

Snake IN THE POWER HOUSE



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The Snake in The Power House

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THE SNAKE IN THE POWER HOUSE

This message is for those who want their destiny changed for the better, that is, those who are tired of playing marbles and want God to do something really good for them. It is not for those who are still arguing whether or not to be holy. It is for those who have already taken the decision to be holy and, with purity, now want power.

A brother was invited to an interview in respect of a plum job. On his way, a commuter bus splashed mud all over his body. By the time he went back home and changed his clothes, the interview was over.

Another invitation to an interview for a far better position soon came. As the brother prepared for the interview, his first child, developed convulsion, followed by the second and the third, all in one day. Even his wife who was battling to save the lives of the three children also broke down. All these kept the brother busy at home while the interview was over. Immediately the interview was over, the sick people in his house got well. Thus, the brother missed his second opportunity.

The third interview soon came. The brother got to the interview on time and went to meet his friend on the upper floor so that both of them would come down together. While he and his friend were in the lift, the electricity supply to the lift was cut off and the stand-by generator refused to start. The interview went on while he and his friend were held up inside the lift. Thus, he lost his third chance.

In Genesis 27:40 we read:

And by thy sword shalt thou live, and shalt serve thy brother; and it shall come to pass when thou shalt have the dominion, that thou shalt break his yoke from off thy neck.

When a man faces an enemy more powerful than himself, the only way to overcome that enemy is to become more powerful. When you are not as powerful as an enemy and the enemy has put a bondage on you and you want to get out, you are bound to suffer more.

When you want to remove the bondage placed around your neck by the strong enemy, but lack the power, the enemy can add more to your bondage. But when you are more powerful, you can take the yoke from off your neck and put it on the neck of the enemy.

One night, as a sister in our church got up from our sitting room to go and ease herself, a demon suddenly moved in. She looked at the demon fearlessly. The demon even went ahead to mention all the sisters' names, including the ones she rarely used, and told the sister that it was sent to kill her. The sister remained unperturbed and gave it an order to freeze on the spot; and it did. She gave it another order to use the big stick in its hand on its own head. The demon began battering its own head with the big stick. That sister had power.

In Psalm 18:17, we also read:

He delivered me from my strong enemy, and from them which hated me: for they were too strong for me.

Also, in Matthew 10:1, the Bible tells us:

And when he had called unto him his twelve disciples, he gave them power against unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all manner of sickness and all manner of disease.

What the above verse tells us is that there is a particular power against unclean spirits. Do you want such a power?

We move to Ephesians 6:10, where we are told:

Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.

There was a particular city which was supplied power by a very powerful generator. The generator was so powerful that it did not only serve the whole city, it never broke down, too. However, at about 11p.m. one night, a thick darkness enveloped the whole city. The city dwellers took it easy thinking it was a minor problem. Throughout the night, there was no light.

At a point, the technicians, engineers and repairmen went to see what was wrong only to discover that a snake had coiled up inside the generator. And because of this, the generator packed up. What this meant was that, that single snake that entered into the power house was enough to shut it down.

The church is desperately in need of men and women of power. While I was, in the primary school, we had what we called "dunce dance". It was done by all the pupils who came last in all the classes who were brought together and made to dance round all the classes in the school.

One thing I noticed about this dance was that no pupil did it twice. After a pupil had done it once and suffered its humiliation, he would sit up and read his book so that he would not do it again.

Many of us are doing our dunce dance now and complaining of not knowing what God is doing. God is looking for men and women of power in these last days, who, will demonstrate His Power, men and women who will declare, to any demon that, crosses their path that there is a Being known as the Highest, the "I am that I am."

I saw an example of this while I was in the secondary school at Yaba. A pregnant woman going to the market stepped upon one of those Sango worshipers in white dress. The Sango worshiper got annoyed and called her names. Despite the fact that she apologised to the idol worshiper, he threatened to curse her. Lest she should think it was a mere threat, the Sango worshiper put something to her mouth and began to curse the pregnant woman. Immediately she did this; fire came out from her mouth. But, to the amazement of the Sango worshiper, the pregnant woman turned round and ordered the fire to stop, it stopped. That was power.

WHAT IS POWER?

- ☛ Power is the faculty or capacity to act effectively.
- ☛ Power is the capacity to overcome your obstacles.
- ☛ Power is the ability to exercise control.
- ☛ Power is the vital energy that makes your enemies to flee.
- ☛ Power is the ability to remove obstacles in your way and decide which way you want to go.
- ☛ Power is part of everyday life.

You are alive today because you have physical power to be alive and the mental power to understand whatever goes on around you. It is the power in the battery of a vehicle that enables it to work. Unfortunately, however, many of us do not understand the Bible definition of power.

According to the Bible, power is to have access to the mysteries of God. But the fact remains that ours is a generation of powerless Christians. Our powerlessness has almost become legendary; it has become monumental.

It is very terrible that believers are looking for power where they should not. The way this present world is going, it is important, beloved, for us to have the power of God in our lives. Our lives must generate the power of God. It is dangerous to live without that power. It is a welcomed idea for Christians to get involved in politics so that unbelievers will not keep ruling God's own people, but that vital power of God must first be acquired for effectiveness.

The Bible says: "He gave them power againstunclean spirits."

It is a lamentable tragedy for you to stay as the foot-mat of the enemy simply because you lack power. Real power is spiritual, power. All other powers bow to spiritual power. There is a very powerful boxer who can easily break bones with his punches, but who lacks power against immorality. Also, there is a very powerful wrestler who is totally powerless against drug addiction.

These days, we need real power.

One day, a woman told me how the MFM was being criticized in her church for always praying "fall down and die" prayers. The woman was constantly harassed by seven spirit husbands. This was the problem that brought her to the MFM Ministries.

Immediately she was given "All powers tormenting my life, fall down and die" prayer points, she was put off. "This is what people say about this MFM church" she grunted. However, something prompted her to pray and she started praying. And immediately she mentioned "Die!", the Lord opened her eyes to see the seven spirit husbands standing beside her, and the ground began to open up to swallow them little by little.

When she saw this, she raised up her voice and intensified her prayer. Once the spirit husbands were swallowed, the ground closed up. I am sure that if anyone goes now to tell that woman not to say "fall down and die" prayers again, she would tell the person off.

WHY DO WE NEED THE POWER OF GOD IN OUR LIVES?

It is because life itself is a battle

This battle of life is a fact that begins the very moment we are conceived and it continues till we enter the grave.

The success of a man's life is measured by counting the battles he wins against the ones he loses. Every man must fight his own personal battles. People get wounded in the battles of life. These wounds can be very serious.

We need it because of one thing known as "bondage"

Bondage is a powerful word. Whoever puts another person in bondage only seeks to rule that person.

To be in bondage is to be limited, to be confined, to be caged, to be bound, to be a slave, to be in subjection to a power or force.

It is to be powerless in the presence of an enemy.

