

THE CHRISTIAN TEENAGER

Teenage is a transitional stage of physical and psychological development that generally occurs during the period from puberty to legal adulthood (Wikipedia).

In the design of God, mankind should first be born as a child. And through the process of growth and development into adulthood or full maturity, man (both male and female) is to pass through the *teen-age*. Teenage is that age range between *thirteen* and *nineteen* (13 – 19) years. People within this range are called teenagers because their age number ends with “teen”. It is the age value standing as the bridge between childhood and adulthood. That means, every child who eventually grows to become an adult in life had once become a teenager. Thus, every adult man or woman have become a teenager once upon a time in their life, and can never again become one till death. All the seeds sown then will grow and bear its fruit in adulthood, whether good or bad. And also, all the decisions which one made as teenager shall produce their expected and equivalent output. All the words spoken (*positive or negative*), steps taken (*with or without God*), the effect(s) of the impact (*positive or negative*) made on one by friends (*good or bad ones*), and all the things that one has done as teenager, be it one that pleased God or one that does not please God, **the harvest of all teenage activities are fully reaped at adulthood.**

However, what the future welcomes one with is that which was deposited in the unseen account of one’s course here on earth. Already, so much has been written, taught and facilitated through vocals and otherwise about the life-span of teenage hood, this, is one of them.

A lot of youths, fathers and mothers lament over some of the decisions made, and things they had done while in teen age, and their regrets will extend to as long as the scars of their wrong teenage decisions last in their minds. Even when through the finished works of Christ guilt of sin get cleansed off the track, one, being in the flesh

may at one time or the other have reflections because of the humbling scars, like the torn in Paul' flesh.

In addition to the numerous articles, sermons, seminars, camp meetings etc. held for the reshaping of teenagers, this publication work is put together for the benefit of the Christian teenagers within and outside the walls of the church. We trust that whether as a new faithful or not, the God-chasing teenager might find this material and its content a help, a sign post, and a reference for their journeys in life through teenage-hood. As you go through this book prayerfully, you will find God's grace available for you to learn how you must take the right decision(s) in all you do, and be able to understand what God really wants you to do at every stage in your teenage years (Eph. 5:17).

The book is not *subjective*, but gives you the privilege of making turns of positive decisions as the need arises. Receive it with a humble heart that's ready to learn (Matt. 11:29-30) and *make adjustments where necessary*. Choose to obey the instructions in each chapter, and help others do so. Be willing to unlearn old ideologies that damage, and with open heart, receive the truth of the word of God, deciding to stand on it without compromise, come what may.

The scriptural advocacy for the godly life of teenagers is written with much hopes and prayers, that as it is read out in the hearing of the teenagers, many of their unanswered questions will be attended to, and Christ's life will be further formed in them practically.

Look out for the other volumes and sessions after this one. Each publication covers four (4) months.

HOW TO READ 'THE CHRISTIAN TEENAGER'

Every article represents one meeting day in a week. One of it may be read several times within a week for more clarity, but, it is better comprehended if all is not forced into the head and heart at once, *except for personal consumption*.

The materials have been well summarized as it can be easily and well understood even by a child. One of the teenagers may be asked to read through loudly, and the others reading along silently, *as in a class*, after which the reader for the day would in about ten minutes explain what is read in his/her own understanding, and also give room for others listening to make their comments, ask questions and make contributions from bible references or some real life experiences, *this is highly encouraged*.

At the same time, one of the teenagers may be requested to study the next article for the following week ahead of the rest, so as to be able to understand, digest and explain it easily/correctly for the others when asked to do so.

At the end of the teenagers' *thirty* minutes discourse, the teacher or elderly person overseeing the teens should react on the whole scene with mature godly wisdom, and make conclusions based on the word of God. The assignments following each of the sessions should be answered collectively or individually. An entire session should not be more than thirty (30) minutes, except if it is intended to be used as the main study guide for the day.

Added to this is a one hundred and eighty (180) days bible reading plan (Old and New Testament). We also advocate that every serious follower of Christ, teenagers inclusive (as far as it is possible) should be taught to engage in a systematic reading and studying of the bible, for all the reasons attached to why the accounts documented in the Holy Bible was compiled.

WHERE TO USE 'THE CHRISTIAN TEENAGER'

Teenagers are found virtually everywhere man can survive, except the mortuaries and cemeteries, which are meant for the dead humans. As at November, 2021, the world had an estimated human population of about 7.9 billion people living on earth surface. According to UNICEF, the approximate value of the population of adolescents between 10-19 years of age was 1.2 billion, this value was for October, 2019. And according to

current research reports, the value has been declining. Which means the mortality rate of adolescents which covers the teenagers is higher than that of elderly people. This is for both obvious and obscure reasons, hence, the holy passion for the writing of this book.

This manual may be read anywhere teenagers gather, i.e. in the family setting, schools (primary, secondary etc.), in the church (teens class), during teens' picnics/dinners, camp meetings, on social media, in the neighborhood, one-on-one evangelism, during outreaches and meetings, and everywhere else teenagers can be found. The book may as well be purchased at subsidized rate for free distribution in order to make them available for the young people. Though it is not limited to teenagers alone; the word of God is a universal instruction.

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CHAPTER 1

WEEK ONE

NEW LIFE IN CHRIST

New life in Christ or the New Creation life is the nature of God put into everyone who is saved by God's grace through faith; who repents from sin and the Adamic nature. It is the main configuration of every born again person. Like the operating system in a phone or computer, when you receive Jesus into your he becomes the operating system (OS) operating in your mortal body.

The bible says in Christ dwells the full content of the divine nature bodily (Col. 2:9). God's nature was Christ's operating system; he was the main coordinator of all the affairs of Christ while he was here on earth physically.

Resurrection can be expected only when death occurs. To resurrect to new life, you *have* to have died to the old life first. The new life in Christ cannot begin in you until the old life of sin and flesh is put away (because it is a dead life). It died from the day of man's fall (Gen. 2:17). Where death has not occurred, resurrection or life cannot be seen.

God made man and breathed true life into him. But when man sinned, there came a death (separation) from God's kind of life - *that separation from the divine life was the death of humanity*. The light God commanded (Gen. 1:2) turned to darkness (Isa. 60:2). All kinds of evil were empowered because the true life which was rooted in the light that God commanded had ceased, and the whole world turned against each other -Animals against man; weather and climate against man; nature which was meant to bring man comfort and suitability now fights him.

When God said, "let there be light!" (Gen. 1:2) he was calling forth the life of Christ as his *choice life* here on earth, which should manifest itself in love, joy, peace, patience...justice, righteousness, and all other fruits produced by the Holy Spirit (Gal. 5:22). God was declaring; he was introducing what manner of life earth should be founded upon, to be expressed in man whom he had made in his own exact image and likeness.

God waited patiently to bring Jesus on the scene. Jesus is the exact image and likeness of God, he lived that way; he lived a life characterized with all the fruits of the Holy Spirit. Adam was also made to live on earth and bear children with the same characters of God which manifested in the life of Jesus Christ.

But at the resurrection of the life of Christ in anybody, the lost power of life is restored (John 1:12). The world can again be brought into subjection through the word of God in the mouth of the believer, because of the resurrection that has taken place in the believer – the lost life resurrects.

The life of Christ is the power of God in every believer and the message of the Gospel; it is the divine ability to subdue and dominate on earth for God, in enforcing the character of the kingdom life everywhere a believer may be on earth. The gospel is the power of God. Anyone who believes and receives the it is again enabled to so (1 Cor. 1:18-24).

Discussion questions:

What is the death of humanity? What is really the new creation life? Who is the origin of it?

WEEK TWO

MY PRAYER LIFE

“...Be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. Put on all of God’s armor so that you will be able to stand firm against all strategies of the devil. For we are not fighting against flesh-and-blood enemies, but against evil rulers and authorities of the unseen world, against mighty powers in this dark world, and against evil spirits in the heavenly places.

Therefore, put on every piece of God’s armor so you will be able to resist the enemy in the time of evil. Then after the battle you will still be standing firm. Stand your ground, putting on the belt of truth and the body armor of God’s righteousness. For shoes, put on the peace that comes from the Good News so that you will be fully prepared. In addition to all of these, hold up the shield of faith to stop the fiery arrows of the devil. Put on salvation as your helmet, and take the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. Pray in the Spirit at all times and on every occasion. Stay alert and be persistent in your prayers for all believers everywhere.” Eph. 6:10-18 NLT

Prayer is talking to God and listening to God. Communication has taken place only when there is corresponding feedback from the hearer. Many people have described prayers in their own way, but the basic element of an effective prayer is when there is communication backed up with the correct feedback from the receiver. This means, whenever you talk to God, you should believe he hears you and will answer you, which is the feedback. Until there is an answer to the request you make unto God, it’s no complete spiritual exercise. Every believer is designed to pray. No prayer no Christianity; no prayer no true faith (Heb. 11:6). From the Garden of Eden man had been praying, and through the Old Testament men prayed and got God’s response to their problems.

You must be born of God

This level of prayer exercise begins from who the origin of your life is. Who is your father? If you have not received Christ into your life through faith, you don’t have his life in you, he’s not yet your eternal and heavenly Father, because he doesn’t have your name in his heart as one he has born yet (John 3:3, 5-8). You should call on him right now; ask that he comes to your heart as your Father, and you his child. With this, you can begin your journey of prayer relationship with your new friend to any extent your faith can take you (turn to the last page to pray this prayer).

Prayer is a fellowship

Humans were created by God to fellowship with him without ceasing. That is why man is the only creature as the breath of God. Until your prayer becomes a fellowship with God, you will not get the best of him. Prayer is Koinonia; it is communion, intimacy, 'intercourse' with God, and fellowship with the Godhead (John 1:3).

Believers don't only come to God to pray because they have a problem or there's something they want done that's greater than their human abilities, Christians pray because it is the will of God for their lives; it is the only way to be the correct Christian.

In the natural sense, in the family setting, your parent do not talk with you only when they want to give you a gift or what you request a thing from them, also, you do not come to them only when you have something to ask or get from them. Relationship might have already existed between you and them on a neutral ground as God has ordained. Even when you have offended any of them, you still belong to them because you cannot take away from you the gene (biological element) of resemblance which makes you theirs biologically. They may be mad at you in response, but will forgive you when you approach them for pardon, and the family relationship continues again.

In the same way, you are to relate with God, a parent-child relationship. Getting anything from the Lord in prayers should be an addendum, not the main reason why you pray. Yes, when things become difficult you are to go to him for his help, but you don't always have to wait for difficult times to appear. When you dwell daily in him in unceasing relations, praying always, and studying word day and night, you might never experience difficult times by surprise. He would have helped you build enough capacity to handle it.

Discussion Question:

How can you define prayers in your own understanding?

WEEK THREE

SEEKING GOD EARLY

Josiah was eight years old when he became king of Judah, and he ruled in Jerusalem for thirty-one years. He did what was pleasing to the LORD; he followed the example of his ancestor King David, strictly obeying all the laws of God. In the eighth year that Josiah was still very young, he began to worship the God of his ancestor King David. Four years later he began to destroy the pagan places of worship, the symbol of the goddess Asherah, and all the other idols. 2 Chronicles 34:3 GNB

A major division of that verse that conveys critical meaning to your life as a teenagers is:

- ...In the eighth year that Josiah was still very young, he began to worship the God of his ancestor King David...GNB
...When he had been king for eight years - he was still only a teenager - he began to seek the God of David his ancestor...MSB
...And in the eighth year of the realm of his empire, when he was yet a boy, [that is, sixteen years of age,] he began to seek the God of his father David...WYCLIFF BIBLE

The best time for you to start seeking God; researching about his person and his will; learning about his character and attributes (i.e. what makes him who he is), his do's and don'ts, likes and hates, blessings and curses, etc. is now. As for Jesus, it looks like, he discovered himself as a peculiar child of God from childhood, that guided him. After the encounter in the temple between him and the doctors of Law, and also his parent, he went home and submitted to their training for another eighteen years before ever venturing out. David also started seeking God from his teenage years until became king in Egypt. Joseph kept on guarding his heart in following the Lord from teenage. Daniel, Shedrach, Mechach and Abednego were also very young exiles who *had* been seeking God, perhaps from their teenage days back in Jerusalem until they were captured into exile in Babylon. Esther as well was a very young Hebrew devout who worshipped and followed God's will for her life while she grew under Mordecai, most likely as a teenager (Esther 2:7). Some Bible Scholars and theologians agree that Timothy actually started seeking God from his teenage days (1 Tim. 4:12). This is because of the connotation of the Greek work translated "*youth*", the word, "*neotes*".

This is the perfect time for you as a teenager to engage God, requesting that he shows you what he has designed you for, it is now! God alone knows the plans he has for you (Jer. 29:11). If you seek him for the revelation of your purpose for your being alive on earth, he'll definitely show you. He shows to those whose hearts are ready, who come to him, even as teenagers. Those who are given the knowledge of their purpose early in life run faster. Jeremiah was probably a teenager too, or a very young person also when God revealed his purpose to him (Jer. 1:4-6). Darling, Seek the LORD while he may be found; call upon him while he is near; (Isa. 55:6 ESV).

It is a great pity how so many Christian youths in their teenage years follow hard to satisfy the selfish longings of their human desires, when the word of God teaches, that believers are not to grant/fulfill the desires of their human nature, but to follow the voice of the Spirit of God in everything.

