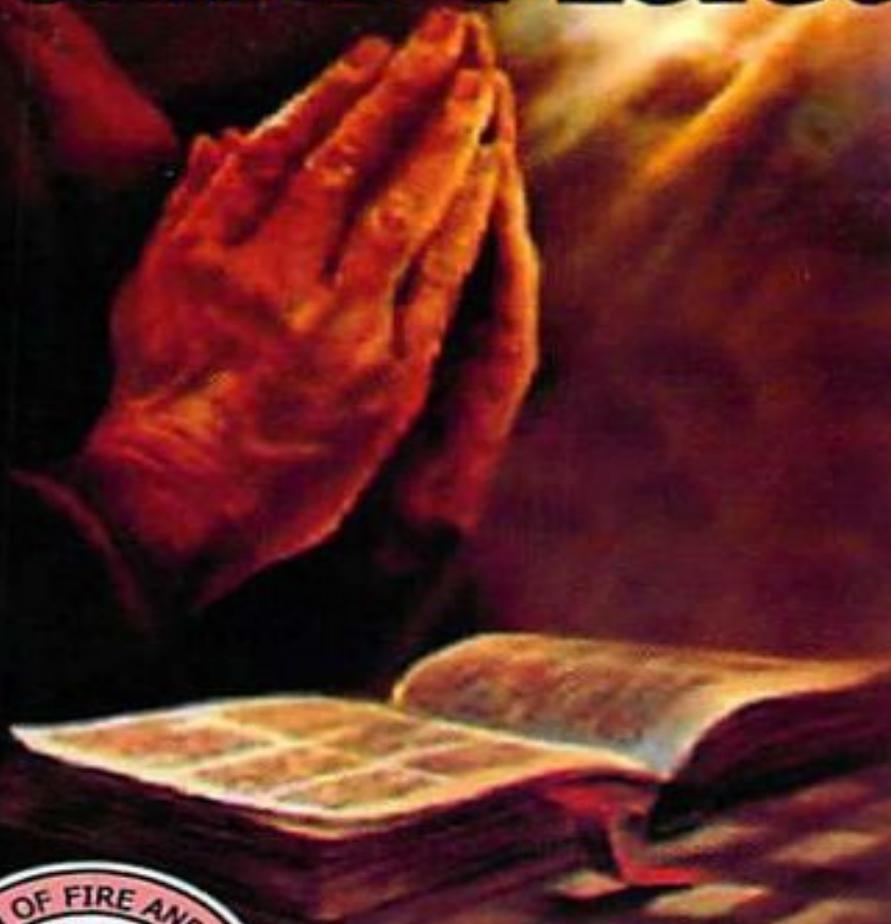
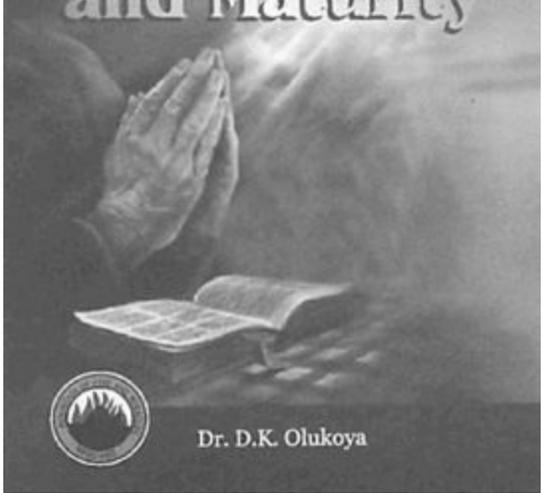


The Secrets of
Spiritual
Growth
and Maturity



Dr. D.K. Olukoya

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Dr. D. K Olukoya

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Iwaya

P.O. BOX 2990, Sabo, Yaba, Lagos, Nigeria, 01-867439, 4704267, 4704367

Website: www.mountain-of-fire.com

Email: mfmhqworldwide@mountainoffire.org

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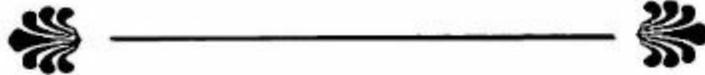
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BACKCOVER



CHAPTER ONE

YOUR TROUBLES AND YOUR ATTITUDES



Spiritual growth is a name subject. It is one of the hidden secrets of victory in spiritual warfare. If you want to become too hot for the enemy to handle, you must apply practically, the secret of spiritual growth.

In this book I have addressed certain secrets of spiritual growth which will help those who have an eye on growing in their Christian lives. In my years of walking with the Lord, I have discovered that the closer you walk with the Lord, the higher your level of victory. You must work on the growth of your spiritual life today. Jesus is our perfect example. You must continue to grow until you are complete in Him. To grow spiritually, you must work on your attitude. Your attitude to the things of God determines your growth. Your attitude to life experiences matters. One thing you must take cognizant of is that problems are forerunners of growth.

