



Ecclesia Today

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# ECCLÉSIA TODAY

EST 2021



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ISSUE 3 VOL 1

1 JANUARY - 31 MARCH 2022

*Christian Digital Magazine*

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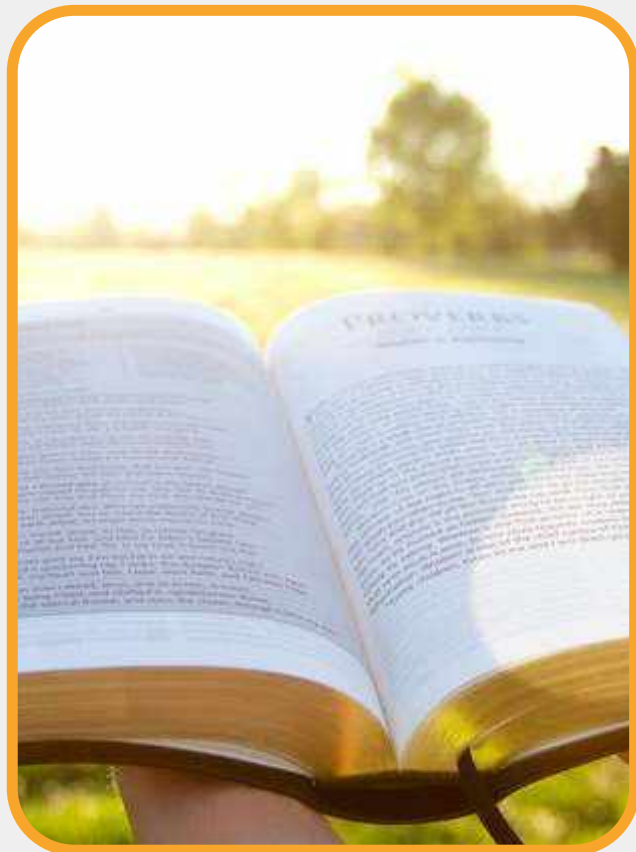
ECCLESIA TODAY ISSUE 3

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# ECCLESIA TODAY MAGAZINE



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## Editorial Note



# 2021 is Gone! Welcome to New Year 2022

While the turning of the calendar comes with no specific guarantees, it marks a firm division of time. As year 2021 passed, New Year 2022 commenced, we feel some reviving hope for new promises and beginnings of better days than before.

It's that time of annual declarations and resolutions. It's that period of attempting new plans, strategies, people and places!

Although Covid-19 is not yet over, we prayerfully and faithfully expect its end. Tears of the loss of our late loved ones are still fresh, but God is healing our hearts.

Graced to be part of this season, I wish **Ecclesia Today** readers, contributors and supporters all the best of the New Year.

Our content displays the work of our great contributors, and inspiration from our dear readers. May God bless us all as we trip ahead together.

From mid-year 2021, **Ecclesia Today** stood out quarterly as an inclusive, digital medium of Christian transformation through contextualized good news for all people across different contexts.

As we sought to be and keep freely accessible without charging any subscriptions, we carried the burden of production costs. I am highly indebted to two of our contributors who graciously paid the layout and design of our July-September and October-December 2021 editions.

It is because of their generosity that we managed to deliver our first two editions. This year 2022 we seek to grow and diversify our coverage in different contexts.

Any support will be greatly appreciated, especially towards the layout, design and related operating costs, so that we continue advancing our enlightenment and transformation through this medium.



**To give ideas, stories or support, please email me through  
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## GOSPEL FEATURE

## KEEPING STRONG IN FACE OF STORMS



**BY PASTOR TSATSAWANI TANATSWA  
MUTUNGAMIRI, IN HARARE,  
ZIMBABWE**

When I took off in my Christian journey, I thought giving my life to Jesus Christ and serving God guaranteed an exemption from suffering.

As Isaiah 43:2, "When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; And through the rivers, they shall not overflow you. When you walk through the fire, you shall not be burned, nor shall the flame scorch you", it does not say 'if' you pass through the waters or fire, it says 'when' you pass through the waters and fire. It suggests that storms are a part of our existence.

When Adam and Eve sinned and rebelled against God, all of creation was subjected to futility, from the sinful and fallen nature of man. Romans 8:20 says that "For the creation was subjected to futility."

We live in an imperfect, fallen world and because of that we will experience the storms of life. Jesus Himself said that "These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world". (John 16:33).

As we know that Christ Himself suffered and was obedient in and through suffering, we are no exception.

Hebrews 5:8 says, "Though He was a Son, yet He learned obedience by the things which He suffered".

In December 2020, I got infected by the South African Covid-19 variant. The frustrating part of Covid-19 is that some of its symptoms can be mediocre. The first days I could not figure out what was happening to me. I struggled to eat, felt unwell and fatigued. I could only sit for a few minutes, quickly go back to lie in bed whilst I was increasingly losing awareness of my surroundings.

I remember this sense of 'hanging' and extreme weakness as days progressed.

I felt lost and was struggling to pray, let alone read scripture. I would try to go outside for some fresh air but I could not last five minutes.

At this point I honestly stopped trying to pep talk myself into being strong. I felt like I was drifting. I suspect this was the beginning of hypoxia in my body. I experienced one of the worst Covid-19 symptoms, which included confusion or delirium and I felt like I was dying.

It was in this brokenness that I fell on my knees in the spirit and wept, admitting to God I could not withstand it anymore.

I think one of the challenges Christians have is not knowing how to respond to storms in our lives. One of what has worked for me in times of storms of life is being authentic, being real. This comes from the simple truth of approaching the kingdom of God as a child.

Matthew 18:3 says, "Assuredly, I say to you, unless you are converted and become as little children, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven".

Children are totally dependent on their parents, wholly trusting and having faith in them until we teach them otherwise. I think one of the biggest aspects of maturity for a Christian is childlike faith.

When I stopped trying to do things in my own strength, and cried out to God in my desperation, I surrendered the need to fix things and be in control. By yielding to my Father, I gave up self reliance and gave Him total control of my life and situation.

Jesus Christ encourages us to be converted, transformed and changed to be like children to access God's kingdom. In times of crisis it is important to approach the throne of God from a place of childlike trust, knowing that God is our Father, that He loves us, that He is in us, that He is with us and He is for us and never against us.

As we rest in His total acceptance and love, it is easy to be real, to cry out for help and simply say, 'I can't do this Daddy, help me'.

When I cried out, peace and reassurance that I would live came as the Holy Spirit enveloped me.

Instead of fear, understanding, revelation and gratitude filled my heart.

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## GOSPEL FEATURE

# KEEPING STRONG IN FACE OF STORMS



Isaiah 50:4 says, "... He awakens me morning by morning, He awakens my ear to hear as the learned".

I eventually realised that each morning I wake up, it's because He wakes me up. The times I am fit and things are okay, it's not primarily because I am perfect, entitled or special, it's His grace. I was grateful.

1 Thessalonians 5:18 says, "In everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you".

An attitude of gratitude gives strength in times of storms. When others see doom, hopelessness, seeing God at work in the mysteries of life releases a joy and peace which surpasses understanding.

I did not get healed the day I surrendered, but continued deteriorating until I was constantly gasping for air. I would go to sleep unsure if I would wake up, and wake up gasping for air. What helped me was resting, meditating on God's love, goodness, and promises and developing an attitude of gratitude daily.

I constantly spoke to Him and refused to be offended by Him or people. I was determined to keep my heart pure. I needed to keep seeing God at work in my life.

Matthew 5:8 says that "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God". While I was severely sick, my spirit man was waxing strong in the Lord. My husband called every praying leader, friend and elder we relate to. We should never be a loner in crisis. It is wise to call out to elders, praying mature friends to help you pray and stand with you during the storms of life (James 5:14).

It is possible to smile, and laugh in a storm if you lean on His strength by yielding, trusting, taking Him at His Word, living un-offended, maintaining an attitude of gratitude and allowing your prayerful community to stand with you.

Pastor Tsatsawani T. Mutungamiri leads Oasis Family church in Harare, together with her husband, Dr. T.D. Mutungamiri. She is a pharmacist by profession, and a qualified Christian counsellor. We can listen to her sermons on Oasis Family church Facebook page, and You Tube channel.





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## BIBLICAL PERSPECTIVE

## Understanding Biblical Tithing: Part two

## Abrahamic Tithing: The Original Purpose of God



**TAWAFADZA MAKONI, IN  
JOHANNESBURG, SOUTH  
AFRICA**

**(Genesis 14:17-23 ESV)**

"After his return from the defeat of Chedorlaomer and the kings who were with him, the king of Sodom went out to meet him at the Valley of Shaveh (that is, the King's Valley). And Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine. (He was priest of God Most High.) And he blessed him and said, "Blessed be Abram by God Most High, Possessor of heaven and earth; and blessed be God Most High, who has delivered your enemies into your hand!" And Abram gave him a tenth of everything. And the king of Sodom said to Abram, "Give me the persons, but take the goods for yourself." But Abram said to the king of Sodom, "I have lifted my hand to the Lord, God Most High, Possessor of heaven and earth, that I would not take a thread or a sandal strap or anything that is yours, lest you should say, 'I have made Abram rich.'"

Hebrews interprets Melchizedek's name to mean "King of righteousness and peace" and on his combined priestly and kingly offices, considers him as a pre-incarnate Christophany.

That means Melchizedek was a manifestation of Jesus Christ before His becoming flesh. This helps bring the tithing question into sharper focus.

These Levitical tithes were not totally new but simply new applications of the Melchizedekal tithes.

Therefore, as Jordan (1984:209) puts it, "the Melchizedekal order always underlay the Levitical order throughout the Mosaic period. The Levitical tithe, then, is an extension and specification of the Melchizedekal tithe."

The relationship of the Melchizedekal tithe to the Levitical tithe is found in Heb. 7:9.

The Levites tithed to Melchizedek through their ancestor Abraham, showing the superiority of Melchizedek (Heb. 7:9). Melchizedek King - Priest who governs in righteousness. Refers to Jesus Christ. So Abraham tithed into Christ not into Levi.

In our priesthood the tithe is made to the High Priest to J C himself, Abraham tithed before

the Law and so tithing continues after the Law. Abrahamic tithing predates and postdates the law. This tithing system preceeds and supersedes the Mosaic Law. Abrahamic tithing is for a period of grace.

