



THE COST OF OBEDIENCE

'WOLE GEORGE-TAYLOR

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TABLE OF CONTENT

Dedication.....	v
Acknowledgement.....	vi
Preface.....	vii
Introduction.....	1
Chapter 1: Jesus our Perfect Example.....	3
Chapter 2: The cost of Obedience.....	8
Chapter 3: Obedience is Faith.....	16
Chapter 4: Prayer is Key.....	24
Chapter 5: Danger of Crowd.....	35
Chapter 6: Cost of Disobedience.....	42

DEDICATION

This mini book is dedicated to God Almighty – the giver of life. The One who has deposited in me His gifting to shine as Light in my generation to the intent that men through me may know Him.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I acknowledge the saving grace of God, who called me out of darkness into His marvellous light. Blessed is that day in 2013, the day He saved me.

I acknowledge the big influence of my Pastor and Teacher – Pastor Olayemi Paul Binoran. A prolific writer and author of many books who through several interactions stirred up the gift of writing in me.

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Love to my boys, Godly seeds: MojolaOluwa Nathan George-Taylor and Tireniooluwa Nelson George-Taylor.

PREFACE

One of the Greek terms for Obedience conveys the idea of positioning oneself under someone by submitting to their authority and command.

According to Holman's Illustrated Bible Dictionary, Obedience is "to hear God's Word and act accordingly".

The Almighty God in His wisdom and benevolence at creation gave man (and woman) freewill, right to choose between good and bad, freedom of expression which is what the law or constitution of every Nation on the earth is founded upon.

This freewill cannot be denied any man; this is why any Nation that tries to suppress the freewill of the people always finds it difficult to survive. It might succeed for some time but it is usually short-lived.

It might interest you to know that even God Almighty will not deny man this freewill. Not that, He cannot in actual sense, but because of His Righteousness He will not at any point in time do so. In other words, it will amount to unrighteousness for God to trample upon the right of man having given it to

man (by Himself) at creation. It is a gift from God and He will not turn again to collect it back. *“For the GIFTS and calling of God are without repentance”* (Romans 11:29)

Sadly, with this freewill given to man, disobedience against God was birthed as we see in the Garden of Eden where Adam and Eve ate the fruit God commanded them not to eat (Genesis 2:17, 3:6 & 11). Practically speaking, God has the power to stop Eve at the very point she was about eating the fruit and prevent Adam as well from doing same. He would rather love to see them keep His instruction as a sign of reverence and obedience.

This is why God delight greatly when He finds Obedience in man and as such places a high premium (reward) on willing obedience. *“Has the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices as in OBEDIENCE to the voice of the Lord?”* (1Samuel 15:22 AMP)

It therefore shows clearly that Obedience is precious and is only found in men and women with deep understanding, reverence and love for God like Abraham, Mary mother of Jesus) who paid the price of Obedience irrespective of the cost involved.

The Lord is still looking for that fellow who will obey His voice no matter the cost in whom He will show His greatness. “*For the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to shew himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward him, herein thou hast done foolishly: therefore from henceforth thou shall have wars*” (2Chronicles 16:9).

Will you be that man or woman the Lord is looking for?

The term ‘Obedience’ as used in this book focuses on obeying both the Written Word (the Bible) and Spoken Word otherwise called ‘Voice of the Spirit’ and not on broader sense or general use of Obedience as in obeying a superior/boss or spouse which could sometimes be sinful in nature.

INTRODUCTION

The ‘Cost of Obedience’ is a book inspired by the life of Jesus who obeyed God the Father completely even unto death and a sermon preached by the famous - Joyce Meyer I saw on her Instagram page.

At the Garden of Gethsemane, Jesus could have wished away going to the cross because it was absolutely not convenient considering the pains and the agony that was imminent being a man like you and me.

“He went a little farther and fell on His face, and prayed, saying, O my Father if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: “nevertheless not as I will but as thou wilt” (Matthew 26:39). The Lord Jesus’ conclusion after praying in this scripture is a cursor to an exemplary life of total submission to God. Obedience is costly to the flesh (our body) but it is prosperity to our soul. The Lord desire that our soul prospers for it is written: *“Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in good health, even as thy soul prospereth”* (3 John 2)

Obedience is not to be lightly regarded by any genuine child of God, because it is vital to becoming Christ like and is a determining factor to a successful daily walk with the Lord who chose us and called us out of darkness into his marvellous light (1Peter 2:9).

Disobedience to God is sin, and no unrepentant sinner will go to heaven. It therefore means that if you are a heaven bound Christian you will not push aside this matter of Obedience. *"For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul"* (Mark 8:36).

