

Benson Akhigbe II



TRANSFORMED TO TRANSFORM

...Heaven's Mandate for Transforming Society

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DEDICATION!

**TO OUR CHURCH FAMILY (FIRM BUILDERS), WE ARE ON A
JOURNEY!**

INTRODUCTION

We have a mandate to disciple nations and every person on the face of the earth is 'a nation.' The bible recorded that Abraham's wife Sarah was barren, and their daughter-in-law Rebekah (wife of Isaac) was also barren. Isaac prayed to the Lord on behalf of his wife, because she was barren. The Lord answered his prayer, and his wife Rebekah became pregnant with twins. Afterwards, the two babies wrestled in her womb. So she went to inquire of the Lord, and this was His reply, "*two nations are in your womb and two peoples from within you will be separated; one people will be stronger than the other, and the older will serve the younger*" (Genesis 25:23). Notice that Rebekah was pregnant with two sons, Esau and Jacob, yet the Lord called them '*nations*'. The younger son Jacob grew up to become the nation of Israel as we know it today.

Every single person walking on the face of the earth today is a nation. God has commanded us to reach every people and group on planet earth; to bring heaven to earth and cause transformation in every sphere. Our divine assignment is to bring the workings of God from our inside and manifest them on the outside. We were originally designed to put the gifts and purposes deposited in us by God to use for the benefit of our world. We were designed by our Heavenly Father to recreate our environment according to His divine power that works in us. When we fail to discover our unique purpose and grow to our maximum potential, we inadvertently reduce our environment to the level of the underdeveloped capacity inside us. If you relocate a group of people with underdeveloped minds from an underdeveloped country to a developed country and remove the group of developed minds from a developed country to an underdeveloped country and leave them there for a period of ten years, what do you think the outcome will be? I am sure that your guess is as good as mine. The people with the developed mind will go ahead to transform the underdeveloped environment they find themselves, while the people with the underdeveloped minds will go ahead to reduce their developed environment to suit their undeveloped state.

Why is this so? The simple reason is that our external environment will always conform to our internal environment. If you take an untidy man and place him in a tidy house, instead of the tidiness of the new house to transform the untidy man, he will reduce the tidy house to the state of his untidiness. This may be a funny scenario, but it is one that can play out in different areas of life. As you read this book, it is my prayer that you will experience internal transformation that will empower you to bring a change to your environment.

By design, the template for our operation on earth has always been, “*your [God’s] kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven*” (Matthew 6:10). I hope that this book will serve as a guide to show you a glimpse of heaven, so that you can go on to your sphere of influence and transform it for the glory of our God.

CHAPTER ONE

OUR TRANSFORMATION MANDATE AS ROYALTY

*A person who is always eager and ready to serve others
never lacks ideas. (Benson Akhigbe II)*

Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit." (Matthew 28:18)

This was the marching order from our King to us for global transformation, and one of the key phrases is “*make disciples of all nations.*” Jesus never said we should make disciples *in* all nations, rather, he mandated us to disciple nations. In verse 20, He said, “*...teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.*” Has the age ended? Of course not! That is why He is called “Immanuel – God *with* us.” This is the assurance that we have: our Master will never stop walking with us as we intentionally live out the kingdom of God in all spheres of influence in our society.

To further understand our mandate to disciple nations from the perspective of God, let us examine a story from the bible. Abraham’s wife Sarah was barren, and their daughter-in-law Rebekah (wife of Isaac) was also barren. Isaac prayed to the Lord on behalf of his wife, because she was barren. The Lord answered his prayer, and his wife Rebekah became pregnant with twins, the two babies wrestled in her womb. So she went to inquire of the Lord, and this was His reply, “*two nations are in your womb and two peoples from within you will be separated; one people will be stronger than the other, and the older will serve the younger*” (Genesis 25:23). Notice that Rebekah was pregnant with two sons, Esau and Jacob, yet the Lord called them ‘*nations*’. The younger son Jacob grew up to become the nation of Israel as we know it today.

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What do you see when you imagine heaven? Do you think there is corruption or disorder at work there? Do you think heaven is dirty? I believe not! By design, the template for our operation on earth has always been, *“your [God’s] kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven”* (Matthew 6:10). I hope that this book will serve as a guide to show you a glimpse of heaven, so that you can go on to your sphere of influence and transform it for the glory of our God.

King Solomon taught so much about our role here on earth. In Ecclesiastes 10:16-17 (The Living Bible), he wrote *“woe to the land whose king is a child and whose leaders are already drunk in the morning. Happy is the land whose king is a nobleman and whose leaders work hard before they feast and drink, and then only to strengthen themselves for the tasks ahead!”* We were made to nurture the earth and flourish in it, and not feast before working. Instant gratification and greed drive leaders in many developing countries to eat “the national cake,” and I usually wonder who baked the cake. If you have been redeemed by the King of kings, then you have a mandate to put order and structures in place wherever you have been planted.

1 Kings 10:24 (New Living Translation) tells us that *“people from every nation came to consult him (King Solomon) and to hear the wisdom God had given him.”* God took a slave-nation and made them a superpower through the wisdom of their king. Everything God does is for His purpose and I believe that God seeks to do even more in our time through everyone. The gospel of Jesus is an agenda that God designed to cause transformation on earth. So, any gospel that does not transform society is an inferior gospel. One of the practical ways the gospel can take effect is when we take what we read and study from the Bible and apply it to government, business, media, education, families, arts and entertainment and every other facet of society.

When the Queen of Sheba visited the nation of Israel to test the wisdom of King Solomon which she had heard so much about, the bible records that she was overwhelmed. She talked with him about all that she had on her mind and the king answered all her questions and nothing was too hard for him to explain to her. When she saw the extent of his wisdom, the splendor of the palace he had built, the kind of food on his table, the seating of his officials, the efficiency of his officials and the burnt offerings he made at the temple of the Lord, she was simply overwhelmed. Being a queen herself, she saw government structures and excellence firsthand, and I am sure that she never imagined it could be possible. It is my prayer that God will use you to show His manifold wisdom to our generation through witty inventions that have never been seen or heard of before.

Through the scriptures, God has laid out strategies for His children to cause transformation. We will consider three of these potent strategies in this chapter.

i. Kingdom Authority

The first strategy of believers for the transformation of any nation is *kingdom authority*. To know how to apply this, we will return again to the mandate given to us by Jesus in Matthew 28:18, “... *all authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations...*” The use of the word “therefore” is to make us realize that the same authority that God gave to him has also been given to us. The authority we were given is not meant for sitting in the pews of our church auditoriums, speaking in tongues and shouting “hallelujah,” but to manifest his will through discipling of nations! It is illegal for a believer to sit quietly and grow cold because “... *the anxious longing of the creation waits eagerly for the revealing of the sons of God*” (Romans 8:19 New American Standard Bible).

Can you imagine the pain and agony you will cause this generation and the ones coming after if you sit comfortably, do nothing, and always expect something from God? Government officials and politicians are practically stranded, because God’s children are not manifesting or “being revealed.” The same is true of every other sphere of our societies. Recently, top-notch, award-winning directors George Lucas and Steven Spielberg both agreed that “HOLLYWOOD IS DEAD” and the movie industry as we know it will come to an end! The bigger question is ‘where will people find the next blockbuster movies and the right structures, systems and processes that will not only entertain but will be informative and transformational? The answer is simple-, someone has to go to the depths of the treasure chest of Heaven to dig them out.

He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation. Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned. And these signs will accompany those who believe: In my name they will drive out demons; they will speak in new tongues; they will pick up snakes with their hands; and

when they drink deadly poison, it will not hurt them at all; they will place their hands on sick people, and they will get well." (Mark 16:15-18)

What a mandate! One common challenge with some believers is that they read this with a “religious mindset.” It is the mandate of Heaven that all believers (and not just pastors) should walk in the supernatural everywhere they find themselves. Jesus wants to see *every believer* demonstrating the dominion of His kingdom. He wants to see the person who will restore co-workers’ failing marriages. He wants to see a young boy who will pray for a blind woman at the bus stop and she will regain her sight. He wants to see that top management executive at a multinational company instill kingdom principles in the workplace. As a pastor, these are the kind of testimonies that make me proud to be a believer. I know of a young girl who while on her way home from work sat next to an older woman who was visibly sick inside the taxi. She offered to pray for the sick woman, and after she prayed, the pain instantly disappeared and the woman glorified God right there inside the taxi!

God has given you authority over all things. He is not concerned with your job title or status. He cares that you are His child, and that is enough! He wants to see His children operate with boldness irrespective of the demonic and occult activities that may be going on where they work. You have authority over the devil and he runs away from every believer that understands kingdom authority. Daniel was one such person in the Bible that thrived, because he walked in the supernatural in a highly pagan culture. He could not escape the culture even if he wanted to, so he became a transformer because he understood kingdom authority. It is my prayer that you will come to full understanding of your authority mandate and run with it!

I envision a time, and it is already happening, when entrepreneurs and business executives will begin to see their role as the mothers and fathers of societies; creating jobs for the teeming unemployed population and reducing the crime rates in their cities through creative thinking. I live in the city of Benin in Nigeria, and the city is known for its rich cultural heritage and history. Gradually, it has become a “transit-city” where people come for education and move on to other bigger cities in search of greener

pastures. There is a high tendency for people in Benin City to take their ideas and move away to other parts of the country; in the belief that they will do better in those other places. Yet, I am very confident of the prophetic destiny of my city and God is already raising an innovative, forward-thinking army that will unleash His plan not just for the city and the country, but for Africa and the rest of the world. This is the mentality I possess.

The story of Jesus and the tax-man named Zacchaeus is recorded in Luke 19. As popular as this story is, it can be very easy to miss the essence of the story and what it teaches about city renewal and revival. Jesus was passing through Jericho, and a man was there by the name of Zacchaeus; he was a chief tax collector and was wealthy. He wanted to see who Jesus was, but being a short man he could not, because of the crowd. So he ran ahead and climbed a sycamore-fig tree to see him, since Jesus was coming that way. In verse 5, we read that *“when Jesus reached the spot, he looked up and said to him, “Zacchaeus, come down immediately. I must stay at your house today.”* Jesus brought authority that Zacchaeus had never experienced before into his house. We cannot change corrupt government officials by simply writing derogatory articles about them or by pointing fingers and throwing stones at them. Yet, we can influence them covertly or overtly. As for Zacchaeus, Jesus used the latter but with love. What can break the demonic grip of corruption is the presence of God released through our lives. Jesus never attacked or accused Zacchaeus, rather, he invited himself to his house to eat with him. When we remove the scales of religion from our eyes we will begin to see opportunities to invade the earth and bring God’s kingdom to light.

