

Developing
FAITH *in*
JESUS
CHRIST



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JESUS
CHRIST

*Keys to Walking In the Spirit
and Becoming Like Jesus*

*“For ye are all the children of God
by faith in Christ Jesus”*

– Galatians 3:26

*“That whosoever believeth in him
should not perish, but have everlasting life”*

Pastor A.O. Asabor


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Introduction



The need for proper understanding of faith in Jesus Christ has never been more crucial than in our day. We have heard so much about it and it has been the subject of many books, magazines and write-ups including audio and video messages, yet majority of Christians still do not know what it means to have faith in Jesus Christ. I can tell you boldly that what many Christians call ‘faith in Jesus’ today is not faith at all, with the implication that majority of Christians have fallen into the danger of not walking by faith. And not walking by faith simply means they are walking by sight. This is dangerous because, the Bible says whatsoever is not of faith is sin (Romans 14:23) and without faith it is impossible to please God (Hebrew 11:6). From these two scriptures it is already obvious that faith in Jesus Christ is critical to the success of the Christian walk. Our faith in Jesus is so central and key to our Christian walk that we cannot afford to take it for granted or leave it to chance. The entire Christian walk can be summarized as *faith in Jesus Christ*, because everything about Christianity is faith from start to finish. That is why the

Bible says, “Now the just shall live by faith: but if any man draws back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him. But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul” Hebrews 10:38-39. It is by faith that we become children of God and it is faith that will determine whether we are eventually saved or not. Don’t forget that lack of faith is the summary of the reasons why all except two of the children of Israel that came out of Egypt failed to make it to the Promised Land, “But with whom was he grieved forty years? *Was it* not with them that had sinned, whose carcasses fell in the wilderness? And to whom swore he that they should not enter into his rest, but to them that believed not? So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief” Hebrews 3:17-19.

There is too much at stake that we cannot afford to allow lack of faith to hinder us. Our potentials, according to the word of God, are enormous but they can only be accessed by faith in Jesus Christ. Lack of faith means leaving our potential in the pages of the Bible and we cannot afford to continue to leave our potentials in the pages of the bible. Jesus recognized that this will happen that is why He said “Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?” Luke 18:8. This is a profound statement that I believe we should continuously ponder in our hearts. Unfortunately this kind of scripture no longer mean much to a lot of Christians but I think it should be a source of concern to us because Jesus does not play with words. Moreover, I believe the purpose of that statement Jesus made is to warn us against taking faith for granted. The unfortunate result of taking faith for granted is presumption, which means, to assume you have faith when you do not.

The parable Jesus gave to illustrate the fact that He may

not find faith on the earth on His return confirms that presumption will be the major cause of the absence of faith. “And he spake this parable unto certain which trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others: Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican. The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican. I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess. And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner. I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other: for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted” Luke 18:9-14. In today’s Christianity the Pharisee in this parable would probably have been applauded or given a standing ovation but Jesus says he went to his house not justified. The problem is not only that he went home not justified but that he was not aware that he was not justified. I am certain that after the prayer he must have felt great and believed that the whole of heaven was nodding in approval.

From the parable we see some reasons Jesus may not find faith on earth when He returns. First, people will trust in themselves that they are righteous which is presumption. Today, we see many Christians falling into this same error, presumptuously declaring they are righteous when they are yet to receive the gift of righteousness by faith. They think they are trusting in Jesus but God says no, they are trusting in themselves. It is the direct consequence of lack of understanding of what faith really is. The second reason we see in the parable is that people will exalt themselves before God claiming to have become what they are yet to be spiritually. This is

what we see in the Pharisee, and it is the reason Jesus ended the parable with “for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted”. See how Apostle Peter puts it, “Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble. Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time” 1 Peter 5: 5-6. The Pharisee in the parable was unknowingly exalting himself in the sight of God. Likewise many Christians today, by their attitude and pattern of praying are actually unknowingly exalting themselves in the sight of God. Whatever you proclaim and declare about yourself that you have not developed faith to receive will result in pride and arrogance because you will unknowingly pattern your life accordingly. It amounts to operating spiritual realities in the flesh or walking above the light of God in your life or walking in the light you have not received. The result is what the Bible calls lifting up of the soul, “Behold, his soul which is lifted up is not upright in him: but the just shall live by his faith” Habakkuk 2:4. When you are doing what you are supposed to do by faith without faith or in the flesh, you are in danger of lifting up your soul and the scripture says such a soul is not upright.

Note that, in the parable, Jesus did not even recognize that the Pharisee was praying to God, rather He said he prayed ‘with himself’. Meaning such prayers do not even get to God. We need to understand that though the sacrificial death of Jesus pays the price for our justification and righteousness, Justification and righteousness only become ours by faith. That is what the Bible means when it says, “Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and

upon all them that believe: for there is no difference” Romans 3:22. “Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law” Romans 3:28. And according to Romans 10:9-10, it is with the heart we believe unto righteousness not by confession only. Confession that does not issue out of believing in the heart is nothing but a lifting up of the soul which amounts to exalting oneself before God.

Yet a lot of Christians today are being led to wrongly declare themselves justified and righteous when they are yet to understand what faith really is, not to talk of knowing how to obtain it. Jesus is coming back soon and I think it is time we began to ask ourselves whether what we now call faith is actually faith indeed? This is the reason this book is written. In it we shall examine the importance and seriousness of faith; explain and illustrate the process that leads to the release of faith in our lives; show the relationship between faith and grace: illustrate why we need faith by looking at what God accomplished for us by the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ; and show how to utilize the faith by fighting the good fight of faith. The goal is to empower you to be committed to the process and dynamics of developing faith in Jesus Christ in order to truly experience all that the death of Jesus has procured for us. And in addition, according to the Bible, be among those “Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time” 1 Peter 1:5.

I pray that God will fill you afresh with His Spirit; enable you to hear Him clearly; and grant you the grace to walk by faith indeed as you comprehend the process and dynamics of faith in Christ, in Jesus Name.



Chapter One

The Process of Faith



God is concerned that a great number of devote Christians are at the verge of frustration and discouragement because their efforts at bringing the power of God to bear on situations and circumstances around them are not yielding any result. Some have prayed, fasted and diligently sought the face of the Lord (correctly or incorrectly) and yet the conditions remain the same. Some have actually concluded that God has abandoned them. In fact others are beginning to doubt whether Christianity is true or not and the love of many is waxing cold. As a result many are struggling with the Christian life. They cannot connect with the victories God promised in His word. Victory over sin, sicknesses/diseases and other attacks/works of the enemy seem continuously elusive. This has led Christians to begin to accept any manifestation of power as being of God even where the lives and methods of men and women bearing the power clearly contradicts the word of God. It has also led others to ignore sin in their lives hoping their sins will stop with time. Yet the Bible says, “For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto

holiness” 1Thesalonians 4:7. That is why the Bible also says, “Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh. For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live” Romans 8:12-13. The implication of this scripture is, no matter how long you have been a Christian if you are not actively eliminating sin from your life by the grace of God or the power of the Holy Spirit you are playing with death. God is also concerned that majority of Christians today are claiming salvation on the basis of assumption and imagination. These are but a few of the challenges that are the cause of the struggles lots of Christians are experiencing in their Christian walk.

