



# The Link

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*A quarterly non-denominational publication to the body of Christ*

*"Be ye therefore perfect, even as your father which is in heaven is perfect" Mathew 5:48*



## **In This Edition:**

**The Heart of a Disciple – Page 3**

**In the beginning it was not so – Page 5**

**Food for Thought – Page 6**

**Sins Unveiled – Page 7**

**Secrets of Inner Peace – Page 9**

**This world is not our home – Page 11**

**God is able – Page 12**

**Secrets of Success in Business – Page 13**

**Cheer up – Page 14**

**Wisdom Nuggets – Page 15**

## EDITORIAL

Dearly beloved, with gratitude to God for His grace upon our lives, we bring you another edition of 'The Link' magazine. We appreciate our God for all He has been passing across to us in the past editions and all He will pass across to us in this edition.

As we look unto the Lord in this edition, the Lord will want us to examine our lives with His word and consider again the kind of life we ought to live as a disciple of the Lord Jesus Christ. There is a burning burden in our hearts in this edition to examine our lives in the light of some of the emphasis of the Holy Scriptures.

We trust the Lord that He will ignite a passion that will change our lives to be all that He desires us to be as His followers. We will stand to be different in the midst of the perilous and perverse generation as we consciously await His second coming.

Brothers and Sisters, **you cannot hide from your maker!** Whatever He reveals to you as we go through the teachings in this magazine, please make appropriate changes, so that He will be glorified in your life. God bless you and keep you.

Also we want to use this opportunity to encourage as many as are in the valley of despair and needs comfort; God has good plans for you, He is interested in giving you peace all round and He is able to attend to all that concerns you. God has comforted us on all sides and will comfort you also today in Jesus Name.

Thanks for your words of encouragements and for the gifts we received from you. Please we desire more of your prayers and support in this ministry.

As many as have been getting a bulk of the magazine, please distribute well and place in right hands that will be able to share the messages and burden in the magazine with others. God will bless you.

On behalf of your brethren from The Link Ministry,

Segun Ajayi

**THE LINK** is a non-denominational teaching magazine published quarterly and sent or delivered free to your homes, churches, ministries, schools, establishment and (or) any believer that request a copy. **THE LINK** carries no subscription or newsstand price.

### **IT MUST NOT BE SOLD.**

This publication is being financed as the Lord provides through a group of brethren.

We would like to know how this publication has been of blessings to you, please write or call us.

You can also send in your gift(s) in cash or kind to improve the quality of this publication. (Cheques/Money orders should be made payable to Segun Ajayi).

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# The Heart of a Disciple

‘Segun Ajayi

*“Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see the Lord”* Matthew 5:8

*“Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord? Or who shall stand in the holy place? He that hath clean hands and a pure heart: who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity?”* Psalms 24:3-4.

The Lord Jesus Christ in His first sermon on the mount addressed this issue of the heart explicitly while teaching His disciples and the multitude that gathered at the mountainside.

It is not surprising that He had to consider the need for a pure heart because this is a prerequisite for coming close to God and relating with Him.

We want to consider in this article the state of the heart that is not yet yielded to God or is yielded to the flesh and what to do to make the heart pure always.

## **The Heart Examined**

### **The Natural Heart**

This is the state of the heart when it is not subject to God.

Jeremiah 17:9 says *“the heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked. Who can know it?”*

The heart in this state is very terrible and does not consider the expectations of God. It ponders on corruption, thrives on wickedness, feeds on dirt and is subject to the dictates of natural forces. The devil holds sway in such heart and directs its action to evil continuously.

The devil played on this heart in the Garden of Eden and eventually led the first man to sin against God. After this experience men and women born of man began to inherit this state of heart. In this state, the devil led men continuously to all manners of evil.

Consider the state of the world after the Garden of Eden. In Genesis 6:5, the Bible records that man’s wickedness on earth became great and the inclination of the thoughts of men on the earth was evil all the time. The Lord became grieved with man and He decided to wipe away mankind from the face of the earth.

However, the seed of sin continued in Noah, and till now men and women born of this seed continue in this natural state.

The natural heart cannot please God and cannot be subject to God. It is only God that understands man in this state and can work on him to change from this state.

The Scripture records in Jeremiah 17:10 that the Lord searches the heart and examines the mind. He is the only one that can see beyond the natural and change the natural to the supernatural.

We should note that what determines a man’s deeds is what is in the heart of man. The Bible records that a bad tree is recognized by its fruit. (Luke 6:43-45) Jesus also declares that evil man brings forth evil out of the evil stored up in his heart.

Every man that does not allow the Lord Jesus Christ to be Lord over his heart is in the natural state. I know you and myself will claim we are born again, that we are not being referred to. But is your heart subject to the Lordship of the Lord Jesus Christ? Out of the natural heart, every evil thoughts breeds and every act that will make you to sin against God is carried out.

Brothers and sisters, the Lord is speaking of those times when you are not subject to the dictates of God as written in the Scriptures. Whenever you disobey God and His dictates in the Scriptures, and you fail to repent you automatically make your heart natural; it becomes a field where the devil plays football and scores goals of corruption and evil.

In Job 31:7, Job describes what happens to men that are not allowing God to dictate their steps and are turned from the path of righteousness. Their hearts are led by the eyes and feeling of the senses. Such men become defiled.

I keep asking these questions recently: why do Christians transgress. Why is there so much wickedness despite all the messages we are listening to. Why is there so much unrighteousness in the nations despite so much preaching of the gospel. I have discovered that devil knowing that his time is so short, keeps working hard to lead men astray. We often failed to realize that despite the fact that we are

born again, we are still in the world and the world system is subject to Satan. The devil works on any man that has not realised that it is only through God's grace and his ability, that we can overcome all his wiles.