Hear Paul,

So I say, let the Holy Spirit guide your lives. Then you won't be doing what your sinful nature craves. The sinful nature wants to do evil, which is just the opposite of what the Spirit wants. And the Spirit gives us desires that are the opposite of what the sinful nature desires. These two forces are constantly fighting each other, so you are not free to carry out your good intentions. Gal 5:16-17 NLT

How to do the right thing at this point is to be led by God himself (Psalm 32:8), because, those who are led by the Spirit of God are the children of God (Rom. 8:14). If you are one, then let him lead you. The world system is designed to pull you away from God, but you must be determined to follow the Holy Spirit daily in everything.

As you learn to follow the Holy Spirit's leading in every little thing now, you will also know how to hear, understand and follow him in greater matters, such as in *academic choices, choice of a marriage partner, where to work, and which job he has designed and equipped you for, where to live and raise children for his glory, etc.*

The essential task before every Christian teenager is '**looking out for God**, and his will in everything (Isa. 55:6). Searching for God is worth living every other thing aside for (Matt. 13:44).

What are those things that keep you away from truly seeking and serving the Lord devotedly? What are those ungodly habits and addictions that sap your time and strength away so that you find it boring to pray, fast, meditate on the word of God,

enjoy the fellowship of other believers and developing into Christ's full stature of maturity (Eph. 4:13)? It's high time you killed them. Arise and declare the war of the Spirit against them (Eph. 6:10-18). Otherwise, the plan and will of God for your life may not come to pass. Say No! to them all.

The grace to say 'no' to their influences has been entrusted unto every believer. "For the grace of God has appeared that offers salvation to all people". It teaches us to say "No" to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age (Tit. 2:11-12 NIV). But be an example for the believers in your speech, your conduct, your love, faith, and purity (1 Tim. 4:12). Do not continue to let your involvement in social media activities take you away from seeking God. Sitting before the television set, or seeing videos on YouTube and other socially engaging platforms have been designed for the use of the world, and if any saint must use them, it ought to be with great caution, self discipline and much self control under the guard and guide of the Holy Spirit. Fight against licentiousness. We must not love the world or anything in it (1 John 2:15-17). Jesus commended Mary, the sister of Martha for choosing the most needful activity for humanity - sitting before the Lord and listening to him teach the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven. The moment you begin to realize that you are becoming excited about how much you have become preoccupied with the activities of the world, then, remember that, "...there is only thing worth being concerned about" (Luke 10:42). Those who choose it have never lost it. Submit yourself unto the lecturing room of Jesus daily, and commit your life to seeking him first and only (Matt. 6:33).

Discussion Questions

Outline some benefits you'll personally derive from seeking God early. When can it be said to be early enough?

WEEK FOUR

WHILE SEEKING GOD

- ...four years later he began to destroy the pagan places of worship, the symbol of the goddess Asherah, and all the other idols.

Josiah began to have understanding of his destiny from childhood, since that was when he became king of his land. At age sixteen, he began to chase after the knowledge of God with which David his father succeeded. And at the age of twenty, he began to put into practice those truths about the will of God that he had been trained with for four years. Josiah committed his life to seeking God, and learning the Laws of God for Israel in order for him to be acquainted with them, and as a young boy with the knowledge of his purpose, that he might know how to focus his attention on the word of God for him in life and destiny.

Seeking God is usually a means to an end: that one would find God, and keep finding out more about him. Those who truly find God testify of how much of him there've not known. Paul said, "All I want is to know Christ and to experience the power of his resurrection, to share in his sufferings and become like him in his death." (Phil. 3:10).

The second purpose behind the calling of the Disciples of Christ was for him to send them out to do exploit. They were called primarily to seek him and be with him, after which he would also send them out (Mk 3:13-14).

Josiah, after about four years of seeking and learning of God from the elderly ones grew to become stronger and firm in the knowledge of God's will for Judah - how they ought to coordinate themselves in obedience to the Lord. He also began to remove the things, i.e. the idols that he found on the land because according to the truths of God he had learnt for four years, no idol should be found in Judah.

Jesus too trained and equipped his disciples for about three years and they were good to go and serve his purpose.

After seeking God you are suppose to begin to do the needful. Practically remove from your life and other places those things that are against the truths you have so learnt of God. Put to death in your life: sin, bad habits, addictions and whatsoever you do not see as part of Christ's nature while seeking him. Unless God conquers your life in those areas, you might not have strength to help others conquer. They must be no trace of dark deeds in your own life.

Knowledge is power. What you **know** is the **power** you have to **exert influence** anywhere you are! The people that do know their God shall be *strong* and do *exploits* (Dan. 11:32). As a Christian teenager, the true definition of your purpose here on earth surrounds the reason for your salvation. You are made wise to make others wise. You are made a friend of God to give you the right to make others friends of God too (2 Cor. 5:17-18). God expects you to tell others what he tells or reveals to you about himself in your process of seeking him, this is why Jesus calls believers, 'his witnesses' (Acts 1:8). The power behind your personal conviction of God's person and reality is the instrument with which your witness of Christ will yield the expected result.

Ezra committed his heart to seeking God devotedly; to obeying the things he discovered and he also made commitments to teach the truths to the Jews also. That means, what you discover about God must first be practiced by you, before you can teach it to others.

The powers of your personal convictions lie beneath the degree to which you have sought God personally. Consequently, the power for you to exert any of such change in an environment or on a person, [a change *which must have first been seen taking place in your own life* while you were seeking God,] also lies beneath the degree to which you have allowed your life to be changed by the truths you encounter.

You ought confronted the many idols in the land and environment where you live in by the power of the Spirit of the Lord, through the truths that you encounter, and which changes you. As a Christian teenager, God wants you to address idols, such as: the love of money, examination malpractice, cultism, internet fraud, gossip of anyone, fornication among your peers and others, ungodly relationships and involvement in all worldly (not secular) gatherings. The lust of the eyes which leads many teenagers like you into all manner of immoral acts, lust to become famous, outside God etc. These and the likes have led many teens and youths to their graves before the time God planned for them.

Today, make up your mind, like Josiah, that as you learn of God's will for the church and the world we live in, you will not continue to fold your hands and watch things remain fallen apart. Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify God for your good life (Matt. 5:14-16). Like Jesus, go about doing good (Acts 10:38), because that was the reason why God re-created and anointed you [anew] in Christ, that you may walk in the exact life and likeness of Jesus Christ (Eph. 2:10).

You are now a Christian teenager for the purpose of doing the good works that please God, because it makes God glad. Don't be saved for nothing! You have been seeking God, it is time for you to arise and begin to destroy the prevailing evils on our land, from the church to every street of the community in which you live. Don't seek God for nothing. Go out there and tell some sinners that Jesus calls them to eternal salvation. Pray for them, and give them Christian materials that helps you (if they are willing to accept, when you make attempt).

Discussion Question

How should a Christian teenager seek God? What hinders people of your age from truly seeking God? What should you do with your knowledge of God?

CHAPTER 2

WEEK FIVE

YOU'VE BEEN FREED FROM ADDICTIONS

According to medicalnewstoday.com, Addiction is one's inability to stop using a substance or engaging in a behavior even though it is causing psychological and physical harm to one's personality.

The average human being has been addicted to one thing or the other at one time in their lives. It could be a total or partial addiction. Addiction is not a good thing at all; its consequences are so devastating and the aftermath, highly regretful. Every category of person can get addicted, either to substance use or a behavior that is humanly accepted as shameful and unworthy of applause by reasonable people of the society. In our contemporary age, adolescents fall easy prey of it. So many teenagers have suffered more from its adverse effect than they can actually testify to be satisfying; it kills. On the long run, when indulging, it may offer one some forms of bodily satisfaction which is usually a temporal feeling, but after trying hard to overcome it and find that they are not able, they become frustrated, depressed and sorrowful.

What many young people get addicted to are things that can actually be talked over, and with little counseling some get over it, yet for a while, and this is because, the actual causal agent of all forms of addictions resides right within the person doing it, it is known as '**the Human nature**'. No natural human therapy designed by man can be used to end an activity of the self life that is powered by the indwelling human nature; the producer of all sinful desires is self, it must be put to death.

All the products of the human nature is sin before God. Addiction is just a level that the work of the flesh grows into in anyone who does not put the human nature and its works to death. Well, addiction to anything is not even the first problem, but the desire to do and continue in what has now become difficult to let go, even though it is life-threatening. The human nature is also called '*Adamic Nature, Sinful Nature, Old Man, Self Life etc.*' Every human born by a woman to earth has the exact configuration that an addict has, because all addiction is sin (Rom. 3:23), and sin is the product of the human nature, otherwise known as the sinful nature. "What human nature does is quite plain. It shows itself in immoral, filthy, and indecent actions; in worship of idols and witchcraft, people become enemies and they fight; they become jealous, angry, and ambitious. They separate into parties and groups; they are envious, get drunk, have

orgies, and do other things like these. I warn you now as I have before: those who do these things will not possess the kingdom of God.” Gal. 5:19-21 GNB

When anyone becomes addicted to a substance, at a point they can never have enough of it. When they develop in the act, they have to take a larger dose than ever before just to get the same effect. In this way greater damages starts setting into their lives, this is physical addiction. Later on, psychological addiction sets in, and the victim begins to depend on the drug, not to get high but his whole life will center on addictive substances, he will be deceived into thinking that he may die without taking it frequently; it becomes as food for their psychological balance. This is how Satan deceives men just to destroy them completely, shatter God’s plan for their lives and make them end up miserable.

What a teenager can be addicted to

Teenagers like you give themselves over to any physical substance with chemical content designed to induce a kind of satisfaction that is temporal and false. Adolescents get addicted to pain relievers or pain killers, anxiety and sleep medicines, alcohol, cigarette, medicine, glue, illegal drugs, and some naturally grown herbs, etc. other things common includes: food, snacks, soft drinks, packed foods etc. Yet another category is addiction to sensual pleasures such as: Masturbation, pornography, sex, unchecked desires for romantic and sexually-related discussions and chats with friends and the internet, sexually arousing movies and sex-stimulating music etc.

Young people, especially teenagers are addicted to their Smartphones. More than five out of eight teenagers are addicted to their mobile phones. When you spend more time pinging, chatting on social media and streaming videos online on YouTube than you do with engaging yourself with spiritual exercises, you can be said to be addicted, or be in addiction of it.

You are becoming addicted to anything you can hardly stay without, because it satisfies your bodily and carnal desires. Whatsoever your human nature finds pleasurable can become an object of addiction. You can know this if you discover that you’re always talking about it even when an ongoing discuss does not suggest it. When you realize you prefer staying alone more, now, not to pray or seek God’s face in prayers, but to think, indulge and satisfy your bodily passions, then cry out to God and to a senior believer you trust for help. Because sin is knocking at the door of your heart, you must master it (Gen. 4:7). Do not allow yourself to be controlled by any worldly material or

activity, because nothing is permanent here on earth. If you give yourself to them, you will be destroyed together along with them on that day.

Present and future repercussions of addiction

Problems with schoolwork, physical health issues, lack of interest in dressing well, negative changes in behavior and frequent mood swing, money issues, i.e. never satisfied with finances. An addict can do anything to get money just to get his addictive stuff, some even go as far as selling personal property and family items, they use their school fees or spend some other money kept in their custody by someone else, or a group on the substance that gets them high, when the craving becomes intense. Addicts have no productive plans for their future, and have lost interest in becoming somebody important in life. They can hardly build a good home, or raise godly children for the Lord. They can never be satisfied with their financial in-flow because their appetites are enlarged beyond the normal due to addiction. They all need help, and have lost value for life. Many of them have had meaningful relationships destroyed because of their addiction. For some, they eventually lost their spouse, children and some of the most important people in their lives. Beloved, addiction is completely bad. Die to it completely before it kills you, and leave you as a working corpse on earth. God forbid! It shall not be your portion in Jesus' name. Every trace of it you see manifesting now must be taken to Jesus, who will command it to be stoned to death in your life by others (Deut. 21:18-21). He knows how best to do it.

How you have been delivered from it?

An African adage says, "If you want to help an ant, you have to become an ant." Addiction is empowered by the lust of the eyes, pride of life and lust of the flesh. In general, it exercises authority on anyone who chooses to walk in the flesh rather than by the word of the Lord and the Spirit. God knew before the creation of the world that when man falls it would be impossible for him to help/save himself no matter how hard he tries. Therefore in his unconditional love for the fallen world of man, Jesus came down in flesh and blood like man. Jesus is the visible image of the invisible God. He is the best description of the supposed life of all mankind, except for the fall. He possessed the exact image and likeness of God, like the first Adam, he knew no sin. He overcame all the cravings of the human nature because he was not born by the will of man, just as you are not born again by the will of man, but the will of God.

Your permanent deliverance has already taken place at the cross when Jesus died. When he died you also died. God put the sin of the whole world in him, and also the

producer of the sin –human nature, so that in his death and sufferings we all went through it together with him; how he died for us (2 Cor. 5:14-15). **Read Romans 6:1-14.** Beloved the power that sin had over humanity, by which it held men in slavery, has been completely shattered by the death of Christ on the cross (Col. 2:13-15). Not even the devil has any right or power anymore to force any believer of Jesus into any sinful act, or to remain under the yoke of addictions to anything at all. The power to hold anyone captive is already removed from Satan, as long as one believes and remains in Christ. It is in order to destroy the grip of the devil on man that Jesus had to die (1 John 3:8). The right the devil had to capture you is no more!