Psalms 34:17-19: *The righteous cry, and the LORD heareth, and delivereth them out of all their troubles. The LORD is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit. Many are the afflictions of the righteous: but the LORD delivereth him out of them all.*

Psalms 9:9: *The LORD also will be a refuge for the oppressed, a refuge in times of trouble.*

Proverbs 17:22: *A merry heart doeth good like a medicine: but a broken spirit drieth the bones.*

PROBLEMS ARE UNAVOIDABLE

It is not possible to run away from problems. There is no place where there isn't any trouble. Life itself is full of troubles. If you are a careful reader of the Bible you will find out that all the great men in the Bible experienced crisis, but had testimonies at the end of the day. If by chance you are looking for a problem free existence you are a dreamer. A life without problem is only available at the cemetery. Whether you like it or not, God will allow you to face challenges. Life itself is a process of solving problems. As a believer, you see a problem as a miracle in disguise.

Asking God to deliver you from all of life's problems is mere wishful thinking. God will allow some problems in your life. Problems can make you bitter or better. The truth is that every problem has a life span. God in his infinite mercy does not reveal all problems at a time; He does reveal them step by step. He may even decide to hide some. He works line upon line and precept upon precept. By the time you begin to examine the wheel on which life runs, you will realize that problems are spring boards to progress and the achievement of your goals.

CHALLENGES

There was a problem several years ago. Whenever it was dark people endured the situation. Somebody, came up with the idea of making electric bulbs that would light dark places. A researcher thought of putting light everywhere instead of moving lights around. A scientist began an experiment which took him twenty thousand failed attempts. One day he finally got it. The electric bulb was discovered.

If you are a spirit filled believer, there is no way there won't be a little bit of the rain of trouble. You cannot be victorious if you have not passed through problems. You cannot give testimony if you have not passed through a test. Your condition does not matter, your attitude counts. What happens to you? It is how you handle crisis.

WHAT IS AN ATTITUDE?

A positive attitude will make you to remain optimistic even in uncertain

times. It is the ability to be positively firm when problems multiply. You must see problems as challenges and an opportunity, to glorify God. Do not accept that the devil is going to kill you.

You must develop the ability to see set backs as temporary inconveniences. You must develop the ability to welcome changes. You must develop a posture that is not upset by surprises. Your actions and attitude will always reflect or show who you really are. Your outward disposition will reveal your mindset. These are deep areas of your life that you need deep prayers to address.

The enemy has turned some people's mind into concrete slabs which will need the hammer of God to break. When you experience a problem, the first thing the enemy does is to make you develop a negative attitude. Satan wants you to react negatively to any problem that comes your way. When people experience symptoms of sickness the first thing they think about is death. Whenever people do not seem to do well in an examination the first thing they will think of is failure. Negative mindset or attitude can kill the positive spirit in people's lives.

In most hospitals, especially in open wards where different people with different ailments are admitted, most people think of death. Negative attitudes must be killed if you must experience victory. Unfortunately, many people have agreed with satanic verdicts over their lives.

For some people, the enemy said it would not be possible for them and they agreed with the enemy because of negative mindset.

Life itself is a battle of attitudes. Attitudes can make or mar you. It can build you up or break you down. It can heal or hurt you. Attitudes can earn you plenty of friends and can also earn you plenty of enemies.

When a manager is removed from his post and the junior staffs begin to do praise and worship it is the attitude of the boss towards his staff that made them happy about his removal. Your attitude can make you a success or a failure. It can also make you happy or sad. The human attitude can be powerful.

THE POWER OF ATTITUDE

After giving or surrendering your life to the Lord Jesus Christ, the next thing you need is deliverance from bad attitudes. A lot of people put up a nonchallant attitude to situations; they are not concerned about anything. Even in emergency and important situations they show a nonchallant attitude. If their colleagues are progressing and prospering, it does not bother them; they are not concerned. They are not ready to participate in the progressive activities. Some parents are not concerned whether their children are making progress, or not.

Your attitude is more important than your efforts towards getting solutions to your problems. Your attitude to your circumstances is important. Your personal attitude is more important than people's opinions. It is more important than your wealth or riches. Your attitude represents your disposition.

Bad attitudes are formed gradually. If you allow bad attitudes to find a landing spot in your life you may become an expert in negative attitudes. Your attitudes determine the failure or success of every relationship you get involved with. When a bottle that is filled with water is shaken without putting on the cover of the bottle, all the water will spill out. If there is no water in the bottle then no matter how vigorously you shake the bottle no water will come out. The same goes with human beings. When people are squeezed, what comes out is the attitude inside of them. Your attitudes need to be seriously addressed.

There is always a difference between two people commuting in the same bus. If all of a sudden, the driver matches the break of the bus, somebody in a priestly garment may scream and a true believer may shout "blood of Jesus". What is inside you will surely come out when you are squeezed. If you are a child of God you will manifest Christlikeness.

NEGATIVE REACTIONS

When people are in trouble they tend to weep, cry, relapse into a sorrowful mood, exercise self pity, become hysterical, curse or shout saying, "God, are you there? This is unfair, what kind of thing is this". Some would even nurse suicidal thoughts. Some would become slaves of false prophets. Some would abandon God and worship idols. Some might feel that God is too slow and

consult witch doctors.

When people are in trouble they go about downcast, moody, quarrelsome and agitated. Some even go into hiding and refuse to talk to people around them. Some complain and murmur saying all sorts of things. Some will not come to Church while others will magnify their problems. Some even resign to fate saying "What will be will be". Some may even be so discouraged to the point of giving up. All these are attitudinal problems. That is why the Bible says, "A merry heart doeth good like medicine but a broken spirit will dry the bones". A wrong attitude will make you grow lean.