This book intends to stir up believers to take hold of God in a new measure. And ask Him to put in us the mind of Christ, to grow like Jesus grew in **stature** (Luke 2:52) and not just in **status**, to be **complete in Obedience** (2 Corinthians 10:6) and **walk closely with the Lord** like Enoch did and ultimately **reign with Him in eternity**. See what the Prophet Isaiah said *"And there is none that calleth upon thy name, that STIRRETH up himself to take hold of thee: for thou has hid thy face from us, and hast consumed us, because of our iniquities"* (Isaiah 64:7)

CHAPTER 1

JESUS OUR PERFECT EXAMPLE

*"Though He were a Son, yet learned Obedience
by the things which he suffered"* Hebrew 5:8

This scripture may appear to the eyes in the surface as if Jesus needed to be punished or forced to become obedient. (Like parents or teachers sometimes punish children or pupils after failed verbal warnings to behave in an acceptable way). But this was not the case with Jesus at all.

He was without any form of sin whatsoever as the scripture bear record of this truth: *"Even though Jesus was tempted in all points, yet without sin"* (Hebrews 4:15).

Taking a closer look at every stage of His life while on earth buttress this truth; as a growing up child Jesus obeyed His parent *"Then he went down to Nazareth with them and was*

OBEDIENT to them” (Luke 2:21 NIV), before He started ministry, Jesus fulfilled all righteousness ***“Jesus replied, let it be so now, it is proper for us to do this to fulfil all righteousness”*** (Matthew 3:15 NIV) and as a youth Jesus obeyed the law ***“Do not think I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets, I have not come to abolish them but to fulfil them”*** (Matthew 5:17 NIV).

Also see John 8:29, 15:10, Hebrews 10:9....as more scriptures for reference on this truth.

Jesus learned Obedience ***“from what he suffered”***. As the divine **Son of God**, Jesus did not have to suffer, but as the **Son of Man**, suffering was required to *learn* Obedience. Digging further deep, the Greek word used for ‘suffered’ in this scriptural context usually refers to enduring unpleasant experiences as in persecution (Acts 8:1) or a challenging process that transform the sufferer (Romans 5:3). Jesus chose to endure an unpleasant challenging process simply because it was the will of His Father for His brief time on earth. How do I know this?

Let's take a look at the next verse of this chapter anchor scripture [*i.e.* Hebrew 5:8], which is verse 9 "*And being made perfect...*" it means that, that process in the previous verse was to make Him perfect.

Again, 'perfect' in this context means 'complete' as in finishing a full course of training or education. In Jesus' case He finished an altogether righteous human life and had complete understanding of human frailty and suffering. It was this Christ human experience and total OBEDIENCE, coming through extreme suffering that made Him fit to become our eternal High Priest.

So also, we Children of God need to learn to endure hardship (if required) so as to be perfect and worthy of the Lord. "*thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ*" (2Timothy 2:3).

Not all 'hardship' is from the devil or human inflicted. It might simply just be a cost of Obedience!

Joseph landed in prison after he refused Potiphar's wife sexual advances. He feared and obeyed God yet hardship came. Undeterred, he paid the cost of Obedience and ended up as the Prime Minister in Egypt. (Genesis 39:9, 41:41)

I remember listening to a testimony about a servant of God whose ministry is in South Africa. He is an American and lives in the United States comfortably. But God called him to ministry in Africa and he obeyed leaving his comfort behind. There are people who have opportunity of getting well paid jobs, some even left the job all together to serve God in a local Church or in mission field and get little or nothing monetary wise.

Every Child of God will have to pay a price of obedience at some point or another. Yours may not be to obey a call to ministry or mission field in remote area. But in your circular job or business, in the political office where he has placed you. He placed you there to teach the world how to do it God's way. That kick-back/bribe you didn't take, that compromise you said no to...are part of your own cost of obedience. The question is, are you ready? Are you willing!

“for if I do this thing willingly, I have a reward: but if against my will, a dispensation of the gospel is committed unto me” (1Corintians 9:17).

CHAPTER 2

THE COST OF OBEDIENCE

“And those who are in the flesh cannot please God”

Romans 8:8

Obedience is costly whether we want to admit it or not. Pleasing God is costly to our flesh. I have heard life coach, motivational speaker say stuff like: “well your body wants pleasure and indulgence, but you don’t give in” with examples such as this; you wake up in the morning and don’t feel like going to work but you’ve got to get up on your feet and so on...while without argument this is true, however the dimension at which the Spiritual angle of not pleasing the flesh takes is superior to this kind of example. It is this angle we would dwell upon in this second chapter as we ride on.

Jesus not wanting to go to the cross at first was not because he wanted to give the body pleasure. When you have to stay away from food for certain period of time because you want to fast and seek the face of the Lord is not because you don't want to please the flesh.

Excuse me; food is necessary for the body!

God created food to nourish the body (Genesis 1:29) except over eating which is gluttony, eating is not pleasing or indulgence to the body, it is rather a necessity. By the way, food is not the subject here am only trying to bring out a point.