These days the passion in the heart of believers should be to seek to please God.

### **The Supernatural Heart**

When we surrender our lives to the Lord Jesus Christ and the dictates of His word, we move to a higher realm of the supernatural.

We become who God wants us to be; men and women that yield their lives to do right things. He will grant the ability to please His Father and live above the natural. Sinning will become a thing of the past and holiness our hallmark.

How is this possible, you may ask? The first step is to yield your life to God and ask Jesus Christ to become the Lord of your life.

You can do this anytime you discover that you are not what God wants you to be. Reaffirm the Lordship of Jesus Christ over your life. Tell Him to reign as the Lord of your life and rule in every situation.

Believe in His entire commandments, carry out His instructions, and let Him see you with Him every time. This is possible if you continually feed on His word; renew your mind with the word of God and let Him be at work in you.

The Scriptures indicates in Romans 12:2 that as you renew you mind with the word of God you will be able to approve God's will for your life. When the devil is suggesting to the mind to go after the dictates of the senses, the supernatural heart will enlighten the mind to do what God approves alone and not what the devil is suggesting.

The supernatural heart will be tempted; temptation is not a sin; you can be tempted and not fail. The supernatural heart will yield only to the dictates of God even when tempted.

Remember that all the enemy is bringing to you is to make your heart to leave its supernatural state and come back to the natural. It is the natural heart that will be subject to the dictates of the prince of the power of the air.

The works of the flesh as stated in Gal 5:19-21 are predominant in the natural heart.

Men and brethren, if indeed we want to follow Christ and we want to get to heaven, whenever the

above is the order of the day, we know we are still allowing the flesh. The heart is not subject to God and the Spirit of God is not at work. The heart is in its natural state. We need to seek God and be delivered out of this state.

In our supernatural state, our heart will pant to follow God. Take up our cross and follow Christ. We can say as David in Psalm 42, my heart pant after God; we will desire to appear before God without fear of judgment; we will not even be afraid of death, because we know that death will translate us to His presence in glory. While we remain here on earth, we will desire to see Him at work in our life, and continually we will come before our God as stated in Psalm 15, because we know we qualify to do so.

Brethren, the passion in the heart of our God is to present himself a body of believers without spot or wrinkle or any such thing. Is your heart in a fit state without spot or wrinkle? Let Him wash away the stains, spot and wrinkles of sin away from your natural mind with His precious blood.

This message is not addressing those in the world but you and I that claim to be followers of Christ. Is your heart cleansed from every spots, stains and wrinkles? Are you allowing the word of God to work on your heart?

The word of God is quick and powerful; sharpen than any two edged sword and can discern the thoughts and intents of your heart (Hebrew 4:12). Ask Him to do that now. Search your heart and yield to God. Let Him help you to overcome that which the natural heart has led you to carry out. Every known and unknown sin as He reveals, you must let go off.

What the enemy can find in you he will use against you. The Lord Jesus Christ said, the prince of this world has searched Him and found nothing in Him. Can you say that about yourself? Open your heart to God, if there is any wickedness in you. Let the blood that flows at Calvary cleanse you.

The Scriptures says in Isaiah 1:18 *"Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool."* Irrespective of the magnitude of your sin, He will cleanse you, He will also make that heart to become supernatural and you will be able to please God. Do that today and be prepared to meet your Lord. He loves you dearly. Stay blessed.

# IN THE BEGINNING IT WAS NOT SO

'Kunbi Ajayi

*"Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leads to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leads unto life, and few there be that find it."* (Matt. 7:13-14) (The Living Bible)

All believers are called to walk in the narrow way to enter through the straight gate that leads to life. The conditions to walk on this narrow way are so stringent and the Lord Jesus Christ has set these in the Scriptures. We shall be looking at some of the conditions and look at our lives where we seem to have deviated. The Lord will help us to make necessary adjustments in Jesus Name.

As Jesus taught His disciples in Matthew 5:6, He is still teaching us, the present day disciples, that *"happy are those who long to be just and good for they shall be completely satisfied."* A disciple gets completely satisfied only from being just and righteous and not from any other thing. That was the way it was in the beginning. But we should ask ourselves. Is it the same way with us as Christians today? Do we still long to be just and good? Are we thirsty for righteousness? Without this it may be difficult for us to continue the walk on the narrow this narrow way of life.

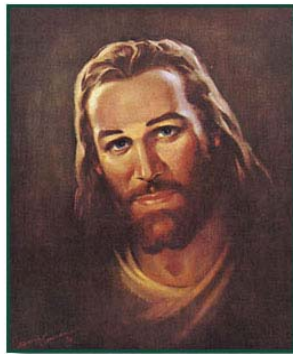
For *"you are the world's seasoning to make it tolerable; if you lose your flavour what will happen to the world?"* (Matthew 5: 13) If we don't retain the purity that God demands, we lose our flavour; we cannot season this world and make it tolerable. Else we would be thrown out and trampled under foot as worthless. Our lives should declare righteousness and speak volume for the kingdom of God. At the beginning, the disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ live a life that declares to everyone that these ones are different and had been with Christ. Everywhere they go, men were touched and changed; consciences are pricked and lives were made different.

Don't you as a child of God hide your light? Even though Christ commands that we should let it shine for all to see, so that they will praise our heavenly Father?

But I warn you brethren *"unless your goodness is greater than that of the Pharisees and other Jewish leaders you can't get into the kingdom of heaven at all."* (Matthew 5: 20)

We must get into that kingdom, that is when all our shouting, our praising, our saying Jesus is Lord will be worth it.

