

# The Overcoming Peace of God

Edison Macusi

Learn how to overcome fear, stand up and declare  
God’ s victory in your life and live as a fortress of His  
peace during these perilous days.

“... the harvest is the end of the age...”  
(Matt 13:39 NASB)

“For then there will be great distress, unequalled from the beginning of the world until  
now — and never to be equaled again.” (Matt 24:21 NIV)

“Thou art my hiding place; Thou dost preserve me from trouble; Thou dost surround me  
with songs of deliverance.” (Ps 32:6-7 NASB)

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## **The Overcoming Peace of God**

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Note: Even at the cost of violating grammatical rules, we have chosen not to capitalize the name satan and related names.

## Foreword

The subject of, "Peace of God" have been widely and deeply studied by many teachers of the Word. The aspects of God's salvation and making peace with our Maker had been covered by many. One missing piece however is how we can reconcile this peace to events that happen around us and how our new found peace can be useful to us. I hope that through this study, our perspective of God's peace will help transform the way we view things around us. Some of the topics covered are not new, though I tried to expand and expound a bit on them. Others though are new. But what matters most is we receive the message of the Lord and use it to overcome evil with good. The more we can receive, the greater our role to stand as well as to apply them in our lives.

The greatest value of God's peace is not just the stability it brings but the power of the presence of God which transforms our personal lives into His mighty fortresses! It is this power of His presence that changes lives. There can be no lasting peace that man can produce on earth. We have manufactured everything we needed but we cannot fake peace. If it were so, there would have been no single incidence of war, battles, quarrels and violence in the past one hundred years or even in one year. This proves how petty, how shortsighted we are and how vulnerable our human laws and agreements are without the Prince of Peace. Only the Lord can bring healing to our divisiveness and it begins with His peace residing inside the hearts of everyone. The Scriptures are clear that the day of the Lord is fast approaching when His army prepared in battle shall be exactly as depicted in Joel 2:28-31:

"And afterward, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your old men will dream dreams, your young men will see visions. Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days. I will show wonders in the heavens and on the earth, blood and fire and billows of smoke.

The sun will be turned to darkness and the moon to blood before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord."

This day of the Lord shall be great for those who have prepared for His coming and it will be dreadful for those who have scorned, disregarded or were indifferent to it. His army shall stand because they have learned to abide in His peace.

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## Chapter 1

### God is shaking the nations

**"This is what the Lord Almighty says: 'In a little while I will once more shake the heavens and the earth, the sea and the dry land. I will shake all nations, and the desired of all nations will come, and I will fill this house with glory,' says the Lord Almighty. (Hag 2:6-7)**

Today we can't afford to live in extravagance. We are all living in a world whose economy had just been shaken from the 1997 Asian financial crisis to the American mortgage crisis this year...the economic recession that the world is facing right now can tip the balance of power and set in events that would bring a deeper depression and hardship to everyone. Almost all people have complaints against their governments, but this is clear that not even the world's most powerful government can solve its own people's problem. The Katrina debacle to the now financial crisis in Wall Street has it all proven that no government can eventually pay for all the entire financial burden that companies whose wrong decisions and actions brought it into this mess. All governments built by men will always be fragile without the strength and protection of Christ.

Every time an economic downturn occurs, companies and individuals alike will either experience pain or gain. Those who will survive the downturn will be stronger when they will come out but those who will not survive will be gobbled up by those who will. Those who have foreseen it coming would have gotten ready ahead and prepared for such events as economic recession. They would have been quick, ready and sell out their stocks and pack up. Investments in land as well as its development would be seen as one of the most stable ones during these times. Immunity to recession in the global community is not easy unless one has been living in isolation or one has already experienced one in the past and has laid down strong financial muscles in place.

We might ask why do recessions occur? And why does God allow it? Recessions do not simply imply shrinkage of money or stocks. It can imply shrinkage of all other businesses too such as the fast food industry or the cosmetics industry. It is truly revealing that the Lord would want to bring economic recession to the whole earth today in many ways we might not have seen. The whole earth today is in agony for the fulfillment of the revelation of the sons of God. Recession or economic shaking will release many people from the captivity of thinking that they have it all; an insurance of the present economic system. This shaking of God is brought about by our false belief systems. It will show the true colors of many nations, friends and alliances will be made and wrong friendships will bind many into future conflicts they have never imagined to come; while the right decisions will bring out the best of friends in the hard times. It will purify and cleanse the people prepared by the Lord

to be used by Him in His vineyard. Others will have to start anew and build a deeper foundation.

**“Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved.” (Acts 4:12)**

**“I have come to bring fire on the earth, and how I wish it were already kindled!” (Luke 12:49)**

Every skyscraper is tested by how strong the steel trusts and beams it has, how deep its foundations are and the quality of cements used. When you build a skyscraper, you won't use a loamy or clay soil to build on it; you will look for the bedrock, you will dig deep enough to anchor the trust beams into the bed rock. Once an earthquake occurs, a skyscraper which was not founded on a solid rock will fall and break endangering not only the loss of an edifice but the lives of thousands.

A great team of engineers and architects would see to it that what they are building and designing won't simply last for a few earthquakes—they design it to last for 500 years. Likewise, the shaking of God is like a furnace of fire by which Jesus has lit the fire. This fire will burn up every chaff in its pathway will consume the hay and stubble in many Christians who have been hiding in the promises of earthly wealth. No one will survive it except the gold, the silver and the bronze.

**“...his work will be shown for what it is, because the Day will bring it to light. It will be revealed with fire, and the fire will test the quality of each man's work. If what he has built survives, he will receive his reward. If it is burned up, he will suffer loss; he himself will be saved, but only as one escaping through the flames.” (1 Cor 3:13-15)**

We can rephrase **“each man's work”** to mean each man's heart. It is the heart of man that determines the quality of his job, the quality of his persona and the strength of his character. A quality with a gold seal speaks of the quality of workmanship which has been approved of Christ. When we think of gold, we think of the highest value in precious metals. Precious metals are in fact measured by how much they compare to a gold standard. Before paper money and credit cards were in use, gold and silver coins are the means to buy and sell in the market. Gold in the Bible does not only symbolize purity but also it means a radiating character. In fact the items in the Holy of Holies are covered with beaten gold. Gold is symbolic of the purity and holiness of God which means above reproach or blemish.

When Jesus Christ walked the earth, he often mentions, who convicts me of sin? A silver quality may not completely depict the holiness required of a gold standard but still a silver quality means purity. Silver is also purified by fire. The longer it has been put on the fire, the clearer and shinier it becomes. Mirrors of today maybe made of glasses, but before, these are mainly made of high quality silver which can better reflect the image of a person. A silversmith will not stop the fire until he has seen his

own image on the molten silver. The Lord will not stop either until He sees His image stamped on us because we were shaped and made up in the image of God.

The prophet Malachi wrote,

**“He will sit like a refiner of silver, burning away the dross. He will purify the Levites, refining them like gold and silver, so that they may once again offer acceptable sacrifices to the Lord.” (Mal 3:3 NLT)**

What is a dross? The greatest enemy of silver is corrosion. Corrosion comes on easily on silverworks made with low quality while the higher quality silvers will last for a long time. This is the reason why silver used in dental works are usually made of strong high quality silver. A sword made of silver when not used and maintained will easily corrode in time. Either reactive oxides in the air or fungi can form a layer on the silver that can degrade its value. Jesus said, **“Take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees”** (Matt. 16.6 KJV). Leaven simply means yeast which is a form of fungi, symbolic of sin in the Scriptures. Christians who carry a lot of dross can only be refined through the fiery furnace of affliction.

Thus, economic recessions which are not limited geographically depict this godly shaking occurring all over the globe. It is a godly shaking taking place all over the world to prepare the hearts of the people of God for His coming. Jesus will not come as a beggar asking people to receive Him. He will come as a King for a lovely queen-His Bride, awesome in deeds and beauty. The continuing verse in Malachi says, “He will purify the Levites, refining them like gold and silver, so that they may once again offer acceptable sacrifices to the Lord.” Hardships can sometimes be the only way by which God can talk people into action. His shakings are meant to inform the believers and unbelievers alike...problems and diseases are consequences of sin which is spoken of as a corruption of the flesh.

**“Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, this he will also reap. For the one who sows to his own flesh shall from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit shall from the Spirit reap eternal life.” (Gal 6:7-8 NASB)**

This godly shaking right now is both a consequence of our sin and the corruption in the market place. We are living in the end of the age. We shall reap what was sown, both good and evil. Haven't you observed the increasing degree of depravity of man in crimes, drugs, syndicate, death, riots and unrests? This is the reason for the shaking, to call forth into repentance every erring believer and to drive the unrighteous to the cross of Jesus. He will purify every one of us so that we will come out of the shaking stronger and able to offer acceptable sacrifices to the Lord. When the Lord said, 'Once more in a little while, I am going to shake the heavens and the earth, the sea,' He had spoken in a serious tone that warns us of His impending judgment. He had shaken this world before to such a magnitude that Noah's

generation perished except for himself and his family. The Lord is making clear a demarcation point between the righteous and the unrighteous, the obedient and the disobedient, the faithful and the betrayer. The sea swallowed the people of Noah and all their monies and valuables perished with the flood. The sea represents God's shaking not just the literal sea but also the sea of peoples in the earth today. We just had a real experience of what happens when God wakes up the sea; He has indeed hidden a vast armory beneath the earth that can shake and cause trembling to anyone if they learn about how precarious we really are. The 2004 tsunami tragedy was just like what happened in Noah's day...fault lines and deep sea volcanoes snapped causing a massive damage and carrying with it not just a few lives but more than two hundred thousand that perished instantly.

The question is, are you ready for the fire? Has the fire of God consumed your heart? Fire is also symbolic of purging. Take gold again. Gold like silver is refined through the fire where dregs separate from the precious metal as it passes through the fire. Our present afflictions, sufferings, trials are meant to do just that, to refine our character and to form in us a needed dependence on God. These are sometimes circumstances which God uses to teach us and lead us into the right directions.

God does not author evil in our lives, but He uses circumstances meant for evil and turns them into good. He uses them as a tool to cleanse our lives. When gold comes out of the fire, it is red hot and pure. Likewise when we come out of a fiery trial, we are consumed with a passion for Jesus. We do not come out weak but strengthened and able to succor those who will undergo the same circumstances as we had. This passion for Jesus is the fuel that will ignite the fire and consume any evil in our lives. We must learn to receive not just the blessings of God or the victories that we have wrought with Him, but also welcome God's purgings with a character of resolve and strength. God sits as a judge and tells when things should stop through. Have you wondered why trials seem so long at times? Have you wondered why it seems so hard? The Scriptures tell us why...

