

**DAVID OYEDEPO JNR**



***This New Life...***

***Foundations for  
Spiritual Growth and Development***

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# Chapter 1

## Salvation: Birth of a New Life

*“Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever”*

*1 Peter 1:23*

Friend, welcome to this new life!

There is something profound that takes place when a man, woman, boy or girl hears the word of God and comes to the point of trusting in Jesus. That word goes into the heart of the individual and the birth of a new life in that person literally takes place.

This is what the bible describes as being born again. When Nicodemus, a Pharisee met with Jesus, seeking to understand how He was able to command such results, Jesus explained that those kingdom proofs were the product of a different life in Christ – John 3:1-3.

He made it clear that the only way to see these proofs was to be born again – John 3:3. This new birth surely does not refer to entering into your mother's womb again, it refers to being born of the Spirit – John 3:4-7.

Jesus was making it clear to Nicodemus that being born of a woman makes you born of flesh, but there is a second birth that needs to take place where you are born of the Holy Spirit.

If you go back to the start of the life of Jesus, you will discover that He was born of the Holy Spirit – Lk. 1:35. So Jesus Himself was called the son of God because He was literally born of the Holy Spirit. His mother represented the birth of the flesh, while the Holy Spirit represented the birth of the Spirit.

There is no doubt that we are born of a woman, so we are all born of the flesh. But to be born of the Spirit, we require a second experience of birth. This is why it is called being born again.

This new life is born at the point of salvation. We escape the limitations of our fleshly lives when we are born again – 2 Peter 1:3-4. This is why salvation is referred to as the way of escape – Hebrews 2:3.

These is something incredibly new that takes place when we surrender to Jesus in salvation. The bible shows us that a new life is born in us. This new life is referred to as a treasure in our earthly vessels – 2 Corinthians 4:6-7.

We carry something divine within this earthly vessel. There is a saying that “what you see is what you get.” This is a saying that does not apply to the believer, because for a born-again child of God there is far more that meets the eye. There is a different kind of life within him or her.

### **How does this new life begin?**

As I stated earlier, salvation is an experience of a second birth, however that second birth begins with a word. That word is an incorruptible seed – 1 Peter 1:23. When an individual comes across the word, there is a response that needs to take place within them. Let’s see it play out in the scripture below:

*“In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise,” - Ephesians 1:13*

### **Believe the word (Receive it as the Truth)**

The first reaction that is necessary is that the word must be received as truth. There are many who receive the word of God as though it is the word of men so it does not profit them – 1 Thessalonians 2:13.

The word received must be believed as the word of God and not man's words. This is such a challenge in our skeptical world where we are trained to always question or query every word we hear. But the word preached will never profit us until it is met with faith in the heart of the hearer – Hebrews 4:2.

We must come to a point where we believe the word, trusting in Jesus Himself. It is about Jesus as a person, being believed. That is why until you believe that He is, you cannot draw nigh unto Him – Hebrews 11:6.

The question is, do you believe in Jesus?

Do you believe that He came to the earth as the only begotten son of God?

Do you believe He died for the sins of the world?

Do you believe that He rose on the third day?

Do you believe that this sacrifice was for you and me?

If your response is yes without a doubt, then the first reaction is complete.

## Confess Your Faith with your Mouth

The second reaction is that you must confess with your mouth – Romans 10:9-10. The bible makes it clear that the first reaction aligns us with the righteousness of Christ, but this second step is where salvation actually occurs. It is calling on the name of the Lord that brings salvation – Romans. 10:13.

So this confession of our faith in Jesus is the only way to access salvation. This is why we are told that there is no other name through which men can be saved except through Jesus – Acts 4:12! This means that until this is done, you cannot claim to be saved. Faith will always demand a vocal expression to deliver on our behalf – 2 Corinthians 4:13.

