



The Book of James: Timeless Lessons on Patience and Endurance

By Paul Onifade

In our previous study of the Book of James, we explored how James urges believers to navigate life's trials by adjusting our perspective. In this edition, we will examine how Christians are not only encouraged to adjust their perspective on suffering but to respond with patience and endurance.

Patience and Endurance: A Central Theme in James

The concepts of patience and endurance feature prominently in James' counsel, highlighting their significance in a believer's response to suffering. Three key passages illustrate this:

• **James 1:2-4:** "Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything."

• **James 1:12:** "Blessed is the one who perseveres under trial because, having stood the test, that person will receive the crown of life that the Lord has promised to those who love him."

• **James 5:7-12:** "Be patient, then, brothers and sisters, until the Lord's coming. See how the farmer waits for the land to yield its valuable crop, patiently waiting for the autumn and spring rains... We count as blessed those who have persevered. You have heard of Job's perseverance and have seen what the Lord finally brought about. The Lord is full of compassion and mercy."

According to the Oxford English Dictionary, patience is "the capacity to accept or tolerate delay, problems, or suffering without becoming annoyed or anxious." While this definition captures the essence of patience, divine enablement is required to go beyond mere tolerance and genuinely "count it all joy."

Lessons from Jesus: The Ultimate Example

Jesus' life and ministry provide profound lessons on enduring suffering with grace. He modelled patience and trust in God, offering Christians a blueprint for navigating trials. More than that, He extended an invitation: "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest" (Matthew 11:28).

1. Patience Is Not Stoicism – Jesus Expressed His Emotions

While some cope with suffering through stoicism by bottling up emotions, Jesus demonstrated patience in a different way. He openly expressed His pain yet fully trusted God:

• "Abba, Father, "He cried, "everything is possible for You. Take this cup from Me. Yet not what I will, but what You will" (Mark 14:36).

• "During the days of Jesus' life on earth, He offered up prayers and petitions with fervent cries and tears... Son though He was, He learned obedience from what He suffered" (Hebrews 5:7-8).

2. Patience Is Trusting God – Jesus Trusted the Father Completely

Jesus embraced suffering because of His unwavering trust in God's promises:

• "For the joy set before Him, He endured the cross, scorning its shame" (Hebrews 12:2).

• "He did not retaliate when insulted, nor threaten revenge when He suffered. Instead, He entrusted Himself to Him who judges justly" (1 Peter 2:23).

Even in the face of death, Jesus remained confident in God's justice, enabling Him to endure the cross with unwavering faith.

3. Jesus Did Not Assign Blame – He Focused on God

Despite betrayal and abandonment, Jesus did not shift blame:

• He did not rebuke His disciples for falling asleep in Gethsemane.

• He did not curse Pilate, or the Roman soldiers. James echoes this principle: "Don't grumble against one another, brothers and sisters, or you will be judged" (James 5:9).

4. Trust in God Leads to Graciousness

Even amid suffering, Jesus demonstrated grace and forgiveness:

• "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing" (Luke 23:34).

• He healed Malchus, the high priest's servant, even as He was being arrested (John 18:10-11).

• After His resurrection, He prepared breakfast for His disciples, including Peter, who had denied Him three times (John 21:9-12).



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*Come to me, all you
who are weary and burdened,
and I will give you rest.*

Matthew 11:28

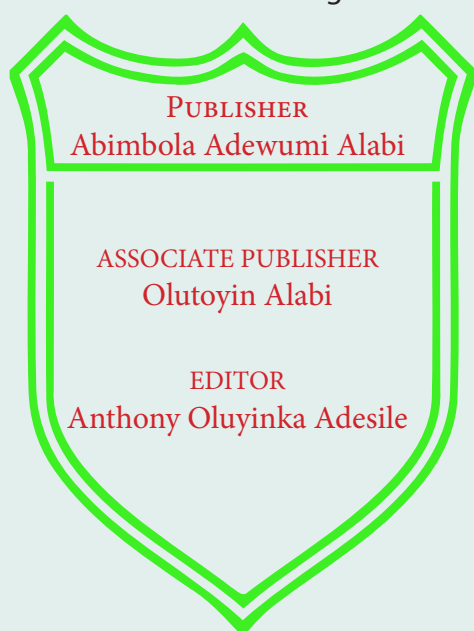
IN THIS EDITION:

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DO NOT TURN ASIDE TO THE LEFT OR THE RIGHT
I FOUND THE LIGHT
GO AGAIN

Welcome to Panoplia.