**“Dear brothers and sisters, when troubles come your way, consider it an opportunity for great joy. For you know that when your faith is tested, your endurance has a chance to grow. So let it grow, for when your endurance is fully developed, you will be perfect and complete, needing nothing.” (James 1:2-4 NLT)**

The end goal of any trial in our lives must be seen as a chance or opportunity to grow over in any areas needing attention. In fact, God does not send any trial that does not have an equivalent of character that needs refining. Every time I have a trial I always ask what is God teaching me here? What do I need to learn from here? The goal of the Lord in trials we experience is not to punish us but to transform us into His image. Trials are useless when we don't get out renewed with clearer visions, stronger resolve and transformed in our character. We must therefore learn to ask ourselves what aspect of Christ's character we are presently learning from. We must all do this if we want to be true Ambassadors of Jesus Christ on earth.



When we avoid these opportunities to straighten out any lacking character in us, we will end up weaker and our journey becomes longer and harder. The apostle Paul gave an advice that is apt for everyone to follow especially when we are in the midst of a trial; **“Do all things without murmurings and disputings: That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world”** (Phil 2:14-15 KJV). He wrote this epistle for the Philippians church while imprisoned which makes it all the more compelling as the apostle in spite of a grim environment manages to even console and give advice to his disciples and children in the Lord. This is a classic study providing evidence that a Christian is not to be controlled by what is happening around him but by what is happening inside him. Paul’s true strength comes into play in his trials as it shows who he really is. It shows his character, his longings and his selfless care for the churches of God. You may not believe it but when the Lord sees our reactions to opportunities he sends to us, He weighs them on how they measure according to a Christ like character, and when we pass, He tags it, “quality check-pass on to the next stage.”

**“We proclaim him, admonishing and teaching everyone with all wisdom, so that we may present everyone perfect in Christ. To this end I labor, struggling with all his energy, which so powerfully works in me.”** (Col 1:28-29)

**“For the anxious longing of the creation waits eagerly for the revealing of the sons of God.”** (Rom 8:19 NASB)

**“Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God.”** (2 Cor 5:20 KJV)

All creations expectantly wait for an army of God that exhibits the very nature of Christ. It cannot be done without the shaking happening in our lives. We all as delivered to every trials and tribulations so that we can have a share in Christlikeness. Ambassadors are sent to represent his country’s interest. If we do not learn how to be citizens of heaven now, how can we more fully represent Him before other people? We have been bought with a price, the shakings will come but how we go through the shaking will determine if we have buried our foundations deeper into the Rock. The deeper we anchor ourselves into the Rock, the more secure and the higher we can go up.

**“For no one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ.”** (1 Cor 3:11)

**“For you have been bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body.”** (1 Cor 6:20 NASB)

**“and all drank the same spiritual drink, for they were drinking from a spiritual rock which followed them; and the rock was Christ. Nevertheless, with most of them God was not well-pleased; for they were laid low in the wilderness. Now**

**these things happened as examples for us, that we should not crave evil things, as they also craved.” (1 Cor 10:4-6 NASB)**

## Chapter 2

### Distress upon the seas

**“For momentary, light affliction is producing for us an eternal weight of glory far beyond all comparison, while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal. (2 Cor 4:17-18 NASB)**

All the people that drowned in the judgment of God during the days of Noah cried for mercy. None of them received one except those living inside Noah’s ark. King David wrote, **“ Therefore, let everyone who is godly pray to Thee in a time when Thou mayest be found; Surely in a flood of great waters they shall not reach him. Thou art my hiding place; Thou dost preserve me from trouble; Thou dost surround me with songs of deliverance” (Ps 32:6-7 NASB)**. When disasters strike and we have been warned already by God that we should leave the area before hand, it would be foolish to expect another kind of mercy. God’s mercy is never a license for carelessness. Noah’s generation was offered warnings for one hundred years but they have ignored not just Noah but God Himself who was speaking through this great prophet and patriarch. The Lord will continue to reach unto us but there will be clear demarcation lines after several ways that God has already reached unto us and we rejected His offer of help. The raging waters during the days of Noah saved only those who were inside the Ark. The distress of the seas that will come upon our times will become more evident as the days unfold and as we move nearer to the end of the age spoken of in Matthew 13:39, 49

**“... the harvest is the end of the age...” (Matt 13:39 NASB)**

**"So it will be at the end of the age; the angels shall come forth, and take out the wicked from among the righteous, and will cast them into the furnace of fire; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.” (Matt 13:49-50 NASB)**

**"And when you hear of wars and disturbances, do not be terrified; for these things must take place first, but the end does not follow immediately." Then He continued by saying to them, "Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, and there will be great earthquakes, and in various places plagues and famines; and there will be terrors and great signs from heaven..."Woe to those who are with child and to those who nurse babes in those days; for there will be great distress upon the land, and wrath to this people, and they will fall by the edge of the sword, and will be led captive into all the nations; and Jerusalem will be trampled under foot by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled. "And there will be signs in sun and moon and stars, and**

**upon the earth dismay among nations, in perplexity at the roaring of the sea and the waves, men fainting from fear and the expectation of the things which are coming upon the world; for the powers of the heavens will be shaken. "And then they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. (Luke 21:9-11, 23-27 NASB)**

**"For then there will be great distress, unequalled from the beginning of the world until now — and never to be equaled again. (Matt 24:21)**

The end of the age will be the culmination of good and evil. It will be the harvest of everything sown in the flesh and in the spirit. There will be great distress in the nations and great earthquakes, roaring waves and seas. When you think about all of these, it signifies the end of the age and we have seen some forewarnings of how it will look like in the coming days...the death of thousands unequalled in history for catastrophe has been shown by an undersea quake which caused a roaring wave to cast its death spell upon thousands during the Asian tsunami catastrophe last 2004. Sadly this catastrophe is just a sign of what might take place again when people will not repent of their sins; in fact the American economic crisis this year will be remembered not only as a recession but it will be a depression just like the economic depression in 1929. Though this maybe the case, there is a way out; distress does not only mean physical disturbance but includes economic disturbances as well.

Anything today that causes distress will not actually lessen as we approach the end of days, rather, it will increase in degree and magnitude because God has to judge the earth for the sin of man. When the personification of the sin of man who is called the Man of Sin will be revealed, the last judgments will be poured out by God. This is not to merely kill humans, but rather judgment is the last resort of God to forewarn mankind of the paths and consequences of their decisions. His mercy will be the time to prepare; it maybe hundred years from now or fifty years more but that does not make any difference, it will still come.

**"For then there will be great distress, unequalled from the beginning of the world until now — and never to be equaled again. If those days had not been cut short, no one would survive, but for the sake of the elect those days will be shortened. At that time if anyone says to you, 'Look, here is the Christ!' or, 'There he is!' do not believe it. For false Christs and false prophets will appear and perform great signs and miracles to deceive even the elect — if that were possible."**

**"Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away. "No one knows about that day or hour, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. As it was in the days of Noah, so it will be at the coming of the Son of Man. For in the days before the flood, people were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, up to the day Noah entered the ark; and they knew nothing about what would happen until the flood came and took them all away. That is how it will be at the coming of the Son of Man. Two men**

**will be in the field; one will be taken and the other left. Two women will be grinding with a hand mill; one will be taken and the other left. "Therefore keep watch, because you do not know on what day your Lord will come." (Matt 24:21-24, 35-42)**

The Lord must have seen and known our times even beforehand since He is the Alpha and the Omega—He knows the end from the very beginning. This is what makes Him different from any impostors, accuracy and precision is one hundred percent. His words as He Himself mentioned will never pass away though we may leave the earth and though the earth maybe destroyed by water or by fire. He characterized this age to be filled with deceivers even preaching, "He is indeed the Christ" using His name to proclaim another gospel. Isn't this rampant today?

There are many sects professing He is the Christ but do not believe in His deity nor in His doctrines. Some even proclaim their gifts come from Him but then what? Use it to manipulate and gain advantage from ignorant people deceived by their clever and subtle prevarications. Lies will be exposed by the truth and a false gifting will be exposed by a real one just as Paul the apostle exposed the false gifting of Elymas the sorcerer. Only a real teacher can expose a false one and only a true apostle can expose those who are not. This is why Paul and even John the beloved mentions and warns the churches about false apostles in their epistles.

**"But Elymas the sorcerer (for that is what his name means) opposed them and tried to turn the proconsul from the faith. Then Saul, who was also called Paul, filled with the Holy Spirit, looked straight at Elymas and said, "You are a child of the devil and an enemy of everything that is right! You are full of all kinds of deceit and trickery. Will you never stop perverting the right ways of the Lord? Now the hand of the Lord is against you. You are going to be blind, and for a time you will be unable to see the light of the sun." Immediately mist and darkness came over him, and he groped about, seeking someone to lead him by the hand. When the proconsul saw what had happened, he believed, for he was amazed at the teaching about the Lord." (Acts 13:8-12)**

Deceptions and marked false gifts will abound as described but our refuge shall be the fortress of Truth. The Lord shall be our guide; His Holy Spirit will always be more powerful than any lies or gifting of the enemy because He has overcome the world already! We will understand those who are false because we will know they glory not in Christ nor have the true glory of Jesus Christ residing in them. Above all a passion for Jesus Christ will always consume every sin hiding in nook and crannies in our lives because our **"God is a consuming fire"** (Heb. 12:29 KJV). The fire of God will consume even the false Christs and prophets; lies will be easily disarmed because the fire of God will consume all darkness. No lies can hide exposed under His light. Our everyday lives would have been different if we can see this glory shining upon every Christian; but the truth is, it is in fact shining in the spirit but we do not see it physically with our own eyes.

The glory we carry in this fallen vessels are indeed aromatic and we can only understand that it is indeed scented with a Christlike life when we are touched by His hand, His healing, His truth, His love and His compassion through another vessel. This is why the Lord is very patient to each one of us because the renewal of one person's life can change and influence the attitudes, behaviors and perspectives of others. You can change the world, you can reform it but what does that mean to you when you are not reformed yourself?