Apostle Paul wrote, *“For the unbelieving husband has been sanctified through his wife, and the unbelieving wife has been sanctified through her believing husband.”* (1 Corinthians 7:14). Darkness can never be stronger than light; even the smallest flicker of a candlelight can dispel gross darkness! Zacchaeus, who had previously operated in and aided the dark, demonic forces bowed down to the authority that Jesus carried with Him. While Zacchaeus hurriedly climbed down and took Jesus to his house in great excitement and joy, the crowds were displeased, because they saw

that Jesus had gone to be the guest of a notorious sinner. Meanwhile, Zacchaeus stood before the Lord and said, "Sir, from now on I will give half my wealth to the poor, and if I find I have overcharged anyone on his taxes, I will penalize myself by giving him back four times as much!" By the presence of one empowered man, financial revival came to a city in one day, because Zacchaeus decided to return stolen money. If Zacchaeus had conned you of ₦2,000, he would give you ₦ 8,000! He paid everyone he owed four times over! What an influx of cash in that city!

ii. Unconditional Love

Unconditional love may be the most impossible thing we can imagine as human beings. It does not make sense. It does not add up. I know some people that will never accept that unconditional love exists; especially in a world like ours that is full of broken promises and shattered dreams. They fail to realize that love is a choice and not a feeling, and transformed people choose to walk in unconditional love every day of their lives. We may not *feel* like loving all the time, but we must make a conscious decision to walk in love every time. What we do is more important than how we feel, and every time we move with our actions, our feelings will follow. But if we allow our feelings to move us, we may never act on them.

When we see some people perpetrate great evil in our society, we will do well not to be mad at them. Rather, like Jesus, we must have a sharp sense of compassion and mercy for our society. Many of the people that the devil uses to perpetrate his plans are crying for help whether or not we know it. They are crying for saviours to come to their rescue (Obadiah 1:21). Accepting and loving people is not the same thing as approving of their behaviors, but we must know that unconditional love is one of the most powerful forces of change that God has given to His people. It is the fuel that not only brings about revival but total transformation. We cannot be transformers without the flame of unconditional love burning in our hearts.

"If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? Even 'sinners' love those who love them." (Luke 6:32)

The challenge for the leadership of the church is to disciple the church to love without conditions or bounds. Love is the gift we have been given and the full embodiment of the role we have been called to play. Every believer has been called to reach out to a broken, dying world in love. One time, I was in a conference and a missionary spoke about how he and his team travel into the dangerous terrains of the Arab world to reach out to the Muslims there. He has Muslim leaders present in many of his meetings where re-creative miracles (eyes popping out, legs growing out, etc.) take place through the power of God and souls are saved. He and his team are accepted by the locals there because he went with a message of love. Late Mother Teresa of Calcutta once said that “Love is a fruit in season at all times, and within reach of every hand.” Miracles happen whenever we present the gospel of love.

The love of God wants to find expression through us in areas where there is hatred, oppression and opposition. I desire to be part of a community that is known for showing unconditional love to those that do not deserve it. I want to be known as the man that loves sinners without looking back. The reason is because we were once sinners saved by grace, and this same grace enables us to love God and others because He first loved us.

iii. Radical Generosity

Wealth can truly transform a nation for good or otherwise. We have people using their wealth to transform nations in negative and degrading ways. Have you ever wondered how terrorism is being sponsored around the world today? When some people hear about radical generosity, they instantly imagine that it only applies to the rich. They are wrong because radical generosity is a lifestyle that any person can adopt. Today, the church is praying for revival, but we must first answer the question of radical generosity. Is true revival being stifled by our comfort and affluence? When I say radical generosity, I am talking about joyfully giving all of one's time, talent, and treasures for the sake of God's kingdom and a heavenly reward. Our giving must also be seen to positively transform the lives of those around us.

Now King Solomon gave the queen of Sheba all she desired, whatever she asked, besides what Solomon had given her according to the royal generosity. So she turned and went to her own country, she and her servants. (1 Kings 10:13 New King James Version)

Have you ever received a gift out of another person's royal generosity? Recently, I was wrecked by royal generosity. I was at a conference and I went to the books stand to check out a few books. A man I sat and prayed with during the meeting earlier in the day walked up to me and asked me to pick *anything* from the bookstore on his account. I gratefully picked up a few items, and he smiled at me and asked, "Is that enough? You can collect more." I took some more but he came around and pointed to other resources. "More," he said. Wow! I collected some *more*. At the end of the day, this man whom I barely knew blessed me with resources worth \$1,500. Treasure (or money) is not the only thing we should be generous with, because in some cases it may be easier to be generous with money than with our time and talents. Can you invest your time to mentor younger leaders in our field of endeavour for free? The time and talent invested in the next generation can bring about the kind of shift that will cause positive transformation.

Joseph was another character in the bible who demonstrated royal generosity. Genesis 40:6-8 (New King James Version) recorded that "*Joseph came in to them (his fellow prisoners) in the morning and looked at them, and saw that they were sad. So he asked Pharaoh's officers who were with him in the custody of his lord's house, saying, 'why do you look so sad today?' And they said to him, 'we each have had a dream, and there is no interpreter of it.' So Joseph said to them, 'Do not interpretations belong to God? Tell them to me, please.'*" This is the account of a dreamer that did not have any body to interpret his own dreams, but he went ahead to interpret the dreams of other people. We are living in an exciting time in history where there are opportunities to give everything that we have in the service of humanity.

A person who is always eager and ready to serve others will never lack ideas. When you make somebody's dream manifest, God will make your own dreams manifest as well. Jesus also said that, "*if you have not been*

faithful in what is another man's, who will give you what is your own?"
(Luke 16:12 New King James Version) Nowadays, we have proliferation of self-help books and seminars that tell you to "Be your own boss" These are not wrong in themselves, but if everyone becomes a boss, who will be the faithful, diligent, employee? I am fully of the view that even before you become your own boss, you must serve, because nobody becomes great except by serving others. Only those that have served are actually fit to lead, because leadership is exalted service. However, if "being your own boss" is taught as a self-leadership quality while serving the vision of others, then I do not have a problem with it.

We should be people that intentionally serve one another and the cities where we find ourselves. We should sow seeds that benefit others, not necessarily for reward but in the assurance that God will watch over His word that "seedtime and harvest will never cease" and He will reward us. The culture of generosity is not tied to people who have "substance" like many erroneously believe. Joseph was in the prison, had nothing but his own dreams, but was still generous with his time and talent. Even when he solved the dreams of Pharaoh, he never negotiated anything as a reward; not even his freedom, but he got that and even more. This is the attitude we must have if we truly want to transform society.

CHAPTER TWO

ROYALTY AND THE RESTORATION OF DAVID'S TABERNACLE

*The hunger for a kingdom without His Presence is a hunger
for a kingdom without a King. (Bill Johnson)*

Now King David was told, "The Lord has blessed the household of Obed-Edom and everything he has, because of the ark of God." So David went down and brought up the ark of God from the house of Obed-Edom to the City of David with rejoicing. When those who were carrying the ark of the Lord had taken six steps, he sacrificed a bull and a fattened calf. David, wearing a linen ephod, danced before the Lord with all his might, while he and the entire house of Israel brought up the ark of the Lord with shouts and the sound of trumpets.

As the ark of the Lord was entering the City of David, Michal daughter of Saul watched from a window. And when she saw King David leaping and dancing before the Lord, she despised him in her heart.

They brought the ark of the Lord and set it in its place inside the tent that David had pitched for it, and David sacrificed burnt offerings and fellowship offerings before the Lord. After he had finished sacrificing the burnt offerings and fellowship offerings, he blessed the people in the name of the Lord Almighty. (2 Samuel 6:12-18)

"In that day I will restore David's fallen tent. I will repair its broken places, restore its ruins, and build it as it used to be." (Amos 9:11)

The hunger for a kingdom without His presence is a hunger for a kingdom without a King. Principles are not bad as long as they were birthed from God's presence. God our Father is very creative and innovative, always doing new things in different times and seasons. God is not stuck on principles; instead He is spontaneous in His love. Principles can quickly become stale and traditional if they are not refined in God's presence. Jesus

healed more than one blind man, but he did not perform each miracle the same way. He understood that God does not stereotype his power.

God's presence is so real; it is imaginative and creative. I believe the time is now when young people on fire for God will walk round the premises of a dead business, just praying in the Spirit and that business will bloom again. Forensic science has established that when humans leave a scene, they leave behind traces of themselves that can linger for a very long time. I also believe that we can leak the presence of God and leave deposits of the kingdom everywhere we go. This is what being transformed to cause transformation is all about! This will only be possible when we are actually carriers of the presence of God in the first place.

Why is the tabernacle that King David erected thousands of centuries ago still very vital to the believer in contemporary times? God called King David a man after His heart because he relentlessly pursued God's presence (Psalm 42:1). He never took a major step without inquiring from the Lord; even while he was running away from Saul he always consulted the Lord. In 1 Samuel 30 the bible records that when his people sought to kill him, David encouraged himself in the Lord. He requested that the *Urim* and *Thummim* (the means of revelation entrusted to the High Priests) be brought again so that he could inquire of the Lord. Sadly, with the information overload in our society and the variety of quick-fix approaches sold to us through the media, people may laugh at those that would rather wait on the Lord and pursue His presence before they take any decision. We are at risk when we place high premium on principles and best practices but neglect to always inquire from God like King David did.

I know a bank in my nation where the presence of God practically turned the entire organization around. It was sensitivity to the Holy Spirit and not expertise that caused the transformation in that bank. All the Chief Executive Officer did was to bring in believers that were also in the corporate world who stood as "corporate prophets" to prophesy to the tools of trade daily. This looked and sounded foolish, but God is no respecter of persons and He chooses to use the foolish things of this world to confound the wise. God is seeking to show his power through His children in these

days. The work of transformation is not a domain that is reserved for pastors alone but for the entire Body of Christ.