The mission of Panoplia is to help believers develop a deeper relationship with Jesus Christ. It emphasises spiritual growth and leadership.

It is published quarterly by City Of Refuge Ministries Inc. and is distributed free of charge.



Most quotations in this newsletter are from the **Holy Bible, King James Version.**

Feel free to write to us if you have comments, contributions, observations or reactions to articles published in this journal.

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5. Jesus Suffered with the Right Attitude

Jesus approached suffering with humility and submission to God's will. Believers are encouraged to adopt the same mindset:

- "You must have the same attitude that Christ Jesus had" (Philippians 2:5).
- "Since Christ suffered in His body, arm yourselves also with the same attitude" (1 Peter 4:1).

The Ultimate Goal is God's Reward

For believers, patience and endurance in suffering are not in vain. James reminds us of the eternal reward awaiting those who remain faithful:

- "Having stood the test, that person will receive the crown of life that the Lord has promised to those who love Him" (James 1:12).
- "Be patient and stand firm, because the Lord's coming is near" (James 5:7-10).

The promise of Christ's return provides hope and strength to persevere. By fixing their eyes on Jesus, Christians can endure suffering with the assurance of God's ultimate justice and mercy.

Patience Is a Fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22)

True patience, which includes peace amidst suffering, is rooted in faith in God. James reminds us that patience is not a natural disposition inherited from our parents; rather, it is cultivated through reliance on God. It develops as a fruit of the Spirit and is refined through life's trials (James 1:2-4; Romans 5:3-5). Given that patience is a fruit of the Spirit, it also involves resisting the natural tendency to grumble or assign blame during hardship (James 5:9). Jonathan Edwards' reflections on Romans 8:28, was "*Our bad things will turn out for good. Our good things can never be lost. And the best things are yet to come.*" This allowed Horatio Spafford to compose *It Is Well with My Soul* even after the tragic loss of his five children. We need this supernatural help if we are to have biblical patience. Trusting that God is in control enables believers to remain steadfast, confident that He will work all things together for their good. Patience is knowing that God is your Shepherd and understanding that there will be times that feel like shadows of death and that God will yet prepare a feast for us in the presence of our enemies not in their absence.

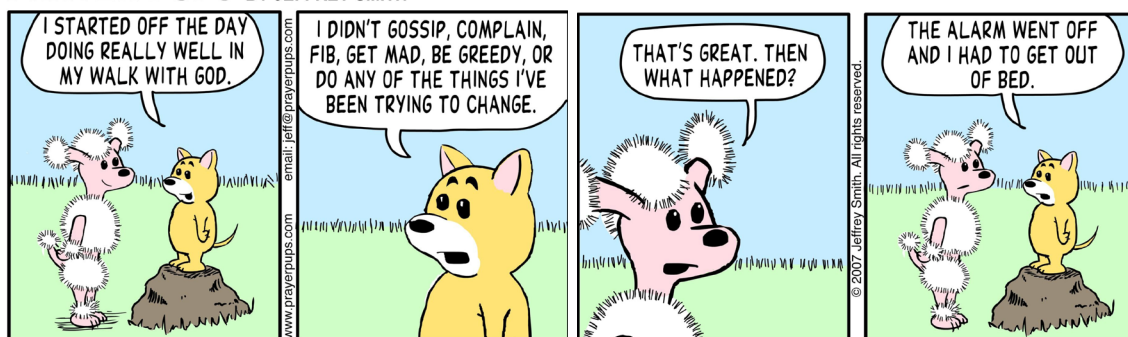
By following Jesus' example, Christians are called to endure with grace, resist the blame game, and trust in God's sovereign plan. In doing so, they await the crown of life when the Lord returns.

Paul Onifade

Paul became a Christian in his early teenage years in Nigeria his home country. He was mentored by a British Missionary – Pa S G Elton. He together with his dear wife Yetunde, moved to the UK in 1990, shortly after their marriage. They have two adult children. Paul is a lay preacher, and he enjoys sharing the gospel – the good news of Christ is often his theme. He is a practising solicitor. He enjoys playing tennis, scrabble, and chess.