Let me just add this, one out of other reasons why God pays particular attention to us when we fast and seek his face is because we are like Him who gave up His right for another out of love.

So, when we are talking about the cost of obedience to the flesh we are not talking on matters of pleasure or indulgence

but sacrificing those things that are our right or which are needful to the body in order to please God.

Sacrifice is the crux of this matter. Obedience requires sacrifice (i.e. giving up what you have right over) Jesus obeying The Father unto death was sacrificial. Abraham obeying God to go sacrifice Isaac was sacrificial. For *Pastor E. A. Adeboye* to quit his promising lecturing job for ministry at such a time is sacrificial.

That is the cost of Obedience!

As students of Economics at one time/level or another we all must have come across the term ‘Opportunity Cost’. Let’s take a look at it again to garner further understanding on the matter of Sacrifice which I said is at the heart of Obedience.

According to micro economics theory, “opportunity cost” also known as “alternative cost” of making a particular choice is the **value** of the most valuable choice out of those that were not taken.

Furthermore, when an option is chosen from two mutually exclusive alternatives, opportunity ‘cost’ is incurred by not enjoying the benefit associated with the alternative choice.

Thus, opportunity cost requires sacrifice!

If there is no sacrifice involved in a decision, there will be no opportunity cost. Bringing to bear the economist view on this matter, we will see one vivid point which is Value. It is the value you place on something that makes you prefer it over another even when it appears the former has immediate gratification. Take for instance; you have some spare money at hand. An acquaintance asked you to lend him/her and promise to pay back with some little interest for inconveniences caused and at the same time you have a very close friend who is also in need of same amount of money and you know he/she won’t even offer to give you any interest because of your closeness. Now if you decide to lend the money to this close friend of yours free of charge, it simply shows you **value** him/her over monetary gain.

If we can look beyond immediate gratification in order to please a friend, then God doesn't deserve anything less!

Let me quickly say this at this juncture; we must learn to wait for God's perfect time to reward our faithfulness. We cannot and should not negotiate or dictate to Him.

Impatient has made some who started genuinely to stop pleasing the Lord and thereby losing their reward! (A friend said something funny but true, he said some people gave their life to Jesus but have collected it back).

Remember the words of Paul the Apostle to the Galatians “And let us not be weary in well doing: for in DUE SEASON we shall reap, if we faint not” (Galatians 6:9)

Value

Value is the **worth** of a thing or the importance we attach to doing something over another. Remember the two sisters: Mary & Martha and the statement Jesus made when He was teaching reinforcement this point of worthiness. “There is only one thing WORTH being concerned about. Mary has discovered it, and it will not be taken away from her” (Luke 10:42 NLT). **Mary valued the WORD**, so she stayed at the

feet of Jesus learning not minding other things like serving food even when there were guests in the house.

Not until we value our relationship with the Lord more than other things, we won't see the need to pay the price of Obedience.

As Children of God, we should see to it that we replicate the way we are diligent with our jobs, businesses, appointments and other official engagements in our relationship with the Lord as well. It is so that we don't do only the former and neglect the latter that the Bible admonishes us to remember that it is the Lord thy God who gives us power to get wealth (Deuteronomy 8:18).

If He withdraws that power, we are finished!

Someone once gave an example of how we all hurriedly get to the airport early to catch a flight and peradventure we are running late, we will do everything possible to beat the closing check-in counter, some will quickly contact their travel agent to check-in online and reserve their seat all in a

bid not to miss the flight, but we come late often to Church and make no attempt to hasten up to get a seat and do not care if we have miss much of the sermon.

When Naaman the Syrian Army captain was going to see Elisha the man of God to seek prayers so he could be healed of leprosy in 2Kings 5:5, He went with ten Talents of Silver, six thousand Pieces of Gold and ten Changes of Raiment (expensive clothes). This is how much he **valued** God in the life of the Prophet. But Judas Iscariot one of the twelve disciples of Jesus sold Him for just Thirty pieces of Silver (Matthew 26:15). That's only double the amount used to hire a harlot which is fifteen Pieces of Silver (Hosea 3:2) in the times of the Prophet Hosea.

It might interest you to know that it will take tens of pieces of silver to weigh one talent. How ridiculous is it for Judas Iscariot to sell the King of kings and Lord of lords for such a worthless amount of money.

But are some of us today not behaving like Judas Iscariot? How much value do we place on our Salvation?

This salvation cost Jesus His blood you know!

Don't we sell our birth right for a plate of porridge like Esau did? Don't we disobey the Word of God easily for money, power and fame?

You cannot please, talk less of obeying someone you don't value, same goes for God Almighty!