While Levitical tithes were fees for services rendered by priests so they were "paid" but Abrahamic tithing consists of tithes of honor as one honours the King of Kings and the High Priest so they are given. Tithes are not paid but given! Jesus as my High priest today receives tithes.

A.W. Pink says, "But not only was Melchizedek there [in Gen. 14] a type of Christ, but Abraham was also a typical character, seen there as the father of the faithful; and we find he acknowledged the priesthood of Melchizedek by giving him a tenth of the spoils which the Lord had enabled him to secure in vanquishing those kings...as Abraham is the father of the faithful, so he left an example for us, his children, to follow -- in rendering tithes unto Him of Whom Melchizedek was a type."

Scripture agrees with Aw Pink. Listen to this: *Isaiah 51:1-2* "Listen to me, you who pursue righteousness, you who seek the Lord: look to the rock from which you were hewn, and to the quarry from which you were dug. Look to Abraham your father and to Sarah who bore you; for he was but one when I called him, that I might bless him and multiply him. (ESV)"

Since New Covenant believers are children of Abraham (Gal. 3:29); as such, we are to walk in the footsteps of the faith of our father Abraham (Rom. 4:11, 12). So since our father tithed, we are tithers as well. It seems inescapable that we are bound to do as Abraham did: set aside a tenth of our increase for the Melchizedekal priesthood.

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## BIBLICAL PERSPECTIVE

# Abrahamic Tithing: The Original Purpose of God

Abraham responds to God's blessing by tithing. Seems we have gotten it wrong. We often teach according to the Levitical model of tithing that one must tithe so that they are blessed. However we find here that it is the blessing that starts. I tithe because I am blessed and not that I tithe so that I am blessed.

We should look to Abraham for tithing model not to Moses. Tithing did not start in Malachi 3 but in Genesis 14. So we should start there. Abraham is the father of faith - we are the seed of Abraham but we are not looking to Abraham in tithing.

James Jordan (1984:210) observes, "The Melchizedekal tithe system is permanently obligatory. Abraham paid tithes (10%) to Melchizedek, and all true sons of Abraham (Rom. 4; Heb. 7) will also pay the tithe to the greater Melchizedek, Jesus Christ. In return for the tithe, Melchizedek gave Abraham bread and wine."

### Tithing Confusion

Many are confused by the teaching on tithing because they are basing it on Levitical (mosaic) tithe in Malachi.

The Abrahamic tithe (pre Mosaic tithe) by definition was 10% and was altered in the Mosaic Law to the three Levitical tithes but after the Cross reverts to the original 10%. The Abrahamic tithing model is kingdom driven and kingdom minded. Tithes in this case are not to support the priest but rather to advance the Kingdom. In some churches tithes are used as pastors' salary.

Dr Myles Munroe may have been right in referring to tithing as a kingdom tax that Kingdom citizens give into the kingdom treasury to show their allegiance to the Kingdom. Everything that is given to the King becomes His royal estate.

Abraham tithes to Melchizedek to honour Him. Honoring the King of Peace. It's not payment of service. It's worship. I tithe in honour of my King. I tithe not in fear of the curse but I tithe because I honour my Lord and King. Jesus lives to receive the

tithes! Jesus as my High priest today receives my tithes.

Abraham tithed because he was blessed. I tithe because I am so blessed I cannot afford not to. Melchizedek blessed Abraham before he could tithe. Blessed to tithe. The Abrahamic blessing leads us in honour our High Priest Jesus through the tithe.

### Tithing Definition

A tithe is a mandatory and divinely prescribed ten percent of our financial income that we give after receiving our income, and is given as an act of worship and honour to God in which we acknowledge His Lordship, His Provision and His claim of ownership over our lives and resources.

### Benefits of Abrahamic Tithing

Acknowledgement of the Lordship and Kingship of Christ over our lives. Lifting of hands is both a sign of worship and surrender. I surrender to The Lord Most High. Tithe is an acknowledgement of surrender to the Lordship of Christ.

Tithing releases revelation of the Lord God Most High who prospers His people.

Tithing to a King means your resources are being used for Kingdom expansion. Your tithe is used for the advancement of the Kingdom of God.

Tithing activates divine interception. God gets to us before the enemy has had an opportunity to get us.

Tithing is a demonstration of being a faithful steward of the mysteries and resources of God.



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Dr Tawafadza A. Makoni is a seasoned theologian, dentist, business man, author and long serving senior pastor, currently leading Celebration Church in Johannesburg, South Africa.



## THEOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

RECONCILING THEOLOGY  
AND CITIZENSHIP

**KURAUONE MUTIMWII, IN  
MASVINGO, ZIMBABWE**

*Reverend Kurauone Mutimwii is a pastor with the Uniting Presbyterian Church, passionate ecumenist, in Masvingo.*

When one comes across a headline like this and wishes to initiate a discussion along it, one is tempted to wrestle with the task of unpacking terms like reconciling, Theology or Citizenship.

One aspect that is obvious is that we are trying to explore gaps that are there between the task of theology and the privilege of citizenship and make proposals as to how links and connections can be established to make sure there is an interrelationship.

From such a task, I would aim at building a thesis around establishing;

- What is the connection between Theology and citizenship?
- What are the characteristics of Citizenship that express their theology or view about God?
- How should theology play an integral part in the forming and shaping of our Citizenship both now and here after-now?

Indeed there is need to reconcile theology and citizenship.

Holistically on all basis at one point theology has hurt citizenship on its various expressions in the history of their contemporality. The opposite is also true that gaps and gulfs have been punctured along the history of their coexistence.

It has always been the task of theology to enrich citizenship with meaning and instil it with the stewardship responsibility over what surrounds it. It has been a theological task to keep fate at bay and establish certainty around hope, eternity and things beyond the physically comprehended world, the reality of the supernatural, the fact of deity power and the essence of life as we live it.

In response, citizenship would shape and align itself institutionally, communally, nationally or internationally in sync with values, hope, principles, behaviours, norms and entities as informed by theology.

We often hear statements such as where is the Church, where is God when people do this and that.

Maybe to make this task easier for some, let me start by addressing what is meant by these terms.

Reconciliation is a divine project. All things created came from God and was destined for God's glory. Sin alienated creation from God, its maker, thus evoking God's wrath. God was angry and wounded by the presence of sin, disobedience and rebellion the world He created for Himself in all terms we can say

creation was wounded and its glorious purpose distorted because of Sin and Evil.

God entered into a task of reconciling the world unto Himself by first dealing with his own wrath through Christ kenotic incarnation into the World and reconciling His own wound as Creator with the wound of the created World.

Theology has a task to live and proclaim the message of reconciliation and awaken the world that there is a space for the Creation in God, secured by Christ, and that space is called Citizenship, in which God can approach Creation again and Creation, through Christ is given access to approach God so that they become one enjoying the privilege of Zoe (the life of God).

Therefore, reconciling theology and Citizenship is more about undertaking to close gaps of hurt, animosity and alienation between God the Object for theology and Citizenry, the subjects of theology, converge them together in a new space in God where God rightfully becomes God of all creation.

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## THEOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

# RECONCILING THEOLOGY AND CITIZENSHIP

It also synthesize theology and Citizenship narrative of God as King and Lord of all to whom they subscribe their essence of being and relevance.

It undertakes to help creation as citizenship to discover and redesign its expression of its identity, purpose, reflection, representation, and reason of its existence. God is radiated into its existential memory and it is divinely empowered to realign itself to the immortal purpose of the eternal God.

When Creation focus on God the creator, then even their citizenship or membership to each other or coexistence becomes selfless, mutual and in healthy interdependent relationship to the glory of God.

## Theology

Migliore define theology as 'Faith seeking understanding'. It is the task of unpacking the concept about God and translating it into the life of the community so that they express it out as faith, hope; love in their relationships to themselves, each other, God and entire creation.

Faith that is seeking understanding goes in to a quest to uncover its surrounding and demystify those things that casts out fear.

In its narrow myopic selfish sense, citizenship has been defined to push a survival agenda of a creation cliques and seclusion of other members of the created order. This is because Creation without Christ fails to tap into the real source of abundant life of God and so it instead of opening itself up to God, it fiercely competes against itself and hurt its harmonious coexistence. That is where theology comes in to correct such distortions or detrimental perceptions and project God in good light

## Citizenship

This can mean bonafide membership to a state of someone or something, of being born or adopted to a given community or kingdom. It legitimizes one's claims to belonging, ownership, locality and natural nativity to a certain space and dispels a sense of alienhood, and strangerhood.

Citizenship is a right derived from the state of being

a citizen. Its conditioning and adaptation is naturalized and indigenized to that given space.

Citizenship from a theological point of view is inclusive of all creation and cannot be monopolized by humanity alone. We, in our created nature all claim equal ecological citizenship of this universe, and this earth and at all costs our needs must be accorded equitable attention.

Citizenship, from theological lenses can be perceived as interdependence of the created order. Different components of creation serve different purposes that are so interdependent to each other to such an extent that the moment we disturb that it will backfire for the rest of creation. Water, Gases, Animals, Plants, light, and heat are bonafide citizens of the geo space and their existence or purity cannot be compromised if survival is to be sustainable.

This is where the aspect of Stewardship is emphasized.

Theology also views Citizenship both as a right or privilege which can be experienced in both the physical and the spiritual realms. We are in a kingdom now and we will be in another Kingdom later when death translates us.

What are the critical issues that wedge apart and alienate citizenship from theology? If we only interrogate them, we would have started clearing the impediments that litter the space of theology and citizenship and open it up for co-existence.

The overarching theme of theology is the Revelation of God in the history of the Created Order and how He wants to ultimately wrap up this order back unto himself. He is the Alpha or Author and so shall he be the Finisher and Omega of everything that has been in existence.

Creation will never fully achieve meaning and belonging until it finds its citizenship in God, its maker and purporter.

The diction of Citizenship and the sense of membership has been historically dictated by political propinquity, geographical juxtapositions, social proximity and religious neighborliness.

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## THEOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

# RECONCILING THEOLOGY AND CITIZENSHIP

These are the plumages that have overshadowed the one greater aspect that must unite creation which is that it is simply an overflow of God's love. We squeeze ourselves to fit each other in as fellow Citizens on the basis of many things other than our common Creator.

