image ?

Dear Christian, henceforth, it should be your decision to praise and give thanks to God no matter your circumstance. Never take a single day God has blessed you with for granted. It is very easy to wake up in the morning and just assume that it is yet another day. In college, I was in class with an older lady who had a teenage daughter. One day she told me about how she heard her daughter screaming in the morning. She rushed to her room to find her daughter lying on her bed and unable to move. Her daughter just said “Mom, I cannot move!” And yet many of us take it for granted that we are able to rise up out of our beds and are able to go about

our daily activities with ease. If you have no cause to praise God at all, this is one thing you need to praise God for everyday.

I remember the words of an old hymn;

*Count your blessings*

*Name them one by one*

*Count your blessings see what God has done!*

*Count your blessings*

*Name them one by one*

*And it will surprise you what the Lord has done!*

So how exactly does praising and thanking God fit into the equation of living the life of an overcomer? Imagine for a moment that you have two children. You buy gifts and present it to them as a surprise. One child after opening the present lights up with joy, jumps up and down with their new gift and then runs into your arms screaming “Thank you so much!” This same child thanks you every day afterward for a month. Now let’s take the other child. The other child opens the present, looks at it, puts it away and simply walks away without saying thank you. He or she never again mentions the

fact that you bought them a gift as a surprise and they never utter a word of thanks. It is obvious which one of these children you will have an unintentional tendency to favor. God is pleased and shows extraordinary favor to those children of His who tend to praise and worship Him more. Another secret is that praise and worship creates an “open heaven” above us through which the goodness of God simply flows into our lives.

King David is described as a man after God’s own heart (Acts 13:22). I believe that one of the reasons for this title despite his many shortcomings was the fact that David was a worshipper. When you read the Psalms you get the sense that David was constantly praising and worshipping the Lord. This life of praise and worship remained constant even when he was faced with challenges and even when he was sadly floored by his sins. God will move quickly on your behalf when you praise and give Him thanks. Power, healing and joy arise from praising the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords.

A great way to get started praising God is to read the Psalms. Psalm 103 for example is a great Psalm that talks about all the reasons why God deserves our praise and thanksgiving. You can personalize Psalm 103 and make it your very own praise hymn.

Another great way to learn to praise the Lord is to have good Christian praise and worship music playing in your home, in your car and on a portable music device and wherever else you can think of. This will allow you the opportunity to learn songs that you can use in your personal time of praise and worship to the Lord. You don't need to wait for church on Sunday to get your praise on!

You can also pray and ask the Lord to help you to develop a heart for praising and worshipping Him. That is one prayer He will *never* say no to.

Giving thanks and praising God will move you from the deepest pit and onto a higher place. Giving thanks and praising God will heal you. Giving thanks and praising God will release God's power and God's favor upon your life. Giving thanks and praising God will bring you to a place of victory. Make that declaration of

praise and thanks to God today and everyday and allow yourself to be released into all that God has for you!



# CHAPTER SIX

## THE KEY OF PRAYER AND FASTING

Before we continue on in this chapter, I would like to debunk a myth. Prayer is not a way for you to manipulate God. I believe this very erroneous perception of prayer is what has led many to give up in frustration and go after other “solutions” to their problems. Here is something that is not a myth: God loves you very much. He knows what you need. In fact, He knows what you need *more than what you think you need.*

How is this? Let’s read Psalm 139.

**You have searched me, LORD,**

**and you know me.**

**You know when I sit and when I rise;**

**you perceive my thoughts from afar.**

**You discern my going out and my lying down;**

**you are familiar with all my ways.**

**Before a word is on my tongue ...**

**For you created my inmost being;**

**you knit me together in my mother's womb. You, LORD, know it completely...**

**Your eyes saw my unformed body;**

**all the days ordained for me were written in your book**

**before one of them came to be.**

Psalm 139: 1-4, 13, 16 (NIV)

God knew you before you were born. He knew every little detail about you before you ever came into existence. He also knew that at a point in your life you would need Jesus Christ and that you would be faced with the choice of choosing Him or not. This is why John 3:16 says:

**For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.**



Beloved, God knew that your greatest need in life was not going to be money. He knew that your greatest need was not going to be the physical healing of a loved one or even physical healing for yourself. Your greatest need was going to be salvation from eternal damnation and this is why before you and I could even ask, He had a plan to allow Jesus Christ to walk the earth as a man, to go through the same trials and temptations we go through in order to identify with us. To make it all complete Jesus Christ would face the death and punishment we would have had to bear for our sins. Jesus paid a debt for us that He Himself did not owe.

