



CAN I TELL
YOU ABOUT
Jesus?

MY TESTIMONY

STEVE ORJI

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This book is about a personal account and testament to the reality of salvation that comes through Christ. It depicts how God can transform lives from being religious zealots to kingdom ambassadors, changing lives and building God's kingdom on earth through His grace that is at work in our lives.

If you want your life to be changed by God and your desire is to be used by God to His glory, read this book.

**CAN I TELL YOU ABOUT JESUS?
MY TESTIMONY**

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DEDICATION

This book is dedicated to late Pastor John Nwachukwu, the man who was instrumental to my salvation.

On 17th of August 1987, 12pm, his teaching on the blood covenant was the turning point of my life. I answered the altar call.

Next day, 18th August same year he put his hands on me and I was baptized in the Holy Ghost and spoke in new tongues.

He did not live to witness how the stream of life through his Ministry has continued to quench the thirst of many and ignite the spirits of thousands of people by the power of the Holy Spirit.

APPRECIATION

To the Lord God Almighty for His wisdom, grace and mercy.

To Evangelist Samson Aboloje for helping set up the book and doing some good editing.

And his wife, Winifred, for translating to French.

Chapter One

MY TESTIMONY

To recognise the truth that Jesus is the Saviour is a brilliant start.

What if you had spent 60 years of your life contesting and fighting off the truth about Jesus being the ultimate Saviour (John 14:6) and you managed to accept the truth at 70, when you are already at the ebbing days of your life, you simply spent 60 years of your life on vanity.

It is vanity to trust in your own wisdom. Fools say there is no God. Psalm 14:1.

There are two things you can do with your life on earth:

1. Waste it: When you live wantonly like the prodigal son. The bible narrated that he took his fathers possession given to him and went to a far country and wasted it. Luke 15:13.
2. Invest it: Giving your life over to Christ is an investment time cannot squander. Matthew 4:19. Jesus met 12 men and transformed them from being mere fishers of fish to become fishers of men and these men changed the world forever.

This is how the content of this book will change your life as it connects you to the eternal source of wisdom, grace and eternal life. I decided to come to Jesus at the age of seventeen, in the middle of the 80's when I had struggle to cut a path for my life and find meaning to the things around me.

It was on the 17th day of August 1987, 1pm on a Saturday, when Jesus reached out to me and something sparked in my spirit, like a giant light from Heaven. Deep within me I had always desired to be a good man.

I had big curiosities. I aspired to know. In my search to know I delved into reading all sorts of books. I pored through books written by Lobsang Rampa, the famed mystic, stuffs from the Hare Krishna, grail message and listened to TV channels that hosted programmes on spiritism. I was ardent listener to the Eckankar programme screened on the NTA channel 6 Aba, presented by one, Benjamin Anyaeji.

When I enrolled at Government college Umuahia, I equally encountered the works of Bertrand Russell, the famed philosopher and atheist.

To my questioning mind, I felt the gospel was too simple and ordinary to lead me to God. I looked for things that sounded 'Bombastic' and scientific. I was aspiring to study engineering, and that could have forged my thought process to become logical and fundamentally scientific.

I remember borrowing books written by Bertrand Russell from the library and never returned them.

That was how much I was gripped by his philosophical writings. It was after I got saved, the Spirit of the Lord started to move me to make restitutions of things I had in my possession that weren't mine. Such encounters prompted me to return the books I removed from the college library. Such was my quest and kindled thirst for knowledge. But that was never enough to lead me to salvation that only Christ could offer.

I remember always disputing mother's biblical stories and church talks, despite my being a churchgoer. My parents were strict with church attendance and the penalty for absenting going to church was the 'No Lunch' edict enacted for the entire household. That was a good push to get your foot into the church premises, not enough to get you in Christ.

Like the archetypal church goers we all were, my parents insisted we all follow the rites and traditions of the church. So, I got confirmed in the presbyterian church alongside my brother and cousin, and we also got baptised. In my heart I knew it was one of those religious rites that

registered me on the roll call but didn't just make any inward difference. I was good at Christian religious knowledge, and it was one of the subjects I scored a distinction (A3).

That was only possible because I could memorise things very easily and my teacher was a Reverend Father who was a good teacher. I was not bad at my schoolwork and could pass for a reasonably good person. But my thirst and curiosities for something more tangible than what life was dealing was the prime passion of my soul. My soul was empty, and my spirit was striving towards a God I knew exists but couldn't reach.

The bang moment came when my friend invited me to listen to one Pastor John Nwachukwu (Late), a spirit-filled great servant of God. He was teaching on blood covenant.

When I got into the place of fellowship in the house of one of my teachers at college, 23 Adelabu Street Umuahia, even though I wasn't saved, the whole atmosphere felt different. The room had a rich ambience of peace. The words I heard were crystal pure, power-filled and kept resonating in my soul with a charming truth my whole being could not just resist. Like a sharp sword, the word from this man stripped down the veil that covered my eyes. Something in me reached out to the irresistible pull of the power I could feel in his words. I felt a knowing in me that this was the substance I was looking for. When the call was made, I walked up to the front and received Jesus. I did it with the urgency and passion of a man who found a gem. I did not think it was necessary to think about the other people in the room. My whole being was engrossed with a reality of what was happening on the inside of me. It was for me a "WAO" moment. A floodgate to eternity was swung open in my life and I knew it.