If we acknowledge that God is still God and that He doesn’t change, then we will understand that the *struggles* in our Christian walk points to the fact that there is something we are not doing right or correctly. The Bible says, “For whatever is born of God, overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.” 1John 5:4. It is by our faith that we overcome and without doubt faith is the most critical factor in our Christian walk. Yet, in spite of all that has been written and taught about faith, faith still remains a major challenge or obstacle to our effectiveness in the Christian walk. The reason is because we are yet to learn how to apply faith where and when it really matters or counts. More importantly, we are yet to know how to develop faith for specific area of needs; what I will call target application of faith. Consequently, we generally assume that we have faith and expect God to move or to answer our requests when in truth we do not have faith yet.

Until we learn how to develop and apply faith wherever we need it which is what God demands of us, we will not see

nor be able to enter into the fullness of the blessedness of being in Christ. The sad part is that because of lack of faith many will eventually not be saved because salvation is not by assumption or imagination and we are saved by active not passive faith. That is why the Bible says, “Now the just shall live by faith: but if any man draws back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him. But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul” Hebrews 10:38-39. To draw back is to allow your faith to become passive. Another word for drawback is to backslide meaning to start and pull back or to commence and later withdraw. Apostle Paul is actually saying here that it is not enough to be declared just or righteous you must continue to believe to the saving of your soul. That is, to be saved eventually, your faith must remain active to the end. Unfortunately many have confused the new birth with salvation. They have been led to believe that once they are born again they are already saved and as a result they are not actively or consciously contending for the faith. This error is a product of not properly balancing scriptures which lead to taking scriptures out of context. Agreed that some scriptures give the impression that we have been saved. However, many more scriptures, like the Hebrews 10:38-39 that we just read, tell us that our salvation depends on what we, by faith, do with what Jesus accomplished for us by His death. Here is a simple test; the Bible says by His stripes we are healed. Now how many people have experienced the reality of this promise just by reading or hearing it once? Or how many have really believed it though they have heard it severally? If you have believed it when or how long did it take you to believe and when did you begin to see result? I am sure that by your own answer it took time for you to believe and begin to see the manifestation of

that promise in your life. That is if you are among the few who are already enjoying that promise. Personally, I know how long and how much struggle I passed through before I could lay hold on the faith to see this promise manifest in my life. If healing did not commence in your life from the day you heard the scripture on healing why do you conclude that you have been saved just because you have heard some scriptures that speaks of salvation?

The major reason people easily misunderstand salvation is because they have lost track of why Jesus actually came and what He came to save us from. The question is; why did Jesus come and what did He save us from? The Bible gives a direct answer to this question, it says, “And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins” Matthew 1:21. Apostle Paul corroborates this when in referring to Jesus he said, “Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works” Titus 2:14. Thus, Jesus came to save us from our sins or all iniquity as Apostle Paul calls it. The fact that we are still battling with sin, sicknesses/diseases and all other works of darkness that the death of Jesus has delivered us from is in itself proof that salvation is not completed yet. That is why in Hebrew 7:25 the Bible says, “Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them”. Simply put, the reason Jesus still intercedes for us is to ensure we are saved completely or eventually. The original Greek word translated as uttermost is “*panteles*” which simply means fully, entirely, completely or uttermost. Which means, the fact that the Bible says, we are saved by grace through faith does not mean that we are saved instantly when we get born again. That is why

the Bible says, “For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world” Titus 2:11-12.

The reason people propagate instant salvation is because they often separate it from its purpose which is to remove sin. Let’s illustrate this with more scriptures, Apostle Peter in referring to Jesus said, “Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed” 1Peter 2:24. Jesus did not just pay the price for you sin He took your sins and died with it so that you will now be dead to sin by faith which is the only way you can live unto righteousness also by faith. That is why Hebrews 9:28 also says, “So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation”. Note that it is at His return that we shall eventually be saved and the condition is without sin. Ephesians 5:25-27 confirms this, “Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish” Ephesians 5:25-27. Until your body of sin is destroyed (Romans 6:6) to make you dead to sin resulting in the power of sin being broken over your life (Romans 6:14) your salvation is work in progress. If you understand this you will begin to appreciate why Jesus said, “Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect” Matthew 5:48.

Another reason people propagate instant salvation is because they confuse being born again with being saved.

Actually, it is the new birth or being born again that happens instantly the moment we believe and call upon the name of Jesus. “But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God” John 1:12-13. You are born again instantly as you believe in the name of Jesus. But, as we have seen, salvation on the other hand is achieved progressively as we learn to receive and exercise faith in the finished work of Jesus. Thus, both the new birth and our eventual salvation are all products of faith which is generated through the activities of the Holy Spirit as we meditate on the word of God. The behind the scene activities of the Holy Spirit that generates faith as we meditate on the word of God is what we refer to as the process and dynamics of faith. Until we understand that faith has a process and begin to learn how to submit to the process, generating and applying faith will continue to be a struggle. Before we proceed to examine the process and dynamics of faith let us first see a few bible facts about faith.

WITHOUT FAITH IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO PLEASE GOD

“But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him” Hebrews 11:6. This is a hard truth that we must come to terms with. This scripture is saying without faith, pleasing God is impossible. That is, whenever faith is absent, it is impossible to please God. The word impossible has been used in this scripture to enable us appreciate the seriousness of faith in the sight of

God. It is not just that you cannot please Him enough but that it is impossible. There is no two ways about it, to please God you must have faith. We can say that the beginning of pleasing God is the desire or passion for faith. If you really want to please God, you must be concerned about your faith and be sure that what you have is actually faith. Anytime you fail to exercise faith, you displease God and in the process deny yourself the benefits of His power and grace. The deeper implication is that without faith there is no Christianity because it is by faith that we receive all that God has accomplished for us by the sacrificial death of Jesus. At His death, our deliverance from sin, sickness and all other wickedness of the devil against mankind was concluded—FINISHED and you can only experience as much as you can appropriate to yourself by faith. It is faith that puts God's power and grace at our disposal.