If you are still struggling with addiction to anything at all, would you please just stop struggling or trying hard by your own human power and wisdom to accomplish what you have no physical or psychological ability to. Forget about any humanly suggested therapies and setting of laws for yourself just to end something that no longer exists in you. The grace of the Lord that brings eternal (permanent) salvation to all men has been revealed in the person of Jesus Christ, and that grace teaches and empowers us to say no to all evils, worldly passions and lusts, sin and sinful habits etc. (Tit. 2:11-12). You have been saved by grace through faith in what has happened for your own favour. Think of all God had to put in place just to save you from all the devil has enslaved you with. How Jesus had to come to the earth and be proven through the same trials and temptations you're going through, he died and rose to show that he has completed the sentences laid out for your punishment. And in his resurrection he lifted you up from the grip of sin and Satan forever. Believe it. Speak about it. Tell others about it. Praise God concerning it, and continue to grow in this grace that brought you the victory of the Lord forever.

Discussion Questions

What is addiction? What have you been addicted to before? How has God saved every believer from addiction?

WEEK SIX

YOU ARE PREGNANT!

Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord, as His divine power has given to us all things that *pertain* to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue, by which have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, that through these you may be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption *that is* in the world through lust (NKJV). Grace and peace to you many times over as you deepen in your experience with God and Jesus, our Master. Everything that goes into a life of pleasing God has been miraculously given to us by getting to know, personally and intimately, the One who invited us to God. The best invitation we ever received! We were also given absolutely terrific promises to pass on to you – your tickets to participation in the life of God after you turned your back on a world corrupted by lust. 2 Pet. 1:2-3 MSG.

Pregnancy is the term used to describe the period in which a fetus develops inside a woman's womb or *uterus* (NIH). It occurs when an egg is fertilized by a sperm, grows inside a woman's uterus (womb), and develops into a baby (*emedicine health*). Pregnancy is a means to the end, that a new life be brought forth into the earth.

When God created you physically he formed you with some special abilities, following the purpose he had in mind which made him designed you to look the way you are, completely different from every other human being. Just as you have unique physiological differences from every other human, even though someone might really resemble you, the person is not you, right! God says, "I alone know the

plans I have for you, plans to bring you prosperity and not disaster, plans to bring about the future you hope for” (Jer. 29:11). It is because of these great plans that he called you out of the corruption of the world into the grace of salvation through Christ Jesus. Kay Arthur said, “So many times we say that we can’t serve God because we aren’t whatever is needed. We’re not talented enough or smart enough or whatever. But if you are in covenant with Jesus Christ, He is responsible for covering your weaknesses, for being your strength. He will give you His abilities for your disabilities!” therefore, understand that Jesus himself has become the author of your divine abilities.

“God has given each of us the ability to do certain things well. So if God has given you the ability to prophesy, then prophesy whenever you can – as often as your faith is strong enough to receive a message from God. If your gift is that of serving others, serve them well. If you are a teacher, do a good job of teaching. If you are a preacher, see to it that your sermons are strong and helpful. If God has given you money, be generous in helping others with it. If God has given you administrative ability and put you in charge of the work of others, take the responsibility seriously. Those who offer comfort to the sorrowing should do so with Christian cheer.” Romans 12:6-8 TLB. Because you now live in Christ, you have also received the right of access into God’s treasures of spiritual gifts and talents, with which you will fulfill the divine purpose behind your existence on earth, first for the benefit of others in the church. When you become born again, you are pregnant with spiritual gifts and talents; God has put a unique strength inside of you to make you live with the sense of relevance every day as a Christian teenager, everywhere you find yourself, if only you can continue to yield to the leading of the Holy Spirit (Rom. 8:14). Identify what you are pregnant with and use it to do ‘good’ like Jesus, everywhere you go (Acts 10:38).

You are created anew in Christ to fulfill those good works which you were predestined to walk in, while living here on earth. Let your light shine before men so much, that they see your good works and glorify God on your behalf (Matt. 5:16) “For we are God’s masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things he planned for us long ago” (Eph. 2:10). When he created you anew, it was with an entirely new configuration and content. “The Holy Spirit displays God’s power through each of us as a means of helping the entire church. To one person the Spirit gives the ability to give wise advice; someone else may be especially good at studying and teaching, and this is his gift from the same Spirit. He gives special faith to another, and to someone else the power to heal the sick He gives power for doing miracles to some, and to others power to prophesy and

preach. He gives someone else the power to know whether evil spirits are speaking through those who claim to be giving God's messages—or whether it is really the Spirit of God who is speaking. Still another person is able to speak in languages he never learned; and others, who do not know the language either, are given power to understand what he is saying. It is the same and only Holy Spirit who gives all these gifts and powers, deciding which each one of us should have" (1 Corinthians 12:7-11. LIVING BIBLE). As long as you remain in close fellowship with Christ, you are expected to remain on the delivery bed, everyday. God expects you to use that which he has put inside of you to cause increase in the church that the kingdom of God might expand.

You need to keep knowing this that a pregnant woman cannot be rough while carrying out any physical activity, they deal gently with everyone and every activity, because of the treasure in their womb. You also ought to coordinate your life in the fear of the Lord. You can no longer involve in all what your friends who have no time for God engage in. You are pregnant with spiritual virtues and you cannot afford to miscarry due to sin and carelessness. You are expected to drop aside whatsoever can cause you to miscarry the Lord's pregnancy preserved in you for his church, and his glory.

A lot of Christian teenagers have messed up and missed it already, and God really wants you to be at alert. He wants you to keep dwelling daily in his presence to learn how to deliver his baby in your womb anytime the need arises.

Beloved Christian teenager, you are pregnant with the spiritual gifts and talents needed by other Christians to grow well, therefore, stir up the gift within you daily, through constant quality personal devotion, prayers, obedience to the word of God, and practicing of the gift(s) within you through faith in God, and the leading of the Holy Spirit. Guard it with all diligence. And never forget that because of this pregnancy, you owe your generation. Lives and destinies depend on you to lead a purpose-driven life even as they, like you, journey through the earth into eternity.

You are pregnant. Make sure you deliver to the right people/person, in the right place and in the right time. You are a debtor, until you give off completely. Make sure you die empty, not like Prophet Elisha. Deliver your baby, and don't forget to remain pregnant for the next person. The more you remain pregnant, the more you remain relevant to your generation and the one waiting ahead (Rom. 8:19). You are pregnant!

Discussion questions

What kind of pregnancy is discussed here? What are Christian teenagers likely to be pregnant with? How can one deliver his pregnancy?

WEEK SEVEN

WELCOME TO FREEDOM LAND!

“You are completely freed by the power of God through your faith in the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Jesus was the freedom fighter. He fought it and won the victory for your independence from the power of Satan.”

Do you remember Jesus saying, “**...it is finished**” in John 19:28-30? That’s it, that’s why you are free, you didn’t just know, perhaps. ‘...Jesus said to the Jews who had believed him, “If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.” John 8:31-32 ESV. Your freedom is activated in your knowledge and actualized in your faith. The truth is Jesus himself (John 14:6). Knowing him is receiving understanding about his purpose for coming, and the blessings in his coming.

Those who *receive the good news and remain in it* shall know Jesus progressively and experience the power that resurrected Jesus in their own mortal body. They will be empowered to live their lives in the victory of Jesus over sin, and the human nature. This is because, "...the message about Christ's death on the cross is nonsense to those who are being lost; but for us who are being saved it is God's power. 1 Cor. 1:18-19 GNB. And also in Rom. 1:16, Paul said, " ...I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes: first to the Jew, then to the Gentiles.

"The Gospel is the power of God over Satan and sin. The Gospel tells us that the power of sin has been broken." -Chidi Okoroafor.

Beloved Christian teenager, the message about Christ's death on the cross is the ultimate power by which Satan and all evil works were completely defeated for your sake, because the message envelops the power of God that destroyed all the works of Satan over the soul of man. If you believe in this message that Jesus actually came to the earth as flesh, suffered and died for the course of sin you have received the power with which God destroys all the works of the devil; you have overcome forever, remain in your victory.

You are completely Saved by God' grace

"For the grace of God has appeared that offers salvation to all people. It teaches us to say "No" to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age, (Tit. 2:11-12 NIV).

Having believed in the message of the cross, you have been saved forever because of your faith in this divine help (Grace) which God has brought to all mankind. You're now a new creation, created anew in Christ Jesus unto good works (Eph. 2:10), powered by the Holy Spirit alone. You are to completely surrender your life unto Jesus under the leadership of the Holy Spirit. You have been given the power to say "No" to all other forms of ungodliness and lustful desires of the human nature.

The power to control yourself in everything, the divine ability to say "No" to every of the natural and sinful desires of your bodily passion now lives in you because you abide in the faith of the gospel. You have been provided with all you need for life and for godly living through your increasing knowledge of Christ's personality (2 Pet. 1:2-8) and his finished works through the cross.

For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith – and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God – not by works, so that no one can boast. Ephesians 2:8-9 NIV

Listen, Darling, your freedom was worked out by Christ, not you. You have no power in you to overcome any bad habit at all. Jesus has helped you out already. After making the way for you, he placed an invite, “Come to me, all of you who are tired from carrying heavy loads, and I will give you rest.” (Matt. 11:28). You are free from every form of ungodly lifestyle that displeases God. Believe and Receive this freedom by faith.

How to receive this freedom:

1. Acknowledge it as God’s gift for you, regardless of how bad you are (Rom. 6:23b; Rom. 5:20-21),
2. Deny yourself of your natural goodness, and replace it with Christ’s goodness towards you (Eph. 2:9),
3. Choose to carry your cross (acceptance that you died to sin when Jesus was crucified) to follow Jesus daily (2 Cor. 5:14-15),
4. Believe in the word of God, and abide in it (John 8:31),
5. Believe in the finished work of Christ (John 19:30),
6. Accept it that in his death, you received Spiritual life, and you have been completely alienated from the path of spiritual death (Col. 2:13; Eph. 2:1),
7. Believe that you have the power of God (i.e. the gospel) resident in you now (1 Cor. 1:18),
8. Believe that you have been raised with Christ from the dead and seated with him in the heavenly realms above all sin (Eph. 2:6),
9. Believe that you now possess the divine nature which cannot be corrupted (2 Pet. 1:4; Col. 2:9),
10. Jesus has overcome the world for you (John 16:33),
11. Your sins are forgiven (1 John 2:12),
12. Know and believe that when you sin, you have an advocate –Jesus Christ with the Father, who is ever pleading for you (1 John 2:1),
13. Believe that he loves you so deeply, despite your weaknesses (Rom. 5:8)
14. Make the word of God your first and final choice (Deut. 32 46-47),
15. Teach others the truth about Christ also (Matt. 28:20),
16. Talk about the word of God everywhere you are (Deut. 6:4-6),
17. Proclaim what you believe (2 Cor. 4:13),
18. Instantly obeying the voice of the Lord (Jam. 1:22; Deut. 5:33),
19. Give the word of God first place in your life, in every activity every day (Josh. 1:8),

20. Resolve to live your life as Jesus did (1 John 2:6),
21. Walk by the Word of God and by the Spirit of God (Gal.5:16)
22. Feed on the word of God, eat it daily, consume as much as you can everyday (Ezra 7:10; Ezek. 3:3; Psalm 1),
23. Be committed to your personal prayer altar daily (Eph. 6:16),
24. Guard your heart diligently (Prov. 4:23),
25. Feed your mind only with helpful resources, such as are healthy for the new creation life (Phil. 4:8; Col. 3:5),
26. Put to death any stubborn attitude you notice in you (Deut. 21:18-21),
27. Keep your mind renewed daily (Rom. 12:2),
28. And now, dear brothers and sisters, one final thing. Fix your thoughts on what is true, and honorable, and right, and pure, and lovely, and admirable. Think about things that are excellent and worthy of praise. Phil. 4:8 NLT

Dear child of God, these scriptures applies to every area of your life, and not just to help you walk in freedom over addictions. You may not be struggling with any form of addiction but understand that the habits of the human nature are obvious, and manifests in many different manners. In some people, it is anger, in some it is witchcraft, etc. Therefore use these instructions to combat every manifestation of self life, in which the desire to satisfy the body finds expression.

Right now, you have complete victory over the world, over Satan, over sin, over sickness, over poverty, over death, and all that worldly people are doomed to suffer here on earth, because you now live in Christ. Even though they may tribulations, Jesus already fought for the victory of all such. To enjoy this victory, you must have received the right to become the child of God. But perhaps you have not given your heart to receiving of the life of Jesus, you can do so right now.

Discussion question

Describe your freedom in Christ?

Pray like this:

Dear God, I desire to call you Father. Remove everything that has kept me separated from you to this time, and make me your friend. I know you love me. I believe Jesus died to provide me with eternal life if I believe, I believe from today. I confess and repent from every of my wrongdoings in the past and the future. Help me remain in your love, and to abide in your word for the rest of my life. Fill me with your Holy

Spirit so I can know your will and receive the blessings you have kept in Christ for me. Be with me from today, and help me to tell others about your great grace and unconditional love for humanity. I pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

WEEK EIGHT

SEE IT AS JESUS SEES IT, DO IT AS JESUS DOES IT

Perspective is a major element that determines how one judges what the eyes see in any situation. It is not an honorable thing to force someone to give the same judgment with you on a matter. In life everyone has right to life, and is subject to his own judgmental approach. Even God does not force any human being to accept his free gift of salvation; he respects the freedom of choice he gives to us.