Next day the preacher man made a call for everyone who wanted to receive the Holy Spirit baptism and I came forward and he put his hand on my head, a surge of light broke into my soul, as if the ends of eternity flowed into me and my whole being erupted in amazing outburst of power and I began to speak in a 'strange tongue' (Acts 2: 1-end). I could feel in my soul the unending flow of God's love. And nothing I ever dreamed comes close to the richness and

sublime quality of that experience. A destiny was born, and a new life fired into a new spiritual plane. Indeed, Jesus is real!

It's impossible to describe that feeling. I felt I was carrying a living light within my inner being and it felt like I was walking on air. I could pray and sing in the spirit without end. My life changed in the deepest dimensions of the word. How did I know? I started to hunger after righteousness and my friends noticed that my life was no longer the same (1st Corinthians 5: 17). One of the girls who always visited me showed up on one occasion to the house and asked me: 'Steve are you now born-again? I said 'Yes'.

Not long after I started to pray for my family members and a good number of them got saved.

I started to talk to people about my experience. I remember placing my hand on the head of one of my cousins who just got saved and she throttled off in a blast of tongues and she fell into a spiritual spell that lasted into the depths of the night. And I carried on with my friends to schools and watching with pure joy as people respond to the gospel and how by placing our hands on their heads, they can receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit. That the more confirmed to me the reality of the gospel.

It's been 33 years on since I have been on this journey, even though it has not always been plain sailing, but with joy in my heart I can declare that Jesus is the way, the truth and the life... John 14: 6.

A good number of people are lost in the wide sea of 'God hunt'. There's a deep hunger in every heart to get to know the real God to be confident of the truth that what they have is the true God.

There are so many people like me out there who are in the pursuit of God, alongside showing off their religious and moral credentials and they 'Innocently' thought that these are good enough to gain God's approval.

Hunger is an invitation God cannot resist. Hunger for truth. Hunger for reality. Hunger for God that cannot be satisfied, not even money or intellect or the abundance of knowledge acquired through learning.

The People in Athens were in this sort of dilemma. They had a subconscious knowledge that there was a God somewhere but hadn't the means or had been shown the way to find Him. - Acts 17-16-34.

It was through the ministry of Apostle Paul that they were shown the light of the glorious gospel. A good number can be in the church and have allegiance to other gods, that is not the true God.

My parents were highly morally principled people. Regardless of their religious duties and church attendance, they were customers to native doctors. They frequented the homes of herbalists and satanic priests in search of the blessings of children.

My mum will come back to the house with scores of items and concoctions for her to drink. Some of the objects were hung on the edge of their bed and we only as children look at those objects with some sort of mythical potency. We were only told in folklore and local stories about the power of charms, we couldn't have experienced them, and it was only right for us to speculate of how powerful Satan was.

Mother always told us bible stories on one hand and how powerful the God of Israel has shown His power towards his people. She was an excellent storyteller and she made sure we all attended church and crusades.

The intriguing thing about religion is that it often gives you liberty to experiment with other forms of piety. This is the trouble with having religion and not having a personal relationship and knowledge of Christ.

Political leaders and some clergy could find themselves in this dilemma, where they espouse their allegiance to Christ and Christianity with one side of their mouth but in deep association with Satan.

You will find that Satan is not so much interested in religious people so long they don't have a living connection with God through Christ. Most times religion also comes with zeal and fervour which always

obscures the central reality of the pursuit of God.

Somewhere in God's calculation He knows that there are so many people who desire to connect to Him but may have been led away or wrongly signposted due to early life influences or the company they find themselves in.

For me it was a friend who helped me come to Christ by offering me the invitation to come and listen to the sermon by the man of God. How many opportunities we may have missed out on by not doing the least of things, asking someone to come along to a place where they can have a sporting chance at salvation, listen to testimonies of those that have been saved?

The beauty of Salvation is that it's already a cooked meal. Jesus had paid the full price. It's like a car at the ready, just put the key in and start the engine.

God is always looking out for anyone who can step forward to say God where are you? Can you see me? Come get me, I need your touch and your salvation that you wrought through Christ.

When I became a Christian my first assignment was to speak to people around me and they noticed that I was a changed person. My zeal was monumental. With my groups of young people, our hearts were on fire from school to school and church to church, we torched people and meetings with the fire in our soul and we loved seeing people collapse in tears and tumble over when we placed our hands on their heads and they burst into a frenzy of new tongues.

For three years I was on my knees asking God for the salvation of my family members. And on the third year a flood gate was opened, and people began to find God in their trickles.

Deep within, I knew my mother needed a new touch of God and must be set free from the entanglements of Satan. I arranged for a special prayer of deliverance for her by contacting a known man of God who was famous for praying for people of her background.

