

THE ANOINTED PRIEST WHO SINS

God's Ancient Ways for Full Restoration and Re-Learning

Clergy or laity, God's law for moral failure is unchanging. Active ministry must cease and offenders must go through a process of discipline and restoration. Men who do not repent greatly will never be restored greatly.

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DEDICATION

To all God's precious priests, who like David, have fallen, and like him,
have repented greatly and have been restored greatly.

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INTRODUCTION

The statistics for misbehaviour and sexual failure among God's people in ministry are appalling and they seem to be escalating. I thought I had heard enough and would no longer be disturbed by such news, but no, I was wrong. When I received word that a 76-year-old well-known international prophet had fallen into sexual misbehaviour, I was in shock and denial.

I found it just too hard to believe – what went wrong? How could an elderly man in his seventies with an anointed and proven ministry misbehave in such a way? The pain and shock lingered for a few days until Leviticus 4:3 flooded into my spirit. I knew God was ministering to me.

Whatever had happened and however shocking some of these cases may be, I know God will never be shocked. He knows that priests, in spite of their 'superior' positions and great anointing, can still fall. He knows that all anointed priests still possess a sin nature beneath their holy robes. The priest's holy office does not ensure his infallibility. In His mercy, God had, (even way back in the Old Testament) made provision for their full restoration. The blood and the resurrection power of Jesus Christ are truly adequate to cleanse and to restore all 'fallen' priests. If ever it seems to fail, it is because there has been a lack of trust, humility, true repentance and greatness on the part of the offender.

The anointed priest is a great man in the sight of the people because he has been chosen as Jehovah's personal attendant and he is supposed to be the 'profession' of piety. He has also been chosen to carry the burdens of the people and to make atonement for their sins. In public estimation, he is recognized as the holiest man in the whole congregation. This is why any slight irregularity in his life is most serious. But great men are also human and vulnerable and they too, can fall. But can they, like king David, be restored again to greatness? Yes, provided they repent like David did – *greatly*. **Unfortunately, today, we have many fallen priests but few manifest the same Davidic spirit of greatness in repentance.**

I have counselled and ministered to fallen priests and it has not been an easy task. The vital element of true repentance which is manifested in humility and brokenness seems to be missing. Most of these men are eager to return to their ministries but not to the Lord. They are eager to have their fallen reputations restored, but not as eager to rebuild their character.

Perhaps this is why most fallen priests hardly return to their former glory and degree of effectiveness. Without true humility, real contrition and brokenness of spirit, and the knowledge of how God works, the restoration process can often turn out to be a farce – something done in a shallow way or given too superficial a treatment. Often the restoration is done only in the sight of men instead of '*before the Lord*' as was required in Leviticus chapter 4. Each step written in this chapter means something and we must not neglect these steps if we believe that God is the source of authority and law.

When a priest falls, **the requirements and conditions for his restoration have to come from God’s ancient unchanging law, not from the whims and fancies of fickle man.** The guilty priest himself should have as little ‘say’ as possible in the discipline meted out to him. He should, like king David, place himself fully into the hands of God. The Davidic spirit of repentance is truly a great spirit. How many offending and fallen priests who have lost everything are able to say,

“If I find favor in the eyes of the Lord, he will bring me back (back to my church, my ministry, my former glory) here I am, let Him do to me as seems good to Him” (2 Samuel 15: 25-26).

This truly requires unfeigned trust, humility and brokenness and only great and repentant men are capable of manifesting such trust, humility and brokenness. No wonder God loved David. He was such an uncommon man. He fell terribly, but he knew that God was able to “*work upon the platform of human impossibilities and replace the bias of degeneration with the bias of regeneration*” and bring him back into greatness.

King David understood the workings of true restoration – that they all depend on finding ‘*the favour of God.*’ And what did David do in order to get His favour? He unflinchingly followed God’s ancient steps to full repentance and met all His requirements.

THE CONSEQUENCES

Why do so many offending priests and even their counsellors ‘make light’ of the offences? Could it be that they are truly unaware of what had really happened and how severe these offences are? What actually takes place when God’s anointed priest, who is supposed to be God’s chosen spiritual covering for His people falls into sexual sin by entering into an unholy union through fornication, adultery or other sexual sins? The consequences are really ugly (2 Samuel 12), but thank God, the fallen priest is not beyond redemption. The guilty priest must first know that when he sins, the following takes place:

1. God is deeply injured and dishonoured.
2. The man himself is greatly defiled.
3. The hedge of protection over his own life, family and church is broken.
4. The enemy has been given, both physically and spiritually, a chance to blaspheme.

THE REQUIREMENTS

These seven steps in God's ancient law for restoration may sound primitive and irrelevant for today's sophisticated, 'learned' and rebellious clergy but this is God's unchangeable ancient formula for wiping out spiritual guilt and defilement. This is the only effective way to prevent spiritual pollution from being transferred onto the congregation. There are no short cuts. Truly, there are no short cuts.

The offender must surely know that his former position was one of great dignity and solemnity. He must know that **special privileges also come with special responsibilities**. Genuine repentance must lead this penitent to feel his sins and failures as heavy burdens that have to be put away by solemn acknowledgement and extraordinary efforts. The one who had held the most privileged position, exerted superior influence over so many, had stood as Jehovah's representative and spoken as His voice has now committed a grave offence. **Should he not also demonstrate the greatest obedience to the demands of divine righteousness and meet the requirements laid down by God for his cleansing and eternal good?** Surely he should not take any short cuts.

There can be no short cuts because everything that the repentant priest does now **has spiritual meaning and eternal validity before God** and wicked principalities and powers who are watching. The latter are watching to find ways to gain another foothold into his life to devour him and to blaspheme God. This is why there can be no short cuts.

*If the priest that is anointed do sin according to the sin of the people; (bringing guilt upon the people — NIV) **then let him bring for his sin**, which he hath sinned, a young bullock without blemish unto the Lord for a sin offering (Leviticus 4:3).*

STEP ONE : “ Bring for his sin...”

The sin of blame-shifting is as old as its first occurrence in the garden of Eden. If the offender wants true restoration and **God on his side**, then a good conscience is vital. Stories can be created to shift the blame on others and save his reputation but we must not forget that there is One who knows all and sees everything. We may be able to hide from man, to run away from justice and continue to minister, laying our soiled hands on others and bringing guilt on them but we can never run away from God and our own conscience. A good and guiltless conscience is vital to our joy and our relationship with God.

*“The end of the commandment is charity out of a pure heart, and of a **good conscience**, and of faith unfeigned” (1 Timothy 1:5).*

*“Our rejoicing is this, **the testimony of our conscience**” (2 Corinthians 1:12).*

David prayed, *“I acknowledge my transgression.”* His repentant prayers were punctuated with **personal pronouns**: *“my transgressions, my sin.”* He did not only acknowledge his sinful deed (the wrong he had done), he went on to **acknowledge his depravity and his great need for God**. Yes, he needed God, not just moral counsellors or psychological help. In Psalm 51, David cried out: “I need You, O God, to (i) forgive me (ii) erase my sin (iii) wash and cleanse me (iv) loose me of the guilt (v) restore the joy and (vi) rebuild my fallen walls. He is saying he needs to go through a process of rebuilding and restoration.