A couple years ago, a wonderful pastor made a powerful statement that has significantly changed my life. I will describe in a nutshell what he said. When Jesus was on the cross He cried out “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?” Jesus was in essence saying “My God, you and I have been close up until this point, why are you ignoring me now? You and I have fellowshiped sweetly as I walked on this earth. Why have you now rejected me?” On the cross, the Lord Jesus faced *total* rejection from God so that

*we*, if we would only choose His way, would NEVER have to face utter rejection from God. It is as simple as that. You owe God nothing. It is done. It is finished.

Beloved, God realized this was our greatest need and so before we were ever born, He had already met that need. Now let's consider another Scripture.

**He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all—how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things? – Romans 8:32 (NIV).**

In other words, if God did not spare His only Son whom He loved dearly and in whom He was well pleased, but instead gave Him up as the ultimate sacrifice for our sins, why will He not give us all the other things we need in this life?

To make it simpler let's consider this example. You have the need for \$100. An anonymous giver offers you a million dollars that you never ever have to pay back. This anonymous giver also

tells you that as long as you keep in touch with him, you can have any amount of money that you want for the rest of your life; no strings attached. Not only do you now have \$100 for your immediate needs, you also have a lifetime supply of money. In addition to that, you never have to pay it back.

With God, the deal is even better! He gave us Jesus in whom all things exist. So why exactly will He not give you the other things you need to succeed in this life? Mind you, when I talk about success, I am not talking about million dollar homes and your pick of flashy convertibles. I am talking about true success and peace that stems from an abundant life in Christ Jesus.

The inevitable question then arises: “so if God knows what I need, why doesn’t He just give it to me so that we call it a day?” Well, a partial answer to that question is what I have mentioned in the last few lines. He already met the greatest need we would ever have in this life. A second answer to this question can be found

implicitly and explicitly throughout Scripture. One of these answers can be found in Genesis.

After God created the earth and everything in it, He created man. He then gave Adam and Eve complete authority over all the creation.

**God said, Let Us [Father, Son, and Holy Spirit] make mankind in Our image, after Our likeness, and let them have complete authority over the fish of the sea, the birds of the air, the [tame] beasts, and over all of the earth, and over everything that creeps upon the earth. - Genesis 1:26 (Amplified Bible)**

However, a few chapters later on in Genesis, something terrible happens. Adam and Eve disobeyed God. In so doing, they committed high treason and sold the authority they had to the devil. This is why the devil is called the “god of this world” (2 Corinthians 4:4). This is why we have wars, murders, sickness and confusion in our world today. Please get this right : God never intended for the world to be in chaos and for our lives to be

miserable. God created the world and saw that it was good (Genesis 1) and He intended for it to stay that way! Unfortunately however, Adam sold out that complete authority we originally possessed to the devil.

God being so full of grace, did not allow the story to end there. Jesus Christ came back to reclaim that authority for us through His death and resurrection. He did this so that through Him, we would overcome the enemy of our souls, the devil, and walk in victory in every aspect of our lives. How do we appropriate or exercise that authority? One of the most important ways in which we do this is through prayer in the Name of Jesus Christ. This is why you and I need to pray.

We pray not because God does not know what we need; we pray because we have the choice to either solve the problem with our own resources and wisdom (in other words, leave God out of it) or invite Him to help us by intervening on our behalf. In the end, the

outcome of life problems really depends on us and what we decide to do with that problem.

Secondly, prayer is a way for us to fellowship with God. Unless you see prayer this way, prayer will be very boring and will become a chore. What do I mean? When we fellowship with other people in our church or Bible study group, we interact. We talk to the person and the person talks back to us. We laugh during the conversation and we actually enjoy each other's company. This is how you typically build a friendship. Friendship is based on constant, frequent interaction. As people who believe in Jesus Christ, we have to see our salvation as an invitation from God to us to draw near to Him. God wants to be our Father but I believe He also wants to be our closest Friend. Our friendship with God is also going to be based on constant and frequent interaction.