Religious people carry along in life lots of baggage and Satan is happy that such people will have a form of piety but may never have the experiential encounter with God.

My importunate prayers to God for my family was a good starting point for the salvation experience for some of them.

The sheer power of salvation is the pivot for the transformation of others. For the fact you can see the change in your life and those around you is a good push to do your utmost to share and keep sharing the testimony of your salvation.

My salvation has been real to me for over 37 years, and I have taken every opportunity on every media possible to share the testimony of my salvation and I am always joyful to see people connect to my story.

I remember a few and I feel confident and joyful to share with you.

Salvation in Christ is a personal experience and compels you to say it out.

The woman by the well could not hide her encounter with Jesus. Everyone who has truly received salvation become a megaphone for Christ. (John 4:1-24)

“Come and see” was the first word that came out of the lips of the woman by the well who encountered Jesus.

“Come and see” should be everyone's story who has met Jesus, and every day is an opportunity to tell the world about it.

I remember meeting a woman in the UK who was a national of Ukraine during one of our Saturday's gospel outreaches. She went on and on talking about issues around her life... it didn't take long after I began to speak about Jesus that something in her heart connected with the truth about the salvation that Jesus brings. You could visibly feel the warmth in your heart as she sobbed into a prayer of salvation to receive Jesus and in a short moment in time, her

countenance brightened up and that's it, Jesus made a difference in her life.

Anyone who has been changed by Christ will always experience the powerful urge to share with others the story of such encounters.

I can always flash back to that brilliant afternoon on a Saturday when the light of God' love broke through to my heart and Jesus walked in.

I felt a surge of power exploding within me. I was singing and pouring out my soul to Heaven. Joy overwhelmingly swept through my being. I felt the shackles of fear, doom and unbelief was broken.

I felt light within me. In that instant I felt all I was looking for in life has come to me.

Each time I meet people I always wonder if they could only have a bit of the joy welling up in me, to soothe their pains and feelings of gloom. I thought I could just tell them about Jesus so they can share and partake in the richness of my own personal experience.

I love to always see people receive Jesus.

For more than 16 years I talked to people about Jesus in public transportation. The first time I did I felt very shy and my voice became shaky when the first words rolled out in that spontaneous moment of preaching the word.

Something was telling me I was going to fall short of the call and I won't say the right words and people will make a fool of me.

I felt inwardly unworthy. I was at that time a slim young man in my twenties, someone you could easily push off as a nonstarter. Deep within was a passion and unstoppable desire to tell my story, even if no one listens, I would have been satisfied. I always get the gentle nudging by the Holy Spirit to seize the moment and pour my soul out to people.

And it was a bolt of energy, a flow of love and amazing grace the first

day I spoke publicly about Jesus.

Words were coming out and after the first few minutes' a boldness I couldn't explain took hold of me and I spoke so clearly and persuasively that when I made an altar call, I saw what shocked me, countless number of people had put up their hands graciously to say the sinner's prayer with me and how beautiful I felt to see them receive Jesus' into their hearts.

I was always praying and crying in tears in my closet asking God to use me. The day I got filled in the Holy Spirit was for me a most spectacular event. It was like the ends of eternity has broken into my spirit, with what could only be experienced and not described. My whole being erupting in power of God's love. At that instant it was like Heaven has touched the earth. Everything seem new and possible and when I started to speak in new tongues, my belly felt it was going to explode and I felt spiritually and physically energised, that I could pray for hours without noticing the time.

Each time I come out from the praying room my heart was filled with joy and love, and was always asking God to set me up to meet people and places so I can empty what I have been given, to them.

The first evidence of meeting Christ would be the changed life, the best outward testimony to the world around you. In the middle and late 80's, the born-again experience was in vogue; young people like us were swept along the torrential revival of the Holy Spirit in our cities in Nigeria.

My testimony embodies the faith and practical reality that the salvation Jesus offers is real and not a figment of religious feelings or thinking.

Time and again I have people respond to the calling of Jesus through the preaching of the word (Roman 1:16).

The word of God preached through any media has in-built power to transform even on the social media. Heartwarming to receive the testimony of a young Muslim who converted to the Christian faith by

just clicking into our social media page as Jesus was being preached.

Jesus the same yesterday today and forever.

On the first day I had the opportunity to share Jesus in a bus, it is a day I will never forget.

As the hands went up to receive Jesus, I felt a fresh joy just like that day Jesus came into my life.

From that day on, the passion and zeal to speak to people about Jesus hasn't ceased.

This is my story, it's all about Jesus doing wonders in many lives, and He can do the same for you. You can ask Jesus to come into your life by quietly saying this prayer.

“Jesus, I recognise You died for me and because of Your love, You came to save me by shedding Your blood on the cross. I am unable to come to God without You and I have no righteousness of my own. My sins and wrong doings are before me and I ask of You to forgive me and cleanse me from every unrighteousness and sin.

I ask You to come into my life and I receive You as my Saviour and Lord and I confess with my mouth that I am saved (Romans 8:9-10).

By faith I know I am saved through grace.

Chapter Two

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE SAVED?