David met up with God, not just with psychologists or moral counsellors who may say, *“ O, you poor thing, you are like this because of your traumatic childhood, your lonely teenage years or because of your step mother, your uncle, etc.”* (Joseph too, had a traumatic childhood and terrible experiences in his teenage years. But he did not give in to sexual seduction).

These words may make the offender feel good but they will not bring the needed cleansing or deliverance to the offender. Neither will it cleanse the guilty conscience nor restore the spiritual reality and joy. David was a man with a multiple anointing and was greatly used by God but **he was willing to acknowledge not just his act of sin with Bathsheba but also his inward depraved condition**. His words, *“ I was shapen in iniquity and in sin did my mother conceive me”* are vital not only for our healing but also to **help us understand why even anointed men with high and holy callings can be promiscuous and violate God’s holy laws to enter into illicit liaisons with other women**.

Why did David do it? He knew that violating Bathsheba was against God's moral laws. Moreover, as the king, he could have had so many other women, but why Bathsheba? Likewise, so many anointed priests who entered into unholy and illicit liaisons with other women also knew God's laws but still, they went ahead and seized the forbidden fruit. Why? If you are one of the fallen priests reading this book right now, do you know why you did it?

Let David enlighten you. When he was confronted with his sin, David immediately acknowledged not only his wrong acts of adultery and murder but also *the reason* for his sinful deeds. **He confessed he had an inward depraved condition and it was this inward condition that led him to fall, not the exterior circumstances or influence.** If you read Psalm 51 carefully, you will realize that David was actually saying,

“I violated another man’s wife and killed the husband because I was depraved, lustful and full of wickedness. Lord, this is my nature. I have no one else to blame. I may be anointed and look alright to everybody outwardly, but inwardly my walls have all broken down. Lord, rebuild these walls for I am your Jerusalem. Lord, I cannot live with this inward depraved condition. I want a new heart and a new spirit.”

Psalm 51 is powerful because it gives us the reason why anointed men fall. They fall because they are **overpowered by their own inward state of depravation and lusts**, not by any outward influence or circumstances. They fall because behind all conscious outward acts of sin there are **inward depraved appetites, which they are not conscious of**. Joseph could have fallen too as his situation was far worse than David's. His employer's wife coaxed him to sin by using physical force on him but Joseph refused to yield to her amorous and bold advances. He fled (Genesis 39). David was different. He just 'looked' at a woman bathing (1 Samuel 11).

But that 'look' stirred up something really ugly within him. It was something that had lain dormant, unexposed and un-dealt with for many years. It was sexual lust and a wicked conniving spirit. David might have killed his exterior enemies – the lion, bear and Goliath but **he still had an inward condition that needed to be dealt with by God. Don't we all?**

Some of us may not have sexual lust, but we do have anger, greed, vanity, unforgiveness, jealousy, etc. which are just as devastating. Going to a Bible school, receiving several theological degrees, possessing a 'holy' title, putting on holy garments and sitting in the privileged position of 'priest' do not mean we are totally sanctified on the inside. These exterior things cannot sanctify the human heart, only the Spirit of God can do it.

But how can God's Spirit work through us when we do not connect with Him and give Him the time to do so? It is unfortunate that today's prophets and priests have given priority to the exterior — to performance but not to the Presence. No wonder sexual failures within the priesthood are rampant and the numbers are escalating.

When lusts and depravation overtook David, he went ahead to take the

forbidden fruit and jeopardized everything he had worked for – his life, family, kingdom and his relationship with God. Is not this the same with so many anointed priests who have fallen? The tragedy is, many of them are not even aware as to why they have fallen and why they did what they did.

At least David knew and he was willing to acknowledge it. The first step towards true repentance is not only to acknowledge the act of wrongdoing at that time **but also to acknowledge that you did it because you wanted to do it. You have to acknowledge that in spite of how great a priest you are, how well you can preach, teach or sing, you do possess unholy appetites and excesses inside and that you need God to deal with you. You need Him to take you through a process of cleansing, purging, healing, re-learning and rebuilding.** Otherwise, your sin of promiscuity may resurface time and again – perhaps seven, ten or twelve years later.

David was not afraid to confess what he was on the inside. His outright confession, *“I was shapen in iniquity and in sin did my mother conceive me,”* must have pleased the heart of Father God. God must have responded with, *“Good. I have been waiting for you to tell Me you need a new heart and a right spirit. Now that you have asked for it, I can get to work on you.”*

*And he shall bring the bullock unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation **before the LORD**; and shall lay his hand upon the bullock's head, and kill the bullock **before the LORD** (Leviticus 4:4).*

STEP TWO : “Before the Lord”

The phrase, “*before the Lord,*” appears five times. Yes, every repentant action and step taken towards restoration by the guilty one has to be “*unto the Lord,*” or “*before the Lord*” (not unto man or unto self). The guilty priest should realize that the one person he has sinned against and dishonoured the most is not his wife, children or church – **it is his God**. Yes, the God who had entrusted him with such a privileged position and given him power and anointing has been sinned against. King David, being the great man he was, realized this. No wonder he prayed, “*Against thee, **thee only** have I sinned, and done this evil **in thy sight**” (Psalm 51:4).*

The guilty priest should forget about his ministry, his reputation, etc... **and seek to be restored to his God**. What brought on the tragedy in the first place was a leak in that vertical relationship with the Father. Priests who fall from grace, had, ‘a long time ago’ forsaken their intimacy with God and had lost the joy of building into their own inner life through meditation of the Word and contemplative prayers.

David's internal spiritual walls had actually collapsed a long time before that exterior moral wall fell. And David knew this. This is why even as he prayed for spiritual cleansing he also cried out, "*Build thou the walls of Jerusalem!*" (*help me build my internal walls! I am your Jerusalem and my walls have fallen down!*)

It is sad that today so many things that are being done are done in the sight of man and not '*before the Lord.*' Jesus Himself bore witness when He charged the spiritual leaders in His days of preferring the honour and the praise of man more than the honour and praise of God (John 5:44, 12:43). These religious leaders and learned men were very much like the spiritual leaders of our days. **They lived much of their lives before man**, not before God.

What is described in Matthew chapter 6 befits our days. Christianity today is hardly the soul's private and sacred relationship with God. It has become such an ostentatious outward religion. Jesus rebuked the scribes and the Pharisees because He knew that all the outward decorum in their worship was to cover a hollowness on their inside. We often give attention to the many human eyes that watch our outward actions but **we forget that there is a pair of divine eyes that tests the inward motive.** Our outward 'lofty' actions are so often moved by inward 'low' motives and how God hates them. How He hates them. For this reason, Jesus could not hold His peace in Matthew chapter 6.