But for being a follower of Christ, as a teenager who has made up his mind to seek the Lord from teenage hood like Josiah (2 Chron. 34:3), it is to your full advantage that your perception and judgment of everything in the world is now narrowed down to just the way Jesus saw and perceived things, Congratulations!

You need a good eye to see as Jesus sees. "The lamp of the body is the eye. If therefore your eye is good, your whole body will be full of light. But if your eye is bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in you is darkness, how great *is* that darkness! NKJV

"The only source of light for the body is the eye. If you look at people and want to help them, you will be full of light. But if you look at people in a selfish way, you will be full of darkness. And if the only light you have is really darkness, you have the worst kind of darkness. Matthew 6:22-23 ERV. Unless you keep seeing Jesus correctly, you will never be able to see as he does, following how he sees things.

Being in Christ is supposed to change everything about your life, and how you judge things, no longer as one born carnally, but as one born of the Spirit. Yes, you'll still maintain your physical form but you are now a new creature spiritually (2 Cor. 5:17), and *should allow the nature of the new creation life dominate and coordinate your judgment of everything in life*. This looks impossible to some, but that's the truth. "Don't you realize that you become the slave of whatever you choose to obey? You can be a slave to sin, which leads to death, or you can choose to obey God, which leads to righteous living." (Rom. 6:16 NLT)

Dear Christian teenager, you need to know that, how you see man, God and every activity on earth defines the direction which your life takes, as you journey through the earth. You are now expected to see all things just as Jesus saw all things. The coordination of your entire life activities should be in accordance with the dictates of the life of Christ residing in you. But how can you do that?

And He said to all, If any person wills to come after Me, **let him deny himself [disown himself]**, forget, lose sight of himself and his own interests, refuse and give up himself] and **take up his cross daily** and **follow Me** [cleave steadfastly to Me, conform wholly to My example in living and, if need be, in dying also]. Luke 9:23 AMPC

"In your life together, **think the way Christ Jesus thought.**" Phil. 2:5 ERV

You really need to pray to God to baptize you with the spirit of wisdom and revelation, for you to truly know him and also that your heart will be flooded with light, that you

might know Jesus, and understand how you should relate and respond to what goes on here on earth. "The lamp of the body is the eye. If therefore your eye is good, your whole body will be full of light..." This means, how well your life in Christ will go depends on the goodness of your spiritual eye sight. Beloved, being in Christ means, you *are to live with his mindset on every matter* (Phil. 2:5). Unless you begin to deny yourself consciously keeping aside the natural way a particular thing is being done on earth, or as you use to do it, you might not be able to let him do it the new way in you.

You are to see money and relate with it as he did. As a male teenager, you are to see the young sisters and relate with them as Jesus did it, and vice versa. When it comes to writing any promotional examination or interview, be careful with the '*current methods*' devised by the world to do it. And don't forget that you are the light; you are to expose the activities of darkness by simply living the right way, according to the new creation life now ruling in you. You have no contract with sin, which means, you are to live daily in the consciousness of God's righteousness that has been inputted into you.

You are to operate in the light of his truths about every matter: Jesus prayed for his enemies (Luke 23:24), you should do same (Matthew 5:43-44); he did much good to both the poor and rich, Jews and Gentiles, educated and uneducated. He saw sinners with compassion, encouraged the timid, and justified the ones condemned by the public to die (John 8:1-12). He saw the helpless as people who need his ministry. He saw children as possessors of the kingdom of God, not as disturbances (Matt. 19:14). *He saw every environment as the place he should do ministry, a platform created by the Father for the work of the ministry* - that's why he went from town to town, village to village, city to city preaching; teaching; healing the sick; and freeing those oppressed of the devil, and God was indeed with him to the end, just he has promised to be with us from now to the end of the age (Matt. 18:20). Even though he could defend himself, he followed his parents and submitted to them (Luke 2:51). You will never grow to the level in life when your parent will lose parental control over you. Jesus began to make moral decisions from age twelve (Isa. 7:16), that could have spurred him into pride and arrogance, yet he went back home with his parent and was completely subject to them, at least for the next eighteen years after then he remained under their guide and instruction. Teenage years are only like first showers of your adolescence. Don't be overcome by the psychological enhancements you notice, there're still some years of learning ahead of you.

So many Christian teenagers do not submit to their parents or elderly ones because they feel they are more enlightened, yet they lack the experiences of this 'old-school' folks, as they call them today. Trying to prove that you have also grown and know things as a

teenager is a natural thing; it is what is designed to happen as soon as any child grows into adolescent. It is part of the biological changes that occurs physically and psychologically in all adolescents. Therefore, do not start thinking that you too, at least know something, and should always be allowed to express yourself. Put away every youthful exuberance and follow the life of Christ by the leading of the Holy Spirit, and submit your head under parental guide like Jesus so that he would be your role model indeed, leading you by his word and his life spelt out by the scriptures.

Strengthen [Arm] yourselves so that you will live here on earth [the rest of the time in the flesh] doing what God wants [the will of God], not the evil things people want [*or* not pursuing your own human desires]. EXPANDED BIBLE

From now on, then, you must live the rest of your earthly lives controlled by God's will and not by human desires. 1 Pet. 4:2 GNB

May the Lord help you to yield your eyes to him, that Christ might show you that which pleases the Father about a particular direction, situation or activity. May we all learn to talk, believe, see, perceive, eat, sleep, pray, do ministry, relate with others, and do all other things as Jesus did it.

Discussion question

Describe briefly how one can see like Jesus and behave like him in any situation? Give example(s).

CHAPTER 3

WEEK NINE

OVERCOMING LONELINESS

Then the Lord God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone; I will make him a helper suitable for him." Gen. 2:18

Loneliness is something God is not pleased with, and has made provision for it from the very beginning. If you are in Christ, you have been provided help against loneliness. Remain in close fellowship with Christ.

Loneliness is a state of the mind peculiar to the natural man (the Adamic nature) only. The new creation man is re-created with complete victory over any form of aloneness, because he has full life, being in perfect union with Christ (Col. 2:9-10). *Mental health Foundation* Defines it as **"the state of distress or discomfort that results when we perceive a gap between our desires for social connection and actual experiences of it."** As a teenager you may be faced with tough times like the loss of a loved one, or of one to whom you have a kind of strong attachment to, due to death or a breakup, loss of a job that sustained you, you're leaving a community, such as secondary school etc. You may as well struggle with feelings of being excluded from others for any reason at all.

Besides the obvious reasons for experiencing loneliness, such as the loss of a loved one or exclusion from your peers/family/friends or community, the unique confrontation with loneliness that young people often encounter comes in the form of loneliness not necessarily meaning to be alone but rather the *feeling of aloneness even when in the presence of others*. "Loneliness is a perceived, individual experience. There's a sense of detachment, alienation, and isolation." -Jonny Shannon. The feeling of loneliness is not peculiar to teenagers/youths only; anyone can feel lonely in any circumstance, regardless of the age when surrounded by people, even when you are in a relationship, or when you have many friends and acquaintances. Loneliness is 'the soul feeling isolated from meaningful human connections, feeling misunderstood, out of place, etc.' -Active Christianity.

Why you should never feel lonely

If you're in Christ you are not alone; you are no longer on your own. You have God and all he owns. Look at this: "...You've come to Mount Zion, the city where the living God resides. The invisible Jerusalem is populated by throngs of festive angels and Christian citizens. It is the city where God is Judge, with judgments that make us just. You've come to Jesus, who presents us with a new covenant, a fresh charter from God. He is the Mediator of this covenant. The murder of Jesus, unlike Abel's—a homicide that cried out for vengeance—became a proclamation of grace." Heb. 12:22-24 MSG.

In the kingdom of God, feelings of loneliness, depression etc. does not reign; it is not given any power over the citizens of the kingdom. This is because all the citizens of God's kingdom like God are kings and priests unto God on earth (Rev. 5:10; 1 Pet. 2:9), which is the colony of the heavenly kingdom. You are possessor of the divine nature like God –the Father himself (2 Pet. 3-4). In Christ you have all you need for life and godliness, to be received as you grow in the knowledge of God (2 Pet. 1:2-3).

Not just that Sweetheart, you have your Father's messengers - God's angels on duty, always working to ensure you enjoy the dividends of Christ's salvation for you day by day in all things (Heb. 1:14). As a son God, you have the Holy Spirit sent into your heart (Gal. 4:6) to keep you company, comforted and to help you in learning and remembering all that Christ teaches you (John 14:26). You cannot be lonely in Christ because you have been brought into the family of God, which comprises of all the saints in the world. If you have denied yourself of all things just to follow Jesus (Matt. 19:29), you are a member of the largest race of mankind on earth – the believers and followers of Jesus Christ. Jesus said, "Mark my words, no one who sacrifices house, brothers, sisters, mother, father, children, land – whatever – because of me and the Message will lose out. They'll get it all back, but multiplied many times in homes, brothers, sisters, mothers, children, and land – but also in troubles. And then the bonus of eternal life! ..." (Mark 10:29-31 MSG).

In this world if you choose to do things the Lord's way, you will lose much, you will be denied the company of some acquaintances, colleagues, peers, and your own will and [carnal] human desires. If you agree to give up all these, you're invariably giving up self, losing your own life as Christ did and said. "...Jesus said to his disciples, "If any of you wants to be my follower, you must give up your own way, take up your cross, and follow me. If you try to hang on to your life, you will lose it. But if you give up your life for my sake, you will save it. And what do you benefit if you gain the whole world but lose your own soul? Is anything worth more than your soul? Matt. 16:24-27 NLT. If you by yourself give up the things and companies which others count as gain, and things, in which their absence make others become lonely, just because you really want to follow Jesus Christ, then you're signing out of a kind of life characterized with the normal human feelings of loneliness.

Was Jesus lonely?

Jesus in his humanity lived this way. Personally, he never had anything or anyone on earth for which he would worry over, or suffer loneliness for their departure, he was complete. But he was deserted at the point he was to fulfill his purpose for coming.

When he was to die everyone deserted him, even his disciples wouldn't identify with him (Mark 14:50). Also on the cross, he felt forsaken by the Father so strongly that he cried, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me"? (Matt. 27:46). All of that was for you and me to receive total victory over loneliness. If he ever sorrowed it was for the salvation of human kind. In his death and resurrection the Holy Spirit would come to be with and to comfort us forever. When he wept at the tomb of Lazarus it was a reaction to how much he loved him, and how the sisters cried. He wept because he was compassionate (John 11:35). He would rather depart from the house long before day break all by himself to a lonely place to be with the Father for personal fellowship (Mark 1:35). And in the evening, he would live the town to a lonely place to report back to the Father Luke 21:37. His being lonely was a voluntary and deliberate attempt to seek God's face.

You don't need a boy friend or a girl friend to overcome loneliness. You don't need to live on drugs. The word of God has given numerous promises of God's being with you through all you might go through here on earth:

Jesus said, "And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Matthew 28:20. God sent Isaiah to tell the people of Israel, "Do not be afraid, for I have ransomed you. I have called you by name; you are mine. When you go through deep waters, I will be with you. When you go through rivers of difficulty, you will not drown. When you walk through the fire of oppression, you will not be burned up; the flames will not consume you. For I am the Lord, your God, the Holy One of Israel, your Savior." Isaiah 43:1-3. Peter admonishes that you should Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you." 1 Peter 5:7. And Paul wrote Timothy, "No one stood by me the first time I defended myself; all deserted me. ... But the Lord stayed with me and gave me strength." 2 Timothy 4:16, 17. God spoke through Isaiah to show the degree of care and compassion he has for his children when he asked "**Can a woman forget her nursing child. And have no compassion on the son of her womb? Even these may forget, but I will not forget you.**" Isaiah 49:15.

Even when your father, mother or any other person you trust forsakes you, God will take you up. The Psalmist testifies to this, "For my father and my mother have forsaken me, but the Lord will take me up." Psalm 27:10. There are numerous promises God has laid out to care for your unbelief in times of loneliness. He'll be with you.

Loneliness is something God is not pleased with, and has made provision for it from the very beginning. If you are in Christ, you have been provided help against loneliness - The Holy Spirit (John 14:16). Remain in close fellowship with Christ.

Discussion questions

Have you at one time felt lonely, what did you do? If you have such feelings from now, how would you attend to it? What truths would you call to mind?

WEEK TEN

YOU ARE NOW A COMPLETE PERSON IN HIM

The feeling of incompleteness which people face today is traceable to the fall of man; it empowers loneliness and depressions in them, especially in those who are not being conformed to the image of Christ through the knowledge of him, daily. From the fall man died, and because man died spiritually, every person born of a woman is born to feel lonely until he is brought back to God by believing in Jesus. After which the companion for all the children of God, who is the Holy Spirit comes to indwell them.

With the cross, and the presence of the Holy Spirit, loneliness is overcome (Eph. 1:13). Every normal human being has this feeling of incompleteness at some points in their lives; feeling incomplete about academics, marital issues, job, income rate, not spending wisely etc. It is alright not to be complacent about certain things, but as for you, a believer of Jesus Christ, only for one thing should you really feel so. It is about your hunger and thirst for the knowledge of the Lord. Every other quest for righteous living flows from that point.