People would always ask, why do I need to be saved and how? A good number like me may have been born into a religious family.

On the average, a reasonable number of families attend church. In some cases, they observe the fundamental tenets of the human moral principles. They can pass for good people. They don't steal or kill and are reasonably decent and honest people.

In the bible days, before Jesus came into the scene, there were quite some people who kept and followed the moral codes provided in the laws of Moses. Apostle Paul, then Saul, before his encounter with Jesus on his way to Damascus was a self-acclaimed righteous man (Philippians 3:9)

Apostle Paul's transformation from being a religious zealot to a Christ-disciple happened after he met Christ (2 Cor 5:17).

He was a shining example of how religion and self-righteousness could blind and keep people back from receiving Christ.

Salvation can only be attained through Jesus. "For there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved". (Acts 4:12)

The basis of transformation and the new life is only possible through Jesus. Jesus is the light and the word of God. When the gospel is preached, which is the power of God unto salvation (Romans 1:16), anyone who hears and receives it by faith, becomes qualified to be saved.

There is an inherent power in the word of God that gives it the ability to change things, even lives, your own very life.

The same word that was spoken by the Apostles that set the hearts of 3,000 people on fire and brought them on their knees (Acts 2:41-43), was the same word that empowered the creation of the world and the entire universe. (Genesis 1:1-2)

The word is the active power that transforms anything, even the life trapped in sin and darkness.

It's interesting to know that the world we see today with all the beautiful things, flowers, trees, animals and the birds in their beauty and the flourishing trees, the hills and mountains and the islands of rich treasures were all brought into being by the power of God's spoken word.

The Earth, just before God began the work of creation was a place that had no form or beauty, it was a dark horizon of emptiness (Genesis 1:2).

The account of creation is the mirror of the human experience. Before the coming of God's word, which is Christ, man like the earth was in darkness. Darkness represents in figurative terms, the life without Christ, for Christ is the light of the world.

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through Him all things were made; without Him nothing was made that has been made. In Him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it."

It is this light of God's word that lights up our spirit and ushers us into the knowledge of Christ. Illumination is an experience that takes place on the inside of the human spirit.

Everyone was born into sin and in that state, the spirit man was dead (Psalm 51:5).

It was the word of God that wrought the miracle of conversion, made our spirit active, and ushered us into a new life when we received

Christ (John 6:6, Ephesians 2:5).

This is what we call the 'New Birth' in the Christendom. We can't be born physically the second time, but our spirit receives a divine touch, which brings into a new experience of life and union with Christ through His Spirit.

The transformation which results from the word of God, bringing new life to our spirit, through the preaching of the gospel is the 'Born again' experience.

"Therefore, if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new" (2nd Corinthians 5:17)

In religion, we lived on the dictates of prescribed moral and human standards. This is good. It passes us off as good and decent moral agents. It makes us respectable men and women who are accorded high regard in our place of work and community. We strive in frail human power and abilities to keep doing the 'right' and moral deeds that earn us the approval of men.

Most times, people who are religious feel the frustrations of not being able to keep up with the requirements of moral and religious living and obligations. They often fail and falter and experience huge emotional and psychological upsets for not always keeping in line and in tune with their reputations.

Apostle Paul was a highly respected religious figure in his days yet his high religious attainments couldn't earn him salvation until Jesus encountered him and gave him a profoundly new life, a dynamic life of the spirit, one that was procured on the sacrifice of Jesus blood, a life empowered by the Spirit of Christ and ultimately His ministry was a showcase of God's power, grace and love.

To be saved and remain saved, Jesus must become the centrepiece of your life.

Jesus is the life-changer. When Jesus walked the streets of Nazareth

and called 12 men to be His disciples, and they left their occupation to follow Him, were those men fickle minded and morons? Didn't they have better things to do than follow a preacher man who had no higher life ambition?

Jesus only said few words, " follow me and I will make you fishers of men" (Matthew 4:19). Jesus identity since then has never been hidden as a 'Maker of men'.

When the 12 men followed Him, Jesus transformed them from village fishermen to fishers of men. They were the men who preached about Jesus to multitudes and 3,000 men gave their lives to Jesus (Acts 2:41)

The difference between Paul and the 12 men that heeded Jesus was that Paul, then Saul, before he met Jesus was a religious fellow who wanted to do God's will without the grace and empowerment of the Spirit of God. He expended his human abilities in the process, including using killings and intimidations to coerce people to come to God. (Acts 9:1-5)

Salvation in Christ is a gift, bought by the blood of Christ (Ephesians 2:8).

Paul was a model of how Jesus can save a man from the clutch of religious slavery to the freedom the gospel offers.

1. Recognise that attending church will never give you salvation - John 3:16, Philippians 3:19
2. Accept the gospel, when it is preached to you - Romans 8:9-10
3. Receive Jesus into your life - Ephesians 2:8-9

Chapter Three

BEGINNING OF A NEW JOURNEY

The journey of Adam in Eden was suddenly ended because of sin. Adam's life began and ended at one spot - Eden.