It then becomes the task of Church and theology to continue projecting that God is the first and primary space of our citizenship because it is from Him that the created order was issued out. In God everything has its being.

Paul in Acts 17:24 spoke about God in this way, *"God, who made the world and everything in it, since He is Lord of heaven and earth, does not dwell in temples made with hands";*

*17:25, "Nor is He worshiped with men's hands, as though He needed anything, since He gives to all life, breath, and all things";*

*17:26, "And He has made from one blood every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth, and has determined their pre-appointed times and the boundaries of their dwellings",*

*17:27, "so that they should seek the Lord, in the hope that they might grope for Him and find Him, though He is not far from each one of us";*

*17:28, "for in Him we live and move and have our being, as also some of your own poets have said, 'For we are also His offspring.'"*

In view of that, we must also project that our Being in God will ultimately culminate in the Kingdom of Him where we will all be Citizens as Paul states in Philippians 3:19, "whose end is destruction, whose god is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame— who set their mind on earthly things", 3:20, "For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ", 3:21, "who will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body, according to the working by which He is able even to subdue all things to Himself".

The theological task must also deliberately undertake to project the aspect of good stewardship. God from the beginning of his interaction with mankind, demonstrated stewardship in that he placed mankind in a beautiful garden and instructed him to take care of it. He expected caring fellowship and responsible interdependence of each other.

Theology must strive to teach the world that citizenship which is true to God the Creator must abstain from greedy consumerism, geo poisoning, disruptive nature exploitation, and human survival competition so that there is a complementation between life and nature in sustainable existence.

Theology must labour to project the Christ Event as the center point of the reconciling ripple of God. In Christ, God was reconciling the World unto Himself so that the world can become of God and God become God of all creation.

In some way God was opening up space for his creation and giving it his identity just in the same way he gathered creation during the great deluge.

2 Corinthians 5:19, "that is, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them, and has committed to us the word of reconciliation",

5:20, "Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us: we implore you on Christ's behalf, be reconciled to God".

Colossians goes on to state in Christ all things created found dwelling, meaning and membership in God the Creator. Colossians 1:15, "He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation", 1:16, "For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him", 1:17, "And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist", 1:18, "And He is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things He may have the preeminence", 1:19, "For it pleased the Father that in Him all the fullness should dwell, 1:20, "and by Him to reconcile all things to Himself, by Him, whether things on earth or things in heaven, having made peace through the blood of His cross", 1:21, "And you, who once were alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now He has reconciled".

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## THEOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

# RECONCILING THEOLOGY AND CITIZENSHIP

When sin entered the world, the divine essence of citizenship was lost and alienation crept in. Creation was subjected into bondage of corruption and as Romans would say it will ultimately find full expression in Christ.

Romans; 8:19, "For the earnest expectation of the creation eagerly waits for the revealing of the sons of God, 8:20, 'For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it in hope; 8:21, 'because the creation itself also will be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God, 8:22, 'For we know that the whole creation groans and labors with birth pangs together until now'".

Theology that neglects the centrality of Christ is the appropriation of common citizenship of the world is likely to miss the real essence of Creation citizenship and citizenship that negates the centrality Christ become hollow in its existential essence.

Paul at one point evoked his citizenship to Rome in order to effect his right to public justice. He knew very well that if one was born Roman or adopted Roman or purchased Roman or redeemed Roman, automatically he would assume the privileges and rights of the Romans. The law only stood valid as long as the Romans were the rulers of the Empire. Now to be a citizen or member of the Roman Empire, it is no longer a prestigious undertaking because they are no longer in power. We have a kingdom of Christ that endures, in which all must find space and citizenship.

It is important for theology to preach against injustice, ecological injustice and dehumanization and speak for our equal statehood in God. In the Apocalypse, we read of how the lamb will graze alongside the Lion and the King Cobra playing with a Child because enmities and appetites of our fallen nature would have been subdued by the glorious power of divine citizenship.

We have seen that the litter in the space of theology and citizenship is primarily the distortion sedimented over history that emphasizes a citizenship that is monopolized by depraved human selfish cravings, racial exclusions, and societal creations. Those distortions will never allow Creation to realize its fullest potential of complimentary citizenship and as long as Theology is tailored to satiate these sectarian definitions of Citizenship then its scope of God is smoke-screened and the quest of creation for a holistic citizenship is far shortcoming.

The distortion is hurting in the sense that a certain part of creation has played God on another and robbed it of its right to existence or unnaturalized its course of ecological development.

There the task is not only of reconciling theology and citizenship but of building the theology of citizenship, reconciliation, or citizenship that has the theology of reconciliation and the citizenship with reconciling theology.

This is a deliberate attempt to harmonize the different in and outflows of this greater concept where God work is the theological revelation reconciling the citizenship of creation.



## CHURCH & DEVELOPMENT



**GODFREY SIMON MKOLO, IN  
AUSTRALIA**

# Understanding times: Utilizing available resources for development

*Godfrey Simon Mkoło is a pastor, passionate of Church and Development, facilitating some developmental work in Hwange, writing from Australia.*

Hello beloved reader, and welcome to Church and development. I have been getting some developmental inspiration from 1 Chronicles 12, which gives us the composition of men that came to build the army of King David. I am therefore giving us some qualities that stood out for me from the men;

**Understanding times** – (1 Chronicles 12: 32, NKJV), “...of the sons of Issachar who had understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do, their chiefs were two hundred; and all their brethren were at their command...”

This scripture is loaded with so much substance that we can draw from. The sons of Issachar had the privilege and honour of directing and showing things which Israel needed to do so that they can have victory.

Planning and administration were their duty. While each one was well trained in their area of expertise, some could use the sling, bows and arrows, swords left and right and some could cross the Jordan River even though flooded. Some of them were swift as a gazelle and faces as fierce as that of lions but still they needed direction on when to take action.

We are living in a time when we need men and women of the ability of the sons of Issachar if we are to succeed in

all areas of the Church. The church is equipped with men and women gifted in various areas and

have the ability to build the work and lead the church to victory. I believe the sons of Issachar were gifted with wisdom, understanding and a spirit of discernment.

That ability was given to them by God. I encourage us to identify such men and women among us who are full of the Holy Spirit, who love God and have a passion to advance God's Kingdom. People who are full of wisdom, understanding, humble and have a discerning Spirit to direct and show us what to do and when to do it, to equip and advance the church.

We need to cultivate a culture of people that will take the church from dependence to independence. Those who can teach prayer and also educate us to work with our hands.

Let us visualise where the church will be in five years with the people God has entrusted us. What kind of believers will walk out of those church buildings? There is so much I can say but I will reserve that for my next writings.

What time is it that needs to be done to advance God's people with all the gifts God has given us? May those with the same Spirit of the Sons of Issachar arise and give direction as to what the church should do when to do it and how to do it in times like these.

God is soon opening the flood gates of heaven and there is rain coming. How are we going to take advantage of this season to benefit from it? Any church in rural areas with its members can have a field members who can give their tithing in form of time and work in the church fields, those with tractors, ox-driven ploughs and manual hoes can give their service. Some of the offerings can be used to buy seeds and other inputs. If animals are given in form of tithing why not breed or do fattening, taking advantage of the abundance of grass or fresh leaves.

What I just mentioned is another method of taking advantage of the time we are entering in. The products can be sold and the church will have income to meet their needs of advancing God's Kingdom.

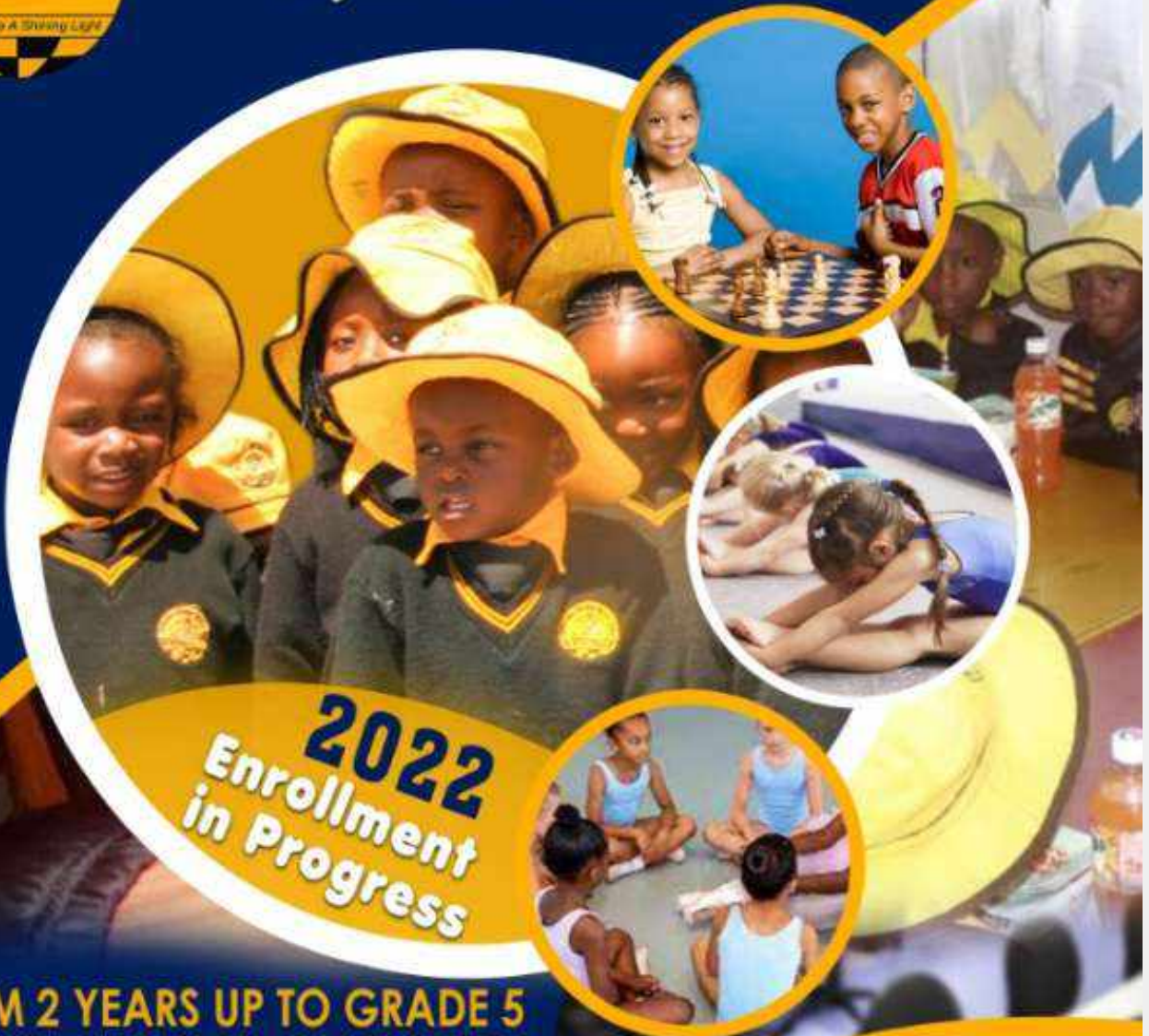
May men and women filled with the same Spirit of the Sons of Issachar arise and take their place to show and guide the church into appropriate action.