The Bible says, “For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” John 3:16. This is one of the most widely read and quoted scriptures but it is always amazing to me that some Christians only pay attention to God's part and never see the seriousness of our part. God's part was completed when Jesus declared it is finished and died but our part, which is simply to believe, takes off from where God's part ended. Unfortunately we usually underrate that simple word—believe. Let's not forget that Jesus paid the price for all mankind (1John2:2; John 1:29; John 4:42) but it is only those who believe in Him that will benefit or be saved. Thus, believing in Him is a requirement for benefiting from His death. Note that the requirement is not an abstract believe but to believe in Him—Jesus. To believe in God is to believe in Jesus and if you do not believe in Jesus, you do not believe in

God. That is, you cannot believe in God without Jesus. See what the Bible says about Jesus; “God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds” Hebrews 1:1-2. It is by Him God has spoken to us and to believe God is to believe in Him. The question is do we really know what it means to believe or have faith in Him? I want you to ponder on this as we progress because believing in Him is much deeper than many of us care to think.

THE UNBELIEVING BELIEVERS

Unbelieving believer is the best way to describe many Christians today. In spite of all that the word of God has declared about us they have continued to walk far below the provisions of God. The sad part is that some know all the wonderful scriptures by heart but they do not have faith in them and so they do not see any result. Instead of getting committed they are getting frustrated as if the word of God is no longer true. The fact that we are not seeing the expected result from the scriptures that we know should tell us that something is wrong with the way we believe or the way we have been approaching and applying faith. Another problem is that we all start the Christian race by faith but try to progress in the flesh. “This only would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? Are ye so foolish? Having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?” Galatians 3:2-3. Apostle Paul is rebuking the Galatians for starting by faith and attempting to continue in the flesh. There is no way you can become a

Christian (child of God) without first believing, “But as many as received him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God” John 1:12-13. You received the new birth when you heard the good news, believed it and agreed to accept Jesus as your Lord and savior. Thus, to become a Christian, you must believe. We can say boldly therefore that if you are not a believer you are not a Christian yet.

The problem is that many of us after believing to commence the Christian race quickly fall back to our old selves, doubting the things that the new life offers and thus become unbelieving believers. As a result, the Christian walk has become one big struggle such that though we know what the Word of God says, the manifestation eludes us. Thank God for the gifts of the Spirit that enables us, through third party miracles, to have a glimpse of the things that have already been accomplished for us. The gift of the Spirit is not intended to replace our faith; rather, it is intended to provide temporary help during the teething period of our faith. For most Christians the teething period is like forever. We must understand that just as the law was given to keep the children of Israel until faith came, so also the gifts of the Holy Spirit have been given to support us until we learn to develop faith. As a Christian, you are not supposed to depend permanently on the manifestation of the gifts of the Spirit through others for your needs to be met, rather, you are expected to mature to become like Jesus. The real problem has been that we have not understood the process of faith and as a result, we have not been able to consciously apply the teachings we have received on faith over the years. It is time to consciously labor to remove the garment of ‘unbelieving believers’ and begin to

develop real faith in Jesus Christ.

WHY IS FAITH SO IMPORTANT

The question is why would God who loves us so much tie everything to faith allowing it to deny us all or part of what He has labored to accomplish for us? Do you know that people for whom Jesus suffered and died have lived and died without enjoying the benefits of the death He died for them, simply because they couldn't believe? The Bible makes us to understand that such people did not profit from hearing the gospel or good news. "Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it. For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them: but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it." Hebrews 4:1-2. We are actually being admonished not to allow unbelief to deny us the eternal rest God has prepared for us. The truth we must appreciate is that there are people before us who heard the gospel but could not benefit from it because of unbelief. Today many are also living short of the plans and blessings of God because of unbelief. If God will allow unbelief to rob us of His blessings, there must be a very good reason for insisting that we believe. We must then understand that God is not the one denying us the blessing but unbelief. In my opinion the greatest enemy of our Christian walk is not the devil, sin, witches or wizards but unbelief. Unbelief is the power the devil and sin are using against us. If you can eliminate unbelief you will discover that the devil, sin, witches or wizards do not really have power over you because they have been defeated. The question therefore is why is faith so important? I believe that knowing why faith is so critical to our Christian walk will

help us to take it more seriously and be committed to getting and applying it wherever it is needed in our lives.

The first thing we must understand is that man is designed to function by faith. The implication is until you believe in something you cannot do it willingly or function accordingly. It is by believing that our will is aligned with whatever requires to be done. In fact, you actually believe when your will is aligned with what needs to be believed and whatever is believed becomes part of your will. That is why your will naturally submits to whatever you have believed. As a result, anything you do not believe violates your will when you are made or forced to do it. In addition, faith or belief is like an agent through which our nature is formed. That is why it is said that we are the sum total of what we have believed. This is applicable to both believers and unbelievers. Consequently, what distinguishes us from other people is simply what we believe? The devil understands this truth so well that he will do anything to make us believe his lies because he knows that once he can make us believe his lies he can make us do anything he wants. The only time the devil will attempt to force you to do anything is when he cannot make you to believe his lies or after he has lured you into a covenant. In which case, you will be doing such things against your will. That is how people are made to do things that they hate. The greatest gift that God has given to mankind is our freewill and He will never violate it. Believing is the only way we can develop the character and nature of God without being forced or without our will being violated. Since God will never violate our will, it is necessary that whatever he has done for us must be received by faith for it to manifest in our lives.

What makes faith critical is the fact that it aligns your spirit, soul and body with the source of what is believed. For

example, believing the word of God aligns our spirit soul and body with God, allowing the word of God to execute itself in our lives. In the same way believing the lie of the devil also aligns our spirit, soul and body with the devil or his demons, allowing them to execute their purpose. Here is the seriousness and importance of faith in the word of God, it aligns our spirit, soul and body with the Holy Spirit, allowing the word to execute itself. That is why genuine faith will always produce according to the word of God that released it. That is also the reason why faith derived from a particular word of God cannot be utilized for another purpose except they are related. This is where most Christians have problem; they want a general faith that can be applied in all situations. Unfortunately, faith does not work that way and the earlier we understand it the better. We must understand that faith is not something that God holds against us but a vital tool that enable us submit to God's will without any violation of our will. Note that when you say, not my will but your will to God, you are actually willingly submitting to His will. Another reason God demands faith from us is because, since we are designed to function by faith, our faith is either in Him or in someone or something else which is unacceptable to God. Moreover, the reason it is unacceptable to God is because we are actually designed to function properly only by faith in the word of God by whom all things were created and by whom all thing consist (Colossians 1:13-17). That is, all created things remain as created or fulfill their purpose by the word of God. For example, the sun and the moon have maintained their positions since creation by the power of the word of God and not even the devil has ever been able to tamper with them. Thus whatever God speaks which we call the word of God, regulates and keeps things in their proper order as

intended by the Godhead. To be in your proper order as intended by the Godhead you must believe the word of God. That is why the Bible says ‘man shall not live by bread alone but by every word that comes out of the mouth of God’.