He is now asking us, *"so why do you call me Lord when you won't obey me?"* (Mark 6:46). We often disregard His commandment because it doesn't look safe, secure, easy and acceptable to the world. He wants to be the centre focus; He wants our dependence on Him to be ultimate, total and complete. That is why *"He sent them out to preach the kingdom of God and to heal the sick. He told them: "Take nothing for the journey—no staff, no bag, no bread, no money, no extra tunic"* (Luke 9: 2-3) (compare Luke 10: 4).



Remember no need for a bag for the disciples in the beginning. But dear brethren are we not armed constantly with bags these days as we go about fulfilling the master's mandate?

When we are called to follow Him, that call demands on us to put aside our own desires and conveniences and carry our cross with us every day and keep close to Him (Luke 9:23). *"For anyone who lets himself be obstructed from the work I plan for him is not fit for the kingdom of God"* (Luke 9: 62).

A disciple should gain satisfaction only through being just and righteous; it is not for him to run after the riches of this world. He is warned: *"Beware! Don't be greedy for what you don't have. Real life is not measured by how much we own."* Luke 12:15

Jesus said, *"So I tell you, don't worry about everyday life--whether you have enough food to eat or clothes to wear. For life consists of far more than food and clothing"*. (Luke 12:22-23)

He will always give you all you need from day to day if you make the kingdom of God your primary concern

*"The seventy-two returned with joy and said, "Lord, even the demons submit to us in your name."*

*He replied, "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. I have given you authority to trample on snakes and scorpions and to overcome all the power of the enemy; nothing will harm you. However, do not rejoice that the spirits submit to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven." (Luke 10:17-20).*

Thank God for the benefits of the name of Jesus Christ; thank God for authority we have as believers. However, the important thing is not that demons obey you but that your names are registered as citizens of heaven.

What about the place of authority and humility in the disciple's life; is he master or servant?

Jesus Christ demonstrated what we ought to be; *"So He got up and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with towel he had around Him" (John 13:6).*

*"After washing their feet, he put on his robe again and sat down and asked, "Do you understand what I was doing? You call me 'Teacher' and 'Lord,' and you are right, because it is true. And since I, the Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you ought to wash each other's feet. I have given you an example to follow. Do as I have done to you. How true it is that a servant is not greater than the master. Nor are messengers more important than the one who sends them. **You know these things--now do them! That is the path of blessing.**" (John 13: 12-17)*

*"For I am the true vine and my Father is the gardener, He chops off every branch that did not produce and He prunes every branch that bears fruit for even larger crops. He has already tended you by pruning you for greater strength and usefulness by means of the commands I gave you"*

*"Take care to live in me and let me live in you, for apart from me you can't do a thing, my true disciples produce bountiful harvest and this brings great glory to my Father, I have told you this so that you will live in my joy, yes your cup of joy will overflow" (John 15:1-5, 8,11)*

These are very hard sayings (John 6:60). *"And at this point many of His disciples turned away and deserted Him. Are you going too?" (John 6:66-67)*

*"Remember what happens to Lot's wife" (Luke 17:32). "For I come quickly and my reward is with me to repay to every man according to his work" (Rev. 22:12). "Let those who can hear listen to what the Spirit is saying to the Churches" (Rev. 3:22).*

## Food For Thought

- We have taller buildings, but shorter tempers; wider freeways but narrower viewpoints.
- We spend more, but have less; we buy more, but enjoy less.
- We have bigger houses and smaller families; more conveniences, but less time.
- We have more degrees, but less sense; more judgment but less knowledge; more experts, but more problems; more medicine, but less wellness.
- We drink too much, smoke too much, spend too recklessly, laugh too little, drive too fast, get too angry too quickly, stay up too late, get up too tired, pray too seldom and watch too much TV.
- We have multiplied our possessions, but reduced our values.
- We talk too much, love too seldom and lie too often.
- We've learned how to make a living, but not a life; we've added years to life, not life to years.
- We've conquered outer space, but not inner space; we've done larger things, but not better things; we've cleaned up the air, but polluted the soul.
- We've split the atom, but not our prejudice; we write more, but learn less; plan more, but accomplish less.
- We've learned too rush, but not wait; we have higher incomes, but lower morals; more food, but less appeasement; more acquaintances, but fewer friends; more effort, but less success.
- These are the times of fast food and slow digestion; tall men, and short character; steep profits, and shallow relationships'
- These are the times of world peace, but domestic warfare; more leisure and less fun; more kids of food, but less nutrition.
- These are the days of two incomes, but more divorce; of fancier houses, but broken homes.
- These are the days of quick trips, disposable diapers, throwaway morality, one night stands, overweight bodies, and pills that do everything from cheer, to quiet, to kill.
- It is a time when there is too much in the show window, and nothing in the stockroom.
- Today, many want to gain the world at the "mere" expense of their souls.
- Evil is contemplated and performed with both hands, yet we cannot lift a finger for our fellow animals or humans.
- God have mercy on our souls. Pray without ceasing. Let each of us examine our own ways.

- Author Unknown

# Sins Unveiled

Olaolu Aderinwale

Brethren I want to draw your attention to the promise of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ in John 14:3. He said *“In my Father’s house (i.e. in the Kingdom of God, the dwelling place of God), are many mansions, if it were not so, I would have told you”*. This important message is addressed to the entire human race, including all those yet unborn. The implication of this statement is that every soul who is a member of God’s family will and conveniently accommodated in God’s house and live eternally in the presence of God. The essence of eternal life is to live a good life here on earth and end up in the kingdom of God after this life. Eternal life is definitely too precious for a person to miss just because of ephemeral and fleeting pleasures of sin.