Mary the sister of Martha had that, and Jesus confessed it would never be taken away from her (Luke 10:39-42). Everything you need for life and godliness will come to you through your knowledge of the one who called you to share in his own glory and goodness (2 Pet. 1:3). Even the grace and peace of God which supplies you enough of the divine strength to overcome in all, including loneliness, depressions, sorrows over the world etc. are drawn from the rivers of your knowledge of God (1 Pet. 1:2). So make seeking of the knowledge of God your primary therapy for overcoming loneliness. Understand this as how you've become complete in him. You've got it all -that God is *'back into you'* also, you're not alone, and you should not be lonely. Commune with the inner man daily, let God in you through the Holy Spirit keep you company in all situations and circumstances, such as will weigh a carnal man down, but you are no more a carnal man, rather a spiritual man (2 Cor. 5:17).

About Jesus, Paul said "...he is the complete fullness of deity living in human form. **And our own completeness is now found in him. We are completely filled with God as Christ's fullness overflows within us.** He is the Head of every kingdom and authority in the universe!" (Col. 2:9 -The Passion Translation)

Like every other human being, Jesus was faced with real life situations that could also make him struggle in loneliness, but rather than releasing himself to such attribute of the self life, he chose to live above it. From his teachings we can know how he overcame. Life is full of unpredictable difficulties. What to do is:

1. Seeking first the kingdom of God (Matt. 6:33),
2. Setting your gaze on heaven alone (Col. 3:1-3),
3. Trusting in God fully (Prov. 3:5; 2 Pet. 5:7) in all things,
4. Do not worry about your feeding, clothing, shelter, and life generally (Phil. 4:6; 2 Pet. 1:3; Matt. 6:25-34), because your loving Father, God takes responsibility of his children,
5. Know, Understand and acknowledge that Jesus has chosen to love you deeply, unconditionally (Rom. 8:35, 38-39; John 13:1; 15:9; Eph.5:2),
6. Lay the reasons for your depressions, loneliness, pains, sorrows etc. down at his feet for Christ to carry them for you (Matt. 11:28-30), and seek spiritual counsel from godly people,
7. Knowing [daily]] that you died with Jesus (Rom. 6:5-6; Gal. 2:20), and a dead man is dead to loneliness, but Jesus now lives in your heart, and he's above worries and loneliness,
8. Focusing on the pursuit of your purpose only, daily (John 9:4; Matt. 28:18-20),
9. Denying yourself, only to follow the Father through the leading of the Holy Spirit (Luke 14:33, 9:23; 2 Cor. 5:15); begin everything with Christ as/at the centre of it, leading you all through (Rom. 8:14),
10. Put to death the love of the world completely from your life (1 John 2:15), so that you can truly love the Father, and experience the ever-sweet feelings of his love towards you,
11. Maintaining a constant prayer and bible study life (Psalm 1:1-6; Josh. 1:8; 2 Tim. 2:15). Develop you devotional altar,
12. Doing only that which you see the Father doing (John 5:19),
13. Fellowship with other believers daily, get a prayer partner if possible (Acts 2:42; Heb. 10:25).

As a teenager, you may be faced with matters that could bring you suicidal thoughts, but don't forget that you are no longer your own. Darling, you belong to Christ, and he loves you more than every other person can love you, **everyday**. He is with you to the end of the age (Matt. 28:20, Rom. 8:38-39). Just keep in mind that he is your greatest companion now. He has even given his Holy Spirit to be with you every day, hour, and second of the day.

Nevertheless, it's okay to be concerned as to make improvements, but, do not worry about your *Schoolwork and grades*, work hard along your prayers. You don't have to try to *feel you belong* or not, because you've been fearfully and wonderfully made (Psalm 139:4), you already belong to the kingdom of Christ (Col. 1:13), and you are chosen to be the King's priest, you are of his royal line, you're particularly peculiar to him, and you already belong to a holy nation (2 Pet. 2:9).

Avoid comparing yourself with any other person on any matter at all. Appreciate whom God has made you to be, and what he's making you into, this is not yet your end; God is still working on you. Don't get depressed over some of the changes you see in your body as you go through puberty, none of them is permanent, seek to understand each changes, and learn how to cope, because, every adolescent must cross this bridge into adulthood.

Attempt everything with confidence in Christ's ability that you're going to make it, but even if you don't, learn to manage failures. Instead see it as another opportunity to learn about that thing you have not yet learned well, don't get fagged out because you couldn't make it this time. You'll always have the opportunity to try again if you stay in faith, and never quit.

Drop the thoughts that you can't do anything well, and are unfortunate. No! God does not create any unfortunate person on earth. You're wired to succeed like God in all your ventures. Understand what the will of the Lord is (Eph. 5:17). Believe in God's ability at work in you (Eph. 1:19-20), and decide not to give up to loneliness again, come what may.

You don't need any boy friend or a girl friend to keep you away from loneliness. You don't have to switch over to the use of alcohols or hard drugs like cocaine, heroin, marijuana, painkillers, inhalants, Hallucinogens, your Smartphone etc. Your companion in all situations of life is the Word of God, and the Holy Spirit, given to keep you from falling, until you attain the full salvation.

Discussion questions

How can you describe that you are now complete in Christ? Who and what is the companion God has given you as his own therapy against loneliness?

WEEK ELEVEN

MINISTERING TO THE AGED

It will be too late then to try to remember him when the sun and light and moon and stars are dim to your old eyes, and there is no silver lining left among your clouds. For there will come a time when your limbs will tremble with age, your strong legs will become weak, and your teeth will be too few to do their work, and there will be blindness too. Then let your lips be tightly closed while eating when your teeth are gone! And you will waken at dawn with the first note of the birds; but you yourself will be deaf and tuneless, with quavering voice. You will be afraid of heights and of falling—a white-haired, withered old man, dragging himself along: without sexual desire, standing at death's door, and nearing his everlasting home as the mourners go along the streets. Eccl. 12:2-5 TLB. This is the description of the time when one can be said to have advanced in years. And the Lord commands that this category of people should be honoured (Exod. 20:12), and shown due respect.

You shall stand up before the grey head and honour the face of an old man, and you shall fear your God: I am the LORD (Lev. 19:32).

A man's life is normally divided into five stages namely: infancy, childhood, adolescence, adulthood and old age. In each of these stages an individual finds himself in different situations and faces different problems. Old age is viewed as an unavoidable, undesirable and problem ridden phase of life. Problems of aging usually appear after the age of 65 years (Shuani). The World Health Organisation believes that most developed world countries characterize old age starting at **60 years and above**. However, this definition isn't adaptable to a place like Africa, where the more traditional definition of an elder, or elderly person, starts between 50 to 65 years of age

(Aged Care Guide). Six most prevalent old age problems include: Physiological, psychological, Social, Emotional, Spiritual and Financial problems.

Old age is a blessing. The preacher, Solomon said, “The glory of young men is their [physical] strength, And the honor of aged men is their gray head [representing wisdom and experience] Prov. 20:29 AMP. A lot of teenagers and young folks do not pay attention to the beauty of old age in the elderly and how to help them manage it. You are a young Christian teenager, make up your mind to honour those who are aged, living close to or far from you in relation. Anyone who can have you as child or grandchild ought to be ministered to. The bible admonishes us to honour our parents, so that we might grow to also fulfill our own days. Every aged person deserves the honour of being ministered unto (Prov. 3:27; Rom. 13:7). It is a great blessing to still have them around with their treasures of knowledge and experience.

In Africa, many young people are made to believe that grandparents, or aged women are witches, and this has in some ways made some teenagers to close their minds against grannies who should enjoy the company of their young friends. It should not be so for you Christian teenager because, **you see all men as Jesus sees them**. You relate with the aged according to the word of God, in obedience to it.

How do we minister to them?

As earlier stated, your aged neighbour(s) have six major problems or needs. Identify yourself with them and their problems (Pro. 19:27). You might have been equipped with enough capacity to respond to one or some. Their challenges range from their *physiological, psychological, social, emotional, spiritual and financial needs*. Under these classifications exists all their major needs that requires someone who cares and obeys God to administer it to them.

You can provide them with clothing; become an encouragement and a source of liveliness to them: hug them, kiss them (at least a peck on the cheek, forehead or back of the hand) will bring them a sense of being loved and acceptance among people, it reminds them that they are not seen as a burden. Put a smile on their faces by cracking jokes with them, eat with them, and if possible ask them to share an old story with you anytime you are with them.

Help them buy provisions from the neighborhood tuck shop or a supermarket; get them new shoes if you have the means; go visiting, help them clean the house and surrounding, wash their plates, laundry their clothes, get them body cares (like pomade, spray, cutting their overgrown fingernails etc.) – if they don’t mind; help them

cut or trim the grasses growing around their houses; engage them in discussions to help curb any excess feelings of loneliness; just put a genuine smile on their faces, as often as you can.

Pray for them/with them as often as you can; give them money when you have; whenever service holds or worshippers gather for fellowship, help them get to the nearest local church in the vicinity in order to keep warmth with the other brethren. If possible gather some Christian friends for a fellowship in their house.

Avoid offending them; make them feel how much their being alive means to you. When possible go to them on vacations, and ask them to teach you, you may even pay them visits with your friend, and don't forget to communicate with them using the language they understand the most, if you don't know how to speak that much, then talk less, and act more. Perhaps, in the cause of their recommendations and compliments, you'll still learn one or two new vocabularies; you can ask them to teach you more, this usually makes living with them full of fun and life.

They are some of them living in 'old people homes'. Go there and share the love of Christ with them.

Discussion questions

Who can you call 'aged'? Give practical example of how you have ministered to any of them before? How do young people abuse or take advantage of their weaknesses today? What blessings do you know God gives to people who take care of them?

WEEK TWELVE
I NEED YOU TO...

Romans 15:1: “We who are strong ought to bear with the failings of the weak and not to please ourselves.” **Galatians 6:2:** “Carry each other’s burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ.”

There is this song written and composed by Hezekiah Walker, it carries the base word “**I need you,**” which drives the main idea of the gospel hit. “I Need You to Survive” is certainly a religious song, but for a piece of music that assures listeners that “It is His will that every need be supplied,” it’s centered on the idea that humans have profound responsibilities to each other.

The singers pledge “I won’t harm you /with words from my mouth.” They promise to pray for each other. And each of these vows culminates in the restatement of an almost stunningly intimate idea: that “I love you / I need you to survive.” That last line hits as hard as it does not least because it has a double meaning. It can be read to suggest that the speaker can’t go on living without the object of the song, or to demand that the listener live for himself (Alyssa Rosenberg, 2015). The song goes:

*I need you, you need me.
We're all a part of God's body.
Stand with me, agree with me.
We're all a part of God's body.
It is his will that every need be supplied.
You are important to me, I need you to survive.
You are important to me, I need you to survive.*

*I pray for you, you pray for me.
I love you, I need you to survive.
I won't harm you with words from my mouth.
I love you, I need you to survive.*

*It is his will, that every need be supplied.
You are important to me, I need you to survive.*

(Hezekiah Walker, The Love Fellowship Choir)

In Acts 2:41-47, the earliest believers showed through their daily encounters how much they understood they needed each other in the Christian race. They shared food, money, material and immaterial possessions. Today, many believers have become so reserved and quite selective when it comes to giving people gifts, in this, may God help

our hearts and lead us. True, the days are evil, and one may find it hard to know who is who, but in obedience to God's word, we are kept safe every day. He has already given his angels charge over us to keep us in all our ways (Ps. 91:11). He also promises to guide us in the best pathway for our lives (Ps. 32:8).

As a Christian teenager, do not allow what people will say to keep you far away from someone God brings closer to you to receive of your goodwill, maintain your personality in Christ. You, see, that Christ was mocked, reviled (insulted), and killed by the people he came for never made him cease from saving man.

You have obligation to love

Let no debt remain outstanding, except the continuing debt to love one another, for whoever loves others has fulfilled the law (Rom. 13:8 NIV). You're familiar with the old written law, 'Love your friend,' and its unwritten companion, 'Hate your enemy.' I'm challenging that. I'm telling you to love your enemies. Let them bring out the best in you, not the worst. When someone gives you a hard time, respond with the supple moves of prayer, for then you are working out of your true selves, your God-created selves. This is what God does. He gives his best—the sun to warm and the rain to nourish—to everyone, regardless: the good and bad, the nice and nasty. If all you do is love the lovable, do you expect a bonus? Anybody can do that. If you simply say hello to those who greet you, do you expect a medal? Any run-of-the-mill sinner does that.

"In a word, what I'm saying is, Grow up. You're kingdom subjects. Now live like it. Live out your God-created identity. Live generously and graciously toward others, the way God lives toward you." (Matt. 5:43-48 MSG)

The song one may say is one of the anthems of a contemporary church choir. The word "I Need you" is often being used either passively or actively by several believers today, but the challenge is in how much saints mean and practice this simple statement; it is so abused daily. If you look through the lyrics of that song again, you'll notice, it spells out clearly how that God places a believer side by side another believer, for the mutual benefit of each other.

As Christian a teenager you have an obligation to love everyone, you also deserve to be loved. Adopting the truth that "*I need you, you need me*" actually makes it much easier for you to live with this knowledge that you are not self sufficient, and no man created by God is. The common saying that "a tree does not make a forest" is true here.

In God's design of the church, they should be mutual coexistence amongst Christian folks, regardless of their differences. In his death at Calvary, Jesus broke the line of division, and united all Christians into one body, hallelujah. You need the other church denominations, despite their differences in doctrine from your local assembly or

denomination. You need other members of the church to support your ministry. No man is fashioned to do ministry or survive here on earth all alone. Some people have closed their minds to receiving others' help, and giving others help, life is a company of direct and indirect mutualism. The strength for the weaknesses of a brother has been put by Christ into another brother or sister [who is also in Christ]. Just as God has provided the strengths of a man's weaknesses in his wife, so also, the weakest believer has been provided for, in the body (the church).