When the *Davidic* tabernacle of praise and worship is established in our cities, things will happen so fast. It does not make any sense, for example, to simply worship all night and your city will be transformed yet that is possible with God. The truth is that when there is sacrifice on the altar fire must fall. In 2 Samuel 6:10- 15, as King David led the Ark of the Lord back into the city of Jerusalem, from where it had been taken away many years earlier, he sacrificed a bull and a fattened calf when they had moved six steps and he danced with all his might, much to the disdain of his wife. When the Ark was brought into Jerusalem, there were shouts and the sound of trumpets. No wonder the bible says “let everything that has breath praise the lord,” not everything that has a voice. A deaf and dumb person can still praise God. There is a choir in Lagos State of Nigeria that is composed of deaf and dumb choristers. I am sure that anybody that ever hears this wonders how it can be.

A missionary, Pa Elton, once lived and died in Ilesha, Nigeria. During his life time, he prophetically spoke that “*Africa is like a pistol and Nigeria is the trigger.*” Something wants to stop the trigger, because without the trigger the gun is useless. This is why our church, Firm Foundation and many other churches have been lifting altars of prayers, praises and sacrifice to God for the transformation of our land. We believe that when God sees our altars, His fire will fall on our city and our nation. Then the prophecy will come to pass we will trigger the gun of salvation and God’s presence in all spheres of influence.

Notice the humility with which King David led the people to praise and celebrate the return of the Ark that symbolized God’s presence. He was a famous warrior king, one that never lost a battle for that matter, but he stripped himself of his royal robes and danced nearly naked before the Ark of the Lord. In the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5:13) Jesus said that “blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of God. Humility simply means less of us and more of God. Nowadays, there is a way that certificates and achievements easily define a person’s identity. Some people

are so full of themselves, but King David knew his identity as king flowed from the presence of God. When David returned to greet his family (2 Samuel 6:20) his wife Michah the daughter of Saul came out and expressed disgust at his show of humility and praise to God. You can never humble yourself before God and be humiliated; it is when you humble yourself before Him that you can be lifted by men. For me, the best part of a service is the praise and worship time, but sadly some people believe that praising and worshipping are delay tactics to wait for more people to arrive before the sermon starts; how pitiful. The tabernacle of David was just a piece of furniture under a tent on the top of Mount Zion. Music is played there twenty four hours a day. In our days, twenty four hours of praise and worship is observed in the building where the Central Bank of one African country operates to keep the anointing upon the money. The presence of God is incomparable.

Dr. Mike Murdock once said that he has sound system in every part of his house to ensure that praise and worship music play all the time. There is a way that heavenly-inspired music attracts the supernatural power of Heaven, but some people confuse this kind of music with inspirational music. The kind of music that releases God's presence is that which was inspired by Him in the first place. There is a city in Guatemala where the farmers drive in Mercedes cars and Jeeps to their farms. The land is so blessed that their carrot, for example, is four times the normal size of a carrot. They submitted their land to God to bless it, and the moment heaven opened over the city prosperity came and the jail houses shut down because there were no more crimes. Where the presence of God dwells, what follows is supernatural favour and prosperity. As children of God, if we make God's presence a priority, every other blessing will be added on to us.

CHAPTER THREE

THE POWER OF COVENANTAL RELATIONSHIPS

*Only two things will last forever- the word of God and
people (**Rick Warren**)*

Now when he had finished speaking to Saul, the soul of Jonathan was knit to the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul. Saul took him that day, and would not let him go home to his father's house anymore. Then Jonathan and David made a covenant, because he loved him as his own soul. And Jonathan took off the robe that was on him and gave it to David, with his armor, even to his sword and his bow and his belt.
1 Samuel 18:1-4

Only sons and not orphans can enter into covenants. Covenant relationships are different from moral or contractual relationships. In a contractual relationship, for example, it is the contract document that outlines the right of each party. In a covenant relationship, one party needs to give up his life for the other person. The person that has given up his or her life does not remain the same way. Little wonder the bible says that except a seed of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it abides by itself. Until we understand covenant as sons we may break relationships on a daily basis.

Every person on the face of this earth has been wounded in one way or the other. Wounded people usually have the mentality of orphans, so our planet was an orphan planet until Jesus came with the spirit of adoption. He adopted us as sons and He gave us a ministry to reconcile others. It is high time the church understood covenant. In our church, we have a membership class for our new family members at the end of which they take the membership covenant. By agreeing to the terms, they are simply saying that they will protect, serve and be vulnerable to other members of our church family. Nobody wants to be vulnerable, because understandably there is a lack of trust and there is fear. This however should not be the case in the body of Christ.

I addressed some men recently and I exposed to them how some married men have never made love to a *vulnerable* wife. Making love to a vulnerable woman is more than just sex or an act, it is an experience. Many married

couples do not take advantage of their covenant relationships to be vulnerable to their partners. They may be married but they are no more than mere roommates. Some couples are afraid to give in everything in their marriages, because they are unsure of their partner's motives. Becoming a vulnerable partner in your marriage means that you are committed to giving and loving your partner without fear.

In the Jewish culture, there is a kind of covenant called the '*covenant of salt*.' Every Jewish man carries a container of salt around in his waist pouch because Israel is a desert and has extremely hot weather. At short intervals, they put their hand in their salt pouch and take a lick to avoid muscle ache. History records that the Scottish explorer David Livingstone carried a goat around during his time in Africa. He suffered from stomach ulcer so he needed the goat for its milk. One time he encountered a powerful king with whom he needed to enter a covenant. The king needed to give Livingstone his staff so that he could show that he had the powerful king's authority and receive their support wherever he went. So Livingstone gave the goat to the king, because his mission was more than the ulcer. That is a show of covenant and the power it possesses.

When I got married to my wife, she was already a pastor but God opened my eyes to see the operation of covenant in the life of Joseph and Mary. The Lord told me expressly that he brought me into her life to nurture her vision and not to let it die. Are you ready to die for somebody? Nobody wants to die for anybody anymore, it has become "me, myself and I." Husbands do not want to die for their wives, and wives do not want to submit to their husbands. Many homes have two visions running concurrently and that is the root of division. Sadly, the children are left with no option but to take sides with either parent. Kingdom citizens must live differently and make covenants count.

There are three important things about covenant relationship. The first thing is that, **covenant relationship is solely operated by sons not orphans**. An orphan cannot enter a covenant relationship, but can easily enter a contractual relationship. In a wedding vow, there is a line that reads "*marriage is a legal contract*." We do not make light of it, but marriage is

also a spiritual contract. In money market operations, there is the money market where banks trade with each other; they do not trade with paper but through phone calls or other forms of modern communication. The treasurer of one bank simply informs the treasurer of another bank that they wish to sell a particular fund and the buyer simply says “it’s ok, done deal!” And that is all! Their motto is- “your word is your bond!”

We (the church) need to get to that level where our word is our bond? Where our young men can say to our ladies ‘I’m going to marry you for life’ and they will stick with that. Orphans cannot go through anything with anyone; they are always looking to protect only themselves. The bible says in 1 Samuel 1:3-4 that “*Jonathan made a covenant with David because he loved him as himself...*” If you do not love someone as yourself, you can never go into a covenant relationship with that person. No wonder the second commandment says “*love your neighbor as yourself.*” Here was Jonathan telling David “I know I’m the king and the heir, but I’ve seen that you are the anointed one, so I’m going to step back and let you go.” Are you ready to die for somebody? When you enter a covenant with a person, you do so not only with him or her alone; you are entering into the covenant with that person’s generation forever. After David entered into covenant with Jonathan, David had two opportunities to kill King Saul - Jonathan’s father, but for his covenant with Jonathan, he refrained from killing King Saul. In a covenant relationship, you do not do anything wicked against the covenant; even when that person has no idea that he or she is being protected by the covenant you have with someone else.

The bible says in Ruth 1:16 that “*Ruth replied, don’t urge me to turn away from you, where you go, I will go, and where you stay I will stay and your people will be my people and your God my God*” and in verse “*where you die, I will die and there I will be buried, may the Lord deal with me, be it ever so severely if anything but death separate you and me.*” This was Ruth telling Naomi that “I will not go back on this covenant am making with you.” Bible historians believe that Ruth and Orpah were sisters, but contract made Orpah to take the convenient path while covenant made Ruth take the other path. Orpah saw her marriage to Naomi’s son as a contractual arrangement that ended when he died, but Ruth saw her

marriage to Naomi's son as a covenant and was willing to hold on to her. The bible says in Ruth 2:23 that "*Ruth stayed close to the servant girls of Boaz,until the valley and wheat harvest were finished and she lived with her mother-in-law.*" In covenant you do not come in to gain, rather, you come in to give. You hardly think of what you stand to gain now or in the future. I know someone may easily give the example of Peter who denied Jesus Christ because it was convenient. The truth is that Peter was in his orphan state when he denied Jesus Christ. He entered sonship after the Holy Spirit had come upon them on the day of Pentecost. After the encounter at Pentecost, the same Peter preached the gospel of the risen Christ and 3,000 men gave their lives to Jesus Christ and were saved in a single day. The bible says that:

Since you are God's children, God sent the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, and the Spirit cries out, "Father." So now you are not a slave; you are God's child, and God will give you the blessing he promised, because you are his child. Galatians 4:6-7 (New Century Version)

Sometimes, the people outside the body of Christ understand covenant more than the children of God. They stay true to agreements made, covenants entered into while kingdom citizens make light of covenant for lack of understanding. It is evil for a person to be in the same place or in the same church with a girl, deceitfully promise her marriage, maybe even sleeps with her and then is nowhere to be found. That is wickedness! It is also a wicked thing to marry a man just because you want to deal with him or because you think he provides an escape route from poverty, it would amount to dealing wickedly against the covenant. The bible says Ruth stayed with her mother-in-law, she was the one bringing in their daily bread, yet she stayed. What happens when some people begin to prosper? Do they remember the covenant they had before things turned around for their good?