These are to two steps that must be taken. If you truly believe in Jesus as outlined in the first step but are yet to declare your faith for salvation to take place, you have an opportunity now. I want to say these words after me:

*“Lord Jesus, I believe that you are the son of God. I know you came to the earth to die for my sins. I believe that after, three days, you rose from the dead for my salvation. Today, I surrender my life to you as my Lord and Savior. From this day, I will serve you all the days of my life. Thank you, Lord, for saving me in Jesus name. Amen!”*

## Chapter 2

# Water Baptism: Immersion into a New Life

*“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 6:4*

One of the foundations of an adventure with God is water baptism. Jesus made it clear that we are to believe and be baptized for a full salvation experience – Mark 16:16. God is comprehensive in His provision for our experience of the new life He has ordained for us.

We find this clearly indicated in the anchor scripture for this chapter. God made it clear that the process of baptism is symbolic of a number of vital spiritual truths that must find expression in a true Christian life. Some of these are as follows:

### **Being Buried with Jesus in Death**

Jesus explained the fact that there is a death that every true disciple must be willing to die to be a true follower or disciple – Matthew 16:14. You can't cling to your current life and enjoy the virtues of eternal life – John 12:23-26. Paul in other portions of scripture, explained that he was crucified with Christ so that the life of Christ will find expression through Him – Galatians 2:20.

That death culminates in a burial with Christ. It is important to note that this is not a literal death, but a surrender of personal life on the altar of Christ. That is a surrender that is demonstrated when you are immersed in the water at baptism.

### **Being Raised up from the Dead**

We also see here that water baptism is to culminate in our raising from death to walk in the newness of life. This means that when we are immersed, we are buried, but when we are raised, we are ushered into the new life Jesus came to give us – 1 John 5:12.

This is the eternal life that we are given access to through salvation. However, baptism is a physical act with the spiritual connotation of empowering us to walk in this new life and all it demands. This new life is a faith life, but it requires that this process is followed to enjoy it – Colossians 2:12.

These are fundamental things we must understand to be baptized in faith.

We must realize that it is not a meaningless process, but a spiritual one, with great benefits to our spiritual adventure. I remember the testimony of a brother who had been struggling with certain habits that were not Christlike in his life.

These habits included masturbation. He had tried all he could but to no avail. At a point he realized his need to be baptized, so he partook of it. When he did, those habits instantly ended.

He was empowered to walk in the new life Jesus had offered. If you are yet to be baptized in water by immersion, I implore you to do so and begin to enjoy the newness of life Jesus has to offer.

# Chapter 3

## The Holy Spirit: The Fountain of the New Life

*“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*

The Holy Spirit is referred to in the scripture above as the gift of God. This is profound because the bible shows us a number of things about the ministry of the Holy Spirit. In fact, the scriptures show us that He is the earnest of our inheritance – Ephesians 1:13-14.

“The Spirit is the [a]guarantee [the first installment, the pledge, a foretaste] of our inheritance until the redemption of God’s own [purchased] possession [His believers], to the praise of His glory.” - Ephesians 1:14  
(Amplified Version)

The word earnest has the following applications:

### **The Pledge of our Inheritance**

The Holy Spirit is the promise of God to everyone that is a child of God – Galatians 3:13-14. This is why He is referred to as the Spirit of Adoption – Romans 8:15. This means that it is through the Holy Spirit that we are adopted as children of God. This means that our initial experience with the Holy Spirit is at salvation. He secures us for our inheritance in Christ.

He imprints the DNA of God on the spirit of the redeemed. This is why He is also called the Spirit of Sonship – Galatians 4:6-7. He is the one who creates a connection between us and God. You see, without the Holy Spirit, you can have religion yet lack a genuine intimate relationship with God.

This is why He is the pledge of our inheritance; He qualifies us for an inheritance with God by making us His children. So, the salvation experience involves the Spirit of God coming into the life of the redeemed. This is what makes us saved.

### **The First Installment of our Inheritance**

The Holy Spirit is also referred to as the first installment of our inheritance. This is because He is released by God to us to ensure that all God has provided for us is accessible to us. He is the security of our inheritance. In this instance, we are referring to His ministry of help for the life of the believer.

He helps us in a number of ways.  
He teaches us – John 16:13-16.

He enables us to serve Him in advancing the kingdom of God – Acts 1:8; He helps our prayer life – Romans 8:26-27 and many more.

However, this is beyond just the experience of salvation.