Thus, we experience, "light afflictions", for the Lord wants to bring about this glory in earthen vessels, the glory of a Christlike character which is more precious than refined gold or any earthly possession. Our spiritual gifts and talents and character will always be more valuable than any treasures this world can give for. Our destiny will always be more valuable than simply being a CEO of the largest retailer in the country. Your destiny in Christ Jesus cannot be valued more because it is priceless! Our trials therefore are meant to bring purity and mastery...this is one way the Lord is refining and purifying our character to bear His glory, **"For everyone will be purified with fire"** (Mark 9:49 NLT). Through the fire, pretenders will soften and either repents or leaves the fellowship, discarded just as chaffs are thrown away.

Many are preaching Christ but the greatest preaching anyone can have is a Christlike life; this life is a greater witness than an apostle who does not exude the inner life of Jesus Christ. The fire of trials will reveal those who have true devotions from those who do not. In a desert biome, seeds of flowering plants sprout only after being cracked open by fire. Hard life or poverty does not have to serve as a debacle to any people. Rather, it should motivate us all to strive for the best that we can reach for, living for Christ everyday. This should not drive us to imagine quick relief, because if we do so, we might end up in the dungeon of a tyrant named IMMEDIATE.

## **Wars and rumors of wars**

**"What is causing the quarrels and fights among you? Don't they come from the evil desires at war within you? You want what you don't have, so you scheme and kill to get it. You are jealous of what others have, but you can't get it, so you fight and wage war to take it away from them. Yet you don't have what you want because you don't ask God for it. (James 4:1-2 NLT)"**

What started the first war was jealousy; Cain killed his brother Abel because he was jealous of God's acceptance of his offering. This was the first apparent consequence of the Sin committed by Adam and Eve in their offspring. The Lord did not take this lightly and in fact branded Cain as a killer. James describes this evil as a desire within man to have more and to be jealous of what others have. It is an uncontrollable greed. In the global economic arena, this is what motivates big companies to devour other smaller ones, simply to survive, and to take more and more and be the dominant player in the scene. The success of Microsoft does not

only mean at the expense of others but rather that it will continue to play the rat race because this is what capitalism is. God did not make or implemented the first capitalism; he also did not consider communism.

His is a Kingdom based on principles of love and justice which can be expressed in both capitalism and communism but as long as we are on this earth, capitalism may yet be the best way to protect the liberty of individuals which is more precious than the type of government or market principle. Nevertheless having mentioned about this, God's kingdom is similar to many free market principles. His kingdom is composed of sort of aristocracy (remember it is a Kingdom and He is the King, the Church is His Queen). His disciples are mentioned as kings and lords (Rev. 17:14; Rev 19: 16); provides estates and dukedoms (Luke 19: 17; Matt 25:15). He gives rewards according to our deeds here on earth and they are stored in our houses in Heaven, which he said He has gone first to prepare a house for us. Simply, the Kingdom of Heaven does not operate in many ways as the way capitalism or socialism does or even communism but it has its elements in these various types of governments. In capitalism, we have the reward system which is embodied also in God's kingdom...if you do well the Lord has a great reward for you and if not you face the consequences. In communism, there is collectivism and equal distribution while in God's Kingdom He gives a commensurate grace to each one of us according to what we need and He treats all of us as His children regardless of heavenly ranks so there is a community of sharing. In socialism, we bear the burdens of those who do not work; in heaven, the Lord has bore all our burdens through the cross while on earth. He has subsidized all our needs being the Jehovah Jireh which you may have known already.

Let's get back to our main topic, the reason why we have had witnessed many types of governments on earth is to show us that no matter what, there is no single human government that can imitate heaven's governance. This is why Heaven has been a utopia in many philosophers' circles because they could not imagine that such a thing can in fact exist on earth as it is in Heaven. Humanity has experienced the age of civilizations and empires, it has experienced the age of feudalism, exploration and colonialism, the age of communism and capitalism and now the age of knowledge and technology. That said, our desires to impose on others what we may think as ours or what we may think as theirs have resulted to devastating wars and violence.

Rumors of wars which are mentioned as precursor to the cataclysmic event of end of days can come as a consequence of such events. When the disciples asked Him about signs of the end of days, He mentioned that "such things must happen but the end will not yet be in sight." So what will be the end? It would be when nation shall rise against nation and kingdom against kingdom. Yet this is not the end but the beginning of the end. I have lived in a province where tribal wars have been a way of life for many generations among our people. Even more than one hundred years since the Americans have landed in the mountains of Cordillera in Northern Luzon, this savagery still happens in Kalinga and Apayao. One tribe will be the target of another for the sin of one of their member. No peace can be set on such kind of

enmity and compromises are often forged on such struggles to end the fighting. In those coming days, this will not just be in provinces but rather kingdom to kingdom and nation to nation. Another example of this happened in the Rwandan genocide where one tribe wanted to annihilate another with such savagery unimaginable in these days. This happened when the enemy sees such differences and vents off his anger towards another group of people using unhealed differences and old wounds between the two tribes, attracting the lord of the flies like a magnet to lit the fire of enmity between the two tribes resulting to massive destruction of lives. Such loss of lives is inescapable when one does not know the Lord; when one has resigned his will to fate and forgot that our destiny is in our hands.

The Lord can only be there to guide us but we make the decisions. Solomon was given the gift of wisdom but he has to decide when and how to use it; his first try was when asked to chose between two prostitutes whose baby is the one alive. God gives but we decide whether to use our gifts properly or simply misuse or neglect them. But any impending disaster can be averted if only we learn to focus on Jesus. A woman giving birth needs someone to focus on. As her breathing increases and her spasms get stronger she holds on to her focus and anchor so she can hold on.

**“...when troubles come your way, consider it an opportunity for great joy. For you know that when your faith is tested, your endurance has a chance to grow.”(James 1:2-3 NLT)**

**“Endure hardship with us like a good soldier of Christ Jesus. No one serving as a soldier gets involved in civilian affairs — he wants to please his commanding officer. Similarly, if anyone competes as an athlete, he does not receive the victor's crown unless he competes according to the rules. The hardworking farmer should be the first to receive a share of the crops.” (2 Tim 2:3-6)**

So no matter what kind of trial comes our way, no matter what kind of distress it would be, let us put our hope on the living God who only cares for our own good. Hope is the anchor of our soul (Heb. 6:19) and it is hope that the enemy wants you to lose, for when you lose hope, you lose your faith and you are easily tossed to and fro. When problems and daily burdens come upon us, we should learn to face them squarely; the best preparation we can do is to face the day with a prayer for when we do that, we know that the whole day rests upon God’s hand. We must learn to **“approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need”** (Heb 4:16).

When we have the presence of the Lord with us, His presence soothes the pain, soothes the toil and gives you a fresh perspective as well as you get an understanding of what you are doing. You do not need to understand things first so you can do them but faith brings us to do things that can matter for life and death and we understand them later. This is contrary to the world’s thinking that we need to understand everything before we can do them. In the spirit, the physical realm is subject to the spiritual realm and what happens behind the spiritual realm manifests



in the physical. This is why we are called to have faith because faith believes all things, it is the conviction that things exist though they maybe unseen physically. In Physics, no one has seen an electron or atom with the naked eye, nor has there been anybody who has seen the structural formula of water. Both physicists and chemists unknowingly apply the principle of faith in their day to day work as do many of us.

**“Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen...**

**And without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him.” (Heb 11:1, 6 NASB)**

It is the presence of the Lord that lingers on leaders such as Moses, Aaron, Samuel, or Isaiah or Paul. His presence cleanses us like a stain remover so that we can go to our work each day filled with hope, faith, bold and free. Is this not what the Lord wants for everyone of us? Is this not what he desires?

**“But you are not like that, for you are a chosen people. You are royal priests, a holy nation, God's very own possession. As a result, you can show others the goodness of God, for he called you out of the darkness into his wonderful light. "Once you had no identity as a people; now you are God's people. Once you received no mercy; now you have received God's mercy." (1 Peter 2:9-10 NLT)**

**“Instead, you must worship Christ as Lord of your life. And if someone asks about your Christian hope, always be ready to explain it.” (1 Peter 3:15 NLT)**

Trials in our lives are not measured by their intensity or magnitude of troubles. God measures them by how we respond to them. The more Christ like our response is, the better prepared we are in facing any trials that come on our way. Our afflictions become very light when we ponder of the Lord, when we thank Him and praise Him for who He is instead of complaining. There is a general thinking that whenever trouble comes our way, the first reaction of many Christians is to think how to solve the problem or who did it. But the better reaction we can have is to actually pray for the solution that the Lord will give us clear mind on the matter. Problems do not come alone. Part of the consequence of the fall of man is that we react to problems.

Our basic reactions though do not always conform to a Biblical standard. When Jesus was facing crucifixion, He did not go to the Priests and Pharisees and paid a consultation fee to them. Rather, He showed us a better way, He consulted the One who ordered it all, and He went with a select group of disciples and then prayed alone. The prophet Daniel did the same. When faced with the biggest crisis of his life, he presented himself before authorities and asked them time to figure out the problem. In order to figure out, Daniel prayed before the Lord what was the dream of King Nebuchadnezzar.

**“He asked Arioch, "Why has the king issued such a harsh decree?" So Arioch told him all that had happened. Daniel went at once to see the king and requested more time to tell the king what the dream meant. Then Daniel went home and told his friends Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah what had happened. He urged them to ask the God of heaven to show them his mercy by telling them the secret, so they would not be executed along with the other wise men of Babylon. That night the secret was revealed to Daniel in a vision. Then Daniel praised the God of heaven. He said, "Praise the name of God forever and ever, for he has all wisdom and power. He controls the course of world events; he removes kings and sets up other kings. He gives wisdom to the wise and knowledge to the scholars. He reveals deep and mysterious things and knows what lies hidden in darkness, though he is surrounded by light. I thank and praise you, God of my ancestors, for you have given me wisdom and strength. You have told me what we asked of you and revealed to us what the king demanded." (Dan 2:15-23 NLT)**

Daniel and his friends did not only save their lives when they asked God what was the dream that bothered King Nebuchadnezzar, they even spared the lives of the wise men of Babylon because they dared to ask God. The Lord will protect those whose lives are given to Him, those who have committed their hearts to follow Him. When we learn what it truly means to love the Lord, we will not only pray to Him when we have a need but we pray because we wanted to be with our Friend and Brother. Fellowship does not have to mean worship without camaraderie, companionship and brotherhood. The word fellowship evolved from “two fellows in a ship”. Basically we have a relationship with Jesus that is worth developing and strengthening; this is our quest as long as we live.