Once I learned that prayer was a time of fellowship with the Lord, it made my prayer times easier and more enjoyable. Spending one hour in my room praying was no longer a difficulty. It was

simply fun (yes I said fun!) for me to pray especially since I wanted badly to get close to God and to know His ways. And guess what? Once I began to pray this way, I began to draw closer to Him. Scriptures that I once had no understanding of have become much clearer and there was even a deeper understanding of the portions of Scripture I *thought* I understood. I also began to sense the Holy Spirit speaking to me.

How does the Holy Spirit speak to you? How do you know it is the Holy Spirit? I am not going to claim any expertise on this because I am still growing in my walk with the Lord but I will share some of my experiences. Before I do that let's look at what Jesus said about the work of the Holy Spirit in the life of a believer.

**But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you. –**

**John 14:26**

The Holy Spirit, a member of the Godhead (also known as the Trinity) is God. The Holy Spirit is the member of the Godhead who is currently on this earth. His job, according to John 14:26, is to teach us all things and to remind us of God's Word. Let us also consider another Scripture reference.

**Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come.**

**He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you. – John 16:13-14**

Once again we receive a job description for the Holy Spirit. Jesus told us that the Holy Spirit would guide us into all truth and show us the things to come. And to make sure we would know that this was the Holy Spirit speaking to us, Jesus said "He shall glorify me". So



based on John 14:26 and John 16:14 we see two things that will help us recognize the Holy Spirit's voice.

1. The Holy Spirit will ALWAYS remind us of God's Word. If anything is even slightly contrary to the Word of God, it cannot be from God.
2. The Holy Spirit will ALWAYS glorify Jesus Christ. If anything does not give glory to Jesus Christ, it is not from God.

Remember the Holy Spirit is also called the Spirit of Truth. Thus He cannot contradict Himself and tell a lie. That being said, I will go on to tell you a little bit about my personal experience with hearing God as I pray.

One of the ways in which the Holy Spirit has spoken to me during prayer has been by reminding me of Scriptures that pertain to my particular situation. This has happened to me on a number of occasions. I remember that on one particular morning I was praying

about a business that my husband had been thinking of going into. As I prayed I suddenly remembered the Scripture in the gospels where Jesus told the disciples who had been fishing all night and had not caught a single fish, to cast their nets onto a particular side. The fishermen thought He was kidding because they had been fishing all night. However their obedience paid off and they caught so much fish that they had to get fishermen from other boats to come and help them haul in the harvest. For me that day, I felt the Holy Spirit use that Scripture to help me understand that if my husband and I would trust and obey God and follow His direction, He was more than able to direct us into becoming very successful in that business. Just like those fishermen, God's direction might look absurd to us, but if we would follow it, it would bring us great increase. That was definitely encouragement to me!

Like we discussed earlier, if you are going to hear God in this way, it is absolutely important for you to spend time studying and getting to know what His Word says.

I have also had instances where the Holy Spirit has spoken to me in a dream. There was a particular year where our church embarked on a 30-day fast to pray and ask for His will to be done in our lives. I prayed this prayer throughout the year asking the Lord to help me know what His will was concerning my life and what He would have me do with regards to ministry. Just as a preamble, beginning in my late teens, I always felt that the Lord God had placed a calling on my life to be a person of prayer or an intercessor of some sort. Later on that year I had an important dream. I did not think it was that important at the time but I would find out later. In this dream, a very well-known preacher was asking me to gather people and pray for him. In the dream, I remember thinking about a particular lady in another branch of our church who I knew loved this preacher dearly and who would love the opportunity to pray for him. And so in the dream, it appeared I proceeded to call her on my cell phone.

I woke up from that dream and realized it was important but did not act upon it immediately. A few weeks later, the lady I had

thought about calling in my dream, called me. She had simply called to say hello. After exchanging pleasantries, I told her about my dream. She was overjoyed. She shared with me about how the Lord had given her visions of attacks that were about to come against this preacher and how she was also in prayer for this preacher. This was no coincidence because I had not spoken to this lady for at least two months!

Just in case you are wondering which Scriptures tell us to pray for those in authority which very much includes our pastors please read 1 Timothy 2:1-3.