FAITH LANDMARKS

As a result of the seriousness of faith in the Christian walk, God, in His mercy, has provided landmarks that lay solid foundation for our faith. They are usually known as Christian ordinances but we refer to them here as faith landmarks because they are not just laws or decrees but they represent major foundational beliefs for the Christian walk. They are physical acts that signify our submission and kick start our faith in major spiritual acts God has executed on our behalf. They are the three basic, scriptural and original ordinances of the church which are: Water Baptism, Holy Ghost Baptism and Breaking of Bread or Holy Communion.

Water Baptism

Water baptism is one of the fundamental as well as foundational principles of the doctrines of Christ which Apostle Paul listed in Hebrews 6:1-2, “Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God, *of the doctrine of baptisms*, and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment” Hebrews 6:1-2. Notice the doctrine of baptisms which refers to both the Water and Holy Ghost baptisms. If you want to make progress spiritually you must settle the issue of water baptism. Some have been baptized but they don’t really know the value. Water baptism is not just a

symbol it is what brings the reality of our co-death with Jesus into our life. “Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life” Romans 6:3-4. If you have not been baptized it means, according to the Bible, you have not been baptized into His death and as a result, the reality of your co-death and resurrection with Jesus cannot fully manifest. “In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ: Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead” Colossians 2:11-12. In baptism you were buried with Him and you rose with Him from the dead. Note, according to the scripture, that it is an act that indicates our faith in the operation of God that raised Christ from the dead.

We can say that water baptism brings the reality of the passing of the old and the release of the new. That is why Jesus Himself commanded, “Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen” Matthew 28:19-20. Baptism is a primary ordinance for the Christian walk that we cannot afford trivialize. Also see Mark 16:15-16, “And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned” this is the seriousness of water baptism that we are ignoring today. It is he that believe and is baptized that shall be saved. The

apostles understood this and they too preached and practiced it. See the examples of Apostle Peter and Philip; Apostle Peter said, “Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost” Acts 2:38. “Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls” Acts 2:41. About Philip the Bible says, “But when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women. Then Simon himself believed also: and when he was baptized, he continued with Philip, and wondered, beholding the miracles and signs which were done” Acts 8:12-13.

Even apostle Paul who was not there when Jesus gave the command was not left out. See what he did to the disciples he met at Ephesus, “And it came to pass, that, while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul having passed through the upper coasts came to Ephesus: and finding certain disciples, He said unto them, Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed? And they said unto him, We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost. And he said unto them, Unto what then were ye baptized? And they said, Unto John’s baptism. Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus. When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus” Acts 19:1-5. Note that these disciples were re-baptized which shows the seriousness the apostle attached to the issue of baptism.

Jesus Himself, as an example for us to follow, also submitted to be baptized, “Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan

unto John, to be baptized of him. But John forbad him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me? And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness. Then he suffered him. And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him: And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased” Matthew 3:13-17. We see the same account in Mark 1:9-11. In both accounts we can see that the baptism of Jesus received the approval of God the Father who immediately declare; This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. I am sure each time any one is baptized in faith God still says ‘This is now my beloved Son or daughter’ whether He will include ‘in whom I am well pleased’ is another matter because He cannot be well please with you until you are really walking by faith. Unfortunately, a lot of people use the case of the thief that Jesus pardoned just before he died as an excuse to either delay their submission for water baptism or discount it completely. “And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom. And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, To day shalt thou be with me in paradise” Luke 23:42-43. We need to understand that when Jesus told the thief that he will be with Him in paradise today, He actually waived all the conditions for him. Certainly, Jesus did not intend this to become a doctrine otherwise we will not need to take His teachings seriously. However, if you want to enjoy that privilege you must get Jesus to also waive the conditions for you.

The truth is that God will never force anything on us or force us to do anything. Whatever He has done for us must be received by faith before it can manifest or come into effect. I

tell you the truth; only those who believe enough to be baptized will actually begin to see the manifestation or the reality of the death and resurrection of Jesus in their lives. That is why the Bible says, “For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ” Galatians 3:27. The question is, Have you put on Christ?

Holy Ghost Baptism

Holy Ghost baptism is also one of the fundamental as well as foundational principles of the doctrines of Christ which Apostle Paul listed in Hebrews 6:1-2, “Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God, *of the doctrine of baptisms*, and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment”. Some have also been baptized in the Holy Ghost but they do not really know nor appreciate the value. The two baptisms are intended to bring the reality of what we have believed when we accepted Christ. Just as the water baptism brings the reality of our co-death and resurrection with Jesus so also the Holy Ghost baptism brings the reality of the Holy Spirit launching us into the fullness of His ministry in our lives. Let me put it in another way, water baptism brings the reality of the passing away of the old you and the entrance of the new you, while the Holy Ghost baptism brings us into the reality of the power available to the new man in his union with God (see Acts 1:8). The Bible says, “But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God” 1Corinthians 2:9-10. The baptism of the

Holy Spirit is not just about speaking in tongues it is what enables us to experience, in a deep sense, the power and potentials of the new man. The problem is, if you have not believed enough to receive the Holy Ghost baptism your efforts to believe other aspects of the ministry of the Holy Spirit will be a struggle, if not impossible. That is why, after the new birth, the next most important thing God wants you to have is the Baptism of the Holy Spirit, “Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call” Acts 2:38-39. We therefore need to understand that the Holy Spirit is the gift God promised mankind through Prophet Joel, “But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel; And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams: And on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my Spirit; and they shall prophesy” Acts 2:16-18. Also see the confirmation in Joel 2:28-29, “And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions: And also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my spirit”

Therefore, if you have not received the baptism of the Holy Ghost with the evidence of speaking in tongues, you are rejecting the promised gift of God which distinguishes the new covenant from the old. We need to also understand that administering this gift is the major prophesied work of Jesus

after the sacrificial death. “I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire” Matthew 3:11. This is also confirmed in Mark 1:8, “I indeed have baptized you with water: but he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost”. Also see Luke 3:16, “John answered, saying unto them all, I indeed baptize you with water; but one mightier than I cometh, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire”. Now see John 1:33, “And I knew him not: but he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost”.

We can see that all four gospels agree that it is Jesus that baptizes and the initial baptism comes directly from Him filling us with the person of the Holy Spirit with the initial evidence of speaking in tongues, “And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance” Acts 2:4, “While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word. And they of the circumcision which believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost. For they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God. Then answered Peter” Acts 10:44-46. “And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied” Acts 19:6.