PRAYER PUPS BY JEFFREY SMITH



SOMETIMES IT'S HARD TO DO WHAT YOU KNOW IS RIGHT, BUT IT'S ALWAYS WORTH TRYING.



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Be Fired up!

By Olutoyin Alabi

Dear Brethren and Reader, this is an urgent call to be Fired up for God in this season.

These are tumultuous times.

The happenings in the world are concerning.

There are losses of jobs and increase in unemployment worldwide, rising inflation, wars, uncertain future for the children and increased unveiling of evil in the society. These are however things previously foretold in the scriptures that would happen in the last days!

Mathew 24:6-8

6 And ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars: see that ye be not troubled: for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet.

7 For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places.

8 All these are the beginning of sorrows. Yes, evil deeds abound but so shall Grace much more abound! Amen.

Romans 5:20-21

20 Moreover, the law entered, that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound:

21 That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord.

When John the Baptist declared of the Lord Jesus, he said, beyond the baptism unto repentance with water, Jesus would baptize with the Holy Ghost and Fire!

Mathew 3:11

11 I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance. but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire:

Jesus Himself said in Luke 12:49- I am come to set the world on Fire and I wish it were already kindled.

Jesus also sad in the book of Revelation 3:15-16, that He wishes we were either hot or cold! A Lukewarm state, He would Not tolerate!

“I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot. I wish you were either one or the other! So, because you are lukewarm—neither hot nor cold—I am about to spit you out of my mouth”

What is going on in the body of Christ today Brethren??

Did we receive only the Baptism of the Holy Spirit without that of Fire??

Where is the Fire with which we have been baptized?

Where are the manifestations!

Jesus’ lamentation 2000 years ago of wanting the world to be set on Fire is still on point today.

He said this is why He came.

That the Kingdom of this world may become the Kingdom of our God!

He showed us the example of how to be on Fire and how to set the world on Fire.

Acts 10:38 tells of how Jesus was himself anointed by the Holy Spirit AND With Power(Fire), and He went about doing Good! Healing men of All sicknesses and casting out devils, for God was with Him.

Acts 2:3-4, tells of the 120 Believers being Baptized in the Holy Ghost and having tongues of Fire on their heads.

This may suggest they were so immersed in God’s Fire that it overflowed on their heads for the outside world to see.

Their miraculous acts of God’s power confirmed the Fire they carried.

Acts 5:12

“And by the hands of the apostles were many signs and wonders wrought among the people”.

Obadiah 1:18- says we, like Jacob and Joseph are made of Fire and we are set to burn away All stubble.

Obadiah 1:18

“The people of Jacob and of Joseph will be like fire; they will destroy the people of Esau as fire burns stubble. No descendant of Esau will survive. I, the Lord, have spoken.”

Today, the same commission has been given to every believer, that has been Baptized with the Holy Spirit and Fire (Power) to go out into the world and set it on Fire for God by doing the same Good that Jesus did. Demonstrating the Power of Healing the sick, casting out devils, speaking the prophecies of Life into the world situations, bringing hope to the lost, speaking God’s wisdom to solve economic and political situations

According to Jesus’s words in Luke 12:49 as above, ‘it’s long overdue’. Let’s shine the Light of God in the world we are in By setting ourselves on Fire! Amen.

Luke 12:49” “I came to set the earth on fire, and how I wish it were already kindled!”†



*The books are available
at Amazon.com,
Barnes and Nobles
and other leading
Christian bookstores*

The Dilemma of a Father



By Abimbola Adewumi Alabi

The Father in the year 2025 faces a dilemma that he has never faced before in his lifetime.

The crossroad is, “What is the truth?”

Truth has always been truth with no coloration.

However, in recent years, some institutions have been embodiments of truth. For instance, the Church, Government, Teachers, and royal palaces were associated with the Truth.

Today, none of these institutions worldwide can be trusted or guaranteed to be speaking the truth.

Before 2025, as a Father, you can tell your child not to accept gifts from strangers.

“My child”, says Dad. “Do not take gifts at your workplace so that you can remain impartial and fair to all”.

“Dad”, called Child.

“Yes, Child”, answered Dad.