**Do not miss the next edition.**



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## RELATIONSHIPS &amp; MARRIAGE

THE JOURNEY OF LOVE FROM COURTSHIP  
TO MARRIAGE

**PASTOR LINDA DHLIWAYO, IN  
HARARE, ZIMBABWE**

By the grace of God I am a pastor and a wife to Lawrence Dhlwayo who is also a pastor. We have two children named Shammah and Juanita.

We have been married for close to twenty years, and our children are now teenagers.

When I first met Lawrence, I didn't give him a second thought about whether he could be my future husband or not.

He was a friend to my cousin's fiancée, so we met through them. Little did I know that he already knew a lot about me, after having seen me on a photograph with my cousin.

At that time I was in a relationship with another guy, which, then, I believed was made

in heaven.

Eventually it turned out that the guy I was dating was a pretender, and was not a true Christian at all. At the counsel of my pastor subsequently ended the relationship.

Oh how I cried my heart out for weeks after. It appeared that I had been in love wholeheartedly. I must confess that such strong feelings are not what makes a marriage.

I eventually recovered from the heartbreak and moved on with my life. It should be remarked that it is so easy to move on if you have not allowed a partner to touch you. So, be wise.

What is essential is the fear of the Lord. Before I entered into courtship again, my friends and I fasted for twenty-one days about our life partners. I mention this because at the end

*Pastor Linda Dhlwayo currently pastors United Denominations Highfield branch, which originated from Lighthouse Group of churches founded by Bishop Dag Heward Mills. She is the national director of Books Ministry under the same organisation where she holds Loyalty Book Conferences and ministers to pastors and church leaders. She is the incumbent provincial chairperson of EFZ Women's Desk for Harare – Chitungwiza. She is a graduate of Anagkazo Bible Seminary, Ghana; holds BSc Hons degree in Science Education, founder and principal of Lighthouse Christian Mission School.*



of the fast that is when what I really needed became clear to me.

I needed someone who really loved God to the point of serving Him as a pastor. Knowing who I am and what I wanted for myself became a guide before entering into any relationship. This seems to be the biggest challenge facing the young people today, especially the ladies. Looking for the kind of a person to marry.

One must establish the fact that I am complete in Christ Jesus from the time I got born again. Another person cannot complete you. I am glad to say that all my three friends and I are stable in our marriages with partners who fear God.



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## RELATIONSHIPS &amp; MARRIAGE

THE JOURNEY OF LOVE FROM COURTSHIP  
TO MARRIAGE

Now, the first time I met my husband, he said to me, “I love you and I want to marry you”. I’m sure you are as shocked as I was to hear that from a total stranger. But as it came to be, I realised that he actually meant what he said. I got to learn later on that this is one of the signs to look out for in a partner, early in the process of courtship. Someone who feels and expresses their intention to marry early.

Even though I did not accept him day one, we became friends and later on developed the relationship.

When that happened, I was very sure that Larry was my husband to be, and we could have married on that day. This was because he knew he had found what he wanted, and so did I. This was made possible by seeking the face of God, as well as spending time together and talking as friends.

Can you talk about Christ in your relationship?

I found friendship to be helpful for a good marriage. Lifelong love can be realized when two people are not afraid to share anything and everything about themselves, especially their

norms and values while placing God at the centre of all conversations.

One should get careful with someone who has nothing to say about God. It is through my walk with my friend Lawrence that I learnt that he really loved God and deep down his heart was a passion to do more for Him, although he was more of a quiet person than me.

It helped me to note how my partner expressed himself – both through words and body language. I observed that whatever we express and see on each other usually indicates what we eventually experience in the marriage.

What we observe on each other before marriage should keep two asking if they will be able to live with it.

For me, I did not realise that I did most of the talking than him, only to realise that I had married a very quiet person. It was a challenge for me in the early days of my marriage. As is said, opposites attract, I have seen for myself that it is very true. I personally feel that what was also most important in my journey from courtship to marriage was the presence of



counsel from our pastors. We were in different churches, but my beloved respected the procedure from my church so we would go for counsel very often.

The Bible says in the multitude of counsel, there is safety. It is a grave mistake to think that the love you have for each other will be enough to sustain a marriage, based on how you feel for each other.

Feelings come and go. One of my mentors always says that “love is blind but neighbours are not”. This means that when you are in love, you may not be able to see certain things about your partner, especially their weaknesses which may need serious consideration before committing yourself to marriage.

However, outsiders may be in a better position to help you see those things. So counsel brings to light important



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## RELATIONSHIPS &amp; MARRIAGE

# THE JOURNEY OF LOVE FROM COURTSHIP TO MARRIAGE



things that you would not otherwise even know about before you are able to ponder over them.

Counsel also brought accountability in my relationship. We were taught the dos and don'ts, for example, sexual intimacy was one of the don'ts.

When in love, it is important to abstain from sexual intimacy before marriage. The Bible is clear on that. It is only through wise and Godly counsel that you will be able to achieve that because most people start out on that road unaware, then end up in jeopardy, which then mares a good relationship.

Respecting each other until holy matrimony enhances excitement at the honeymoon and it will go all the way into the marriage life. Any past relationships must be discussed during courtships to avoid surprise attacks.

In my case, the day I went to introduce my partner to my family was the exact time my former boyfriend decided to make a telephone call. In those days mobile calls were not as common as they are today, so it was not something to be ignored.

By God's grace, it did not spoil my relationship because it was easier to explain since my beloved knew about him. The Bible talks about the man and his wife being naked before each other and not being ashamed. This simply means openness in every crucial area including finances, relations with extended family, our backgrounds and many others. This openness must start during courtship. Not saying certain things is as good as lying.

One of the things that made me respect my beloved more was that he told me about his child whom he had from a past relationship while we were still friends. I knew from the onset that I might end up being a stepmother, and my heart was prepared for it.

It is a great responsibility for someone who will become a part of child's life, therefore it is unfair for them to find themselves in the situation uninformed. So for both ladies and gents you must tell the truth about such issues.

Finally, I acquired the knowledge about temperaments during courtship, which I knew nothing about before. This is a major topic that needs to be discussed separately, but it makes people understand each other's character and personality. It helped me to merge with my husband to be and continues to be a reference point on how we relate to each other.

I recommend couples to read a book titled 'Model Marriage' authored by Bishop Dag Heward Mills and 'Spirit Controlled Temperaments' by Tim and Beverley LaHaye. My husband and I dated for 10 months before getting married. We had intended to marry just three months into the courtship because we were sure about it. I'm still grateful to God that I have Larry as my husband today. Praise the Lord!





**RELATIONSHIPS & MARRIAGE**

# TILL DEATH DO US PART: STRENGTHENING MARRIAGE TODAY



**PASTOR CLEOPAS TAGUMA NEUSO,  
IN HARARE, ZIMBABWE**

*Cleopas Taguma Neuso is a pastor, professional counselor, and lecturer from the Baptist Convention of Zimbabwe. He is the founder and director of Tabgha Foundation which cares for the less privileged and vulnerable people in the society. For more information about his philanthropic work please visit <http://www.tbghafoundation.org/>*

Marriage is a God-ordained union and sacred institution. It should be highly honored and respected by all, but this is contrary to what is happening on the ground.

The writer of Hebrews says, *"Marriage should be honored by all, and the marriage bed kept pure, for God will judge the adulterer and all the sexually immoral"* (Hebrews 13:4).

I wish this could be emphasized during premarital counseling and at wedding ceremonies. The rate at which people are divorcing is so astonishing and the major contributing factor is infidelity which some attribute to lack of love in the marriage.

Things being equal, marriage should be a lifetime decision and commitment. God hates divorce. No matter what challenges you are currently going through in your marriage, take note of this verse seriously, *"For the Lord God of Israel says that he hates divorce, for it covers one's garment with violence, says the Lord of hosts, therefore take heed to your spirit, that you do not deal treacherously"* (Malachi 2:16).

In Matthew 19:1-9, Jesus Christ taught that divorce is contrary to the will of God and His intention was that marriage last a lifetime. Jesus Christ acknowledged that in the case of adultery, divorce may be a sad necessity when one partner refuses to stop his or her unfaithfulness.

This is not the Bible's last word on divorce. However, Paul suggested another possible scenario for divorce: when a believer is deserted by unbelieving spouse (1 Corinthians 7:15). Since God's intention is that marriage should be for life, this provides good reason to make every reasonable effort to achieve restoration and forgiveness in marriage.

Let me now emphasize on what I believe should strengthen today's marriages. Marriages should be strengthened by love and then the rest of other factors will fall in place. Keech (1984) defined love as active concern for the life and growth of the person we love. Some couples are no longer drawn to each other because of love but because of other factors that have got nothing to do with love and that's a recipe for divorce.

There is no longer love in most

marriages today. Some couples are just staying together for the sake of kids, financial benefits or just marital status. The Word of God emphasizes that, *"Wives, submit yourselves to your own husbands as you do to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the Savior. Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit to their husbands in everything. Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her ... In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. ... For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh.... However, each one of you also must love his wife as he loves himself, and the wife must respect her husband"* (Ephesians 5:22-25, 28, 31, 33).

From the definition of Keech, love involves physical attraction, mutual expectations and personal intentions. Love is deep, unselfish, and caring that involves a deep respect for the one who is loved.