The second thing about covenant relationship is the fact that **it is the only kind of relationship that will last forever**. Apostle Peter said that the family that will last forever is the spiritual family, but some people are only committed to their biological families. This is why it is important for a church to have the culture of family. We may not be able to agree equally on

many things but we can be united despite our different opinions. For example, a husband and wife will always have differences, yet they find a way to live together peacefully. We need to imbibe the culture of family bearing in mind that not every member of a family agrees on everything. In a covenant family relationship, we can be different yet united. In a contractual relationship it is agreement on certain terms that makes us united. For example, a husband and wife will always have differences, because God made us different by design. Little wonder Apostle Paul said that marriage is a mystery. It takes a mysterious God to unravel a mystery to anyone. No one can ever fully explain their wives or husbands; we need God to reveal them to us. I want to be with people for life. Some of the people that ministered with Billy Graham in his life time also bought places near each other; they are living to die with one another. The body of believers should catch this revelation and forego petty quarrels and rivalries!

Covenant relationship is sacrificial and courageous in nature. If you do well for other people so that they can return the favour, what good is it to you? Why visit people when they are sick, so that they will visit you when you are also sick? Is church now a social association? Covenant people stick together no matter what happens. I always tell those that care to listen that even if I were told that my spiritual father and mentor- Apostle Lawrence Achudume- was involved in a scandal (adultery) or a scandal of any sort (God forbid), I will be the first to call him and say "I am with you my daddy." That is not condoning sin but sticking with the relationship for restoration. Covenant is when things are going bad, you remain undaunted and let the other person know that you are there for them. For example, in a marriage covenant, submission does not start when the couple agrees, it starts when they disagree. Jonathan was a son, he knew his father dealt wickedly against David who had been anointed in his stead to rule over Israel, yet he followed him till death.

Some people may try to convince you that you are being used, but it is that person that is actually being an orphan rather than a son. I have decided that nobody will ever make me dance to their tune; the fact that I am doing well for someone that has other motives is okay with me. Have I ever been

used? Yes, I have. Covenant can be violated and people will take advantage of your kindness, but it is the decision you take afterwards that is more important. In 2 Samuel 9:1 the bible says that “one day David asked, *“Is there anyone left of Saul's family? If so, I'd like to show him some kindness in honor of Jonathan.”* David understood that when he entered into covenant with Jonathan, it was a covenant with the entire family of King Saul. This is why I tell people that a spouse’s parents are no longer called “parents-in-law,” but “parents-in-covenant.” So the day you got married, you no longer have one mother and father, but two mothers and fathers. You also have to give them money and other kinds of assistance where it is needed.

The third thing about covenant relationship is that **it is in this relationship that you find your destiny**. The parties to the covenant sacrifice so that at the end of the day they will find their destiny. Sadly, many marriages in our society are breaking up, because one party goes ahead to find his or her own vision. When you pursue your vision you may not find your destiny, but when you seek relationships you will always find your destiny. When I met my wife many years ago, she was already pastoring our church. Many people thought I had come into her life to steal or divert her vision. We had crises and some people advised me to pull out and leave, but God had told me that he brought me in to midwife the next level of the vision. It was tough; most people did not understand my heart although some did. Some well-meaning people (I miss them) left the church because they felt I was coming to take the vision, and they would rather not be a part of it.

The power of covenant relationship is what the corporate world calls networking. It may be more difficult to live out your royal destiny if you do not have friends. The bible says two are better than one for they have a reward for their labour. We need covenant relationships so that we will achieve our destiny, when I mean ‘achieve destiny’ I do not mean that destiny is a place to attain to, but a responsibility to bless our generation with what we have inside us. The way we build or destroy relationships is a good indication of how far we will go in the journey of destiny, because there are always about four persons between you and the person you desire

to meet. I have had doors open for me not because I had money but because I knew people. This is why if we must keep relationships, they should be significant covenant relationships. How do you value relationship? Do you see them as building blocks to destiny or as a necessary evil?

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CHAPTER FOUR

FAVOUR: THE INHERITANCE OF ROYALTY

God programmed the DNA for victory into every person on the face of the earth. He won the ultimate victory and He wants us to enjoy it with him. (Benson Akhigbe II)

And Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men. Luke 2:52

The grace of God cannot be fully defined, and nothing would give us more pleasure than to see every child of God function in the supernatural. For instance, a person does not need to bear the title “*pastor*” or to be spooky for them to give you a genuine word from God. It is okay for them to be joyful, normal, and to exhibit the fruit of the Spirit. They do not need to put up an act that would make you feel that they have attained a spiritual height that you cannot reach. That would be a beautiful opportunity to dominate others, and sadly, this is not the way of The Kingdom of God. Some leaders erroneously harbour the opinion that they have something that their followers cannot have, and they take advantage of that opinion to dominate their followers. God designed leadership to function top-down and from bottom-up. A leader stays on top to protect and goes to the bottom to empower. The bible says that counsel in the heart of a man is like deep water, a man of understanding will bring it out. In other words, there are some desires in our hearts that we may not know that God has put there. A leader is supposed to ask God “Lord what do you have for these people? What is their prophetic destiny? This may even be at a time when these people are not behaving according to their prophetic destiny (who and what heaven originally designed them to be); a leader does not address current behaviour because it is easy to see dirt in people’s lives, but to see gold you have to look with another eye.

A man once shared a story about how they dug a large expanse of area and leveled some hills because they were mining gold. Deep in the earth, the

gold is buried together with earth, but during the mining process, the gold is separated from the earth. He added that some gold would remain together with the earth even when it has been separated from the gold. A recent technology has been developed that enables the miner look closer into the earth to discover more gold. In the same way, it is quite easy for us to look at someone and conclude about them. It is a different thing to be able to look at someone through the eyes of heaven and see the next inventor, business giant or national reformer. Too many times, we relate with people based on their behavior.

The vision of our church is to “*raise people empowered to cure desert places in all stages and segments of life*”. In other words we are raising people who are empowered, not by their intellect or by the educational acumen. Rather, they will be people empowered by the presence of God to live righteously, because righteousness is not by works but was inputted into our account when we gave our lives to Christ. I tell people that when a person becomes saved, the capacity to sin is not taken away, what is taken away is the capacity to enjoy sin. This is the reason why if I continue to address your righteousness and tell you your prophetic destiny, it will not matter how bad your behaviour, you will soon fall in line. We are to call those things that are not as though they were. Someone shared a testimony recently, he said he called out somebody in a meeting and said to him prophetically “*you are a holy man.*” After about two years the man came and told him how “I came to church and you called me a “*holy man.*” “I was on drugs when I came for that meeting,” but today, I am here living that word you spoke over my life. The spoken word into our lives is real and this is why you must constantly document what God is saying over your life, so that you can say it to yourself every day. There may be disorder and insecurity in your country that makes it hardly possible to see anything good about it. It is very easy to see the disturbances in Nigeria (or any country you live), one does not need to look too far, but it takes another eye to look at the country and say “I see beauty coming out of this.” God never told us he will give us beauty for beauty, instead He gives beauty for ashes. God did not tell Ezekiel to talk about the dryness of the bones, instead he asked Ezekiel to prophecy to the bones. How come we talk about all the ills in our society, but we are not prophesying what we want to see?

One of the two ways to walk in your royal destiny is to walk in two dimensions of favour; favour with God and favour with man. If you look closely at the life of Jesus, you will clearly see that these two dimensions were always at work. During my meditation time recently, I was asking the Holy Spirit how come Jesus did not just transform the society completely before he left but asked us to take over. He took me back to Adam and reminded me that in the garden Adam did not have cars or modern gadgets for example. He said to me *“I left it in your hands, it would be sweeter to allow you share in the victory.”* For it is the glory of God to conceal a matter, but the glory of kings to search it out. In other words, God does not hide things from you, he hides things for you. When you play hide and seek with your children, the fun of the game is in the searching and the finding not in remaining hidden.

God programmed the DNA for victory into every person on the face of the earth. He won the ultimate victory and He wants us to enjoy it with him. Royalty operates in two ways; favour with God and favour with the people. Royalty does not beg or try to deny its status. As royalty, you are supposed to rule with the heart of a servant and serve with the heart of a king. Jesus, the ultimate expression of royalty, took off his garment washed his disciples' feet and did not feel any less than God. We should ask ourselves how it was possible for Jesus to increase in favour with God and man.

INCREASING IN FAVOUR WITH GOD

First, how do you increase in favour with God? Maybe you have read through the entire bible and you practice many other spiritual disciplines, but your motive is for the master to love you, then you are mistaken. Increasing in favour with God, first of all, means that you have an encounter of His love. That one cannot be taught, it can only be experienced, this why the inner healing movement is gaining momentum in our church family. I remember once we were in a leaders' meeting and I began to talk about the love revolution. I asked everyone to close their eyes and let us paddle into the heart of our Heavenly Father. A young lady was apprehensive at first, but she decided to go on the adventure all the same.

Then God showed up and she had an unforgettable encounter. You know that John was called the beloved Apostle or the disciple whom Jesus loved; little wonder he wrote the love letters of the New Testament. The truth is that until we encounter the love of God, we cannot love others as well. Loving others is as a result of God loving us then us loving ourselves which will make loving others the new 'normal.'

Many people think that we must obey God for Him to love us, which is simply putting the cart before the horse. When the bible says the "*fear of the Lord*," some of us think that he will use a hammer to hit our heads when we do wrong. This is why when some people fall into sin, they stop going to church, they don't pick their pastor's calls and when they decide to come back they simply say that they have been away on a business trip or give some other excuses. The bible called Abraham, a '*friend of God*.' Not only did Abraham know that God loved him, he understood that obedience should flow out of that love that God had for him. I am amazed because this was a man that did not live long enough to enter the reality of the New Testament.

We increase in favor with God when we get a first hand revelation of his love for us. Some persons actually believe that the reason their lives are not working well is because of some things they did or have not done. They believe that God is keeping malice with them, so they need to do more; maybe increase their tithe to 20% or 30% or 40% so that God will be marking their "score card". That is not love; that is the law of karma. The beautiful part is that it is not what you have read in the bible, it is more of what you have encountered that convinces you that God loves you. One of the men of God I respect so much was asked "if you are to start ministry all over again, what will you do?" and he replied "I want to get a deeper revelation of the goodness of God." That God is good is not just a song, it is a revelation of His goodness in my life. Jesus had to grow to the revelation that His Father is a good Father, no wonder on the cross, when He was abandoned because of our sins that He took upon Himself, He still yielded His Spirit into the Father's hands. What happens when you have everything planned out, God himself told you, I want you to go to some places and once you got there the doors closed and you almost lost your life? You will

be forced to ask “You were the one that sent me there, why did You abandon me?” But God is still a good father, not willing to put more on us than we can bear.