CHAPTER 3

OBEDIENCE IS FAITH

*But without faith it is impossible to PLEASE him:
for he that cometh to God must believe that he is,
and that he is a rewarder of those that diligently seek him.* Hebrew 11:6

*By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place
which he should after receive for an inheritance, OBEYED and
he went out not knowing whither he went.* Hebrew 11:8

Obedience is faith practically speaking. When the Lord told Abraham to go sacrifice Isaac, he simply obeyed out of faith. The bible bear record of what was on Abraham's mind at that particular time (Hebrew 11:19).

Each time the Lord command us to do or not to do something He is not out to humiliate us or cause us to suffer unnecessary hardship but it is for our own good and wellbeing both in the short and long run.

However, it takes the eyes of faith to see and accept this position!

“For I know the plans that I have for you declares the Lord, plans for welfare and not for calamity to give you a future and a hope” (Jeremiah 29:11 NASB).

I have discovered that it is because we don't instantly see the good plan of God for us that is why we often find it difficult to be Obedient to His Word and instructions for our daily living. If the Lord shows us a glimpse of the glory that awaits believers who choose to walk worthy of the Lord, we all will be such stanch Christians. I wish He does for obvious reason.

God won't always do that, but rather expect us to have faith that He is a Rewarder, a Promise and Covenant Keeper, One who is not a son of man that should lie....simply put;

God expects us to trust and obey Him because there's no other way to be happy walking with Him!

Let's use this common example of persons in sales, we know the Bible in Ephesians 4:25 says '***put away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbour, for we are members one of another***'...but some may say I'm a Sales Manager I just have to tell 'white' lies to achieve my sales target which may be factual practically speaking.

It will now take Faith to trust in the help of God for the sales target to be met without telling lie whether white or black!

Experience has shown that the burden of Obedience for most people is the fear of not getting something longed for, pressure of not accomplishing some target or realizing an ambition. As much as this is the common situation around us, the principle of Faith which God operates with should not be set aside. Without faith it is not only impossible to please Him but also impossible to receive from Him.

The centrality of faith to pleasing God is so crucial. The Lord Jesus marvelled at the disposition of faith displayed by the centurion who beseeched Jesus for healing of his servant. We know the story; Jesus had offered to come to his house and

heal his servant but the Centurion asked Him not to bother but should only speak the word. (Matthew 8: 5-13).

“Now Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen” (Hebrew 11:1). There are two level of revelation in this scripture:

First is Hope and the second is Evidence. Hope is expectation. As in hoping to receive some good news, hoping that things will be better and so on. There is no tangible substance of anything to lay hold of when one is hoping except hope itself. Evidence is a proof of something, a fact or testimony.

Faith adds substantial material or evidence to hope!

The substantial material is the ‘Word of God’. You and I can bank on the Word of God. His word is a divine guarantee. The Lord says heaven and earth will pass away but His word will never pass away (Matthew 24:35 GNB). So, if he said it, He will do it. He says I will not forsake you or leave you alone. He says when you pass through waters, I will be with you, when you walk through fire you will not be burned.

With these and many other Words of the Lord given to us in the Scriptures, reassuring us of His faithfulness we have to move from level of Hope to Faith!

The Mind

"Above all else guard your heart, for everything do flows from it" (Proverbs 4:23). Paying attention to our **mind** can help us walk in Obedience in the light of the scripture mentioned above. This is because the battle between believing and resting on the Promises of God as contained in scriptures AND making efforts to do things our own way is often in the mind. I have learnt by experience and through reading that the place where the physical reasoning and spiritual wisdom meets is in the mind. You see, Tens and Tons of thoughts both good and otherwise usually flows into human mind daily which is quite normal. Some come as a result of an advice someone gave to us or a past experience or situation of things around us. At the same time when God is sending guidance or leading us to take a step of faith, it is still the same mind it will first make contact with. So, either of the two thoughts that gained dominance over the other usually birth the line of action we often take.

Now here is the danger, if we allow human reasoning to dominate our mind, it can lead to strongholds which will in turn exalt itself over the wisdom of God for our lives!

So, we have a responsibility to take control or captive and cast down such thoughts as of unbelief no matter how logical it appears to be. *“Casting down imaginations and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God and bringing into captivity every thought to the OBEDIENCE of Christ”* (2Coriantians 10:5).

Since the battle begins in the mind, we will do well to nip disobedience in the bud from the mind. How can we do this? *“And be ye not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God”* (Romans 12:2).

By continuous and daily renewal of our mind with the Bible. It is from the Word of God that we read or hear that Faith comes from (Romans 10:17).

Take note friends, what we feed our minds with often is what dominates it!