A pastor came to see me in my office. He said, "General Overseer, somebody in this church said something bad to me and because of this am leaving this church". I asked him "Who spoke to you badly", and he mentioned another pastor's name. I told him "Was I the one that spoke to you? He said no, but he was going. The pastor left in 1995 and he came back this year. He came to apologize saying "I am sorry I made a mistake in 1995, I never knew MFM would grow like this, if I had known I wouldn't have gone". His attitude towards us then was that we would never succeed. He came back with financial problems. I made him realize that if everybody had left the way he did nobody would be here to rescue him from his financial problems.

THE WINNING ATTITUDE

The differences between people are their attitudes. It is the attitude that differentiates between negative and positive people. Our happiness and success depends on how we respond to the challenges or problems that we face. If you are a good Bible reader you will appreciate Shadrack, Meschack and Abednego. They had the cause to complain. God was not sleeping when Nebuchadnezzar raided their country. God allowed King Nebuchadnezzar to capture them. God allowed Nebuchadnezzar to waste Israel. It was a terrible war crime. The children of the King of Israel were killed right in front of the king of Israel; Nebuchadnezzar plucked the eyes of the King of Israel. It was a terrible situation.

Shadrack, Meschack and Abednego had every reason to change their attitudes towards God. They had the right to say "What kind of God are we

servicing? Are you a living God? But they had positive attitude towards God and the situation around them. Shadrack, Meschack and Abednego said to king Nebuchadnezzar "We will not bow down to you. The God whom we serve will deliver us". They had a positive attitude even to the point of death. A positive attitude can remove discouragement from your mind and motivate you to accept the challenges ahead. Positive attitude will inspire you to choose action instead of withdrawal. Positive attitude will make you to choose growth instead of stagnancy. Positive attitude will make you to choose courage instead of fear. Positive attitude will make you decide for encouragement instead of despair. Positive attitude will make you to see good results in every situation.

WINNING IN CRISIS

Paul and Silas were beaten seriously. They were treated badly. They were dragged on the floor. Paul and Silas were sent to the innermost jail. Paul and Silas had the right to complain and cry bitterly to God for their ill-treatment but their attitude made them receive deliverance from God. The Bible tells us That at midnight Paul and Silas began to sing praises.

When your attitude is bad, you will handle life's problems wrongly and mess up yourself. When there is a problem you may think withdrawal is the solution. That is a bad attitude. Negative attitude brings about fighting your wife or your husband, drinking alcohol or smoking, worrisome, resort to taking drugs to make you relax, suicidal feelings, confusion, being insulting, crying all the day long because of challenges, reckless driving, intake of sleeping tablets, neglecting family responsibilities, sleeplessness, making sarcastic statements, getting involved with destroying of properties.

I knew an excellent guitarist. One day he had a misunderstanding with his wife. Out of anger, the wife broke his expensive guitar on his head. The guitarist got angry and carried the most precious thing which the wife brought home. It was a big television. He took the television and slammed it on the floor. They both displayed violent anger as a result of negative attitudes. But much damage had been done by the time they realized their folly

THE POWER OF CONTROL

When you begin to have bitterness against people who have what you don't

have, you have a negative attitude. When you get very irritable and moody, you have a negative attitude. When you feel that attending Church services is not important and you decide to go back to the worldly things you have abandoned before then you have a negative attitude. When you begin to attend parties that you have never attended before watch it, you have a negative attitude.

Beloved, you can completely alter your life through your attitude. The good news is that your attitude is within your control. You are responsible for how you react to disappointments. Happiness in life is a choice. Happiness in life is just ten percent of what happens to you and ninety percent of how to respond or react to it.

I remember Dr Sails, a popular man who published children's books. The first children's book that he wrote was rejected by twenty-three publishers. The publishers condemned the book that it was absolute rubbish. His twenty-fourth book was published and he sold 6 million copies because of his attitude. It was easy for Dr Sails to give up.

Attitudes are secret powers working 24 hours a day for good or for bad. Excellence is not a skill or talent. It is an attitude. It is not your position that matters but your disposition to your condition.

STEPS TO GOOD ATTITUDES

How can you develop a positive attitude?

1. Begin to speak positive words. To become a positive person you have to learn how to speak positively. You must learn, by practice, to speak positive words. Positive attitudes can not come to you naturally. The Bible says "As in Adam all died". So dead people from Adam cannot speak positive words. It is not natural to speak positively but it is always easier to talk negatively. Criticizing and abusive language bringing other people's fault to notice can be done effortlessly. Negative words, criticism, sarcastic statements, just flow out from people's mouth.

You must learn how to speak positively. When you begin it may be hard but practice makes perfect. Speak positive things to people. If you do this, you will begin to create an atmosphere of love and power around your life. What

you utter will create an atmosphere for you. If you speak positive words you will create a positive atmosphere. If you speak negative words, you will be surrounded by a negative atmosphere.