You have lived your past life in the sight of man. Now that you have fallen and are making your way back to the Lord, **will you take this step towards your restoration before the Lord? Cast off all your unreality because if you are unreal, God cannot touch you.** He sees not only the outward actions but he tests the inward motives. Do not just anxiously sit (and fret?) through your period of discipline so that you can get back into ministry and prove yourself once again.

Repentance “*before the Lord* ” means **true repentance**. Like the way David repented. A hundred people may be named ‘David,’ yet how many among that hundred will manifest the Davidic spirit and character? David was not afraid of the truth about himself. Truth is painful because truth has active searching power and the human nature hates it. The human nature resists truth, just like Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses (2 Timothy 3:8). These two magicians could not stamp out what was real, so they decided on imitations and counterfeits in an attempt to depreciate and devalue the real.

Have you fallen because you have lived on the counterfeits and the unreal all these years? Have you fed on shadows instead of on the substance? Now that your walls have fallen, be sure you live with the real and with the substance by manifesting true repentance, a repentance “*before the Lord.*”

*If the priest that is anointed do sin according to the sin of the people; then let him **bring** for his sin, which he hath sinned, **a young bullock** without blemish unto the LORD for a sin offering (Leviticus 4:3).*

STEP THREE : “Bring a young bullock”

The offending priest was required to bring a sacrifice larger than that brought by the common people and the ruler of the people. This is because he had a larger share of the sacred position before God. Special privileges do carry with them special responsibilities. But why bring an unblemished young bullock? Holiness demands it. God will not accept any sacrifice with defects as the sacrifice is a symbol of the coming supreme sacrifice that will be offered at Calvary. Why a bull, and not a lamb or any other animal? Because that bullock represents the offending priest – and all of us.

Yes, by nature, we are all ‘bullish’ – stubborn, insensitive, rebellious, strong and (destructively) powerful. The guilty priest had to identify himself with that bull by laying his hands on it and then he had to kill it. Yes, kill it. Kill it without any second thoughts, without any mercy and without any excuses.

This is not a pleasant scene – no, not in the natural. To plunge a knife into a healthy animal and watch it totter, die and have its body hacked into pieces with its blood splattered all over the place is nauseating. But God requires it because this is the only way to atone for this sin. This is the only way to put an end to all our natural talents and human dynamism. Many of us are too strong, too capable, too brilliant, too shrewd and too manipulative in ourselves for God to use us. We have to die. This

nauseating and brutal act of killing and hacking this young healthy bull to death has spiritual meaning and eternal validity.

God is saying, *“Put to death, once and for all, **all that you are and all that you represent.** I have been wanting for you to die a long time ago but you refused to. Can't you see you are too 'bullish' (too strong and powerful in yourself) for My use? You kept on and on, thinking you are infallible, thinking that self-dynamism is holy zeal and that I cannot do without you. I truly hate that smell of 'bullish' success because it's the smell of pride, of un-brokenness, rebellion, insensitivity, unrighteousness and unfettered lusts. It is wonderful to know that now this bull is going to die. When it dies, then I can get what I truly want. I can get the offering that will give Me true pleasure and eternal validity which is, **(i) the burning away of its exteriors (the hide) (ii) the offering of its internals and (iii) the tearing away of all its fats**” (excesses).*

How could God get into the 'internals,' of the animal to touch its kidneys and liver, etc. unless the animal dies? How could He separate the 'fats' (ungodly excesses) or tear away the 'hide' (the fleshly exteriors and pretensions) if this tragedy had not happened? We hate crises, dilemmas and suffering but they do serve their purpose. They have a way of penetrating beyond the surface to get at our inwards, to separate the false from the true, to tear away the fats or the excesses and to make us real.

From the human perspective, death is painful because it means a cessation of everything – ministry, reputation, career, friendship, income, etc. but not from God’s perspective. Jesus refused to rush to the bedside of His beloved friend, Lazarus, to raise him from that sick bed. He waited till Lazarus had died and was buried before He went to raise him up. Only in this way can God be glorified. There is no glory in your falling. Now that you have fallen, be willing to **die and be buried**. Stay buried until God raises you up. So where is the glory? The glory is when He raises you up and restores you to your former glory and power.

And he shall bring the bullock unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation before the LORD; and shall lay his hand upon the bullock's head, and kill the bullock before the LORD.

And the priest shall dip his finger in the blood, and sprinkle of the blood seven times before the LORD, before the vail of the sanctuary (Leviticus 4:4, 6).

STEP FOUR : *“He shall bring, he shall lay, he shall kill, he shall dip, he shall sprinkle.”*

Every initiative taken to meet the requirements for cleansing and restoration was to be taken by the guilty priest himself. No one could do it for him because it was a sin of his own initiative. He had to lay his hand on the young bullock and he had to kill the bullock himself. Then he had to take the bullock's blood to sprinkle it on different places and also on the pieces of furniture in the holy place. He had to dip his finger in the blood and daub the blood over the veil of the most Holy Place. His hands had to be 'dirtied' with the dead animal and blood. What is God saying? He is saying that the guilty priest must **take the initiative to repent, take the initiative to be cleansed, take the initiative to be delivered and take the initiative to be restored. No one can do it for him.**

Unfortunately, today, most guilty priests **do not take the initiative to repent or be cleansed, be delivered and be restored.** Instead, they carry on with their unholy liaisons until they are ‘discovered’ or exposed by someone. Usually it is the unfortunate wife or church members. Many do not even come out with the full confession even when they are ‘found out.’

Those who do may break down and cry but are they really shedding tears of deep remorse because they have injured and dishonoured God or are they shedding tears of regret (at being ‘found out,’ of being shamed, of having to end the illicit affair and losing their ministry)? Only God knows and He can tell the difference between tears of regret and tears of remorse and repentance. Sometimes even the offenders cannot tell themselves because sin has caused such a deep schism and detachment within them that they cannot even get contact with their own feelings.

Others make ‘half’ confessions while putting up a lot of defences and excuses. Who suffers in the end? King David had no defences and excuses. When he was caught, He blurted out,

“I did it because I am depraved. Yes, Lord, even though I carry the multiple anointing of prophet, psalmist and king and have killed the lion, bear and Goliath, my heart is still not clean. My spirit is not steadfast. I do have inward defects and deformities.”

What music these words were to the ears of God! *Since you have confessed you are not clean, I will take you through a process and clean you but you must endure the process. Since you have confessed you are depraved, I will elevate you. My light can shine through any darkness but I refuse to let it shine into you when you are unreal. If you are unreal then I cannot reach you. But when you are truthful, then I can do My full work in you and after I have finished with you, you will return to your former glory. My son, you need to wait.*

David waited and waited and waited. Now you know why in his writings he repeatedly declares, “*Wait on the Lord!*” (Psalm 25: 3,5, 21.27:14, 37:7,9). He did not fight, strive, manipulate or scheme his way back to his throne. The return to that privileged position and reputation was not important, the return to his God was the foremost thing in his life. We all know that David did return to his former glory and the Bible records that he died “*full of days, riches and honour.*” Can one who had been a liar, an adulterer and a murderer die in honour? Yes! Because God restored his honour. May we know that honour can only come from God and not man. **The man who had sinned greatly had been restored greatly because he repented greatly. O, for the Davidic spirit!**

*And he shall **take off** from it **all the fat** of the bullock for the sin offering; the fat that covereth the inwards, and all the fat that is upon the inwards, ...and the priest shall **burn them**...*
(Leviticus 4:8, 10).