That's the pattern it follows. I remember a funny scenario shared by one of my favourite preachers – *Pastor Bankie*, founder of Kingdom World Ministries in Enugu Nigeria, he said a lady was going to start praise and worship during family devotion with her children one morning, and as she opened her mouth the song that came out was this MTN caller tune of a friend. Apparently, she calls the friend often and while waiting for the call to be picked at the other end, the caller tune is sung to her many times. The lady had to quickly caution herself. Imagine! It is not her fault in anyway but the mind has unconsciously picked, stored and replayed the song without her permission...(laughs). It has happened to me too but not in similar fashion.

You will agree with me that nowadays it is increasingly becoming difficult to watch cable TV with a little child as one cannot tell what might just pop up in the name of advert.

So, we have to do more work of feeding our minds on the Word of God, good Christian books, listen to tapes and sermons on our phones/iPods so we can flush out those junks we have taken in “without our permission”

A person that has his/her mind constantly renewed, refreshed with the Word of God will be able to gradually but progressively take hold or captive of useless thoughts when they come.

On the other hand, some of us Christians consciously ‘with our permission’ this time, feed our minds too much with newspapers, social media, worldly music and movies! So where will the faith come from when it is needed? Our mind is just like a computer system - garbage in garbage out. No one can give what he/she doesn’t have.

If faith is not been fed into your mind, it will be difficult to take a step of faith on your own. Even when God bid you to move!

Remember it takes Faith to be Obedient when dealing with God.

CHAPTER 4

PRAYER IS KEY

"Then cometh Jesus with them into a place called Gethsamane, and saith unto the disciples, Sit ye here, while I go and PRAY yonder. And took with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee and began to be sorrowful and very heavy. Then saith he unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful even unto death; tarry ye here, and WATCH with me. And he went a little farther and fell on his face and PRAYED, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless not as I will but as thou wilt. And he cometh unto the disciples and findeth them asleep, and saith unto Peter, what, could you not watch with me one hour? WATCH and PRAY, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak. He went away again the second time, and PRAYED, saying O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, thy will be done. And he came and found them asleep again: for their eyes were heavy. And he left them, and went away again and PRAYED the third time, saying the same words. Matthew 26: 36- 45

As seen in the scripture above, Jesus at Gethsemane had three prayer sessions each possibly lasting for an hour. His prayer as we can see through the scriptures was all about going to the cross. He prayed until He got to the point where he was willing to OBEY the Father even unto death. Note that our Lord Jesus was not oblivious of the fact that he was going to be crucified for the sake of reconciling Mankind to God, as He often mentioned it to the disciples during his three and half year of ministry with them, yet when the time was

approaching the flesh (the human nature) was unwilling to go ahead with this divine plan due to the pain and agony of the cross. No wonder the scripture says:

“Those who obey their human nature cannot please God”
(Romans 8:8 GNB).

There's a reality we young people in Christ today have to embrace very well, it is a known fact to the 'Fathers of Faith', the matured and old Christians. Although there is space of time for growth between been young and old but this knowledge will surely be of help so as to be better prepared: Practice such as Fasting, tarrying in the place of Prayer and commitment to personal growth or anything that will inconvenient us, is not well embraced.

We want to serve God but with swag, in a soft and easy fashion.

Excuse me, it wasn't easy for Jesus to die for your and my Salvation!

"Therefore, since Christ suffered in his body, arm yourselves also with the same attitude, because whoever suffers in the body is done with sin" (1 Peter 4:1 NIV).

So, it is only fair that we pay a little price to keep our Salvation.

We 've got work to do friends; Prayer is one of the works! I'm not saying we have to work to be saved, "*for it is by grace that ye are saved*". But after Salvation we must be diligent and labour to bear 'good works' otherwise our faith can die. "Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone" (James 2:19). The tempter goes after our Flesh to continue with 'dead works' by lying to us that once saved always saved irrespective of what we do. The Bible says "*Work out your Salvation with fear and trembling*" (Philippians 2:12) see NLT rendition of the scripture "**work hard to show the result of your Salvation, OBEYING God with deep reverence and fear**"

Another scripture says: "*ye have not resisted unto blood, striving against sin*" (Hebrews 12:4).

The example of our Master-Jesus who prayed Himself into Obedience is the focal point and emphasis of this fourth Chapter. This is what we must learn to do regularly and continuously as long as we are in this body (on earth) until we depart either by rapture or death when we will take up new bodies.

“For we know that if our earthly tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens” (2Corinthians 5:1).

Another challenge of today is that many still see Prayer as a weapon to be drawn out when there is trouble. While some think prayer is only needed to ask God for healing, financial breakthrough, business success and when everything is fine physically speaking, they ask why the need to pray they.

While there is nothing wrong in asking all of these physical needs in prayers (because our Lord Jesus told us to ‘ask’ in Matthew 7:7 without separating physical from spiritual). However, Prayer is much more needed for Spiritual things like forgiving someone who really hurt or betray us, like

loving and praying for our enemies, like letting go of money or comfort when it conflicts with righteousness. This was the emphasis of the teaching of Jesus on the mountain. He said:

“But seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness and all these things shall be added unto you” (Matthew 6:33).