## Chapter 3

### Finding God's rest

**“You are my hiding place; you will protect me from trouble and surround me with songs of deliverance.”(Ps 32:7)**

One of the greatest revelations I find that keeps me from living an insecure life and appeals of the flesh is the understanding that Jesus Christ died for me and loves me. With this love, I find rest and peace that I do not need to struggle to find someone to love me unconditionally. I do not need to put my best foot forward and do many stunts and lies to cover up who I am. In Christ, I feel secure and free because He has paid the price for my freedom. Today many people engage in activities that can lull the mind, pull them into addictions and make them hallucinate. Things like drug addiction, eastern religions, yoga, transcendental meditations, occult readings and new age has only pulled many into a false sense of security and false safe haven. The so-called New Age movement has everything but no Christ and no lasting peace. Many Christians also engage in horoscope and fortune telling which God has forbidden that no one who calls himself a Christian should dabble with.

**"Don't dabble in the occult or traffic with mediums; you'll pollute your souls. I am God, your God. "I will resolutely reject persons who dabble in the occult or traffic with mediums, prostituting themselves in their practices. I will cut them off from their people. "Set yourselves apart for a holy life. Live a holy life, because I am God, your God. (Lev 19:31; 20:6-7 THE MESSAGE)**

The apostle Peter wrote,

**“Most importantly, I want to remind you that in the last days scoffers will come, mocking the truth and following their own desires. They will say, "What happened to the promise that Jesus is coming again? From before the times of our ancestors, everything has remained the same since the world was first created." They deliberately forget that God made the heavens by the word of his command, and he brought the earth out from the water and surrounded it with water. Then he used the water to destroy the ancient world with a mighty flood.” (2 Peter 3:3-6 NLT)**

When knowledge abounds, it is finding the right information that would most benefit us; which one to accept and which one to reject should be our skill if we want to grow in the Knowledge of God even in daily practical living we need to do the same. In Science, there are many published papers on many issues, but in everything we write, we need to cite the most references we think strongly supports our views or our findings. In spiritual terms, we need to find only the knowledge that conforms to

what Jesus has shown us in the Bible or whether it rightly conforms to the word of God.

This is the way we judge sound practices as well as sound living. Because when we unknowingly open ourselves to the powers of darkness, we do not have the luxury of time to remain bound in it or to like it to remain bound in such state. The greatest enemy of most Christians today is not satan, but our lack of knowledge of the Truth (Hos. 4:6), this is in spite of the explosion of knowledge in many areas. We have hardly scratched the whole treasure load of the Bible. Only we have become superficial in the way we deal with it and the way we dispense knowledge arising from it. The Lord does not have to be an elusive Being called the Old Man upstairs, He must become your father, your friend, your trouble-shooter, your refuge. He called all of us to come to Him and to find rest that our souls need.

**“Then Jesus said, "Come to me, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you. Let me teach you, because I am humble and gentle at heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy to bear, and the burden I give you is light." (Matt 11:28-30 NLT)**

Since the Lord has called to every one of us, our excuses are not acceptable. None can find true peace or true rest apart from the Prince of Peace, the everlasting Father (Isa. 9:6) for He decreed that we will only find rest of our souls in Him. Problems and pressure from work and everyday living does not mean that He has condemned us or judged us. This is the meaning of toil, part of the wages of sin (Rom. 6:23). Salaries are paid to anyone who works on a job; so are the consequences of sin which has been likened to salaries or wages. From the very beginning since the fall of man, sin has continued and increased in magnitude today until its personification in the Man of Sin will be revealed to this world.

The Christian life is not for cowards; it is one of confrontation with reality. Problems should not drive us away from God but towards Him who has all the answers that we are seeking. He is the Light of the world. No matter how different, how big your problems are, His everlasting light can shine through your night. Light cannot be hindered no matter what happens, its radiance will always be reflected outside. Light pierces the darkest night of the soul. The first century Church understood that sufferings and trials are part of the life that we have in Christ; they understood that we must go through tribulations to enter the Kingdom of God (Acts 14:22). They have learned that through much trials God is teaching them the Kingdom lifestyle. He is purifying them from imperfections of character. Daniel's story tells us how he made the Lord his refuge and how the Lord preserved him and his friends from certain death.

When we make the Lord our refuge, He will find ways to do so. David's life was marked with both joy and sorrow. Even though he was anointed as a king in his teen years, he did not become the king of Judah and Israel until the death of King Saul. With constant battle and being on the most wanted list by the government, his life

was always on the verge of being death, hiding and persecuted. It was this kind of preparation that exactly made him the greatest King of Israel. King Saul was the choice tool to shape the character of David and prepare him for kingship. His greatness lies in his forgiving heart and trust in the Lord that no matter what circumstances he is in, he knows the Lord will protect and keep him.

**“My God, my rock, in whom I take refuge; My shield and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold and my refuge; My savior, Thou dost save me from violence.” I call upon the Lord, who is worthy to be praised; And I am saved from my enemies. "For the waves of death encompassed me; The torrents of destruction overwhelmed me; The cords of Sheol surrounded me; The snares of death confronted me. "In my distress I called upon the Lord, Yes, I cried to my God; And from His temple He heard my voice, And my cry for help came into His ears.” (2 Sam 22:3-7 NASB)**

**“O Lord my God, in Thee I have taken refuge; Save me from all those who pursue me, and deliver me...” (Ps 7:1 NASB)**

**“Preserve me, O God, for I take refuge in Thee...” (Ps 16:1 NASB)**

**“You have been a refuge for the poor, a refuge for the needy in his distress, a shelter from the storm and a shade from the heat. For the breath of the ruthless is like a storm driving against a wall and like the heat of the desert. You silence the uproar of foreigners; as heat is reduced by the shadow of a cloud, so the song of the ruthless is stilled.” (Isa 25:4-5)**

Like David and the prophet Isaiah, we must make the Lord our hiding place, our refuge and strength because He will deliver us from any sickness, from any problem, from any distress or from any foe or bondage in this life. The Word of God simply says, **“Is there anything too hard for God to do?”** (Gen. 18:14). It was not hard for Him to remove Saul from kingship or even give an Isaac to Abraham; it was not hard for Him to bring revival in such hard places as Wales, a little unknown place in Great Britain at the turn of the previous century. And it won't be hard for us to invite the Lord in our schools, offices and places because God is able and God is great. It is only our own perceptions that limit what God can do through us and in us. When we truly believe in faith, we will trust, and we will believe there is nothing impossible with God.

## **The right response**

The biggest set back can be turned by God into your biggest victory. He gives abounding grace to even the chief of sinners and when you are weak, God will be your strength. **“And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that in all**

**things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work.”** (2 Cor 9:8). This abounding grace is for us. We can become vessels of His grace if we respond the right way. Paul’s secret for every encounter of problem is not hidden, for he has written it for us, **“Rejoice evermore. Pray without ceasing. In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you”** (1 Thess 5:16-18 KJV). When we think of the word rejoice, what emotion does it evoke to you? Does it mean laughter? Or does it mean an inner sense of joy? When the Word of God says REJOICE, it means exaltation regardless of the circumstances we are in. It means we worship the Lord even in the most gloomy circumstances we are in. Paul and Silas demonstrated this truth when they were beaten and imprisoned in Thyatira.

**“The crowd joined in the attack against Paul and Silas, and the magistrates ordered them to be stripped and beaten. After they had been severely flogged, they were thrown into prison, and the jailer was commanded to guard them carefully. Upon receiving such orders, he put them in the inner cell and fastened their feet in the stocks. About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the other prisoners were listening to them. Suddenly there was such a violent earthquake that the foundations of the prison were shaken. At once all the prison doors flew open, and everybody's chains came loose.”**(Acts 16:22-26)

Although both of them were tired and needing medical attention, Paul and Silas stood up and praised the Lord. They did the very thing that few of us dare to do, to focus on God and solve the problem. Many of us think that focusing on God is rather a waste of time and it is often the last resort for many of us. Well, Paul and Silas has just proven to us how false this idea was. Faith is not abstract of the unknown. Faith in God means knowing your Lord and Savior as He is...the all powerful Almighty God. He is the, “Great I am”. The meaning of I am cannot be possibly listed for everything that it stands for. It is limitless in power, beauty, magnanimity, character, love and truth. Paul and Silas knows that God can set them free even inside the most secure prison of their times. To be fettered does not only evoke humiliation but also to be counted as the most dangerous criminal of the land. Yet, the Lord’s power cannot be limited by any human authority, even by the highest authority in the land. When we call on God, He shows Himself strong in behalf of those who trusts in Him. When we pray and believe in what we pray for, trusting in the Lord, there is no limit to what He can do. God hears every prayer that we utter.

**“There was great joy in the city, for Jerusalem had not seen a celebration like this one since the days of Solomon, King David's son. Then the priests and Levites stood and blessed the people, and God heard their prayer from his holy dwelling in heaven.”** (2 Chron 30:26-27 NLT)

Though Paul and Silas are constrained by human authority, their authority with God cannot be limited by even the powers of human or demonic authorities. Their worship ascended to heaven and God cannot disregard any true worship arising from the human heart. When we pray and thank the Lord, we enter His gates but when

we worship the Lord, we enter His courts (Ps 100:4). Gates refer to doors or openings of either earthly authority or heavenly authority, and courts refer to lobbies where guests or relatives are received. By way of thanksgiving we are ushered into the Heavenly gates but when we come and worship the Lord, we are ushered into His presence. It is being in His presence that will open our hearts and minds to our true conditions. This is also the time that we adore our Father no matter what is happening before us. Paul and Silas may not even be aware at first that their chains already fell! When we come before our Father, He knows what we need, He being the King of the Universe extends His sceptre to us and asks, what do you want my son? What do you want my daughter? This is why the Lord encouraged us to pray without ceasing and to always be thankful for everything God has given us even when we are in situations we deem to be bad.

**“Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving...” (Col 4:2 KJV)**

When I first encountered this command, I was quite hard-pressed what it really means because I cannot even keep up to pray one hour. Later, I found out that it simply means that we pray continuously throughout the day without the need of always being inside our prayer closet. When I asked the Lord why and that it seems silly, He gave me a word I will never forget, **“set your affections on High.”**

**“If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.” (Col 3:1-3 KJV)**

**“But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know *them*, because they are spiritually discerned. But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man.” (1 Cor 2:14-15 KJV)**

Prayer and communion with God becomes second nature like walking to anyone who wants to be a citizen of the Kingdom of God. This is not a very hard job to do, you don't even need to sweat blood in order to do it.