In the light of this, it is necessary to consider the things that are capable of wresting this place of eternal rest from us and run away from them. This message is meant to identify the things that can hinder one from entering the kingdom of God. From onset I want you to understand that nobody was created to miss heaven. Whether one will enter the kingdom of God or not depends entirely on what one does during ones lifetime here on earth. Many people because of their sinful lifestyle in life are rejecting the grace of God and consequently will miss the kingdom of God and finally end up in hell.

God abhors sins and He has warned men to steer clear of it in all our dealings. He had warned in Ezekiel 18:4 that *“the soul that sinneth, it shall die”*. The other warning is found in Exodus 32:33 where God said, *“Whosoever has sinned against me will I blot out of my Book”*. What the Almighty God is saying in these two statements is that anybody who makes a practice of sin will not share in His kingdom.

It is clear from the scriptures that sinful living militates against the occupation of mansions already prepared for us. For instance, in Galatians 5:19-21 and Romans 1:29-31, the scripture clearly states that those who practice the sinful lifestyle enumerated in those passages cannot enter the kingdom of God. However, many do not understand the meaning of those sins or their gravity.

Let us try to consider some of these evil practices that will debar a person from having a share in The Father’s House. These are:

## **Unrighteousness**

Unrighteousness includes partiality and injustice. For example, a person who invents a false report against his/her neighbour, or joins the wicked to be a false witness is unrighteous. To wrest justice from a neighbour or to take up the cause of a poor man through sympathy if he is wrong are acts of unrighteousness. God demands that when justice is at stake, wealth or poverty must not be favoured. An unrighteous person is a candidate of hell.

## **Fornication**

A fornicator is a person who engages in sexual intercourse with a person not married to. Fornication is a serious moral sin mostly connected with illegal and immoral sexual behaviour. This is repugnant to the principle of holiness that God demands from men. There is a powerful spirit behind this sin; therefore underrating it may be dangerous.

## **Adultery**

This is sexual intercourse between a married person and someone who is not the wife or husband. Both the Old Testament and the New Testament frown at this sin. Jesus Christ, in Mathew 5: 27-28, citing Exodus 20:14 and Deuteronomy 5:18 said, *“thou shall not commit adultery...whosoever looks on a woman to lust after her has committed adultery with her already in his heart”*. This is one of the commonest sins today. The terrible thing about this sin is that males and females do not appreciate the enormity of the danger inherent in it, so men in particular take glory in committing this sin. Hell is sure for adulterers.

## **Uncleanness**

Any act done which is the opposite of purity is uncleanness. Examples of this sin are sodomy, homosexuality, lesbianism, bestiality and all other forms of sexual perversion. The seriousness of this sin is described in Romans 1:21-24 with particular reference to verse 24, *“Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves”*. These vile affections are passions of infamy and shame; the end result is spiritual death.

### **Lasciviousness**

This is one evil thing that comes from within a person. It means licentiousness, lustfulness, and lewdness. Lasciviousness is act of promoting or partaking in that which tends to promote lewd emotions. It is anything that tends to foster sexual sin and lust. This is why many world pleasures must be avoided by the Christians so that lasciviousness may not be committed. Today pornographic films and obscene pictures are freely circulating among the youths to the detriment of their souls. Many of our girls walk through the streets half naked there by allowing their souls and those of their admirers to be dragged to hell.

### **Idolatry**

Idolatry, in ordinary parlance, means image-worship. But by extension, idolatry includes anything on which affections are passionately set. It is extravagant admiration of the heart which Paul in Colossians 3:5 called 'inordinate affection'. The love of money above the love for God is idolatry. Read Paul's warning in Ephesians 5:5 "*For this ye know that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God*".

### **Witchcraft**

Witchcraft is no doubt of satanic origin. It involves sorcery, practice of dealing with evil spirits, magical incantations and casting spells and charms upon another person through evil spirits. Such enchantments are used to inflict evil, pain, hatred, sufferings or death. It is also purportedly used to bring good health, love and other blessings. So, it is not only those who inflict wounds on the others by spiritual means that are witches or sorcerers but also those who use magical powers to invite blessings. Read their end in Rev. 21:8 "*But the fearful, and unbelieving; and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers AND SORCERERS (men, witches for women) ... shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone, which is the second death*".

### **Hatred**

Hatred has many meanings, some more potent than others but all have negative and sinister connotations. Some of the meanings are enmity, bitterness, dislike, abhorrence, malice, and ill-will against anyone; tendency to hold grudges against or be angry at someone. For the end of the persons in this group, Paul said in Galatians 5:20-21 "*Idolatry,*

*witchcraft, HATRED they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God*".

### **Variance**

Variance, which Paul called 'debate' in Romans 1:29, means causing strife or discord, quarrelling, disputes or dissensions. Paul's counsel to the Christians in Rome is noteworthy. He said in Romans 13:13 "*Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting, and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, NOT IN STRIFE and envying*". This is one of the sins that damn the soul and those found guilty of it according to Romans 1:32, are worthy of death.

### **Emulation**

Emulation means envies, jealousies, striving to excel at the expense of another, seeking to surpass and outdo others, uncurbed rivalry spirit in religion, business, society and other fields of endeavor. It is important to note that there are two types of emulation; the first type is that whose meanings are listed above. This is sinful. The other type is constructive emulation or imitation.

### **Wrath**

Wrath is a very terrible sin from which a child of God should, as much as possible and as a matter of deliberate policy refrain. Wrath means indignation, turbulent passions, rage, determined and lasting anger. During this period of extreme anger, there is nothing one cannot say or do, however serious or dangerous. A child of God should not allow himself or herself to be overwhelmed by wrath.