But God proved with Enoch - a descendant of Adam, that life can in fact extend beyond the temporary existence on earth. God “took” him, from the earth, up to Heaven. (Genesis 5:24)

In effect, the life of a child of God that has received Christ - “born again” should not end up at a spot like Adam's. If he “walks with God”, like Enoch did, the believer will ultimately dwell with God forever (John 14:1-2)

Christ is the model of the Christian faith. As God instructed Moses to build the Ark after the pattern that was shown him in the wilderness - with attention to details and specific instructions, so would God want all His children to follow a pattern - Christ. (Exodus 25:8-9)

To follow Christ entails watching and observing His “footsteps” and putting one's foot in His. A close relationship with Christ through the Holy Spirit and the Word of God will ultimately warm the believer into an affectionate, intimate life of fellowship with Christ.

This kind of deep association is not without an aftermath - it engrafts the nature of God, instils the godly character into the believer, naturally.

God's plan is not for us to be like our pastor, even though he may have some desirable and gracious attributes. But only like Christ.

“Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ” - (Ephesians 4:13).

This great and exciting journey begins with a desire and a personal determination to make the most of God's grace already at work in our lives as believers.

It then becomes a daily desire and a passionate goal that one can attain as a child of God.

Chapter Four

ASSURANCE OF SALVATION

As you stepped forth to receive Christ, an exchange took place in your life. Your sins were taken away - you were forgiven and your old nature of sin was replaced by a new nature - the life of God.

You were “born again” by the Word and Spirit (John 3:3). The word of God you heard and received by faith made it possible for the Holy Spirit to carry out the work of regeneration in your life.

The spirit of man is the part of our being that speaks and receives from God, because God is a Spirit (John 4:24). At the time you received Christ (born again), you became spiritually alive once more, your spirit-man became connected to the life giving Spirit of God and you were now “spiritually aware” and can talk to God as a new “child-Father” relationship is born.

Sometimes because we are still in the flesh, we often may doubt that experience because we are basically still the same people physically since after we gave our life to Christ. The question is what was that, that changed?

Something really changed. It was by faith that you received Christ (Romans 10:9-10).

But God's Spirit bears witness that you are now a child of God (Romans 8:16)

How can I tell that if really I am born again and not just following a religious illusion? Even though I can't physically “see” and “touch” God, can I still be sure of His abiding presence and love?

Would that experience produce a proof that is obvious and indisputable to all around me?

Let's consider the following Bible passages for a discussion:

1. ***“If any man be in Christ old things are passed away, behold all things are become new”***- (2cor 5: 17).

Did you ever feel new? It's like a big weight was laid off your life - you felt joy and something new and wonderful. You felt a deep inward peace that you have never felt since you were born. Peace is one of the substantial gift of God, given to one's soul and spirit at conversion (John 14:27)

It's often difficult to explain in plain words that experience. But one thing is sure - your spirit is now alive and you are a new creature.

People around you certainly can tell that something new has happened in your life. If you had a “notorious” lifestyle - one that everyone could tell, your new life in Christ definitely will come as a sharp contrast to your former life, as you gradually drop old sinful habits and begin to adopt and grow a godly character, one that will be a testimony to the world around you.

2. ***“The holy spirit beareth witness with our spirit that we are children of God”***(Romans 8-16)

Sometimes as new believers there are moments when we seem to have doubt about what has taken place in our lives. There is also a tendency to feel “empty”, or “ordinary”- even casting doubt on the rationality of being “born again” itself. Did it actually happen? Is it really real? When you begin to feel this way, always remember not to walk by your feelings but live and walk by faith (Hebrews 13:8)

The Holy Spirit is given to believers as a “Comforter” (John 16:7) - to comfort them at such times when they are feeling awkward, lonely, disturbed, unsure - He assures them that in spite of how and what they feel - God is real and ever present with any and every child of God.

3. ***“As many as receive Him to them gave He the power to become children of God”*** (John 1:12)

One of the manifest outcomes of the new life of the believer in Christ is the inclination to be godly. Inwardly you begin to feel the hunger for righteousness (Matthew 5:16).

Don't be surprised or even alarmed about this. What is happening to you is that God has given you a new spiritual appetite. Your spirit-man having received a new life is beginning to lead you after God.

You notice, involuntarily, there is now a growing passion to please God, to be holy and to seek for more of His knowledge and things that will promote your growth in the things of the spirit.

This kind of urge to please God is rather a gift that every believer receives - “an inward enabling” (DIVINE POWER) that helps you obey God unlike the old times when you were in the world.

4. ***“... lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen*** (Matthew 28:20b)

One way that God assures us that He is with us is by His presence. That should give us confidence that we are secure and protected in Him.

David, God's anointed king of Israel, in the Old Testament, understood this secret. He wrote:

“Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for Thou art with me; Thy rod and Thy staff they comfort me” (Psalm 23:4).

Always be assured as a new believer that God has made a promise, which He is always able to keep - that is, to always be by you forever.