- 2. No matter what happens, look for what is good in people and you will find it.** When you recognize negative attitudes refuse to dwell on them. People tend to find what they are looking for whether negative or positive. You can look at the whole of your life and see giants but you can decide to see the stones of David, These stones will kill your goliath.
- 3. Take charge of your thought life.** Good thoughts will expel garbage from your life. Fill yourself with the word of God then you will have a positive attitude.
- 4. Replace destructive attitudes.** Replace destructive attitude and satanic attitudes with Christ like attitude. You need to do this by taking practical steps and through prayer. Replace disbelief with belief; replace your dryness with the flavour of the river of life. Replace disarray with order. Replace the divorce spirit with the spirit of oneness. Replace the spirit of division with unity. Replace doubt with stable confidence that will bring answers to your prayers. Replace the spirit of derogatory speaking with speeches that move people forward. Instead of condemnation make edifying statements or comments. Replace disloyalty with actions and Words of loyalty. Replace thoughts of infirmity with thoughts of health and healing.

You need to be fervent in prayer in order to achieve all these goals. You need to work on your attitudes because when the enemy begins to blow his trumpet and you begin to scream, you have encouraged him. Pray God for the cultivation of the right attitude today.

Pray these prayer points.

- I damage every attitude of failure by the power in the blood of Jesus.
- Every good thing that negative attitudes have stolen from me I recover you by the power in the blood of Jesus.
- Anything planted in my life that has not manifested now but will manifest

in the future to destroy my destiny, die in the name of Jesus.



CHAPTER TWO

YOUR PERSONAL GOLGOTHA



Matthew 27:27-36: Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the common hall, and gathered unto him the whole band of soldiers. And they stripped him, and put on him a scarlet robe. And when they had platted a crown of thorns, they put it upon his head, and a reed in his right hand: and they bowed the knee before him, and mocked him, saying, Hail, King of the Jews! And they spit upon him, and took the reed, and smote him on the head. And after that they had mocked him, they took the robe off from him, and put his own raiment on him, and led him away to crucify him. And as they came out, they found a man of Cyrene, Simon by name: him they compelled to bear his cross. And when they were come unto a place Called Golgotha, that is to say, a place of a skull, They gave him vinegar to drink mingled with gall: and when he had tasted thereof, he would not drink. And they crucified him, and parted his garments, casting lots: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, They parted my garments among them, and upon my vesture did they cast lots. And sitting down they watched him there;

WHAT IS GOLGOTHA?

It is a place of the skull; it is a place outside the city wall where Jesus was crucified. It was a place where human skull and human eyes were seen at midnight. It is a place of great suffering, a bone yard, a mortuary, a grave yard, a tomb, a sepulcher.

Golgotha is a place where unburied skull of dead criminals were found; a place where there are scattered skulls, where visitors can have a feel of the type of sorrow which people experienced. It is a mountain of doom; a mountain of execution. At Golgotha you will find bodies of victims who were abandoned and turned to preys for birds.

The hill of Golgotha was constructed in the shape of a skull. The hill was in a conspicuous and elevated position. If you are summoned to Golgotha, your family members will know you are going to die. This was the most dreaded in those days. Nobody goes to Golgotha and comes back. At Golgotha you will see dried bones, ugly skulls and parts of the body without the flesh. The symbol of the skull is associated with danger. The skull is an emblem of poison. Where there is hazard on chemicals like acids the sign of a skull is placed to warn people.

Golgotha represents the sting of death. It is a place where the world will converge with your accusers and you will be executed. Golgotha is an altar of sacrifice. This is the place where Jesus Christ our Passover lamb was slaughtered. At Golgotha, the intelligent human being or brain no longer has power. At Golgotha, there is no make up, no merriment. It is all gloom and darkness.

For you to be effective in spiritual warfare, for you to be a light where there is darkness, you must experience your own personal Golgotha, the place of the skull. Your personal Golgotha is the battle ground of the mind, the arena of your uncrucified thought life and your uncrucified body, head, leg and life. Your Golgotha occurs when satanic attacks are magnetized.

To defeat the devil you need the renewal of your mind. When God judges sin, He judges your action, motive, the thoughts of your heart, intention, the meditations of your heart and the words of your mouth. All these will be judged by God.

Beloved, if you must conquer your enemies you have to take your uncrucified thoughts to Golgotha. If you allow lust and other types of uncrucified thoughts to becloud your mind you will find it difficult to succeed in spiritual warfare.

Where is the location of the Devil?

The address or location of the devil is the realm of darkness. Where there is spiritual darkness, the devil is there. If the darkness is in your heart, no matter how many hours you speak in tongues per day, the devil is in your heart. If there is darkness in any home the devil will be there.

Let me share a couple's sad story with you. For six months they did not talk to each other. They lived in the same house and slept on the same bed. The wife would cook food for herself and the children. Later the husband would enter the kitchen and cook his own food. Even on Sunday they would enter the same car and go to Sunday services without talking to each other. This lasted for six months. One out of their four children had very terrible malaria and the wife didn't tell the husband. Unfortunately, the husband never checked the children. By 6:00 am the next morning the boy was found dead. By 12 noon another child was dead. The darkness in the home Brought in the enemy. The situation was tragic.

DARK PRACTICES

If there is darkness in a business, the devil will be present in that business. If you introduce lies into your business and you think you are smart, it is the devil you are introducing into your business. If there is darkness in your body, of course, the enemy will stay with you. If a dead man worshipped a golden idol and was buried with his golden idol and another man exhumed the my of the idol worshipper and found a golden idol and decided to break it into smaller parts which he turned to ear-rings, necklace and all sorts of jewelry, if by chance you bought the jewelry, there is no amount of sanctifying prayer you can do to the jewelry; all idols are under a curse. You have invited the devil into your life.