Every Christian is like a building block in the body of Christ. Each block needs every other block to remain firm in the wall. No doubt, you are stronger than someone and someone is stronger than you, and vice versa, but all the same, you are needed and you are also definitely in need!

You need your parents; siblings; friend(s); colleague(s) at work place; you need the next door neighbour; you need the government; you need the less privileged; you need the orphans; widows; beggars; the poor; the rich; the weak/strong; beloved; the aged; you need others and others likewise need you to survive through their pilgrimage on earth.

See the scriptures below. If possible memorize at least three of them if not all:

Isaiah 1:17: "Learn to do good; seek justice, correct oppression; bring justice to the fatherless, plead the widow's cause."

Matthew 5:16: "In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven."

John 15:12: "My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you."

1 John 4:19-20: "We love because he first loved us. Whoever claims to love God yet hates a brother or sister is a liar. For whoever does not love their brother and sister, whom they have seen, cannot love God, whom they have not seen."

Hebrews 13:16: "And do not forget to do good and to share with others, for with such sacrifices God is pleased."

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."

Galatians 2:10: "Only, they asked us to remember the poor, the very thing I was eager to do."

Luke 6:30: "Give to everyone who begs from you, and from one who takes away your goods do not demand them back."

John 15:13: "Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends."

Romans 12:10: "Love one another with brotherly affection. Outdo one another in showing honor."

Romans 12:13: "Share with the Lord's people who are in need. Practice hospitality."

Romans 12:20: "If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink; for by so doing you will heap burning coals on his head."

1 Thessalonians 5:11: "Therefore encourage one another and build one another up, just as you are doing."

Beloved, you are highly needed and you also need someone. Honour anyone with the breath of God's life in them.

Discussion question

Who do you think you may never need in your life, or may never need you?

CHAPTER 4

WEEK THIRTEEN

ATTITUDE TO THE BIBLE

“Renewal of mind begins with reading and mediation on the Scriptures.”

— Lailah Gifty Akita, Think Great: Be Great!

Dennis was a sixteen year old SS one student in a burden school. He was a pastor’s son who only went to church for that reason. He never really gave time to studying the bible and praying to God, which is, maintaining a steady and progressive private devotional life. Although he was a multitalented instrumentalist in the church like many other pastors’ children, he was unfruitful to God, and struggled with many secret sins and bad habits, because of the insufficient content of God’s word in him.

On one of the holidays, he came home as usual from school. After some days at home with careful monitoring, his mother became unusually concerned about her son’s spiritual status, perhaps she’s been praying about it for a while, and now had to add a little work necessary to establish her prayers of faith. She called Dennis and asked, “When will you begin to study the bible and pray like your elder brother is always doing?” That question was never answered verbally, but by the expected actions. It sank into the heart of Dennis like the drop of ink into a clean glass of water. The Holy Spirit magnified the quest in the heart of Dennis, and that became the beginning of his journey with the Lord. He soon began to see the need more than he’s ever done. He became an intentional chaser of the knowledge of God, attending insightful and impactful Christian meetings he saw to be relevant to his spiritual life. And continued like that with increasing effort. Dennis grew up into a good measure of spiritual stature; he eventually grew to become an effective minister of the gospel.

Beloved Christian teenager, attending weekly or daily church activities is not all there are to your growth. God promises to teach anyone who will humbly come before him to learn (Ps. 32:8). He has also put a teacher (Holy Spirit) in every child of his, to remind them of what he’s taught them before, and also teach them new things that reveals the truth about Christ (John 14:15, 26, 13-15). The Holy Spirit is the teacher whom Christ has sent into the heart of all his believers; he is to reveal the truths about Christ and the will of God to them as they learn through the study of the bible. He teaches Christians who come to him with ready hearts, open to learn, all about Christ that they must know of God.

Change your attitude towards the reading, studying and meditating of the word of God. How much value you place on the word of God determines how much priority you give to the study of it. You need to keep knowing that the word of God is the source of your new life; it is your life itself. When you take fish out of the water environment, it may not survive the waterless environment for so long, it will surely die. If you separate yourself from the word of God now that you are a teenager, it means you are never going to make it in life as a Christian, especially when it comes to the fulfillment of your purpose for existing here on earth.

“The full description of your essence of living is placed in the word of God. It means if you do not know the word of God for yourself, you’ll never know how to explore the blessings of God kept in Christ for you.”

Joshua, Moses’ successor was admonished to keep reading the book of the Law, which means the bible for us today. He was to study/meditate on it in the day and at night, obeying everything written in it, and then he and the people of God will have good success, and be able to possess the land God had given them (Josh. 1:8).

Ezra devoted his entire life to reading and studying the Law of God, obeying it and teaching it’s truth to all Israel (Ezra 7:10). David gave himself to the Law of God from teenage. He wrote an entire chapter in the book of Psalm, telling of his commitment to the word of God (119). Paul admonished Timothy to study the scripture so well, that he might be able to divide, breaking it down correctly for other people to be able to listen to him and be edified (2 Tim. 2:15).

Jesus himself throughout his ministry showed signs of great learning that had taken place in his youth. Severally he responded to questions saying, **“It is written...”** or **“have you not read?”** Many times he proved to his contemporaries that he was not alien to the Old Testament scriptures. Moses made the Israelites understood that the word of God was their very life: “When Moses had finished reciting all these words to the people of Israel, he added: **“Take to heart all the words of warning I have given you today.** Pass them on as a command to your children so they will obey every word of these instructions. **These instructions are not empty words – they are your life!** By obeying them you will enjoy a long life in the land you will occupy when you cross the Jordan River.”” (Deut. 32:45-47 NLT); they must not keep it out of sight: “Write these commandments that I’ve given you today on your hearts. **Get them inside of you** and then get them inside your children. **Talk about them** wherever you are, sitting at home or walking in the street; talk about them from the time you get up in the morning to when you fall into bed at night. **Tie them** on your hands and foreheads as a reminder;

inscribe them on the doorposts of your homes and on your city gates.” Deut. 6:6-9
MSG.

Jesus concludes by saying, those who are truly his disciples are those who obey his words and teachings. He is glad when we remain in his word, and continues therein. That is what will make his followers know all the truths that have been kept in the scripture, to show them how complete Christ’s worked out freedom has come to all believing and obedient followers of Jesus Christ.

“Dear Christian teenager, your knowledge of God is proportional to the degree of quality attention you give to your personal fellowship altar with Christ. It is place where you read, study, meditate and pray with the word of the Lord exposed to you.”

Satan will never want you to see the provision for your freedom, therefore he will fight you every day *with much work in the day, and stress at night*. He will keep you busy with many other things, such as, cooking, chatting, getting entertained, going on business trips, and making a lot of official journeys with a large sum as travel allowance (this is mostly found with adult believers), academic pursuits, etc.

The world system is designed in a way it can keep its allies busy with ‘necessary-looking activities’, including preaching and other works of God. But as a Christian teenager, God expects you to fight to keep all needless distractions away. Design a systematic bible study plan for yourself, use it personally or get involved in a bible study group with your friends and peers. *A walk with God en route personal bible studies is better and still possible.*

Three Benefits you Derive from habitually studying/meditating on the word of God:

- 1. You’ll be knowing God and increasing in strength in all areas for you to be able to “do” reasonable impacts, by fulfilling God’s purpose for giving you life;**

“Those who do wickedly against the covenant he shall corrupt with flattery; but the people who know their God shall be strong, and carry out great exploits.” Dan. 11:32 NKJV

- 2. You’re sure to keep recording good successes in all that you do in life, according to the will of the Lord;**

“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." Dan. 11:32 KJV

3. You'll be known to Christ as his disciple here on earth, and you'll always be with him in heaven.

"Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, "If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed." John 8:31 NKJV

Bible reading habits:

- Pray for a hunger for God's Word
- Set a definite time
- Read consecutively
- Turn your heart to the Lord
- Pray over what you read
- Keep track of your Bible reading
- Guard against distractions

(Bibles for America)

What you may not know is the that the key for your abundant living here on earth from this age of yours is kept in the word of God for you. You will surely lay hold on it the moment you begin to abide in the word of God and prayers.

Discussion questions

Briefly describe how a Christian teenager can study the bible and become fruitful? What are some likely activities that prevent teenagers from studying the bible fruitfully? Mention them.

WEEK FOURTEEN

BEAUTY TREAT

ESTHER 2:1-5; 8-14; 15-18

Queen Vashti did not find grace in the sight of the king and she was evacuated from this presence forever; she was banished from the king's presence because she had being a queen with a haughty mind. She exhibited pride because of her beauty and prestige which deceived her to think she was one who should be treasured beyond public display, and not one who could be brought forward for beauty display even by her husband. She lost her place as queen just as Satan lost his place in heaven. But the fact that her husband -the king was the request-maker should have humbled her and brought her great honour at the same time if she played along; instead she turned down the undivided expectation of the king and that of his excited spectators in who were waiting.

Now, a replacement was suggested in Vashti's place and Esther was preferred, because the group of selected ladies [out of which Esther was picked out] was brought and kept in a 'harem', and since it was ordered that they should each be given a measure of beauty treatment for a specified period of time (about a year) before appearing before the king, Esther was also given a place among them and she received the same beauty treatment, but Esther eventually won the favour of the king above all the others who would now become the king's concubines - she was made queen in place of Vashti. She found God's grace because of her complete submission both to her uncle-Mordecai and Hegai, the king's eunuch in-charge of the women. When her turn came to go in to the king, she requested nothing except what Hegai the king's eunuch in-charge of the women, advised. She obviously found favour in the sight of all who saw her (vs. 15).

Mystery of the King's 'harem'

'Harem' was mostly used in the past for keeping a polygamist's wives, unmarried daughters, unmarried female relatives, and domestic female servants etc. who were to be attended to or guarded by a eunuch -a castrated man. It is where ladies dress up, make up, and prepare themselves to meet with the man of the house to whom they belong, when he needs their service.

The Lord has a 'harem', the place where he makes and keeps the people he uses. The Lord's 'harem' is the **discipleship process** he uses in making, molding, beautifying and equipping all who desire to fulfill His divine plan and purpose for them. God keeps his chosen ones in his 'harem'. It is to furnish and establish them with his different

treatment specialties -the activities and the people he uses to prepare his servants who reign in his name (1 Pet. 2:9). He prepares the lives of those who will fulfill his own purpose for their lives. This is because God is so meticulous in making all who chose to become what he called them for (John 15:16) as they obey him daily, forever.

God's 'harem' is the **training exercise** he uses in the making and remolding of every life he would travel in, and travel with. When God has chosen anybody like he chose Paul (Gal. 1:15-17) to reveal himself in him, he takes such a life through a form of refinement from one level/phase of spiritual experience to another to make them ready. The success is based on how much each trainee yields, he gives speed and the desired quality of training in the preparation of each person's life (Lam. 3:27). This 'harem' is the concept '**Discipleship.**'

God does not bring his reign through any life he has not given his 'chosen' beauty treatment. This beauty treatment is meant to remove every spot and blemish that may hinder the full manifestation of his glory, so that without reservations, God might reveal every man he makes to the world, using them to shine his light, reflecting his glory on their faces, and causing them to reveal his real person to the whole earth through the life they live in their environment.

In Christianity the major aim of discipleship is to teach and train believers to develop into the full stature of the fullness of Christ, looking and behaving like him in every way (Eph. 4:11-13). The major tool used in this training is the word of God and the transformed life of the person whom God uses to disciple i.e. to train the others.

Discussion questions

What is a harem? What is Christian discipleship? In what way does a harem relate to discipleship? What are the tools used for Christian discipleship?

WEEK FIFTEEN

THE TESTING SEASONS

When the time of God's treatment for any believer is fulfilled, he, just as he led Jesus into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil (Matthew 4:1) allows such a believer into the stipulated tests meant to validate the impact(s) of the current spiritual training that was conducted. When this is done God puts his beauty crown on the individual. He gives his divine presence, his glory, his approval, his seal, his authority and his honour upon such a life. This he does by releasing into each person the ability to reflect the glory and grace of God everywhere He takes him to, all the days of his life. It is all by God's sufficient grace through faith.

Examples of young people God treated

The beauty treatment is that which God used to prepare and perfect the life of all who ruled and reigned in foreign lands for him [even when Christ was not yet born as flesh].

Joseph, Daniel and his three friends:

People like Joseph (Gen. 37), Daniel and his three friends, these ones revealed God's glory in other people's land, why? It was because they had received God's beauty treatment before their days of manifestation showed up. King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon ordered his chief official, to select from among the Israelite exiles some young men of the royal family and of the noble families. **They had** to be *handsome, intelligent, well-trained, quick to learn...* so that they would be qualified to serve in the royal court. Dan. 1:3-4. All Christian teenagers are also young men of the royal and of the noble families (1 Pet. 2:9). But before you would be qualified to serve in God's royal court, you would have been prepared outside before you're been brought to serve in the royal court.

King Solomon's Temple

Do you remember the building of King Solomon's Temple? See the approach he used: The stones were completely finished before they were brought into the Temple area, so there was no noise of hammers, axes, or any other iron tools in the Temple (1 Kings 6:7 ERV). You see, God does not want noises to be heard in your life and in his work when some manifestations of his grace begin to find expression through you out there.