## Chapter 4

### Divine Shift

**“Blessed is the man that trusteth in the LORD, and whose hope the LORD is. For he shall be as a tree planted by the waters, and *that* spreadeth out her roots by the river, and shall not see when heat cometh, but her leaf shall be green; and shall not be careful in the year of drought, neither shall cease from yielding fruit.” (Jer 17:7-8 KJV)**

There are instances in our lives when changes happen and set a milestone. These are events made memorable because of their impact in our lives can be simply different. The change can be observable as well as its effect. One of the so called milestones in our lives includes tests we overcome in the Lord. Maybe you haven't observed but your salvation in Christ is one, the removal of bondages and curses is another, as well as your high school graduation day. Events like these are called divine shifts because of their impacts in our lives. I count my salvation in the Lord to be the first of the major shifts in my life because of the way it has impacted my perspective in life and in my career. Bringing salvation to mankind is not an easy task for the Lord and neither an easy task for any evangelist to save souls. Apart from the need of prayer as well as new fellowships for the young believers, discipleship is necessary if they would ever grow in Christ.

Salvation is the very first step in the stairways to God's intimacy. The Lord does not want us to remain in any steps apart from moving up and being found in His throne. This is described in Ephesians 1:20, where Christ was set up at the Father's right hand far above any power or principality and the most surpassing revelation of all is to know and understand that as we composed His Body, so we are also set far above any power or principality in the heavenly places.

**“...which He brought about in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead, and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places, far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age, but also in the one to come. And He put all things in subjection under His feet, and gave Him as head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fulness of Him who fills all in all.” (Eph 1:20-23 NASB)**

This is why we are inscribed in the palms of His hand (Isa. 49:16), secure and free, well provided with love and care by the Father of Lights. This is why we are always admonished in the Bible to set our affections above and to set our eyes above because the Lord has made us to dwell in the heavenlies by virtue of Christ's death and resurrection. This is like a virtual reality where we are both living in two worlds, only it is not virtual but in fact very real. This is why we have what we call us spiritual lives and at the same time we have our own earthly lives together.



Our connection in heaven is our spiritual life while our connection on earth is the fact that we are not dead yet and whatever blessing and revelation we receive from heaven, we bring here on earth by our deeds. So just how do we do this effectively? In the Old Testament, we are told of the story of Jacob's ladder that reaches to the Heavens, "As he slept, he dreamed of a stairway that reached from the earth up to heaven. And he saw the angels of God going up and down the stairway. At the top of the stairway stood the Lord, and he said, **"I am the Lord, the God of your grandfather Abraham, and the God of your father, Isaac. The ground you are lying on belongs to you"** (Gen 28:12-13 NLT). Jacob's dream was not only significant for him but also for us. Every rung of the ladder could have been events in his life leading to his encounter with God; nevertheless he did not persist to ask God about it. But for us, every rung of the ladder represents the milestones of trials we learn in this life for every step of the way, we are learning God's characters that bring us nearer to the knowledge of Him.

The apostle Peter had summarized these virtues that we need to learn while we are here on earth, **"And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins. Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall: For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ"** (2 Peter 1:5-11 KJV). The promise is, "ye shall never fall," and "*an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord.*" God wants every one of His children to be able to open the door and enter through in His presence (Rev. 4:1). He wants all of us to experience Him deeply because that is where we are called to, deep calls unto deep.

**"Deep calls to deep at the sound of Thy waterfalls; All Thy breakers and Thy waves have rolled over me. The Lord will command His lovingkindness in the daytime; And His song will be with me in the night, A prayer to the God of my life."** (Ps 42:7-8 NASB)

When King David described his experience of deep calls to deep, he meant something like his whole being is floating, flooded and swallowed up in the River of Life. When this experience comes to you, it would be like feeling your whole being has been flooded overwhelmingly by the Lord's presence. Let us not waste our daily struggles but use them to move up by simply calling on the Lord as deep calls to deep. This is part of our quest.

## Our preparation

There is a saying that goes, “those who failed to plan, planned to fail.” None of us can do time travel and move through the space time continuum or even have a precognition of impending events. Unless you have a prophetic gifting, there are simply too many physical laws you have to break in order to do that. At least this is our condition on earth, but the fact that we hear stories of angels, stories of how God delivered people from certain death through interconnected events are strong enough to warrant our attention and how we should order our day.

God is a good planner, there is no question to that; in fact the things that are happening to us have been planned long time ago by the Lord. I have found out that children who are helped by their parents at home do not only excel in their classes but also end up more secure and better prepared to face life outside the school. Consequently they also end up with better education and decision making later in life. Moreover, top achievers in schools are usually children who are not only intelligent or diligent at reading but also because they can make plans and have the will to actually implement them no matter how simplistic their goals or ambitions are. There is therefore much to be desired in being a good planner apart from the fruits of good planning. Although I have not heard God tell me audibly to become a good planner, my readings and lessons from the lives of great voices of Science and the Bible tell me it is so and a must for anyone who wanted to leave a legacy that will be told by generations to come.

God’s timings are always right; you may think it too slow or too fast, but it just comes right no matter what. We certainly think of time in terms of a chronological order. Just think about your daily routines and schedules and you know it that it must go by this order. Though this is good, when we are bound by the present things or by the past, we forget to receive new things or to allow flexibility in our schedules. It is this set of mentality that basically distrusts things that are unexpected because it simply forces our schedule to keep on changing. During the days when Jesus walked on earth, the group of Pharisees who were the most avowed conservatives of their day came face to face with God but could not even discern who He was. He became their target of assassination because His teachings and interpretation of the Scriptures were simply contrary to their basic precepts and ideology. The Lord therefore gave a statement that we are wise to consider for our own sake, **"And no one puts new wine into old wineskins. For the old skins would burst from the pressure, spilling the wine and ruining the skins. New wine is stored in new wineskins so that both are preserved"** (Matt 9:17 NLT). Old wineskins refer to people who through their daily routines have become hardened and paced up the way life goes around. They continue the way they are until one challenges them and “boom” there is a sudden sound of collision between what’s not and what’s on. To old wineskins, what they have is enough and okay. This kind of people cannot be entrusted with new revelations lest they cut it out or simply ridicule it. Old wineskins have become familiar with things around that they have forgotten the God they serve. They do

things around because it is the right thing; they have lost their passion for their first love.

When things go berserk and we forget God, we endanger our relationship with the One who loved us most. The spiritual state of the Pharisees can be the ultimate state of delusion and hypocrisy that any Christian can fall into and this happens when we forget our first love. Revelations of the things of God have been likened to a wine because they are intoxicating apart from the new knowledge we receive, we are imparted with new strength and spiritual faith muscle that we can use for the things we need to do. When we stop communicating with God, we stop receiving His revelations. Revelations are products of our relationship; it comes naturally as we grow in His likeness. God's revelations may come by seeking them but no Christian will leave empty handed who does not seek the face of the Lord. As Christians we therefore seek to balance the way we plan things and the way the things of God come or appear. It does not have to go disorderly or in confusion because God is not the author of confusion or disorder.

When the Lakeland Revival first occurred this year many Christians were confuse whether what was happening was real or under false pretence. Most of the old wineskins simply labeled the young revivalist as false. Since when did the Lord taught us that to figure out someone was false was because of his tattoos? Or because of the signs and wonders happening around Lakeland? Revivals like what has happened in Ontario as well as in Lakeland should always be acceptable to Christians who love the appearing and fellowship of the Lord. Genuine revivals are the mark of God's last outpouring before He returns again and this will not be limited in few pockets of cities but it will happen in many places around the world just before the Lord will come again. Old wineskins will always be known by their vehement derision of things they do not understand or things that occur because they do.

In Science, new revelations and discoveries are always welcomed, scrutinized and judgment comes in later years. The fruits of the discovery as well as the repetitions and other concepts discovered related to it frames the discoverer to our mainstream consciousness. In Christianity today, we are always looking ways not just to hinder the new but to even crucify it. There has been no area in church advancement that has not come under the scrutiny of critics and false brethren. Nevertheless, every trials and victories we go through could either make us better or bitter. The choice is yours.

**"I have refined you, but not as silver is refined. Rather, I have refined you in the furnace of suffering." (Isa 48:10 NLT)**

**"And have you forgotten the encouraging words God spoke to you as his children? He said, "My child, don't make light of the Lord's discipline, and don't give up when he corrects you. For the Lord disciplines those he loves, and he punishes each one he accepts as his child." As you endure this divine discipline,**

**remember that God is treating you as his own children. Who ever heard of a child who is never disciplined by its father? If God doesn't discipline you as he does all of his children, it means that you are illegitimate and are not really his children at all.” (Heb 12:5-8 NLT)**

## **The victory**

The ultimate preparation we have would bring us the ultimate victory we need. When I was in college, as far as I can remember, my goal was to graduate as a Cum Laude. Unfortunately every time I target a high grade at the beginning of the semester, I then begin to lower it by the end of the semester which only resulted to hope deferred. The results of our being with Christ should never result to defeats because He has always been an Overcomer; there are times however when defeat comes because we have lowered our guards and did not look towards the Master.

**“But thanks be to God, who always leads us in His triumph in Christ, and manifests through us the sweet aroma of the knowledge of Him in every place.” (2 Cor 2:14 NASB)**

If God is leading us in His triumph why do we learn defeats in life then? Unfortunately we have forgotten that we are not yet perfect, so we have to learn this way. Our time of preparation is important just as any unprepared army will ultimately face defeat, the better our preparation, the better the outcome of our training. The best preparation in this life depends also on the desired results. While everything can depend on the amount of preparation, the grace of God can also succeed where man fails. I shall never forget an example from Bob Jones who recounted one from his dreams. It was the last inning in a baseball game and the Lord's team was on bat while satan was the pitcher; all the bases were full and the score was still 0-0. The name of the batter was Grace, and when satan threw a swerve ball, he hit it and it was a home run!