**CONTINUED ON THE NEXT PAGE**



## RELATIONSHIPS &amp; MARRIAGE

# TILL DEATH DO US PART: STRENGTHENING MARRIAGE TODAY

With this in mind, how many couples are respecting and honoring each other in their “holy matrimonial?” Let me help those who may be struggling with the basic principles of love. I am going to focus on four aspects of love which I believe if well understood and taken care of seriously, then most of the modern day marriages will stand the test of time:

**1.Action speaks louder than verbal promises of love and devotion** that couples say when they are joined together in marriage. Love is action, when did you last surprise your spouse with a present or gift? Those gifts don't have to be something big or expensive. What counts most is the love behind the gesture. Love is not love until you give it away to your partner. In other words, in a relationship ensure that each other's needs are fulfilled. But be aware that, with time, people change and so do their needs. Perhaps this explains why some couples fall out of love with one another and eventually divorce or someone end up having an extra marital affair. Couples need to consciously review one another's needs and work towards helping one another to have their needs fulfilled.

**2.Love requires a reciprocal investment** from both parties. How many couples are investing into their marriages so that they can enjoy the dividends? One aspect that needs to be invested into your marriage is PRAYER. The devil is after destabilizing marriages. You can't expect the best out of your marriage when you are not putting an effort to make

it interesting and sustainable. It's very difficult to ensure that partners invest equally in marriages. The idea is to make sure that each spouse is capable of making an investment in the marriage that he or she is capable of making and which fulfills the partner's needs. Therefore take time to know each other as spouses. Both partners should contribute positive actions and/or make some sacrifices in their marriages. As a spouse are you sacrificing for your marriage?

**3.Love needs effective management.** Each person is unique, and sees things from his or her own perspective, when in marriage, couples have to develop explicit rules to ensure that the marriage remains mutually satisfying. These rules are often linked to values such as amount of independence, money issues, leisure time activities, nature of communication and so forth. One thing that needs proper management in marriage is social media. A number of marriages have collapsed because of social media, especially WhatsApp and Facebook. Instead of couples bonding and showing affection to each other, most of their time is spent on social media. Without effective management of the marriage, chances of it collapsing are high hence the high rate of divorce cases.

**4.The goal in marriage is to be just reasonably content and hoping for the best.** Marriages are unique, complicated and demanding. In view of this, the goal for couples should be “to be just reasonably content.” Each partner should take stock of the

partner's strengths and weaknesses and weigh these up to see if they can be tolerated without resentment. To remain in an unsatisfying marriage will result in one or both partners falling out of love and eventually divorce. Like I mentioned earlier on, each marriage is unique and it should be treated like that. No size fits all. No best practice approach. Adopt the best fit approach for your marriage. Don't try to be like the next door couple. You don't know the investment they have put into their marriage to be where they are or how they are managing their marriage.

In conclusion, be aware that marriage is one of the institutions that is at the heart of God. Because of that the devil is after destabilizing marriages by all means. Couples should be always alert and resist the devil as pointed out here, “Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you” (James 4:7). You need to keep on submitting your marriage before God and praying for the leadership of Holy Spirit.



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## SOCIAL LIFE

## REMAIN RESOLUTE IN ADVERSITY



**SIMPLISIO KOMBONI, IN GWERU,  
ZIMBABWE**

*Simplisio Mukondo Komboni is a police officer and one of the African Apostolic church leaders under Arch-bishop Paul Mwazha. He also writes novels, short stories and poems.*

Life is not a bag of roses. Rather, it is full of ups and downs! Sometimes, you enjoy, sometimes you shed tears of shame.

It is incredibly cumbersome to calculate an answer as to why life is not straight forwardly predictable. No wonder there are regrets, near-misses, shocks, set-backs and drawbacks.

As human beings under the sun, we are exposed to quite a number of adversities. Some of them are really an uphill task to contain. Across the orb, people are met with various obstacles which are not easy to maneuver. They include poverty, famines, wars, diseases, infidelity and divorce, just to name but a few. One such example is the deadly coronavirus

which has been wreaking havoc, of late.

Millions of people perished and some are still recuperating from the deadly pandemic. Sad memories of how devastating this novel virus was, when it ravaged our communities, are still lingering painfully in our minds.

Such is life. It is not easy. For as long as we are still alive, we go through some rough patches of life. It's not always that we find gold on the silver platter. One author wrote that the rough sea produces a good sailor. Essentially, it is the difficult environment that shapes and hardens one into a hard-core survivor, provided they remain resolute in adversity.

Having worked in

the counselling office for a number of years, I have seen quite a number of people shed torrential tears of sorrow. Chief amongst their complaints is infidelity. Indeed, people are not faithful these days. They cheat. Quickly becoming common nowadays is adultery. People are committing adultery at an alarming rate. It seems as though nobody is caring about their marriages any more.

What am I saying? Emphasis is not about adultery, per se. It is about endurance when problems like these come. How you solve your problems, mind your business and sustain the mounting pressure is what we call remaining resolute in adversity.

Champions are born out of contention! You cannot be a hero from scratch. You have to be resilient, rigid and determined.

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## SOCIAL LIFE

## REMAIN RESOLUTE IN ADVERSITY

Life is how you make it.

They say a coward dies many times before his actual death. Now, listen. Cowards have no place in this modern world where civilization was enhanced through education and technology. Biblically, John, the Revelator wrote, and I quote, "But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death." (Rev 21:8 KJV).

From the above quote, it is the fear that I want to tackle here. What it simply means is that, for one to avoid the lake of fire, they have to be bold and stand firm against fear. One has to conquer fear (which is the adversary here) if he wants to see the Lord. If you don't remain firm against fear, then automatically you are a candidate of hell fire. There are so many verses in the Bible which talk about fear, anyway.

Beloved reader, life will never be the same. We are created differently, so is our way of life. The problem most people have is accepting bad advice from failed examples. There is no need for us to accept failure in life, just because our friends did the same.

We should learn to be strong, both physically and mentally. Let us copy from others what is good and not their inabilities. Learning from others remains key in all our endeavors. Let's not be quick to surrender. If at first you fail, try again. If the number you have dialed is not reachable, please try again later.

We should pluck a leaf from soccer players. I like what they do. They are good examples of people who show character and patience. In soccer they say it is not over until it's absolutely over. You should not relax before scoring an insurance goal because anything can happen. Two

goals can be scored against you in less than a minute, and you lose the game like that. Hence players fight hard, protecting their advantage, till the last whistle, knowing that a draw or loss can be forced. The pain of losing the game at the final death is so excruciating one cannot bear it.

My friend, it's solely you who knows better how to manage your life. You should not rest on your laurels expecting things to tick in your favor. Surrounding you is the hostile environment where everything seems like plotting your great downfall. Economically, things are bad. Politically, nations are struggling. Socially, matrimonially and religiously, people have got their adversities. We have enemies who hate us for several reasons, the reason being that nobody wants to see you prosper. Some of your foes have long been wishing you dead.

Probably, your marriage is off the track right now, as I am speaking. May be, it is your financial situation—you're struggling to pay your rentals, bills, school fees and other obligations. Perhaps, you feel neglected, the whole system rejected you and you look like a nonentity. Possibly, you dismally failed to achieve your set goals and you are feeling like: Hey, it was so near, how did I fail this time around, how can I break the jinx, and so forth. My word to you is, do not give up. There is still another chance to improve. You still have got time to do corrections. Mistakes are common and epicene in life. It is equally important to learn from such mistakes so that you rectify them and do well.

Take your time. Do not make hurried, uninformed decisions. Relax your mind and plan your next move if the first one fails. Yes, it may be what it is today, but I urge you to go an extra mile! God bless you!

## CHURCH &amp; ECONOMICS

# SUSTAINING PASTORAL MINISTRY - RETHINKING TENT-MAKING



**PASTOR DANIEL CHIWEDA, IN  
HARARE, ZIMBABWE**

*Pastor Daniel Chiweda ministers with the Assemblies of God church. He is currently serving Seke North Assembly. He is also a consultant in the plastics field.*

(Mathew 25:15, "And unto one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one; to every man according to his several ability; and straightway took his journey").

It is remarkable to note that God gave everyone talents according to their ability. As such, nobody can stand and accuse Him of not having received anything.

Pastors are not excluded in this universal plan of God. Starting right from your calling, God gave each one something and made out callings different according to our capabilities. The calling for everyone therefore, is to apply the talents as provided by the master.

It is discernible that everyone was born to solve a certain problem. The size of the problem you're solving determines the seat you're allocated in this journey of life. Your remuneration is directly proportional to the impact

of your solution to the equation of life.

All people – Christians and non-Christian, are inherently selfish. They decide your worth, purely based on how much they can benefit from your service.

A Pastor, therefore first and foremost, must be careful of the purpose of the pulpit which they have been given as their first tent.

### **The Pastor therefore has two important tasks;**

- 1) To lead the people in worshipping God
  - 2) To make the God of the Bible become an absolute reality that impacts the life of believers.
- How can you threaten people of hell, if they are already living in hell on earth? Thus the pulpit, must transform the ordinary lives of people to experience heaven on earth. That is the first tent of the ministry. Use your pulpit to solve the problems of the people, heal the sick, fix broken

marriages, restore father and sons and mentor the youth.

### **How can you measure the impact of your pulpit?**

- 1) How many people in your congregation consult you before making life changing decisions?
- 2) Do your congregants refer others who have problems to come to you for help?
- 3) How many of your congregants associate their success to your pulpit?
- 4) What's the impact of your church to the community in which you operate?
- 5) Are you available for weddings, funerals, graduation, birthday celebrations of congregants?

Your congregation is not mostly interested in the correctness of your theology than its impact on their lives. Those who want to produce theologians out of their congregation, will soon find themselves with very few students, whose visit to the church is to inquire on the interpretation of last week's sermon, instead of worshipping of God, or finding solutions to their problems.

This means the Pastor has a responsibility to increase his skill-set according to the ability given by the Maker. It is also crucial to ask questions such as; how many books a pastor read? How wide is his/her network, both with other pastors and with the world?