It is to be demoted. It is to have your enemy as your prison warder and regulator.

To be in bondage is to be under an embargo.

It is to be under a foreign standing order.

It is to follow an evil voice always giving orders.

It is to have captors deciding your fate.

There is conscious bondage and there is unconscious bondage. Also, there is the bondage by choice and there is the, bondage by inheritance. There is the bondage by force; there is bondage by accident. There is the self-inflicted bondage. We need the power of God to overcome all these.

We need it because the Bible says, "Evil men and seducing spirits shall wax stronger and stronger" (2Tim. 3:13).

We need it because this generation is becoming more and more dangerous, and wicked.

But this is a generation of powerless Christians. We need to do something quick.

Let us look at Revelation 17:6:

And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus: and when I saw her, I wondered with great admiration.

Wonders upon wonders - Babylon drinking the blood of saints! Not the blood of the wicked! Even the apostle were astonished. The same things are already happening in our present world. Blood drinkers have taken over the affairs of men.

Therefore, before we can do anything, we need to pray. Before we take an injection we must pray. Before we undergo surgery we must pray. In fact, whatever we wish to do these days, we need to pray first. Even now, there are people who plant demonic materials in front of clinics and hospitals to ensure that when a patient enters there with malaria fever, he comes out with tuberculosis. This is to keep the patient in bondage of sickness." It is a typical operation of eaters of flesh and drinkers of blood. God is looking for violent Christians to confront these evil people.

John 6:55-56 says:

Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him.

It is after we have been able to drink the blood of Jesus and eat His flesh that we can drink the other type of blood we are told of in Numbers 23:24:

Behold, the people shall rise up as a great lion, and lift up himself as a young lion: he shall not lie down until he eat of the prey, and drink the blood of the slain.

God is looking for confronters who will demonstrate His power in these last days. There is wickedness all around us and terrible things are happening every day.

A preacher got into an aircraft and took his seat beside a fellow who was busy praying. After watching the fellow pray for a long time, the preacher was delighted that he was seating beside a prayer warrior. When the man finished praying, about 30 minutes later, the preacher turned to him, smiled, greeted him and said. "You must be a Christian, brother, to have been praying since."

To his astonishment, the brother looked at him disdainfully and charged: "Dare you mention that word again. I hate Christians. I'm actually praying against them." For the remainder of the journey, the preacher couldn't be himself. However, to get over the shock, he himself resorted to praying.

Beloved, the supreme need of the hour is power from above as opposed to power from beneath. The rule is very simple: when power goes against power, the weaker power has to bow.

Dry leaves and paper were boasting against the wind. They boasted so much about beating Mr. Wind whenever it comes along. But when the wind blew, both the dry leaves and the paper were blown away. This was a clear demonstration of the result of a weaker power facing a stronger one.

We can notice all around us the revival of witchcraft and other demonic practices. The other time, I read in a foreign newspaper about one small boy who went into the house of a 90 year old woman and slaughtered her. He neatly cut out the heart of the old woman and was drinking the blood from that heart when the police arrived.

This happened in a white-man's land and not in Africa. The boy belonged to a satanic society where they were told that to become immortal, they needed to drink blood from the heart of another mortal. This is the type of people we live with now. But can we continue to live in their midst without power? To live in their midst powerless is to get sacked from work without any cause and without any consequence.

The 19th chapter of the book of Apostles is an interesting chapter of the Bible, the people of Ephesus were interested in witchcraft, astrology, demonism and such other dark things. This reminds me of present day Nigeria. Young men are rubbing all manner of demonic powder all over their faces. Many go and bury things in the cemetery or bring things out

from there and put them in their pockets. People are being kidnaped and their organs cut off for fetish use.

There are people in our country today who daily take blood bath. There are people who walk into the market just to test their voodoo power on other people, who comes to the market. Many of the people we think are innocent are far from being innocent.

A man took his own wife and wanted to use her for money. The woman managed to escape. All these things happen around us on a daily basis.

Paul got to Ephesus and preached and preached and preached without achieving any result. The people of Ephesus saw no reason why they must leave their own gods and idols and follow one man of Galilee who was crucified: and that man was even not crucified alone: He was crucified along with thieves. However, something happened to change all this. The thing became the talk of the town:

Then certain of the vagabond Jews, exorcists, took upon them to call over them which had evil spirits the name of the Lord Jesus, saying, We adjure you by Jesus whom Paul preacheth. And there were seven sons of one Sceva, a Jew, and chief of the priests, which did so. And the evil spirit answered and said, Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are ye? And the man in whom the evil spirit was leaped on them, and overcame them, and prevailed against them, so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded. And this was known to all the Jews and Greeks also dwelling in Ephesus; and fear fell on them all, and the name of the Lord Jesus was magnified. And many that believed came, and confessed, and shewed their deeds. Many of them also which used curious arts brought their books together, and burned them before all men: and they counted the price of them, and found it fifty thousand pieces of silver. So mightily grew the word of God and prevailed (Acts 19:13-20).

After Paul had preached fruitlessly for a long time, the people woke up one day to be faced with two powerful realities: one, that the devil actually exists; two that the man, Jesus, preached by Paul, had power over the devil. These two hard facts forced them to turn to Jesus in large numbers.

Many there are in our present world, who are waiting to hear the voice of Satan before they move. Jesus did not come to start a religion but to destroy the work of satan (1 John 3:8). We need to understand where we are; we need to know that there are forces facing us; we need to understand the powers that are in operation and know also that until we have a greater power they will continue to put us in bondage. But if there is a snake in

your power house, you will not be able to exercise the power that God wants you to exercise.

The Bible calls Jesus the King of kings and the Lord of lords. Who are the other kings? It is you and I. Jesus is King, we are kings. And who are we kings over? As a matter of necessity, for you to be a king under the King of kings, you must first be a king over your flesh. There must be no snake in your power house. Paul said, "But I put my body under subjection, lest at any time, after I've preached unto others, I myself will be a castaway." For you to exercise the power of God, seven things are necessary. These are the things from which you need to set yourself free and set others free, too.

WHAT TO DO

You need these seven things to possess your possession. To have them will enable you to look the devil straight in the eye and dictate what and what you want.

1. YOU MUST BE BORN AGAIN

This is non-negotiable. I may quickly add here that the majority of people who come to church are simply not born again.

Many church workers are not born again.

Many pastors are not born again.

Many people who claim to be working for God do not even know the God they claim to be working for.

Many of those who go about proclaiming their 'born-againism' are, in fact, 'born against'.

Many roam around claiming to be Christians, but they do not smell the word Christianity.

Do you claim to be born again while you keep on telling lies? How can you claim to be born again while you keep stealing? How can a child of God dance all night at a party with the children of darkness? How can you

put a "Beware-Angels On Guard" sticker on the door of your house while you commit fornication inside the same house? What this means is that you are not born again.

Many church workers don't know what they are doing, yet they want the power of God in their lives. Before you can get this power of God, this first point must be sorted out: you must be born again. Born again people don't issue curses on people at random.