The Holy Spirit will speak to you when you pray. You will just have to learn to have faith and to be patient. Like I wrote earlier on, make sure that what you hear during prayer lines up perfectly with the Word of God and that it glorifies Jesus Christ as Lord. If it does not, you are not dealing with the Holy Spirit.

Prayer is such a far-reaching and extensive topic and I have to say many books have been written on prayer, the types of prayer,

how to pray etc. Honestly, one chapter is simply too short for us to discuss prayer exhaustively. However, I make a list of suggested reading on prayer in the back of this book. These are some of the books that have helped me understand prayer and helped me learn how to pray effectively. I hope you will be blessed by them as I was.

Before this chapter ends though, let us take a look at how Jesus Christ taught His disciples (and us) how to pray. Jesus gives us detailed instructions on prayer in Matthew 6:5-14.

**“And when you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners to be seen by men. I tell you the truth, they have received their reward in full. But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you. And when you pray, do not keep on babbling like pagans, for they think they will be heard because of their many**

**words. Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him.**

**This, then, is how you should pray:**

**“Our Father in heaven,  
hallowed be your name,  
your kingdom come,  
your will be done  
on earth as it is in heaven.**

**Give us today our daily bread.**

**Forgive us our debts,  
as we also have forgiven our debtors.**

**And lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from the evil one.’**

**For if you forgive men when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins. (NIV)**

We see here in Matthew 6 that Jesus gives very clear instructions on how we should pray. There is no reason why anyone who calls themselves a Christian should not spend quality time praying. As we discussed earlier, prayer is a major way in which a Christian builds his or her relationship with God. There is a lot of power in prayer and anyone who prays often will find tremendous power and victory in his or her life.

Let us now look at a few major points that Jesus Christ Himself makes about prayer.

1. Prayer should be *primarily* a personal affair. Now, this does not mean that you should avoid attending church-held prayer meetings or prayer conventions etc. I am the last person who would suggest that! In fact, throughout the book of Acts, you will find believers in Christ time and again getting together for times of intense prayer.

In Matthew 6:6 however, Jesus was telling His disciples to place an emphasis on personal and private times of prayer. It is in your personal prayer time that you can build a closer relationship with God. It is important for any serious Christian to take time out of his/her day to pray. I will use an analogy here that I hope most of you can relate to.

For most married couples, you had an opportunity to date your spouse before you got married. If you will confess to it, you will realize that during the dating period, you were able to build a closer relationship with each other primarily due to the fact that you spent a considerable amount of time alone with your spouse to-be. Whether it was at the beach or at a restaurant, you spent quality time with your spouse to-be without a third party interrupting. Those personal times together made the precious moments of your relationship. In fact, after you are married and have kids, most marriage counselors suggest that it is important



for you and your spouse to occasionally send the kids away just so that you can spend quality time together and in so doing, improve your marital relationship. This example goes for any type of relationship. Without spending *quality time* with each other, our relationships will generally be shallow.

In a similar manner, without quality private time spent in the presence of God in prayer, you are essentially missing out on a deeper relationship with the Lord God Almighty.

There is encouragement and hope yet for those of you who desire a closer walk with God but simply have not had the opportunity to. You could start with 15 minutes of prayer a day. As time goes on, you can increase it. The key is to be committed and persistent.

2. Matthew 6:7 says "...when you pray, do not keep on babbling like pagans, for they think they will be heard

because of their many words” . This means long prayers do not necessarily guarantee answered prayer. Although, if you really want a deeper relationship with God, it is good if you can develop the art of praying and fellowshiping with God for long periods of time. Like we’ve already discussed, once you realize that your walk with Jesus is a real relationship, you will want to spend more time in His presence. One of the ways I have learnt to do this is to pray with my Bible open and read the Bible while I pray. Another way to pray for long periods of time is to play worship music in the background as you pray. This is especially effective for me because there are times I have been in prayer for two hours at a time and have not even felt the time pass just because the music seems to make the time move faster. Patience is the key to developing a life of prayer. Be patient as God works that in you.