Chapter Five

FELLOWSHIP WITH GOD

“But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even by the spirit of the lord” (2 Cor. 3:18)

One of the greatest experience one can ever have as a child of God is to come into the presence of God in fellowship and this is the foundation of our relationship with God.

God loves fellowship (Isaiah 1:18)

God's desire is to always draw us into a fulfilling, intimate fellowship with Him. It is in the atmosphere of His presence and glory that brings about the much desired transformations in our lives as He exchanges our weaknesses and flaws with some of His divine natures.

Moses indeed was no longer the same after He gazed upon the glory of God in the mountain of Sinai (Exodus 34:34-35)

Moses' encounter with God made the glory of God to shine on His face. This is a testament to the wonderful transformation that takes place any time believers encounter God in genuine fellowship.

Our fellowship with God can come in songs and praise worships
(Psalms 95:1-2)

David was a master worshipper. He knew how to open the door of fellowship with God. In worship and praise, God takes delight in our hearty, deep reverence of His works and Mightiness. God loves the exclusive worship we give to Him and to no other person or gods (Exodus 20: 3-5).

God will always come down in the fullness of His glory when genuine

praise and worship is offered to Him (2 Chronicle 5:13-14).

We can also fellowship with God in the Word by meditating upon God's word (Joshua 1:8)

Prayer is another way we come into fellowship with God (Mark 1:35)

In each of these, God's presence is made abundantly manifest. The most important aspect of our fellowship with God is the fact that there is an atmosphere of God's presence that can affect our lives with tangible, real spiritual changes.

Jesus had a strong and regular habit of coming to commune with God. His life and Ministry was empowered daily by the virtues and grace He derived by His consistent engagements with God in the quiet place.

All believers should develop a fellowship centred lifestyle that revolves around making the most of ones relationship with God.

Every minute and hour of the clock counts for us in eternity and that's why our time must be spent well in God's presence because it is in Him we live, move and have our being (Acts 17:28)

Chapter Six

FAITH

“Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen” (Hebrews 11:1)

The only way we can receive “things” from God is by “FAITH” - To have strong believe you will get “something”, or “something will happen”, when you have not yet seen it”

We have been told that God exists, how do we know it's true when we have not yet seen Him?

The act of simply believing what the Word of God says about Him, and “acting and living” as though it were true, is “FAITH”

How does FAITH come? By hearing the Word of God (Romans 10:17)

Either by the printed Word or

Spoken word

“By faith Noah being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house, by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith” (Hebrew 11:7)

“By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went” (Hebrews 11:8)

“By faith also Sarah herself received strength to conceive seed, and was delivered of a child when she was past age,

because she judged Him faithful who had promised” (Hebrews 11:11)

By “FAITH” we can virtually receive everything we have been provided for in the promises of God as believers in Christ.

Chapter Seven

WATER BAPTISM

“Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death; that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we should walk in the newness of life” (Romans 6:4)

Water baptism is one of the cardinal beliefs of the New Testament gospel.

The Ethiopian eunuch got baptised immediately after he received the Word of God from Phillip (Acts 8:36-38)

In fact, Jesus exemplified the importance of water baptism when He went to river Jordan to be baptised by John the Baptist (Matthew 3:13-17)

Christ being the model for the believer thus encourages believers to take after His steps.

What then is baptism? Is it mere ceremonial Christian practice? What does it stand for?

Baptism is both physically and spiritually symbolic. It's an act that affirms our faith in the death and resurrection of Christ as believers in Him.

Did Christ indeed die and resurrected?

To every believer, Christ's death was necessary to bring us salvation - *“He was bruised for our sins”* (Isaiah 53:5); and His resurrection signifies how our life transits from “deadness” in our sinfulness to the new life in Christ (born again).

In baptism we are “buried” with Christ and by faith are “risen” also

with Him, having conquered sin and death, can now live free of sin and death (Romans 8:1-2)

In baptism the believer is practically and publicly identifying with Christ's death and has set a personal pledge not to look back but follow hard after the new life of faith that is laid forth before him (Luke 9:62)

This reality indeed is the chief cornerstone of the Christian faith.

In baptism, the new believer “*dies with Christ and resurrects with Him in the newness of life*” as the baptized is plunged into water, three times, signifying his dying with Christ and the final one which is the third (Jesus rose up on the third day) brings him from death to life everlasting.

Baptism identifies the truth that by faith we died with Christ:

“I am crucified with Christ nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ that liveth in me: and the life I live in the flesh is by the faith in the son of God who loved me and gave His life for me” (Galatians 2:20)

Baptism is also a commandment by Christ to His disciples (Matthew 28:19)

The local pastor of the congregation you attend will ensure that every new believer experiences this wonderful opportunity to obey this command from the Lord Jesus Christ.

Some people have testified of the wonderful impartation they received during baptism. Some were instantly filled with the Holy Spirit as they burst into new tongues praising and glorifying the Lord.

Chapter Eight

HOLY GHOST BAPTISM

The coming of the Holy Ghost was first hinted by prophesy in the Old Testament (Joel 2:28-29) and a promise by Jesus in the New Testament (Acts 1:18)

The prophesy and the promise were both fulfilled in the upper room when the Apostles gathered to pray as instructed by the Lord Jesus (Acts 2:1-4)

The importance of receiving the baptism of the Holy Spirit cannot be over emphasised.