In Taiwan and Bangkok, most of their products are placed before their idols before shipping or exporting it to another country. If you buy the product, it will magnetize satanic attacks into your life.

Then there must be some darkness you are harbouring in your life. Some ministers of God have become clever thieves in the house of God, unknown to them they are inviting the devil into their lives.

No matter how devoted you are, if there is darkness in your heart, the devil will be there. If there is darkness in your marriage, the devil will be there. If you have built your house with stolen money the devil would be there. The enemy will demolish the house no matter how you try to sanctify the house night and day.

Brethren, whether we fight or not, the devil is an incurable fighter. You must analyse areas of your life which are open to satanic attacks. The day you are able to analyse your life, then victory has come your way. Analyse the hidden area of your life. Ask yourself and give answer to questions like; do I get angry easily? Do I have lust in my heart? Am I a thief? Do I steal my tithe? Do I react aggressively when people talk to me anyhow? Am I proud? You must give honest answers to these questions.

THE POWER OF BROKENNESS

There was a woman who came from London to one of our ministerial schools in Nigeria. She gave a testimony that of all the text books given to her for her studies the only book that gave her sleepless nights was the book on brokenness which she read five times. When she was going back to London, she sat at the window side in the aircraft. Somebody sat beside her. She was praying and the woman who sat beside her said 'Is this the first time you are entering a plane? Look at where you put your foolish bag. The woman shouted; "Take your bag away from her here and behave yourself" she said immediately something steered up inside her and ordinarily she would have exploded in that place. All of a sudden she remembered the book, Brokenness and she became gentle and started crying. She decided to put into practice what she read from the book and she embraced the woman saying "I am sorry madam I will put my bag somewhere else".

It dawned on the other woman and she was embarrassed and asked to know the Church she normally attends? She replied "I attend Mountain of Fire and Miracles Ministries". The woman told her that when they got to London she must take her there.

When you are able to discern the areas of your life that are in darkness and you are able to open them up to the Holy Spirit, a great victory will come to

your life. Life is not an experiment. The devil and his host have been sentenced to darkness. Darkness is not just the absence of light but it is any area of moral darkness or any area of ungodly character.

Many years ago I addressed a women's meeting. I asked the women; Why is it that when you put seven men in a room for three years they will never fight? But if seven sisters are placed in a room for two weeks there would be pandemonium. They all kept quiet. One old woman raised her hand and said "Pastor the reason is that men have Adam's apple and women do not have". I told her that there is no basis for her answer in the scriptures. The problem is that there are areas of darkness that must be dealt with by women.

WHAT IS SPIRITUAL DARKNESS?

Spiritual darkness is the absence of God who is light. If you tolerate darkness through secret tolerance of sin in your life, you have opened yourself to satanic attacks, you have surrendered yourself to be preyed on by your enemies. Whenever there is disobedience to the word of God, there will be spiritual darkness. Consequently, there will be demonic activities. Wherever there is willful disobedience to the word of God, there will be spiritual darkness and a potential ground for high demonic activities. The Bible says;

Luke 11:35: Take heed therefore that the light which is in thee be not darkness.

Many of us have been suffering and many of us have been punished because we refused to take darkness away from our lives. In the Bible passage above, the Bible tells us that it is possible for the light in our life to become darkness. Because there is light in every child of God, the Bible says the spirit of man is the candle of the Lord.

Immediately, you begin to harbour sin, malice, gossip, unforgiveness, lust, bitterness, that light in you can become darkness. Bad luck and failure will be rampant in your life because the sins you harbour have made the light in you to become darkness.

AREAS OF DARKNESS

The devil has legal access to any area of darkness. Satan had access to an area of Peter's life. Immediately, he drafted an agenda for Peter because he wanted to sift him. Peter, a pillar in the early Church was satanically induced. It was not human fear that made Peter to deny Jesus. Peter was not a fearful person by nature, he feared nobody. It was the same Peter who drew a sword and cut off a soldier's ear. Fear was not Peter's problem. But the devil knew the dark areas of his life.

Beloved, all those pampered areas of darkness in your life are the very areas of future defeat and people will not understand what is going on. They will not know that you have harboured dark areas in your life.

One day, a man called me on phone and stated that he is not a full member of MFM but he often attended our special programmes. I prayed with the man and before the man dropped the line, he said he gave a cheque to the pastor who prayed with him when he came for the last programmes and he also gave the pastor a cheque for MFM, that, was the cheque received? I told the man that no cheque got to us". The pastor who was given the cheque did not inform me that he was given a cheque and I refused to ask. There was an area of darkness in the pastor's life.

One day the pastor called me and said God told him to go and establish his own church and I told him he was free to go. But nothing was established. The pastor was busy roaming around the streets. There was darkness in his life which he did not address before the devil entered. When there is darkness in your spirit you will see visions, you may think that it is from God, whereas it is from the devil.

THE ARMOUR OF DARKNESS

You may never win life's battles until you discover and repent from the darkness within you. The reasons why many people are not ready to depart from the world of darkness and face God is because of pride. Pride is the armour of darkness. The greatest I defense you can have against the devil is to have a clean heart and hand before God.

I guess you have a little lawyer in your heart that will defend you when you are doing the wrong thing. This internal lawyer in the laboratory of your heart

will be telling you that what you did is not too bad.