This aspect of the ministry of the Holy Spirit requires a second experience: the baptism of the Holy Spirit. This baptism of the Holy Spirit is evidenced by speaking in tongues – Acts 2:1-6/10:44. This is the gauge that gives us the indication that we have been baptized in the Holy Spirit.

To be baptized in the Holy Spirit, you simply need to recognize that Jesus is the One who baptizes with the Holy Spirit – Matthew 3:11-12. In fact, Jesus told the apostles to wait in Jerusalem because He was going to send the Holy Spirit to them – Luke 24:49.

We must understand that the Holy Spirit is sent by Jesus. So, if you can look to Jesus for the baptism of the Holy Spirit as you did for salvation, you will be baptized in the Holy Spirit with the evidence of speaking in tongues.

Once your eyes are set on Jesus as the baptizer, you must remember a simple statement in the first baptism with the Holy Spirit seen in the scriptures: “...speak ... as the Spirit gave them utterance” – Acts 2:4.

You see, one must understand that there is a faith component to this experience – Galatians 3:14. That faith demands that as we look to Jesus and ask for this baptism in faith, once we begin speaking, the Holy Spirit will give utterance.

The difference here is that when you speak in a human language, your mind determines your utterance, but when you speak with other tongues, the Holy Spirit is the one giving utterance.

Therefore, you do not pre-determine what you say. The Holy Spirit gives the utterance, but you have the responsibility to speak in faith trusting Him. He will not speak for you. You must speak for yourself. Don't forget, it is when you open your mouth that He fills it – Psalm 81:10.

One of the errors I have seen people make over the years is that they expect the Holy Spirit to speak for them. That's not the scriptural pattern. He enables you to speak, but you must do the speaking. Once you ask in faith, you must be absolutely convinced that He has been given to you as He promised – Mark 11:24.

Jesus said, “If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?” - Luke 11:13.

We have an assurance, so be confident when you ask as His child. If you have not yet had this experience, please pray the following prayer in faith after me and after that, simply speak in faith trusting Him for utterance. Do not allow your mind to interfere with your spirit.

Trust in Jesus absolutely as you do this:

*“Father, I believe that Jesus is the baptizer in the Holy Spirit. I also believe that it is an experience available for every child of God. You have said you will not withhold the Holy Spirit from anyone who asks.*

*Therefore, Jesus, I ask of you that You baptize me with the Holy Spirit now. Thank you for answering my prayer in Jesus Name!”*

**If you have done this, simply begin in faith, trusting God for utterance as you do.**

### **The Foretaste of Our Inheritance**

The third description is that the Holy Spirit is a foretaste of our inheritance. Remember that at redemption, we are promised the riches of His grace – Ephesians 2:8. These are realities of heaven which we should experience on the earth – Hebrews 6:4. While we are in the world, we are to escape the limitations of the world – 2 Peter 1:4.

In fact, we are told that we are to expect the demonstration of the powers of the world to come – Hebrews 6:5. This refers to subduing natural laws. but this experience requires increasing measures of the Holy Spirit unleashed to us. Jesus had the Holy Spirit without measure and therefore, His manifestations were without measure – John 3:34.

We must keep increasing our measures in the Holy Spirit. This requires that we have desperation to grow in His power – Isaiah 44:3. It also demands that we engage in spiritual exercises of prayer, fasting and the study of the word – Matthew 17:21, Luke 9:28, 43, Luke 4:17-21.

It also requires that we develop the spiritual discipline of subduing the flesh and conforming to the image of Christ so as to reflect more of His glory – 2 Corinthians 3:18, Romans 8:13, Galatians 2:20, 6:14.

As you do these things, keep desiring and demanding more of the Holy Spirit to be poured out and you will see His power on the increase in your life.

# Chapter 4

## The Word: Diet for the New Life

*“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*

One of the important things for any new believer to discover is the necessity of the word of God. The scripture above makes it clear that the word of God is a vital force for sustaining the new life that God has given you at salvation. What food is to natural life, the word is to spiritual life. So, there can be no spiritual life without the word of God. In fact, we are first told that we must desire the milk of the word in our infancy through which we can grow – 1 Peter 2:2.