Money is with the people according to Luke 6:38, "*man shall add to your bosom*". Notice that it doesn't say God will give you money. The money is with the people. In order to increase streams of income, a pastor has

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## CHURCH &amp; ECONOMICS

# SUSTAINING PASTORAL MINISTRY - RETHINKING TENT-MAKING

the responsibility to take advantage of the talents at their disposal. Many are called into ministry after having attained a certain levels of education. But all this is quickly thrown out of the windows in pursuit of the calling of God. And who could falter such a noble desire? But in as much Paul was a tent maker, Peter was a fisherman. Peter in John 21, tried to go back to fishing and the result was a lot of questions from the Lord. Peter do you love me, three times and the admonishment. Feed my flocks. Paul on the other hand made tents during the night and preached the gospel during the day. Some of us will have to tend the sheep fulltime and some will have to make tents. The important thing is that he who gave talents, gave according to our abilities. And the same God who decided to give these abilities is the same who gave the talents.

The challenge of pastors is therefore is aligning the talents with their abilities. If you are educated, take advantage of that talent and use it as a source of solving problems.

The challenge has always been that when we think of tent-making, we think of a vegetable garden or a fowl run. It is God who gave you that skill set, and there's no shame in the doctor seeing patients during the day and preaching at the crusade at night.

Whatever you are doing wherever you are, your streams of income are directly proportional to the problems you are solving. And who has the biggest problem to solve, if it is not the pastor, who solves the world's most difficult problem.

The human race cannot be locked up by the most sophisticated computer program, neither can the soul of man be exposed by the biggest and fastest microscope. Yet only the pastor through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, tame that soul and bring it to its knees.

The depravity of the human soul is still the greatest problem of the world.

The Lord Jesus said, "the labourer is worth his hire"



## LIFE SKILLS &amp; DEVELOPMENT

# MANAGING THE PAINS AND GAINS OF ADULTHOOD



**DR. FREDERICK KASESE, IN  
MASVINGO, ZIMBABWE**

Adulthood can be described as the period in every human life in which a person is under complete maturity of physical and intellectual well-being.

The adult stage is the period of every human being when parental control is lost and everyone is assigned their responsibilities. In legal terms, the adulthood stage is the time in human life when one reaches the major age of becoming self-reliant and decisive. Mature adulthood also indicates the development of psychological and sexual maturity. It is the phase when an individual learns to make decisions and live an independent life. Most individuals start families of their own during this time. This is the time in the life of every individual when a single action or decision can have a huge impact on

his/her life and society at large. *"When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I gave up childish ways. For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I have been fully known."*

There are certain things that only children do. Their youthfulness, and their inability to discern between what's good at a certain time and what is not, is something that is acceptable in a child, because the Bible tells us that foolishness is bound in the heart of a child (Proverbs 22:15).

But when we are adults, we are supposed to have a developed common sense *"to discern both good and evil"* (Hebrews 5:14); generally, we should know what is right in practical situations.

It therefore an unassailable fact that during adulthood, one has to sacrifice and endure much to transition from childhood to adulthood.

You have to go through a lot of pain, especially moral pain to maintain the gains of adulthood. God delights in his own moral character, which is supremely good, unchanging, and eternal. His moral standards for human beings flow from his moral character,

hence we are called upon to put into practice these standards.

- God is love, so he commands us to love (1 John 4:19).
- He is holy, and he commands us to be holy (Peter 1:15).
- He is merciful, and he commands us to be merciful (Luke 6:36).
- He is truthful, and he commands us not to bear false witness (Titus 1:2; Exodus 20:16).

God's moral character and the historical fact that he has given us moral commands provide the basis for acceptable character which we should possess in our adulthood. Pain which comes from choosing to do what is right no matter the value of the gain is often a vehicle for spiritual growth which we should embrace as training in our adult life. Hebrews 12:7, 11 says; *"Endure hardship as discipline. No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it"*.

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## LIFE SKILLS &amp; DEVELOPMENT

## MANAGING THE PAINS AND GAINS OF ADULTHOOD



You will never fully appreciate anything you did not work for. Things that are handed to us or acquired easily create a wrong value system in our mind.

**Adulthood dictates the following;**

- Having an understanding of what you believe in and stand for guided by your personal values which are the roadmap that guides you through life. These are the principles and ideas that drive your decisions and goals. When your values align with the choices you make in daily life, you feel more confident.
- Willingness to go through hardships and glean a lesson from them.
- Ability to weigh the pros and cons of a situation, take time to ponder their options. Do not rush decisions, but also don't delay making a choice either and move forward with confidence once the choice has been made.
- Willingness to seek the advice of those around them without allowing others to cloud their own judgment. In the end, making a decision alone based on careful consideration.
- Having self-control and avoiding ways that you later regret.
- Open-minded and ability to see the humanity in others, even when they look or think differently.
- Relationships
  - with others defined by clear set boundaries.
  - Not playing games when it comes to matters of the heart.
  - Accountable to yourself and to others. If you make a promise to someone, follow through with it. If you set a goal, make a daily effort towards reaching it.
  - Being a person of integrity who is trustworthy.

Some people might think that pain only happens to bad people, but in truth, it happens to every person who wants to make a difference in this world. That is why you have to realise that in your adulthood, nothing is going to present itself to you on a silver platter. You need to allow yourself to go through a process of transitioning from adolescence to adulthood. And if that means going through some pain, it does not matter, for if you allow yourself to go through the processes you will definitely get some gain out of it.



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**HEART2HEART**  
*To have and to hold...*

## Heart | Heart 2 have & to hold

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## HEALTH EDUCATION

# UNDERSTANDING DENTAL HEALTH: AN INTRODUCTION



CYNTHIA XOLISWA APRIL, IN  
THE MIDDLE EAST

*Cynthia Xoliswa April is a Zimbabwean qualified dental therapist. She is currently working in the Middle East, and can be contacted through [musuthu@yahoo.com](mailto:musuthu@yahoo.com)*

It is important to have a routine dental checkup. That way, we can prevent and detect dental diseases early.

More-so, bad breath can be reduced by routine dental hygiene visits, which also helps in removing plaque and calculus.

When there is reduced plaque and calculus, our gums are healthy and there's reduced gum disease.

Routine dental checkups help in early detection of any underlying abnormalities in the mouth and oral cancerous lesions.

If our children are introduced to early routine dental check ups it helps in altering bad habits like thumb sucking and mouth breathing.

When one is dentally healthy, it gives one good self-esteem and overall well-being because we use our mouths for eating and

drinking; talking; smiling and laughing and taking medication.

How to observe dental hygiene

Brush your mouth twice a day at least for 2 minutes...in the morning and last thing before you go to bed, using a fluoridated tooth paste of your choice. In young children it allows remineralization of the enamel.

Floss every day, to remove the debris and plaque present between the teeth.

If you can afford, rinse with a mouthwash. Some mouthwashes control plaque formation around the teeth and gumline and some provide a fresh breath.

## Four steps for proper brushing technique

- 1) Get the right angle (tilt the brush at a 45 degree angle)
- 2) Get the motion gently moving the toothbrush up and down or in small circles or short back and forth.
- 3) Brush all surfaces of the teeth; inside, outside, top and in between.
- 4) Don't forget to brush the tongue, loads of bacteria live on the tongue and inside the cheeks

What is your responsibility after a dental check-up?

It is essential to take proper care of your teeth and gums by following regular oral hygiene practices.



**LEGAL MATTERS**

# WILL WRITING AND FAMILY TRUSTS



**ADVOCATE CHIPO  
MAHLANGU, IN HARARE,  
ZIMBABWE**

*Chipo is a practicing Attorney, Conveyancer and Notary Public registered with the Law Society of Zimbabwe with vast experience in dealing with Commercial Law, Family Law, Constitutional Law and Property Law matters. She is also presently a Trustee of the Law Society of Zimbabwe Compensation Fund. Chipo is a registered Estate Administrator with the Council of Estate Administrators and Insolvency Practitioners of Zimbabwe.*

*She can be contacted on +263 733 840 350/+263 776 359 635 or email: cmahlangu@rmattorneys.co.zw or chipo.mahlangu@yahoo.com*

*The information set above is by way of guidance. Specific advice should be sought in all cases.*

## 1. Background

Death is never a welcome development but it is inevitable nevertheless. Acknowledging that death is real and inevitable is not failure or lack of faith but victory and pragmatism. It gives one the opportunity to think and plan objectively for the future.

A discussion on Estate Planning shall be done hereunder in terms of Will Writing and Family Trusts.

## 2. Wills and will writing

### 2.1. What is a Will?

A Will in simple terms is a legal document that specifies who gets the property if a person dies. It can only be recognized as such if it satisfies the requirements set by the law. This testamentary act must be done freely and voluntarily by the testator without the use of any duress or undue influence.

### 2.2. Testate and Intestate Succession

Legally there is no obligation on a person to leave a will behind if he or she dies. A person who dies without leaving a will is said to have died intestate and laws governing intestate succession will govern this particular matter. If one dies after having executed a will, they are said to have died testate. The problem with intestate succession is that it does not afford you the opportunity to have the people you wanted inherit your property and it takes a great deal of time in terms of procedure compared to testate succession.

#### Disadvantages of intestate succession

(i) Greed on the part of the deceased's relatives resulting in spouses and children suffering.

(ii) Many families have been split as a result of succession disputes and other people have actually died as a result of such.

(iii) Minor children are at great disadvantage if the person appointed to be the guardian is inconsiderate and his powers not clearly defined.

(iv) The welfare of children most of the time is likely to be sacrificed at the altar of greed and the deceased in his or her grave can do virtually nothing.

#### Advantages of testate succession

(i) Enables you to appoint the person you want to be the guardian of your children and you will define his or her powers in your will.

(ii) You can provide for the welfare of your children, educationally, socially,

CONTINUED ON THE NEXT PAGE



## LEGAL MATTERS

# WILL WRITING AND FAMILY TRUSTS

economically among other things.

(iii) The life for the survivors should not drastically change when you pass on thus the need to make adequate preparation now.

## 2.3. Legal Issues

(i) A will is an important legal document thus there is need for greater care and clarity so that wishes of the testator will be clearly seen from the document itself.

(ii) The will therefore has to conform to set standards in terms of the law if the contents are to be enforced.

(iii) A will that will be deemed valid is one that adheres to the requirements stated in the Wills Act and the Common law.

(iv) Once a Will has been written and executed properly in terms of the law it becomes binding.