Recently, I met a sister whom I saw last in 1990. At that time she came to see me and said she wanted to marry a pastor, I prayed with her and I told her that she was pregnant and she never denied it. I told her to tell her pastor fianc6 to see me. The pastor came in a well dressed suit and sat before me I asked him "Why are you sleeping with a woman outside marriage". The pastor simply made a funny statement saying that the devil has power but lacks salvation. I told him that was not the answer to my question. This incident was 1990-1991. Recently, when I saw the sister, she said the pastor had died.

There is an internal lawyer inside your heart who will be keep defending you when you are wrong. You must sack the evil internal lawyer. Satan will keep arresting areas of weakness in your life until you become Christ-like. The enemy will keep coming. But when you are humble, the devil will avoid you. Satan detests humility. Satan is a proud person; Satan feeds on the carnal human nature. The foods of the devil are those things which make you carnal and ungodly.

The real bondage you have is not demonic but fleshly in nature. It is dangerous to rationalize your sins. It is dangerous to rationalize your carnality. You must separate what is of Christ from what is of the devil for effective warfare.

THE DEVIL'S FOOD

Ask yourself, the problems and oppressors that you are facing today, are they as a result of yesterday's events?. You must remove that darkness that attracts the enemy. Rebellion or disobedience can invite a demon into your life. The devil feeds on sin. Whenever there is sin in your life there will be demonic activities. The best way to achieve deliverance is to have your life swept clean without any trace of sin.

The construction materials of the enemy in your life must be roasted today. Remember, until you arrive at your personal Golgotha, the place of the skull, the enemy will continue to harass you.

What is your personal Golgotha?

Your personal Golgotha is a place where all your bad habits die. It is a place where pride evaporates. Your place of personal Golgotha is a place where flesh no longer has control over you. It is a place where money loses its hold upon you. Your personal Golgotha is a place where your mouth is disciplined and you can not misuse your tongue again. Your personal Golgotha is a place where sin emits a bad odour. Your personal Golgotha is a place where Satan no longer has a place in your life. Your personal Golgotha is a place where you do not entertain any form of disobedience.

Your personal Golgotha is a place where repentance becomes your way of life. A place where you learn how to capture evil so that it does not overshadow you and you learn how to arrest your evil thoughts. Your personal Golgotha is a place where you must hand over your life to Jesus Christ. A popular hymn writer declared: "Take my will and make it thine and it shall be no longer mine".

Your personal Golgotha is a place where you no longer blow your trumpet. A lot of people boast of their worth. They go about saying I know my worth, even when my colleagues see me they all know my worth. Never blow your own trumpet.

Your personal Golgotha is a place where you don't live above your experience.

There was a man who had all the degrees obtainable in law. With all the professional certificates, he decided to establish a law firm. One day, somebody was about entering his office. Immediately he noticed that somebody was about entering his office, he quickly grabbed the telephone and was making a false statement saying "Is that America, I will join you soon, I will get a first class ticket and join you so that I can help you handle the case. I learnt it is me you are waiting for. Don't worry; I will join the next available plane". His intention was to impress the person who came into his office. But to his surprise the man was not impressed. He quickly introduced himself, and declared "Sir, I am from the telecommunication company, I have come to connect your phone because it is not yet connected. I wonder why you must make a fake phone call. When you blow your trumpet above where you are that is what happens.

A young man asked an old saint who has been in the Christian faith for years, "Sir, what will you recommend as the first Christian virtue that I should pursue? The old saint looked at the young man and answered "Humility". The young man asked the old saint. What is the second virtue that I should pursue? The old saint said "Humility". He asked the old saint again; what is the third virtue I should pursue? The old man said "Humility".

When you shun carnality, and when you have no room for self the enemy will lose interest in you.

Some people who receive a little gift and people gather around them and start praising them saying, "You are highly anointed, don't stay here, we will follow you to where you are going". The baby pastor will listen to them and move out of his place of destiny. Later, he will come back and repent. When such men are pushed out of their place of destiny it is because there was an area of darkness in their lives.

A TRANSFORMED LIFE

You need to go through your personal Golgotha. But immediately you are out of the place of Golgotha you become a changed person. When you see a Christian brother or sister who commits sin at will, it is because he or she has not gone to Golgotha; he has not been crucified. If you have been crucified, the old man will be dead and you will become a new man.

The last time I got angry was 1974, it was the old Daniel. Now the old Daniel is dead. When the old Daniel wanted to die some worldly friends felt sorry for me because they felt I was too intelligent, and smart. They wondered why I wanted to become a devoted Christian. They lamented because they knew they had lost me.

Brethren, have your friends lost you? Have your family and colleagues lost you? Have you reached your personal Golgotha? Surrender your all today before the enemy finds a place in your life. Get to your Golgotha before satanic attacks dominate your life.

You must get to your place of Golgotha so that God can expose the dark areas of your life. Let God fight for you. Getting to your personal Golgotha. When

you get to your place of Golgotha, there will be reconstruction in your life. There will be great changes, God will expose and torment the demons hiding in the dark areas of your life. The strangers will be frightened out of their hidden corners.