The fact that a person attends the MFM Ministries does not mean that he is born again. We have a lot of rebellious choristers, ushers, Sunday school teachers, etc., in our midst. And once you are rebellious, it means you are a witch (1Sam. 15:23). The Bible says that rebellion is as an iniquity as witchcraft. So, if you are a witch inside and you are praying against another witch outside, it will never work. You will be able to put your enemy under your authority only when your own obedience is complete. Ponder the question: Are you born again?

2. Mr. FLESH MUST DIE IN YOUR LIFE

When the power of flesh is ruling over you, the power of God cannot come upon your life. You must disobey the instruction of the flesh at all times. Mr Flesh must be killed and buried.

3. You must have the holy determination to convert yourself from a powerless sheep to a roaring lion

4. Be endued with power from on high

This is what the Bible calls the power of the Holy Ghost. If you have not received the baptism of the Holy Spirit, you must get it now. You need to move in this power.

5. You must control your tongue

God does not use talkative people, those who have loose mouths. Read your Bible very well and you will notice that in those places where God spoke, His words were very few. In fact, God's instructions are often in one syllable, "Go," "Sit," "Eat," etc; You need to understand all this to be able to get His power.

6. You need to know that power is measured out according to the level of self-crucifixion in your life and your level of faith.

7. The key power is to be able to convert every pressure upon your life unto power, rather than allowing such pressure to pull you down, or becoming an expert at worshipping your problem.

Covert your pressure points to power points. I have a favorite testimony which I have shared several times. It is about a man of God who boarded a bus at Iddo heading for Ikorodu. Inside the bus, the conductor began to insult an elderly man. The elderly man then promised him a tough time by the time they got to Ikorodu.

When they got to Ikorodu, the elderly man put his hand inside his 'agbada', brought out a horn, put it to his mouth and issued incantations against the bus conductor.

Thereafter, he ordered the bus conductor to remove his trousers. The conductor complied. He further asked the bus conductor to remove his shirt and singlet, and the bus conductor. It was at this point that the servant of God began to beg the elderly man, who turned to him and asked him who brought him into the matter.

Feeling affronted, the elderly man brought out his juju horn again and cursed the man of God in the same manner. He then asked the man of God to remove his coat, but he replied, "In the name of Jesus, I shall not do so." This surprised the elderly man.

The man of God thereafter turned to the conductor and said, "in the name of Jesus, I command you to put on your clothes now."

People watching them were shocked to see, right before their eyes, two powerful persons locked in battle. One was turning somebody insidiously mad and the other was reversing it. Right there, the man of God started preaching the word of God; and most of those present gave their lives to Christ. The good news is that, that person who was turning the conductor mad has become a man of God.

The Bible says, "Whatsoever ye bind on earth shall be bound in heaven." What this means is that the initiative starts here. But if the binding here is

not effective, or you yourself doing the binding should be bound, the heavens will ignore your directive.

We need to bring down the power of God into our lives so that if witches fly over our compound, they will somersault and crash-land. Even if some people are taking your name to herbalists, their action would backfire by the' power of God, without you knowing what they are doing.

But if there is a snake in your power house, your engine will shut down, no matter how hard you cry. You need to first kill that snake in your power house.

PRAYER POINTS

1. Any snake that has entered into my power house, die, in the name of Jesus.
2. Holy Ghost power, arise! Come upon my life, in the name of Jesus.
3. Any power delegated to turn my life upside down, die, in the name of Jesus.
4. Any power programming sorrow into my destiny, what are you waiting for? die, in the name of Jesus.
5. Thou power of the earth, hear the word of the living God: release my virtue, in the name of Jesus.

YOUR PRIVATE SODOM

Any mention of private Sodom should take one into three of the most troubling passages in the Bible:

For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, if they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance: seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put Him to an open shame" (Hebrews 6:4-6).

For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins but a certain fearful looking for of judgement and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries. He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?" (Hebrews 10:26-29).

The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it? (Jeremiah 17:9).

Many men of God have read the above Scriptures and have thereafter cried unto the Lord day and night. If you read them with understanding, you too, will cry unto the Lord.

They portray the terribleness of sin. One thing they all say in common is that a person can push himself to a level where there is no likelihood of recovery. That is, the person is gone forever. He will cry and people would cry with him but heaven will go blank with no sign of redemption for him

It is possible for a person to get to that point where the chance of recovery is zero. What the last Scripture above tells us is that the heart is at the root of every destruction. It makes it clear to us that the heart can make one miss ones destiny.

Unfortunately, the Bible is full of frightening records of those people who began very well but ended tragically. The Holy Book paints really terrible pictures of those who wasted their lives and forfeited their callings.

Is it possible to miss out on God's best for your life? Could a person fall short of what was intended for him? The Bible says, yes, it is possible. That is, if you do not deal With the tablet of your heart.

Esau sold his birthright and lost his destiny.

Lot chose Sodom and lost his destiny.

Moses, the blessed man of God, forfeited the Promised Land.

Samson, the strongman was blinded and finally enslaved.

Saul lost his kingship.

Solomon decayed into disappointment and emptiness. In fact, the problem that we are witnessing right now in Jerusalem can be traced back to the life of Solomon.

When David was on the throne, who was that person that would refuse to pay tribute to him annually. Eventually, Solomon took over. He had no battle to fight; everything had been handed over to him on a platter of gold. He didn't sweat for anything.

Unfortunately, this gave him the latitude to marry 700 wives. If their engagement were done the same way we do ours in Nigeria, it means Solomon carried engagement 700 times. Solomon also, had three hundred concubines. All these only added up to trouble for him.

Two New Testament Christians - Ananias and Sapphira - also went from the altar to hellfire. Israel is still battling with the same trouble right now

A white minister of the gospel once shared something with me. He said that one night, at about 3 a.m., his telephone rang. When he picked up the receiver he heard a voice crying, "Man of God, if you don't come right away, I will kill myself; I'm tired of everything about my life!" The lady went on whining until the man of God was moved with compassion and asked for her address so that he could go and pray with her. Amid tears the lady reeled out the address.

The man of God got up, dressed up but as he was about to step out of the door the Holy Spirit told him, "Son, get your assistant pastor to go with

you." Taking this advice, the man of God went to collect his assistant somewhere downtown.

They rushed down to the lady's address. When they got there and knocked at the door, the lady came to open the door - stark nude. When she now saw that the pastor brought along another person, she banged the door on their faces.

The white minister said that as they were healing back towards their car, the assistant pastor that followed him began to say, "Glory be to God, glory be to God." And turning to the man of God, he said that if he had been the only one who came to meet the lady and saw her stark naked that would have been it!

Beloved, when each of us meets his Bathsheba one day, it is our hearts that will decide what happens to us. As the senior pastor told his assistant later, "Son, you still have work to do inside the laboratory of your heart".