STEP FIVE : “ *Take off the fat and burn them!*”

Fat represents excesses. Obesity is never good to the physical body; likewise ‘fats’ or excesses are never good to our spiritual life. Christians, whether individually or corporately, thrive on excesses because they have lost the spiritual reality. The more ‘un-connected’ we are with the Head, the more we give in to excesses.

King Solomon was a perfect example. When he lost the spiritual reality, he turned to excesses. After a lifetime of thriving in unbelievable excesses, he ended up by declaring, “*Vanity and vanity, everything is vanity and a vexation of spirit.*” He went on to declare that “*evil and madness*” are in the hearts of man. Solomon himself was a perfect example of that evil and madness. To turn away from God after God had given him so much was indeed evil and to have 1,000 wives was indeed madness!

When the Shulamite lost her shepherd lover in the Song of Solomon, she thrived on excesses shouting, “*Comfort me with apples and settle me with flagons*” (of wine). She turned to physical food and drinks to make up for the loss of her bridegroom, her ultimate reality. She could not face the vacuum and the thirst within. Her cry, “*I am love sick. I sought him, but I could not find him; I called him, but he gave me no answer*” was indeed pathetic.

The Samaritan woman was thirsty and that thirst drove her from man to man. Although she had had five men (and religion), she was still empty. When she met Jesus at the well she tried to discuss and argue religion with Him but Jesus met her deepest need (John 4). The religious leaders in the days of Jesus thrived on outward excesses by being outwardly factitious and ‘showy.’ They could deceive others with their extravagant holy ‘exteriors’ but they could not deceive Jesus because Jesus did not subscribe to such an excessive and intemperate lifestyle. He had no ‘fats’ on the inside.

We cannot expose false values if we live by false values ourselves. Jesus knew their outward religious exterior was just a mask over their inward condition of “extortion and excesses” (Matthew 23:25). These religious and learned men made such a fuss over the exterior because they had no inward spiritual reality – they were un-connected to the Head.

The words of Jesus are truly disturbing. He told those ‘holy’ spiritual leaders that they were not only full of excesses, they were also full of **extortion**. EXTORTION? EXTORTION in the hearts of priests? Do not only gangsters and the Mafia extort people? How could Jesus associate extortion with the priesthood?

Do you have extortion in your heart? Ask the Lord. When priests extort, it is both subtle and frightening. Frightening because they do not extort by violence, guns and knives. Instead they use subtle methods, pretences of piety and special spiritual stratagems to ensnare innocent souls. They abuse their spiritual power and authority by using scriptures and spiritual language like, *“Thus saith the Lord,”* or *“God told me to do this and that”* to impress God-loving but naive people. There are many such prophets and priests in today’s Christendom. Excesses and extortion always go hand in hand. **When a man gives himself over to excesses, he will, sooner or later, give himself over to extortion to support his excesses.**

When we raise money supposedly for God’s kingdom and then use it on ourselves, it is extortion. It is wrong to tell people to give money to church projects, to “God’s work” for starving orphans, destitute old people, unwanted mental patients, etc. and then use the money on ourselves to feed our excesses.

Fat is truly dangerous because it is the number one ‘silent’ killer, causing strokes and heart problems to our physical body. It is the same with spiritual fat. This is why God hates it and wants it exposed and burned upon His altar. It is unfortunate that the 21st century church loves to thrive on outward excesses and extortion. Are we using all these exteriors, the theatrics, the sensationalism, the false excitement, the sensuality, the ‘hyping up,’ the showmanship, the entertainment, etc. to make up for the lack of inward spiritual reality?

Human nature loves excesses. Greed is so natural. If we can have two, three or four, why have one? God speaks very clearly in His word that kings are not to multiply horses, silver, gold or women, yet Solomon did it and was not judged. This emboldened him to continue to multiply these possessions until he lost the spiritual reality and the presence of God.

Priests who fell into sexual excesses had first given themselves over to their own 'inward' intemperance and excesses. These excesses might have been expressed because of their dissatisfaction with their houses, cars, wardrobes, furniture and income. They just wanted these things to be bigger, better, more fashionable and more expensive. In wanting the best from the physical world, so often we sadly lose our solid spiritual reality.

The church in Laodicea was a perfect example. They boasted in their physical excesses only to have Jesus rebuke them for their spiritual blindness, deafness, wretchedness and destitution (Revelation 3:14-18). They were not even aware of their condition. Peter and John were just the opposite. When the lame beggar seated at the gate of the temple looked to them for alms, they had to confess they had nothing material to give him. They confessed they could only release to him what they had – their spiritual power and reality. The beggar received it, jumped up and was healed! He who had sat for years was now walking and leaping! Which do you prefer: physical excesses or inward spiritual power and reality?

*And **the two kidneys**, and the fat that is upon them, which is by the flanks, and **the caul above the liver, with the kidneys**, it shall he take away, As it was taken off from the bullock of the sacrifice of peace offerings: **and the priest shall burn them upon the altar of the burnt offering**. And the skin of the bullock, and all his flesh, with his head, and with his legs, and his inwards, and his dung, Even the whole bullock shall he carry forth without the camp unto a clean place, where the ashes are poured out, and burn him on the wood with fire: where the ashes are poured out (Leviticus 4:9-12).*

STEP SIX : “Give Me the internals!”

In almost all animal offerings, God is delighted only with the offering of the internal organs like the kidneys and the caul and the caul above the liver (the upper part of the liver). These internal organs were to be set apart and then burned on the altar of sacrifice (Leviticus 3:3-5; 4: 9, 10; 8:16, 17). God wants the incense that comes from these internal organs – not the incense that comes from the exterior parts of the animals. The exterior of the animal, its head (self will), legs (self direction), skin (reputation) and its flesh (all the carnal pretensions) were to be thrown outside of the camp! Yes, fling them out! God’s estimation of their worth was equivalent to dung. It reminds me of what the apostle said of his outward ‘grandiose’ achievements. “*They were dung,*” he exclaimed (Philippians 3:8). When God directed the priest to burn all these animal parts outside, He wanted us to know that these exterior things really had no place before Him.

No wonder king David prayed, “*Thou desirest truth in the inward parts.*” The sinner must know that before an Almighty God, he cannot invent any more excuses. No measure of human effort can hide his sin from the eyes of God. He cannot offer any other price or method of compensation other than the one that God had demanded, which is “*truth in the inward part.*”

The inward part? Offer to God my internals? But this is so different from what is being taught and practised today. In modern day Christianity, the outward or the exterior seems to be the most important. In fact, we are made to believe that if something is not externally impressive or captivating or big, sophisticated and opulent, then it is not of God. It is sad that so many prophets and priests today live like the religious leaders in the days of Jesus. In their living and their ministry, they concentrate only on the external, not the internal.