We may have all the best preparation we can do but still we must remember that everything comes by the grace of God. It is indeed tragic to see unprepared students take their exams only to expect a failing mark by the end of a semester. But what could be a more tragic instance than to find a Christian who has not prepared himself for any task in the Lord and when their time of opportunity comes they fail to do anything of value for the Kingdom of God. Joseph's great promotion came as a result of his ability to endure hardship in the heat of trials. He was sold as a slave to a master who was subservient to his wife. He was tempted by a seductress and imprisoned; he gave his service for free to Pharaoh's cup bearer but was forgotten. What could be a more unfair treatment and situation that a man could endure? And yet, Joseph never complained or ridiculed God; in all of his sufferings, he acknowledged the hand of God so that He trusted him with the highest authority in the most powerful country of that time. And who can forget the richest man of the east in his time? Job who was accused by his thoughtful and concerned friends and a

bitter wife never forgot that from God can come good times as well as trials. In all of his sufferings, he never surrendered to baseless accusations or allowed his wife's bitterness to influence his perspective on God.

**“Faith is the confidence that what we hope for will actually happen; it gives us assurance about things we cannot see. And it is impossible to please God without faith. Anyone who wants to come to him must believe that God exists and that he rewards those who sincerely seek him.” (Heb 11:1, 6 NLT)**

**“For every child of God defeats this evil world, and we achieve this victory through our faith. And who can win this battle against the world? Only those who believe that Jesus is the Son of God.” (1 John 5:4-5 NLT)**

## Chapter 5

### Following God's Presence

**“Now therefore, I pray thee, if I have found grace in thy sight, shew me now thy way, that I may know thee, that I may find grace in thy sight: and consider that this nation *is* thy people. And he said, My presence shall go *with thee*, and I will give thee rest.” (Ex 33:13-14 KJV)**

Moses asked for it and the Lord gave it. How many thousands of Christian leaders are wasting their time asking for other things but not the presence of God in their congregation, parishes, families and offices? Many ask for general blessings from new cars to new houses but all of these fail comparatively in measure to His marvelous presence. What makes babies attractive are because they are born with God's resplendent presence surrounding them. Matter-of-factly, this is why most of us whether we like children or not are compelled to look at them either because of their teeny voices or their lovely faces. We may ask, what is in the presence of God that all leaders should be asking for?

**“See, I am sending an angel before you to protect you on your journey and lead you safely to the place I have prepared for you. Pay close attention to him, and obey his instructions. Do not rebel against him, for he is my representative, and he will not forgive your rebellion. But if you are careful to obey him, following all my instructions, then I will be an enemy to your enemies, and I will oppose those who oppose you...” “You must serve only the Lord your God. If you do, I will bless you with food and water, and I will protect you from illness” (Ex 23:20-22, 25 NLT).**

This is the presence of God; He goes ahead of us, we follow closely from behind and we obey anything He says. Does it go as literal as that? For some this maybe the case but for most it may not be as literal as that. To have God's presence in our midst can mean many things but to feel His presence means to have His anointing as well as His wonderful presence going with you. It is God's presence that will compel many followers to obey true Christian leaders because His presence comes only in a hallowed and devout life of a disciple. When we have His presence we will not only have peace but also rest. Real peace emanate from having the Prince of Peace living in us and with us. This is why the first step always involves making peace with your Maker. Without this step, you will always be in want trying many things to bring your inner self into peace but finding nothing.

**"Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light." (Matt 11:28-30)**

**"I will personally go with you... and I will give you rest—everything will be fine for you." (Ex 33:14 NLT)**

Here we find, that asking God's presence is not after all a presumption as Moses did but rather it is an act that God is also waiting for us to do so. It is the Lord's presence that can heal a broken heart, a broken relationship or a divided family. His presence can bring refreshing and quickening to our mortal bodies (Rom. 8:11). Diseases, infirmities and mental oppressions cannot stay when we have His presence in us. As we spend more time in His presence, this is transferred not just into our beings but also in our physical bodies. This is why the face of Moses shone brightly before the Israelite congregation after 40 days and 40 nights spent with God at the top of Mount Sinai. Today we don't often see this kind of physical manifestation but we do see its equivalent today in lives changed and touched by people of God who has His presence indwelling them. This is what makes an effective leader, the indwelling presence of God which provides strength and wisdom necessary to serve a congregation or body.

The life that we now live, if lived for the Lord, we will also enjoy the abundant life just as Moses did. He was so filled with the presence of God that even at the day the Lord would take him to heaven, his strength and eyesight has never dimmed. God had to take him anyway so He just buried his body somewhere so that succeeding generations will not find out where and use it for idolatrous worship. Likewise, Enoch was so filled with His life so that God has just to take him intact without tasting death. To both men, think about it, all of science is trying to find a cure for ageing but the secret is a life lived in communion with the Lord.

Living in communion with the Lord does not need to mean stern looking, fist pounding preachers or disciples. To change the world, we do not need to be another copy cat of a revivalist or apostle. We simply need to do the part God has for us. It begins by simply obeying the Ten Commandments and praying daily for your family, nation and yourself. When we fall in love with His presence, the time spent with God increases. This time does not need to be all intercessions or supplications; it can simply be your story and the Lord hearing what you say. It can begin as that and end up hearing what He has to say to you.

**"Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things.  
For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God..."**

**"...Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful." (Col 3:2-3, 15)**

Living a balanced life should always be our goal whether we are in a heavy or stressful situation or simply enjoying a vacation. Jesus always lived a balanced life that's why we do not see his character sketch in the Bible tainted with any nervous breakdowns or neglect of his family members. Well it is easy to judge Him and say because He was God so these things did not happen to Him when He walked the

earth. Well, the truth is, just as we are flesh and blood, so he became so that he can save us. He suffered more than what we can bear so that we do not need to but anytime during His sufferings He could have easily reclaimed His deity but He did not because He did all things for our sake.

**“But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, now crowned with glory and honor because he suffered death, so that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone. In bringing many sons to glory, it was fitting that God, for whom and through whom everything exists, should make the author of their salvation perfect through suffering.” Heb 2:9-10**

These Scriptures simply tell us why He was made flesh and blood, and that was to make Him suffer for mankind’s Sin, to “taste death for everyone”. Thus, no one can simply reason out that He did suffer it but did not feel it because He was God. For us, the application is clear, we can live a fruitful and healthy life in Christ not just by watching our diets but more than these, we actually spend more time with Him during our prayers. When we do so, we will be transformed just as the Korean Church had demonstrated before the world.

When complaints arise in our hearts due to our situations, we would know what to do. Before we go to our offices, business meetings, or our daily tasks, asking for His presence will always be a better choice for a Christian to do so. It is by abiding with the Lord’s presence that Moses was able to lead a stiff necked and stubborn generation from defeat to victory, from bondage to freedom. Because of this, his name will forever be remembered in the annals of history for setting free and leading a generation full of bitterness and complaints that any leader would better leave of and set out alone. There is something big and evil in complaining which is why the Lord punished the Israelites severely for their complaints. Complaining reveals the state of one’s heart...it is a heart without faith. It shows how weak we are and how disconnected we have been with the Lord. The reaction of the Lord to the Israelites during their complaints can be gleaned as a similar reaction when we complain against Him about our situations, our spouses, our teachers or our leaders.

**“You will know that it was the Lord when he gives you meat to eat in the evening and all the bread you want in the morning, because he has heard your grumbling against him. Who are we? You are not grumbling against us, but against the Lord” (Ex 16:8)**

**"I have seen these people," the Lord said to Moses, "and they are a stiff-necked people. Now leave me alone so that my anger may burn against them and that I may destroy them. Then I will make you into a great nation." (Ex 32:9-10)**

He was against complaining because this shows our lack of faith in His ability to deliver His promises. When we complain, it is evidence that we have given up hope which is the anchor of our soul. Now we need to understand that the Lord’s goal for the Israelites was not simply freedom from Egypt as much as Egypt’s influence



within their hearts. He allowed them to march through the wilderness because the trial will bring about the best or the worst in man. The Lord bets that it would give the best in man; the first generation actually failed to be the generation that would be completely free from the influence of Egypt, for their bitter complaints led them into 40 years of trials in the wilderness. Although this was a tragic case, a newer and bolder generation arose from this that fully obeyed the Lord and conquered the Promised Land so that in the end it did not frustrate the Lord's hope. Thus, when we have a complaining heart, it really shows who we are, that we do not really trust Him that He is in control. When we lose this perspective, we will lose everything and begin to blame everyone. We can only do one thing at a time, either to complain or to trust the Omnipotent and Omniscient God.

## The right reaction

What shall we do then when we are trapped? When we feel the need to vent off our anger at someone who did us wrong? What shall we do when we find our leaders seem to be slow in finding solutions to problems we referred to them? Shall we be bitter and complain? Our reactions to problems and situations are actually our reaction to what God is doing in our life. When we do the same foolish mistakes as the Israelites did, we are sure to end up in defeat. There is however a better way than this and it promises sure victory.

**“God's promise of entering his rest still stands, so we ought to tremble with fear that some of you might fail to experience it. For this good news—that God has prepared this rest—has been announced to us just as it was to them. But it did them no good because they didn't share the faith of those who listened to God. For only we who believe can enter his rest. As for the others, God said, "In my anger I took an oath: 'They will never enter my place of rest,'" even though this rest has been ready since he made the world.” (Heb 4:1-3 NLT)**

The doorway, the gate to enter His presence is no other than faith! Complaining is counterproductive to faith. It is a false faith. True faith is not founded on circumstances or based on other people. True faith will always rest on this truth...God is powerful enough to be able to deliver His promises and omniscient to do it in His time. True faith will always be centered on what the Lord can and not on what we can or what we will do. To those who believe Him, he has a great reward because He is a rewarder of those who seek Him even though they did not see Him.

IF we will seek Him, we will always find Him. It begins when we stop trusting ourselves and we start looking at Him. If we believe that He cares, we will not waste our time and effort complaining of our situations but rather we start thanking His goodness to us; **“Give all your worries and cares to God, for he cares about you”** (1 Peter 5:7 NLT). When we realize what the apostle Peter is saying we will stop worrying and spend the rest of our time praying before God. This does not mean that

we should only pray our concerns during our prayer times as Muslim or Hindus do, but we pray wherever and whenever we can because Jesus said, **“why are you sleeping?...Get up and pray. Otherwise temptation will overpower you”** (Luke 22:46 NLT). Prayer is more powerful than any nuclear or pulse bombs; it has stopped the mouth of lions, it has brought rain and water, it has removed the bitter taste of a well, it has brought down the walls of Jericho, it has brought down the institution of slavery and communism. We pray even in impossible situations and tasks at hand because we believe that the Lord can do the impossible, **“For nothing is impossible with God”** (Luke 1:37). Only through faith and patience we will be victorious. If we continue to do good, we shall reap the same; we overcome evil by being good inside out.

