

MIRACLE BREAD

“And when the tempter came to him, he said, if thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread.

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.” Mathew 4:3, 4.

In this first temptation, the Devil was appealing to the ego of our Lord Jesus Christ. *“If you are whom you claim to be, if you have the credentials you claim to have, turn these stones to bread”*

There was an obvious need in the life of our Lord. He had been fasting for forty days (total abstinence) and he was hungry. There were many plausible options or solutions of meeting this need, one of which was to act in line with the suggestion of the Devil and turn stones into Bread.

Jesus as the Son of God has the power to turn the stones into bread but refrained from doing so. Why? Physical bread is not an ultimate; the word of God should be the ultimate guide and rule for our lives, actions and decisions. In Christ, we see a case of anointing under subjection to the will and the word of God.

Man has problems today, not as much with what he does not have as with what he has and what he chooses to do with what he has. Lack of restraint in the use of resources, gifts and talents is a leading index of sinful life. Free pleasure ride, unrestrained, unbridled desires, appetite and will lines the road to sin and perdition. We need the grace of God in the face of abundance of resources, great potentials, great abilities and gifts to choose to act in the direction of God’s will and word; to choose to labour in righteous and honest ways to meet our needs or to expand our wealth.

We need God’s grace to act like Christ who in the face of the ability to do much, in fact, to do all things chose to do nothing because of personal conviction, commitment and consecration to act only in line with the word of God.

Note this: if the word of God is to moderate our lives, we must take time off, indeed, be willing to spend quality time to learn at the feet of expository teachers of truth and righteousness. Genuine conversion is a turning of sinful men from a life of disobedience and/or complacency to the word of God. A leading mark of repentance (fruit of repentance) is an awakened or heightened appetite for the word of God.

Conversion is primarily a turning from sin to a consistent prayer and fellowship life firmly rooted in the word of God. Conversely, diminishing appetite for God's word are initial signs of spiritual retrogression and backsliding which may affect an individual or a church. Revival starts whenever there is a rediscovery of the central and pivotal role the word of God is expected to play in the lives of believers and the Church. The word of God will keep you from sin or sin will keep you from the word of God.

In responding to the temptation by Satan that Jesus should turn stones into bread, Jesus quoted Deuteronomy 8:3

“And he humbled thee, and suffered thee to hunger, and fed thee with manna, which thou knewest not, neither did thy fathers know; that he might make thee know that man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the LORD doth man live.”

The context demonstrates the priority of God's word in all man's endeavours to satisfy basic needs and fulfil temporal desires. Many have fallen from grace to grass. Many have been drowned in the pernicious sea of lying, robbery, fraud, cheating, bribery, slander, murder, stealing, hatred, malice, immorality and all kinds of abominable and damnable wickedness in the quest for bread. Many a faith has been compromised and overthrown. Many homes have broken up and consciences betrayed.

Tele- marriages are increasing in the world because of inordinate ambition for foreign travels and many children continue to be raised in single parents' homes contrary to the plan of God because of *‘what shall we eat?’*. Ironically, some have what to eat but joined in the rat race for acquisition (or hoarding) of material things because of unbelief and feeling of insecurity. Like Naomi in the book of Ruth, their voyage ended in

irreparable loss of what they already have rather than their acquiring more.

Others like Lot ended up in good territory but had to contend with bad neighbours whose atheistic and immoral influences truncated a promising future. *How is your life today? Are you born again? Have you been tempted and has fallen? Are you being tempted right now even as you read this?* The time to change your direction and turn to Christ is now!

The satisfaction of basic need of hunger in the natural takes time. For Christ who has power to turn stones into bread to be willing to endure the time it will take to find, receive and eat bread in God approved is a lesson in discipline and patience. Great blessings are lost and opportunities to learn, to grow and to attain higher spiritual maturity are lost when men sacrifice long term strategic assets for short term tactical manoeuvres.

Besides, there is also this lesson from Christ: spiritual gifts are not to be manifested for personal, selfish, or carnal gratification. They are not to be manifested to satisfy men's curiosity like magical acts; rather they are manifested to demonstrate God's love and compassion towards men through the alleviation of their suffering and the meeting of desperate needs in circumstances where natural abilities or endowments are grossly inadequate; in circumstances where men's impossibilities becomes God's opportunity.

