

BIBLE QUESTIONS ANSWERED BY DR. AYODEJI AWE

Q 81 - WITH THE MAGNITUDE OF PITFALLS, ANTAGONISM, RESISTANCE, PERSECUTIONS AND EVEN DEATH THAT LIE ON THE PATH OF ALL THAT WILL LIVE GODLY, HOW (ON EARTH) AM I EXPECTED TO GO ALL THE WAY WITH GOD?

ANSWER -

Let me begin by making it clear to you that God, by offering Jesus His only begotten Son as a sacrifice for human sin and by presenting him as an instrument by whom man is saved eternally when he believes and confesses Him, had paid a huge price for your redemption. Therefore He expects you to go with him all the way. And I say emphatically to encourage and embolden you that you can and you will make it through. You are capable; the Holy Ghost lives in you.

Jesus presented himself as a prime example and model of success in this life-long venture. He came to save us primarily but in addition shows us that if he had lived on earth and made it through, transcending Calvary and all of its demands and brutal executioners, no less would all who believe in Him be enabled to pass through successfully. Remember when He says "if you believe in me, the works that I do you shall do also, and greater works than these shall you do...."

As a pastor, I know your concerns and fears; so does Christ. The Word says "For we do not have an high priest who cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin" (Heb. 4:15). Trust me, he inspired Apostle Paul to pen these words: "Yea and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution (2 Tim. 3:12). That was after he had earlier hinted them at his departure discourse that in this world they will experience tribulation (John 6:33). Jesus suffered untold proportions of strikes, abuse, persecution and execution. Definitely we are neither out of his sight nor feelings as we take a stand for him in faith and began a journey of a new life in him with all of the cons attached.

Since we have begun well (that is: since we have received Jesus Christ the Lord), Apostle Paul encourages us to be become rooted and built up in him, and stablished in the faith as we are being taught (Col.2: 6-7). "Thou shall receive power when the Holy Ghost comes upon you", Dr. Luke quoted Jesus as he doubled down on the interim dexterity (Acts 1:8). Realistically, you have this power since you genuinely received Jesus into your heart. It is no farce! By the indwelling of the Spirit, you receive the constant strengthening from Jesus the Lord and this enables you to do all things that you are scripted and led to as a believer.

Apostle Paul identified for us a great ingredient in the mix that is key to our survival and eventual success. He as one of the few called who is atop in

experiencing persecution and hardship of preposterous dimension was endowed with grace which was the bane of his stability often as 'the tornadoes' struck his life. "My grace is sufficient for you" (2Cor. 12:9), the Lord encouraged him. My strength is perfected in the fury of the surge of attacks on your life; the Lord appears to be further saying. From that point on, Paul was lowered into a new plat of survival mode that thrives in the glorification of his infirmities. Thus by inverse spiritual exertion of a dynamo: that which intends to decimate is turned into power to withstand and eventually overcome. It works out in the dynamics of faith, without which no man can please God and by which men of mere human stature have been found to attain to life success of humongous proportions that encrypted them into divinity- labeled hall of fame (c.f. Heb. 11:1 ff).

Be encouraged therefore, I charge you; do not be afraid of tomorrow. Trust your walk of faith today to the degree of the present help that Jesus is for you (Ps. 46, Phil. 4:6-7). The Savior is by our side as we tackle the forays that are generated by the very elements of spiritual progression. Be not perturbed by the fear of possible failure. The one who fails ultimately are the ones that never tried. Peter pressed, till he descended the 'valley of bewilderment' where he was embarrassingly shredded by his failure at standing by Christ when it would have counted. But thanks to God, he didn't get buried in the syncline. He rebounded to become the 'Seven Star' general of the unflinching, conquering army of Christ, who later ascended to become the chief of the select all-time Patriarchs and the precious stoned laced foundations of the new Jersusalem (Rev. 21).

I repeat: Do not be afraid of yourself. Christ lives in you and so you are a transformed creation endowed with glory and power. On this journey to eternal life, pitfalls that attend your way you will bypass; antagonisms that launch at you by themselves will fizzle and resistance that confronts you will be repelled by the word of God that richly dwells in you (Col. 3:16). Persecutions will inflict but the rich and the sufficient grace will be the best absorbent that you have become. Death? Reputed to be lasting an enemy, it is doomed for destruction (1Cor. 15:26). "For your sakes we are killed all daylong!" (Ps. 44:22); yet we are alive and pressing on. God's unfailing presence has blurred the sting of death. Because Christ triumphed over its patriarch (Calvary triumph), we thump death as many a time it rears up. But then when it foolishly strikes at a time fitting into perfection of God's plan, we ride its crest into God's glorious presence where we experience indescribable beauty and joy that God has earmarked for us before we were created and chosen for glorification. For, to be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord.

Therefore, have this handy: your arch enemy, Satan and all his cronies employed against us will certainly lose. He is headed for a bottomless pit and ultimately for the lake of fire (Rev.20:10). But you are destined to reign with

Christ at the end (Psa.8:4ff, 2Tim.2:11-12, Rev. 20:6). That is the scripted destiny of the believer which many before us have actualized in glory-recall the hall of faith recital (Heb.11, *ibid*). Moses, Samuel, David, Elijah, Isaiah, Daniel, John the revelator, and countless others-some got jabbed in the jaws while others zigzagged to the finish line. They were not afraid to live, neither be they scared of accidental erring, which is human. Despite all, they made it through. Those reminders are highs for us for confidence that we will not be the aberration.

But for now absorb the admonition of Christ the Lord, who is the first and the last, who was dead and came to life: “Do not fear any of those things which you are about to suffer” he declared. “Indeed the devil is about to throw some of you into prison that you may be tested and you will have tribulation for 10 days. However, be faithful until death and I will give you the crown of life”, he concludes (Rev.2:10). This implies that he is aware of all that await you on your path from now to then. He promises to stand by you-‘If God be for you, who can be against you?’ (cf: Rom. 8:31b).

My prayer for you and all who follow Christ, in the words of Apostle Peter (2)1-1ff, is that grace, peace and the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord be multiplied unto you. Remember that his divine power has given us all things we need for life and godliness through the knowledge of Christ our Savior. Endeavor to be diligent to make your call and election sure and at this the Lord guarantees that you will never fall, as you see wide open for you the entrance into the everlasting kingdom of God.

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