**“For if we are faithful to the end, trusting God just as firmly as when we first believed, we will share in all that belongs to Christ. Remember what it says: “Today when you hear his voice, don't harden your hearts as Israel did when they rebelled.” And who was it who rebelled against God, even though they heard his voice? Wasn't it the people Moses led out of Egypt? And who made God angry for forty years? Wasn't it the people who sinned, whose corpses lay in the wilderness? And to whom was God speaking when he took an oath that they would never enter his rest? Wasn't it the people who disobeyed him? So we see that because of their unbelief they were not able to enter his rest.”** (Heb 3:14-19 NLT)

**“That ye be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises.”** Heb 6:12 (KJV)

## Chapter 6

### Rock Solid Foundation

**“You will keep in perfect peace all who trust in you, all whose thoughts are fixed on you! Trust in the Lord always, for the Lord God is the eternal Rock.” (Isa 26:3-4 NLT)**

Except the foundation of Christ, there is none that will last on earth. The only lasting legacy one can have is a good name to be remembered and anything other than that will not stand the test of time. When one thinks of history, you can either remember the good name or the bad name of a person who shaped that period or era; we seldom here someone of distinction because of his fabled riches apart from the legendary King Midas or Solomon.

**“A good name is more desirable than great riches; to be esteemed is better than silver or gold.” (Prov 22:1)**

**“A good name is better than fine perfume, and the day of death better than the day of birth.” (Eccl 7:1)**

**“On that day I will gather you together and bring you home again. I will give you a good name, a name of distinction, among all the nations of the earth, as I restore your fortunes before their very eyes. I, the Lord, have spoken!” (Zeph 3:20 NLT)**

The leaning tower of Pisa is fabled precisely for its tower which tilts. Built on a soft soil, the foundation can scarcely hold the solid building of marble. Our lives can be much similar to this tower, though ornately adorned with Romanesque arts, the tower is basically useless these days for its purpose; no matter how luxurious our lives can be, the true significance of living is not built around what we have but what we can do with what we have. A precursor to a life of significance is living with the foundation of eternity and there is none better to provide that answer than Jesus Christ Himself. He is the eternal Rock by whom our lives should be built on. David writes, **“Unto thee will I cry, O LORD my rock; be not silent to me: lest, if thou be silent to me, I become like them that go down into the pit”**(Psalms 28:1 KJV). The Lord has become King David’s Rock; but just exactly what it means when the Lord becomes the rock of our lives, is a question not of security or vulnerability alone but of foundation.

**[David] sang: "The Lord is my rock, my fortress, and my savior; my God is my rock, in whom I find protection. He is my shield, the power that saves me, and my place of safety. He is my refuge, my savior, the one who saves me from violence.**

**I called on the Lord, who is worthy of praise, and he saved me from my enemies.  
 "The waves of death overwhelmed me; floods of destruction swept over me.  
 The grave wrapped its ropes around me; death laid a trap in my path.  
 But in my distress I cried out to the Lord; yes, I cried to my God for help. He  
 heard me from his sanctuary; my cry reached his ears. (2 Sam 22:2-7 NLT)**

The meaning of Christ being our Rock according to David is when the Lord becomes our Savior where we find protection from our enemies; He becomes our shield from every accusation and traps; He becomes our Refuge and Safe Haven that not even death can get near us. Thus, our rock solid foundation can only be Jesus Christ for whom we shall find salvation and redemption. He must become our personal Lord and Savior because the Lord does not have grandchildren. It is by making peace with our Maker that we stay at peace within ourselves and without. The prophet Isaiah wrote,

**"So this is what the Sovereign Lord says: "See, I lay a stone in Zion, a tested stone, a precious cornerstone for a sure foundation; the one who trusts will never be dismayed." (Isa 28:16).**

**"The fruit of righteousness will be peace; the effect of righteousness will be quietness and confidence forever. My people will live in peaceful dwelling places, in secure homes, in undisturbed places of rest. Though hail flattens the forest and the city is leveled completely, how blessed you will be, sowing your seed by every stream, and letting your cattle and donkeys range free." (Isa 32:17-20)**

When we make the Lord, the Eternal Rock, the true foundation of our lives, righteousness will flourish and there will be peace this is why His people will live in peaceful dwelling places and secure homes because He will be the lofty foundation by which their lives will be built on. The alternative for us will be judgment and condemnation,

**"When your judgments come upon the earth, the people of the world learn righteousness." (Isa 26:9)**

**"Lord, you establish peace for us; all that we have accomplished you have done for us."  
 (Isa 26:12)**

**"See, the Lord is coming out of his dwelling to punish the people of the earth for their sins. The earth will disclose the blood shed upon her; she will conceal her slain no longer." (Isa 26:21)**

**"Seek the Lord while you can find him. Call on him now while he is near.  
 Let the wicked change their ways and banish the very thought of doing wrong.  
 Let them turn to the Lord that he may have mercy on them. Yes, turn to our God,  
 for he will forgive generously." (Isa 55:6-7 NLT)**

**"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him. Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because he has not believed in the name of God's one and only Son. This is the verdict: Light has come into the world, but men loved darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil."  
(John 3:16-19)**

## **God connection**

**"Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand. And we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God." (Rom 5:1-2)**

We stand in this world only because of the grace of God. That grace was given to us when we first believed and was forgiven of our sins. Consequently, our enmity with God was broken and removed. Paul writes, we now have access by faith into God's grace and we rejoice with God for this new standing that we have. The cleansing of our hearts is one of the greatest miracles we can ever experience. We were unrighteous but He has made us righteous. We were undeserving but still He chose to forgive us. The only One who can do that is no other than the Lord. He was a King yet He left His first estate and took the form of a humble servant and was willing even to the point of death. He was in fact so full of love that He was so willing to die and give His life for us.

**"[Jesus] made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death — even death on a cross!" (Phil 2:7-8)**

**"When we were utterly helpless, Christ came at just the right time and died for us sinners.**

**Now, most people would not be willing to die for an upright person, though someone might perhaps be willing to die for a person who is especially good. But God showed his great love for us by sending Christ to die for us while we were still sinners." (Rom 5:6-8 NLT)**

The apostle Paul writes that none are so much willing to die for a sinner though a few will do for a good man. Yet Jesus Christ volunteered Himself to actually die for us though we were still sinners. Think of that, He died for us, the unjust, even when He has seen us at our present ugly conditions. In the King James Version, Rom. 5:8 speaks, "God commendeth His love," which when translated plainly means He

demonstrated, He proved, He showed His love while we were still sinners. He was willing to die disfigured, flogged, humiliated, and mocked all because of His love for you and me. When Paul had this revelation, that was the beginning of his revelation of Christ living in him. He wrote, **“I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me”** (Gal 2:20 KJV).

He realized that indeed this Jesus whom he tried to persecute and destroy His churches loved him very much and died for him. Not many of us realize how much God loved us in the first place because of the ambiguities in our mind of His Fatherhood. Many of us are raised up with a father figure who may seem to be too harsh for us to be truly a father. But God is much more than any human father we can think about, and though he may have semblance to human fathers, his fatherhood can be compared roughly with such Patriarchs who follow His heart closely like Abraham and David. Does that mean that all have failed as fathers because they did not reach the stature that Abraham or David has? Indeed no, the message here is that though we may have experienced harshness with the way we were treated by rude earthly fathers, we can't generalize that God is so. I only compared Abraham and David because of the way they were expressive of their love to their children. In fact Abraham loved Ishmael and Isaac both and this is captured by the way Sarah seem to have mistreated Haggai when Isaac was born. He could not have been simply standing and doing nothing during those times when bickering inside his family occurred because of trouble about inheritance.

We can take a glimpse of how Abraham could have loved his two sons by the way God tried him by asking the life of his own son Isaac. With David, even the death of Absalom was too painful for him, though Absalom was a renegade son, and yet he said, it would have been better that he had died instead of Absalom. The fatherhood of God is expressed in the way these two Patriarchs unselfishly showered love to their children. This is the same way that the Lord loved us and even more for He emptied Himself and died on the cross for us. Jesus became human for our sake so He can be crucified and ransom us from the clutches of Sin and death (Heb. 2:9). This is one aspect that we should always be wary of, He became human so He can be crucified otherwise there could have been no crucifixion since a spirit cannot be crucified.

Without Him tasting death, how can He proclaim the resurrection from the dead? How can He claim victory from death? And how can we be redeemed from Sin and death? It is therefore required and logical that Jesus has to go through much sufferings and death so He can be the Savior, Redeemer and Mediator of man.

**“What we do see is Jesus, who was given a position "a little lower than the angels"; and because he suffered death for us, he is now "crowned with glory and honor." Yes, by God's grace, Jesus tasted death for everyone. God, for whom and through whom everything was made, chose to bring many children into glory.**

**And it was only right that he should make Jesus, through his suffering, a perfect leader, fit to bring them into their salvation.” (Heb 2:9-10 NLT)**

**“For *there is* one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time.” (1 Tim 2:5-6 KJV)**

**“Just think how much more the blood of Christ will purify our consciences from sinful deeds so that we can worship the living God. For by the power of the eternal Spirit, Christ offered himself to God as a perfect sacrifice for our sins. That is why he is the one who mediates a new covenant between God and people, so that all who are called can receive the eternal inheritance God has promised them. For Christ died to set them free from the penalty of the sins they had committed under that first covenant.” (Heb 9:14-15 NLT)**

## **The Teacher**

As we start our journey with God, He must also become our personal Teacher and Pastor from whom we rely for everyday spiritual food to feed our souls and spirit with Heavenly manna. Just as He fed the Israelites with manna during their 40 years of wanderings in the wilderness (see Exod 16:1), the Lord has chosen to feed His people with daily manna from His Word, from the lives and writings of His servants as well as from fellow Christians. Just as a baby would always desire a bottle of milk, we must also desire the **“sincere milk of the word”** that we may grow in the knowledge and wisdom of Jesus Christ (1 Peter 2:2 KJV). Personally before receiving the Lord in my life, the Word of God sounded like a brass when I try to hear from sermons or from others; it’s just that I could not really understand what it means and why when I tried reading it, I just feel sleepy and dose of to sleep. But when I got saved, the Word of God tasted differently; it has become a guide and book that breathes out life to my body. Again, the prophet Isaiah makes this clear that our separation from God has blocked our understanding of Him or His Word.