On the surface, everyone looks quite innocent but by the time the light of the Holy Spirit begins to bring out what each of us has in his heart, some may run several kilometers before they can stop and look back. That is why 1 Samuel 16:7 says something very revealing about the Lord of hosts:

But the Lord said unto Samuel, Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him: for the Lord seeth not as man seeth; for a man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart."

According to the above Scripture, when Samuel wanted to ordain Eliab, the brother of David, as king the Lord found him unsuitable. Not because of his stature, which was all right, but because of the state of his heart.

You may look at a person and see holiness written all over him. His face may look sanctimonious and angelic but the Lord may not be interested in all that; He is interested in what goes on in his heart. It has been well said that when God wants to measure a man, He would put His tape across his heart, and not, around his head or his waist.

Everybody may lookup and say, "Wow, this is a wonderful sister, "but it is that sister who knows what she has been doing at the corner of her room. She is the one who knows the kind of terrible, evil, lustful thoughts she

harbours in her heart. She is the one who knows the way her heart travels all over the place and swallows evil poisons. The inner drama that goes on within the heart is what determines the history of man.

Everything you see in the book of history first took place in the heart of man. People may hold peace meetings often but no meeting of human beings can stop wars as long as the war like spirit resides in the heart of man. This is very sad.

Many people keep missing their destinies day and night and dying before their time. Many Christians are getting confused day and night. Some who have been born again for many years don't even know where to go. Some are so confused that they don't know what to do.

To change one's character, therefore, you must begin at the control center, which is, the heart. As long as your heart keeps going in the right direction, you don't have to worry about your feet. They will follow in that right direction. But if your heart is going in the wrong direction, your feet cannot decide to go elsewhere. The peace that we all yearn for is not made inside documents but in the heart of man.

Marriage is not the mere wedding ring or the marriage certificate. Many people have their framed marriage certificates on the walls of their homes while in their hearts, terrible wars rage on. Whatsoever is in the well of your heart will show in the bucket of your speech and action. You need to deal with these things, beloved. God said, *"Give me your heart and I shall take care of every other thing."*

One man prayed seriously one night to know where he was in the Lord and went to sleep. In his sleep, he had a dream in which he found himself in heaven. An angel carrying a big, golden book welcomed him. He asked the angel, *"What book is this?"* The angel replied, *"It is the book of your life."*

He requested to read the book and the angel cheerfully handed it to him. When he opened the first page, he couldn't understand all that was written therein. He sought the angel's assistance and the angel explained to him that all that was written on that first page were his evil actions. "You can see that they are very many," the angel said. When he opened the second page, the text here was smaller and much more compact.

When he asked what the text represented, the angel said that it was his evil words, and that he could see that they were more than his evil actions, "for a man speaks more than he acts." At this stage the man began to tremble. When the angel asked if he would like to see the third page, he said yes and they opened to it.

The text on this page was even much more closely written. The man asked what was written there. The angel told him that they were his evil thoughts, and that he could see that these were very many, "for a man thinks more than he does or says."

Now with a really trembling voice he asked to be taken to the fourth page and the angel opened to it. This one was as dark as midnight. When he asked the angel what this represented, the angel told him, "This represents your evil heart. For it is out of your dark and evil heart that all your thoughts, words and actions issue forth." The man suddenly woke up and started praying to God to break down the evil altar in his heart.

Sodom was said to be like the garden of Eden. Sodom and Gomorrah were very close to each other. In the Bible, Sodom was noted for wickedness, rebellion against God, sexual immorality, confusion, disobedience, insulting God, personal and collective corruption, hypocrisy, mocking the truth, blaspheming, bragging, boasting and alcoholism.

Many of us will have to deal with our private Sodom which is in our hearts. If you undress a woman in the laboratory of your heart, or undress a man in the laboratory of your heart, the Bible calls you a fornicator or an adulterer; you could even be a rapist. O yes, right there in the laboratory of your heart.

The Bible says that if there are thoughts of anger and hatred in your heart, you are a murderer. That is why, when God judges sin, He judges your intentions, your principles, your motives, your thought process, the secret lurking of your heart. That is why the judgment of God is going to be very interesting.

Many of those people you call fathers in the Lord or mothers in the Lord will not be found in heaven. You will be surprised to find most of them very far from heaven. Some of the songs people sing here on earth will be

sung by them in hell fire but now with a different music, unless they allow the Lord to deal with the laboratory of their hearts.

In my own experience as a minister, I have found out that there are five situations or places where people pray very hard and listen very hard:

The leprosy colony. When you preach in a leprosy colony, you will always have an attentive audience. The class of people there has nothing to lose again. Their feet and hands are already gone and, having been thrown out of town, they have become social outcasts.

The prison yard. When you go to the prison and watch the MFM fellowship there, you will see fire on display. The prison, inmates listen well and hard.

People on the death row. When you take the word of God to people who have been condemned to death, they listen hard.

The cemetery. There is always dead silence here when a man of God preaches.

Death bed. When a man is terminally ill, like suffering from AIDS, he listens very hard, as the tablet of his heart at this stage can no longer play games.

Many years ago, at a football match; having played the full time goalless, the players went into extra time. Yet there was no goal. But just a minute to the end of the match, someone touched the ball inside the penalty box. This brought about a loud cry at the stadium. Tension rose very high and attention turned to the goal-keeper. But the sympathy and good wishes felt by some people were not shared by the supporters of the side going to take the penalty shot.

The ball was placed on the penalty spot. The referee asked the goal-keeper to take his position, and cleared the other people away and put his whistle to his lips. But just as he was about to blow the whistle he slumped to the turf. Medical personnel rushed into the pitch and after examining him for a while they moved their hands in a way that showed that the referee had given up. That was the end of the match.

The shouting and the screaming went down. People went home dejected. They had seen the reality of life. Death has no warning for anybody. But if the laboratory of your heart is very dirty, you will go from where you are to where God does not want you to go.

It will be very sad if, after reading this message, you do not allow the sword of the Holy Spirit to circumcise your heart. It will be very disastrous if, after you have read this message, God still looks at you and says: "This one is stinking in my nose; this one is not serious. I'm looking for serious people." It will be an open disaster if, after you have read this write-up, God asks that you be cut down for another person to carry out your assignment.

No wonder the Psalmist says, *"Let the words of my heart, and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in your sight, O Lord."* What this means is that there are certain meditations of the heart that are not acceptable to God; that there are certain meditations of the heart that are abominations to the King of kings and the Lord of lords.

Beloved, I thank God for one grace that He has given me: I do not gamble with my life. Others may, but I do not. Like I said earlier, when I spoke about tackling our roots, I come from a very poor home.

Immediately I got to the secondary school, I had this Indian teacher who kept saying if we were really serious about killing poverty we had better study hard. Since that time, and more so as I did not want to gamble with my life, I ruled out sporting activities, girlfriends and wasting of time in any way. I gave myself to serious reading.

I don't joke with the issue of life and death. I don't want to go to hell fire. I plan and intend to get to heaven.