When you are baptized in the Holy Spirit you are actually being made to drink into the Spirit of God, “For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made

to drink into one Spirit” 1Cor.12:12-13. Some are in the body but have refused to drink into the spirit. You are limiting your ability to generate and apply faith if you have not received the baptism of the Holy Ghost with initial evidence of speaking in tongues.

Breaking of Bread or Holy Communion:

Another landmark that we cannot but mention is breaking of bread or Holy Communion as some call it. Just as the Passover was a reminder to Israel that the Lamb of God is to be sacrificed to take away the sin of the whole world, so also ‘breaking of bread’ is a reminder not only that Jesus has been crucified but that we have been crucified with Him. And just as most of the Israelites did not understand what the Passover was all about, so also majority of Christians do not understand nor appreciate the seriousness of ‘breaking of bread’. They just see it as a holy religious activity. Breaking of bread is not just a spiritual energy drink, it is a reminder that we died in Christ and it is the means by which the reality of our death is established through faith. See how Apostle Paul explains it, “For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread: And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, this cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord’s death till he come” 1Corinthians 11:23-26. We cannot talk much about this scripture right now but you will appreciate breaking of bread better when you understand that it is to show the death of

Jesus until He returns. When you eat the bread that represent His body that was broken for us and drink the cup that represent the blood that was shed for us what you have done, in simple terms, is confirm your participation in His death. Thus, each time you eat the bread and drink the cup with understanding you are declaring your faith in His death as well as your death. And when you declare your faith in His death you are empowered to live in the continuous consciousness of your own death with Him allowing Him to live His life through you. That is when, like Apostle Paul, you can declare, “I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me” Galatians 2:20

These landmarks of faith when properly observed provides the foundation and continuous reference point for the release of faith because they will continue to stand as memorials for us in the sight of God. Ignoring any of these three ordinances will diminish your ability to generate faith and reduce your capacity to endure to the end and therefore you chances of being saved at the end.

THE LABOR FOR FAITH

Before we finally begin to look at the process of faith, it is vital that we understand that developing faith in Jesus Christ require effort. Faith is never a product of wish. You can never have faith except you are willing to put in the required effort or labor. Thus, there is a labor for faith. As declared already, faith is all we need to do the works of God. That is why the Bible says, “Then said they unto him, what shall we do, that we might work the works of God? Jesus answered and said

unto them; This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent” John 6:28-29. Thus, the work of God in the life of a believer can be summarized as labor for faith. That is, to work for God is to labor to believe the word of God concerning that work because God does not do anything without His word, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made” John 1:1-3.

We must understand that it is the word of God that always executes God’s purposes. Anything God is involved in must have His word. Wherever the ‘word of God’ is absent, God is obviously absent. That is why as Christians we must avoid anything for which we do not have clear word from God. Anything for which we do not have the word of God is not the will of God because His will is always expressed through His word. God will never do anything without His word. Every work that God seeks to do in your life or through you is actually to be done by His word and your job, according to John 6:29, is simply to believe. Every true belief will result in the required action that will produce the work. This is confirmed in the second chapter of the book of James “So it is with faith: if it is alone and includes no actions, then it is dead. But someone will say, “One person has faith, another has actions.” My answer is, “Show me how anyone can have faith without actions. I will show you my faith by my actions.” Do you believe that there is only one God? Good! The demons also believe—and tremble with fear. You fool! Do you want to be shown that faith without actions is useless? How was our ancestor Abraham put right with God? It was through his actions, when he offered his son Isaac on the altar. Can’t you

see? His faith and his actions worked together; his faith was made perfect through his actions. And the scripture came true that said, “Abraham believed God, and because of his faith God accepted him as righteous.” And so Abraham was called God’s friend. You see, then, that it is by our actions that we are put right with God, and not by our faith alone. It was the same with the prostitute, Rahab. She was put right with God through her actions, by welcoming the Israelite spies and helping them to escape by a different road. So then, as the body without the spirit is dead, also faith without actions is dead” James 2:17 -26 (Good news Bible). The summary is that faith without the corresponding action is useless because it is really not faith at all. Any time real faith is born, the work of faith must follow.

We must also understand the difference between works and the work of faith. The work of faith is a divinely executed work that may seem to be physically done by you but in actual sense, it is being done by God who is at work behind the scene. That is why the Bible says, “For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure” Philippians 2:13. We can therefore, say categorically that the process of deriving faith from the word of God is a work that God demands or expects of every Christian. If you fail in this work, you cannot do any work for God because it is impossible to please Him without faith. Therefore be prepared for the labor of faith in your Christian walk.

THE PROCESS OF FAITH

Now here is the central message of this book. Over the years people have taught and written on the importance, the seriousness, the nature, the use/application and several other

aspects of faith but how to develop or generate faith has been given little or no attention at all. We need to understand how to receive or obtain faith for all the other lessons we have received to become useful. I therefore encourage you to pay close attention as we examine the process of faith which will primarily show us how to generate, receive or obtain faith.

The Bible says faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God (Romans 10:17). This verse of scripture looks very simple and innocent but it is really very complicated and in it is hidden not only the process but also the dynamics of faith. The first point to note is that it says ‘faith comes’!!! We need to flag this because it is the key to realizing that faith has a process. To appreciate ‘faith comes’ we need to understand that it also means ‘faith originates’, ‘faith derives’, ‘faith arises’ or ‘faith emanates’. Here is the first major problem with our efforts to walk by faith; we do not wait for faith to come (originate, be derived, arise or emanate) before we try to use it. I don’t know about you but I know I have been guilty of this on several occasions. The reason we are not seeing result is because faith has not come but we think we already have faith just because we have become children of God and we are called believers. The second point from that scripture is that faith does not come until certain conditions are fulfilled. That is, faith is the result when the specified conditions are met.

From the scripture we see that the condition needed for faith to come is simply described as hearing and hearing by the word. Here is the dynamics, it is not just hearing that brings faith and it is also not just hearing the word of God but hearing and then hearing by the word of God. That is faith does not come just because you have listened to or heard the word of God. You need to understand this dynamics to appreciate the process. Now Apostle Paul could have said faith comes by

continuously hearing the word of God but that will not be correct because it is not what he is saying. Using hearing twice indicates that he means two types and levels of hearing. If you hear only once faith will not come until the second hearing. In the first hearing, you hear the word of God but in the second hearing, you hear by or from the word of God. We can say that the second hearing is when the living word of God actually speaks or ministers the written word of God to you. We shall deal with this further in the process.