### **Strife**

To strife is to be in conflict with someone. Strife includes discord, frictions and rivalry. This sin is common even among many Christians. Many of us do not see its danger, whereas it is listed in Galatians 5:20 as one of the sins of which will lead to hell. Paul warns us in Philippians 2:3 that "*Let nothing be done through strife...*"

### **Sedition**

This simply means 'division'. It is a sin that is capable of throwing the church of God into a serious confusion e.g. stirring up factions and parties in the church. It can result in a popular disorder, hence, Paul warns against it in Romans 16:17 and said "*Now, I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned and avoid them*"



### **Heresy**

A heretic is a person who maintains opposition to the truth; he/she is a dissenter, a non-conformist. With regard to the Christian religion, it takes on an evil meaning when the truth (Jesus Christ) is rejected and fallacy (Satan) is accepted and taught in preference to the truth. Read Paul's instruction to Titus in Titus 3:10 "A man that is a heretic, after the first and second admonition, reject". This statement underscores the danger of heresy.

### **Envy**

Envy is the most base of all degrading and disgraceful passions. It means ill-will, jealousy at the good fortune or blessing of another. The danger of envy is found in Matthew 27:18 where it was recorded that "For he (Pilate) knew that FOR ENVY they had delivered him (Jesus)" The word of Peter in 1 Peter 2:1 is instructive "Wherefore, laying aside all malice, and all guile and hypocrisies and envies and all evil speaking".

### **Murder**

Simply put, to murder means, to deliberately kill or take the life of another person. This is one of the Ten Commandments that God gave to the children of Israel through Moses on Mount Sinai, (Exodus 20:13), "Thou shall not kill". In this law, God prohibits killing for malice, and pre-meditated and willful destruction of man who was made in the image of God.

### **Drunkenness**

A drunkard is one who has become a slave to drink. He lives intoxicated. Paul's instruction in Romans 13:13 states "Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting, and **drunkenness**, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying".

### **Reveling**

This sin is very rampant today as the youths are more indulged in it now than ever before. Reveling is to take great pleasure in something especially parties and feastings that leads to other sinful activities. Paul said in Galatians 5:21 that revelers will not enter the kingdom of God.

### **Malignity**

To malign is to say or write unpleasant things about someone that are untrue. This is a disposition producing evil habits. This sin leads its victim to put the worst construction on every action; ascribing to the best deeds the worst motives.

### **Backbiting**

This is a very common sin. It includes unkind remarks and spitefulness. Backbiters are evil speakers, false accusers and slanderers of absent men.

Brothers and Sisters, I want to admonish you all to flee from these sins so that the glorious promise of our Lord may be yours. It is impossible to compare the temporary pleasures of sin with the eternal pleasures of heaven. May God give us the grace and spiritual strength to flee from these sins that damn the soul, in Jesus Christ, Amen.

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# **The Secrets of Inner Peace**

Rufus Oladosu

"Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you, not as the world gives. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid" (John 14:27).

Peace means calmness, inner equilibrium, tranquillity or absence of confusion. It is self-evident that peace is desirable by all. Everything else in life loses its meaning when peace of mind is absent. The lack of it is responsible for many ills plaguing the church and the society. Jesus, in the above passage, indicates that believers can have inner peace that is completely independent of the circumstances around them. This peace is meant to differentiate us from

others as God's children and attract unbelievers to the loving arms of our saviour. However, the peace that Jesus brings only thrives in a right environment. The inner peace can be enhanced through the practical actions discussed below:

### **1. Repent and receive forgiveness of sin by faith**

"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9). Breach in fellowship with God is the root of all confusions. Sin puts the light out. Reconnection is done through repentance. It is the ploy of Satan to entice to sin and then spark

off guilt in the heart. The best policy is to run from all the appearances of evil. When sin is committed, admit your fault before God and ask for His forgiveness that you should receive by faith on the basis of His word. Thereafter use God's word as a bulwark against the devil's accusations.

## **2. Delight in God's word**

*"Great peace have they which love thy law; and nothing shall offend them"* (Psalms 119:165). Inner peace relies on what and whom you know. Faith comes by hearing the word of God (Romans 10:17). As you feast on the word, the consciousness of God's power and love will fill your heart and every form of fear and anxiety will be dispelled. You will have a sense of confidence solidly resting on God's promise that all will be well. God restores our soul through His word. It's our responsibility to guard our heart (Proverbs 4:23).

We should be careful of what we listen to because what we give heed to hear invariably determines our state of heart.

For this reason, we are asked to listen and think on things that are true, honest, just, pure, of good report, virtuous, and praiseworthy (Philippians 4:8) A heart that dwells on this will enjoy peace.

## **3. Turn your worries, fear and needs to prayer and thanksgiving**

*"Be careful for nothing; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passes all understanding shall keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus"* (Philippians 4:6-7).

Peace of God that is beyond comprehension will be generated in your heart when you pray and praise God. What is genuinely committed to God will turn out well. Being anxious and fearful solve nothing. But prayer changes things. The moment you begin to truly pray, the hand that moves the universe begins to work out things to your favour. However, it is not enough to pray. You should through the eyes of faith see and welcome your heart desires; Like Abraham, begin to give glory to God in spite of the present circumstances (Romans 4:20). It's good to know that Satan is allergic to praise. Anxieties and thanksgiving don't mix. A heart of gratitude will enjoy supernatural peace.

## **4. Put your trust in the Lord**

*"Thou will keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee. Trust in*

*the LORD for ever: for in the LORD JEHOVAH is everlasting strength"* (Isaiah 26: 3 - 4)

Perfect peace fills the mind that is fixed on God. Only God is immutable; everything else is subject to change. Broken focus leads to confusion. When your attention is on Christ, your heart will be filled confidence knowing that you can do all things by his strength (Philippians 4:13). But when your gaze is distracted and diverted, fear, anxieties and confusions ensue.