In fact, this exterior form of ‘opulent’ piety and this cloak of ‘captivating’ outward devotion will continue to prevail even in the days of apostasy. This mask of outward godliness, which is a repudiation of the truth, will continue to cover corrupted hearts in the end times (2 Timothy 3). If God loves us, then He must, in His mercy, continue to deal with us until we learn to separate ourselves from the unreality of the external and offer to Him our internals. We must know that externalities and appearances are never enough for Him. Appearances will always be the song of the world, it is never the tune of the Holy Spirit.

Consider these words from ARTHUR KATZ, author of the book, *APOSTOLIC FOUNDATIONS*:

“The things that are a sweet savor to God are the inwards, the inner parts – not the outward things. God is not interested in the outer hide and the flesh. He counts that along with the dung. **What is on the inside, in the inner man worked by Him in the hidden places, born of inward wrestling** – these things are the offering of a sweet and pleasing savor before God. **We have been guilty as contemporary Christians of offering our personalities, our winsomeness and our fleshly abilities to God simply because we do not have the inward parts to offer, never having learnt to rest or wait before God.**

We have despised the suffering, reproach and obscurity in which **alone the sweet offerings are formed deep within us**. We have not esteemed such things as God esteems them and have preferred to do without them. We need the obedience and vision that will enable us to take our hide and flesh outside the camp and to exclude it from the holy place as well as from the pulpit.” (Taken from page 29 of *APOSTOLIC FOUNDATIONS*, by ARTHUR KATZ. Used with permission, Burning Bush Press. Emphasis mine)

In a disgusting and unguarded moment of uncontrolled lusts, David was stripped of everything. He stood before God, naked, shameful, hurting, bleeding, and frightened. What else could he offer to Him but his shame, brokenness, tears, fears and desperation? Here he is – splinters, blood and debris. O God, can You put me back together again? I have nothing left for You, but these.

Yes, David. If you will let me. Son, there is hope for you because you are willing to offer Me the internal parts of your broken spirit and your contrite heart. There is hope for you because you can feel shame. Son, allow this sense of shame to be the true sentinel that will drive you further from sin, degradation and destruction (Jeremiah 6:15, 8:12). Yes, turn all your internal parts to Me and give Me your tears of repentance, your shame of failures, your hurts of losing your everything, your fears of the future and your disgust at yourself. These are the best offerings and sacrifices that you've ever made to Me.

What delight is there in broken things? Can we drink out of a broken cup, lean on a broken staff, sit on a broken chair and wear a broken shoe? Other things may be worse off when they are broken, but not the heart. A heart is never fit to offer to God until it is broken by shame, genuine penitence and contrition. **God loves a broken heart and places high value on one because His heart was broken too.** Calvary was God's broken heart, and He offered that to us. This is why Calvary is so powerful. Which father will not have his heart broken when he witnesses his only son brutally slaughtered by vicious hands? *Go ahead, My child. Cry like you have never cried before and offer Me your broken heart.*

*And the priest shall dip his finger in the blood, and **sprinkle of the blood seven times before the LORD**, before the vail of the sanctuary (Leviticus 4:6).*

STEP SEVEN : *“Sprinkle the blood seven times before the Lord”*

The sprinkling of the blood before the veil had to be done seven times, and the different modes of sprinkling (sprinkle, dip, daub, pour) the blood mark successive degrees of consecration. This ritual of purification for God’s anointed priest was different from others because the impurity was far greater. **Even the holy place (the vicinity where the worshippers congregate) and the pieces of furniture had to be purified.** Blood must first be sprinkled on the veil of the most holy place which means the priority of the offender is to **be first reconciled to God.** He must have this vital spiritual communion restored. If this is not done, then the offender will never be able to judge accurately because corrupt affections have robbed him of pure spiritual insight.

The rest of the precious blood was then daubed on the horns of the altar and the remaining blood was poured out at the base of the high altar. There was blood, blood, blood all over the place. Just imagine the sight and the smell – it must have been rather gory but ah, it pleased Almighty God. Why? Because the blood speaks of the boundless sufficiency of the blood of Jesus. Great was the defilement but greater the power of the blood to expunge it all.

The bull is now dead. Its offensive ‘bullish’ smell is now replaced by the smell of fresh blood. Yes, this is the highest form of purification. The message it carries tells us that the sin committed by the anointed priest is dangerously contagious because the priest is the embodiment of the people’s sanctity. If his sin is not properly dealt with, it will infect the holy place and the worshippers.

Seven is the number of perfection and completion. The offender has to go through this process of 'completion' in his restoration. God is so thorough, so very thorough. It has to be because this anointed man had not only fallen from his exalted position; **he had, through his unholy liaison, taken poison in his blood and that spiritual blood-stream had to be 'detoxified' through a process meted out by God Himself.** Yes, God forgives immediately. But the man who has sinned has been deeply defiled. He must go through the process of cleansing and healing before he can minister again.

Most people do not understand that a physical union involves transference of spirits. God's priest could be sleeping with a woman who had slept with two homosexuals and a pervert who in turn had been with lesbians. So it is not surprising that the promiscuous priest suddenly changes personality and becomes violent or develops homosexual tendencies after his 'rendezvous' with this one woman.

Yes, God forgives but this priest must still go through the process of 'purification' before he ministers again, otherwise his defilement will be transferred to his congregation as he lays hands on them and prays for them. The 'laying of hands' means an impartation. It is not surprising that so many Christians today are defiled and have problems with lust. They may have had defiled hands laid on them.

When king David prayed, *“Wash me thoroughly,”* he was actually pleading with God to take him through a process of cleansing, not just a ‘one time act.’ The word ‘thorough’ means ‘multiply the washings.’ In Psalm 41:4 David prayed, *“Heal my soul for I have sinned against thee.”* **David recognized that sin ravages and really ‘sickens’ the soul – our minds, emotions and will, that internal part of us that thinks, feels and makes decisions.**

The guilty priest has **internal sores, bruises and wounds that must be bound up before he can minister again.** If this does not take place, he may fall into the same sin again and again. So many may have had outward restoration but unfortunately, inwardly, they are still the same lustful and conniving men.

The soul, which is the mind, the emotions and the will, are the internal parts that must be dealt with through a process of cleansing, healing and deliverance. The mind itself has **four departments:** (i) the thinking, (ii) the reasoning, (iii) the imagination and (iv) the memory. All these four departments of the mind must be dealt with, especially the imagination and the memory. These two departments are often the targets of the devil. **There are things in the imagination and the memory of the promiscuous priest that must be dislodged and this takes time.** This is why time is needed for the cleansing and the healing of the fallen priest and he should not go right back into ministry. If he knows the complications and the complexities, he would not fight for ‘the throne’ again. King David knew – this is why he did not fight for his throne. He waited for God to give it back to him for only God knows the timing.