If you have been a Christian for a long time, you would have found out that every time somebody dies, the kind of music played at his burial is the melancholic. This simply serves as a pointer to the fact that death may, indeed, be the beginning of sorrow for many people. I wonder if you have been in a mortuary before.

There are several things you will notice when you enter a mortuary. The first thing is the smell of death. The second thing is people with bare

bodies. You could not have seen the bare bodies of these people when they were alive. The third thing you will see is the lack of respect for age: lying side by side are corpses of both the young and the old.

The fourth thing noticeable is the fewer number of old people. Out of say 20 bodies, you may see just one with grey hair.

The fifth thing you see is that most of the corpses are those of people who have been struck down in their prime.

The sixth observation is that both the rich and the poor lie side by side.

The seventh thing is that all the pride, the positions and the dignities of people are forgotten in this helpless state to top it all, lowly-placed attendants control where each of these corpse stays and how.

The eighth thing one notices is the vanity and the uselessness of this temporary life.

There are only two destinations beyond the grave - heaven, and hell. There is more to life than wealth, age, money, popularity, marriage, clothing, etc. More than any other person, Jesus talked to us about hell. It is important to know that those dresses you are sewing now will not be worn in eternity. It is important for you to know, too, that if you live wrong and die wrong, you cannot go to heaven.

Therefore, you need to ask yourself this question: This thing I am doing now, how much of eternity is in it?

What this means is that the greatest business of life is to prepare for the next life. Your future is purchased by the present. You cannot walk with God and run with the devil. And if, as Christians, we desire to make heaven, we must live as if Christ had died yesterday, risen today and is coming back tomorrow. This is how we should live our lives.

You will notice that all over the world, the dead are always separated from the living. In most countries, cemeteries are located far away from the town where the people live. It is the same way that spiritually dead men will be separated from God until they find God.

Those evil things moving about in your heart, the lust and the pride of the heart, all the cleverly concealed evil thoughts and all the evils you practise in your bedroom will only do one thing to you: make you not to attain your destiny and send you to hell fire, unless you deal with them.

You need to cry out to the Lord like the psalmist cried: *"Create in me a new heart!"* *Return unto your rest, O my soul.*" All that a person needs to do to go to hell fire is to do nothing. Everybody has done enough to go there. Your heart is the only thing God is going to deal with. You have to deal with it too.

The father of sin is the devil. The companion of sin is shame. The wages of sin is death. Once your heart is living in sin, what it is doing is challenging the justice of God. As long as your heart is living in sin, it is insulting the love of God; it is striking at the holiness of God; it is mocking the power of God.

That sin that you are cleverly keeping in your heart is not a sleeping dog that should be allowed to lie. If you don't deal With it, whenever you wake, it will go into a rage. All you need is small temptanon and you will somersault. Sin can makee God take His ark from our Shilon. What this means is that His glory can depart from your life.

It is better to die than to live your life on lies and falsehood. Secret sins will send Christians to hell fire unless they repent. Secret sins are very dangerous. When you retain them in your life they wm kill you instalmentally. One single termite can spoil a whole garment.

A pin can kill just like the gun. One leak in a ship can sink the whole ship. The secret sins in your life will drag you to hell fire. Secret Sins are more dangerous than open sins: they are like someone who covers up his sickness outside while he bleeds internally. And anything that is in your heart is known to only you and God.

It is time to go into the room of our heart; it is time to ransack all those cupbords in our hearts. There, you will find all the junk and rubbish that your soul has been living with. There, you will find the secret dirty food that your soul has been feeding upon. There, you will begin to locate the worm at the root of the tree that will spoil the fruit. It is a satanic strategy to allow small sins to drag us into big ones. The sins in the heart of man

have degraded him and made him a beast. Your sin cannot make noise but, one day, it will be exposed.

All that man is doing now is no more than committing old sins in new ways. The sin in your heart is like Judas - it will kiss you and then kill you. It will salute you then slay you. It will harden your heart. It is better to die in jail or dungeon than to die in your sin.

All those friends you fear so much and don't want them to leave, long after they are gone, your sin will follow you and will go to the judgment seat with you to accuse you there. Your sin will get to hell with you to be your tormentor.

If you are a child of God, I want you to know that the sins of God's children touch His heart more than the sins of others. God looked at David and bitterly told him, *"By this deed, thou hath given occasion to the enemy to blaspheme; therefore, the sword would not depart from your house."* If you leave sin without dealing with it in your heart you will return to it again. So, what is the conclusion of this matter?

Don't spare your evil heart, it will not spare you. Sin is a murderer, so kill it before it kills you.

Hell fire has become the permanent address of many big men, film stars and politicians. Many great leaders in history are in hell fire. We may hold state funerals for them and erect monuments in their honour but that does not invalidate the fact that they are in hell. All the glowing tributes we pay to them will not change anything. It is sad that in hell fire there is going to be a roll call of famous people unless they kill the sins in your hearts and dismantle their personal Sodom.

One boy was looking for fish. He put a bait to his hook and threw it in to the water. Each time he was fishing a particular man passed by. The man would greet him and ask him how he was getting on. He would respond that the fishes were biting the bait.

One day, however, when the man passed by and asked the boy how the fishes were doing, he gave a negative response. "The fishes are not biting, only the worms are biting." As the man went off he wondered what the boy

meant. After turning the matter over and over in his heart, he returned to where the boy was fishing. When he got there the boy was dead.

This is what happened: while looking for worms, the boy unknowingly gathered small snakes. When he said that the fishes were not biting but the worms, he meant that the snakes were biting his hands. This is what sin does to whoever plays with it.

According to Isaiah 5:7-14,

Woe unto them that rise up early in the morning, that they may follow strong drink; that continue until night, till wine inflame them! And the harp, and the viol, the tabret, and pipe, and wine, are in their feasts: but they regard not the work of the Lord, neither consider the operations of his hands. Therefore my people are gone into captivity, because they have no knowledge: and their honourable men are famished, and their multitude dried up with thirst. Therefore hell hath enlarged herself, and opened her mouth without measure: and their glory, and their multitude, and their pomp, and he that rejoiceth, shall descend into it.

A brother went to minister in Cameroun many years ago. He was preaching in English while his interpreter was interpreting in the local language. As he went on preaching, he found that the faces of the members of the congregation were getting tighter and tighter and unfriendly. He couldn't understand what was happening.

At a point, he stopped the message and asked what the problem was. One person who understood English stood up and said, "Your interpreter fits perfectly into everything you are saying here. He is the first offender. We know him in this church, hence we are getting agitated as you are preaching." That day, that brother's sin found him out.

Perhaps you are a married woman who keeps lusting after other men, or you are a married man whose eyes are steadily on the bodies of other women.

Perhaps you look innocent but yours is a heart of stealing. It is dirty, cloudy and stinking. Where do you think you will go with this kind of heart? Do you think the Lord will pat you on the back and say "Well done?" You need to confess your sins to the Lord. Tell the Lord whenever your heart misfires; whenever it goes astray.