“The Government says it is stupid of me if I don’t take my dream car or house from the guy I am just helping”, says Child.

“Well, what if you are charged in court? Do you have the law enforcement and judiciary in your pocket to justify this new truth?” Asked Dad

A lot has changed from what it used to be. Today, the Bishop gives vantage seats in the Church to wealthy and influential individuals. It’s not about their spirituality. It’s about packaging the Church.

I believe the truth in the Bible about relationships has to do with our pure heart before God, not man.

Truth today is about what the man of God can get from the Church, not about what God wants him to do for His Kingdom.

The father faces the challenge today of guiding the young adult in choosing a spouse.

Marry, Marriage is what I hear you say? Replied the Child.

Indeed, today’s young adult has their questions for the father:

“Why should I marry?”

“What is the truth about this today?”

“Should I marry?” Asked the Child.

“There are benefits in the institution of marriage”, the father replied.

“What benefits?” Asked the Child. “All the benefits you talk about have been available from High School and through colleges. All the benefits are available with choices and without any liabilities of raising children. It’s a well-understood game”. The Child pointed out.

“But that is not for the child of God,” Dad replied.

“Dad, I don’t know who God’s children are anymore”. The Child continues, “Everyone is repackaging his or her physical attributes. You can choose to look like anything you fancy. Any part of your body can be remodelled. So how do I know the real person I want to date?” asked the Child.

Appearance, you’ll find, is quite deceptive these days.

Today is Father’s Day, and how do I tell my child the truth?

Today, the Father has only the Bible.

But then ...

“Wait, Dad. What version of the Bible should the father rely on as the basis for teaching the truth?

“Well,” said Dad, “the one that says teach your child the truth so that when he or she grows old he will (or she will) not depart from it”.

“Again, Dad, I am asking what version of the Bible I can rely on?”

“You will have to accept Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior. HE will then introduce you to the Holy Spirit, who will daily guide you”.

So, it’s safe to conclude that as the question of truth continues, the Holy Spirit can truly guide and Teach The Truth.

However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come. He will glorify Me, for He will take of what is Mine and declare it to you. (John 16:13-14)

Happy Father’s Day

Please Watch.

https://youtu.be/M6CYdWR9IQs?si=2CSpY_Hwu5Wroj7X

New book by Abimbola Adewumi Alabi

Devotional For Youth



The young ones are the future of any society. You can tell what will become of a community or a nation by the way these young ones are raised. Many dysfunctional marriages are a function of two individuals whose foundation was distorted. That is the reason why the Bible says in Proverbs 22:6, “Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it.” But you may ask, what way should a youth go? How should a youth be trained with an assurance that he would not depart from it? Ephesians 6:4 answers it. It says, “And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.”

Dr. Abimbola understands that raising a child in the teachings of Christ is the only way to secure their future and align them on the path of truth and eternity. Through this inspiring devotional, you will learn to study God’s word daily and develop the character of Christ. So, open your heart to hear His voice which will set the sail for your glorious destiny.

THE AUTHORITIES OF LEADERSHIP - OVERVIEW

Pastor Oladipo Kalejaiye

“Authority”

In this presentation, “authority” does not refer to the legitimate power vested in individuals within organizational structures based on their formal positions and roles. Rather, it refers to the informal “powers” or “propelling forces of influence” that certain qualities, capacities, and abilities in a person generate, which motivate others to follow their lead.

Delineation from Leadership

Although “authority” and “leadership” are always delineated - the former is rooted in formal positions, the latter relies on influence and inspiration.

The one is often positional, the other personal; the one is granted, the other earned. This presentation ignores the mutual exclusivity of the two concepts. It harmonizes them: the leader is the authority, and the authority is the leader, simplistically expressed, because the leader is a composite of qualities, capacities, and abilities that imbue the leader with authority, influencing others. It is leading without any formal, positional, or granted authority.

Sources of Authority

[Although these sources of authority have been variously expressed by different authors, the content and illustrations are mine.]

There are at least four sources of authority that avail a leader to wield tremendous power and influence: the authority of position, the authority of character, the authority of competence, and the authority of personality.

1 . The Authority of Position

Often, this authority is exercised by a leader in a formal position within an organizational structure.