In Psalm 51:3 David prayed, “*My sin is ever before me.*” He had not forgotten the unpleasant past but had allowed it **to serve and affect him in a good way**. The painful memory of his past failure caused him to live out of a contrite heart and a broken spirit for his entire lifetime. (His contrition and brokenness had enduring power. Many today manifest contrition and brokenness for only twenty minutes or three weeks). David did not forget that he almost did not make it, but for Jehovah’s great and enduring love. Yes, after that experience and failure, David lived his entire life in deep contrition of heart and brokenness of spirit. He did not exalt himself, fight for his own rights or get into any strife and contention for his own selfish end. **This Davidic spirit is so unlike the spirit of so many pastors or priests who have fallen in our days.** In many cases, they were restored by man.

CONCLUSION

My heart goes out to all the anointed priests who have fallen from grace and lost their big churches, their ministries and reputation. Most of all I ache for God. I think the dishonour He feels through their failures cannot match the pain He receives through their lack of genuine repentance, trust and humility. This is often manifested in their anger at being ‘found out,’ in their rebellion towards the discipline and the restoration process and their impatience with their counsellors.

I do ache for God who loves the fallen priests so unreservedly. He is more than willing to restore them and to bring them back into greatness once again. Unfortunately, time and again, He has been hampered and disappointed because of their bad attitude.

I have written this book for the following reasons:

- (i) I foresee the coming of a spiritual ‘tsunami,’ **one that will cause not only the collapse of moral walls within the priesthood but also bring with it thousands of ‘seared consciences.’** Most people, including Christians, have no spiritual fortitude and a right value system. What can we expect from the effects of globalization and the new world culture?
- (ii) Many ‘fallen’ priests were not taught to go through God’s ancient way of restoration. During the times of discipline and restoration, most of them only go through an external time of ‘non-activeness’ but are not truly cleansed, healed and delivered inwardly. As a result, three things happen: (a) guilt is brought onto the congregation and the people they minister to (b) spiritual defilement, pollution and vexation multiply within the Body and (c) this same priest may fall into the same sin years later.

- (iii) It is vital that all fallen priests, in spite of how they think and feel, know that their days of greatness are not over. Their feeble hands and knees must not *“be turned out of the way”* and they must not come short of the grace of God (Hebrews 12:12-13). They must persevere like King David did. Heaven may be like brass and they may feel like God has hidden from them, but no, He hears them. The God of greatness can restore them greatly, but only on His conditions. They, like King David, must also manifest great repentance.

My earnest prayer for every anointed priest who has sinned is that he will:

- (i) be willing to meet the requirements of God or go through the proper channel of restoration and **not bring guilt on the people in his congregation**. The congregation can contract your guilt as you lay hands on them. You must know that your position of influence, your action and behaviour will affect the conviction and character of your people. Do not encourage others to fall into your errors and transgressions by ministering to them out of an unrepentant heart and by laying defiled hands on them (causing them to identify with your sinfulness). This transference of spirit will cause them to also fall into condemnation, lust and a deep vexation of spirit.

- (ii) **re-learn the right things as he rebuilds his life.** You cannot rebuild your life with the old materials. You have to rebuild your life with the right solid material. Re-learning is always more difficult than learning. Let your courage show as you re-learn and be encouraged to know that **God has not given up on you.** King David’s courage was not in his slaying of Goliath; it was in his willingness to expose himself and let God deal with him. Isn’t it amazing that God still calls the offending priest the ‘anointed priest?’ **All through the process of his cleansing and restoration, the fallen priest is still distinguished as the ‘anointed priest.’** God foresees his rebuilding and his return to serve Him again in that privileged and superior position!
- (iii) remember there is hope. How can there not be hope when we believe in a God of hope? The days of ministry greatness are definitely not over for you. This verse, “*The light shineth in the darkness and the darkness comprehended it not*” (John 1:5) says it all. Yes, however thick the darkness, it can never extinguish or master the light. The thicker the darkness, the greater the light! God’s light can shine through every sin, failure and perversion and bring the proper restoration back into your life. He will lift you up once again into greatness if you are willing to humble yourself and follow His ancient law into full restoration.

As you rebuild your life, be sure you rebuild it with the right materials, the cement of God’s unadulterated truth. Your walls fell because you had, like old Israel daubed your walls with the ‘untempered’ mortar – the mortar of the ‘exteriors,’ of half truths, of pet doctrines, of ‘fancies’ and defective interpretations of God’s word (Ezekiel 13:10-11).

Your great-looking and fanciful walls were alright as long as it was fair weather. But storms do come and they do beat down on us. What happened to your walls? They came tumbling down! Be real now, come out and stop hiding behind those rotten walls. Stop pretending that nothing has happened because something has happened. Open your spiritual eyes and see! The spiritual realm will never be the same again for you unless you complete the process of restoration. Stand up on your feet, collect the debris and start to work. Let God soften your heart and *'make all grace abound towards you'* as you now rebuild your life and put up a different wall.

As you allow God to rebuild and restore you, these **four elements** which have proven their strength against all howling tempests and vicious storms must be in place in your life.

A. Burn for God and Not for Ministry

So many today are burning for ministry and not for God. Burning for ministry is actually **indirectly burning for self and living for selfish gains**. So much has been stressed about building our ministry, our church and our gifting but **not our relationship with God**. The undiscerning will think that burning for ministry is being zealous for God. No, it is not. True zeal for God will always consume or corrode self. We know this because both David and Jesus confessed that their zeal for God had burned up the self in them. That is the meaning of “*The zeal of thine house (for God) hath eaten me up.*”

The manifestation of the burning for self within the Body of Christ is frightening today. This is the reason why so many have burned out, fallen out or have been taken out of the ministry. God’s promise is, “*He that doeth the will of God abideth forever*” (1 John 2:17). Many have claimed that they are doing the will of God, but where are they today? They have lost the abiding, and have vanished into thin air.

When we burn for God, He becomes **the focus and the purpose of our life**. But when we have a zeal that burns so much for ministry until it has no time for God, then it is a zeal that is totally unrelated to or estranged from God. It is a zeal in which the vital element of self denial is absent. It is counterfeit fire. Counterfeit **fire is fire that is not taken from the altar of burnt sacrifice**. (Burnt sacrifice always means self denial or death.) Nadab and Abihu died because they offered to God a fire of their own kindling. Instead of taking fire from the altar of burnt sacrifice which fire originally came from heaven and was deposited at that sacred altar, they offered to God defiled fire. Many anointed priests today ‘died’ early because they offered to God fleshly and defiled fire.

When we burn for God we will make time to connect with Him. Unfortunately, today's prophets and priests have lost the joy of wanting to go into the private chamber behind closed doors for communion with God. Living the hidden life has also become an unknown experience to so many. The more we live for the 'greater,' the more we should retreat from the public and build up our inner life. Most things done in the public today are **not aimed to please Him**, but are done to secure the admiration of man and for self display.