We can increase in favour with God through faithfulness in our assignments. Do you know why King Saul lost the throne to David? It was not because he committed a personal sin, because Saul started well. It was because he sinned against the assignment. Check David’s sins, they were personal to him, they were not against the assignment. God instructed Saul to eliminate the Amalekites, “do not take anyone, and do not rescue anyone.” That was the assignment! There are many of us that will not experience favour personally, but it will come upon our assignments. Some of us were called to be doctors, entertainers, scientists or entrepreneurs. God will put his favour upon that assignment. This is why you can come into an environment and people just like you, and until people like you, you may not be able to get some things; somebody must like you to sign your promotion letter, promote your business or approve your next big deal. I dealt to a large extent about “The Power of Likeability” in my book “TAKE CHARGE!”

The bible says that the steadfast love of the Lord never ceases, his mercies never come to an end, and they are new every morning because of His great faithfulness. So, the next time you find yourself worrying, go before him and say “reassure me of your love, reassure me of your goodness.” when God created the world and saw that it was good. To God, ‘good’ is a standard. If you do not get this assurance every day, someone else will assure you of a lie. The reality that God our father is a good God is a sure way to grow in favour with God, because in every situation that may come our way, we will go through with the revelation still that God is good.

INCREASING IN FAVOUR WITH MEN

Whether we realize it yet or not, we need favour from men, and it is the favour upon your assignment that will cause men to show you favour. One of the ways you covet favour with people is by loving and honoring them. Some people find it very difficult to love people that do not hold the same spiritual beliefs as they. It is high time we learnt to respect the protocol of those that are different from us if we are really serious about influencing them. In Genesis 41:14, the bible says that “Joseph shaved himself” before he could appear before Pharaoh. The Egyptians, unlike the Israelites, did not wear beards, and Joseph knew that he could not come before the king with his grown beards. In Daniel 4, the bible says that King Nebuchadnezzar had a dream that none of his wise men or astrologers could interpret. God gave Daniel the interpretation but Daniel did not give the King the interpretation in just any manner. Daniel said “oh king, I wish this interpretation given is for your enemies.” Take a moment to think about that. Here was the same king that killed his family, took him away from his own land to serve him. Now this same king had a dream that he will be in the wilderness for seven years and eat grass like an animal. Yet, Daniel still honoured a dishonourable man? Until the body of Christ understands the power of love and the power of honor in taking territories, we might not be able to do much after praying and fasting. Daniel honoured a pagan king and he enjoyed favour with him and even beyond his reign. A man that carries honour is always welcomed and the doors are always open to him.

What transformed Paul the terrorist into Paul the Apostle? It was kisses from a good God. What about Zacchaeus? It was kisses from a good God. What about the Samaritan woman, Mary the prostitute or the adulterous woman? It was kisses from a good God. How could a simple dinner transform a corrupt tax collector? Jesus did not accuse or condemn, he only showed love and honour to a man that, in the eyes of his society, did not deserve it. When you honour, love and serve a person, that’s how you increase in favour with men. Both are very important, and when the two combine their forces in your life, you will fulfill your assignment.

CHAPTER FIVE

LIVING OUT YOUR ROYAL DESTINY

*We need to get to that place where we understand that we
have power and love, because it is by love you serve.*
(Benson Akhigbe II)

One of the most important questions we can ask ourselves is “do I really know who I am”? We are priests and kings, and we must understand that living out your royal destiny is not something we attain, because it is who we already are. We need to live out this identity everywhere; home, market place, everywhere! I asked my friend Dr. Abu Bako why believers misbehave when they enter the marketplace, contrary to the prophecies that have gone ahead that wherever believers take charge there will be righteousness. He told me that the challenge is that when believers arrive on the scene, their identities are not known. Some believers also enter the market place with a *religious mindset*; forgetting that as kingdom citizens our agenda should be “*as it is in heaven so shall it be on earth.*”

Daniel and his three young Hebrew friends- Shadrach, Abednego and Meshach were from the royal lineage in Jerusalem, but they ended up as slaves in a pagan country. They were taken away from their place of assignment into another environment, and the time came for them to be tested whether they had conformed to the environment or they will make the environment conform to what was inside them. It is what happens on the inside of a person that shows on the outside (environment) of that person. There is no trick around this rule. After one of our New Year Eve services, I came to church the morning after and discovered that our church premises and surroundings were littered with all kinds of trash. Some of our guests had actually recreated their internal environment in our church premises regardless of their “spirituality”. I had a similar experience when I went to pick my permanent voter’s card from a registration unit at a primary school. I arrived at about the time when the pupils were on recess, and I discovered that the pupils went beside the fence to urinate. I

wondered how these pupils would be expected to behave differently even when they were taken to another environment. The bible says that:

But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light. Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy. 1 Peter 2:9-10 (New International Version)

We do not need to be born into a royal family for us to assume the mentality of royalty. When you realize that your heavenly father is a king, you will live like royalty. The bible says that believers are royalty and royalty serves humanity, in other words we are supposed to have the mentality of royalty but meekness and servant hood in our hearts. If you look at Moses, for example, he stayed in the palace of Pharaoh to understand the mindset of royalty, but he needed the heart of a servant to be able to deliver his people from captivity. Moses spent the next forty years in the wilderness raising his father-in-law's sheep so that by leading and protecting the sheep daily, he could learn patience, care, and ultimately earn a heart for service.

We need to get to that place where we understand that we have power and love, because it is by love you serve. When you understand these two principles you will always be relevant in any dispensation, because as a kingdom citizen, you are not looking for money, you are looking for significance.

The relevance of the believer is dependent or proportional to his attunement to the voice of God. This is the time to study the bible, and become more conversant with scripture. As the Holy Spirit begins to breathe on the word, some verses will lighten up your heart and you will know that it is a special word from God to you. We have a goal in our church to host God's presence and love people.

An eighty years old man who had been the CEO of a multinational company in this country for many years shared his secret at a men's meeting. He revealed that the Holy Spirit is the reason for his critically successful decisions. In the market place, the believer needs more of the Holy Spirit

than a pastor does. Some believers erroneously believe that the Holy Spirit is that “*thing*” the pastors use to slay people under the anointing during church services. We need to get ahead to experience the tangible presence of God and that is the Holy Spirit. How many times have we gone into a shop and asked the Holy Spirit what He wants us to do there? How many times have we asked the Holy Spirit to tell us what to say to a customer? We need to have a walking-talking relationship with the Holy Spirit to experience His presence in the tiny details of our everyday lives..

CULTIVATING HONOUR

The believer needs to imbibe the culture of honour. Honour is not about honouring only the people we think are honourable. Honour is about honouring people not because they are honourable, but because we are honourable. Honour is not only upwards, honour is downwards. Honour means to look at the gate keeper and say “good morning.” We need to respect people and when we create an environment for respect; everyone will find it easy to respect one another no matter their titles or positions. When someone disrespects you and you disrespect the person in return, you become a member of his own team of dishonour. Royalty treats even paupers with honour and respect. We need to understand one thing though; the fact that we treat people right and treat them with honour does not mean that they will treat us in the same manner. Sometimes, we may get insults in return and at other times we may be clearly misunderstood. But it is not about them, it is about us, because as long as we continue in the culture of honour, our environment will respond in honour as well.

The bible says in

Daniel 8-12 that “*Daniel purposed in his heart, that he will not defile himself with the portion of the kings delicacies nor with the wine he drank, therefore he requested the chief of eunuchs that he may not defile himself.*”

So, God brought Daniel into the favour the chief of the king’s eunuchs. Daniel was royalty (being born into royalty in his home nation), but he displayed honour and in return he got favoured by royalty. How do we

address people? Do we make a point of reminding others of our ranks or positions so that we can intimidate or humiliate them? Daniel did not remind the chief eunuch that he was of royal lineage. Rather, he politely requested from the chief eunuch. A young man in one of our church locations once shared his personal experience with me. When he got married a few years ago, his wife did not attend our church with him, although he always wanted her to worship with him at our church. One day, I went to a super store to buy some items, and unknown to me the wife of this young man was in the store doing some shopping too. As I got to the payment counter she observed from a distance that the cashier was very rude to me, but I treated her politely. That day when they got home, she asked to come to church with her husband. That is big time evangelism! I sincerely believe that when we host God's presence and love people the outcome is evangelism. If you forget everything about honour remember this thing- ultimate honour as a believer is "treating people they way you will treat the God that first loved you." More of the subject of honour in the next chapter.

THE POWER OF WISDOM

The next key to living out our royal destiny is the power of wisdom and understanding. About Daniel and his three friends, the bible says that:

To these four young men God gave knowledge and understanding of all kinds of literature and learning. And Daniel could understand visions and dreams of all kinds. At the end of the time set by the king to bring them in, the chief official presented them to Nebuchadnezzar. The king talked with them, and he found none equal to Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah; so they entered the king's service. In every matter of wisdom and understanding about which the king questioned them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians and enchanters in his whole kingdom. Daniel 1:17-20.

We need to understand that wisdom and understanding is already ours; and no believer can walk with the Holy Spirit and be foolish. A man (believer) shared an experience about how he prayed and God showed him

a vision about inventions and innovations in Heaven that many believers prayed for in the 1940's that are already available. God needed some believers to tap in because every Holy Spirit-inspired prayer is always speaking before God and is still potent today. This is why I tell believers not to relent because the manifestations of the answers to the prayers they are praying now will be delivered to their future generations. Most times, believers relent in their prayers because their goal for praying is to get something from God. This is a mistaken belief, because the primary goal of prayer is to have an encounter with God to enable you to impact your generation; receiving is a secondary issue. We need to be high on discernment, because the challenges we face every day may not be the kind that our educational certificates prepared us for. Wisdom and understanding will empower us to view situations and challenges critically, to see supernatural dimensions that no one else can see. The wisdom of God supersedes human understanding, because in the book of James the bible says that the wisdom that is from above is pure. If people claim to be wise and they use that wisdom for craftiness and mischief, they are not wise but only cunning.