Nevertheless, influence and power could also be gained or earned just by virtue of being in a particular position, albeit outside an organization or system.

2 . The Authority of Character

This authority is rooted in the transparency of the leader’s integrity,

compassion, self-confidence, resilience, and commitment to upholding ethical values even at the risk of suffering losses.

3 . The Authority of Competence

This authority, sub silentio, boldly proclaims that the leader “is an authority” in the subject matter at hand. The leader’s competence is not only obvious but exhibiting skills that develop competence in others and showing respect and being patient with those who are slow to learn generate respect, obedience and followership for the leader.

4 . The Authority of Personality

This authority comes from the leader’s apprehension of the reality of the “drama” of human existence and how to come alongside the human players in all of life’s vicissitudes. It has to do with being human and humane, feelings and spirit.

Excerpts From the June 2025 Practical Workable Solutions Leadership Summit . THE AUTHORITIES OF LEADERSHIP.

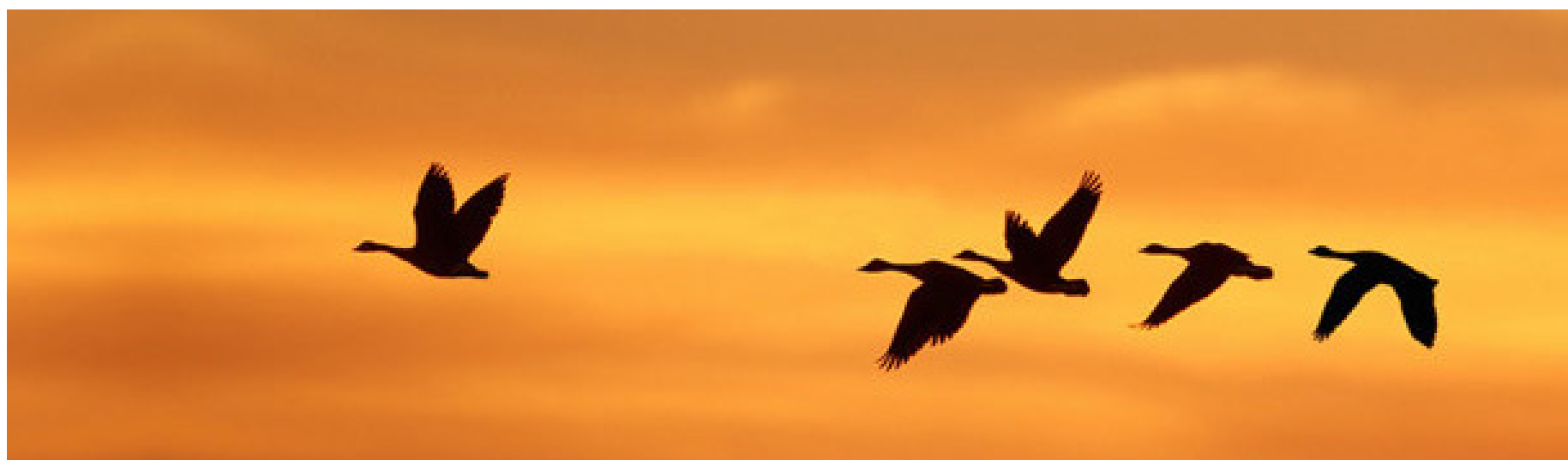
DR . OLADIPO KALEJAIYE

SENIOR CENTER, PASTOR, LOS INTERNATIONAL ANG ELES

“You need to persevere so that when you have done the will of God, you will receive what he has promised.” (Hebrews 10:36)

“And as for you, brothers and sisters, never tire of doing what is good.” (2 Thessalonians 3:13)

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written by Crystal B at www.actsweb.org

We can find numerous stories in history of people who were gifted but whose talents were overlooked or devalued by many. Their discouragement at the time was great, but with their perseverance, they reached great heights. Here are just a few examples...

Albert Einstein was four years old before he could speak and seven before he could read. Einstein became one of the greatest physicists who ever lived.

Sir Isaac Newton did poorly in grade school. Yet, he became one of the greatest scientists to ever live. He discovered and developed the three laws of motion and the law of universal gravitation.

Leo Tolstoy flunked out of college. It was later in life that he wrote the literature classic that we know as "War and Peace".