Your mind will not stay on God unless your trust is in him alone.

Trust is always at the centre of any great relationship. Trust brings stability. Those who trust in the Lord shall be like immovable mount Zion (Psalms 125:1). It is better to trust the Lord than to trust in Princes (Psalm 118:9). It is good to know God is totally committed to you. Only God will be always there for you. He loves you, cares for you and is powerful enough to deal every issue of your life. David declares He will not be afraid even when he passes through the valley of the shadow of death once God is with him. God's presence is the guarantee that all will be well.

## **5. Forgive others their offences**

*"Forbearing one another, and forgive one another, if any man have a quarrel against any even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye. And above all those things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness. And let the peace of God rule in your hearts to which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful"* (Colossians 3:13-15). Forgiveness and peace of heart are linked in the above passage. Storing offences in the heart produces bitterness, anger and malice. It's a sure way of suffering twice. If you will not forgive others and harbour bitterness in your heart this is simply self-imprisonment. The offender may even not be aware of his offence and hence enjoys sunshine while the offended endures self-inflicted torture. We are asked to forgive and forget as God does for us and asked us to. This will allow God's peace to rule our heart. We should constantly fight off bitterness from our heart and forgive others.

Offences will certainly come. What we do with them will determine who we permit to control our heart and affairs.

# THIS WORLD IS NOT OUR HOME

(Culled from an unpublished article written by Ubong Etiko at the Unilorin Christian Union (1989))

It is really unfortunate and very disturbing to notice that a lot of Christians have been so much overwhelmed with the influence of this world that they now have little or no deep concern for their eternal home again. They have so much embraced the world that they have little time considering the beauty of the kingdom of God and how they should watch and pray so they would not miss heaven. Even the happenings around them are not enough to call them to order and point them to a beautifully – prepared place reserved for them. Instead, they still afford to live carelessly.

Beloved, if we really understand and appreciate the importance of the kingdom of God, we will really live as pilgrims in this world. We will pass through this world and refuse to allow the world to pass through us for the sake of making heaven. We will live pure where everyone else is living in impurity and we will stay clean where everyone is meddling with sin. This is because when the unrighteous shall be thrown into utter darkness; there will be an uncontrolled weeping and gnashing of teeth. The door of mercy shall have been closed and the God of mercy shall assume his other position as the God of judgement; the days of grace shall have been over and the day of the Lord shall set in.

Instead of using this beautiful opportunity to get closer to God, most Christians have lost the interest of identifying fully with Jesus Christ because they don't want to bear his reproach. They have chosen to move at a distance with Jesus as Peter did, so they can easily deny him when occasion demands for that. They don't want to be mocked for professing Christianity without shame and reservation. Yes! They don't want to be ridiculed by friends and loved ones. And as such, the deep love for him who died for them is no more there and the daily preparation and expectancy that characterizes the soul who waits patiently for the final redemption and

translation from this world of sin, sorrow, pains, hardship, difficulty and uncertainty, is nowhere to be found.

Paul the apostle, in writing to the church said: *“Under the system of Jewish laws, the high priest brought the blood of the slain animals into the sanctuary as a sacrifice for sin, and then the bodies of the animals were burned outside the city. This is why Jesus suffered and died outside the city, where his blood washed our sins away. So let us go out to him beyond the city walls (that is, outside the interests of this world, being willing to be despised) to suffer with him there, bearing his shame. FOR THIS WORLD IS NOT OUR HOME; we are looking forward to our everlasting home in heaven”* Hebrews 12:11-14 (The Living Bible). (Emphasis by the author)

The soul who knows that this world is not his home is the soul who has made up his mind to put aside his reputation and go outside the interest of this world, being willing to be despised and ridiculed by friends and loved ones, to suffer for Jesus when occasion demands and to bear his shame and reproach in the face of this hopeless world. This is someone who has realized that this world has nothing promising. He is patiently waiting for a beautiful home where peace, joy and righteousness reigns – a place where sorrow and pain shall no more be experienced and a place of everlasting rest at the side of our master Jesus Christ.

Beloved, when last did you sit down and remind yourself of that wonderful home? When last did you encourage yourself that though you are facing a lot of hardship and difficulties in life, in a little while all will be over and you will go to be with the Lord?

The Scripture says: *“For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry”*. Hebrews 10:37. The Living Bible puts it this way: *“His coming will not be delayed much longer”* Amen. You can comfort yourself with these words. If there is anytime God's people should strive to bring back the king, it is now. He will come and take us to be with the Lord forever

*“And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes, neither shall there be any more pains: for the former things are passed away”. Rev. 21:4.*

*“The important thing to remember is that our remaining time is very short (and so are our opportunities for doing the Lord’s work). For that reason, those who have wives should stay as free as possible for the Lord; happiness or sadness or wealth should not keep anyone from doing God’s work. Those in frequent contact with the exciting things the world offers should make use of their opportunities without stopping to enjoy them; FOR THE WORLD IN ITS PRESENT FORM WILL SOON BE GONE” (1 Corinthians 7:29-31) (The Living Bible)(Emphasis by the author).*

Certainly, the world in its present form will be rolled away; for this world is in a mess and it stinks. God cannot stand the present situation of the world in which things have fallen apart. This world in its present form is very unreliable and very sick. God is displeased with it and will soon terminate it. But there is a rest for the people of God in the everlasting home in heaven.

Why not make this home yours by surrendering to Jesus without reservation. Turn over your life to him and he will take care of it for you. Come unto him just as you are.

# God is Able

Oduayo Ogundipe

The most wonderful and excellent thing about the Almighty God is that HE IS ABLE to do all things. Since we have a great God like this our mind should be at rest that in whatever situation we find ourselves, we should know that He is able to see us through. “He is able, more than able, to do what concerns me today; to do what I could not do and to make me what He wants me to be” says a songwriter. This now reminds me of a popular song in our daily gathering.