3. It is imperative that you forgive people who have offended you (Matthew 6:14-15). This is a major reason why prayer

sometimes does not get answered. If you are looking for answered prayer and an open heaven, forgive people who might have offended you. Jesus even asks us to take it a step further, if you know someone has a grudge against you, seek the person out and be reconciled to them. If you have tried all ways to be reconciled to him or her and they still refuse, God knows you have done your part and will not hold you accountable (Matthew 5:23-24). Forgive, walk in love and see God answer your prayers.

## **Fasting**

Fasting is a special time of dedication which involves abstaining completely or partially from food for a period of time. When you fast, you reject confidence in your flesh and you are acknowledging the fact that your help comes from God. It is always good to check with a doctor if you are healthy enough to fast. Even if you are not

cleared by your doctor to do a complete fast, you can always do what some have called the “Daniel Fast” where you abstain from particular pleasantries such as rich meat and focus on eating say, vegetables and bread. I am not going to write too much about fasting in this book. I will only mention some points Jesus made about fasting in the Gospels.

1. Some problems will not go away unless you pray *and* fast (Mark 9:29)
2. When you fast, do not go about with a sad face so that everyone knows that something is wrong. If possible, look your very best on the days that you fast. (Matthew 6:16-17)
3. Do not announce your fast to everyone so that you look more spiritual than you really are (Matthew 6:18)
4. True fasting is from the heart, it does not come from merely starving yourself for several hours (Isaiah 58:6-9)

No-one ever gets used to fasting. It can be painful and uncomfortable. However, the results that spring forth from spending

even a day in true fasting will set you on a course of victory. This is what the Prophet Isaiah wrote concerning God's reaction to a true fast.

**Then your light shall break forth like the morning,**

**Your healing shall spring forth speedily,**

**And your righteousness shall go before you;**

**The glory of the LORD shall be your rear guard.**

**Then you shall call, and the LORD will answer;**

**You shall cry, and He will say, 'Here I *am*.' – Isaiah 58:8-9a**

If you have never fasted and you are reading this book, resolve to fast at least once a month from now on. Your life will literally never be the same. In Jesus' Name, Amen !



# CHAPTER SEVEN

## THE KEY OF RIGHT CONFESSIONS

“Oh be careful little mouth what you say!” I remember this song from my days in elementary school. Proverbs 18:21 declares:

**Death and life are in the power of the tongue: and they that love it shall eat the fruit thereof.**

You can chart a course of victory with your words or a disastrous course with your words. In Matthew 12:36-37 the Lord Jesus Christ gives a serious warning we should all pay particular attention to, especially if you know you are a talkative.

**But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment. For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned.**

Think about this for a minute. Every idle word you speak will have to be accounted for on the day of your judgment. I am not sure about you but that sure does scare me! If we would take heed to what comes out of our mouths, half of the quarrels and conflicts we face with one another would cease to exist.

Dear Christian, your words hold a lot of power and so you have to be wary of what comes of your mouth. You can't just talk like everyone else. You cannot share dirty jokes and stories. You cannot say negative things about yourself or about others. You cannot just let every thought that pops into your head come right out of your mouth. You have to be especially careful when it comes to what you say. A king and a priest is mindful of his or her words.

I have sometimes met people who say stuff like "Well heart disease runs in my family. I know I will be next." True to their words, these people begin to struggle with heart problems. At a point in my life, I used to say "Things do not work out for me." True to my confessions, a lot of things during that season of my life



did not work out for me. We chart the courses of our lives by our words. Let us consider another Scripture concerning our words.

**Likewise, the tongue is a small part of the body, but it makes great boasts. Consider what a great forest is set on fire by a small spark. The tongue also is a fire, a world of evil among the parts of the body. It corrupts the whole body, sets the whole course of one's life on fire, and is itself set on fire by hell. All kinds of animals, birds, reptiles and sea creatures are being tamed and have been tamed by mankind, but no human being can tame the tongue. It is a restless evil, full of deadly poison. – James 3:5-8(NIV)**

Our tongues are just a small part of our bodies but yet like a small spark that is able to set a whole forest on fire, our words can either build our lives or tear down our lives.