Drawing near to God is the highest human experience because it requires the help of the Holy Spirit and demands the exercise of all our highest faculties. Unfortunately, most prophets and priests have lost it. They are so busy burning for self that they have prostituted even the soul's greatest privilege of having communion with God. We are living in difficult days. The advent of globalization and the new world culture have ushered in godless days and living **on the anointing upon us is not enough. We have to live by the anointing within. We have to draw from that inward Spring and that indwelling Presence by making the contact daily and unhurriedly.**

In the days of Noah, when God flooded the earth to destroy the wicked, the waters did not only fall from **above**. The waters that fell ‘upon the earth’ from above were not sufficient to cause the deluge. **It was the water that came from within the springs of the earth that was really powerful.** The earth was flooded out by water that came from **two sources – above and within.**

“The same day were all the fountains of the great deep broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened” (Genesis 7:11).

Many priests and prophets have failed because they only lived by water (or the anointing) that came upon them. They did not know how to draw from the water that came from the springs of the deep (the anointing within).

They could not draw from the Fountain within because they were too busy – busy connecting with the outward ostentatious things that have no spiritual value or eternal validity. Time is spent to connect with the ‘accessories’ but not with solid reality. We have failed to understand that ministry is taking the Lord’s yoke and bearing His burdens. His yoke and His burden are light – not stressful, not vexing, not competitive, not vain and definitely not oppressive.

When ministry gets to the point when we feel vexed, heavy, vain, competitive, and we cannot connect with Him, then we have missed it. We are NOT taking His yoke and bearing His burden, (we are taking our own yoke and bearing our own burdens), and we are not burning for Him but for self. The fire we burn is called ‘strange fire’ and it is the equivalent of what Nadab and Abihu offered before God (Leviticus 10:1-3). **It is not hard to tell that this is the fire of our own kindling because such fire always burns out our appetite for God, burn out the joy of**

contemplative prayers and the meditation of the Word.

When Mary and Joseph, the earthly parents of Jesus, discovered their loss — that Jesus was missing from their midst, they immediately stopped their journey and went back to Jerusalem to ‘retrieve’ Him before they journeyed on. They refused to take the journey until the ‘substance’ came back. May you do the same. You have burned for ministry and have been burned out. When Delilah came, you could not stand up against her because you had lost all your strength by allowing her to shave off all your hair. Thank God that hair can grow back! Samson’s story had a happy ending. May yours too be the same.

May you now learn to burn for God. When you do, you will not burn out or fall out. Hear the voice of your Saviour inviting you to **learn from Him, take from Him and bear His burden.**

B. Minister Out of a Strong Inner Life

Most ministers today do not minister out of a strong inner life. Image is more important to them. Many of them have worked hard to rise to the height of influence, privilege and glory. But they have forgotten that there are dangers lurking on those heights, and that they need to guard their lives with the strictest vigilance.

The indictment given by God to the prophets of Israel in the days of Jeremiah was that they had separated their ministry from their relationship with Him. God charged that they had not stood in His council to see, to hear and to listen to His word before they went ahead to minister (Jeremiah 23:18). As a result, they had no fresh word from God. Instead they borrowed one another's visions, dreams, fleshly prophecies and words and ended up as the *"blind leading the blind."*

If prophets and priests have no capacity for God, then where does this leave our people? How can we take them further and deeper? If spiritual leaders were to sever their relationship (with God) from ministry, then not only will they be easy targets for marauding demons of lusts and deception, but where will they draw their strength from?

It is a lie to believe that when we have Jesus we have an inexhaustible supply. No, the truth is: **when we have Jesus we have ACCESS to the inexhaustible supply and the accessing must be made frequently and unceasingly.** The apostle Paul talked about "prayers and the supply of God's spirit" (Philippians 1:19, 2 Corinthians 1:11). Prayer will keep our spirits supplied with God's spirit and strength. If we do not connect with Him through prayers, the supply will be cut off. Life is too full of complications and complexities, and **the only way to unravel the complications and the complexities is to come into the presence of**

God so that the deep subtleties of our own hearts can be exposed.

Spiritual intimacy or prevailing in God's presence will unravel the complications and put all deceitfulness, deception, strife and painful complexities to rest. (Please read my book on *SPIRITUAL INTIMACY*.) To do spiritual work without connecting with God is utter foolishness and the sure result is failure. This explains why there have been so many moral failures among the priesthood in the last two decades.

Ministry is about fighting wicked spirits, not flesh and blood. The only thing that can help you withstand these vicious attacks is your strong inner life. Many priests are not aware that they had "picked up spirits" in the process of their ministry. Demons of uncleanness, lusts, hurts, anger, sickness and death can follow you and then call for a full attack when you are not conscious of it. You may say that this is not possible because God promises that "greater is he who is in me than he who is in the world."

Well, how great have you allowed Him to be in you? Can God rise great in you when you do not connect with Him? Instead of walking in His light, you walk in your own selfish will. No, God cannot rise greatly in us when we daily make the choice to let self rise higher.

Demons are not afraid of our great and fanciful exteriors. They only understand the language of force which comes in the name of Jesus through a strong inner man. **A strong spirit or a strong inner life is the only thing that can succour you or help you "lift up the standard" against the flood waters of the enemy.** The Bible tells us: "*The spirit of a man will sustain (hold up) his infirmity but a wounded spirit (injured or weak inner man) who can bear?*" (Proverbs 18:14). What a tragedy that today's priests and prophets spend their time building into the outward (ministry, building, reputation etc) but not into their inward or inner man or into their relationship with God.

When King David requested God to “*build the walls of Jerusalem*” (Psalm 51:18) in his penitent prayer, he was acknowledging that his inner walls had collapsed. This was why sin and temptation could take hold of him so easily and he could live in it for years before God Himself apprehended him. David’s outward moral walls fell because he had **not been building** into his inward spiritual walls. He was so intoxicated with success, prosperity and position that he became spiritually incapacitated. Honour can be too much sometimes for some people. David had allowed success to breed complacency and laxity into his life, so much so that he became insensitive to the timing of God in his life. When the time came for war, he refused to go to war. While every man in his kingdom went to do his duty, he became ‘un-dutiful’ and he absconded. He lingered behind, became restless, walked about aimlessly, saw Bathsheba and fell into sin with her.

Oh, that God will bring us back to His ancient ways to re-lay the right foundation. We have deviated and we have swerved. We have pushed back God’s ancient stones and strayed from His ancient ways to concentrate on the wrong thing. We have drunk from only broken man-made cisterns and attended too many seminars that challenged us to build for God, build for God and build more for God. **But when will we ever learn to let God build into us? Many prophets and priests fall because they are too busy building for God but have never allowed God to go beyond the scaffolding of their lives to build into their inner man**

In “*CLOSING THE GAP*”, I wrote the following paragraph,

*“Let God work into you and **build into you because the only thing we can take with us into heaven is what He has built into us.** The apostle John learned this lesson when he was taken up to a high mountain by an angel. The angel wanted to show him the Lamb’s Bride (Rev. 21:9-10). On reaching the top of the mountain, he saw, to his surprise, not a bride, but a glorious and heavenly city – the city of Jerusalem! The bride had become a city! A city built by God! **God is telling us that every redeemed life has to become a city, a city built by God.** Are you a city built by Him? If we are not, then nothing in us will be of lasting value and worth (page 72, “CLOSING THE GAP” by Susan Tang).*

C. Your Anointing Will Not Annul Your Humanity

God's power in our lives will certainly work to make us more like Jesus, **but not less human**. You may be anointed, but you still have hormones, eyes and ears. This means you are not immune to temptation. You can still be attracted to another woman or man even though you can cast out devils, heal the sick and raise the dead. Even Jesus was tempted sexually but He did not give in. Temptation is painful. This is why the scriptures says, "***He himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour (lift up) them that are tempted***" (Hebrews 2:18).