This means there can be no spiritual growth without the word of God. Furthermore, the bible tells us that the solid food of the word belongs to those that have developed themselves to distinguish good and evil – Hebrews 5:15. This means there cannot be spiritual development without the word of God.

In summary, the word is the sustainer of our spiritual life, the sponsor of our spiritual growth, and the instrument for our spiritual development. This means no effective Christian can emerge without the word of God.

This is why the word of God must become the central focus of any individual that will emerge as a faithful and fruitful believer. For the word of God to effectively deliver in your life, you must do the following:

### **Listen to it daily**

The first duty you have with the word of God, is the duty of hearing. It is in hearing the word of God that faith begins to build up – Romans 10:17. We have a solemn responsibility given to us by God to hear Him daily – Matthew 4:4.

Mary in the bible left everything to listen to the word of God, and Jesus said she had chosen the good path – Luke 10:42. The word of God must be a priority in the life of the believer. Be committed to attending church services, listening to recorded messages, or audio bibles, among other things.

### **Study it daily**

The second responsibility is study. The bible instructs that we study to have proofs in our walk with God – 2 Timothy 2:15. The bible speaks about a group of noble Christians called the Bereans.

They received (or heard) the word eagerly and went back to search the scriptures daily to confirm what they heard – Acts 17:11. They were noble because of their commitment to study. The honour of our Christian walk becomes apparent when we commit ourselves to the study of the word. You may also use books on specific subjects, devotionals, or other such materials for this purpose.

### **Meditate on it daily**

The third duty we have with the word of God is meditation. We are instructed to meditate on the word of God day and night – Joshua 1:8. In fact we are told that the word of God must dwell richly within us – Colossians 3:16. This means we must fill our hearts with the word of God, by thinking on it.

The purpose of meditation is to understand application. This means we must think through how the word applies to the various situations of our lives.

### **Obey it daily**

The fourth duty we have with the word is obedience.

Being a hearer and not a doer of the word of God is self-deception – James 1:22. The blessing in the word of God cannot be accessed without doing what it commands – James 1:25. We must become committed to the dictates of the word of God, by doing them. In fact, Jesus said, there is no point claiming Him as Lord without doing what He says – Luke 6:46. Take time to follow these duties with the word of God and watch as you begin to grow.

I must admonish you however, never to forget to ask the Holy Spirit to teach you every time you come before the word of God. It is so loaded that the natural mind cannot fully comprehend it – Romans 11:33, but praise God, the Holy Spirit who is our teacher can unveil the most difficult things to us – 1 John 2:27.

# Chapter 5

## Prayer: Facilitator of the New Life

*“And he spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint;”  
Luke 18:1*

One of the most primitive expressions of faith is prayer. It is so fundamental that the apostles said they would give themselves to prayer and the ministry of the word – Acts 6:4. Jesus admonished the disciples to watch and pray so as not to fall prey to the temptation of the enemy – Matthew 26:41. One of the most discernable expressions of genuine faith is prayer.

### **What is prayer?**

Prayer is communion with God. Jesus taught us that we as children must learn to come to God as a Father and pray to Him – Matthew 6:9-13. In fact, we are told that when a person becomes born again and the Spirit of God enters his or her spirit, there is filial cry of ‘Abba father’ – Galatians 4:6-7.

This prayer communion is supposed to be the lifestyle of the believer. This is why Jesus taught us to pray always and never give up – Luke 18:1.

### **The Faith Component**

For prayer to be effective, it must be backed with faith – Mark 11:24.

Faith here has to do with confidence that what is requested is being delivered. This kind of assurance can only come from a promise made. This is why we are told that our prayer confidence only comes when we know we have asked according to His promise – 1 John 5:14-15.

This is why taking in the word is so important as discussed in the earlier chapter – Romans 10:17. When your faith is in place, you approach God with confidence and therefore you can secure His help – Hebrews 4:16.

### **Praying in the Spirit**

As we saw in the earlier chapter on the Holy Spirit, one of the evidences of our second experience with the Holy Spirit is speaking with other tongues – Acts 2:4. The purpose for this new language is for effective communication. No wonder Paul admonishes the church to pray all kinds of prayers in the Spirit – Ephesians 6:18.