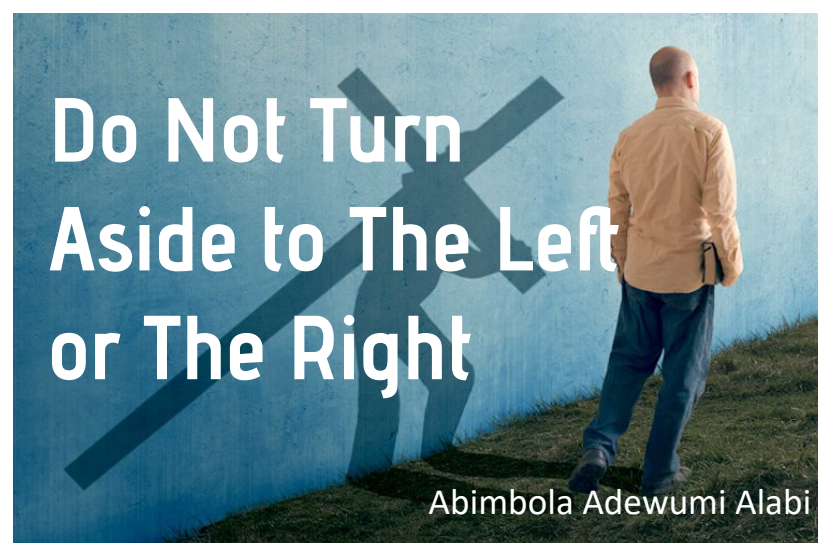
A newspaper fired Walt Disney because he had "no good ideas" and "he lacked imagination" (Walt Disney lacked imagination???)

Our failures do not define who we are!

God has given us all talents and he knows the desires of our hearts. When we are faithful in developing those gifts and persevere even when we fail, God can use us to do great things. The key is to never stop trying.

Suggested prayer: Dear God, thank you for the talents you have given me. Give me wisdom to know how to best develop them, and discernment to know how to best serve you and others with those gifts. Thank you for hearing and answering my prayer. In the name of Jesus I pray, amen.

Based on a devotional written by Crystal B at www.actsweb.org



"Josiah was eight years old when he began to reign, and he reigned thirty and one years in Jerusalem. And his mother's name was Jedidah, the daughter of Adaiah of Boscath. And he did that which was right in the sight of the Lord, and walked in all the way of David his father, and turned not aside to the right hand or to the left." (2 Kings 22:1-2) KJV

Josiah was a focused person, He was not distracted. He did what was right by following God all the way.

He did not try to be a little to the left, and a little to the right and dance between two opinions.

The path to following Christ is straight, predictable and narrow. How are you following Christ" today?

Don't turn aside to the left or right. The maxim of "when you are in Rome do like the Romans" do is not of God.

Do not compromise your stand for God on any issue. Be a reliable child of God in all issues of life.

As King Josiah was able to follow the good example of King David, so also we are more blessed to have Jesus as our perfect example to emulate in all issues.

Take time to find the mind of God on any issues in life you may be facing. Proverbs 22:28 "Remove not the ancient landmark, which thy fathers have set."(KJV)

Jeremiah 6: 16 "Thus saith the Lord, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls. But they said, We will not walk therein"(KJV)

Turning aside in The Yoruba Culture Says Once you start stealing, you will lie and also live an immoral life

Don't be a people pleaser by oscillating between opinions.

Holiness without which no man shall see God :

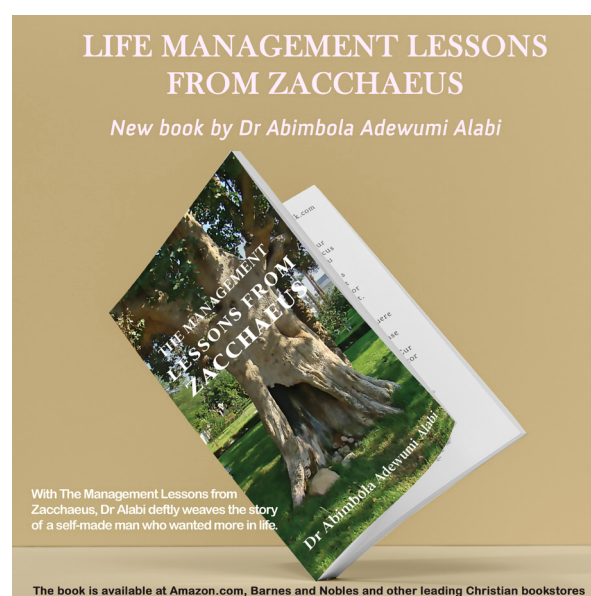
Hebrews 12: 14 "Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord" (KJV)

Be a true disciple of Christ and you should be able to say like Paul follow me as I follow Christ "Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ" (1 Corinthians 11:1) KJV

Don't turn aside to the left or right."