When Jesus was fitted into a human body, He had a mind like ours – a mind prone to take its own ungodly mental excursions. It also means He had emotions like ours. He could feel as any human being feels – depression, fear, anxiety, meanness, resentment, hatred or revenge but **He did not give in to these feelings**. It also means His physical body was also impacted with muscles, hormones and appetites just like us. Yes, Jesus as the Son of Man, was, in "***all points (mentally, emotionally, socially, sexually etc) tempted like as we all, yet without sin.***" If He had not subjected Himself to every human temptation, then He cannot be our merciful and faithful high priest (Hebrews 2:17-18, 4:15).

He was called the “Son of Man” because of His humanity, a humanity from which He did not hide. He was never unreal when He was on earth. He opened blind eyes, cleansed the lepers, multiplied loaves and fishes and raised the dead but in the garden of Gethsemane, He bared His soul to His disciples. He told them that He was going through some things that **He could not go through alone, so He asked for their support and their prayers. That was being human and real.**

When He was overwhelmed by grief, He was not afraid to cry, even in public. When He was angry He was not afraid to express it by overturning the tables of the money changers. When He became disgusted at the hypocrisy of the religious leaders, He proceeded to rebuke them with strong language and scathing remarks. He enjoyed Himself at social gatherings and He interacted well with children, women and men.

He was invigorated by sweet smelling perfume as it was poured over His head. He also believed in taking a ‘break.’ He told His disciples to “*come apart and rest awhile.*” He definitely did not believe in “working till you drop.” He believed in taking ‘snacks’ between preaching, if it was necessary. When He felt the people were hungry, He stopped His discourse and told His disciples to give the people something to eat. He also believed in eating a good breakfast! Even in His resurrected body, He dirtied His hands by cleaning fish and collecting firewood to cook breakfast for His disciples

The humanness of the apostle Paul could be seen in some of his epistles, especially in his letter to Timothy. He expressed his loneliness and his need for human companionship and comfort (2 Timothy 4). This anointed man of God was so disappointed when Titus did not catch up with him in Troas that he decided not to preach there (2 Corinthians 2:12-13). He was anointed but at Troas, **he needed more than the anointing; he needed human succour.**

Paul was very real with his own feelings when he confessed that he was “*troubled on every side; without were fightings, within were fears*” and that God comforted him by “*the coming of Titus.*” God did not comfort him by giving him more revelations and visions but by the coming of a trusted friend. Yes, however strong we are, there are times when we need someone to whom we can open up to and someone who can pray with us. To the Corinthians, he was bold enough to say, “*Who is weak and I am not weak? who is offended, and I burn not?*” He was indirectly saying, “*I am still a human being like you all, subjected to the same passions.*” When one is secure in the anointing, one is also real. There is no need to hide behind unreality.

Many anointed priests fell because they thought their anointing had cancelled their humanity and had made them invincible and infallible. They thought they could stay independent of human support and they denied they had temptations. They thought they were immune to their seductive secretaries, scantily clad church women or the lustful people they ministered to. Unhealthy denials, false ‘bravado’ and self-delusion caused their fall. They failed to flee from evil until evil had them ensnared.

When we know we are vulnerable, then we must learn to flee, not just from evil, but from the MERE APPEARANCE of evil! This has always been the biblical stand (1 Thessalonians 5:22).

D. Wear The Three Marks of a Man of God!

The road to success for a man of God was mapped out by Paul when he penned these forceful words to Timothy, “*O man of God, flee, follow and fight*” (1 Timothy 6:11-13). A man of God! What a dignified and distinguished title. Paul said that such men will be marked by these three distinct characteristics:

- (i) **Flee!** This word, ‘phlego’ means ‘*to run away from something with terror in your heart.*’ A man of God knows how to run away from evil with terror in his heart, the way Joseph fled from Popithar’s evil and seductive wife. Joseph’s story reminds us that sin is both violent and tenacious. There are times we need to stay and pray but there are times when we need to flee because this is the only way to be safe!

Joseph taught us that saying ‘no’ to sin verbally is not enough; there are times we have to get out of that situation because of the nature of sin. It is both violent and tenacious. Most anointed priests succumbed to sin because they did not flee in the first place. In fact, we are told to flee from the **mere appearance** of evil (1 Thessalonians 5:22). Since our anointing does not annul our humanity and our vulnerability, we must know how to protect ourselves by living with our spiritual antenna held high. Whenever something appears to be evil, we must run from it with terror in our heart in order to save our souls! (1 John 5:18).

- (ii) **Follow.** This word ‘follow’ means to pursue relentlessly. **A man of God is always marked out by what he pursues.** It is sad to see so many prophets and priests not hungering and thirsting for things that will **enrich their souls and deepen their relationship with God and not placing their values on things of spiritual and eternal worth.** A man of God must truly pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience and meekness. Then there will be fewer cases of sexual promiscuity in the priesthood. **The appalling statistics of moral failures tell a sad, sad tale – priests are no longer pursuing what they should pursue.** Like prophets and priests in the days of Jeremiah, many have gone after excesses and extortion. They live for materialistic rewards and worldly gains.
- (iii) **Fight.** If we have first learnt to flee and to follow, we need not have to end up fighting all the time. We don’t have to keep repeating, *“I rebuke you, I cast you out, I curse you, kick you, slap you, etc.”* everyday! Evil cannot lodge within us so easily when God has put holiness within us. This is how powerful the Christ life can be in us. **We may come into contact with evil daily yet we do not have to be connected with them.** Jesus had constant contact with evil but He was never connected to it. Prophets and priests fall because they have **not** chosen to flee, to pursue things of spiritual value and finally, when they are ensnared by evil, they realize they have, like Samson, lost every ounce of their strength to fight. They want to fight and to end the illicit affair, but alas, they discover they have no inner strength to do so. Often they carry on until the affair is discovered by someone else. I have heard this sad, sad story too many times.

Too many prophets and priests have cultivated ungodly and deadly habits and tendencies. They run along with the wrong company, spend hours in front of the TV and Internet and get addicted to unhealthy and violent films, obscene pictures and pornography. We cannot nurture such appetites and then turn to the Bible and expect revelation knowledge to flow. Neither can we expect God to give us the victory over evil when we are running empty on the inside. This will never be.

As you **rebuild your life, you will also need to restructure, realign and re-learn.** Remember there is efficacy and complete sufficiency in the blood and the resurrection power of Jesus Christ to take you through the process. Our prayers go with you. May the God who restored David greatly do the same for you.