I understand just as Abraham believed and obeyed God and it counted for him as righteousness, Obedience to the will of God is highly regarded among the things in the ‘kingdom of God’ that the Lord would want us to ‘seek first’. That is why Jesus gave it as one of the prayer points in the Lord’s Prayer: “thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven”. Everything and everyone in heaven obeys and does the will of the Father.

At every stage of our Christian life, we must actively engage Prayer to remain Obedient and true to our first-love for Christ, our initial confession of faith and resolve to follow Jesus. With Prayer we will never turn back! No wonder the popular song says:

Prayer is the Key, Prayer is the Key, Prayer is the master key, Jesus started with Prayer and ended with prayer, Prayer is the master Key!

The Role of Prayer in Obedience cannot be overemphasized. This is majorly because our flesh does not want to please God. In fact, it may appear that our body is designed for self-Pleasure or Sinfulness. Especially with the way Civilization, Fashionistas, Entertainment industry, social media and others could sometimes portray.

The truth is God didn't create our body for self-pleasure or sin. Two Scriptures testify to this truth: first is Revelation 4:11 which says "*Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou has created all things and for thy pleasure they are and were created*". We are created for His pleasure!

Second scripture is Genesis 1:27 which says "*So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created He him: male and female created He them*" so again it will be

incorrect to say that man created in the image of God who is Holy, is created for sin.

However, since the time that sin entered into the heart of man (through Adam & Eve) every human being is susceptible to committing what I called three-fold sin: the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the pride of life (1John 2:16).

That is why the Lord Jesus came to free all flesh from this life of sin by giving us Power.

“As many that received Him, to them gave He Power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name” (John 1:12).

This Power like seed is planted in believers at Salvation but Prayer and the Word of God is the water with which the seed thrives on!

The substance of Prayer in Obedience is for two basic factors: one is the flesh factor and second is the devil factor.

Much of the flesh factor has been spoken about above where we learn from Jesus who Prayed His flesh into Obedience because the body will not want to Obey the death on the cross due to the attendant pain and agony but in addition, before moving to the next factor I will like to point out to us that, as far as God is concern our spirit is of outmost importance, maybe because the human spirit came from God Himself unlike the flesh that He created from the soil or for some other reasons I may not know and can't share for now in this book. That is not to say that He doesn't care about our physical wellbeing but the point here is that, on a scale, the spirit takes pre-eminence over the flesh (body).

Jesus said "*it is the Spirit that quickeneth, the flesh profit nothing*" (John 6:63).

Paul the Apostle has this to say; "*now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing*" (Romans 7:17-18a).

In verse 25 Apostle Paul then say: "*I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord, so then with the mind I myself serve God; but with the flesh the law of sin*".

The devil factor

"**Watch and Pray**, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak" (Matthew 26:41)

"**Stay alert! Watch out for your great enemy the devil. He prowls around like a roaring lion, looking for someone he may devour**" (1Peter: 5:8).

In John 10:10 the bible while enumerating the mission of the thief listed to: steal, kill and destroy. Chiefly among where the thief targets for this onslaught is in the area of Obedience.

Even though Jesus was not referring directly to the devil as the thief in that scripture situation but the Pharisees and Teachers of the law because of their erroneous teaching and seeking to deny the people from knowing the truth, but we know he operates in similar fashion and once he can get

Christians walk in disobedience with God, it will be easy for him to achieve his mission. On the other hand, as long as a Child of God is walking in Obedience to the Word of God, the devil is frustrated and he will lose out.

The famous Bible story of Balak the son of Zippor, King of the Moabites and Balaam the prophet of God contains the truth of this revelation.

“He hath not beheld iniquity in Jacob, neither hath he seen Perverseness in Isreal; the Lord God is with him and the shout of a King is among them” (Numbers 23:21)

“I called thee to curse mine enemies, and behold thou hast altogether blessed them these three times” (Numbers 24:10)

Sadly, when the Children of Isreal began to work in Disobedience to the commandments of God, without any effort from Balaam, curse began to manifest in their camp no wonder the Bible says: *“whoso breaketh an hedge, a serpent shall bite him”* (Ecclesiastic 10:8).

Temptation is the tool in the hand of the adversary. Remember he is a defeated foe. So, he doesn't have power over genuine Children of God except to tempt us to sin and if we peradventure fall for his temptation, he goes to accuse us before God Day and night with evidence of those sins. That is why the Bible calls him the accuser of the brethren (Revelation 12:10). The Lord Jesus being tempted Himself three times "then was Jesus led up of the spirit into the wilderness to be TEMPTED of the devil" (Matthew 4:1-10) taught the disciples to PRAY against temptation knowing fully well the onslaught of the devil and the tool he uses.