Examples of those who did not yield to the treatment

Peter, Thomas, Judas Iscariot, Samson, and Moses

Peter had healed some sick people, yet he rebuked Jesus when he said he would die (fear/pride of life); Thomas doubted that Jesus had risen (John 20:24-29) (doubt/pride of life); Judas, having participated in the grace of God with the others a short while still loved money so much that he sold his Master for Money, he committed suicide later (Luke 22) (lust of the eyes); Peter, again, having seen a little of God's glory in his life still fell into denying Jesus as soon as he was arrested (Luke 22:54-62). Samson, Israel's Judge failed woefully, he had not given up [lust] which produced noise in his destiny, it destroyed him (Judg. 16) (lust of the eyes/flesh). Moses lost it; he did not enter Canaan eventually due to his reaction in anger, after all the eighty years plus labour (Deut. 32:52) (pride of life/anger/impatience). Release yourself to God for complete overhauling of the self life and its products (Gal. 5:19-21).

God, in his plan wants to prevent noises from being heard in your life as you bear his light and glory about. Humbly release yourself to him from now as a teenager to so.

How God will treat you

Let him align you to his will in all areas of your life. In your academics, let him choose the course for you to study, with which he would prepare and use you; let him lead you into the tertiary institution he has chosen to mold you; let him fill your mind with the knowledge of his will on every other matter, and determine to do *not your will* (Col. 1:9), but try to find out his own will (Eph. 5:17) and live the rest of your earthly life controlled by it (1 Pet. 4:2). In this way you'll be bearing his yoke of divine discipline as a young person (Lam. 3:27). If you grow this way, you will become like an arrow sharp and ready for God's use (Isa. 49:2) everywhere and every time.

No one who manifests as a son of God is able to fully manifest his sonship unless he is trained and furnished; equipped and established in the life of Christ (Prov. 24:3-4); It must become the normal way of life for such.

Your effective manifestation as son [like Christ] is possible depending on your level of upward growth in spiritual maturity. Such is attained as you abide in the finished works of Christ and as you [willingly] remain under his disciplinary hand till he's through with you. In this way He would be able to train, teach and give approval of you as one qualified to be seen and listened to (Mark 9:7).

God makes people listen to you only when he has treated your life, and severed you from the self life in order for Christ's life to become evident. Unless your market value in the Spirit reaches the standard God has set in Christ, you may not be shown to the public by God.

The purpose of God's beauty treatment orchestrated by the acknowledgment of the power of the cross daily is to evacuate the deceptive beauty of the self life. In all its manifestations and vices, it is to bring to light the **unfading beauty** of the new life found only in Jesus Christ. This kind of beauty with its eternal value is acquired as one is being emptied of the traces of the Old sinful nature (*this thing t Jesus did at Calvary*).

In God's 'harem', He provides his trainees with the appropriate articles for their use in the real world. They would train with them for the purpose of expertise. David could use his usual sling and stone in the defeat of Goliath of Gath because by it he had learnt to fight the enemies of his flock, depending on God. When he was given that which God had not trained him with, he returned it, and he rather stuck to what God had used to train him in the wilderness.

Discussion question

How does God really treat the people he will use?

WEEK SIXTEEN

SUBMIT UNDER GOD'S CHOSEN GOVERNORS EARLY

Esther was most likely a growing adolescent as at this time. To have yielded to Modecai's disciplinary terms was one great work that prepared her life for the throne. She remained under trainers (Modecai and Hegai) for the proper formation process to be completed.

God is interested in beginning with your own life too while a teenager. Josiah began to pursue God from teenage, and as soon as he had been trained by the administrators, he began to destroy the standing works of Satan in Judah (2 Chron. 34:3).

You need administrators

"But now to continue—the son who will receive his father's property is treated just like a slave while he is young, even though he really owns everything. *While he is young*, there are men who take care of him and manage his affairs *until the time set by his father.*" Gal. 4:1-2 GNT. "It is good for a young man to be under discipline, for it causes him to sit apart in silence beneath the Lord's demands, to lie face downward in the dust; then at last there is hope for him." Lam. 3:27-29 TLB. Peter warns believers thus, "So be humble under God's powerful hand. Then he will lift you up when the right time comes." 1 Pet. 5:6 ERV

God is committed to using you when he's done working on your life. Every Christian teenager has the potential to serve God's purpose in their lifetime. God has an honorable purpose for them to fulfill, it is the plan he said he has for his people (Jer. 29:11) -to become mighty in his hands.

God has an inheritance in you, and for you, because you are a co-heir with Jesus (Eph. 1:18). "And if we are [His] children, then we are [His] heirs also: heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ [*sharing His inheritance with Him*]; only we must share His suffering if we are to share His glory." Rom. 8:17 AMPC.

It is for this reason that God trains his children. He places them under the care of elders, and others he chose to train them up until they grow up with the needed maturity, fully equipped and prepared to take over the inheritance that God has set aside for them to oversee on earth.

Even you today, God has an inheritance of his that he wants you to be the one to manage it for him. That was one of his major reasons he created Adam before he fell and the whole plan dashed. No man was good enough to be used of God to be Lord

over his inheritances until Jesus came. That is why he treats the people he makes use of, it is to remove impurities and make them spotless for his holy use (Mal. 3:3). If you have God's plan being fulfilled over your life, you'll be placed under some people to help you mature enough before you are released into that which God preordained for you.

In Ephesians 4:11-16, Paul shows that: Some of us have been given special ability as apostles; to others he has given the gift of being able to preach well; some have special ability in winning people to Christ, helping them to trust him as their Savior; still others have a gift for caring for God's people as a shepherd does his sheep, leading and teaching them in the ways of God.

Why is it that he gives us these special abilities to do certain things best? It is that God's people will be equipped to do better work for him, building up the Church, the body of Christ, to a position of strength and maturity; until finally we all believe alike about our salvation and about our Savior, God's Son, and all become full-grown in the Lord – yes, to the point of being filled full with Christ.

Then we will no longer be like children, forever changing our minds about what we believe because someone has told us something different or has cleverly lied to us and made the lie sound like the truth. Instead, we will lovingly follow the truth at all times – speaking truly, dealing truly, living truly – and so become more and more in every way like Christ who is the Head of his body, the Church. Under his direction, the whole body is fitted together perfectly, and each part in its own special way helps the other parts, so that the whole body is healthy and growing and full of love -TLB.

There is a time set by the Father

You must humble yourself under the hands of the people God places you under so that you can truly learn. They include your *parent, guardian, church pastor, human disciples (i.e. other mature believers), etc.* Jesus returned with his parent from the Temple at Jerusalem and submitted to them (Luke 2:51). Although he knew why he came, he had to wait for another eighteen years (*remember there is a time set by the father*) before finally showing up publicly. That you're discovering your purpose in life, and God's grace over your life now does not mean you can jump out at will, there is a set time for your manifestation.

From this time that you are a teenager, give up all of your being so that *God [who will use you for his glory]* might sit over your life, using the *different people, different methods, and different platforms* he appoints. It is the period of growth, when the character of God will be formed in you by the things you will suffer, and required to endure. Jeremiah said,

“it is better that one should bear this yoke of divine discipline while he is still young” (Lam. 3:27).

Beloved Christian teenager, God has an inheritance in you, the divine nature; he cannot afford to let it be under-utilized. He also has an inheritance for you to possess and manage even here on earth, it is the fulfillment of his long-planned divine purpose, for which he saved you to accomplish (Eph. 2:10). You are God’s workman!

Let him treat you

Let him treat you. Gladly accept the demands he might be making over your life at this time to give up anybody in your life he asks you to; any habit of yours that you grew up with naturally, your natural human plans, your human principles, and the way of life of the environment you’re growing in, which militates against your training for the fulfillment of his divine mandate for your life. You need to give up the various *schools of thoughts* and *human ideologies* that hinder you from learning of Christ. Give up that which disallows you from living the life of Jesus here on earth, since as he is, so are we in this world (1 John 4:17). Simply deny yourself, and all your natural ways of doing everything as it pleases you, take up your cross and choose to follow him in all your ways, ever acknowledging him (Prov. 3:5-6).

You have been called by God to serve his course here on earth. He will gladly lift you up in his own time for his glory as you yield to his leadership in the process of being disciplined. Accept his training scheme now. Josiah, though a king, yet at sixteen submitted completely to the training set up by God for him as King over his people, and carried out by the men God had chosen. After four years, he was matured enough, fully ready to fulfill the divine assignments God had trained him to do. *Your time to be treated through discipleship is now! Submit your neck.*

Discussion questions

Who are the administrators that the Father has kept to train you until you mature enough to receive your inheritance? What happens to people who do not yield to spiritual treatment fully?

WEEK SEVENTEEN

LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOUR AS YOUR SELF

Jesus answered, "**The first and most important one is:** 'Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord; and you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul (life), and with all your mind (thought, understanding), and with all your strength.'

This is the second: 'You shall [unselfishly] [a]love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these." Mark 12:29-31 AMP

Love, this simple word is one the most abused words in the society. For the godly, love means Godliness, but for the ungodly -the corrupt, it means more of carnal pleasures, even though they might be some measures of morality because of natural human conscience.

Nobody can truly love another human being if he does not love the Lord as seen in the first commandment. The reason Jesus had to add the second was to complement the first. No one can really prove his/her love for God except by loving another man because God is Spirit, and man is flesh; he can be seen. If anyone says, "I love God," and hates (works against) his [Christian] brother he is a liar; for the one who does not love his brother whom he has seen, cannot love God whom he has not seen." 1 John 4:20 AMP.

As a Christian teenager, the only way you can prove your love for God is to show it to the people you have around you every day.

"Be under obligation to no one—the only obligation you have is to love one another. Whoever does this has obeyed the Law. The commandments, Do not commit adultery; do not commit murder; do not steal; do not desire what belongs to someone else" – all these, and any others besides, are summed up in the one command, "Love your neighbor as you love yourself." If you love others, you will never do them wrong; to love, then, is to obey the whole Law. You must do this, because you know that the time has come for you to wake up from your sleep. For the moment when we will be saved is closer now than it was when we first believed." Rom. 13:8-11 GNT.

The faith we have in God is hinged upon the love he expressed to us through the life and death of Jesus (Romans 8:32). God loved the world so much that he gave his only son away, as down payment for the debt of sin, so as to forgive humanity forever. The

call to be a Christian is a call to an unconditional love like God –the Father, who loved us even though we were sinners.

Love your neighbour

“...‘You shall [unselfishly] love your neighbor as yourself.’ There is no other commandment greater than these.”

Who can we say is a neighbour?

My dear teenager, you are called to love your neighbour. But who can we say is a neighbour? Your neighbour can be anyone in need of your service, your attention, your response, and anyone who needs something that you have, a help you’ve been empowered to deliver.

Your neighbour is any individual be it a church goer or a non-church goer who shows his needfulness of something, who is weaker than you in anything at all. Your neighbour is the one whom you can show good to. Jesus was anointed by God and he went about doing good Acts 10:38. Anyone who is open to receive of your fruit of goodness is your neighbour.

To every neighbour, you can truly show God’s love by feeding them with the fruits which the Holy Spirit bears in you: “...the fruit that the Spirit produces in a person’s life is *love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control*. There is no law against these kinds of things. Gal. 5:22-23 ERV. You cannot over produce any of these fruits because the producer is God himself. As often as you deny your own natural self in every matter, the fruits will manifest abundantly. Allow these fruits to go ahead of you into every relationship you keep. Let them go ahead of every response you lay before anybody.

In fact Paul confessed, saying: “I may be able to speak the languages of human beings and even of angels, but if I have no love, my speech is no more than a noisy gong or a clanging bell. I may have the gift of inspired preaching; I may have all knowledge and understand all secrets; I may have all the faith needed to move mountains – but if I have no love, I am nothing. I may give away everything I have, and even give up my body to be burned – but if I have no love, this does me no good.”

Love is patient and kind; it is not jealous or conceited or proud; love is not ill-mannered or selfish or irritable; love does not keep a record of wrongs; love is not happy with evil, but is happy with the truth. Love never gives up; and its faith, hope, and patience never fail.

Love is eternal. There are inspired messages, but they are temporary; there are gifts of speaking in strange tongues, but they will cease; there is knowledge, but it will pass. For our gifts of knowledge and of inspired messages are only partial; but when what is perfect comes, then what is partial will disappear. 2 Cor. 13:1-11 GNT.

Who is my neighbour?

Everyone in need whom you can reason with is your neighbour. Every human being has a unique weakness that makes him depend on another human for support. Just as you are someone's neighbour so also are others yours too. Your neighbour includes: your family member, your friends in school, your colleagues wherever, fellow Christians and non-Christians; the one who wrongs/offends you; the person who makes you smile or angry, those who do not like you for one reason or the other, and would not even give you an applause for the good you do; anyone who rejoices at you, when something evil happens to you; anyone who asks or begs you for food or some other thing(s) they need; whosoever needs you for one thing or the other is your neighbour. Let love constrain you. Do what will make a person or a people glad.

The golden principle states that "So then, in everything treat others the same way you want them to treat you, for this is [the essence of] the Law and the [writings of the] Prophets." Matt. 7:12 AMP.

Discussion questions

What is love? How should Christian teenagers show true love to the unbelieving teenagers, and also amongst themselves?