The third point is that both hearings are products of the word of God. Which means the word of God is the foundation for the hearing and hearing that cause faith to come? The reason is because hearing and hearing is the means by which the word of God is allowed to release its content that produces faith in us. This is what we refer to as the process of faith and it is accomplished as we hear and hear the word of God through continuous study and meditation. That is why as children of God we are required or instructed to meditate continuously on the word of God, “This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success.” Joshua 1:8, “Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night. And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.” Psalm 1:1-3. It is through this kind of continuous study and meditation on the word of God that the hearing and hearing that results in faith is achieved. Which

means we do not have to be conscious of the process and the dynamics but we need to know and understand them so that we can continue to meditate on the word while the process is going on? The beauty of knowing the dynamics and the process of faith is the delight it produces as we continuously study and meditate on the word. The truth is, to continue to meditate on the word without discouragement requires delight which comes from the understanding that the continuous meditation is achieving something critically beneficial and inevitable. It is only a man who delights in the word that can continue to patiently meditate on the word until it releases faith without being discouraged.

The Process

As we meditate on the word, an invisible process commences and continues progressively until faith is released or born. Again let me emphasize that we do not need to be conscious of the process but we need to recognize that the word we are meditating on is passing through a process so that we do not terminate the process or give up before it is completed. It is just like the farmer, when he sows his seed in the ground he does not need to be conscious of the process but he should also know enough not to tamper with the process. It is the result that tells him whether the process is successfully completed or not and also whether the soil needs improvement or not. Now, we cannot say how long we have to meditate on the word before the process begins but as we continue to meditate things begin to happen internally. The first thing that happens as we meditate on or hear and hear by the word is that the word is broken to release its primary contents and the first two to be released are the Spirit and the Life of God. That is why the Bible says, “It is the spirit that quickeneth; the

flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life.” John 6:63. Note that it is the word that the living word Himself speaks that is Spirit and life. Which means until we actually hear by the living word Himself there is no spirit and life and until we receive the spirit and the life of the word the process is yet to commence? If we stop meditating after we receive the spirit and the life, the Spirit and the life released will just make us feel good and excited about the word that we have heard, but the word cannot yet produce any fruit because faith has not come yet. What we receive at this point is hope which is a foundation and progress towards faith. But the Bible says hope deferred makes the heart sick, therefore staying too long on hope will lead to frustration and discouragement. It is as we continue to meditate on the word that the Spirit and the Life are also broken down to release their content, the life will release light while the spirit will release power. We shall explain this latter. Thus faith is born when the divine content of the word of God that the grace of God has made available to us are released in various combinations. As we can see the divine contents of the word are; the Spirit of God, the life of God, the power of God and the light from God. They are the essence of the person of God and the root or source of the divine nature. However, note that they are not the divine nature but they together are the source of the divine nature or they produce what is known as the divine nature.

Until these four entities that constitute the essence of the person of God are released to us in ordained combinations there is no faith. Therefore, faith is the combination of the Spirit of God, the life of God, the power of God and the light from God you receive from the word of God that enable or empower you to align and conform or function according to

the word. We need to also understand that though these entities that constitute the essence of God produce faith in us they are not the faith, just as they are not the divine nature. They are the source of our faith and the four must be present for faith to be born. The Bible refers to them as the great and precious promises by which we are partakers of the divine nature. “Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust” 2Peter 1:4. God has promised us His Spirit, His life, His power and His light but they are all hidden in His word and until the word is broken open to release them to us they remain hidden and we cannot receive them. One of the major realities of the death of Jesus is the breaking of His body for us which signifies the breaking of the word to enable us receive its contents. This is what makes the ordnance of breaking of bread a critical landmark for the process of faith generation such that, if you are not participating in it, you diminish your capacity to receive the contents of the word.

Note that whatever faith is meant for, determines the combination in which each of the four entities or essence of God are released to us. For example, the combination for the faith for receiving healing may have more of the power of God than the combination for the faith for fighting unbelief which may have more of the light from God. That is why you cannot use the faith for healing to solve the problem of anger. You have to generate faith for every aspect of life. Now let’s see the role of the four entities or the essence of God that we receive through the process of faith:

1. The Role of the Spirit of God in the Process of Faith:

The Spirit of God is always the first to be released as we

meditate on the word of God. That is why the Bible says, “It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life.” John 6:63. Notice that the Spirit is mentioned twice in this scripture. First the scripture says He is the one that quickens or gives life and then He appears again as one of the contents of the word. I want you to understand that both refer to the same Holy Spirit but functioning in different capacities. He is himself God and He represents the God head in the word. He is the one that causes the rest to be released. Moreover, the Spirit of God is the chief promise of God as far as our partaking of the divine nature is concerned. Without the Spirit of God the rest cannot be released and when they are released they cannot produce any result without the Holy Spirit. This is because the Holy Spirit coordinates or operates the rest to produce faith in us. He links them to our spirit soul and body enabling our entire being to be united in receiving and accepting contents of the word of God. Therefore until the spirit of God is released the process of faith has not started. That is why He is also referred to as the Spirit of faith, “We having the same spirit of faith, according as it is written, I believed, and therefore have I spoken; we also believe, and therefore speak” 2Corinthians 4:13. He is the Spirit of faith because it is by Him that faith is released to us. Without Him we cannot have faith and when we function by faith it amounts to functioning in Him. That is why to walk in the spirit is simply to walk by faith and to walk by faith is the major way we are led by the Spirit. We need to understand that until He is released from the word the life of the word cannot be released because it is the Spirit that give life from the word. That is why apostle Paul said,

“Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life” 2Corinthians 3:6. Thus, when the Spirit in the word is released, He releases the life and progress to release the power and the light as the conditions are met through our continuous meditation on the word of God. It is necessary to mention that what I have written here does not cover all that the Holy Spirit does in the process of faith. But I pray that as you need to know more God will reveal them to you as necessary, in Jesus’ name.

2. The Role of the Life of God in the Process of Faith:

We have seen that after the Holy Spirit, the life of God is the next to be released from the word and it is released by the Holy Spirit. That is why the Bible says, “It is the spirit that gives life, the flesh is of no avail; the words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life”. To appreciate the role of the life of God in the process of faith we need to understand the life of God itself and to establish the fact that this life is actually in the word of God.