"And lead us not into temptation..." in the Lord's Prayer is very instructive. Again, the Lord Jesus said in Luke 22:40 "Pray that you will not fall into temptation"

Going by these scriptures and many others, I will like to submit that If we Pray enough, we will escape temptation to disobey God just enough!

CHAPTER 5

DANGER OF CROWD

"Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in therewith. Because strait is the gate and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it" Matthew 7:13-14

Every ‘born again’ child of God is expected to be a student in the school of Obedience. (In a School, learning is continuous and students strive for personal improvement). We must do all it takes to remain Obedient to the Word of God. This is our identity as children of God. We must not lose it!

Obedience to the Word of God as contained in the scriptures is what separates children of God from the crowd.

There is ‘crowd’ even in the Church, mixed-multitude who has one form of godliness but refuses to yield to the Lord in so many other vital areas! (2 Timothy 3:5).

God has forewarned us about the crowd, when He brought out the children of Israel from Egypt he said: “You must not follow the **crowd** in doing wrong” (Exodus 23:2). For it is written *“wide is the gate, and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat”*

I read while researching online, that being a gay use to be a criminal offence punishable with death in the UK under the Buggery Act of 1533. It also carries so much public disdain, that the Earl of Dudley in a statement once said “homosexuals are the most disgusting people in the world, prison is much too good a place for them, infact that is a place where many of them like to go for obvious reasons”. In the process of time, Wolfenden Report of 1957 recommended decriminalization of homosexual offences if it is done in a private place between two consenting adult not lesser than 21years of age. It took another ten years later for it to be passed as a legislative Bill and then got Royal assent because it lacks much political impetus for it to be pushed through but gradually as many people embrace it, it began to gather momentum.

According to *Pew Research Center* Poll of 2013, 76% of the population says homosexuality should be accepted by the society. Today there is Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) rights not only in the UK but in several countries of the world. Though it is criminalized in Nigeria, it is with us too. **This is just to buttress the point on the influence of crowd.**

Because a lot of people are doing something, doesn't make it right! whether they are Rich, Civilized or Famous!

Our heavenly Father is the Richest, most Civilized and Famous of all time!

Nonetheless, the Lord is more interested in many/crowd as opposed to saving a few.

I learnt this in the account of Prophet Jonah, who after preaching to the people of Nineveh; the people repented and God had mercy on them, was displeased that the Lord has pardoned the people just like that. The Lord said in response to Prophet Jonah's angry disposition:

"And should not I spare Nineveh, that great city, wherein are more than six score thousand persons that cannot discern between their right hand and left hand and also much cattle?" (Jonah 4:11)

It should be clear to us now that it is not God's desire that any human being should perish, Christ died for ALL. Unbelievers, Idol worshippers, Homosexuals, Terrorists...just name it. The blood of Jesus is available and can save every single soul that will come to Him in repentance. Jesus said "*All that the Father giveth me shall come: and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out*" (John 6:37). So, the reason that makes it appears as if the crowd is getting away with doing wrong and also prospering in it, is because of the Lord's mercies. He is graciously waiting for their repentance. But some Christians are ignorant of this truth and instead have joined the crowd. (You that has been washed by the blood of the Lamb, now going back again to the mud because many people are playing and having fun in the mud) How sad!

*“The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, **not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance”** (2Peter 2:9).*

“But God commendeth His love towards us, in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us” (Romans 5:8)

So why then did God make ‘Hell’ if He truly wants all men to be saved? You may be asking...

*“Then shall He say also unto them on the left hand, depart from me, ye cursed into everlasting fire, **prepared for the devil and his angels”** (Matthew: 25:41).*

Hell was not prepared for man but the devil and his angels who are spirits because of pride and disobedience. But human beings may decide to follow the devil to Hell- a place of everlasting torment.

This ‘follow follow’ starts from the earth through the choices human beings make!

...“you must not follow the crowd to do wrong”

Choice to disobey God and refusal to submit to the Lordship of Jesus. Interestingly, The Lord will not force any one to be saved. Irrespective of the number of people involved. I have had cause to ponder on the number of people who belong to many different religions in the world and what will be their fate if rapture happens now. At those times I will say to myself, it is not possible for this ‘Millions’ to go to hell, come on! God will do something, perhaps He will compel them to be born again and be saved.

But he has already said in His Word “*My spirit shall not always strive with man, for he also is flesh*” (Genesis 6:3). And again as mentioned in the Preface, it will amount to unrighteousness on the part of the Almighty God; having given man freewill, ‘right-to-choose’ in the beginning of creation.

Hence the Lord is persuading the crowd, through men who have come to know Him, to turn to Him in Obedience and Righteousness.

“Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men; but we are made manifest unto God; and I trust also are made manifest in your conscience” (2Corinthians 5:11).