He specifically says of himself that he prays both in the Spirit and in the understanding – 1 Corinthians 14:15.

The reason why this is so important for us as believers is that in doing so, the Holy Spirit takes over the prayer process by giving us utterance on how best to pray on the subject we are presenting to God – Romans 8:26-27. This is profound. When you are praying in the Spirit, your mind is unfruitful, but your spirit man is speaking mysteries to God – 1 Corinthians 14:14.

This is why the experience of the baptism in the Holy Ghost we discussed earlier is so important. If you have not had the experience yet, go to Chapter 3 and follow the instructions. Also, most churches have a foundation class where this is taught. You may take advantage of such opportunities where they exist. Make it a habit to speak to God about anything or anyone.

When you pray concerning things not directly related to you, it is called intercession. In such prayers, you are usually standing on behalf of someone else. Otherwise, you can pray for yourself based on the promises you find in the word of God. Take advantage of this awesome platform to commune with your heavenly Father, the creator of the Universe.

## Chapter 6

# Fellowship: The Strengthenener of the New Life

*“Not forsaking the assembling of  
ourselves together, as the  
manner of some is; but  
exhorting one another: and so  
much the more, as ye see the day  
approaching”  
Hebrews 10:25*

One of the vital keys for developing a robust spiritual life is fellowship. In the scripture we are admonished that we must not forsake the gathering together of the saints. This refers to corporate fellowship. While a number of the things we have discussed has to do with personal responsibilities, we cannot ignore the place of corporate gatherings.

In fact, such gatherings are key to experiencing proofs of Christ in our individual lives – 1 John 1:1-3. Furthermore, we discover that the only way for a Christian to go from strength to strength is through fellowship – Psalm 84:7.

This means without fellowship, you will be losing strength and spiritual stamina. The consequence of absence of strength is exposure to defeat – Proverbs 24:10.

**How does fellowship strengthen the believer?**

**Fellowship leads to spiritual growth**

Spiritual growth is the product of spiritual understanding – Colossians 1:9, and spiritual understanding is enhanced with fellowship.

Just being in church brings you into the realm of illumination – Psalm 73:17. This means there are things you will never understand until you are in fellowship. In fact, the appointed pastors to whom God has sent you, are armed with the wisdom and understanding with which you are to be fed – Jeremiah 3:15-16.

### **Fellowship leads to sanctification**

The scriptures make it clear that if we do not want to be corrupted, we must come out from those who are corrupted – 2 Corinthians 6:16-17. In fact we are told that as we fellowship together, we fellowship with God and the blood of Jesus cleanses us from all sin – 1 John 1:7.

The reason is that when we come to corporate fellowship, we are interacting with heavenly personalities, and the blood of sprinkling reaches out to us for our cleansing and sanctification – Hebrews 12:22-24.

### **Fellowship enhances answers to prayer**

There is a corporate power base that answers to us when we are in fellowship – Matthew 18:19.

The early church understood this so they had the habit of returning to their company or fellowship – Acts 4:23. In fact the starting point of the early church was corporate prayer – Acts 1:14. It is the believer's stronghold.

Ultimately, we are recognizing that there is a prayer advantage to corporate fellowship.

### **Fellowship provides the privilege for stewardship**

One of the things we must discover is that God is seeking serving sons – Malachi 1:6. This means it's not enough to become a child of God, but we must seek opportunities to serve.

In fact, the highway to blessings is commitment to stewardship – Malachi 3:17-18.

The beauty of this is that you get to build capacity to serve by the example of others.

Therefore, we must take the opportunity to be in fellowship at the various levels. The scriptures identify fellowship in the temple (the church), and from house to house (house fellowship) – Acts 2:47. Take advantage of these opportunities for your ultimate profiting.

This means you must locate a church to belong to. If your church runs a house fellowship system, then take advantage of it also. But make it a point to remain consistent in corporate fellowship. It has untold advantages!

Once again, friend, I welcome you to this new life and I pray that all the benefits therein will begin to find expression in your life in Jesus Name.

*Congratulations!*

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