Now, to understand the life of God we need to first understand life in general terms. Life has three distinct components; the life itself, the quality and the duration of that life. The life itself is a mystery (hard to explain), that is why a lot of people often just see life only from the point of quality and duration. There is no quality or duration of life without the life itself which is the real thing. Therefore each time you come across the word, life, you need to find out the context in which it is used because it could be referring to any of the three components or all at the same time. Now let’s try to explain the components one by one;

the duration of life simply refers to the span of the life (life span) or the length of time the life is available to the recipient. While the quality of life means, the value or worth of that life or the potentials and excellence of that life or the benefits the life holds for the recipient. Now, the life itself is the first and most important aspect of life. It is the substance that has duration and quality that makes a thing function as a living thing. To understand it, let's illustrate it with the physical life or the life of the flesh as the Bible calls it. According to the bible the life of the flesh is in its blood. "For the life of the flesh is in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul" Leviticus 17:11. Which means without the blood one cannot be alive physically and anything that affects the blood affects the life directly? As important as the blood is, it is not the life it is simply a vehicle for the life. That is why a person can die even if his body is still full of blood and though the heart is the reservoir and pump station of the blood, it is the life that keeps the heart working such that once the life ends the heart stops working even if nothing is wrong with it. This is what makes life a mystery. That is why, at best, we can only describe the physical life as an invisible but tangible substance that God puts in all flesh to enable them live physically on earth. We can also say it is an attribute or mark of God that keep things alive physically on earth or that make them living things. Now let's try to understand the life of God from the above explanation of life of the flesh. Like the physical life the life of God also has three components; the life itself, the quality and the duration. As we zero in on the life of God, I want you to understand that the life of God is sometimes

called eternal life or everlasting life but they all refer to the same thing and the deference is simply in the usage. Again let's try to explain each component one by one starting with the life itself. First let's understand that the life of God is something in God that we are enabled to receive from the time we get born again and this life is kept for us in His son, "And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son" 1John 5:11. God in His mercy has given to us the very same kind of life in His son, what a privilege!!! "That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life; (For the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and shew unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us;)" 1John 1:1-2. Again whether it is called the life of God or eternal life it is the same. The summary is that the life of God which was with the father has been made available to us in the son. The life of God is what the Bible refers to as the seed of God which is similar to what we call DNA on earth, "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God" 1John 3:9. John 6:40 says, "And this is the will of him that sent me, that everyone which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day". It is the will of God that everyone who believes in Christ should receive eternal life which is the life of God and it is the life of God in you that will determine whether you will be raised up on the last day. Thus if you are truly born of God you actually have in you God's own kind of life known as the life of God or eternal or everlasting life.

That is why Jesus said, “Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life” John 6:47. “These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God” 1John 5:13. The quality of the life of God on the other hand is the potentials or capacity of God Himself, “Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God” 1John 3:9. Your capacity to overcome sin or the world is hidden in the life of God. That is why the Bible also says, “In him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not” John 1:4-5.

In terms of duration; the life of God is eternal or everlasting or forever. That is why the terms are normally used interchangeably. However, we need to note that it is not all form of living that continues for ever that is called eternal life for example eternal damnation also continues forever but in a state the Bible refers to as death. We need to understand as children of God, that we now have God’s very kind of life which has great prospect for all eternity. And according to scriptures anyone who is not a child of God is cut off from it until they become children of God (see Ephesians 4:17-18). That is why we must be born again to be part of the kingdom of God because it is at the new birth that we are reconnected with the life of God.

To further emphasize the seriousness of the life of God in the release of faith lets explore the statement of Jesus in John 5:25-26. Jesus said, “Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear

the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live. For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself” John 5:25-26. Two points from this scripture; the impact the voice of Jesus has on those who hear and the capacity that the presence of the life of God brings to whoever has it. In terms of the impact, the scripture says it is those who hear His voice that shall live. That is why the Bible says, “But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God” Matthew 4:4. Which means every word from the mouth of God gives life. ‘Shall live’ actually means to function in the realm where the life of God operates. Furthermore, the scripture makes us understand that the dead shall hear the voice of Jesus and live because the same life that is in the father is in Him. That is, it is the life of God that is in Jesus that makes the dead live on hearing his voice. This is a revelation of the capacity or ability that the life of God brings to anyone that has it. Note also that the scripture quotes Jesus as saying “For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself”. Thus, having the life of God is by express permission of God, which means you do not have the life of God because you are created by Him rather you have it because He grants you the permission to have it. That is why Jesus said, “The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly” John 10:10. Note that Jesus came that we might have life (the life of God) not just to be alive because you cannot live the life of God on this corrupt earth. Living the life of God is for eternity, that is why ‘shall live’ is the term always used for

those who receive the life of God. The life of God only benefits you physically when allowed to contribute to the release of faith. That is, it is through faith that we enjoy the benefits of the life of God in our physical life. May this truth like a hammer that breaks the rock remove every trace of unbelief to enable you to be established in this truth in Jesus' name!

3. The Role of the Power of God in the Process of Faith:

This power to become comes directly from the anointing which is in the word of God. The Spirit will release His content, the first of which is 'Power'. That is why the Bible says, "But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:" John 1:12. Note that this power is only given to those who receive Him – the word of God. Let's understand that the first thing we get when the Spirit of God comes upon or into us which we call anointing is power. That is why Jesus also said, "But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth" Acts 1:8. Thus, every time the Spirit from the word is properly watered major results is power. This is the source of the power by which effect is given to acts of faith and it is the power or ability of God Himself.

4. The Role of The light From God in the Process of Faith:

The light from God is released from the life of God earlier releases as the meditation continues. Without the life you cannot access the light. That is why the Bible says, "In him was life; and the life was the light of men." John 1:4. The

implication is that the light from God is hidden in the life of God which is in Christ. Note that we refer to it as the light from God because God is light. 1John 1:5 says, “This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all”. Which means light is whom God is. It is not that He has or carries light He is light and Apostle John says this is the message they heard from Jesus. That is why Jesus said severally that He is the light of the world, “Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life” John 8:12. Again John 9:5 says “As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world”. Again we see that light is not something Jesus has but it is who He is. I hope you are getting the seriousness of the matter. Thus the light which is the last to be released in the process of faith is the very inner nature or person of God and of Christ. That is why in referring to Jesus, the Bible also says, “That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world” John 1:9. We can rephrase that as the true inner nature or person of God that every one that comes into the world must receive to become useful to God. Which means it is through the process of faith that the true light lights us because it is in the life and the life is in the word of God and it is only as we continue to meditate on the word after the release of the life that the light is released. That is why the Bible declares in Psalm 119:130 that the entrance of His word gives light. Again, we see that the light is in the word and to get the light you must allow the word entrance through continuous meditation. It is the light that is released that enables us to perceive or see in our spirit what the word is convey-

ing to us. That is, the light released, which is the inner person of God, enables us to understand or realize what God is saying to us by His word as it relates to specific circumstance or situation confronting us. It is at this point that we usually say a revelation has been received or that we have heard by the word of God. As a result the word is transformed from ‘Logos’ to ‘Rhema’, ‘Logos’ is the written word while ‘Rhema’ is the spoken word. Now, when the light (the inner person of God) is released it illuminates our spirit, soul and body enabling them to see and lay hold on the reality of the word of God that we have been meditating on.