WALKING COURAGEOUSLY

Lastly, we need to walk courageously. Courage is not the absence of fear, it is moving ahead in spite of our fears. Nothing would give the enemy more joy than to see believers paralyzed by fear. In the book of Act 4:29-30, the bible records the prayer of the early believers in the face of persecutions.

They prayed:

Now, Lord, consider their threats and enable your servants to speak your word with great boldness. Stretch out your hand to heal and perform miraculous signs and wonders through the name of your holy servant Jesus."

We need courage because there will always be the presence of fear. God did not give us the spirit of fear, the Holy Spirit was given to us to keep us sound and powerful against all the devices of the enemy.

CHAPTER SIX

TRANSFORMING YOUR BELIEF SYSTEM

*The quality of your life is determined by the quality of your thoughts or belief system **(Steve Backlund)***

Rom 12:2

Don't become so well-adjusted to your culture that you fit into it without even thinking. Instead, fix your attention on God. You'll be changed from the inside out. Readily recognize what he wants from you, and quickly respond to it. Unlike the culture around you, always dragging you down to its level of immaturity, God brings the best out of you, develops well-formed maturity in you

(THE MESSAGE)

Our current civilization is growing at an alarming pace. One only needs to follow the news or social media to realize how ideas are springing up and affecting how we live. Therefore it is even more imperative that as believers, we should endeavour to spend more time together in deep fellowship. Proverbs 27: 17 says, “*As iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another.*” It may not be obvious at a first glance, but something powerful happens in a community of believers. It may be just five, ten or fifteen people, but revival can still break out there. I also believe that if you seek after signs they will follow you; the disciples sought Jesus and after Jesus left signs and wonders followed them. So, I want to be where the Word of God is, because there are some things that are not learnt but caught.

Heart Transformation

From the beginning of time, cultures along with its people have been shaped by their beliefs. Pause and examine your life for a moment. What are your beliefs about finances, marriage, career, the society? I am certain that you will quickly notice that your beliefs influence how you make decisions. History is good; it is good to learn from those who have gone ahead of us, but we cannot rely solely on the past for our lives. We must begin to allow God change our lives transform our minds by changing the way we think.

Manufacturers understand a very important principle: the end product you get is as a result of what has been programmed from the start of production. You can never get a Mercedes ML SUV if you programmed a Mercedes SLK coupe. The only way that can ever happen is if the programming was changed and restarted. Therefore, the quality of your life is determined by the quality of your thoughts or belief system. The engineer cannot speak (even in tongues) over the line and expect the car to change to his wishes if he does not change the programming. Many Christians are like that; they make declarations without first changing the state of our hearts.

“May the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be pleasing in your sight, O Lord, my Rock and my Redeemer” (Psalm 19:14)

When we constantly meditate on God’s promises, our hearts become transformed. We will begin to see things from His perspective and no longer elevate the devil or the evil that happens in the world over hope and joy. That is why we celebrate testimonies in our church, because we want to constantly see what heaven is doing. Debunk every lie that the devil is in charge and that God is clueless about what to do. He knows the end from the beginning and in the final analysis, we are victorious! So what do we do? As we begin to renew our minds with God’s Word, He will transform our hearts. This is so important because out of our hearts flow the issues of life (see Proverbs 4:23). If you pray and still think of where the answers will come from, your heart has not yet been transformed. This is why our prayers have to be balanced with the truth from God’s Word.

We must constantly work on our beliefs, many believers are not able to transform themselves, their families and their societies because of wrong beliefs. They cannot launch social initiatives because they are worried about their lack of finances. Unknown to them, poverty is not a lack of money, because you can have a lot of money and still be very poor. Abundance is a mentality that we have when our souls are prosperous and our hearts and mind have been transformed by the reality of the abundance in our account as royalty.

If you find someone not able to submit to another man's vision, that person is actually a powerless person. Jesus was so powerful that He could say about His life;

"No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down and authority to take it up again." (John 10:18).

Such extraordinary confidence!

When Mohandas K. Gandhi was killed in 1948, among his sparse worldly possessions were about a dozen books, including the "Life and Teachings of Jesus Christ" and the gospel of St. John. On the wall by his bedside was a picture of Jesus with the words, "He is our peace." Gandhi's interest in Jesus began early in his life. In 1888 when he was sent to study law in England, the young Hindu was persuaded to read the Bible even before he had studied the *Bhagavad Gita* and other Indian classics. The Sermon on the Mount, he said, "Went straight to my heart." "When I read in the Sermon on the Mount such passages as...'whoever smiteth thee on thy cheek turn to him the other also' I was simply overjoyed."

Although Gandhi learnt the principle of the non-violent revolution from Jesus, when he saw the Christians in his day, he preferred not to associate with them. His reason was that the Christians he met did not practice what Jesus taught. One other book that played a key role in India's independence from Britain was written by Leo Tolstoy *'The Kingdom of God in You.'* The kingdom of God can truly function anywhere. This is one of the reasons I do not particularly like the label "Christian" because of how watered down we have made it and how limiting it can be in the society. Society has

inadvertently relegated our relevance to the four walls of the church building, and rightly so too, because we have permitted it. You hear statements like, “Christians shouldn’t work in the alcohol processing industry,” and “Christians shouldn’t go into politics.” Little wonder the theology of the “church” could not accommodate modern-day innovators like Steve Jobs and Bill Gates. We preach a survival and escapist theology in the church that Jesus is coming to carry us home so we must keep ourselves “pure” and not mingle with the society. While Jesus taught that we should occupy till He comes

Moving in Honour

Honour is a word that can be interpreted in different ways to different people. More so, honour has also lost its true power because of the way people think honour is. When you live in the part of the world where I come from, you can perceive our rich culture of respect of one’s elders as all there is to honour; it is part of it, but not all of it. In the Kingdom of Heaven, honour is not only received by those in authority or in leadership positions, but honour is also given to people who are been led and even people who ordinarily do not deserve it. *Honour is recognizing and releasing the glory of God that is in another person.* The glory of God in your life is not an intangible thing. It is all-encompassing, like a mixture, of your personality, abilities, talents, and gifts. And may I add that the glory of God is not just on believers but non-believers as well. The *same* glory. This may come as a shock to you, but it is true. How would you respond to someone who tells you that he doesn’t believe there is a God, or that Jesus Christ is the Son of God? We may not be able to release a prophetic word into that person’s life because we may [unconsciously] believe that they do not deserve one. Just like Apostle Peter had his doubts about the “unclean animals,” we may also frown at unbelievers and actually think that *mingling* with them is a *sin*.

I believe that anything we did not see in the life of Jesus should be questionable. I have read through the Gospels over and over again and never saw when Jesus treated anyone in a dishonourable manner, even to those who didn’t treat Him honourably. Although the enemy likes going

after people's gifts to destroy and pervert it, Jesus always sought to see people the way heaven saw them and brought out the gold in them. One day Jesus was on the way to Jericho when he encountered Zacchaeus, a short man who had to climb a sycamore to be able to see Jesus. Jesus stopped in His tracks and *attended* to Zacchaeus. Everyone knew that he was a corrupt government official, and I'm sure a lot of people would have been shocked that Jesus would invite Himself to have supper with this hideous man.

Even in our culture, it is not normal for us to honour criminals. Some of us would even choose to burn them alive for crimes they have committed. We would rather honour those who are honourable, but that is not what honour really is. As we have already discussed, honour is recognizing and releasing the glory of God that is in another person, people's true gifts can come out when we honour them. Even when the behaviour is abysmal, we treat them according to their prophetic destiny, because *we* are honourable.

As I enumerated in the previous chapter something remarkable happened the day Jesus went to have dinner with Zacchaeus whom everyone had previously branded as a *sinner* and *unrighteous*. There was financial revival in that city because Zacchaeus repaid everyone he had wrongfully taxed and owed *four times over!* No sermon was preached to him; all Jesus had to do was to treat him honourably and recognizing the gold beneath the dirt was revealing. We can see even greater dimensions of revival if we do same in our cities and begin to release the prophetic destiny of the politicians, businesspeople, judges, lawyers, doctors, clerks, cleaners, students and indeed everyone!

We seem to be weak and not having so much impact because we are not intentionally blessing our cities. We somehow possess the wrong belief that other people's sins can actually contaminate us. In fact, let me narrow it with this question: Would you still follow Jesus after he constantly visited notable criminals in their homes? Let me even be more direct: What if God gave you a prophetic word for someone in the city you barely know? He says, "Tell her that she has been called to serve God as a pastor, to raise up revivalists for the kingdom." Here comes the recipient: a woman, say in her mid-twenties, scantily dressed, exposing her body in a very offensive way,

with a cigarette between her lips. How would you react to that? And even when you summoned the courage and love to speak to her, how would you deliver that prophetic word? You see how we can struggle with truly seeing people the *way* God sees them. We may have become “accidental Pharisees,” condemning and judging people and think we are doing it with a well-meaning motive.

We cannot, then, truly transform society if we equate the honour we show people by the standards of their behaviour. We must never equate the glory of God inside of them with their behaviour. They have messed up, but they are still the apple of God’s eyes. However, we do not approve of their behaviour, but we must accept and assimilate them into the family of God. Acceptance is not approval. If we only honour those whom we have an agreement with, then we did not even have honour to begin with.

I remember one day, traveling back home to Benin City from Abuja, I had to make a stop at the church for a service before retiring for the night. The man who drove us was from the northern part of the country where they are predominantly Muslims. I had to ask him, “Sorry, I’m going to the church for a service, are you a Christian?” He replied that he was a Muslim. I had to apologize for bringing him to church and making him uncomfortable, but he was okay to join us for service. Someone could have said, “Bring him to church so that the Holy Ghost can *catch* him!” My response to that will be: “Can’t the Holy Ghost captivate the heart of unbelievers *anywhere*?” I heard a story about one worker at a radio station who would resume work and neglect her duty post to pray for two hours and forty minutes because she has to give her tithe of the day to God. I reacted: “Why can’t she do that at *home*?” Sometimes, out faulty beliefs as Christians cause an impediment for non-Christians from encountering the Gospel and entering the Kingdom of God.