## 2.4. Who can write a Will?

**2.4.1.** Any person who is 16 and above is competent to write a will.

**2.4.2.** Greater clarity is called for as there would be no person to clarify your will when you die and also the fact that courts respect what is called freedom of testation that is the wishes

of the testator. The courts do not usually want to appear as if they are making a will on behalf of a person by being greatly involved in the interpretation of a person's will.

**2.4.3.** It is common in modern times to engage the services of a lawyer particularly if your estate is quite big and complex issues are involved. Why?

- You enjoy a great deal of professionalism in the manner that your will is written.
- Complexities in the will are reduced.
- - Minimises chances of the will being disregarded as legally defective.

## 2.5. Disposing of Property by Will in a marriage set up

**2.5.1.** The Wills Act does not require a husband or wife to bequeath his or her property to the surviving spouse. A valid will cannot be set aside because one thinks that the testator ought to have bequeathed his or her property to the surviving spouse.

**2.5.2.** The right of every person to freely dispose of his

or her property is a fundamental right for every person regardless of gender enshrined in section 71(2) of the Constitution.

**2.5.3.** One may even give his or her property to any other person they are not married to under a Will.

## 2.6. Confirmation

- A will must be lodged with the Master of the High Court in Harare or Bulawayo.
- If not, upon your death, the Executor must register that will with the Master.

## 3. Family trusts and their formation

While a Will is one of the methods which a person can use to protect his assets from falling into wrong hands in the event of one's death, another method is formation of family trusts.

### 3.1. What is a Family Trust?

A Family Trust is a legal persona or entity and is run by trustees. The Trust is created by a founder who is known as the Donor, Founder or Settler. The Founder donates property to a trust or settles for a Trust. The Trust is usually named after the Founder e.g. The C. Mahlangu Family Trust or The Chenai Moyo Family Trust. In a Family

CONTINUED ON THE NEXT PAGE

## LEGAL MATTERS

# WILL WRITING AND FAMILY TRUSTS



Trust the beneficiaries are usually the immediate family members of the founder e.g. the spouse or the children.

## 3.2. Objects of a Trust

- The objects of the trust are to vest specified assets (both movable and immovable assets) in the name of trustees or administrator for administration in accordance with the formalities of the law it is created.
- There are many forms of vesting the property in the hands of the trustees. A classic example is where vesting of the assets can be in terms of a will.
- The will may provide as follows: "In the event of my death, I want my property to be vested in a Trust which is going to be administered by Tom Banda as the Trustee."
- It is also possible to vest property in the Trust by means of a contract or an ante nuptial contract. An ante nuptial contract is an agreement which is entered into by two parties before entering marriage to govern their proprietary rights after marriage.
- A donation can also be made to a Trust.
- The objects of a Trust must be lawful. They must not run fowl of public policy or perpetrate criminal activities.

## 3.3. Characteristics of a Family Trust

- Once formed, a Family Trust attains semi-judicial personality. This means that it is recognized by the law as an entity with full powers to own property.
- A Family Trust has a distinct legal personality which is independent of the trustees who run it. If the family Trust involves immovable assets, then it has to be registered in the Deeds registry Offices in Harare or Bulawayo. In creating a Family Trust, the founder will donate the assets to the Trust.

## LIFE SKILLS &amp; DEVELOPMENT

## PURSUING VISION IN UNCERTAIN TIMES



**PASTOR GERALD CHIMWANDA, IN  
CHIPINGE, ZIMBABWE**

*Pastor Gerald Chimwanda is a pastor with the Alliance church in Zimbabwe. He is currently pastoring Alliance church branch in Chipinge, Zimbabwe.*

Life, and events we face can put us in a position where we doubt our assignment on earth. Today the Covid-19 pandemic has brought us into uncertain times which leave us wondering if we should drop our visions or carry on.

Here are few tips that can help us to keep on pursuing our visions in times of uncertainties.

### 1. Believe in your vision

Your vision is your identity. You are your vision. Believing in your vision is believing in yourself. You must be sold out to your vision to the point of willing to do whatever it takes. When you believe in your vision, anything else that stands in the way is minor compared to the size of your vision.

### 2. Hold on to faith in God

In an uncertain season, in an ever changing environment, one thing remains constant and certain – God's faithfulness. We cannot proceed in this life without believing in a higher power. If you do that, life and its challenges will be insurmountable. God is the only constant in changing times. We have to keep holding on to him. Remember his word, "...he that started a good work in you is faithful..." (Philippians 1:6). Your vision is God-inspired and he is there to see you through all seasons and situations until the vision manifests.

### 3. Slow down but don't stop

You don't give up on the vision because of uncertainty. You may have to re-strategize but always targeting and working on the vision. In an uncertain economy, assess how your pursuit of vision is affected. Maybe you have to downsize on your stock if it was a business, do so. Maybe

you have to close shop and operate from home, do so with pride. Sometimes you may have to downsize on time dedicated to the vision and do something else that will put food on your table. Whatever you have to do, do it because one way or the other it will take you steps closer to the vision. Many had to move their businesses from physical locations to the internet because of lockdown. If that's what is required of the situation, do it. If you are a musician and you have to find a job, you are not giving up on your vision but you have simply taken another route towards your vision.

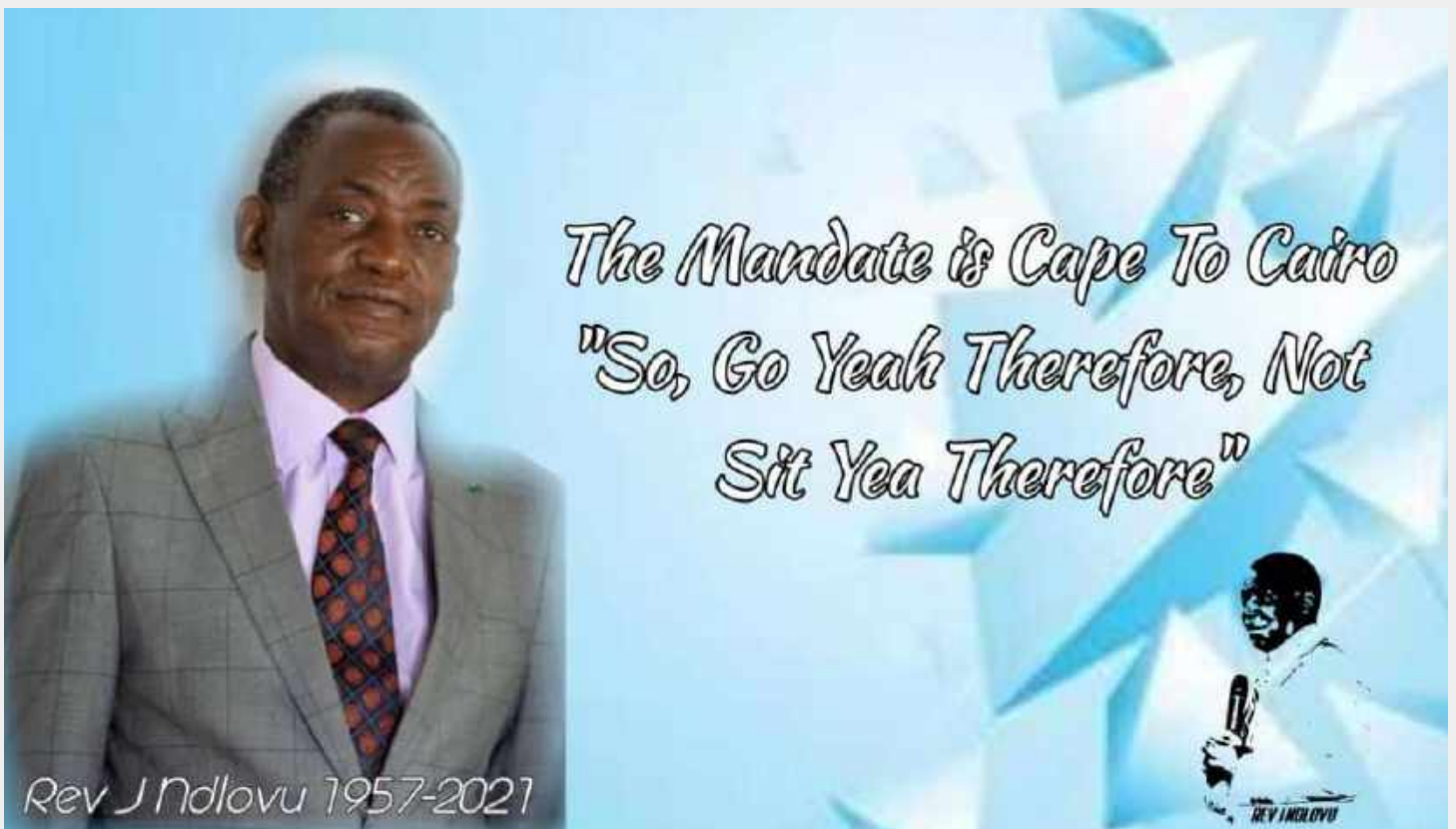
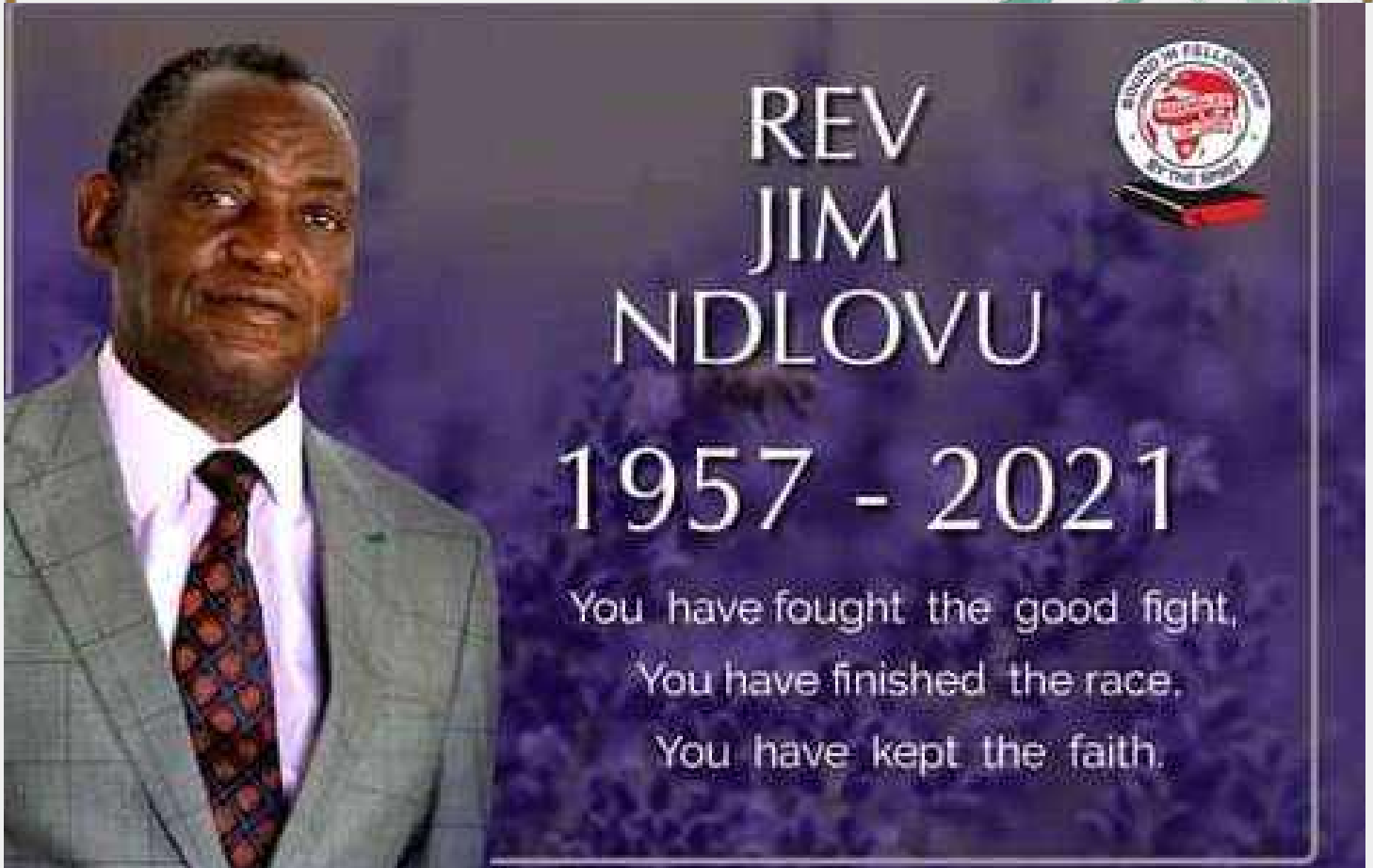
### 4. Be patient, you are going through a process