**“Surely the arm of the Lord is not too short to save, nor his ear too dull to hear. But your iniquities have separated you from your God; your sins have hidden his face from you, so that he will not hear.” (Isa 59:1-2)**

**“We have not received the spirit of the world but the Spirit who is from God, that we may understand what God has freely given us. This is what we speak, not in words taught us by human wisdom but in words taught by the Spirit, expressing spiritual truths in spiritual words. The man without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually discerned.”(1 Cor 2:12-14)**

## The goal

We must understand that once we have grown and matured, the goal of the Lord is to release us to do ministry. This means we replicate the ministry which has been entrusted to us by the Lord. This truth is profoundly illustrated by the DNA molecule itself and shows to us the roadmap of our discipleship. Every single cell contains a core of DNA which in turn contains chromosome that mainly functions to dictate our genes. It is this DNA that will direct the overall arrangement of structures and function of the cell itself. When a DNA replicates, it unwinds itself from the bottom up. Once separated as single strands, each strand will form a new partner strand. Likewise, when we have undergone discipleship or been trained, it is part of our Christian duty to spread Christianity and disciple others too. Whether this happens inside our workplace, in mission outposts or in sports arenas you determine it. Even Paul the apostle advises this to every Christian soldier, **“You have heard me teach things that have been confirmed by many reliable witnesses. Now teach these truths to other trustworthy people who will be able to pass them on to others”** (2 Tim 2:2 NLT). And the Lord Himself taught this to us: **“I have been given all authority in heaven and on earth. Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you. And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age”** (Matt 28:18-20 NLT).

Another amazing facet of DNA replication is that the old strand passes all the information it contains to the new strand, while at the same time it freely releases this new strand to also replicate itself. In the same manner, the person whom we disciple receives all that we have given him and he also passes this legacy to many others. Jesus did the first model by teaching His twelve disciples well and then leaving them to do as He did. An added lesson from here is to freely release our grip on others we have discipled; whether they remain with us or move on to other congregations or fellowships, we should be happy to release them knowing that the Lord will continue His work in their lives. In Christianity, there is no feudalism or territoriality for if this happens, we are not serving the Master but our own little dukedoms. Discipleship of others is a field not only for the mature or grown ups but a church paradigm model by which we grow in numbers and at the same time increase in the knowledge of Christ. No one can do this better than the Lord Himself but He tasked us not because we are the best in the field but rather because He trusts the Holy Spirit will empower us to do.



## Weeds and good seeds

The advancement of the Kingdom of Heaven is likened to cultivating a vast field of wheat and rice. In this field, the land owner has hired His servants to prepare the ground and sow the seeds of the Kingdom.

**"The Kingdom of Heaven is like a farmer who planted good seed in his field. But that night as the workers slept, his enemy came and planted weeds among the wheat, then slipped away. When the crop began to grow and produce grain, the weeds also grew.**

**"The farmer's workers went to him and said, 'Sir, the field where you planted that good seed is full of weeds! Where did they come from?' "'An enemy has done this!' the farmer exclaimed. "'Should we pull out the weeds?' they asked. "'No,' he replied, 'you'll uproot the wheat if you do. Let both grow together until the harvest. Then I will tell the harvesters to sort out the weeds, tie them into bundles, and burn them, and to put the wheat in the barn.'" (Matt 13:24-30 NLT)**

When the Kingdom of God advances, satan does not lie in wait to merely watch; he also tries to bring distractions and hinder the work of God. He sows doubts, accusations, confusion and tries to bring bickering among leaders. Moreover the newly born babes of the Kingdom are the favorite target of the enemy to try to dissuade them from following Jesus Christ. He can do this by countless ways from simple distractions such as stopping attendance of fellowship, bringing persecution from family members, ridicule of others and even spiritual confusion; the enemy shows himself as a roaring lion who seeks to devour the new believer (1 Peter 5:8). The Scriptures above show how the enemy tries to accomplish his purpose; as the Lord plants the true seeds of the Kingdom, the enemy also plants weeds. Weeds are representative of his devious ways to choke the true seeds of the Kingdom. Just as real weeds try to suck the life out of a wheat plant, satan tries to suck the life of Christ in every new believer. Who can even try to help the child of God then? How do we overcome the enemy? The answer to all of these is as simple as prayer. If we continue to pray, to hold on to God, our night shall become like the broad daylight.

**"Thou *art* my hiding place; thou shalt preserve me from trouble; thou shalt compass me about with songs of deliverance." (Psalms 32:7 KJV)**

**"The Lord is my rock, my fortress, and my savior;  
my God is my rock, in whom I find protection. He is my shield, the power that saves me, and my place of safety. He is my refuge, my savior, the one who saves me from violence.**

**I called on the Lord, who is worthy of praise, and he saved me from my enemies.  
"The waves of death overwhelmed me; floods of destruction swept over me.  
The grave wrapped its ropes around me; death laid a trap in my path.**

**But in my distress I cried out to the Lord; yes, I cried to my God for help. He heard me from his sanctuary; my cry reached his ears.” (2 Sam 22:2-7 NLT)**

**“For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: For the weapons of our warfare *are* not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds; Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.” (2 Cor 10:3-5 KJV)**

**"Pray that you will not give in to temptation." He walked away, about a stone's throw, and knelt down and prayed, "Father, if you are willing, please take this cup of suffering away from me. Yet I want your will to be done, not mine." Then an angel from heaven appeared and strengthened him.”(Luke 22:40-43 NLT)**

**“Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: Whom resist stedfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world.” (1 Peter 5:8-9 KJV)**

## **Crushing the serpent’s head**

**“The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet. The grace of our Lord Jesus be with you.” (Rom 16:20)**

Do you really believe we can crush satan’s head under our feet? The Bible says so. During these days, the revelations of the Kingdom of Heaven and darkness are both increasing. Though darkness increases, Light is destined to overcome darkness. As we look around us, it would seem to be that darkness gets the upper hand just by basing our own observations from the dailies we read everyday. But then the Word of God declares that His children will overcome, **“I write to you, fathers, because you have known him who is from the beginning. I write to you, young men, because you have overcome the evil one. I write to you, dear children, because you have known the Father. I write to you, fathers, because you have known him who is from the beginning. I write to you, young men, because you are strong, and the word of God lives in you, and you have overcome the evil one”** (1 John 2:13-14). I will show you how this happens. When the Word of God indwells our lives, every pocket of lies that the enemy has purposely planted will be exposed. When truth resides in us we are not only set free but become the agent to expose the lies that bound many others.

Satan primarily brings corruption and death to this world through the lies he propagates (see Joh 8:44). For example, Hitler’s belief that the Arian race is the greatest race comes from the lies that the enemy has entrenched in science such as Eugenics. This false science believes that wars are tools of natural selection where

only the fittest and best human race survives. This was released through the idea of Darwin's evolution where mankind is the result of primeval selection from outer space and there is no concept for a Maker whatsoever. When this concept is applied to our societies, there will be no need for religion, culture or concepts of morality. This will be in fact the utopian society of many Darwinists. But lies such as these are debunked by many natural examples and questions that demand answers. For instance in nature, cannibalism rarely occurs within a group of family. Mankind is supposed to be the family that it was called to be and an example to the smaller creation of God. In spite of our intelligence, mankind has not found a true solution to this problem; there has been no rest from war even in the last 100 years. We are still predated on each other; killing the vulnerable and hindering others we think are a threat to us! The Lord commands Christians to cast down such vain ideas and overcome them,

**“For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: For the weapons of our warfare *are* not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds. Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ...” (2 Cor 10:3-5 KJV)**

**“Neither give heed to fables and endless genealogies, which minister questions, rather than godly edifying which is in faith: *so do.*” (1 Tim 1:4 KJV)**

**“But refuse profane and old wives' fables, and exercise thyself *rather* unto godliness.” (1 Tim 4:7 KJV)**

**“...If ye continue in my word, *then* are ye my disciples indeed; And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.”(John 8:31-32 KJV)**

This study is treated more in depth in my books, **“Kicking Evolution and Unmasking Evolution.”** The gist is simple, the truth shall prevail and trusting the Truth brings life whereas lies will ultimately bring death and destruction. The Scripture, **“The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet,”** aptly expresses the deliberate truth that God has spoken long time ago, **“it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel”**(Gen 3:15 KJV). It was a prophecy spoken when Adam and Eve sinned; they did not ask for mercy or salvation but out of God's abundant love, He pardoned them by believing the coming Savior who will redeem mankind from Sin.

And when the Savior came, He dealt a fatal blow on the serpent's Head, a wound that cannot heal, because just as Satan thought he killed Jesus Christ, the act of His sufferings and death was a means to bring justice and redemption to mankind. Though we suffer persecutions and slayings, the blood of Jesus Christ was enough to pay for our sin and salvation just by looking at the Cross of Jesus. If the patriarchs and people long time ago has to have faith in the coming redemption through a

Messiah who would die by being crucified, we are redeemed by looking back to the time when Jesus Christ was crucified. It seems a paradox that it is the God of Peace who will bruise Satan under our feet and not the Lord of Armies or Hosts; what this really means is that beyond ammunitions and armory what brings true victory is the morale of the fighters. When the Christian soldier has peace inwards, he won't be troubled by distress surrounding him but he can focus to do what his Master bids him to do. This was demonstrated during the Falklands war between Britain and Argentina where the Argentine army though more numerous and positioned at a more strategic higher ground lost their will to fight and thousands of them surrendered to a fewer British commandos simply because they thought their government has forgotten them.

In a similar manner, Christians who possess the inner peace of God in their hearts can profoundly change their landscapes precisely because of their resolution to never surrender before the enemy. When peace prevails within our hearts, it will be like a fortress that no arrows of the enemy can penetrate. This is why the apostle Paul confidently wrote, **“And in nothing terrified by your adversaries: which is to them an evident token of perdition, but to you of salvation, and that of God”** (Phil 1:28 KJV). When the enemy shoots arrows of accusations and confusion to a child of God, His peace will be a strong bulwark that will thwart the arrows of the enemy.

**“Be still, and know that I *am* God: I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth.”** (Psalms 46:10 KJV)

**“...for the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. For he who in this way serves Christ is acceptable to God and approved by men. So then let us pursue the things which make for peace and the building up of one another.”** (Rom 14:17-19 NASB)