WEEK EIGHTEEN

HE MAKES ME - 1

Corrupt Human Nature

For several reasons many teenagers are at loggerheads with their family and friends; they could become mad at parents, or an elderly one whom they live with temporarily or permanently. Perhaps you also might have at one time or the other been there, or even now be fighting your parent indirectly with your words and gestures, and with your cold responses to their advances toward you. Perhaps, you might be thinking and feeling you're so unloved in your home or the house you currently live in and feel that the set of people you're living with hate you for being yourself naturally. Or maybe you like me, on some occasions have wished you could just vacate the house and be somewhere else where you can receive some fresh air all alone, or eased from the troubles of the place you call home. The truth is that, all these and the likes happen for certain positive reasons, and a major one is that 'you need to be made', like Moses/Joshua for Spiritual Leadership over Israel; Joseph for Egypt; David as Israel's king; Ruth under Naomi to become the great grandmother of Jesus; Esther under Mordecai as the Queen of Babylon; Daniel, Shedrack, Meshack and Abednego for the royal palace of Babylon even as exiles; the disciples of Jesus for spreading the Good News of Jesus throughout Palestine and beyond; Timothy as church pastor etc.

As I grew through my teen age days, on many occasions I had felt like I should be separated from the other members of the family because of the internal 'terrible' feelings of 'not been loved' I felt being amongst them. Sometimes it would seem to me that I was not being properly understood, and was in disfavor with the people around me on some matters -it brought me a lot of pains and distress. Other times, I would judge it that I was been overused. I found it difficult to see the true definition of love according to 1 Cor. 13 expressed in my daily interactions with every other person. In response to these, many times I nagged at my mum, and nursed unspoken feelings of bitterness and hatred for the other members of the family. When gifts come my way, I become cheerful for a while, but back to the natural me soon after. I grew up this way until I met the Lord Jesus when I was about seventeen years of age old and in SS two then. Things began to change, but not so fast. It is a gradual, step by step change (1 Cor. 3:18).

Needed to be made to fulfill purpose

But the truth is that, all these and the likes happen for certain positive reasons, and a major one is that 'you need to be made' for the top, like Moses under Jethro and Joshua under Moses were made for Spiritual Leadership over Israel; Joseph was made for governance in Egypt; David was made to be Israel's king; Ruth was made under Naomi to become the great grandmother of Jesus; Esther was made under Mordecai as the Queen of Babylon; Daniel, Shedrack, Meshack and Abednego were made back from Judah for the royal palace of Babylon even before the exile; Jesus was made under the supervision of Joseph and Mary; the disciples of Jesus were made by Him for spreading the Good News of Jesus throughout Palestine and beyond; Timothy was disciplined by Paul as church pastor etc. All of these people and others not mentioned grew up just like you, with your kind of lifestyle and testimonies, some even had worst teen age experiences (like David and Joseph who were usually bullied by their elder brothers).

The unique thing with each of these brethren was that they were men of like passions – like everyone else. They all had their silent seasons; the period of their lives when they were not that known to the public; nothing much was known about them, and even their unusual abilities and talents were kept under public notice. In those days they each had a kind of life that was mixed up – a life mostly occupied with many obvious vices and characteristics of the natural man. It was a life full of selfishness and ordinary ceremonial religion. With these, they would not emerge their full potential in the plans and purpose of God for them. Therefore he had them placed under the guard and guide of his chosen human representatives/ disciplinary circumstances for a while. He did this to get them adequately disciplined, equipped and formed into his most suitable design of mould, the kind that best suits them for the fulfillment of his unique plan and purpose for them. He was patient for each of their making processes to complete before ever releasing them out to reflect his glory, and spread his knowledge to as far as he prepared and strengthened them to go, at the time he appointed.

He gave me a human Discipler

But now to continue – the son who will receive his father's property is treated just like a slave while he is young, even though he really owns everything. While he is young, there are men who take care of him and manage his affairs until the time set by his father. Gal. 4:1 GNB

I submitted to a senior brother in the Christian faith. He is one in whom I saw Jesus Christ expressing the true divine nature. By way of life, he actually looked like the

Christ I was shown and called to become like if I grow up correctly in the knowledge of Christ (Eph. 4:13).

Paul told the Corinthian believers,

“For even if you have ten thousand guardians in your Christian life, you have only one father. For in your life in union with Christ Jesus I have become your father by bringing the Good News to you. I beg you, then, to follow my example.” 1 Cor. 4:16 GNB. **“Imitate me, then, just as I imitate Christ.”** 1 Cor. 11:1 GNB

I was directed by the Holy Spirit to a true Christian man –Alex Oguh, in Kogi state of Nigeria, who began to tell me about ‘biblical discipleship’ and the processes involved in it. I enrolled into it as teenager and have remained in the process ever since then, with him as the human example of Jesus that I can see and follow.

Before I ever yielded my neck for the learning and making processes, I, in my zeal for the Lord was walking in a deception. I even told my discipler then, it was quite funny. I resolved that since I really wanted to be like Jesus, let Jesus disciple me by himself daily invisibly –that was an impossible resolution, but the Lord Jesus graciously brought another human being like me whom he had helped and was helping to grow into his mature stature. I saw Christ in the man, and I was led by the Holy Spirit (Rom. 8:14) to go and submit under the nurturing arm of the man.

My experiences as a true disciple of the Lord Jesus Christ ever since then have been fruitful and progressive; with the fruits of the Holy Spirit maturing within me day by day, and the beauties of the Lord’s glory being expressed through the various gifts of the Holy Spirit in me.

The Making Process: Discipleship works

Sooner than later, I began to discover that some of the ill-feelings of loneliness, of ‘not being loved as desired’, the unspoken bitter and hateful feelings in my heart for members of my home and how bitter it seemed when the people living around me related with me; these all died out of me. And it was because I also began to know about the features of the self life that were being exposed and disgraced by the Holy Spirit through my discipleship –I was being taught the right things.

I soon became the complete opposite of whom/what I used to be in the house. I became a sincere lover of the individuals I once saw as the devils of my life.

I was being taught about the person and life of Jesus through the daily and weekly teachings I received in my personal and cooperate bible study meetings with other believers respectively. My entire life began to take shape like Christ's. I learnt obedience to God by the painful and comforting circumstances I was being taken through, they formed part of my making processes (Lam. 3:27). I knew it, and others saw the changes; that indeed Christ's life was being formed in me daily. Today I am becoming a greater blessing to the body of Christ, because **he makes me**.

**CATEGORY: CANONICAL
READING PLAN - 180 DAYS**

1.	Genesis 1-7
2.	Genesis 8-15
3.	Genesis 15-21
4.	Genesis 22-26
5.	Genesis 27-31
6.	Genesis 32-37
7.	Genesis 38-42
8.	Genesis 43-47
9.	Genesis 48-50; Exodus 1-3
10.	Exodus 4-9
11.	Exodus 10-15
12.	Exodus 16-21
13.	Exodus 22-27
14.	Exodus 28-32
15.	Exodus 33-38
16.	Exodus 39, 40; Leviticus 1-4
17.	Leviticus 5-10
18.	Leviticus 11-15
19.	Leviticus 16-21
20.	Leviticus 22-25
21.	Leviticus 26, 27; Numbers 1, 2
22.	Numbers 3-6
23.	Numbers 7-10
24.	Numbers 11-15
25.	Numbers 16-20
26.	Numbers 21-25
27.	Numbers 26-30
28.	Numbers 31-34
29.	Numbers 35, 36; Deuteronomy 1, 2
30.	Deuteronomy 3-7
31.	Deuteronomy 8-13
32.	Deuteronomy 14-20
33.	Deuteronomy 21-27
34.	Deuteronomy 28-31
35.	Deuteronomy 32-34; Joshua 1-4
36.	Joshua 5-11
37.	Joshua 12-18
38.	Joshua 19-24
39.	Judges 1-5

40.	Judges 6-9
41.	Judges 10-15
42.	Judges 16-21
43.	Ruth 1-4; 1 Samuel 1-3
44.	1 Samuel 4-12
45.	1 Samuel 13-17
46.	1 Samuel 18-24
47.	1 Samuel 25-31
48.	2 Samuel 1-7
49.	2 Samuel 8-15
50.	2 Samuel 16-21
51.	2 Samuel 22-24; 1 Kings 1, 2
52.	1 Kings 3-7
53.	1 Kings 8-11
54.	1 Kings 12-17
55.	1 Kings 18-22
56.	2 Kings 1-5
57.	2 Kings 6-11
58.	2 Kings 12-17
59.	2 Kings 18-22
60.	2 Kings 23-25; 1 Chronicles 1, 2
61.	1 Chronicles 3-6
62.	1 Chronicles 7-11
63.	1 Chronicles 12-17
64.	1 Chronicles 18-24
65.	1 Chronicles 25-29; 2 Chronicles 1
66.	2 Chronicles 2-8
67.	2 Chronicles 9-17
68.	2 Chronicles 18-24
69.	2 Chronicles 25-31
70.	2 Chronicles 32-36
71.	Ezra 1-7
72.	Ezra 8-10; Nehemiah 1-3
73.	Nehemiah 4-7
74.	Nehemiah 8-11
75.	Nehemiah 12, 13; Esther 1-5
76.	Esther 6-10; Job 1-4
77.	Job 5-10
78.	Job 11-16
79.	Job 17-23
80.	Job 24-31

81.	Job 32-37
82.	Job 38-42
83.	Psalms 1-16
84.	Psalms 17-25
85.	Psalms 26-35
86.	Psalms 36-45
87.	Psalms 46-57
88.	Psalms 58-69
89.	Psalms 70-77
90.	Psalms 78-85
91.	Psalms 86-95
92.	Psalms 96-105
93.	Psalms 106-114
94.	Psalms 115-119
95.	Psalms 120-132
96.	Psalms 133-145
97.	Psalms 146-150; Proverbs 1-3
98.	Proverbs 4-9
99.	Proverbs 10-15
100.	Proverbs 16-21
101.	Proverbs 22-26
102.	Proverbs 27-31
103.	Ecclesiastes 1-8
104.	Ecclesiastes 9-12; Song of Solomon 1-8
105.	Isaiah 1-8
106.	Isaiah 9-17
107.	Isaiah 18-27
108.	Isaiah 28-35
109.	Isaiah 36-44
110.	Isaiah 45-53
111.	Isaiah 54-63
112.	Isaiah 64-66; Jeremiah 1-3
113.	Jeremiah 4-9
114.	Jeremiah 10-17
115.	Jeremiah 18-25
116.	Jeremiah 26-31
117.	Jeremiah 32-37
118.	Jeremiah 38-45
119.	Jeremiah 46-50
120.	Jeremiah 51, 52; Lamentations 1, 2
121.	Lamentation 3-5; Ezekiel 1-4

122.	Ezekiel 5-12
123.	Ezekiel 13-17
124.	Ezekiel 18-22
125.	Ezekiel 23-27
126.	Ezekiel 28-33
127.	Ezekiel 34-39
128.	Ezekiel 40-45
129.	Ezekiel 46-48; Daniel 1-3
130.	Daniel 4-9
131.	Daniel 10-12; Hosea 1-7
132.	Hosea 8-14; Joel 1-3
133.	Amos 1-9
134.	Obadiah 1; Jonah 1-4; Micah 1-7
135.	Nahum 1-3; Habakkuk 1-3; Zephaniah 1-3
136.	Haggai 1, 2; Zechariah 1-7
137.	Zechariah 8-14; Malachi 1-4
138.	Matthew 1-6
139.	Matthew 7-10
140.	Matthew 11-14
141.	Matthew 15-19
142.	Matthew 20-23
143.	Matthew 24-26
144.	Matthew 27, 28; Mark 1-3
145.	Mark 4-7
146.	Mark 8-11
147.	Mark 12-14
148.	Mark 15, 16; Luke 1
149.	Luke 2-5
150.	Luke 6-9
151.	Luke 10-13
152.	Luke 14-18
153.	Luke 19-22
154.	Luke 23, 24; John 1, 2
155.	John 3-6
156.	John 7-10
157.	John 11-15
158.	John 16-21
159.	Acts 1-6
160.	Acts 7-10
161.	Acts 11-15
162.	Acts 16-20

163.	Acts 21-26
164.	Acts 27, 28; Romans 1-3
165.	Romans 4-10
166.	Romans 11-16
167.	1 Corinthians 1-8
168.	1 Corinthians 9-14
169.	1 Corinthians 15, 16; 2 Corinthians 1-4
170.	2 Corinthians 5-13
171.	Galatians 1-6; Ephesians 1
172.	Ephesians 2-6; Philippians 1-3
173.	Philippians 4; Colossians 1-4; 1 Thessalonians 1-5
174.	2 Thessalonians 1-3; 1 Timothy 1-6; 2 Timothy 1
175.	2 Timothy 2-4; Titus 1-3; Philemon 1; Hebrews 1-5
176.	Hebrews 6-13; James 1-4
177.	James 5; 1 Peter 1-5; 2 Peter 1-3
178.	1 John 1-5; 2 John 1; 3 John 1; Jude 1; Revelation 1-4
179.	Revelation 5-14
180.	Revelation 15-22

IF YOU ARE READY TO GIVE YOUR LIFE TO JESUS AND TO RECEIVE HIS OWN:

Pray like this:

Dear God, I desire to call you Father. Remove everything that has kept me separated from you to this time, and make me your friend. I know you love me. I believe Jesus died to provide me with eternal life if I believe, I believe from today. I confess and repent from every of my wrongdoings in the past and the future. Help me remain in your love, and to abide in your word for the rest of my life. Fill me with your Holy Spirit so I can know your will and receive the blessings you have kept in Christ for me. Be with me from today, and help me to tell others about your great grace and unconditional love for humanity. I pray in Jesus' name. Amen.