Between having an idea and seeing the manifestation of the idea, there is a long road called 'process'. Every vision has to go through the process towards manifestation. In that road you will find failures, setbacks, disappointments, temporary successes, and a lot of things. It's all part of the process. You have to know that the day you plant the seed is not the day you harvest the crop. Be patient enough to go through everything that you must go through. The light bulb failed so many times before it became a success. Habakkuk 2 says, "For the vision is for an appointed time..." This means that there is a set time for manifestation. Anything that happens before that time of manifestation is part of the process. It goes on to say "...though it may tarry, wait for it..." Be patient to see it manifest. I remember telling some people that in every vision building, there is a season of making a name and then there is a season of reaping from the name. In the season of making a name that is when you get window shoppers and walk-ins who want to check out your merchandise but are not yet buying from you. Patience through this period will get you to the stage of reaping from the name. A lot of us close shop when our brand is about to start giving back profit. Wait for the vision, it will not delay but it will surely come to pass. A lot of changes can happen when you pursue vision. Whatever comes your way, be it in the positive or the negative, should never stop your pursuit of vision. There is always a way through or around every mountain. Always find a way and always be patient to see your vision to fruition.



OBITUARY

# REMEMBERING REV. JIMMY NDLOVU



Rev J Ndlovu 1957-2021

## PROMOTIONAL FEATURE

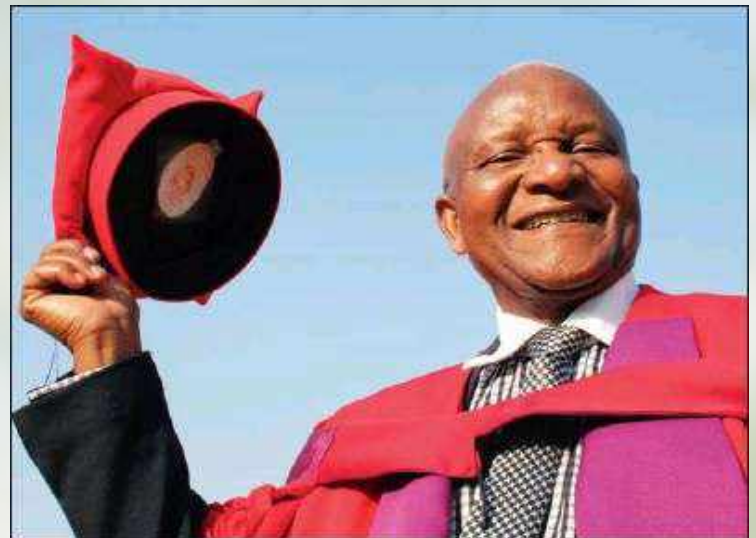
# NONAGENARIAN STILL STANDING STRONG: CELEBRATING A LIVING GOSPEL LEGEND

**Kimion Tagwirei**

When most people grow old, they give in to tiring biological, physical, social, psychological changes and usually retire from various commitments. One of the most senior pioneers of the Assemblies of God church (BTG) in South Africa, Daniel Simon Billy Lephoko, who turned 91 years old on 30 September 2021, is unusual and inspiring. He graduated with a PhD in Theology at 80 in 2010 and Master's in Theology at 75 in 2005 from the University of Pretoria. He holds a Baccalaureus Iuris (Legal) degree from the University of South Africa (UNISA), completed Management Advanced Programme from Wits Business School, Senior Management Development Programme from the University of Pretoria and trained in leadership with Leadership Dynamics in Atlanta, Georgia, USA.

After Dr. Lephoko's doctoral graduation, UNISA professor Tinyiko Sam Maluleke wrote a touching message about him, and it is befitting for us to read it here;

*"It was Friday the 3rd of September 2010. I sat in awe among the graduation ceremony audience at the University of Pretoria – a stone throw away from my own university, the University of South Africa. On that occasion, 80 year old Daniel Simon Billy Lephoko received his PhD. I did not cry but tears decided on their own to flow down my cheeks. These were tears of pride, tears of joy and tears of wow. I was truly proud of the octogenarian's achievement. Joy was written on the faces of his children and grandchildren. The audience was spellbound. But for me, the absolute joy did not come unaccompanied by a little bit of anger. I was angry at the Apartheid conditions in which Lephoko lived all of his productive life. I could not help wondering how far a young Daniel Lephoko might have gone had he lived in a different country at a different time. Yet, I was also assaulted by a pang of guilt. Ten years ago Daniel Lephoko walked into the office of a young dean of faculty - the 'first black' dean of that faculty. It was the era of 'first blacks' in various fields and*



**DR. DANIEL SIMON BILLY LEPHOKO**

*9 years old and almost 70 at that time. Naturally, I thought he was too old to embark on a PhD. But I was not brave enough to say it to his face. Instead I manufactured a litany of hurdles - real and imagined – designed to make it seem either unwise or unnecessary for him to pursue doctoral studies. What could he possibly do with a PhD at his age? Was it really necessary for him to put himself through the pain? Without a master's degree in the field in which he wished to pursue a PhD he would have to do a master's degree first – this means it could take him anything between 7 and 10 years to complete. Aah! I did have a plan. Given his qualifications and track record of community service, I suggested that we try submitting his name for an honorary doctorate instead. Though courteous to the end, Lephoko was visibly dissatisfied if not disappointed with my litany of excuses. Unbeknown to me and undeterred by me, a few years later, when he was 73, Lephoko registered for his first master's degree at the university next door. He then did another master's degree and a PhD. Three postgraduate degrees in seven years! Quite a feat for a person in their*

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## PROMOTIONAL FEATURE

# NONAGENARIAN STILL STANDING STRONG: CELEBRATING A LIVING GOSPEL LEGEND

*seventies, would you not say? You can imagine how pleasantly surprised I was when Lephoko invited me to his graduation. Oh, ye of little faith! He could have said. But he did not. He was happy for me to partake, a decade later, in the joy of one of his finest achievements. What a humbling experience, it was for me! What an inspiring experience it was! Ask not what old man Daniel Lephoko will do with his doctorate. Marvel rather at what it has done to him – the incredible journey he has travelled towards the PhD. Ask not what the doctorate will do for him, consider what his achievement says to his children, grand-children and great grand-children, among whom I count you, my dear reader. Ask not what material benefits will accrue to him following his PhD; contemplate the inspiration of his story to his home township of Atteridgeville where he still lives. In a country where education is in crisis, we need more Daniel Lephokos. Our world would be richer if we had more people like this Daniel, don't you think?"*

Now Dr. Lephoko is a nonagenarian, yet he continues to research, write and serve God through several ways. He currently serves as an associate research fellow in the Department of Science of Religion and Missiology at the University of Pretoria, executive member of the Advisory Board of the Centre for Contextual Ministry at the University of Pretoria and is a credentialed senior pastor with the Assemblies of God (BTG) in South Africa.

Dr. Lephoko is also the director and founder of **Children on the Move Foundation** which cares for more than 300 orphans, children infected by HIV/Aids as well as other vulnerable community members.

In year 2018 at the age of 88, he published a scholarly book about the founder of the Assemblies of God (BTG) movement, Nicholas Bhengu, titled **'Nicholas Bhhekinkosi Hepworth Bhengu's Lasting Legacy: World's Best Black Soul Crusader'**.

When he told me that he turned 91 on 30 September 2021, I was engaging him on some issues for my PhD research, and I asked him if my conversations with him could be through audio messages to save him from the labour of typing. He did not respond, but kept typing until I realized that he still loved and managed to type! Besides indomitable self-discipline and commitment, the story of Dr. Simon Billy Lephoko teaches that whenever there is grace and willpower, anything can be done at any time regardless of age.

# BOOK YOUR SPACE





# ECCLÉSIA TODAY