What can the Holy Spirit do in the life of the believer?

He is the source of power and boldness (Acts 1: 8)

He enables us to pray and makes intercession for the saints through us (Romans 8:26)

He will teach us all things and bring things also to your remembrance (John 14:26)

He is the Comforter who comforts the believer (John 14:18)

He guides believers into the truth (John 16:13)

Reveals the secrets of the Father to believers (John 16:15)

He will reprove and convict people of their sins (John 16:8)

Every believer is encouraged to thirst and hunger after the infilling with the Holy Spirit, to enable him live an effective Christian life and

thus an effective witness for the Lord.

One of the manifest evidence of the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit is speaking in tongues. (Acts 2:4)

The Holy Spirit endows the believer with other spiritual gifts and enables the believer operate these gifts according to the will of God.

Here are some of the gifts the Holy Spirit gave to the church (1 Corinthians 12: 4-11):

1. The word of Wisdom
2. The word of Knowledge
3. Faith
4. Healing
5. Working of Miracles
6. Prophecy
7. Discerning of Spirits
8. Divers kinds of Tongues
9. Interpretation of Tongues

How may I receive the Holy Spirit?

By the laying on of hands by another believer who is Spirit filled (Acts 19:6)

y waiting on God in prayer (Acts 2:1-4)

Chapter Nine

THE CALL TO HOLINESS

“... Be ye holy; for I am holy” (1st Peter 1:16)

Holiness is God's nature. He has also called every believer to a life of consecration and holiness.

Can one effectively have an abiding fellowship and relationship with a God who is absolutely holy without being holy?

God was aware that we could not come to Him in our sinful state, reason He made Jesus the sacrifice for our sins so that by the Blood He shed on our behalf our sins were washed away, so we may have the “clothing of righteousness” to approach God (Philippians 3:3, Hebrews 10:10)

Yet, God wants us to consistently live a holy life and maintain a life that is attractive to His presence. God cannot stand sin (Isaiah 59:1-2)

“And that ye put on the new man which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness, wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbour; for we are members of one another” (Ephesians 4:25)

Holiness is a life without sin. But were we not born into sin? (Psalm 51: 5) Even though we are born again, we still carry with us the “sin nature” which time and again shows up and can be a hindrance to our walk with God.

When we became born again, God begins a work of grace by His Spirit so we can maintain the standards of Holiness that is required of us. One of the ways He does that is by helping us subject our body to His Spirit and by renewing our minds by His word.

“I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world; but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God” (Romans 12:1-2)

Our flesh is the “operator” of sin and is the embodiment of sin. The mind also produces impure thoughts and imaginations that are against the nature of God.

By reading the word of God and meditating on it continually, God's spirit begins to shape our thoughts and values, even our intentions and make them pure(1 Peter 2:1-2)

Prayer helps the believer to be strong in the Lord by strengthening his spirit man so he can be able to resist the domineering influence of sin(Ephesians 6:10,1 Thessalonians 5:17)

In constant fellowship with God in prayer, worship and praise, the believer soon acquires the nature of God which reflects in his thoughts, speech and actions (2 Corinthians 3:18)

Holiness therefore, will include those things we do as believers that helps to keep us in continuous fellowship with God, helps us maintain the life of purity and good standing with God (1 Peter 1:15)

Chapter Ten

GROWING IN GRACE

“Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord” (2 Peter 1-2)

The believers' growth is a personal responsibility. He must seek for the things that will aid his growth in the Spirit. One major way to grow spiritually is by consistently reading and meditating on the Word of God.

“As new born babes desire the sincere milk of the word that ye may grow thereby.” (1 Peter 2:2)

The Word of God supplies the required spiritual nutrients that helps every believer keep in shape and strong. God revealed Himself to Samuel in the old testament by the Word of God. (1 Samuel 3:19-21)

There are many other avenues a new Christian can grow, which includes:

Fellowship with other believers (Hebrews 10:25)

Increase ones “knowledge” by reading books by established Christian authors (2 Peter 1:5-6)

Increasing ones faith by hearing the Word of God taught directly by other preachers (Romans 10:17)

By adopting a consistent lifestyle of prayer and fellowship with God (Mark 1:35)

By associating with other believers who know more than you. Jesus was in the temple sitting in the midst of doctors, both hearing and asking them questions (Luke 2:46)

That was part of the secret of His growth in “wisdom and stature” (Luke 2:52)

By exercising yourself in spiritual things; praying and fasting, even preaching of the Word (Hebrew 5: 12-14)

By having deep hunger and thirst for the things of the Spirit (Matthew 5:6)

Chapter Eleven

AUTHORITY OF THE BELIEVER

The believers' new life is one that is divinely empowered. Christ is the example of how much power a believer can receive and exercise.