CHAPTER THREE

YOUR MOUTH AND YOUR MIDNIGHT



Acts 16:22-26: And the multitude rose up together against them: and the magistrates rent off their clothes, and commanded to beat them. And when they had lad many stripes upon them, they cast them into prison, charging the jailor to keep them safely: Who, having received such a charge, thrust them into the inner prison, and made their feet fast in the stocks. And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God: and the prisoners heard them. And suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken: and immediately all the doors were opened, and every one's bands were loosed.

Psalms 30:5: For his anger endureth but a moment; in his favour is life: weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning.

There is a physical midnight and there is a spiritual midnight, you must be able to differentiate between the two.

MIDNIGHT EXPERIENCES

Spiritual midnight represents the dark and turbulent experiences that a child of God encounters. At one time or the other you will have a close encounter with your midnight. It can be daylight outside but midnight in your house. It can be daylight in your house but midnight in your life.

Perhaps as you read this book, there is sickness troubling your destiny, doors of breakthroughs seems to be closing against you, prayers have become a

routine, fear is becoming a daily occurrence, loneliness is troubling you, your finances have become very poor, you are tired and weary, you tried to get a job but none is available, as one problem is ending another one keeps erupting due to chain problems, you begin to get confused and you are at a loss concerning what to do, you don't know who to turn to. This is your midnight hour.

The midnight is a period of darkness, a period where seeing things around you is very hard. The midnight is a season of darkness. It is a peculiar time where there is a dividing line between night and day; an awesome time.

Beloved, just as there is a physical midnight, life has its own midnight; the darkest hour in the life of a child of God. Midnight is a form of trouble harassing people. Midnight comes in various shapes and forms. Midnight troubles are troubles that are capable of keeping you awake all night.

THE POWER BEHIND YOUR MIDNIGHT

Perhaps you have been battling with your midnight. You tried to move forward, somebody tried to pull you backward. You tried to lay your hands on certain things and somebody said it is wrong. Prayer has become hardwork, You have gone through countless deliverance sessions but nothing is working. If you have noticed all these troubles in your life then you are a prisoner of the midnight. You are experiencing an episode of the midnight. You are passing through what is called your midnight hour.

There are two major keys that can deliver you when you are at your midnight hour. Many are familiar with crying. The Bible says "weeping may endure for a night" but they are not familiar with the morning joy. My prayer for you is that you will experience a divine visitation in the name of Jesus.

The Bible tells us that at midnight Paul and Silas prayed and they sang praises to God and the prisoners heard them.

PRAYER AND PRAISE

The first thing to do in your midnight hour is to pray. When you begin to pray God turns the table and converts your crying into morning joy.

The second thing to do in your midnight hour is praise. The Bible says;

Job 35:10: But none saith, Where is God my maker, who giveth songs in the night;

When you are able to sing in your midnight and praise God, no matter what you pass through, you are activating a powerful force that will fight for you.

It is crystal clear that it is not normal to begin to shout or sing praises when you are in trouble Paul and Silas did. It is unusual to sing praises when you are in a financial mess. It will sound very strange when you sing praises after knowing that you have an incurable disease. It will sound abnormal to sing praises when you know that armed robbers had just raided your house.

But if you want to make it through your midnight hour, if you want the earthquake of the holy Ghost to be released on your behalf, if you want the doors of the prison to swing open and you want to be released from your midnight troubles you have to throw what is called a praise bomb. Declare violent praises and bombard heavens with high praises.

Isaiah 24: 15: Wherefore glorify ye the LORD in the fires, even the name of the LORD God of Israel in the isles of the sea.

Exodus 15:11: Who is like unto thee, O LORD, among the gods? who is like thee, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders?

Psalms 149:6: Let the high praises of God be in their mouth, and a two edged sword in their hand;

Psalms 22:3: But thou art holy, O thou that inhabitest the praises of Israel.

THE MYSTERY OF PRAISE

There is a mystery about praises that modern day Christians cannot comprehend. The above Bible passages tell us what to do about praises at the midnight hour. There are several lessons.

1. Praises have the capacity to execute judgment upon your enemy.
2. Through praises you have power over kings and nobles.

3. Praises ignite the anger of God against your enemies. That is why you must not miss the praise and worship done during services on Sunday.
4. Praises execute vengeance against our enemies.
5. Praises can take you to the spiritual realm. That is what the angels do at the throne of God.
6. When the high praises of God come out from your mouth, the sword of God Almighty comes into your hand. The sword of deliverance comes into your hand.
7. From these Bible passages, you can learn that praise is a tremendous weapon of warfare and violence.
8. Praise will expel all binding spirits. Nobody will want to stay where they are praising his enemies. When you praise God the devil does not like it because you are praising his enemy.
9. Praise brings down the manifest presence of God.
10. Praises unburden the soul. It gives you the garment of praise instead of the spirit of heaviness.

Isaiah 61:3: To appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the LORD, that he might be glorified.

11. Praise can bring the earthquake of deliverance. If you want the earthquake of deliverance to shake all your enemies then engage in violent praises.
12. Praises can melt unclean thoughts. When you are in the presence of God praise will release the power of God to meet your needs.

The Bible tells us that, praises can enter into the enemies kingdom and frustrate their efforts. Praises create the fruit of our lips. Your mouth can make use of the weapons that you need at your midnight hour to set you free from the powers of the night.

THE SEASON OF LIFE

The human life is divided into three major seasons.