The Culture of Honor in Action

When Boaz had finished eating and drinking and was in good spirits, he went over to lie down at the far end of the grain pile. Ruth approached quietly, uncovered his feet and lay down. In the middle of

the night something startled the man, and he turned and discovered a woman lying at his feet. "Who are you?" he asked. "I am your servant Ruth," she said. "Spread the corner of your garment over me, since you are a kinsman-redeemer." "The Lord bless you, my daughter," he replied. "This kindness is greater than that which you showed earlier: You have not run after the younger men, whether rich or poor. And now, my daughter, don't be afraid. I will do for you all you ask. All my fellow townsmen know that you are a woman of noble character. Although it is true that I am near of kin, there is a kinsman-redeemer nearer than I. Stay here for the night, and in the morning if he wants to redeem, good; let him redeem. But if he is not willing, as surely as the Lord lives I will do it. Lie here until morning."

So she lay at his feet until morning, but got up before anyone could be recognized; and he said, "Don't let it be known that a woman came to the threshing floor." He also said, "Bring me the shawl you are wearing and hold it out." When she did so, he poured into it six measures of barley and put it on her. Then he went back to town. When Ruth came to her mother-in-law, Naomi asked, "How did it go, my daughter?" (Ruth 3:7-16)

From this story, we see that it takes an honourable man to protect a woman from *his own* desires. What happens when you do good for a lady who is not your wife, and she wants to repay you with, say, her body? There is a tendency that you may want to take advantage of the situation. Many people do. But a man of honour, who recognizes the glory of God in her, will call out her true prophetic destiny.

In Ruth 2:5, "Boaz asked the foreman of his harvesters, "Whose young woman is that?" He must have been attracted to her, surely. What would you do if the opportunities before you are in sync with your own desires and possible prayer requests, but violates the principles of God? Think about that for a minute. You are honourable when you can protect the next person from your own desires just as we see Boaz protecting Ruth, this vulnerable girl. After all, she was getting free food from him, he could have manipulated and defiled her, but he chose not to. The lesson here is that a person of honor is one who has developed a lifestyle of honour and doesn't violate those who are vulnerable or even not deserving of honour.

Sadly, even in the Body of Christ, there are three sets of people we still tend to marginalize and dishonor:

1. Children
2. Women
3. Those who have made mistakes (like moral failure)

For the last set of people, it may even seem justifiable to ask, “How can I honour somebody who has just committed fornication, abortion or stealing?” “How can I honour someone else who is gay?” Our prototype is Jesus. Even when he was experiencing excruciating pain on the cross, he still honoured the criminal he died with. I believe that we should be custodians of hope, especially by empowering those in the Kingdom who have misbehaved. In our church which is run entirely by establishing a free environment and supported by high levels of grace and empowerment, sin resurfaces *quickly*. We are often compelled to confront people when they err. The first thing we do is to raise their heads up and not allow the shame of their error engulf them. Shame has its own torment, why torment them even more by rubbing it in?

We are not perfect, but are *being* perfected. There is no way you will treat everybody well and you will be treated well. Some people are even too damaged to treat you well or even *receive* the goodwill you have towards them. You are not a chameleon, don’t ever change who you are. You do not honour people because they are honourable. You honour people because *you* are honourable.

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CHAPTER SEVEN

THE STRATEGIC MOVE OF ROYAL GENEROSITY

“Cooper coins would suit the beggar’s need, but gold coins suit Alexander’s giving.” (Alexander the Great)

There is a way royalty give gifts to other royalty, it is different from the way commoners or ordinary people give. When kings and rulers give, they give *according* to the size of their status. Once you enter the Kingdom of God, you become royalty. Through the blood of Jesus, you are adopted into the royal family of the Kingdom. From the identity perspective, you are not a pauper but a prince. The day you gave your life to Christ you were born by the blood of Jesus Christ into a royal family, and that is why it is called kingdom. It means that you have been ushered into the king’s domain.

There is a way that royal generosity gives, it is something that is unexpected. In warfare, surprise is one of the military strategies. People will not understand you when you come in your royal generosity; royal generosity is not only for those that have enormous wealth. We have seen in this our story that Boaz operated in royal generosity and also Solomon (in 1 Kings 10:13) because they had enormous money. Daniel who was a slave in the king’s palace operated in royal generosity (in Dan 5:17). Although Daniel was taken out of royalty and nobility and was placed elsewhere as a slave he never lost his Identity. As a person of royalty we must enter every situation with our royal destiny intact, that is why I tell people that any situation you enter as royalty you should enter as a giver not a consumer and you must also understand that generosity is not all about money it has to do with your talent, treasure and time because sometimes it is even easier to give money because you don’t want to be involved in the mess. You can say I will be generous with my talent alone or my money alone or my treasure alone but, it has to be encompassing because what you need more is what you give out more, so if you give out time you get more time. In church, there are three types of giving, one to ministry needs like your

tithes and offerings. There is another type of giving that deals with meeting human needs but there is a third type and that one is Royal generosity.

Alexandra the great was taking a walk one day and saw a beggar and gave him gold coins and people said that the beggar can do well with copper coins, he replied that “copper coins suits the beggar’s need but the gold coins suits Alexander’s generosity.” You don’t give people what they deserve you give them because of who you are. Jesus said you have been told that an eye for an eye but I say to you love your enemies, what credit will it be to you if you love only those who love you because even the pagans do it. There is something about royal generosity that gets people surprised because royal generosity repays evil with good.

Four things about royal generosity:

1. Royal generosity celebrates the cause receiving it.

It is normal for the person that receives a gift to say ‘thank you.’ What about a situation where the receiver cannot say ‘thank you?’ Nowadays, people believe that giving must be reciprocal. What if you give to a cause and the final beneficiary does not even know you or have a chance to say ‘thank you.’ Late Brother Peter Anozie (The Catholic Priest with a Message) once told his congregation that since the bible says that when your right hand gives your left hand should not know. His congregants started to give their offering secretly and the offerings reduced. Giving in church is not like giving in the market place, Jesus commended a woman who gave two mites and said she has given more than everybody, because she did not give out of her living but she gave all her living. That is why we believe in equal sacrifice but not equal gift. You may give a million and it may just be out of convenience, another may give a thousand but it is a huge sacrifice. Royal generosity is backed by sacrifice, and it is possible for you to move in royal generosity and people will not understand your motives. Sometimes when you try to give to some people who have been told about ritualists, they may nurse evil thoughts because they suspect that your generosity is tainted with evil intentions. When some people experience these things, they become weary in generosity; which is what the enemy is after. He wants you

to quit your royal status to the status of a pauper. So, any time you find yourself in a situation that seeks to challenge your royal destiny, make sure you emerge as royalty.

In Daniel 5: 14-17 we see how Daniel used his gift to serve the king by interpreting his dreams, and he did not ask for a fee. This is one of the reasons why unemployment has increased in many nations today; nobody wants to do anything for free. As kingdom citizens, the gifts and the talents God has given us are not just to make money with but to also use in our service to others. We need to understand that service destroys the power of darkness, and we do not really need to pray certain prayer points but our service can break the power of darkness. I was in a wedding ceremony recently and someone came to hug me and I know that he is a Grail Messenger. As we exchanged pleasantries he said “I listen to your radio broadcast every week day.” Then I understood that the radio broadcast is serving people; serving those who cannot pay back. Since evangelism is not an event, when our audience listen to the messages everyday their hearts are gradually illuminated. The messages will bring light to their situation and dispel the powers of darkness in their situations. When the Body of Christ understands royal generosity our giving will go above board, we can even give to our last penny because we understand that we will walk in ceaseless flow.

2. Royal generosity attracts favour to the giver

One of the ways to transform society is to win the favour of the people at the top. One reason why some people will embrace the gay community is because they love the people that are propagating them. No wonder the CEO of a notable software company rose up to say that he is gay and he has not lost his job as a result. The bible says that Potiphar took a liking to Joseph (See Gen 39). Until you have favour with God and men, you may not climb the throne; and that is why you should be careful of the way you speak. The gospel was not designed by God to beat people, and some people have actually left our church because they felt that we do not preach against sin enough. We cannot correct sin by preaching against it because the

kingdom of God does not operate that way. For example if the kingdom of God sees depression, it will come with abundance, if it sees sin and darkness it will come with light. Jesus did not look at Zacchaeus and tell him to repent or die; instead he invited himself to dinner at his house. Nobody fights love. Jesus did not see the Samaritan woman and call her a thief; instead he sat down beside the well and politely asked for a drink so that He could minister to her in the process.

In Esther 7: 1-2 Queen Esther had fasted for three days and I believe the Lord gave her and her people a strategic move. She held a banquet in honour of the king, and while the king was drinking wine, he asked Esther to make her request. She requested for the salvation of her people from Haman's evil plot to destroy them, and her request was granted. Like the case of the queen Esther, nobody can eat your food and fight you. Joseph brought food to the brothers and they could not kill him so they sold him into slavery.

Generosity will always attract favour to the giver, but when it comes to giving, some Christians add many twists and turns to the teaching of the bible. For example, some say that tithing as instructed in Malachi 3:6-12 was an Old Testament commandment and as such it is no longer necessary. They fail to see that Jesus Himself instructed us to tithe in Matthew 23 :23. What we must bear in mind is that even though it is human beings that will collect our tithes and offerings, it is God's blessings that will come upon us.

3. Royal generosity destroys the powers of darkness.

Daniel was generous to the pagan king, and people conspired against him. The same king was forced to put him in the lion's den, but the king could not sleep all night. He rushed to the entrance of the den in the morning to ask Daniel whether his God saved him. Daniel told the king that his God shut the mouth of the lions and the king ordered him to be brought out. I believe his generosity preserved him. Recall when King David set out to rescue his family after the enemy's attack on them at Ziklag (See 1 Sam 30). On his way, he met an Egyptian whose master had forsaken and left to die.

He gave him food and revived him, and the Egyptian pointed him in the direction of the attackers. Imagine if David had dealt wickedly towards him, he could have lost his family completely. Queen Esther did not go to the King to make any allegation against Haman, instead she went before him and worshipped him. So instead of going to the King of Heaven to report your enemies, why don't you give him worship because in worship you become the sacrifice? Esther went to the king, but before she did that, she had already told herself "if I die, I die." She became the sacrifice and her desire was also granted.