Concerning all those things you are not supposed to be thinking about but which you are thinking about, ask God to send His fire into your heart

and do a cleansing with it. Ask Him to wash your heart clean with the blood of Jesus today. Ask Him to help you not to become a castaway at the end of the day. Talk to the Lord about the state of your heart.

It is dangerous to deceive Yourself. Be specific to the Lord. Tell Him those kinds of things you have been thinking which you ought not to think as a Christian.

Young man, are you masturbating? Something is wrong with your heart.

Young woman, are you covetous? Are you always collecting money from where you should not be collecting money? Something is wrong with your heart.

Does your heart wander about during prayers? Something is wrong with your heart.

Do you tell lies very easily? Something is wrong with your heart.

Do you notice that in spite of all your efforts that God should use you, He has refused to use you? It is because the laboratory of your heart is dirty. You need to call upon God. The Lord Jesus Christ shed His blood so that you may live. Don't let His death be in vain. Deal with your sin before it deals with you.

When God refuses to use you in spite of your daily cries to Him, it can only mean that there is Sodom and Gomorrah in your heart. God sees the dirtiness in the heart. Why should you, as a Christian, be entertaining evil thought? Why should your thinking be a disgrace to heaven? Why should you allow the enemy to be laughing at you because, as far as your heart is concerned, he sees that it belongs to him. You may be dressing according to the will of God and may be talking according to His will, while your heart is far removed from Him.

When your heart wanders during prayers, where does it go? Something is wrong with it. You need to cry to God, with tears, to sort you out.

PRAYER POINTS

1. Any power troubling my destiny, be broken, in the name of Jesus.

2. Any power that says I should not make it, what are you waiting for? die, in the name of Jesus.
3. Where is the Lord God of Elijah? Arise! manifest your power in my life, in the name of Jesus.
4. Every altar of darkness in my heart, break, in the name of Jesus.
5. Every serpent of sin in my heart, release me and die, in the name of Jesus.
6. Blood of Jesus, wash my heart, in the name of Jesus.

THOUGH HAND JOIN IN HAND

Thou hand join in hand, the wicked shall not be unpunished: but the seed of the righteous shall be delivered (Proverb 11:21).

It is important that this message be well understood as it touches on the root of man's problems. "Though hand join in hand" means no matter how strong the co-operation of the wicked may be, no matter how clever they may be, no matter how intelligent they may be, no matter how smart they are, no matter how cleverly they conceal, no matter the wall they build, no matter their technique of hiding, no matter the kind of meeting they hold, no matter their agreement not to reveal each other's secrets. The wicked shall not go unpunished.

Whenever sin is on the driving seat, you can be 100 per cent sure that shame is on the backseat. When sin is the driver in your life, no matter how long it takes, that shame at the backseat will take over.

STRANGE MURDER

The worst enemy we have is our sinful heart propelled by Mr Flesh.

A couple had only one son. When this son saw that the family poverty was too much, he decided to go and work in a foreign land so that he might be able to help his parents. The son did not come back till after more than 20 years. By this time, he was very prosperous and he bought many things for his old parents. Because he had left home a long time ago, he could not remember his parents address.

However, as he was passing through the village, somebody greeted him very warmly. Afterwards, he continued roaming about in the village in search of his parents' house. When his efforts seemed unavailing, he knocked at a certain door and a couple came out to answer the call. This couple were obviously his parents and although they could not recognise him again, he instantly recognised them. But he hid his identity.

The couple welcomed him, gave him food and a room to sleep till the second day when he could continue his search for his parents. The young man went to bed that night laughing gently to himself. He put all the things he brought with him neatly under the bed in a corner of the room.

At night, the couple could not sleep. They planned to kill the young man and take his things. "In what better way could God prosper a person?" they reasoned and killed the young man his sleep.

The next morning, a villager came and knocked at the door. As the couple opened the door, he congratulated them on their son's return. "I saw him yesterday, hence I came to greet him this morning," he said. It Was then it dawned on the couple that they had killed their own son.

UNAVOIDABLE CONSEQUENCES

There is no sin that one commits for which God has not get the facility to forgive. He will forgive you, but you must attract some consequences which are bound to take their toll, no matter what you do. You knew quite well that something was bad and quite unchristian, but you went ahead and did it; no matter what, bear in mind that you've attracted some consequences.

If, right at this moment, you are planning to commit a particular sin, you are quite at liberty to do so. But, as written in Revelation that, after you've read through the whole of the Bible and you still decide to live in sin, "Behold, I'm coming quickly and my reward is with me."

Samson's hair grew again after it was shaven, but he never recovered his eyes.

Abraham hastily had Ishamel but its consequences are still with us today. It is unfortunate that one may have to live with some of the consequences of sin all of one's life. So the way you are living today, is a foundation for your future and for your posterity. The consequences of your sin will find you out and also find out your posterity. It is for this reason that we have to be very careful.

When Gehazi was going to collect money from Naaman, if he had known that that action was going to affect his offspring, he would have desisted from the move. He planted an evil seed for his offspring.

During our day in the secondary school, there was something called "The black book". If a student's name got into this book, as the headmaster used to tell us then, "his testimonial at the end of his studies would be so hot that he would drop it."

One day, in another school, one of our students used a knife on another student. The matter was reported to our principal. The principal wrote the student's name in the black book. In addition, the principal took the knife, dried the blood on it and kept the knife too, inside the black book. He then turned to the culprit and said, "You used knife on your mate whose name is Sogbetu. Note that Sogbetu's blood is in your file." The rest of us students thought that the matter was a joke and we laughed it off.

Eventually this same student travelled to the United States where, he, at a time was vying for an important office. His former school in Nigeria was contacted for a testimonial as to his character. The principal wrote back and said that the fellow had the blood of Sogbetu in his file. This disclosure put a stop to the fellow's dream in the United States. It was as simple as that: every sin will find you out.

If you think you are clever, be sure that you cannot be cleverer than your sin: it will eventually find you out.

There are some wrongs that can be righted. For instance, when a person steals another person's money, it is easy to make restitution.

In this case, the attendant punishment is limited because the wrong has been corrected. But, certainly, there are some sins that cannot be corrected.

Forgiveness does not free one from accountability. David committed the sin of sexual immorality, deception and murder. The consequences came in different forms: his own son raped his daughter and his own son, Absalom, slept with David's wife on the rooftop! Now, David killed only Uriah but lost three children. Evil consequences!

If you don't want your children to become armed robbers, don't train them with stolen money. If you don't want your children to have broken homes don't "panel beat" their mother before their face. If you don't want your children to go into drugs, don't get involved in drug business. If you don't want someone to mess up with your own daughter, don't mess up someone else's daughter.

I was a teacher in a secondary school for some years. At a time a member of the teachers' disciplinary committee. I couldn't really understand why I was put in that committee because I was the youngest teacher in the whole school. Perhaps, it was because, being a Christian, I would always tell the truth.