Once again lets understand that these four entities that constitute the essence of the person of God are what makes God who He is and they have been made available to us such that the more of them we receive the more we become sons and daughters of God enabled to exhibit His nature, qualities, ability and capabilities. That is why the Bible says, “For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith” 1John 5:4. To be truly born of God is to have the four entities that constitute the essence of the person of God released into you. We need to understand that the four entities themselves are not the faith but they in varying combinations produce the faith and their presence in the combination will be for the specific purpose for which they have been released. However, we also need to understand that when these entities are released they are not only to produce faith they have other important roles to play in our lives. For example, it is their coming that enables us to know God in specific ways and it is the presence of the life of God in us that will qualify us for

salvation at the end. But our immediate benefit from their presences is the faith they produce in us which is the most valuable resource for our Christian walk. The summary of all we have been saying is that there is an invisible process that the word of God must pass through to produce faith in us. The aim is not to make us try to follow the process but to make us aware of the process so that we are encouraged to continue to diligently meditate on the word we have heard until faith is born. With this it is clear that obtaining faith is not a child's play and it demands serious commitment, dedication and devotion. Furthermore, we need to understand that the state of our hearts is vital and also play significant role in the success of the process.

THE STATE OF OUR HEARTS

The success or otherwise of the process of faith depends on the state of our hearts. This is not to frighten us but that we should not be discouraged by the state of our hearts because the process also has capacity to effect needed changes in the heart itself. Thus the state of our hearts is one of the factors that determine how long we need to meditation before faith is released or before we begin to see result. This is the lesson Jesus taught in the parable of the sower in Matthew 13:3-23. In this parable Jesus illustrated how the state of the heart determines the fruitfulness of the word of God that is heard. I believe most Christians are already conversant with the parable so I will just proceed to the part where Jesus explained the parable. "Hear ye therefore the parable of the sower. When any one heareth the word of the kingdom, and understandeth it not, then cometh the wicked one, and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart. This is he

which received seed by the way side. But he that received the seed into stony places, the same is he that heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it; Yet hath he not root in himself, but endureth for a while: for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended. He also that received seed among the thorns is he that heareth the word; and the care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word, and he becometh unfruitful. But he that received seed into the good ground is he that heareth the word, and understandeth it; which also beareth fruit, and bringeth forth, some an hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty” Matthew 13:18-23.

Jesus described four different states of heart and all of them heard the word but it was only one that was fruitful. The Bible says the word of God is powerful, living and sharper than any two edged sword yet in the first three state of heart the word was not allowed to bear fruit. If you truly understand the implication of this parable then you will appreciate the need to be committed to the process of faith which is the only way we can apply the word to overcome the state of our heart. The reason it seems the word is incapacitated by the state of our heart is because God does not override our will. He does not force us into submission rather He depends on us to willingly surrender or submit to His word. To properly understand the parable we need to in addition to seeing it as the state of the heart also see it as the stages our heart go through as we progress in the process of faith.

Now let’s look at the states or stages of heart one by one. The first state of heart is referred to as the ‘way side’. Jesus explained that the way side is he who hear the word of the kingdom, and understand it not. That means any word of God you hear and do not understand your heart is still way-

side in that area and the wicked one quickly takes away the word. In this case to continue the process of faith you have to start all over again because the word is not even there to meditate on. Now, let's learn something from this, the fact that the devil can steal the word on the wayside means that the word at that stage is still just letters. The Bible says the word of God is God can you imagine the devil stealing the word that is God? The second state of heart is the stony places. This state of heart hears the word and receives it gladly but has no root and as such gets offended when tribulation or persecution comes because of the word. Note that the problem was that the word did not have root. Meaning the word heard and received was not fully processed to make its full content available. The solution in this case is to keep meditating until the word is allowed to change the stony places to fertile ground and develop roots to sustain it.

The third state of heart is simply described as among the thorns. Jesus said, He also that received seed among the thorns is he that heareth the word; and the care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word, and he becometh unfruitful. The problem of this state of heart is that it is full of thorns and the thorns choke the word making the person unfruitful. First, I want you to note that it is the person that Jesus said is unfruitful and not the word. When you receive the word of God you are impacted to bear fruit. That is, the word of God is to make you bear fruit by releasing its contents into you. This is to help you understand that the state of your heart affects the fruitfulness because it is not the word that bears fruit, it is your heart. Your heart is expected to receive the contents of the word in order to become like the word bearing fruits accordingly. The thorns choke the word by not allowing it release its content into the heart. Now let's

see what the thorns are; the care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches. Wow, is this really in the Bible? Or did Jesus really say this or did someone smuggle it into the Bible? Unfortunately, these are the very things Christians including pastors are willingly submitting themselves to these days. The care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches have taken over the driver's seat of the life of most Christians today. I will not deal with it more than this but I want you to see and understand that it is only the process of faith that can transform your heart from wayside, stony places and among thorns to a fertile heart so that the word can become fruitful. All you need to do is to be committed to the process by consistently meditating and praying upon the word. The most dangerous of all is the thorny heart but the word of God can remove the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches to enable you bear fruit by the word. For faith to be released the state of the heart must first be transformed to become good. How long you have to meditate depends on how far the heart has been taken over by thorns.

In conclusion, God is seeking men and women who will labor for faith. We are in the last days; it is not the time to continue with business as usual kind of Christianity. We have seen that the word of God must pass through a defined process to produce faith and the process involves labor which means, faith requires our labor. We must understand and always remember that faith is never a product of wish. You can never have faith except you are willing to put in the required labor. Thus, the work of God in the life of a believer can be summarized as labor for faith. That is, to work for God is to labor to believe the word of God concerning that work. God does not do anything without His word "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the

Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made” John 1:1-3. We must understand that it is the word of God that always executes God’s purposes. Anything God is involved in must have His word and the process of deriving faith from the word of God is a work that God expects or demands of every Christian. If you fail in this work you cannot do any work for God. That is why it is impossible to please Him without faith.

Neglecting the process of faith amounts to trying to acquire faith by chance! Faith is of God but the level of faith you operate is determined by you because the effort you put into the labor for faith will determine the level you will operate. You cannot eat your cake and have it; you cannot continue to neglect the things that will enhance your growth in faith and expect to operate a higher level of faith. The choice is entirely yours. If you desire to operate a higher level of faith, then you must take labor for faith seriously. If this is your desire, then you must begin to do the following:

- Study the word of God with utmost diligence
- Identify the areas where you lack faith (that is areas where your life fall short of the great and precious promise in the word of God).
- Organize the word of God as they relate to the specific issues and meditate on them patiently.
- Water the word with prayers as you meditate and include fasting where necessary.
- Be diligent and consistent; do not give up until the evidence of faith begins to manifest.