Do you need a miracle? Why do you want a miracle? What purpose will the miracle you seek serve in your life at this moment? Judging from the example of Christ in the wilderness, these are primary determinants of whether or not God will manifest His power in granting you your needed miracle. If your motive is pure as you petition heaven for intervention, God will answer your prayer and meet your need. There is a miracle for you even at this very moment.

When we look at the world today, and even at the Church, the body of Christ, it is disheartening to see that the quest for satisfaction of basic needs- what to eat, what to wear, where to live – is fast eroding spiritual appetite and sincere love for God. It is fast diminishing men's interest and love for fellowship with the saints. It is dampening enthusiasm in spiritual matters and deepening spiritual slumber. Men are fast turning their back

on the giver of life and all good things and running after His gifts. We forget that the originator of life has the resources to sustain it and will readily give them to us if we labour with faith in His ability and wisdom; if we labour in full consciousness of the demands of His words and laws.

God has an adequate, sufficient and satisfying programme for every man coming into the world. His programme for your life encompasses the satisfaction of your needs, but in accordance with His word. The desires for miracle bread have made many to err from the way of truth and faith. It has made many (may be even you, my dear reader) to turn from the Bread of life to perishing bread – bread with expiry date: bread that will perish with use in this world. It might have made you to sacrifice spiritual heritage and issues of enduring and eternal realities for earthly glory and vanities.

Undoubtedly, man`s physical body requires physical bread as much as his spirit and soul require spiritual food to thrive well and be heaven -ready. However, all labour in the direction of acquisition of physical bread cannot take men beyond the limits of earthly life. No matter how much you nourish your body now, you will leave this world ultimately. After death, what next? We must be wise.

We must strike a balance. Best efforts at work for daily bread culminate in the achievement of only “*half - life*”. The remaining `half` ought to be complemented by the development an intimate relationship with God: the initiation and sustenance of abiding relationship with Christ, the Bread of life, and His kingdom. There is an enemy on the prowl who will want us to do the exact opposite of that. He does not require invitation to project, promote and propagate ungodliness and disobedience to God and His word in the life of those who allow him. Most times, he takes advantage of our precarious circumstances and situations or some urgent pressing needs in our lives. We need to watch and pray.

If Christ was tempted by the Devil, then nobody is beyond temptation. However, the life, examples, sacrifice, death and resurrection of Christ serves to encourage us on the possibility of victory in our daily struggle against temptation.

Temptation does not always come at a time of need. It may come at a time we have much more than we desire or need.

“And he spake a parable unto them, saying, The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully: And he thought within himself, saying, What shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow my fruits? And he said, This will I do: I will pull down my barns, and build greater; and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods.

And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry.

But God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided? So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God”. (Luke 12:16-21).

The tempter will come to promote and encourage pride, greed and complacency to spiritual matters in the lives of wealthy believers. We must watch. Jesus was in all points tempted, yet He never sinned. He promises to help those who are in any way tempted.

” For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted. There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it”. Hebrews 2:18,1Corinthians 10:13.

Jesus came to lead us back to God and launch us into the victory we have lost by falling into temptations and sinning. He has paid the penalty for your sins and obtained pardon and redemption for you. If you have fallen into temptation, through confession, repentance and turning from sin to Christ, you can rise again. If you are living in sin, this is the time to repent. Jesus will this moment give you light and life. He will lift you up. If you so desire, He will do it now as you pray this prayer:

LORD Jesus, I come to you today. I am sorry for all my sins. Forgive me and cleanse me. Come into my heart as my Lord and Saviour. Give me power to go and sin no more and to overcome every temptation. Thank you because I

believe you have heard and answered my prayers. In Jesus name I pray – AMEN.

In case you have taken this simple step of faith to receive salvation in Christ or restoration of faith and fellowship with Christ, if you want to learn more about how to grow in Him and in your new experience or you require further spiritual assistance, contact us through this address:

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