4. It brings multiplication for the giver and the receiver.

This violates every economic principle. Some people believe that when they give to people they will go down. My accounting background does not tell me so. The book keeping principle of crediting the giver and debiting the receiver was developed by a monk who got it from scriptures. Even the Bible acknowledges this principle when it says that "it is more blessed to give than to receive." The person that gives does not lose even in the natural accounting process, but there is another process that takes place so that the multiplication affects everybody as evidenced in the miracle of feeding the 5,000 in Matthew 14: 17-21. Any money that touches your hand and does not touch others violates kingdom economics, the bible says that all the people ate and were satisfied and they picked about twelve baskets of leftovers.

Whenever money comes to our hands it should flow, otherwise we will become like the Dead Sea that keeps taking and never gives. No blessing is too small to be shared. Five loaves and two fishes fed five thousand men excluding their wives and children and twelve baskets remaining. It may not be easy to understand the principle but that is the kingdom principle and this is why every time you receive money everyone including God must get a portion of your blessing. We came naked into this world and we will depart naked. We are only a breath away from all our possessions, but only two things will last forever the word of God and people. Giving into ministry is one way to invest in the word of God and people. So, it does not

matter who you are in this kingdom or your income level you are the child of the king and you should always move in royalty generosity.

CHAPTER EIGHT

THE POWER OF HIS PRESENCE

*Every person needs an encounter with God, and every person owes the world an encounter with God (**Benson Akhigbe II**)*

Then Moses said to the Lord, "See, You say to me, 'Bring up this people.' But you have not let me know whom you will send with me. Yet you have said, 'I know you by name, and you have also found grace in my sight.' Now therefore, I pray, if I have found grace in your sight, show me now your way, that I may know you and that I may find grace in your sight. And consider that this nation is your people." And He said, "My Presence will go with you, and I will give you rest." Then he said to Him, "If Your Presence does not go with us, do not bring us up from here. For how then will it be known that your people and I have found grace in your sight, except you go with us? So we shall be separate, your people and I, from all the people who are upon the face of the earth." So the Lord said to Moses, "I will also do this thing that you have spoken; for you have found grace in my sight, and I know you by name." And he said, "Please, show me your glory." (Exodus 33:12-18 NKJV)

This was the Old Testament where the Holy Spirit had not started dwelling within believers, but Moses tapped into something. The Bible records that Moses spoke with God face to face, but the High Priest could go into the holies of holies, and if he was not careful he could die. Moses would always return to the people and share God's mind with them after every such encounter. Every person needs an encounter with God and every believer owes the world an encounter with God. Believers are supposed to lead people to an encounter with God through their words or through their impartation.

According to Jewish history, the High Priest had to tie a rope round his waist and pomegranates and small bells around his garment. If he was still alive after the sacrifice had been offered, they could tell from the sounds of the bells and pomegranates beating against each other. If they waited and heard nothing, they would pull him out by the rope. Moses found favour with God and God showed him the glory of His Presence. The Presence of God that Moses enjoyed also gave him boldness. We all need boldness to face some people and tell them the truth with love, grace and discernment. Before Moses encountered the Presence of God, he was a timid man. He argued with God when He instructed him to return to Egypt so that he could lead the people of Israel out of captivity. Even when God assured him the Pharaoh that wanted to kill him was dead, he still lacked boldness. The moment he encountered God, he became a new man and stood before Pharaoh to boldly display the miracles of God.

It may shock you that what a lot of people practice is practical atheism. If you were called an atheist your response will be “NO! I am a Christian,” but what does an atheist do? When the atheist encounters a problem, because he believes that there is no God he looks for practical solutions to solve the problem. Have you ever taken time to consider whether when you have a problem, you are either thinking for whom to call or trying to recall how you did it before? The way you did it before is not wrong; it is a testimony and the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy. In other words if God can do it yesterday he can also do it today so my confidence is not in the strategy but my confidence is in the fact that God is with me. No wonder his name is ‘Emmanuel’ “God is with us.” In the Old Testament the Presence of God (symbolized by the ark) was carried on the shoulders of the Levitical priests. Have you ever wondered why the same ark that could kill a person that was not a Levitical priest if he touched it was put in the house of Obededom and he prospered. If we can just show believers how to host God’s Presence in their spheres of influence our outcome will be phenomenal.

Today, we operate on principles which are not bad in themselves, because David was a man of His Presence and Solomon was supposed to be a man of principled Presence but he became a man of principles. I like principles

but if we are not careful principles can prevent us from hearing God, because sometimes the voice of God is not logical. When Moses was running out of Egypt he did not cross the Red Sea but God in his infinite wisdom did not want the Israelites to go through the way of the Philistines because their heart will become weary. He was determined to take them through a part that had hills on both sides leaving the Red Sea in front of them. So if they were being pursued from behind they could not run to the left or to the right. Their only choice would have been to keep moving forward.

Every believer has the access to host God's Presence and if we must fulfill our royal destiny we must have this zeal for His presence. After the deliverance at the Red Sea, God told the Israelites that he would make them a kingdom of priests, and through their lives He would show the world how to be in a right relationship with Him, so that the world could also seek after Him. It is from His Presence that every other thing streams down. From His Presence we have great inventors, doctors and the likes. That is why in the market place, we should speak three things; wisdom, creativity and favour.

The Presence of God can distinguish a man in every aspect of his life. Exodus 14:19-20 says "*that after the Israelites had crossed the Red Sea, the angel of God, who had been leading the people of Israel, moved to the rear of the camp. The pillar of cloud also moved from the front and stood behind them*". It stood between the people of Israel and the Egyptians. And that night, as it changed to a pillar of fire, it gave darkness to the Egyptians but light to the people of Israel! So the Egyptians could not find the Israelites. The same thing happened with the ten plagues. The plagues ravaged the camp of the Egyptians but the opposite was happening in Goshen where the Israelites lived because the Presence of God was right there.

The kingdom of God is not eating and drinking but righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Ghost. We can only encounter the kingdom of God right from His presence. If we do not host His Presence daily, we will not be able to understand what Heaven is doing and cannot bring down His kingdom

on earth. You cannot bring change to a situation when you do not have Joy and peace. Little wonder when David played the harp, the evil spirit that tormented King Saul would relieve him. God's plan is that we will be change agents wherever we find ourselves, because of His presence that we carry. We are supposed to radiate peace and joy such that every person that comes around us will experience the overflow of our peace and joy. This is one sure way to attract the right people, because they can find rest around you.

The Presence of God can give us access into things that we may consider as difficulties. When we carry the Presence of God, He drops solutions in our spirits in the face of difficulty and adversity. Our first reaction when we are in such situations will not be to rack our heads for solutions, we simply key into the abundance of solutions in His presence. The believer that gives priority to His presence will never be stranded, because he has the most important thing. It does not matter whether he is alone, because one with God is the majority.

Caleb understood that power of God's presence when he tried to encourage his people to go up to possess the land of Canaan. He said I know there are giants in the land but God says that he has given us the land; therefore let us go at once to possess it. The people in their depraved state thought that they needed a majority to go up against the giants. God knew the number of the giants and He knew that there were indeed giants in the land, but that does not affect the fact that He had sworn to their ancestors to give them that land. His Presence is sufficient confirmation of every promise that He has made; if He has said that He will be with us till the end of time, how much more will He not give us everything our hearts desire.

Rediscovering the Priority of His Presence

Until we get the full revelation of who God is, we may not be able to grasp the fullness of what He wants us to do here on earth. God did not reveal himself to Moses as "I do," he revealed himself as "I am." He didn't reveal himself as 'Jehovah Elshaddai' or 'Jehovah Shallom;' those were the names

that men called him out of their encounter, but God chooses to reveal His character. Little wonder when Nicodemus came to Jesus to ask “what must I do?” Jesus said no, you’re getting it wrong, your question should have been ‘who must I be?’ it is from being that we can start doing. We need to rediscover who we are. If you know who your God is, you will now discover yourself in Him; and you will find strength to do exploit. Without that revelation, you will continually do what other people want you to do. In Genesis 2:7, the Bible says that God breathed into man and he became a living “being.” Notice that man did not become a living “doing”; we are not human “doings” but human “beings.” It is when we discover our “being” that the “doing” becomes easy.

We need to rediscover the priority of His Presence, because His Presence is all we need. This is why Jesus said “seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness. A kingdom means ‘a king’s domain,’ this means that wherever Jesus is enthroned as king, that place becomes His domain and Heaven comes to dwell there. The Holy Spirit who is the express Presence of God dwells inside you and I, so we can recreate our environment to suit the climate of heaven. This is why the bible says that “they that are lead by the Spirit of God are the sons”. In the Old Testament, God instructed the high priest to wear the ephod on his breast plate with the twelve stones representing the twelve tribes of Israel on it. This symbolizes the fact that the priest was to carry the children of God before the Presence of God, to constantly remind God that they were His covenant people.

Praise be to our God for Jesus who died to usher us into unfettered access into God’s presence, because when He gave up His Spirit, the veil in the temple that separated the worshipers from the ‘holies of holies’ was torn in two from top to bottom. Today, we do not need to go to any mountain to encounter the Presence of God; we can now worship in Spirit and in Truth. This is the point that Jesus tried to explain to the woman at the well. Today God is chasing after us to reconnect us to His presence. In revelation 3:20, He said “behold I stand at the door of your heart and I knock.” Will you open up to Him today?

In making the presence of God our priority, we must not neglect fellowship with other believers, because there is a concentrated Presence that comes in when believer gather to host His Presence as a family. We must also

remember that it takes sacrifice to pursue and hosts God's Presence. The priest in the Old Testament never entered the holy of holies without a sacrifice and today seeking God's presence requires time. This is why it should be a priority, because the most important things are the things that we need to give the best of our time.

CONCLUSION

I am glad that you chose to read this book and I am sure that your life has been transformed by the power of God. Every human being is wired by God to seek Him and that is the root of transformation. If this void is not filled then man becomes restless and looks for other ways to fill it. This void called spiritual emptiness can be filled today if you just pray this simple prayer of restoration:

"Our Father, I realize I have a need for You in my life and I admit that I have tried to go my own way or live my life without Your input. I ask You to forgive me for that. I believe You will forgive me. Thank You for loving me. Jesus Christ, help me to believe in You, I want to believe in You. I want You to be the manager of my life. I want to be the kind of person You want me to be. As much as I know how, I ask You to come into my life, in Jesus name. Amen"

Welcome to Kingdom life!

We will love to hear from you so we can pray along with you.

May the good Lord bless and you keep you in perfect peace. Amen.