Excerpt From

Empowering You To Fulfill Your Destiny: A Daily Devotional
Abimbola Adewumi Alabi



I FOUND THE LIGHT

Abiodun Fijabi

I have witnessed darkness in its most profound form—a grim tapestry of human suffering woven from selfishness and neglect. I have seen the homeless jostle for a sliver of concrete beneath the bridges, claiming a patch of cold ground for the night. I have watched children, their eyes too old for their faces, sift through reeking bins for scraps of food, numbed to the stench of decay. Desperate souls, stripped of dignity, stretch out their hands not for help, but for mere alms. The streets are a river of bowed heads and shadowed faces, a silent procession of the forgotten. In this city, does anyone remember how to smile?

“Someone must do something!” The cry echoed in my mind, aimed at the distant, powerful figures: the government in its marble halls, the lavish politicians, the outspoken Christian leaders, the wealthy executives in their glass towers. I searched the faces around me, hoping to see a hero, one man who might rise above his own struggles to lift up another. I found none. A profound sadness settled over me, a grief for a humanity that seemed to have lost not only its way but its very soul.

Seeking refuge from the biting wind and the even harsher reality of the streets, I pushed open the door to a restaurant. Warmth washed over me.

An imposing mirror framed in sleek aluminium and rich wood adorned the entrance, a testament to a world of curated beauty and comfort.

I caught my own reflection and instinctively straightened my coat. But the man staring back at me was a stranger—a coward, a man who had surrendered. I saw a light long ago dimmed by overwhelming circumstance, a voice silenced before it could even whisper a protest, a fighter who had shamefully fled the ring while the real battle raged just outside the door.

The truth struck me with the force of a physical blow. The prayer I had been casting outward had no recipient. The hero I was waiting for would never come.

In that crystal-clear moment, without a second thought, I turned and strode back onto the street. But I was not returning to search for the light. I was returning as the light. A radiant, defiant joy overflowed my heart. I had found my reason to live. I would not solve everything, but I could do something. I would shine, however faintly, and impact life, one person at a time.

Go Again

Abimbola Adewumi Alabi
From Daily Empowerment Devotionals

“And when [the families of Jacob’s sons] had eaten up the grain which the men had brought from Egypt, their father said to them, Go again; buy us a little food.”

Genesis 43:2 (AMPC)

Go again, don’t sit still.

Go again, don’t give

Go again. Stop arguing.

Go again; trust him/her.

Many of us today are in similar situations, like Israel was with his remaining sons after Joseph had held Simon as a surety to prove they were not fakes. We are sometimes in a quagmire where the only way out is forward. The family could debate, justify, and rationalize delaying going back to Egypt.

Look around you and find hope and courage as Israel did

Trust more for just one more time.

Love more for just one more time

Pray more for just more time.

Give more for Just more time.

Israel’s decision to go again yielded fulfillment

There may be some grey areas and misgivings.

God says HE knows the way through the wilderness.

All you have to do is follow.

God said to Moses, “Why cry out to me? Speak to the Israelites. Order them to get moving. Hold your staff high and stretch your hand out over the sea: Split the sea! The Israelites will walk through the sea on dry ground. Exodus 14:15

God told them to move forward despite the challenges of the pursuing Egyptian army, the fearful mixed multitude, and the Red Sea.

The Red Sea parted,

There was a way out.

They walked across miraculously.

Though they were initially reluctant.

They went forward.

It ended joyfully.

Go again.

Abimbola Adewumi Alabi

From Daily Empowerment Devotionals

EMPOWERING YOU TO FULFILL YOUR GOD GIVEN DESTINY



‘How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power, who went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with Him.’

ACTS 10v 38

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