At one time, a teacher was caught committing fornication with a student. The teacher was before the committee, accused of immorality. The vice-principal was the head of the disciplinary committee.

After the teacher had been pronounced guilty, the vice-principal began to say something like "Well, this thing that we have been talking about here, we all do it; the thing is, when these students refuse, we should not force them." At this silly talk, my blood erupted and I stoop up, brought my Bible out of my bag, opened it and read out that verse that says, "No wicked shall go unpunished."

Then I turned to the vice principal and said, "You're here to be a shepherd to these children, and you have your own children too. Now someone messed up another person's child; and if, as the vice-principal, this is all that you can say, be sure that your sin will find you out."

It was as if what I said was a prophecy. I meet all these people one by one later in life. The one that was not mad among them suffered stroke. They were all afflicted with one terrible ailment or the other. It is in the habit of people to shout "the Blood of Jesus", but it does not cover the consequences of any sin; it can only remove the condemnation.

"The only thing that can eliminate the consequences of sin is the mercy of God. But the problem with the mercy of God is that, the Bible says, "I will have mercy on those I will have mercy." This means that this mercy is not guaranteed. This must be well understood.

Another thing we need to understand is that sin is success in nothing. It is self-inflicted nonsense. It invites death and obscures the soul. In fact, sin can sometimes come as a friend but the longer it stays with you the less it bothers you. In effect, you becomes hardened. You know that when you take a frog and throw it into a boiling water, it will jump out. But when you put it in cold water and put the kettle on fire and begin to warm it, the frog will not jump out; it will stay to enjoy the warmth until it is boiled to death.

This is the way sin works. Sinners grow to enjoy sin until it causes trouble for them.

Only one leak in a ship is enough to sink the ship. One sin can destroy a person totally. Don't compare yourself with other people; your life and destiny are different from any other person's. What one person may get away with may cause your own downfall.

Some years ago someone bought a new car and wanted to take it to somebody at Ibadan. The man who took us in the car was the kind of motorist who hated to see another vehicle ahead of him. He kept overtaking all vehicles. All of a sudden, rain began to fall. He switched on the wiper but it did not function. The rain got heavier till we could not see ahead of us. This forced the driver to slow down and move over to the slow lane.

Now, sadly, all the other vehicles, and even motorcycles, that he had overtaken began to overtake him. We had a new car which had no wiper. That small wiper sent us to the back. It is the same thing with sin. That small sin you don't take serious will send you to the back of your destiny.

We need the mercy of God these days; we need to cry unto Him for mercy. But mercy is obtained with discipline. If you want to obtain mercy, tell God the truth. When you tell Him the truth you stand a better chance of receiving mercy.

Some readers of this book may need to sort out their lives with God. It is difficult to understand why some people find it hard to give up certain things that have already destroyed many others. Why must you repeat other people's errors?

The Bible says, "These things were written for our learning that we, through the comfort of the Scriptures, might have hope." All those evil friends that you follow about, there is a consequence for them. Like wise all the smoking and drinking, as well as that satanic romance you are having with that brother or sister.

All those lies that you are telling, and the malice and the grudges you bear, have their consequences. Even the prayerlessness in your life has its consequences. All the gossips and the rumours and the slanders have their consequences. The pride in your life has its consequence. All your alcohol drinking has its consequences. If you are coming to the church without using what God has deposited in you positively, you will certainly face the consequence.

The man with one talent in the Bible did not kill anybody. He did not commit fornication. His small sin was that he did not use his talent; he buried it, and because of this he went to hell fire. Are you running away from the agenda God has for your life? Are you stealing other people's money? There is a consequence for it.

Remember that though hand joined to hand, the wicked shall not go unpunished. If you think you have paid somebody back in his or her own coin, there is always a consequence for that. It will surely be a sad thing if you appear at the gate of life and fail to find your name in the book of life, though, here on earth, your name featured in all manner of Christian records. Whoever such a thing happens to must have lived the life of Methuselah who came to the world but did not achieve anything.

There are many things that God would have done for His people, but they keep having pet sins which they hide from Him. People may know nothing about all your extra-marital affairs but there are certainly consequences for them.

Though hands joined in hand no sinner shall go unpunished. Mind you, this does not say that no sinner shall not be forgiven.

When sin is on the driving seat in your life, at the back seat will be Brother Shame. Sin hooks onto a man in the process of his obtaining what he does not have, or when he fears that he may lose something he already has. Let me remind you that there is no small sin.

If at the church service you keep discussing with other person in a way that diverts people's attention from the service, you are a sinner. No matter how small a sin is, its consequence, may be immeasurable.

If you are sinning because you want to make some profit, I must let you know that you cannot profit by sinning; it's just not possible. Anything you gain from sin will be taken back from you, even interest. Sin is like a small child playing with a snake. The child may find the snake beautiful and exciting, but it remains exciting only when it has not done its worse.

Everyone of us has the power to choose sin, but the one thing that we don't have the power to choose is its consequence. The way God has organised the world, every sin has consequence and punishment attached to it.

Once you commit a sin that attendant punishment is automatic. When sin enters, it causes the cup of joy to leak. As soon as the seed of sin is sown, judgement is sure. Unfortunately, the Bible says that one sinner destroys much good. This means that the sin of one person can bring tragedy to many. For instance, Jonah would have killed many people on that boat because the Lord was not ready to negotiate with him at all.

Perhaps as you are reading this, you are the Jonah in your family; you are possibly why evil winds have been blowing across your family or why the family has been experiencing storms. Perhaps God has brought you into that family to do something which you have not been doing. So, as long as you fail to do that thing for your family, the evil continues to haunt the family.

The first time small pox entered into India it was through one small boy who escaped from a ship and ran into India. As a consequence of this small boy's action three million Indians died.

The mistake we make is this: We think that sin is judged the way we see it no, it is judged the way God sees it. And once God starts the judgement it may be from a place totally strange to you. A boy was tied to the stake at Bar Beach and shot for stealing.

When God wanted to start the judgement over the boy, He started with his mother who had a sugar daddy, then the sugar daddy opened for the

woman a joint where she sold pepper soup. God then went on to the person who introduced the boy to robbery. When God begins to judge a sin He may bring many people into it.

Human beings judge according to their opinion and sentiment. Because of this, when a person is guilty of a sin, we tend to overlook it because some other people have committed the same sin in the past and were not punished. This is not the stand of God. Several people may commit the same sin but get different reactions from God.

If, for instance, you are a sister and God has called you to be a prophetess with the purpose of saving the whole of Africa through you and you commit an abortion, the consequence may be greater than that of a sister who committed ten abortions. This is because he has purposed the former for a greater duty.

Prices of materials may rise or fall, but the wages of sin remain the same - death. The most expensive thing in the world is sin. This is because it was for the sole purpose of this sin that God allowed His only begotten Son to be killed.