“He is able

Abundantly able

To deliver and to save

He is able, abundantly able

To deliver those who trust in Him.”

Put your trust in God because He is able. *“For with God nothing shall be impossible”* (Luke 1:37). Whatever you are passing through now – barrenness, sickness, oppression, affliction, poverty, slavery, servitude, etc. just put your trust in Him; He is able to settle you.

Basically, there are four major things needed by men today that are only obtainable from the Almighty God because He is able. Our education, family or other humans cannot give us these things.

Jesus is the Saviour and Christ the Lord, Luke 2:11. He has come to seek and save the lost, Luke 19:10. He did not come to condemn the world but to save her, John 3:17. His divine exaltation at the right hand of the Father is to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness to sinners; Acts 5:31, 1 Timothy 1:15.

This is why He is able to save to the uttermost whosoever comes to Him, Hebrews 7:25. He saved the Eunuch of Ethiopia, Acts 8:26-35, Zachaeus, Luke 19:1-10 and He

is able to save you too. The very first thing needed by men is Salvation. Come to the one that is able to save.

Secondly, the Lord Jesus Christ bore our sicknesses and diseases both at the cruel whipping post and on the cross, (Isaiah 53:5). He was anointed to heal the broken-hearted and He went about doing good and healing those that were oppressed of the devil (Acts 10:38). His healing virtue has capacity of dealing with all diseases, sicknesses, and infirmities (Mark 1:30-32, John 5:1-9). His ability to heal does not change. Therefore, He can heal you too because He is able (Hebrews 13:8).

Another thing needed by men is deliverance. Our Lord is able to deliver. Jesus Christ came to deliver those oppressed of the devil (Isaiah 61:1; Luke 4:18). He proclaimed the truth purposely to set at liberty those who will believe, John 8:21-32. Those in prisons and bondages to sin, sicknesses, diseases, curses, and demonic oppressions were set free (Mark 2:1-12, Mark 5:25-34, Galatians 3:13, Romans 8:2, Mark 5:1-16). Your own shall not be impossible. He is able; just trust Him. Stop running from one place to the other.

Lastly, every human being needs blessings. God is able to bless because He is a great provider. Don’t worry; just put your trust in Him (Matthew 6:25-34). He is able to provide for your needs. Don’t put your trust on others but on God. Men will fail; it is only God that cannot fail you. The abundantly able God is calling you today, answer Him, put your trust in Him and enjoy the rest of your life.

# SECRETS OF SUCCESS IN BUSINESS

Rufus Oladosu

*“Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the Lord, and in his law doth he meditate day and night. He shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither, and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper”.* Psalms 1:1-3.

It's clear from the above passage and several others that God wants his children to succeed in whatever they do. However there are certain principles we have to follow to enjoy success in business. Anyone who follows them diligently will make progress in life and business. These principles are discussed below;

## 1. Make God your senior partner

*“I have planted, Appolos watered; but God gave the increase”* (1 Cor. 3:6).

They had success because God was involved. Without him no good thing can come (John 3:27, 5:3). The business where God is the senior partner is bound to excel. How is this done? Receive direction concerning your business by waiting on him. Ask him for help when you are faced with difficulty. Give him the credit for successes you experience and remember to honour him with the first fruit of your increase.

## 2. Be in the right business

*“Let every man abide in the same calling wherein he was called”* (1 Cor. 7:20). You will bear fruit wherein God has planted you. The right business is:

- a. Where your Christian testimony cannot be called to question.
- b. Where you enjoy what you are doing.
- c. Where your life priorities can be in place; God, family and business in that order.

## 3. Know your business very well

*“Through wisdom is a house built; and by understanding it is established: And by knowledge shall the chambers be filled with all precious and pleasant riches”* (Pro. 24:3-4).

The house here represents your business. For its growth you need wisdom, understanding and knowledge.

Know your product and the market well; you will be outstanding by learning from the best in the same or similar field. Paul learned from Gamaliel the best teaches of law when he was a Pharisee. Study any available literature on your chosen field. Ask relevant questions.

## 4. Be innovative and creative

*“Now we received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us by God”* (1 Cor. 2:12).

The Spirit of God in us is creative. You can do ordinary thing in an extra ordinary way. Sit down to think of new ideas, how you can improve on your product and marketing. Ask what you can do differently that will increase the patronage of your product. Give value for money.

## 5. Locate your business in the right place

*“Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bush, but on a candlestick; and it gives light unto all that are in the house”.* (Matt. 5:15). Location is important. Every plant has a particular place where it thrives. To know the right place, seek God's face and apply common sense.

## 6. Be diligent in your business

*“See a man diligent in his business? He shall stand before kings; he shall not stand before mere men”.* (Prov. 22:29).

The Greek word for diligence is “Spoudazo” it means carefulness, swiftness, application of efforts and punctuality. All of these must be practiced by you to have outstanding results. Get to your business place early and work.

## 7. Don't start a new business with large loans

*“Better is little with the fear of the Lord than great treasure and trouble herein”* (Prov. 15:16).

Large loans put a man under pressure to cheat, swindle or make excessive gain from customers. Moderate profit from many is better than large profit from few that invariable shut the door against any future transactions. Don't put yourself under great pressure that engenders cutting of corners.

### **8. Be truthful and honest in your transactions**

*“A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches and loving favour than silver and gold” (Proverbs. 22:1).*

Honesty still remains the best policy in life and business. Don't sell inferior for original at the same price. Don't use false measures (Prov. 11:1). Let your business have a trademark of integrity. It will give you success, honour and a good name.