“How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy ghost and with power; who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him” (Acts 10:38)

Jesus did many mighty works that even the whole book in the world would not be able to contain it (John 21:25)

The same power Christ received, He gave to believers in Him (Ephesians 1:19-21)

The believer has therefore received authority from Christ to do all manner of great works including but not limited to:

- 1. To cast out evil spirits (Matthew 10:1, Matthew 17:18)**
- 2. To heal all manner of sicknesses (Matthew 10:1, James 5:16)**
- 3. Power of poison (Luke 10:19)**
- 4. Power over power of the enemy (Luke 10:19)**
- 5. To raise the dead (Acts 9:36-40)**
- 6. Boldness to speak the Word (2 Timothy 1:7, Acts 4:31)**

Like Elijah who exercised power over nature, the believer by faith can also exercise similar power over nature and its elements (James 5:16-18).

The prayer of agreement (when believers come together) in faith to pray about anything is so powerful.

“Again I say unto you, that if two of you shall agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is Heaven” (Matthew 18:19).

An example of this when the church in the Acts of the Apostle prayed fervently for Peter when he was put in prison by the authorities.

“Peter therefore was kept in prison; but prayer was made without ceasing of the church unto God for him”

God heard the prayers of the Apostles and Peter was released miraculously from prison.

“And behold, the angel of the Lord came upon Him, and a light shined in the prison, and he smote Peter on the side, and raised him up, saying arise up quickly, and His chains fell off from his hands” (Acts 12:7)

Chapter Twelve

PURPOSE OF THE CROSS

“And he said to them all, if any man will come after me, let him deny himself and take up the cross and follow me, for whoever will save his life shall lose it; but whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall save it” (Luke 9:23-24)

The cross represents the point where our personal desires and wants intersects with the demands of our calling as children of God. The question that will always be for a disciple is: “what will Jesus do if He was in my shoes giving the circumstance?”

It is always not just as easy to wave goodbye to a world we have always lived in, shared with and “cherished”. How often does God nudge us by His Holy Spirit to change our dress code or even change our association, so our life can begin to conform to the demands of our new life in Christ?

Are you still the old person you have always been in terms of social and peer indulgence?

Have you had clean break with sin, sinful tendencies or with the way and attitude of the world, including the customs and traditions of the people around you?

The cross is the call not to conform to the style of the world anymore. Christ wants all believers to subject their thoughts, desires and day to day conduct to the word of God and leading of the Holy Spirit, so that the life of Christ and the will of God can shine out through them. (Romans 12:2)

“I am crucified with Christ nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ that liveth in me: and the life I live in the flesh is by the faith in the son of God who loved me and gave His life for me” (Galatians 2:20)

Who determines my lifestyle as a child of God? Friends, family, colleagues or Christ?

Am I willing to forgo any personal ambition for the sake of Christ?

Can I “concede” defeat on a matter that involves my faith in obedience to God's Word?

Can I joyfully make amends with my dressing if it is “offensive” to my new faith?

Would I feel “offended” when I'm laughed at and derided because I now look and act differently from the people around me?

Even if you are persecuted; don't get discouraged because persecution is one of the inescapable experiences of the Christian faith.

*“Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven”
(Matthew 5:10)*

“Yea, and all that shall godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution” (2 Timothy 3:12)

Chapter Thirteen

SHARING YOUR NEW FAITH WITH OTHERS

“A true witness delivereth souls; ...” (proverbs 14:25a).

The believer's new life in Christ was brought about by the preaching of the gospel.

Christ had laid out a role for every believer in Him to share His new faith with others who don't yet believe in Him. In order words, as believers we ought to be “witnesses” for the gospel of the Lord Jesus.

“And ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth” (Acts 1:8)

“The spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because he has anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek” (Isaiah 61:1a)

By sharing your new faith, one is sharing in the truth that Jesus is the Saviour and that indeed, my new life is evident that Christ saves.

Sharing of ones faith may seem an awkward exercise at the first attempt but the believer being strengthened by the Holy Spirit and the encouragement of older Christians soon begins to become bolder and more skilful in presenting the gospel to others.

Practical ways to share your new faith in Christ:

Going out with an older believer and learn from him (Acts 12:25)

Your conduct and new life is already a clear message (Acts 11:26, 1 Peter 3:1-2, 1 Peter 2:9)

Sharing of gospel tracts and other gospel related literature

By sharing your new faith with the people in your own household

About THE BOOK

This book is about a personal account and testament to the reality of salvation that comes through Christ. It depicts how God can transform lives from being religious zealots to kingdom ambassadors, changing lives and building God's kingdom on earth through His grace that is at work in our lives. If you want your life to be changed by God and your desire is to be used by God to His glory, read this book.

About Author

Steve received a clear word from the LORD as he was completing his National Youth service, NYSC, in 1999. The voice of the LORD came audibly to him: "Write for me and I will use your works to bless the ends of earth". His ministry, Sentword Ministries for more than 25 years, have been providing Christian literature free of charge, to churches within Nigeria and the United Kingdom.

His prayer Ministry, His reign, supports missions through intercessions as well as material supports.

He is a proud father of two wonderfully blessed daughters: Olamma and Udodirim.



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