The world continues to see new sinners everyday. We have academic sinners, intellectual sinners, brain sinners and psychological sinners, but there are no new sins. We should continue to remind ourselves that wickedness does not go unpunished. "Though hand join in hand, no sinner shall go unpunished." One must pay for the pleasure of sin with the coin of sorrow. That sin you are covering up will eventually bring you down. This is because sin is the greatest of all detectives. The Bible says, "Be sure that your sin will find you out".

THE MISSING BUTTON

A man strangulated a young girl after raping her. He dumped the girl in a bush and went home. When his wife, saw him she observed that his jacket looked a bit rough and that a button was missing. Worried, the woman asked him what happened to the missing button. He did not tell the wife what happened but he knew quite well that, that button must be at the spot where he had killed that girl, and he became restless.

Not long after, policemen arrived at the site of the murder. As they saw the corpse of the girl, they began to search the surrounding for any possible clue. For a long time they could not find anything until one of the them spotted the button. He picked it up and put it in his pocket without telling any of the other detectives.

Even when the newspapers reported the murder and the police investigations were made, no mention was made of the button. Despite this, this man had no peace. Something kept reminding him about that button. About two months after he committed the murder, he returned to the spot to see if he could with any luck find the button.

Immediately he arrived there and was looking around, the police arrested him. They told him calmly that they knew what he was looking for. "Your button?" They asked. The man answered, "Yes". They took him away.

You can be sure that your sin will always find you out. Those children you have outside marriage, the sin will eventually find you out. Those children will grow up and come round to destroy your family. Every sin, no matter how small, has consequences.

Ordinary misuse of your tongue has its own consequences. Let us see an example of this in Numbers 12:1, 9-15

Verse 1: And Miriam and Aaron spake against Moses because of the Ethiopian woman whom he had married: for he had married an Ethiopian woman.

Verses 9 -15: And the anger of the Lord was kindled against them; and he departed. And the cloud departed from off the tabernacle; and behold, Miriam became leprous, white as snow: and Aaron looked upon Miriam, and, behold, she was eprous. And Aaron said unto Moses, Alas, my Lord, I beseech thee, lay not the sin upon us, wherein we have done foolishly, and wherein we have sinned. Let her not be as one dead, of whom the flesh is half consumed when he cometh out of his mother's womb. And Moses cried unto the Lord, saying, Heal her now, O God, I beseech thee. And the Lord said unto Moses, If her father had but spit in her face, should she not be ashamed seven days? Let her be shut out from the camp seven days, and after that let her be received in again. And Miriam was shut out from the camp seven days: and the people journeyed not till Miriam was brought in again.

This Miriam was the same person who watched over Moses when her mother kept him on the water from where the king's daughter picked him. All the same, when she sinned with her mouth against Moses, God punished her. Though Moses pleaded with God to pardon her, God still

punished her for seven days. What this meant was that though God forgave her, she still had to face the consequence of her sin. She might as well have died.

When David was supposed to be going to war, he decided to be watching a satanic television set. He saw Bathsheba, another man's wife, eventually killed her husband and married the woman. Thereafter, a prophet of God came to David.

And Nathan said to David, Thou art the man Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, I anointed thee king over Israel, and I delivered thee out of the hand of Saul; And I gave thee thy master's house, and thy master's wives into thy bosom, and gave thee the house of Israel and of Judah; and if that had been too little, I would moreover have given unto thee such and such things. Wherefore hast thou despised the commandment of the LORD, to do evil in his sight? thou hast killed Uriah the Hittite with the sword, and hast taken his wife to be thy wife, and hast slain him with the sword of the children of Ammon Now therefore the sword shall never depart from thine house: because thou hast despised me, and hast taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be thy wife. Thus saith the LORD, Behold, I will raise up evil against thee out of thine own house, and I will take thy wives before thine eyes, and give them unto thy neighbour, and he shall lie with thy wives in the sight of this sun. For thou didst it secretly: but I will do this thing before all Israel, and before the sun. And David said unto Nathan, I have sinned against the LORD. And Nathan said unto David, The LORD also hath put away thy sin; thou shalt not die. Howbeit, because by this deed thou hast given great occasion to the enemies of the LORD to blaspheme, the child also that is born unto thee shall surely die.

And Nathan departed unto his house. And the LORD struck the child that Uriah's wife bare unto David, and it was very sick. David therefore besought God for the child; and David fasted, and went in, and lay all night upon the earth (2 Samuel 7:7-16).

Once God forgave David, the forgiveness removed the condemnation on him, but without eliminating the consequences of his sin. This confirms that even though we join hands, no sinner will go unpunished.

A person who started life as an adulterer and contracted HIV in the process, now turns to God to help him. Even though God may forgive him, he is still sure to die of the consequences of his immoral conduct.

A man once came to tell me about his wife who was always in the habit of annoying him. He begged God to allow him five-minutes to panel beat the woman. Thereafter he pounced on her and pummelled her.

However, one day, many years after, as the man alighted from a bus at the CMS bus stop in Lagos, someone started shouting, "thief! thief! thief!" This man did not know whom they were shouting after. The person

shouting eventually walked up to him, gripped him by the waist band and accused him of stealing his wallet.

Without verifying the charge, the crowd that had been attracted to the scene pounced on him and gave him a severe beating. Before they discovered that he had been wrongly charged, he had been thoroughly bruised and blinded in one eye.

While on admission in the hospital, this man turned to God and, amidst tears, asked Him why this had happened to him. God told him that it was the consequence of beating his wife many years back. When he reminded God that he asked for forgiveness at that time, God replied that He actually forgave him but that forgiveness did not in any way cancel the consequence of his action.

Sometime ago, as an argument ensued at a pastors' conference, a pastor got so annoyed and said, "For what you've just said to me, I'll drop this Bible and deal with you."

When returning home after the conference, the vehicle the angered pastor was travelling in had an accident. While every other passenger escaped unhurt, the pastor broke two legs.

At the orthopaedic hospital where his legs were hung up, the pastor began to ask God what he had done to deserve the mishap. And God told him, "You said you'd drop the Bible, and you actually dropped it..."

"But I later asked for forgiveness, didn't I?" the man asked. "Of course, you did", God replied. "In fact, if I had not forgiven you, you would have died. Because that Bible that you dropped has been your support and your shield. And when you dropped it, you removed my shield and support from around you..."

Although that pastor is today able to walk, he limps. This is the testimony the discipline he received from God.

PRAYER POINTS

1. Every sin that wants to destroy my destiny, Blood of Jesus, clear it away, in the name of Jesus.
2. My father, have mercy on me today, in the name of Jesus;
3. Change my heart, O God; make it ever new; may I be like thee, in the name of Jesus.
4. Ancestral spiritual chains and personal spiritual chains, break in the name of Jesus.
5. Every ancient prison door in my family line, break, in the name of Jesus.
6. Every gap between where I am and where God wants me to be, close by fire, in the name of Jesus.

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