One with God is a majority...not the Crowd!

CHAPTER 6

COST OF DISOBEDIENCE

"if ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead and your life is hid with Christ in God, when Christ who is our life shall appear then shall we also appear with him in glory.

Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence and covetousness which is idolatry. For which things' sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience" Colossians 3: 1-6

"For the sons of Israel walked forty years in the wilderness, until all the nation, that is, the men of war who came out of Egypt, perished because they did not listen to the voice of the Lord, to whom the Lord had sworn that He would not let them see the land which the Lord had sworn to their fathers to give us, a land flowing with milk and honey" Joshua 5:6

"They profess to know God, but by their deeds they deny Him, being detestable and disobedient and worthless for any good deed" Titus 1:16

The previous five chapters have spoken on the cost of obedience and the elements of the cost like Sacrifice, Value, Faith, Prayer, danger of crowd etc.

This Chapter caps it all but with a slightly different message. It is a message not too many people want to hear. It is the cost of disobedience.

Disobedience is also costly. In fact, extremely costly!

The cost of disobedience is separation from God. Separation from God begins here on earth. That was what the Lord was saying when He told Adam and Eve that they will ‘die’ when they eat the forbidding fruit. That Disobedience cost them the Garden of Eden - a place prepared by the Lord for man where they eat without labour and sweat.

Today, Jesus is the author and finisher of Salvation and anyone not found in Him is separated and misses the way to God the Father.

"Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me". (John 14:6 KJV) There will also be another separation from God in eternity (i.e. while obedient children of God will be enjoying in Heaven, disobedient people will be separated into Hell) for anyone who did not accept Jesus as Savior.

In addition, **Jesus must also be accepted as Lord that means one must submit to the Lordship of Jesus by obeying His word.**

This matter of seperation as contained in the Holy Bible is the **will of God** which must come to pass.

In Greek, there are two words used for the 'Will' in reference to God. One Word is *Boulema*, referring to God's sovereign Will, which is His predetermined plan for everything that happens in the universe. This type of God's Will is fulfilled, regardless of decision made by man. God is at work to bring to pass all things on the basis of His sovereign Will; "*In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated*

according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after to the counsel of his own will” (Ephesians 1:11).

The *boulema* Will of God (which ‘*separation*’ falls under) does not require the cooperation of man because its outcome is predetermined since it is the Written Word of God.

The other word for ‘Will’ is *thelema*, and it refers to His individual Will for each man and woman (Salvation falls under this). People have the power to choose whether or not they will walk in the *thelema* Will of God.

So man’s continual refusal to walk in His will cannot stop His own ultimate will from coming to pass.

You may be saying...What then is the role of mercy? Didn’t the Bible say His love is everlasting and it endures forever? How will a loving God punish His creation because of disobedience with such terrible fire in Hell!

Mercy, of a truth is the characteristics of God to overlook, give another chance, and forget the sin and disobedience of

man. Yes, *Psalm 100:5* says His mercy is everlasting, *Psalm 108:4* says His mercy is great above heavens, *Psalm 106:1* says His mercy endures forever and *Exodus 20:6* says His mercy extends to thousands.

But you see, mercy of God is synonymous to grace, it is meant to give human beings the opportunity to repent and empowers to turn a new leaf. To escape the judgment or punishment of sin which is death (*Romans 3:23*). It is not a license to continue to sin or remain in sin perpetually as misconstrue by many who are unwillingly to repent.

In reading through the Bible, one will realize that in the things of God Almighty there are seasons, dispensations, and dimensions.

The matter of mercy is not excluded; there are seasons for mercy. When a man dies, mercy is not available anymore, but rather judgment for it is written: “And as it is appointed unto men once to die and after this the judgment” (*Hebrews 9:27*).

Note: The Bible describes death as an appointment which means it is never an accident. Every man, woman, black, white, tall, short...all have an appointment with death whether at old age or otherwise.

Again, it will be judgment time when the Lord shall return (rapture).

“When the Son of man shall come in glory and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory; And before him shall be gathered all the nations and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats” (Matt: 25: 31-32).

Cost of obedience is cheaper compared to that of disobedience!

Why pay such a great cost of eternal burning in Hell when you can pay far lesser cost of obedience by simply accepting Jesus as your Saviour and Lord!

If you are reading this book and you are not born again, the first Obedience you must do is to surrender your life to Jesus without further delay.

Say this prayer now: Lord Jesus, I confess that I am a sinner, I repent from my sinful lifestyle from today, please forgive me all my sins and write my name in the book of life, I accept you as my personal Lord and Saviour. I promise not to go back to sin. Thank you for saving me. Thank God I am born again in Jesus' name. Amen.

Please find a bible believing Church near you and fellowship there. Get a bible for your personal reading, studying and meditation.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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