1. Your Yesterday
2. Your Today
3. Your Tomorrow.

Whether you like it or not you will have to thank God for your yesterday, your today and your tomorrow because they are all in God's hand. You have to thank God for what He has done for you yesterday, what He is doing today and what He will do tomorrow.

If you run to your yesterday you will meet Jesus there. If you run to your today, Jesus is there and if you run to your tomorrow you will meet Jesus there. Whether you like it or not you must praise God for your yesterday, your today and your tomorrow.

The Bible tells us that Paul and Silas were badly beaten. They dragged them on the floor, gave them heavy lashes on their bodies yet they praised God. The Bible says "If it were not being that the Lord is with us what will our Israel become". If God had not been with you in the past what would you be saying now?.

If you are reading this book and you are over 30 years, then you have every cause to praise God.

When you were an infant, and your mother wanted to breast feed you by putting you by her side, that experience did not choke you. You are alive today. When you refused to eat and she blocked your nose to feed you, you did not die. Today, you are alive. When you were small you must have been exposed to danger one way or the other, you did not die. The Lord kept you till today. So who are you not to praise God for what he did yesterday?

GIVE PRAISE TO GOD

Many of us were born among witches and wizards who could have killed us at infancy stages but you are alive today.

I remember many years ago when I was driving a Bus on a street. Suddenly, a man was reversing his car out of his compound without even checking if there was any vehicle coming. All of a sudden, the car hit my bus in such a

mysterious way that my bus almost did a somersault He damaged the door of the bus. People who were at the scene were angry with the man who drove the car. But, I was not interested. I came out of the bus took the damaged door, kept it in the bus and I went back to my steering wheel. People kept on asking me "Won't you tell the man to repair the bus?" I told them not to worry because I know where I was going and I know what the devil was up to.

Many of us have gone through what is called accidental discharge. In spite of the troubles of the past you are still alive to day. Pay a visit to a police station and you will discover that to be saved from trouble is a great miracle.

PRAISE HONOURS GOD

A brother came to give a testimony that for seven months he did not go to toilet. You may take going to toilet for granted. Some people will be happy that for the first time they could wake up and dress themselves up.

Beloved, you woke up this morning, nobody carried you to toilet. You have every right to give thanks to God.

The Bible declared that at midnight Paul and Silas sang praises to God. Beloved, you should also thank God for your today. If you thank God for today then you are asking for the benefits of tomorrow.

When you decide to praise God, marvelous things will happen in your future. When you begin to praise God, things will change in your life. When you genuinely praise God today, you will receive better things for your future. If you decide to praise God inspite of your problems then things will begin to change for the better.

You need to thank God for you future because your future is in the hands of the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. God loves people who will praise Him before the miracle happens. The wall of Jericho fell after a session of violent praises. If you praise God accurately, it would pull down the walls of Jericho in your life. When the situation around you seems very big, bring out your hymn book or praise book and sing praises to God. Even if you have nothing to rejoice for, still praise God and watch what God will do.

God is interested in the fruit of our lips. The enemy also knows that at midnight, it is very difficult for you to praise God. People around you will think you are almost mad. But when the earthquake of deliverance begins to pull down the ancient foundations of your life, people will know the God whom you serve. If you want the Lord to visit you at your midnight hour the solution is in your prayer and praise.

Prayer Points

1. Every bitter water assigned against my life, dry up in the name of Jesus.
2. Weapon of the wicked, hear my battle cry, go back to your sender in the name of Jesus.
3. Every dark power fighting against my destiny, I command you to kill yourselves in the name of Jesus.
4. My enemies shall not celebrate my demotion in the name of Jesus
5. Oh God arise and do something in my life that will make the world to say this is the finger of God in the name of Jesus.
6. Oh God arise and let my story change in the name of Jesus.
7. Every power assigned to cause tragedy in Nigeria, your time is up, die in the name of Jesus.
8. Every wicked power in the heavenlies assigned to drink blood, scatter in the name of Jesus.

Spiritual Growth and Maturity addresses an uncommon topic. The author challenges the reader to get to the highway of spiritual growth. The secrets of growth are revealed, hindrances to growth are identified, while what it takes to keep growing is revealed. In this book, you will discover the keys to accelerated spiritual growth. You will also discover what it takes to become too hot for the enemy to harass. It is a must read for end-time spiritual soldiers.

About The Author

Dr.D.K. Olukoya is the General Overseer of the Mountain of Fire and Miracles Ministries and The Battle Cry Christian Ministries. The Mountain of Fire and Miracles Ministries Headquarters is the largest single Christian congregation in Africa with attendance of over 120,000 in single meetings.

MFM is a full gospel ministry devoted to the revival of Apostolic signs, Holy Ghost Fireworks, miracles and the unlimited demonstration of the power of God to deliver to the uttermost. Absolute holiness within and without as spiritual insecticide and pre-requisite for heaven is openly taught.

MFM is a do-it-yourself Gospel Ministry, where your hands are trained to wage war and your fingers to do battles.

Dr. Olukoya holds a first class honours degree in Micro-biology from the University of Lagos and a PhD in Molecular Genetics from the University of Reading, United Kingdom. As a researcher, he has over seventy scientific publication to his credit.

Anointed by God. Dr. Olukoya is a prophet, evangelist, teacher and preacher of the Word. His life and that of his wife, Shade and their son Elijah Toluwani are living proofs that all power belongs to God.

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