Dear Christian, begin to speak good things about your life. Begin to speak good things about your children. Begin to speak

good things about your spouse. Speaking good things does not involve wishful or magical thinking. Speaking good things involves, studying what the Word of God says about your child, your spouse or whatever situation you are in and declaring the Word of God over it. For instance, it may be very true that heart disease runs in your family. This may very well be an ancestral stronghold. However as a believer in Jesus Christ, you have the authority through Jesus Christ to change the course of what has gone on in your family for generations. Instead of accepting the plight of experiencing heart disease you can say “In the Name of Jesus Christ, who died and who rose again from the dead, I declare that heart disease is not my inheritance. I refuse to be suffer from heart disease because “by His stripes” (1 Peter 2:24) I am healed. I am a child of the King (Galatians 4:5) and Jesus dealt with heart disease on the cross. Therefore, I refuse to welcome it into my life.” You have to say it and you have to believe it. This may mean repeating this declaration several times to yourself until it becomes a firm belief that is deeply rooted in your spirit.

Dear Christian, learn to speak the Word of God over your life and over situations. You must know that you have authority through the Name of Jesus Christ to change adverse situations in your life with your words. Your words have the power to bless and the power to curse.

You will only say what you are full of. If you are convinced in your mind that you are a failure, your words will tend to reflect that notion you have of yourself. The things that fill you up will naturally spill out of you. So what do you do? Fill yourself up with the Word of God! In an earlier chapter, we discussed how important it was for every Christian to set aside time everyday to read and study the Word of God. This is one of the reasons why. When you are full of the Word of God, you are aware of what it says and so you can find specific scriptures that speak about your current situation and boldly declare them over your life though the Name of Jesus Christ.

**Can both fresh water and salt water flow from the same spring? My brothers and sisters, can a fig tree bear olives, or a grapevine bear figs? Neither can a salt spring produce fresh water. – James 3:11-12**

**...for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things: and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things. - Matthew 12:34-35**

Fill yourself up with the Word of God. Do not be hard on yourself when you fail especially when it comes to words. Ask the Father for forgiveness and come right back to Him. Ask the Holy Spirit to help you to guard yourself against speaking carelessly. Make the decision today to only speak what the Bible says about your life and chart the course of your life according to what God Almighty has spoken over you.

# *CHAPTER EIGHT*

## **IN CLOSING**

It is possible for you to rise up from the defeat that you thought you had to live with for the rest of your life. God is a loving Father and He never intended for any one of us to live in continual regret, guilt, unforgiveness, bitterness, self-blame and unhappiness. On the contrary one of the hallmarks of a life that is victorious and that is controlled by the Holy Spirit is joy (Galatians 5:22). I know that the idea of being a joyous, happy Christian is foreign to some people. You may be hearing such a thing for the very first time. This is because for most of us growing up in church, we were inadvertently taught that being joyful and being a Christian could not be mentioned in the same sentence. This is notion is nowhere close to the truth! Do not believe it because I said so. If you have followed along in this book, you will realize that many Bible references have been given. This is so that, you will have a chance to study for

yourself what the Bible says about you living the abundant, joy-filled and victorious life that God intends for you to live (John 10:10).

Beloved, I have not purported to share anything out of my own head or imagination with you. I have only shared what the Word of God says about you being a conqueror and some of my own experiences in my Christian walk as well as some key steps to get you started on that journey towards living the life of a conqueror.

As you study God's Word, you will become more convinced of who you are in Jesus Christ. As you praise and worship God, spiritual chains will be broken to set you free from the devil's oppression. As you pray, God will move on your behalf. And the greatest thing about all these is that you will build a deeper relationship with Almighty God Himself. No-one can steal that away from you!

**Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things *are* noble, whatever things *are* just, whatever things *are* pure, whatever things *are* lovely, whatever things *are* of good report, if *there is* any virtue and if *there is* anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things. The things which you learned and received and heard and saw in me, these do, and the God of peace will be with you. – Philippians 4:8-9**

## SUGGESTED READING

Dag Heward Mills (2008) *100 % Answered Prayer*. Lux Verbi.BM

Dag Heward-Mills (2008) *Strategies for Prayer*. Lux Verbi.BM

Kenneth E. Hagin (1986) *The Believer's Authority*. Faith Library Publications

Kenneth E. Hagin (1977) *The Interceding Christian*. Faith Library Publications

Derek Prince (2009) *Secrets of a Prayer Warrior*. Chosen Books