### **9. Be neat and decent**

*“Then Pharaoh sent and called Joseph, and they brought him hastily out of the dungeon; and he shaved himself, and changed his raiment, and came in into pharaoh” (Gen 41:14).*

Despite the urgency of Pharaoh's message, Joseph showed wisdom by making himself acceptable through neat and decent appearance. A good product not well packaged will not sell. Therefore, be neat and decent in your personal appearance, business place and in the packaging of your product.

### **10. Have a good recording system**

*“Now there arose up a new king over Egypt, which knew not Joseph” (Exodus 1:8).*

A crisis with catastrophic ending started with faulty recording system. Where proper records are not kept blunders are inevitable.

Have a good system of keeping record of your stock, sales, profits, transactions and appointment. This will help to avoid hidden losses, debts and disappointments. This will also help to determine the true value of your tithes.

### **11. Spend wisely**

*“There is treasure to be desired and oil in the dwelling of the wise; but a foolish man spendeth it up” (Prov. 21:20).*

Discipline yourself about the use of business money. In the time of great profit don't be frivolous in spending. Also resist the temptation of spending both capital and profit. Rather invest part of the profit to increase your capital base and thereby make room for future business expansion.

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## Cheer Up

### ***Shake it off and step up!***

This parable is told of a farmer who owned an old mule.

The mule fell into the farmer's well. After carefully assessing the situation, the farmer sympathized with the mule, but decided that neither the mule nor the well was worth the trouble of saving. Instead, he called his neighbors together and told them what had happened...and enlisted them to help haul dirt to bury the old mule in the well and put him out of his misery.

Initially, the old mule was hysterical! But as the farmer and his neighbors continued shoveling and the dirt hit his back, a thought struck him. It suddenly dawned on him that every time a shovel load of dirt landed on his back...HE SHOULD SHAKE IT OFF AND STEP UP! This he did, blow after blow. “Shake it off and step up...shake it off and step up...shake it off and step up!” He repeated to encourage himself. No matter how painful the blows, or how distressing the situation seemed the old mule fought “panic” and just kept right on SHAKING IT OFF AND STEPPING UP! It wasn't long before the old mule, battered and exhausted, STEPPED TRIUMPHANTLY OVER THE WALL OF THAT WELL!

What seemed like it would bury him, actually helped him...all because of the manner in which he handled his adversity. THAT'S LIFE! If we face our problems and respond to them positively, and refuse to give in to panic, bitterness, or self-pity...THE ADVERSITIES THAT COME ALONG TO BURY US USUALLY HAVE WITHIN THEM THE VERY REAL POTENTIAL TO BENEFIT US.

## Wisdom Nuggets

*"If you have trouble understanding and applying the Bible, remember this: How a seed grows depends on what kind of soil it is planted in."*

*"One of satan's primary weapons is ignorance. If he can stop you from knowing, he can stop you from growing."*

*"What you say and what you see will take you where you want to be."*

*"If you're the same place spiritually today that you were yesterday, you are a backslider." - Smith Wigglesworth*

*"Faith reaches into tomorrow and changes it before it gets here".*

*"Your FEAR point is your FAIL point".*

*"Fear tolerated is faith contaminate"  
-Kenneth Copeland*

*"Courage is not the absence of fear; it is acting in spite of fear".*

*"Never put a question mark where God put a period".*

*"Success = the willingness to bear pain".*

*"Success is when preparation meets opportunity".*

*"What you continually mind, you'll eventually find".*

*"Don't be a 'One of these days...' Christian, be a 'THIS is the day!' Christian!"*

*"Sow a thought, reap an act. Sow an act, reap a habit. Sow a habit, reap a character. Sow a character, reap a destiny!"*

*"Faith sees the invisible, believes the unbelievable, and receives the impossible."*

*"Worry does not empty tomorrow of its sorrow; it empties today of its strength".  
- Corrie Ten Boom*

*"Never be afraid to trust an unknown future to a known God". - Corrie Ten Boom*

*"Victory is not the absence of problems, it is the presence of power" - Joyce Meyer*

*"When the storms of life strike, it's what happens in you that will determine what happens to you". - Jerry Savelle*

*"Faith takes God without any ifs. If God says anything, faith says, "I believe it"; faith says, "Amen" to it". - D. L. Moody*

*"The reason that people do not have a rich, beautiful faith is that their spirit is denied the privilege of communion and fellowship with the Father". - John G. Lake*

*"Faith's role is to grasp that which appears impossible or strange to human eyes". - Andrew Murray*

*"I believe in Christianity as I believe in the sun- not only because I see it, but because by it I see everything else". - C. S. Lewis*

*"Your life is only as productive as the freshness of your walk with God". - Randy Shankle*

*"Do what you can, with what you have and do it now!" - George Washington Carver*

*"When you come in contact with the anointing of God, it not only effects your moment, it effects your tomorrow. - Creflo Dollar*



**A**cknowledge: "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God," Rom 3:23 (NIV)  
 Say, "God, have mercy on me, a sinner." Luke 18:13 (NIV)

**B**elieve: "'For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.'" John 3:16 (NIV)  
 "Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because he has not believed in the name of God's one and only Son." John 3:18 (NIV)

**C**onfess: "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness." I John 1:9(NIV)

Pray like this: Dear Lord Jesus, come into my heart right now. Your word says if I come to you, you will in no wise cast me out. I believe in my heart and confess with my mouth that you are the Son of God. I believe you died and rose for my justification. Thank you for agreeing to be lord over my life. Thank you because I am saved NOW.

If you have just taken this step, we would like to pray along with you, please contact us at the address below or contact any gospel Church close to you. God bless you and keep you in Jesus Name (Amen).

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